

Effectiveness of Ruangguru Application as Communication Medium in Online Tutoring among HighSchool Students in Medan

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the meaning of tutoring by high school students in Medan, analyze the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as a communication medium in online tutoring activities among high school students in Medan, and analyze cognitive, affective and psychomotor changes in high school students in Medan after taking online tutoring through Ruang Guru application. This study uses qualitative methods with research subjects from various circles, namely high school students, parents, high school teachers and two triangulation informants, namely master teacher or tutor and communication observer. The results showed that Ruang Guru application was effective as a medium of communication in online tutoring activities among high school students in Medan. This can be seen from the effectiveness of communication and the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application. The effectiveness of communication is viewed from communicators, messages, media, communicants, and effects. The effectiveness of Ruang Guru application is viewed from the aspect of tasks and functions, and the aspect of plan or program. The change that was gotten by students who subscribe to Ruang Guru is changes from the cognitive aspect, while the affective and psychomotor aspects have not been seen in students. The students also understand about the meaning of tutoring.

Keywords

application effectiveness;
communication medium; online
tutoring; Ruang Guru



I. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused several unplanned changes for the people of Indonesia, especially the people in Medan city. One of the changes that occur is in the field of educational communication. During the pandemic, teachers and students are required to carry out the teaching and learning process from home. Learning from home does not only require teaching materials as usual at school. Students need a communication channel through the internet which in terms is called as online learning system. To make it easier for students to learn, many companies offer a learning system via internet by creating special applications for learning. One of the online learning application managers that is quite popular and used by students is Ruang Guru. Teachers and students take the advantage of Ruang Guru in carrying out the teaching and learning process during the pandemic. In implementing the learning system, the manager of Ruang Guru uses communication techniques to make it easier for students to understand the learning material displayed in Ruang Guru.

Ruang Guru is one of the online tutoring applications in Indonesia. As an Indonesian technology startup, Ruang Guru focuses on education, offering a school curriculum-based learning platform through interactive video tutorials by teachers and animations on mobile

phones and computers. This unique and creative online learning application creates a new phenomenon for the Indonesian people, especially for students in communicating and learning.

Tutoring is a place that is made specifically for students to help students explore the subject matter of the school. Tutoring is usually reserved for students who need additional lessons apart from school. The materials presented in the tutoring are usually materials that are extensions obtained from the school. The difference is in the special tricks in working on certain subject matter.

According to journal by Aulia Fatimannisa and friends about Students' Perception On The Use Of Ruang Guru Application In Their English Learning, it's show that students' perception was positive on the use of Ruang Guru application in their English learning by mean score 70. Based on the students' classification that 5 students classified as Strongly positive, 10 students classified as Positive, 5 students classified as Moderate, 3 students classified as Negative and 1 students classified as Strongly negative. This was indicated that most students like using Ruang Guru in their English learning.

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum *et al*, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020).

Raihan and Firman (2020) also made a research about Social Presence of Ruang Guru in Social Media during Covid-19 Pandemic. That research aims to see the social presence of Ruang Guru in social media (Instagram) during Covid-19 Pandemic through three dimensions of social presence, which are: social context, online communication, and interactivity. Based on the research shows that, Ruang Guru as showing good social presence based on three dimensions of social presence during Covid-19 Pandemic in social media Instagram.

Maichel and friends found that during this crucial time (Covid-19 pandemic), Ruang Guru offers an Education revolution which is very helpful, so that, students and teaching staffs can still learn and develop themselves amid the limitations. What is presented by Ruang Guru application is in harmony with the ideation theory, which is a new way of thinking or behaving in social interaction or communication. The author found something creative and different in Ruang Guru system where communication is varied which can enhance the enthusiasm of students to learn as ideation in social interaction.

Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (APJII) stated that the number of internet users in Indonesia due to the Covid 19 pandemic until the second quarter of this year increase to 73.7% of the population or equal to 196.7 million users. The data has almost penetrated 200 million users from the Indonesian population of 266.9 million people according to data from Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) or Central Statistics Agency. The increase in the number of users is influenced by several factors and one of them is due to the increasingly massive digital transformation as a result of online learning since the Covid-19 pandemic entered Indonesia (source: <https://apjii.or.id/survei>).

