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The Influence of Digital Technology in the Transformation of Sociocultural Communication

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Abstrak

Teknologi digital saat ini semakin berkembang dan mempengaruhi hampir semua lini kehidupan manusia modern, termasuk dalam komunikasi sosiokultural. Peralihan penggunaan teknologi dari analog ke digital dimaksudkan untuk membuat segala sesuatu menjadi lebih mudah, praktis, cepat dan efektif. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji seperti apa pengaruh teknologi digital dalam transformasi komunikasi sosiokultural dimana tradisi sosiokultural ini mencakup adat, budaya, agama, bahasa, dan strata sosial. Metode penelitian yang dipilih adalah kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data secara literature review untuk menghimpun data dan informasi yang memberikan gambaran fenomena yang terjadi saat ini dalam komunikasi sosiokultural. Penelitian ini diharapkan memberikan pengetahuan mengenai produk teknologi digital yang ada saat ini dengan kegunaan positifnya. Peneliti juga menjelaskan pengaruh negatif apabila teknologi digital tidak dimanfaatkan dengan bijak.

Kata Kunci: *Teknologi Digital, Komunikasi Sosiokultural, Transformasi Komunikasi Sosiokultural*

Abstract

Digital technology is currently growing and affecting almost all lines of modern human life, including in sociocultural communication. The shift in the use of technology from analog to digital is intended to make everything easier, more practical, faster and more effective. This paper aims to examine what the influence of digital technology is in the transformation of sociocultural communication where this sociocultural tradition includes customs, culture, religion, language, and social strata. The research method chosen is qualitative with literature review data collection to collect data and information that provides an overview of current phenomena in sociocultural communication. This research is expected to provide knowledge about current digital technology products with their positive uses. Researchers also explain the negative effects if digital technology is not utilized wisely.

Keywords: *Digital Technology, Sociocultural Communication, Sociocultural Communication Transformation*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we have entered the digital era where life has experienced rapid progress that leads to digital forms, including technology that has switched to digital technology. Digital technology is a technology based on computers, the internet and smartphones.

The development of digital technology affects every line of human life and has a huge impact on human behavior and lifestyle. With digital technology, everything becomes easier and more practical. "The process of interaction between people mediated by technology and able to reach layers of society in any part of the world is becoming increasingly open. The internet as one of the impacts of the development of new technology is basically not only a door to find out how the existing culture of the people in a particular area, but also a tool in cultural expression itself."

Over the decades, many theories have been developed by communication experts. Some of them are sociocultural approaches in communication theory that discuss the understanding, meaning, norms, roles and rules that work and interact with each other in the communication process. Sociocultural theory in communication science explores the world of interaction in which humans live. This theory emphasizes the idea that reality is built through a process of interaction that occurs in groups, communities and cultures. In life a person needs to socialize and create and maintain close relationships with others, therefore, we spend a lot of time communicating interpersonally which aims to maintain social relationships with others. Likewise, to be able to change the attitudes and behavior of others with persuasive efforts, this interpersonal communication is also used to achieve this goal.

"The sociocultural tradition focuses more on patterns of interaction between people rather than things related to the nature or soul of an individual. Interaction is the process and place where different kinds of meanings, roles, rules, and cultural values are at work. This social tradition of thinking very clearly shows its interest in the communication processes that occur in actual situations" (Studocu, 2021).

In relation to communication, digital technology also has an influence that will be discussed in this paper, namely the influence of digital technology in the transformation of sociocultural communication. The media is now changing people's lives so as to form a hyper reality that becomes a functional part in various structures of society, especially the presence of television and the internet that takes over human social functions. Speaking of the media's relationship with politics, Sy Nurul Syobah in her research said that the media needs to be controlled to provide political education, in the form of building public awareness through media information channels. It is thus clear that the media has an important role in circulating political messages to the public. Through the media, a politician can build his image so that he has a high level of electability.

