

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND STRUCTURALISM IN JOB INTERVIEW SUCCESS



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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of effective communication and structuralism on the readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students in job interviews. While students excel in technical skills, they often struggle with verbal and non-verbal communication during interviews. Utilizing surveys and interviews with 184 final-year students, the research reveals that effective communication has no significant impact on job interview readiness, while structural factors such as social norms and cultural adaptation significantly affect preparedness. The results indicate that the combination of these factors accounts for 57.8% of students' readiness. This finding suggests that enhancing communication training and understanding of structural frameworks could improve students' job interview outcomes. The study provides valuable insights for curriculum development aimed at increasing employability skills for future graduates in a competitive job market.

Keywords: *Effective Communication; Structuralism; Job Interview; Human Resource Development*

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INTRODUCTION

Communication skills have become increasingly important in the evolving job market. Effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is essential for conveying ideas, building relationships, and positively influencing others (Cole, n.d.). At Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR), students often face challenges in developing these communication skills, despite possessing strong technical expertise. The overemphasis on technical skills can sometimes neglect the importance of communication, which is crucial in the competitive and complex work environment.

Effective communication in job interviews involves the ability to convey information clearly, listen well, and demonstrate composure and confidence when handling challenging questions (Agrawal et al., 2020). PCR students often struggle to express their experiences and qualifications clearly, which can hinder their job opportunities. This research is in line with studies conducted by Widiastuti et al. (2018), Sipayung & Paramita (2023), Mumtahanah & Kurnia (2022), Musliamin (2018), Suryana (2022), Ayu (2019), and Oktivera & Wirawan (2020), all of which discuss the role of communication within specific contexts. However, previous studies have focused on how communication plays a role from various perspectives. Widiastuti et al. (2018) and Ayu (2019) explain that information gathering can be viewed from the perspectives of verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as audience language style. Suryana (2022), Musliamin (2018), and Sipayung & Paramita (2023) mention in their research that organizational communication and the communication patterns used and adopted by certain institutions affect relationships, capabilities, and even employee performance.

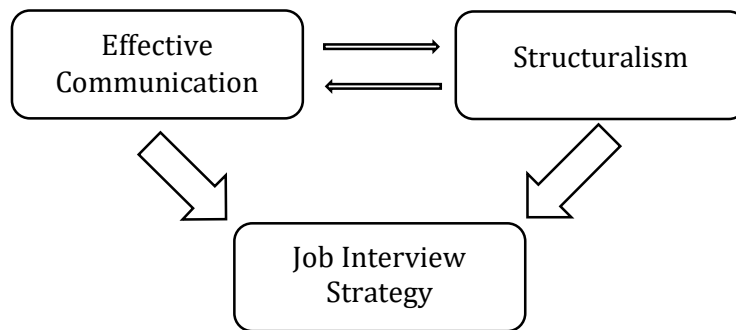
This study builds on research by Mumtahanah & Kurnia (2022), which emphasizes the importance of communication skills in the employability of communication students. While many studies on effective communication focus on its impact on organizational performance, research on communication during job interviews in Indonesia is still limited. This study aims to explore how technical students' communication skills, as a soft skill, influence their readiness for the workforce.

To help PCR students, as well as students at other polytechnics, overcome these challenges, a comprehensive and ongoing approach to developing communication skills is needed. This research, which focuses on analyzing PCR students' readiness for job interviews, seeks to find effective solutions for improving their preparedness for an increasingly complex job market. It also contributes to the development of human resources in the digital creative and manufacturing industries, emphasizing non-technical preparation as an essential factor for students' success in the workforce.

LITERATURE REVIEW, RESEARCH FRAMEWORK, AND HYPOTHESES

Effective communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, beliefs, feelings, and attitudes between individuals or within a group, leading to outcomes that align with expectations (Ivana & Kurniawati, 2023). It occurs when the receiver understands the communicator's message clearly and acts accordingly (Miller & Carole, 2023). In effective communication, the receiver clearly understands what the communicator conveys and acts in accordance with the desires expressed in the message (Muhith et al., 2018).

This study utilizes two theories effective communication and structuralism as analytical frameworks to evaluate the effectiveness of language and communication in interviews.



Source : Researcher, 2024

Figure 1
Theory Flow Path

In the context of job interviews, effective communication is crucial for candidates to convey information clearly, listen attentively, and maintain composure and confidence, particularly when responding to challenging questions. Such communication plays a pivotal role in determining the success of a candidate in securing the desired position (Alshammari, 2023).

