

# *Rusabesi* Community's English Language and Communication Patterns

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**Abstract**---The research focused on how English language and communication patterns used by a community affected the way its members socialize with their peers and other people. As the research data were utterances and sentences used by *Rusabesi* Community members in their everyday communication, we conducted an observation and interview with some of them to find more accurate data. All data were qualitatively analysed using the concepts of language and communication pattern. The research showed that *Rusabesi* Community members mostly communicated with others using indirect speech patterns and informal languages as what they did in their first language. These patterns eased the tension that laid between the senior and junior members. This community also used the horizontal communication pattern in conveying meaning or messages to the others because the pattern supported teamwork which was considered more effective. In addition, they also found it was more convenient when they communicated using some visual media, such as pictures and other realia especially in semi-formal discussion. This led to conclude that *Rusabesi* Community members' first language interfered their English utterances or sentences in their everyday communication, but they still maintained the horizontal communication pattern to have more intimate communication interaction.

**Keywords**---language pattern, communication pattern, horizontal communication, interference, first language

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language and communication patterns among community members must be different from other groups although they use the same language. If they use a foreign language, the differences in linguistic and communication patters must be so great, and even cause miscommunication. Such language and communication differences do not only occur in geography-based and culture-based communities, but also in social institutions or learning groups. In learning groups, the differences are triggered by the diversity of the members' social and cultural background. One of learning groups whose

members coming from different social and cultural background is *Rusabesi* Community (hereinafter called *Rusabesi*).

*Rusabesi* is a community that a discussion group focusing on English literature such as literary works, authors, theory, and anything related to literature. The discussion is held every Thursday evening at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta (hereinafter referred to as UIN Jakarta). Although the community is based in UIN Jakarta, its members covers not only UIN Jakarta's students but also other universities' students as well youth organization. The diversity of *Rusabesi*'s members creates a particular English language and communication pattern. Language pattern itself is the arrangement of identifiable repeated or corresponding elements in an utterance. These include patterns of repetition or similarity that may alter.

A language pattern of an utterance contributes to the distinction of its overall organization that shapes its meaning. the language pattern is a network of language used in communication that associates with one another. Furthermore, such pattern helps the communicator to remember insights and knowledge, and it can be used in combination to create solution [1]. Those potentials of communication can be developed through interaction between communities using patterns or structures in terms of efficiency of communication and satisfaction of community members [2]. The language and communication patterns are crucial to be discussed because both patterns cannot be separated from every life because they helped to create effective communication.

There were studies on language and communication patters; among others was the one that belonged to Marcelino. His study revealed the person's culture and environment influenced his foreign language mastery. Another aspect that also contributed the development of foreign language mastery was learning and teaching method implemented inside or outside the classroom [3]. However, this study did not explore more about the linguistic and communication patterns that might affect communication effectiveness among the community.

Therefore, the language and communication patterns in English interaction among a community's members is still interesting topic to conduct in order to uncover the most commonly patterns used in everyday communication. Another research was also done by Werner Ulrich [4], about the understanding of language pattern from a specific cultural tradition where every person has a language pattern in their mind which is the sum total of their knowledge of how to build the language patterns differently one person from others. No two are exactly the same but they can share. The research investigated the language pattern of farmers. They used their language in everyday communication to run all transactions to earn their living. Therefore, all farmers of a community had a similar yet slightly different language pattern in communication interaction.

Different from the previous studies, our research focused on one particular community in the university called *Rusabesi* whose members build communication interaction to share ideas, thoughts, and other information. The ethnography aimed to find out the communication patterns applied in their communication interaction. To accomplish this goal, a participant observation and interviews were conducted with three members of *Rusabesi*.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language can be understood as an organized system of symbols used for creating and transmitting meaning. This language has elements that entities, called pattern. Each pattern describes a problem which occurs over and over again in our environment, and then describes the core of the solutions to that problem, in such a way that you can use this solution a million times over, without ever doing it the same way twice. These include patterns of repetition or similarity and it may alter. Such patterns connect one with one another, or even help the communicator to remember insights and knowledge, and it can be used in combination to create solution [1].

The process of sharing information among persons is called communication. In a community, communication provides a way of motivating, influencing and interaction of people. Communication pattern is a central element in all aspect of human endeavours. It is an important aspect of daily living. It is clearly understood that the potentials of communication develop through interaction among the communities, which are strengthened by the structures of communication in terms of communication efficiency and satisfaction of the community members [5]. An effective communication takes place when the message is properly sent and received by the receiver without any distortion. On the other hand, ineffective communication occurs as a result of the inability of a person to interact meaningfully with another.