The era of computerized development continued and developed until the 1990s, giving birth to internet technology. Experts were astonished by the rapid development of this technology which they called "unexpected". The internet is mesmerizing and so fast developing with its program variants that make this earth in the grip of technology. Technology makes everything practical, unlimited and easy, including in the process of sociocultural communication.

However, the advancement of communication technology is not necessarily beneficial in all aspects. Besides the many uses and benefits, there are also many negatives. Things that are inappropriate for children to see are unstoppable, resulting in many immoral cases and other negative actions due to the impact of accessing the internet (Nuruddin, 2007).

Some of these views illustrate that the development of digital technology is like two sides of a knife in the transformation of sociocultural communication. This means that digital technology provides significant benefits and advantages but is accompanied by risks due to improper utilization.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this paper is a qualitative method. Qualitative method is a research that has the aim of understanding the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subject, for example seen from the point of view of behavior, perception,

motivation, action, and others, holistically. Qualitative methods are generally carried out by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a natural context and by utilizing various natural methods.

This research method uses a systematic literature review that collects several references from books, journals and previous research to complete this article. The research review itself serves to obtain a theoretical basis that can support the solution of the problem being studied. The theory obtained is the first step so that researchers can better understand the problems being studied correctly in accordance with the scientific framework. With the literature review, data collection is more on participant observation and in-depth interviews.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Digital Technology Development

Digital technology is based on computer, internet and smartphone technology. In this modern era, the application of digital technology is increasingly prevalent in many sectors ranging from education, trade, health, agriculture, government, banking, etc.

The digital era first began with the emergence of revolution 1.0. which was then developed in the era of revolution 2.0. The digital revolution began to develop later referred to as the digital revolution 3.0. which began in 1970 to 1990. It was during this time that time and space began to feel closer and less distant. Furthermore, what we feel today is the digital revolution 4.0. where there are many changes that occur and the level of competition is increasing. Automation trends and data exchange are also getting more sophisticated. The emergence of AI (Artificial Intelligence), IoT (Internet of Things) and others that ultimately make everything feel sophisticated (Ma'ruf, 2023).

After the invention of computers, cell phones were developed which had a huge impact on the development of human communication. Where now in the communication process to give news can be done in seconds, unlike in the past who had to wait for days until the letter sent reached the recipient. Now in an instant we can give news, send photos and even meet face to face with video calls using smartphones. Then social media was also born which makes communication easier and more expressive, starting from Friendster to today's Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and others.

2. Development of Sociocultural Communication

Robert T. Craig identifies 7 traditions in communication science, one of which is the sociocultural tradition. The sociocultural tradition departs from anthropological studies, that

communication takes place in a certain cultural context. Some figures who also discuss this are James Lull, Geertz, Erving Goffman, Gerge H. Mead, etc. Sociocultural theory symbolizes how we understand meaning, rules and roles in communication. The central idea of this tradition focuses on the forms of interaction between people. This model makes social order as its center and views communication as the glue of society (Raden Ayu, 2023).

The main theme that distinguishes socio-cultural communication studies from other communication studies is the degree of difference in background, socio-cultural experience between communicators and communicants. A basic assumption is that among individuals of the same culture there is generally greater similarity (homogeneity) in terms of overall background experience than among those from different cultures. These cultural differences between communication actors as well as other differences, such as individual personality, age, physical appearance, become inherent problems in the communication process. By its nature, socio-cultural communication is considered an extension of the fields of human communication studies, such as interpersonal communication, organizational communication and mass communication. Meanwhile, Stewart (1974) describes the notion of socio-cultural communication more comprehensively, namely communication that occurs in a condition that shows differences in socio-cultural backgrounds such as social strata, language, values, customs, and habits.

Based on some of these definitions, it can be concluded that sociocultural communication is a communication process that involves people who come from different socio-cultural environments. Sociocultural communication occurs when two or more people with different socio-cultural backgrounds interact. The consequence is the interaction of different values and norms that have the potential to disrupt the effectiveness of communication.

