

# IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATION ETHICS BY DIGITAL IMMIGRANT LECTURER TO DIGITAL NATIVE STUDENTS AS A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN ONLINE LEARNING IN SUMATRA UTARA UNIVERSITY

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the application of communication ethics by Digital Immigrant lecturers to Digital Native students as a communication strategy in online learning at the University of North Sumatra. The method used in this research is qualitative with a case study design on online learning. The subjects in this study were lecturers of the Digital Immigrant generation who were born before 1980 according to the Digital Immigrant theory by Marc Prensky, as well as students as the Digital Native generation used as source triangulation or data validity. Application of data collection techniques using non-participant observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. Furthermore, the data analysis technique used in this study is in accordance with the Miles and Huberman model, namely data collection, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that Digital Immigrant lecturers are a generation that upholds the ethics of media communication aimed at students of the Digital Native generation. The form of media communication ethics in online learning as a communication strategy is realized by establishing rules that must be obeyed by students such as activating cameras, setting a time limit for filling attendance and joining online discussion forums and using the comments column if students want permission. These four things are done with the aim of respecting and appreciating the existence of the lecturer, not interrupting the conversation when the lecturer is explaining the material, proof of attendance and seriousness of students in online learning.

Keywords: Communication Ethics, Media, Digital Immigrants, Online Learning.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Since the discovery of the Covid-19 pandemic case in early March 2020 in Indonesia, the government has begun to adopt various policies to break the chain of the spread of the virus in Indonesia, one of which is in the education sector. The government implements Work from Home and School from Home policies that prioritize online learning systems. The learning system in the network is a teaching and learning process by utilizing various learning applications that are connected to the internet network. Online learning certainly has positive and negative impacts on its use. Acceleration and transformation in the world of education, improvements in research and teaching and learning activities that can be carried out without space and time limitations are some of the positive impacts of online learning (Gusty et al, 2020).

Marc Prensky (Hills, 2010) divides humans into two groups, namely digital immigrants and digital native generations. Digital immigrants are a group of people who were born before 1980, because at that time the human group had to adapt to the phenomenon of the discovery of the internet in

several developed countries. Meanwhile, digital natives are people born after 1980 where they are accustomed to using internet-based digital tools. It is undeniable that educators in Indonesia are currently dominated by digital immigrants and students from digital natives. Thus, there are differences in behavior and characteristics that characterize these two generations. According to the information the researchers obtained from several North Sumatra University students as source triangulation, they said that there were many students who did not activate the camera during the online teaching and learning process for various reasons. Students said the reason they turned off the camera during the lesson was because it saved internet quota, was on a trip and felt more comfortable when following the lesson by turning off the camera. However, this is one of the negative impacts of easy access to online learning, thus indicating an ethical shift in the ongoing communication process. Therefore, researchers want to see how the communication ethics are applied by digital immigrant generation lecturers in the online teaching and learning process for their students who come from the digital native generation. It is also based on behavior that is considered good by one generation, in fact it is not necessarily seen as good by another generation. Thus, the lecturers of the digital immigrant generation have an important role in the formation of virtuous ethics in students.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

This study uses the constructivism paradigm. Constructivism is a paradigm that holds that the experience of a person or group is constructed or organized into an interpretive scheme. Thus, this paradigm considers the subject as the main factor in the communication process and how social relations between communicators are formed (Morissan, 2013). The research method in this study is qualitative with an interpretive approach. The interpretive qualitative focus is the subjective nature of the social world and understanding the frame of mind of the research object. The purpose of interpretive qualitative is to analyze a social reality that is formed and assume that access to this reality can only be realized through a construction (Sugiyono, 2015). The subjects in this study were digital immigrant generation lecturers born before 1980 according to Marc Prensky's theory. The subject criteria set in this study are based on two characteristics, namely those who are still involved in the activity being researched and have the availability of time to be asked for information (Sugiyono, 2015). Data collection techniques were carried out in three ways, namely in-depth interviews, non-participant observation and documentation studies. Meanwhile, data analysis techniques were applied using the Miles and Huberman method such as data reduction, presenting narrative data and drawing conclusions.

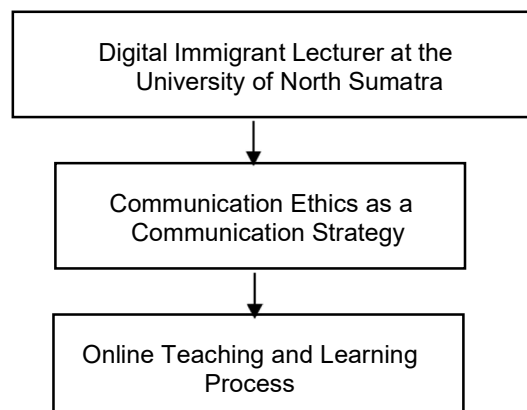
*Tabel 1. Data Informan*

<b>Name of Informant (With Initials)</b>	<b>Year of Birth</b>
MZS	1968
L	1969
TM	1970
H	1960
A	1978
OA	1973

Source: 2021, Research

This study also used data validity techniques which were carried out using the source triangulation method, namely students. The purpose of data validity is to examine and compare subject information with triangulation opinions (Moleong, 2017). The framework that becomes the flow of analysis of this research is described in the following chart:

*Figure 1. Thinking Framework*



Source: 2021, Research

### **3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Activating the camera during online teaching and learning activities is the first communication ethics instilled by the informants. There is a study which explains that many students feel comfortable participating in online learning because they can turn off their cameras. This statement is supported by data 88% of students strongly agree and 12% agree. That is, students feel more comfortable listening without having to activate their cameras because the lecturer will not know what students are doing (Rachman, 2020).