Achieving effective communication requires a solid understanding of its fundamental principles. These principles are encapsulated in the acronym REACH, as identified by Agustina & Eka (2019) :

1. Respect: Valuing each individual, fostering mutual respect in communication.
2. Empathy: Understanding and putting oneself in another's situation, based on the ability to listen effectively.
3. Audible: Ensuring that the message is clearly understood by the recipient, and using appropriate media.
4. Clarity: Creating clear messages to prevent misinterpretation and build trust.
5. Humble: Demonstrating humility, fostering appreciation in communication, and promoting effective collaboration.

Factors that influence effective communication include: 1) development, 2) perception, 3) values, 4) sociocultural background, 5) emotions, 6) gender, 7) knowledge, 8) roles and relationships, 9) environment, 10) distance (April, 2018). In addition to the REACH principles, there are five other perspectives on effective communication (Hardiana et al., 2020):

1. Openness: Interacting with others openly and honestly, accepting and sharing information without withholding, which is crucial in the workplace (Tubbs & Moss, 2001)
2. Empathy: The ability to feel and understand others' emotions, an important aspect of communication (Tubbs & Moss, 2001).
3. Verbal and Non-Verbal Support: Expressions of support, such as smiles, nods, or eye contact, which, even when unspoken, hold positive value in communication (Tubbs & Moss, 2001).
4. Positivity: Having a positive attitude towards oneself and others, creating positive feelings in communication situations, supporting effective collaboration (Tubbs & Moss, 2001).

5. Similarity: Effective communication occurs when there is common ground between the speaker and listener in areas such as experience or knowledge, but it must be balanced with openness to ensure equilibrium in the interaction (Tubbs & Moss, 2001).

In the context of job interviews, effective communication involves both verbal and non-verbal principles, such as the use of appropriate language structure and word choice to convey messages clearly and persuasively. Intonation, tone, and body language are also essential in interpreting meaning and reinforcing the message (Radhi et al., 2022). Understanding pragmatic linguistics, which refers to how language is used in specific social and situational contexts, is crucial for grasping communication dynamics in interviews (Anyagwa & Adedeji, 2025). Thus, linguistics offers an important framework for enhancing communication in professional settings, including job interviews (Kusmiarti et al., 2020).

Structuralism theory, an approach in linguistics, focuses on analyzing the internal structure of language. It posits that language has an organized structure that can be analyzed through interrelated units (Shaikh & Memon, 2023). The central idea of structuralism is that meaning within language arises from the relationships between elements within the language system, rather than from its connection to the external world or referents (Nugraha, 2023). This theory seeks to identify the patterns and rules that form the foundation of language.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a key figure in structuralism, distinguished between language (abstract language) and parole (language in use). He proposed that language structure consists of two primary components: phonology (sound patterns) and syntax (word arrangement patterns) (Sintia et al., 2023). Saussure argued that the relationships between language units in both phonology and syntax create a system governed by consistent internal rules (Musarrofa, 2019). Leonard Bloomfield, another influential figure in structuralism, emphasized structural analysis in linguistic studies. His work, especially the book *Language* (1933), introduced key structuralist concepts that significantly contributed to linguistic analysis (Ubaidillah, 2021). Although structuralism has faced criticism and paradigm shifts in linguistic studies, its foundational concepts, such as structural analysis and the focus on language's internal systems, continue to be essential contributions to the development of linguistics (Ubaidillah, 2021).

Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives, this study focuses on analyzing the influence of effective communication and the structuralism perspective on the readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students to face job interviews. The research hypotheses are formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Effective communication positively influences the readiness of PCR students to face job interviews.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The structuralism perspective positively influences the readiness of PCR students to face job interviews.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Effective communication and the structuralism perspective simultaneously have a significant influence on the readiness of PCR students to face job interviews.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative explanatory approach to analyze the relationship between effective communication, structuralism, and the readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students to face job interviews. A survey design was chosen to facilitate the collection of numerical data, with data analysis conducted using multiple linear regression.

The population of this study comprises final-year students at Politeknik Caltex Riau, with the sample determined using a stratified random sampling technique. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error (Ahmed, 2024). The variables examined include effective communication (clarity, appropriateness, listening skills, responsiveness, emotional control, and non-verbal communication) (X1), structuralism (understanding social structure, cultural norms, position in the structure, language and symbols, and adaptation to social systems) (X2), and job interview readiness (Y), measured through specific indicators using a Likert scale (1–5) questionnaire.

Data collection was carried out in three stages : pre-research for instrument design and testing, data collection through questionnaires, and data analysis using statistical software. Validity tests were conducted using Pearson correlation, and reliability was assessed with Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive and inferential analyses, such as t-tests, F-tests, and the coefficient of determination (R^2), were used to evaluate the relationships among variable (Chan & Idris, 2017), (Ikhsanudin et al., 2024).