3. The Influence of Digital Technology in Sociocultural Communication Transformation

Along with the rapid development of communication technology, the utilization of mass communication media is getting bigger. Television, radio, newspapers, and even the internet are means of conveying messages from communicators to communicants. This condition brings transformation (change) in sociocultural communication which was previously conventional to be more sophisticated with the use of information and communication technology.

In the transformation of sociocultural communication where the subjects and objects are humans with different backgrounds, be it social background, culture, language, values,

and customs, digital technology has a very large role. Digital technology can overcome or at least reduce communication barriers which include language, psychological, physiological, physical, systematic and attitudinal barriers.

Digital technology in the form of artificial intelligence has produced several language translation machine products. These translation machines can even work to translate millions of words instantly. This is of course very helpful to overcome language barriers between communicators and communicants from different countries with different languages. Although ideally language mastery is by studying the language intensively until proficient and fluent, at least machine translators can help the communication process. We know several translation apps that can be accessed through smartphones, for example: Speak and Translate, Udictionary, Naver Papago, Google Translate, Reverso Translate and Learn, and others.

In the internal communication activities of the community or between groups of people with various differences in social status and status, cultural differences, differences in values and customs, digital technology plays an important positive role. Today everyone can know and learn the customs, culture and habits of people from other regions in the country and even from other parts of the world. Digital technology spoils us with various online media that present content that contains cultural values. Various types of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, TikTok, Twitter, Whatsapp, and others have features that make it easy for us to share information and obtain information from various sources. Social media can be used as a means of intercultural communication. Through social media, it can be used to introduce and spread cultural identity so that it is known and recognized by many people.

The shift in the trend of today's world community to access more digital information allows content with cultural values to be witnessed by many people. Content creators as communicators can convey messages in the form of cultural recognition to viewers as communicators through social media and other online media. For example, the YouTube channel @BudayaSaya highlights the uniqueness of local cultures. One of the contents can be seen at the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSysZfRvOXI>.

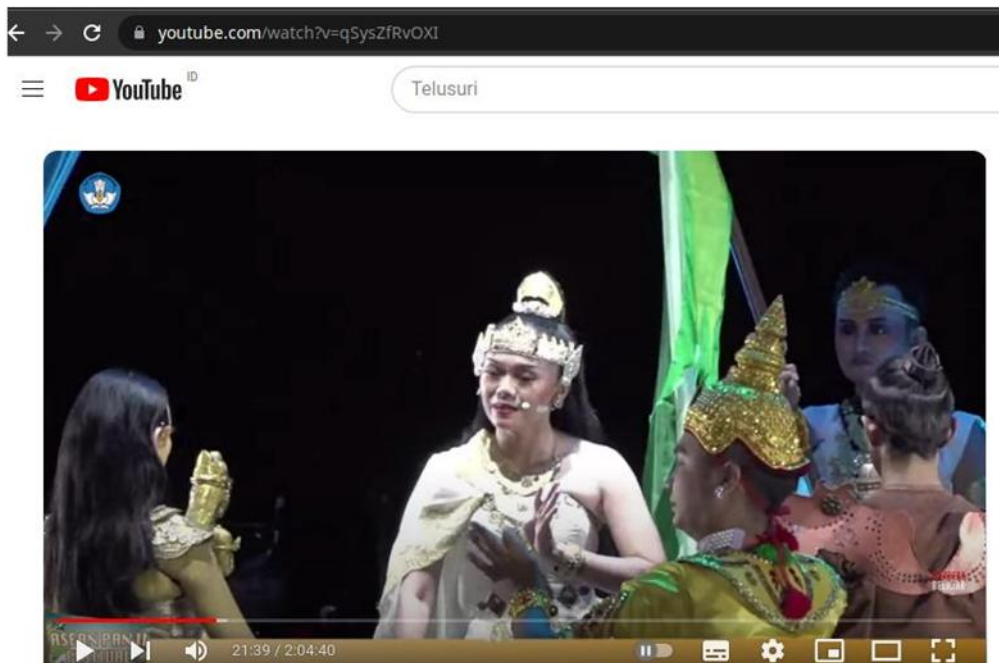


Figure 1. Highlights the Uniqueness of Local Cultures

Still with the same theme there is the Local Culture Channel, one of the contents can be seen at the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spzMRkZoRTU&list=PL00x17dbC0PiyMDh7h3mYJsSn0SYNWgwj>



Figure 2.