To have effective communication, one has to identify what ways he has to use. The people can use formal and informal channels in their everyday communication. Both of them hold four patterns of communications. The formal ones include downward, upward, horizontal, and vertical communication. Downward communication means a form of communication flows from the top to the bottom components of an organization. This is similar to the chain of line of authority in the

organization [6]. While, upward communication refers to the communication flows from the bottom to top elements of the organization [6]. Different from the first two patterns, a horizontal communication refers to the kind of communication that flows along the horizontal lines of the community members. This type of communication involves lateral communication between those at equal levels [7], [8]. While, vertical communication is the communication activity where information or messages flows between or among the subordinates and superiors of the organization [7].

As well as formal channels, informal channels also consist of four patterns, namely verbal, written, nonverbal, and visual communication. Verbal communication as the most common pattern of communication refers to a communication interaction that make use of speech as it main media to share information with others [9]. However, the communication that relies on the help of body gestures, eye contact, facial expression, dress, and other instruments is understood as non-verbal communication [9]. Written communication is a major means of external communication that includes letters, memo, circulars, report, cables, and minutes of meetings and others [10]. The last channel is visual communication which utilizes pictures or other media to visualize messages to share [11].

## III. METHOD

The study was a kind of ethnography that made use of observation and interview. In the observation, the researchers involved directly in their activities to identify the communication interaction happened among *Rusabesi* member. The observation was focused on the language patterns and ways they communicate with others. While, the interview was done to look for more detailed information to confirm what had already obtained from the observation. Therefore, the interview involved some key informants who had significant role in running the community group. The data were the qualitatively analysed using the concepts of patterns of English they use in everyday communication. There were five stages to analyse. The first stage is coding for descriptive labels. Since the materials collected are in the form of spoken words, those words must first be grouped into meaningful categories or descriptive labels. The second stage is sorting the descriptive labels into smaller sets to develop themes from those groupings and a sense of possible connections between the information. The third stage will be identifying outliers where we may try to find the cases, situations or events that do not fit the rest of the findings. The fourth step is generalizing constructs and theories. In this stage we make sure if the patterns or connected findings are related to theories in order to make sense of the rich and complex data collected. The last stage is noting with reflective remarks to know if anything needs further clarification or testing. This last stage helps to keep track of assumptions, biases and opinions throughout the whole research process.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the observation and interview that have been done by the researches from May 17<sup>th</sup> until May 24<sup>th</sup> 2017, the

Rusabesi community used indirect speech and informal language in their communication interaction in some occasions they use direct speech and formal language too. For example, during the observations in the discussion we found some members of the community was trying to persuade the other member to express his opinion by using informal language:

A: *Is there anyone who wants to say something? Naufal maybe? Come on, say something about the current phenomenon!*

B: *I have something in mind but I don't think it's necessary so never mind.*

A: *Hey it's alright, spill it.*

There are several underlined phrases and words which are considered as an informal language because informal languages were more commonly used in situations that were more relaxed and involve people the a speaker knows well [12], and in the situation above, both members have known each other pretty well. It can be said, that formal and informal language serve different purposes. There are several distinctions to notice whether it is a formal or informal language, such as the tone, the choice of words, the way the words are put together within the sentence, and unlike formal language, informal language tends to be spontaneous. Here are the explanations of what the underlined words and phrases mean: The phrase “*say something*” is delivered in a relaxed tone, and instead of using formal phrase such as “*voice an opinion*” in offering a favour, the speaker A chose to offer in an informal way instead. This choice of words is made because the speaker A wanted to create a friendlier atmosphere during the discussion. The second phrase “*come on*” was often used to express disbelief or frustration, or to encourage someone to do something, like how the speaker A was trying to persuade the speaker B to voice his opinion. The third phrase “*never mind*” uttered by the speaker B is also considered as an informal language [12], for the phrase can only be used among people who have known each other well and not a mere acquaintance. The phrase “*never mind*” is used to suggest that a problem or objection is not important or used in refusing to answer a question like what happened in the case above. The word “*alright*” was expressing or asking for assent or agreement in an informal version of “*all right*,” and the phrase “*spill it*,” means to talk about or express an emotion freely delivered in an informal way [13].

There was a time during the observations where a member was trying to express his opinion using indirect speech as well, such us:

*“Marx said that capitalism shouldn't exist, so he thought that elimination of social class is the first thing to do. I agree with his theory and opinion regarding this matter.”*

The underlined words *said that* and *thought* have the characteristics of indirect speech because in indirect speech, we convey the message of the speaker in our own words to another person using past tense [14]. The sentence above indicates an indirect speech since there are several points in spotting indirect speech such as the use of *that* between the reporting and reported speeches, the use of past tenses in the contained verbs,

and the second person of reported speech changes according to the object of reporting speech [15]. In the sentence above, the member of the community tried to express his opinion by quoting a scholar as a reference. There are two main rules in proceeding indirect speech, those are the changes in person to pronouns and changes in verbs.