The validity of the study was enhanced through data triangulation and adherence to research ethics, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring the confidentiality of respondents (Lokdam et al., 2021). This methodology was designed to produce valid, relevant, and significant findings in understanding the readiness of students to face job interviews.

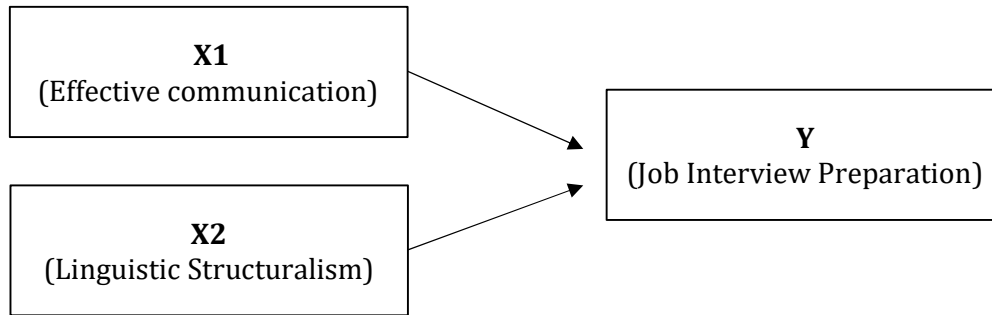
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we present the research findings on effective communication and its impact on the readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students to enter the workforce, particularly in job interview processes. The study analyzed data from 184 final-year students selected as research samples. Data were collected through surveys and interviews and analyzed using correlation and regression techniques to evaluate the relationship between effective communication skills, structuralism perspectives, and job interview readiness.

This research is grounded in the understanding that effective communication is a key skill that significantly influences job search processes. It aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the extent to which effective communication enhances students' chances of success in job interviews. Furthermore, the findings are expected to offer valuable insights for PCR in designing more focused communication training programs to improve its graduates' readiness to meet the demands of the competitive job market.

The research findings are presented in both quantitative and qualitative formats, detailing the relationship between effective communication and job readiness, as well as other influencing factors. These findings aim to shed light on the key challenges students face in developing strong communication skills and provide a foundation for practical solutions to support the career development of PCR students in the future.

The study employs three variables, each with specific indicators serving as benchmarks, as elaborated below:



Source : Researcher, 2024

Figure 2
Variable Flow

To assess the relationship between each variable, we utilized indicators as benchmarks, resulting in 54 instruments, with 16 instruments allocated to each variable. This approach was adopted to ensure significant and specific outcomes in examining the relationships. Following the survey conducted with 184 respondents, the findings are summarized as follows:

Hypothesis Testing for H1 and H2 (t-Test)

Based on the data analysis using statistical software (SPSS), the results of the linear regression analysis are presented in the following Coefficients table:

Table 1
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	14.404	2.808		5.129	0,000
Leadership (X ₁)	0,099	0,080	0,452	1.237	0,218
Controlling (X ₂)	0,671	0,076	0,485	8.845	0,000

Source : Data Analyzed, 2024

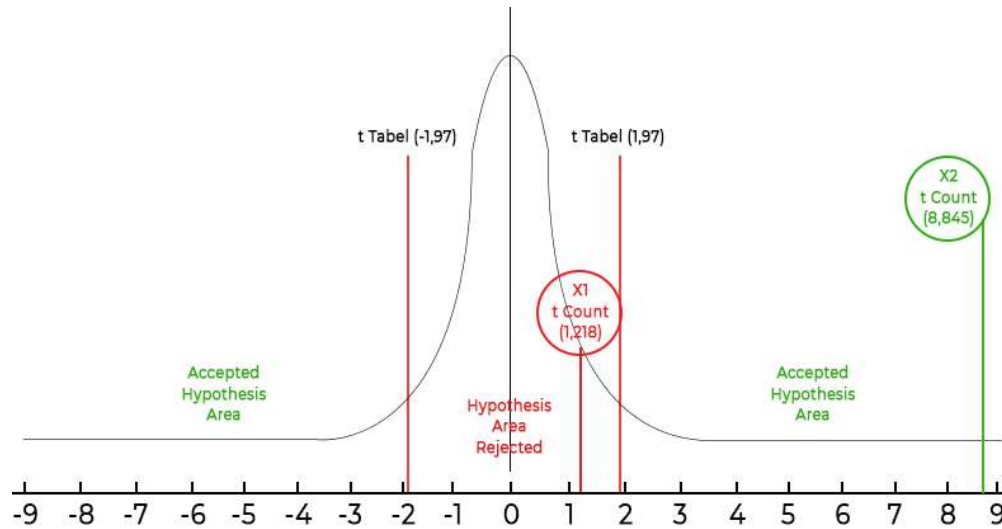
First Hypothesis Testing

The significance value (Sig.) for the effect of X1 on Y is 0.218 > 0.05, and the t-statistic value is 1.237 < the t-table value of 1.97, indicating that this effect is not statistically significant. This implies that, in the context of this data, changes in effective communication do not show a meaningful impact on job interviews.