More broadly we can see the content of Nihongo Mantappu which raises about cross-country culture. One of the contents can be seen at the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNIUem5HoFI&list=PLXE8AUnn_XpV_ApliZkCQ1Rgitzok5Kq-

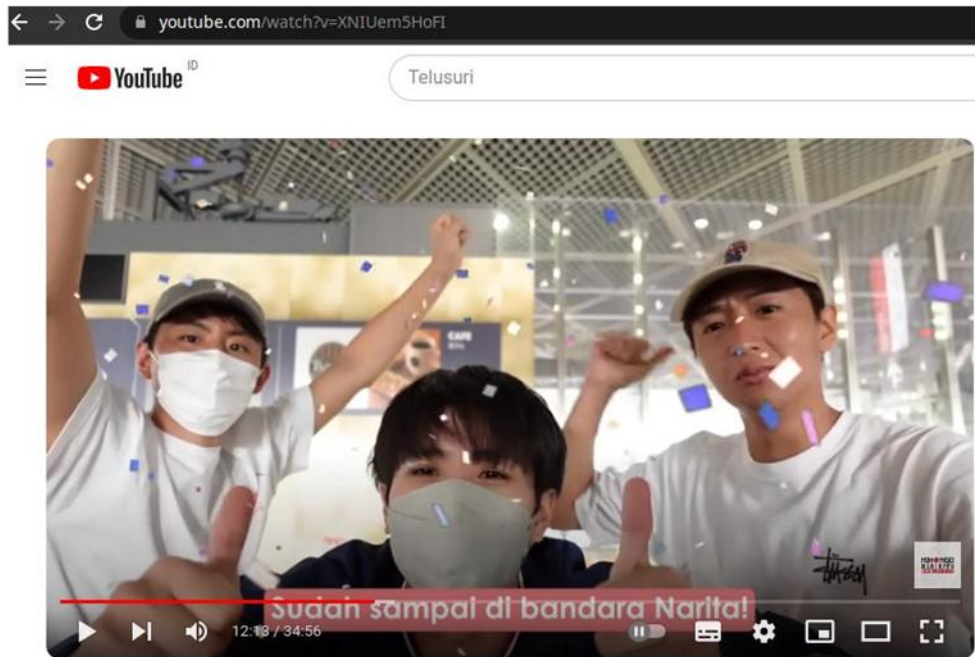


Figure 3. The Content of Nihongo Mantappu

The presence of increasingly sophisticated digital technology also makes access to various information faster and easier. Nowadays, distance is no longer an obstacle to communication. Internet and smartphone technology can connect communicators and communicants wherever they are.

Like two sides of a coin, digital technology provides tremendous positive benefits if utilized properly. However, there are also negative impacts if its use is misused. The ease of information dissemination and access has led to the proliferation of fake news (hoaxes). Communicators can spread untrue messages or information with the aim of misleading public opinion to communicators. A lot of fake news circulates and goes viral because people do not research the truth of the news before spreading it through their social media.

As part of information technology innovation, social media provides a space for people to express their opinions and voice their thoughts that might not have been able to be expressed before due to limited platforms. Social media has become a new space of expression for the world community in recent years.

Examples of hoax news in Indonesia :



Figure 4. Hoax News in Indonesia

The invention of this technology is unique. A welder by profession named I Wayan Sutawan aka Tawan has successfully attracted the attention of the entire country. The man from Bali created a robotic arm in the style of the superhero Iron Man. Tawan claimed that the arm worked based on direct commands from his brain with a trigger device in his coconut. However, this was later denied by a number of researchers who saw the arm firsthand. They stated that it was impossible to realize the control of the robot arm by the brain because the robot arm was made without a computerized process.