Many complaints are felt by students with the online learning system. Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI) or The Indonesian Child Protection Commission has made a survey on student complaints due to the implementation of the online learning system. The survey results in December 2020 showed that there were 57% of students who had difficulty with some subject matter and practicums that were less interesting and tended to be boring so that many students did not understand the subject matter (source: <https://nasional.kontan.co.id/news/survei-kpai-78-siswa-menginginkan-pembelajaran-tatap-muka>).

The problems such as, uninteresting learning, boring, no learning interaction between teachers and students, students not understanding the subject matter, teachers burdening assignments without explaining, sending task deadlines too fast, no task corrections, and several other complaints from students during online learning. This makes students want something more interesting in learning. Therefore, many students turn to online learning applications that can help their understanding in learning.

The advantages of Ruang Guru application are expected to make students effective in learning. Not only students can be effective in learning, Ruang Guru is also expected to provide changes from cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects. According to Bloom, these three aspects are important in education to see the effects or changes that are caused by students after going through the learning process. Based on the background that the researcher has described, focus of the problem in this research is how the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as a Communication Medium in Online Tutoring Activities among High School Students in the city of Medan.

In this study, researcher used a constructivist paradigm with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research based on the constructivist paradigm sees that knowledge is not only the result of experience with facts, but also examines the construction of the subject's thinking. Human recognition of social reality is centered on the subject and not on the object. This shows that a science is the result of construction by thought and not the result of mere observation (Arifin, 2012: 140).

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Communication Theory

Lasswell's paradigm shows that communication includes five important elements, namely the sender of the message or communicator, the message, the media, the recipient of the message or communicant, and the effect or feedback. The five elements can be concluded that according to Lasswell's paradigm, communication is a process of delivering messages by communicators to communicants through media that cause certain effects. The communication theory used in this research is seen from the five elements, namely communicator, message, media, communicant and effect. Researchers will analyze how the process of the five elements of communication that occurs in high school students when using Ruang Guru application as an online tutoring medium.

2.2 Effectiveness Theory

Effective means successful or something that is done successfully. The concept of effectiveness is a broad concept, covering various factors inside and outside the organization (Tika, 2014:129). Effectiveness is the relationship between output and goals. The effectiveness of a program or plan can be seen from the following aspects:

a) Aspects of Duties and Functions

Aspects of duties and functions in question are an institution or a person is said to be effective if it carries out its duties or functions.

b) Aspects of the Plan or Program

What is meant by the aspect of the plan or program is a programmed learning plan, namely in the form of material that is embodied in a predetermined curriculum.

c) Aspects of Terms or Rules

The effectiveness of a program can also be seen from the point of view of the functioning or not of the provisions or rules that have been made.

d) Aspects of Goals or Ideal Conditions

A program is said to be effective if the goals or ideal conditions of the program are achieved. Assessment of this aspect can be seen from the achievements achieved by students (Khafid, 2017:13).

From the four aspects of effectiveness, the researcher chose two aspects to be used to see the effectiveness of Ruang Guru which is a new communication medium for high school students in learning. These two aspects include aspects of functions and objectives and then aspects of plans or programs.

III. Research Method

The research method used in this research is qualitative research. According to Anggito and Setiawan (2018: 9), qualitative research is research that emphasizes understanding of problems in social life based on conditions of reality or natural settings that are holistic, complex and detailed. Research on the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as a communication medium in online tutoring activities among high school students was conducted in Medan city, North Sumatera from March until August 2021. The researcher chose Medan as the research location is because Medan city is one of 15 cities in Indonesia that has the official Ruang Guru office and Brain Academy Ruang Guru. Brain Academy Ruang Guru is a place for Ruang Guru's students who want to consult directly with Ruang Guru's tutors. In addition, Medan is the third largest city with the largest population after Jakarta and Surabaya according to a survey by Badan Pusat Statistik or Central Statistics Agency. Medan city also got the first ranks with the highest number of students at high school level in the province of North Sumatera (source:https://reference.data.kemdikbud.go.id/pd_index.php?kode=070000&level=1).