Second Hypothesis Testing

The significance value (Sig.) for the effect of X2 on Y is 0.000 < 0.05, and the t-statistic value is 8.845 > the t-table value of 1.97, demonstrating that the effect of structuralism is statistically significant. Therefore, this variable has a substantial impact on job interview readiness within this model.

Based on the hypothesis testing results above, the t-Test Curve is presented as follows:



Source : Researcher, 2024

Figure 3
t-Test curve

The t-Test Curve illustrates that both variables move in a positive direction, indicating that as the values of X1 and X2 increase, students' readiness to face job interviews also improves.

Hypothesis Testing for H3 (F-Test)

Based on the data analysis using statistical software (SPSS), the results of the linear regression analysis are presented in the following Anova table:

Table 2

Anova ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	11181,345	2	5590,673	124,050	0,000 ^b
Residual	8157,258	181	45.068		
Total	19338,603	183			

a. Dependent Variabel : Job Interview Readiness (Y)

b. Predictors : (Constant), Linguistic Structuralism (X2), Effectiv Communication (X1)

Source : Data Analyzed, 2024

The F value of 124.050 tests whether the regression model as a whole is significant in predicting job interview readiness. Based on the output above, the significance value for the simultaneous effect of X1 and X2 on Y is $0.000 < 0.05$, and the calculated F value of 124.050 is greater than the table value of 3.05. This indicates that both Effective Communication and Structuralism, together, make a significant contribution to job readiness.

Coefficient of Determination

Based on the data analysis using statistical software (SPSS), the Coefficient of Determination can be calculated using the following Model Summary table:

Table 3
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,760 ^a	0,578	0,574	6,71325

1. Predictors : (Constant), Linguistic Structuralism (X2), Effectiv Communication (X1)
 Source : Data Analyzed, 2024

Based on the output, the R Square value is 0.578, which means that the simultaneous effect of variables X1 and X2 on variable Y accounts for 57.8%. On the other hand, there are other variables influencing Y, aside from X1 and X2, making up 42.2%.

This study has provided valuable insights into the role of effective communication and structuralism perspectives in enhancing the job interview readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students. Although the effective communication variable did not show a statistically significant effect in this study, the structuralism factor proved to have a significant impact on students' readiness. In other words, students' preparedness for job interviews is more influenced by structural aspects related to cultural norms, social adjustments, and relevant symbols in a social context. Overall, both variables contribute meaningfully to students' job readiness.

The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable input for institutions in developing more focused training programs to improve students' communication skills and understanding of structural factors. This is essential for preparing graduates who are better equipped to compete in the job market. These findings also lay the foundation for further research that could explore other factors potentially influencing students' readiness for job interviews.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study examines the impact of effective communication and structuralism perspectives on the job interview readiness of Politeknik Caltex Riau (PCR) students. Involving 184 final-year students as respondents, the research found that effective communication, although considered a crucial skill for job interviews, was found to have no statistically significant effect on PCR students' readiness in this study. This means that, despite the importance of communication skills, PCR students with effective communication skills are not necessarily more prepared for job interviews compared to others.

The structuralism perspective showed a significant impact on job readiness. This highlights that understanding and adapting to social systems, norms, and cultural values plays a crucial role in enhancing students' preparedness for job interviews, enabling them to integrate and adapt better in professional environments.

Simultaneously, both effective communication and structuralism variables contribute significantly to job interview readiness, with a combined influence of 57.8%. The remaining 42.2% is influenced by other factors beyond effective communication and structuralism, suggesting that other aspects such as work experience, technical skills, or psychological factors may also contribute to students' readiness for job interviews. These findings provide a strong foundation for the development of training programs focused

on communication and structural understanding, aimed at better preparing PCR students for the challenges they will face in the workforce.

This study has limitations in its variables, namely focusing on only two variables, namely effective communication and structuralism. While there are other factors, such as organizational experience, technical skills, and others, that can also affect job interview readiness. This research also has limitations, namely the focus on final year students at Caltex Riau Polytechnic, so that the results cannot be generalized to students from other institutions.

The suggestion for future research is to add other variables to add more comprehensive results about factors that affect job interview readiness. Population and location expansion can also be done to see if the findings apply to different contexts. And can carry out experimental research on communication training programs to measure effectiveness in increasing the readiness of direct job interviews.

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