Figure 5. Saracen Case

The dismantling of the Saracen syndicate, which is suspected of actively spreading SARA nuanced fake news on social media based on orders, is indeed an organized thing,

not just an individual action, observers said. Information technology (IT) expert Ruby Alamsyah said the police's success had a big impact on the community. "Especially for those who have not believed that the spread of hoaxes is organized," he said. On Wednesday (23/8), the Indonesian Police revealed the arrest of three leaders of the Saracen syndicate who were allegedly behind a number of false and provocative news. A digital forensics investigation revealed that the syndicate used Facebook groups - including Saracen News, Saracen Cyber Team, and Saracennews.com - to mobilize more than 800,000 accounts, police said. Furthermore, the perpetrators uploaded provocative content with SARA nuances by following the development of trends on social media, the police also said. "The posts are in the form of words, narratives and memes that appear to direct readers' opinions to view other groups of people negatively," said a press release from the Indonesian National Police's Cyber Crime Unit received by BBC Indonesia. The syndicate, which has been in action since November 2015, sent proposals to a number of parties, then offered services to spread SARA hate speech on social media.



Figure 6. Hollow Power Plant (PLTH)

A dynamo repairman from Malang named Slamet Haryanto or better known as Mbah Embing had made a splash thanks to his invention. Mbah Embing successfully invented a generator called the Empty Power Plant (PLTH). As the name implies, the power plant does not require any energy source, aka it only needs emptiness. The crazy thing is that many people, including the Minister of BUMN Dahlan Iskan, ordered the generator made by Mbah Embing. The PLTH was eventually found out to be a lie because Mbah Embing was doing a trick, namely connecting electricity to the generator through the underground.

On the other hand, the reality of rapid technological development in Indonesia today affects the way today's children grow, learn, play and interact. 21st century children born in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 grow up with digital platforms such as Facebook,

Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, recent research explains that 2-year-olds are already years old and able to use tablets before they can speak, Studies even 40% of children aged 2 to 4 years use smart phones, iPods, iPads or the like (Graafland, 2018). This condition has a negative impact on the massive exposure of pornography to children.

A case related to exposure to pornography occurred in mid-March 2018, when Indonesian society was saddened by the emergence of a video of a 5-year-old girl sitting next to her mother watching a pornographic video in the waiting room of the Kebon Nanas Samsat Office, East Jakarta (Miftahul Munir, 2018; Pranamya Dewati, 2018). Research on pornography (Bulkley, 2013) shows that in 2013 the average age of a child's first viewing of internet pornography was 11 years, with 70% of boys having spent at least 30 consecutive minutes viewing pornography on-line on at least one occasion; 35% of boys had done this at least ten times; 83% of boys had viewed group sex on the internet; 67% of children admitted to cleaning up their internet history to hide their online activity; 0% of pornography users reported addiction.

The negative impact that cannot be denied is also that the shift of society to the use of social media in sociocultural communication has reduced direct / face-to-face social interaction, causing social estrangement. Many people feel that they no longer need to interact and communicate directly because they have done it through social media. Even nowadays, it is common to see people when they are gathering with their family, colleagues, friends or community, each of them is busy with their gadgets.

CONCLUSION

The development of digital technology has a significant impact on the transformation of sociocultural communication. Digital technology makes access to information faster and easier, and can reduce barriers in sociocultural communication which include language, psychological, physiological, physical, systematic and attitudinal barriers. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has produced several language transfer machine products to overcome language barriers between communicators and communicants from different countries. Content with values, cultural identity, customs and habits through social media such as Youtube, TikTok, Twitter, Whatsapp, etc. is a means of sociocultural communication. However, digital technology is also one of the causes of declining morality, the spread of hoaxes and pornography, and social estrangement.

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