The research subjects in this study are two high school teachers in Medan city, three parents of high school students in Medan city, and three high school students in Medan city. The object of this research is the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as an online tutoring medium. Data collection techniques in this study are in-depth interviews and documentation. The analysis process used in this study is Miles and Huberman model, namely through the process of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The source of information in the triangulation process in this research are first, communication observer as well as a Communications lecturer and also the Chair of the Women's Journalism Association and the second is Master Teacher Ruang Guru or online mentors or tutors in Ruang Guru who have competence and are able to provide accurate information about the object of this research.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

a. The Effectiveness of Communication

In this section, the researcher describes how the effectiveness of communication is viewed from the five elements of communication that occur when a person or communicant accesses the video contained in the Ruang Guru application which is an online tutoring application. The five elements are communicator, message, media, communicant and effect.

The first informant was Nita Penina Purba or fondly called by the name Peni. Peni attends SMA Budi Murni 2 Medan. Peni has long subscribed to Ruang Guru, starting when she entered the 11th grade of high school. He is also a diligent child as his mother said

when the researcher interviewed the two. According to Peni, when she accessed the videos in the Ruang Guru application, she did not get any introductions by each Master Teacher (the title for the tutor in the Ruang Guru application). Peni enjoys using the Teacher's Room because her Master Teacher goes straight to the point. He also explained that the communication method used by each Master Teacher was interesting and clear and not monotonous. This is also because each video will be explained by the Master Teacher with interesting animations. According to him, the intonation, pronunciation and voice of the communicator (Master Teacher Ruang Guru) sounded well and clearly. He added that when he watched the instructional video, he felt like he was watching a film that kept his focus until the film was finished.

"They went straight to the point, for example, I wanted to access a video about Mathematics, so the mentor immediately explained the topic. The way they deliver is interesting and clear, the intonation is right and they use animations that make listening more focused. It's like watching a movie, but at the same time adding knowledge and getting answers if we don't understand certain material. Anyway, it's interesting and it's not monotonous like at school, sometimes the teacher just wants to explain flatly, so it can make you sleepy. If this is fun, it's easy to understand. It doesn't make you sleepy either, it's like watching a movie, so you're naturally curious."

According to Fildzah, the message or material conveyed by the Ruang Guru Master Teacher was clear and nothing was difficult to understand. According to him, the language that the Ruang Guru Master Teacher uses is everyday language that is easy to understand so that messages or materials are conveyed properly.

"The message or material being taught is clear, nothing is difficult to understand. I do not understand you. They use everyday language, so it's easy to understand because it's adapted to us kids. You speak fluently, the message or material is conveyed well."

The third informant that the researcher explained about where students access the Ruang Guru application was Ieremia Purba or Yere. Yere chose his room and study room to access the Ruang Guru application. Yere chose the room and study room because they were more focused and there were no distractions. According to him, because accessing the Teacher's Room is the same as studying as usual, he will choose a place that is focused and not while doing other activities such as eating.

"Sometimes in the room, sometimes in the study room. The reason is to focus more. Because if you access the teacher's room, you will definitely focus on studying. So it's not while eating or snacking, but really focusing on just accessing the teacher's room, not doing other activities."

According to Mrs. Ika, of course there must be a change when students have studied online using the Ruang Guru application, especially when the student is following the learning videos that have been given well. Mrs. Ika also added that whatever tutoring, be it face-to-face or online, of course, it must be seen from the side of the students, how they are developing, they should exist and not deteriorate.

"Well, of course, if they follow this online tutoring activity optimally, it will definitely make changes to their learning outcomes, I see. Whatever the tutoring, whether it's face to face or online, it's still up to the students."

b. The Effectiveness of Ruang Guru

1. Aspects of Functions and Objectives

Overall, informants from the category of students, parents and teachers stated that the Ruang Guru application was in accordance with the functions and objectives of tutoring. This is evidenced by several reasons for informants who explain the changes and things experienced by users after subscribing to learning in the Ruang Guru application.