These cases happen because according to the members, by using indirect speech and informal language, it eases the “tension” that lays between the senior and junior in the community. Here is another example of a dialogue that happened:

A: *“Do you think capitalism overpowered the proletariat? Like the laborers and the slaves?”*

B: *“Indeed. The bourgeois people are suppressing the laborers, because all they can think about are money and benefit. The laborers are paid way too low for working that hard. So, as you said, yes. Capitalists overpower the proletariat.”*

C: *“I agree. Marx said that capitalism shouldn't exist, so he thought that the elimination of social class is the first thing that should be done. I agree with his theory and opinion regarding this matter.”*

A: *“Yes. I think the elimination of social class like Marx had said is the only way to eradicate capitalism.”*

The conversation above contains the characteristics indirect speeches have, such as “*as you said...*” and quoting someone else as the referee like “*Marx said that...*”, “*so he thought...*”, and “*Marx had said...*” because the speaker conveyed other speaker's words with his own words, to another person. Also, the use of past tense determined that those are indirect speech. Using indirect speech is also making the argument clearer and stronger, especially if we quote something from another speaker. To support this, Searle explained the indirect part of indirect speech acts includes a theory of speech acts, certain general principles of cooperative conversation, and mutually shared factual background information of the speaker and the hearer, together with an ability on the part of the hearer to make inferences [16].

The pattern of communication in the community to some members appear to be downward, but then as they get to know each other better, the pattern changed into horizontal and it stays that way. This pattern can be seen vividly during the weekly discussion in the community. For the data, we found that particular case where a younger member asked the older one for a favour:

A: *Excuse me, can you speak louder?*

B: *Oh yeah sure, sorry.*

As stated on the conversation above, the pattern that flows between the two speakers is considered as a horizontal communication pattern although it was the younger member of the community who was asking for a favour to the older one. This happens because all of the members of Rusabesi community are in the same level of organizational hierarchy. This type of communication involves lateral communication between those at equal levels of the organization hierarchy [17]. Another example can be seen in the following conversation:



A: *Hafizh, do you think people of colour are often treated bad in movies, like their characters serve no purpose? Either that or being the token people of colour for the sake of being called a diverse movie?*

B: *Yeah! All the time. I find it annoying because when people of colour land on a job in big movies, they are either going to play stereotype characters or being dismissed so easily!*"

A: *Right?! Like c'mon! its 2018! Let's not forget about whitewashing too."*

B: *"OH totally!"*

The conversation flows between the senior member of Rusabesi and the junior member. Though based on their age, the senior is older but since both of them have been involved in the community for years, they have bonded and became closer to one another so the way they communicate with each other is horizontal, no one is higher than anyone. The senior and junior communicate as if they were the same age. However, the conversation above can also occur in *Rusabesi* community that they are in the same age or same "level." This a lateral communication allows various parties to work together in solving problems and relate information of common interest. It also promotes teamwork and horizontal communication seems to be more effective because of the free atmosphere associated with the encoder and decoder [18]. *Rusabesi* members thought that the pattern helps them decrease misunderstanding between one and another. Though, several members also thought that there were disadvantages caused by this pattern, such as a greater problem in maintaining control in the community as horizontal communication increased. Some older members also thought that this pattern created a lack of discipline if strict procedural rules of communications were not imposed, such as the politeness that the younger members sometimes tended to ignore when talking to the older members.

*Rusabesi* members did not use any written media to communicate, but non-verbal media, like body gestures, eye contact, or facial expression. They used eye contact when they were communicating to be more immersed with others. When the members voiced their opinions or thoughts, they automatically made eye contacts to the audience followed by gestures or body movement to express themselves better. They used gestures depending on the topics [19].

Visual communication is a way of communication that make use of relevant pictures to make the conversation more effective which in turn the messages are transferred from the speaker to the hearer. Though visual communication is not always needed but, on a few occasions, *Rusabesi* members needed a medium to further explain the topic that was being discussed. For example, when they were talking about realism in painting, they needed a chalkboard or the painting itself. George-Palilonis also pointed out that we need to be able to communicate visually as well because we all know how important visuals were. Visuals such as graphic and charts can enhance written words. Using visuals effectively is a part of good communication [20]. The language and communication pattern in the *Rusabesi* community indirectly affect the way the members socialize. For instance, it affected the way they express themselves and be

even more confident when they have to publicly in seminars, workshops, or other trainings.

## V. CONCLUSION

To sum up everything, this research basically showed there were three main points to point out regarding the community's language and communication: the language pattern, communication pattern, and the impacts on the way of communication. Through this research as well, *Rusabesi* members could learn several patterns of language and communication. The first point was the language patterns of how the speech is delivered. They used both indirect speech and informal utterance in conversing and the patterns affect the atmosphere around the community by giving it a friendlier vibe. The second point was the communication pattern which showed the same-level members' position due to the community's horizontal communication pattern. This pattern fully supported the teamwork as this type of communication involved lateral communication between those at equal levels of the organization hierarchy. Another information also showed that the community used visual media to help the members in communicating. The last point gave an actual evidence which showed that the members agreed that the community indirectly affect the way the members socialized. For instance, it affected the way they expressed themselves and be even more confident when they had publicly.

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