The phenomenon of turning off the camera which was carried out by many students, caused a breakdown in ethics which was often complained about by many lecturers at universities. Ethical

issues in communication are a major shock to the world of education in the current modernization era. That is, the development of the era greatly influences aspects of human life, including ethical behavior with generations that should pay attention to how to communicate with them.

Informants L, TM, H and OA made regulations for students to activate the camera during the online teaching and learning process as a form of student presence. In addition, the purpose of this regulation is as a form of discipline, seriousness and ethics of respecting the presence of lecturers. The informants discipline students to obey the rules they form. This is in line with the results of a study which explains that one of the characteristics of Generation X is a group of people who obey rules and want other people to do the same thing as them (Bencsik, 2016).

The interesting thing about the ethics of activating the camera happened to MZS and A. The two informants did not require students to do the same thing as other informants, because they considered students as adults and were able to distinguish between good and bad behavior. In addition, the two informants also considered the use of internet quota and the domicile of students who find it difficult to access the internet network if the camera is activated during online teaching and learning.

Researchers did not find any appeals to both lecturers and students to activate cameras for online activities in the Circular of the Chancellor of the University of North Sumatra. However, in the circular letter on pound A.1 sub pin c it explains that the implementation of online lectures can be carried out through voice recordings which are easily accessible to all communication participants. (<https://fhut.usu.ac.id/images/PDF/Surat-edaran-pelbelajar-online.pdf>, 2020). This policy was implemented by informant A, where discussion or question and answer activities were carried out via video conference, it was enough to hear the voices of students as proof of their presence. This is because informant A uses the USU E-Learning platform, so one of the benefits of the features on the site is being able to see students who are online and not during communication activities. Another application of ethics in communication enforced by digital immigrant lecturers is giving students a deadline to fill in attendance and join online classes. One of the advantages of the online learning system is the flexibility of space and time in its implementation (Pangondian et al, 2019). So, this shows that communication between lecturers and students can still be carried out even though they are geographically separated. The availability of 24 hours in the online system allows students to respond to lecturer messages whenever and from wherever they are.

Utilizing chat columns or comments in video conferencing applications when students want permission is an application of other communication ethics by digital immigrant generation lecturers. Basically, the online learning system is not much different from the offline method. This means that communication strategies that are usually applied by lecturers during offline learning can still be implemented in online classes. In offline classes, students will usually tell the lecturer immediately when they want permission to leave and in fact this can still be applied to online classes. This was done as a form of respecting ethics and not interrupting the lecturer's conversation which indicated it would cause message distortion.

The various communication ethics established by this digital immigrant lecturer are because apart from the positive side provided by new media, it turns out that it has a negative impact from its presence. Setting aside communication ethics is one of the impacts of the presence of communication media (Herliani, 2015). In line with this, researchers see that differences in human generations include diversity of understanding in interactions as well. In certain things that are considered good and ethical by one generation, it is not certain that other generations do not see the same thing.

The phenomenon of the diversity of educational patterns and culture also causes gaps with what is considered good or not. If the fact of turning off the camera is done by students for reasons that are not due to saving quota or bad signal, the researchers see that the more advanced and developed technology, the more shifting style and ethics of communication from one generation to another.

The declining morals and ethics of students are felt by most educators in the current online learning system. Therefore, many lecturers continue to cultivate ethical rules in communicating, so the researcher concludes that lecturers from the digital immigrant generation can be said to be generations who uphold ethics even though they are carried out through new internet-based media. In line with the opinion of researchers, a study explains that educators play a major role in fostering communication ethics, because they are considered capable of solving problems related to communication patterns between students and lecturers (Muali et al, 2010).

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Based on the results and research that has been presented, it can be concluded that the digital immigrant generation of lecturers is a group of people who uphold ethics in the process of media communication as an online learning communication strategy. This is based on the erosion of student ethics in online teaching and learning activities. Thus, the lecturers form rules that must be obeyed by students in the form of activating the camera during online teaching and learning activities, setting a time limit for filling attendance and joining online discussion forums and using the comments column if students want permission. These three things are done with the aim of respecting the existence of lecturers, proof of attendance and seriousness of students in learning. Therefore, the researcher suggests conducting further research on how the communication ethics are applied by young lecturers who come from the digital native generation.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

we would like to thank the open university professional development unit (UPP-UT) for the financing opportunity carried out in this seminar activity.

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