According to the first informant, Peni, the Ruang Guru application is appropriate to be used as an online tutoring application. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the teaching and learning process was shifted to online learning, which made students not have to go to school to study. Peni feels that the online learning system is still not appropriate because learning is not optimal and only assigns assignments to students without explanation as usual in classrooms. According to him, the application of online tutoring can reduce students' laziness in learning and help students who miss lessons. Peni also added that the online tutoring application can help implement government regulations not to gather and maintain distance so as to maintain the health of students from the Covid-19 virus.

"Yes, that's right, especially during a pandemic like today. Students learn online, there's no need to go to schools again to meet teachers and friends. Even learning is minimal, even more assignments. So, in my opinion, is just right, it's okay so you don't get lazy and miss lessons because you keep learning online. And it's also good for health, because we just stay at home, so we can take care of our health so we don't get infected."

By knowing the statements of all informants in this study, it can be concluded that the Ruang Guru application is appropriate to be used as an online tutoring application for students, especially high school students in the city of Medan. This is in line with the function and purpose of online tutoring that has occurred in the Ruang Guru application. Armed with government cooperation, this application is expected to be more focused and improve its quality as an online tutoring application.

2. Aspects of Plans or Programs

When interviewed about Mrs. Purba's views regarding the features and programs in the Ruang Guru application, Mrs. Purba said that Mrs. Purba had had the wrong idea with Peni, her son. When Peni was studying in her room using her smartphone, Ibu Purba thought her son Peni was watching a movie in the room and not studying. Spontaneously, Mrs. Purba immediately approached her and saw firsthand what Peni was opening at that time. It turned out that what Ibu Purba thought Peni was watching a movie or video outside of learning was wrong. Mrs. Purba immediately saw and watched the learning videos in the application. According to Mrs. Purba, who has watched learning videos in the Teacher's Room, the features and programs in the application are interesting and in accordance with the age category of students who are still teenagers.

"I've seen pens when I watched the video, I thought that she was just watching another video (not a lesson), but it turned out that I got the wrong idea, I saw an interesting video, it's perfect for school children."

Based on statements from all informants, it can be concluded that the features and programs in the Ruang Guru application are good and interesting because they are accompanied by animations that can make it easier for students to understand the material in the learning video. The video content in the Ruang Guru application is also interesting and good because at the end of the learning video there are questions that must be answered by students. When you have finished answering these questions, a discussion

will appear regarding the questions that have been answered, whether students' answers are right or wrong. These questions can be ignored, but according to one of the informants, Fildzah, it would be very unfortunate if they were not answered because in the end there was still discussion about the question.

Regarding the video quality in the Ruang Guru application, it is also good. According to Mr. Lubis, the learning videos in the Ruang Guru application are not wobbly or blurry, but the videos are all clear. The process of directing learning materials is also good and no material is cut off.

"The video quality in the Teacher's Room is also good, there is no shake or blur, the video is clear. And the process of directing the learning material is not cut off and everything."

Based on statements or information from all informants, it can be concluded that the second aspect, namely the plan or program aspect of the Ruang Guru application, is good. This is evident from the overall statements of the informants regarding the features and programs that are well implemented, the quality of the teachers are good and interesting, and the video quality is good and clear. All aspects of the plan or program of the Ruang Guru application are carried out properly in accordance with the expectations and objectives of the application.

4.2 Discussion

The researcher examines this section in two aspects, first is the effectiveness of communication and second is the effectiveness of Ruang Guru's application. The effectiveness of communication is seen from the five elements of communication according to Lasswell's paradigm, namely communicator, message, media, communicant and effect. The effectiveness of the application is seen from two aspects, namely aspects of tasks and functions and also aspects of plans or programs. Based on the results of interviews that researchers have done, it can be concluded several things regarding the effectiveness of communication, namely:

- a. Communicators or Master Teacher Ruang Guru communicates well and clearly. The communication technique used by Master Teacher Ruang Guru is one-way communication where the communicator is active in sending messages and the communicant is active in receiving messages. There is no reciprocal interaction between Master Teacher Ruang Guru and students unless the student buys additional coins to be able to access the live chat feature on the Ruang Guru application.
- b. The message conveyed by the communicator is received well and clearly by the communicant. This is evidenced through the use of good language, easy to understand and clear when the master teacher delivers the subject matter in Ruang Guru application.
- c. The media used by the communicant in accessing Ruang Guru application is a smartphone because it is more flexible and easy to carry anywhere and be accessed anytime. Laptops or computer devices are rarely used due to their larger size and quite complicated use.
- d. The communicant usually accesses the Ruang Guru application in their own room because it is more conducive so that it can make students focus and make it easier for students to listen to the subject matter properly.
- e. The effect that is received by students after online tutoring through the Ruang Guru application is a change in understanding and knowledge seen from student learning outcomes through better student grades and ratings. This is proven by the statements of

student informants, parents and teachers who found good learning outcomes for students who subscribe to Ruang Guru application.

Based on the results of interviews that researchers have conducted regarding the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as an online tutoring application, it can be concluded several things related to two aspects of effectiveness (aspects of tasks and functions, and aspects of plans or programs) as follows:

1. Informants in this study knew about Ruang Guru application through several things, such as Ruang Guru team who contacted them, through advertisements on social media, advertisements on television, live broadcasts, and programs broadcast on television.
2. Informants in this study stated that Ruang Guru application was in accordance with its function and purpose as an online tutoring application among high school students in Medan city. This is evidenced by the statement of the informant who stated that there was a change in students for the better through their learning outcomes and rankings.
3. Informants in this study stated that Ruang Guru application was appropriate to be used as an online tutoring application among high school students in Medan. This is evidenced by the statement of student informants who find it easy to learn and are in accordance with the functions and objectives of tutoring. The same thing was found in parent and teacher informants who stated that there was a good change in learning outcomes through the grades and ratings of students who subscribed to Ruang Guru application.
4. The plan or program aspect of Ruang Guru application is good. This is evident from the overall statements of the informants regarding the features and programs that are well implemented, the quality of the teachers are good and interesting, and the video quality is good and clear.

The last part is about cognitive, affective and psychomotor changes in students who have used Ruang Guru application. Based on the results of interviews that researchers have conducted, it was found that the changes that can be seen from students after using Ruang Guru application is only in the cognitive or knowledge aspect. This is because the teaching and learning process or teaching communication carried out through Ruang Guru learning video is one-way. This one-way communication makes students only arrive at changes in knowledge or cognitive because students only receive the material being taught without any discussion and other material related to affective and psychomotor aspects. According to some informants, these three aspects can be assessed when students study at school. According to them, learning in schools is not just about providing subject matter, but students are also given an understanding of how to behave, ethics, develop skills, and other social lessons that are not in Ruang Guru application. Changes in cognitive or knowledge aspects that can be seen are through the addition of students' knowledge and understanding and through student learning outcomes from students' grades and rankings. Cognitive change is definitely accepted by students who are tutored online through Ruang Guru application because the function and purpose of tutoring is as a learning aid for students who do not understand the lessons from school.

V. Conclusion

Based on the research, can be concluded that Ruang Guru application is effective as a medium of communication in online tutoring activities among high school students in Medan. This can be seen from the effectiveness of communication and the effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as online tutoring. The effectiveness of the communication that has occurred is good, seen from the five elements of communication, namely communicator, message, media, communicant and effect. The communication that occurs is one-way communication, where the communicator is actively sending messages while the communicant is actively receiving messages. The effectiveness of Ruang Guru application as online tutoring is seen from two aspects, namely aspects of functions and objectives and then aspects of plans or programs. Based on the results of interviews, both aspects have been carried out well through the functions and objectives, features and programs, quality of teachers and the quality of learning videos in Ruang Guru application.

The suggestions that can be taken from this research are as follows: first, videos and learning programs in Ruang Guru application may be a new innovation in the world of education, especially for teachers or educators to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Second, tutoring providers may not only provide changes from the cognitive aspect but also can provide changes in the affective and psychomotor aspects of students. This is because students also need self-development, attitudes and skills to improve the quality of students. Last, research with a topic or theme like this still needs to be used as research material due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This is because the learning system or teaching and learning process in Indonesia will continue to develop following the situations and conditions that occur. Research with a topic or theme like this can be used as reference material to improve the quality of education in Indonesia in a better direction.

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