Counseling Pedagogy during Covid-19 Pandemic: A Study of Communication Accommodation Theory

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ABSTRACT

Education field has experienced a number of obstacles during Covid-19 pandemic which the greatest impact has been felt by students and teachers. The online learning program was one of the ways used by the government and schools so that the teaching and learning process can continue even in the middle of a pandemic. The research problem in this study is how Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) has been situated in the interaction between counseling teacher and students at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya during the pedagogy shift in the pandemic situation. The purpose of this study is to explain the Communication Accommodation Theory that was carried out between counseling teacher and students at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya. This study uses a qualitative approach within a data collection method in the form of interviews and the study of documents. The result of this study shows that Communication Accommodation Theory occurring among counseling teacher and students is applied in online pedagogy in which they need to adapt their communication behavior and language pattern while interacting with each other. Communication Accommodation Theory is used to explain the process of adaptation during online pedagogy within the accommodation, unaccommodating actions, and symmetrical communication among students and counseling teacher. The pivotal adaptation in online pedagogy is adaptation to learning the latest technology, then moving on to a new way of learning. Counseling is held via Zoom application and chat devices and counseling material is delivered briefly so that students don’t get bored and stay focused on their pedagogy. Obstacles are unavoidable when the Internet network is bad, when there are differences in perception between the counseling teacher and students, also when there is a concentration decrease when online pedagogy takes place. To maintain accommodation and reduce unaccommodating action, symmetrical communication is needed between the two parties.

Keywords: Communication Accommodation Theory; adaptation; counseling; pedagogy; Covid-19 pandemic

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INTRODUCTION

The realm of Indonesian pedagogy has experienced the considerable and extraordinary challenges due to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has finally made the learning process activities to be temporarily stopped, so that the teaching and learning process could not be carried out as usual. Based on information from the Minister of Education Nadiem Makariem, the learning from home program was a form of independent learning for students so that the pedagogy activities can continue even in a limited situation. The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has finally forced students and teachers to carry out the teaching and learning process through the online platforms (Hermawan, 2020). The information has been obtained from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2020 stated there were around 1.25 billion students worldwide who felt the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and around 5.44% of them were situated in Indonesia with the number of students affected approximately 68 million ranging from primary to high school level. There were also around 13 million parents who eventually became teachers when their children studying at home during Covid-19 pandemic. In this case, the impact caused by the pandemic, especially in education, was huge (Puspita, 2020)

Ministry of Education, Culture and Technology Research (Kemdikbudristek) further explained that there were almost 127 million schools in the world that are affected by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. In Indonesia alone, there were around 407,000 schools affected by this pandemic, and there were also around 3.4 million teachers in Indonesia who have felt the challenges of this pandemic. Many of these schools were forced to temporarily stop their learning activities on site at schools and implement online learning policies (Prasetyo, 2018). There was an official release from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) The Directorate of Higher Education No. 1 of 2020 which gave instructions of learning process must have been carried out remotely or from home. All teaching and learning activities that run normally then carried out online. This online pedagogy was implemented so that the affected schools can prevent the peak of Covid-19 transmission in their environment (Handarini & Wulandari, 2020)

Covid-19 pandemic has resulted a shift on the teaching and learning process at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya where the teachers and students must integrate the online learning system. Moreover, the main focus in this study carried out by the counseling teacher with the students while experiencing online learning process (AP, 2020). The informants of this study came from a counseling teacher at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya who has been teaching for five years and students from X and XI grade majoring in Social Science. They were the persons who actively adjusted communication behavior during pandemic so that misunderstandings and challenges could be conquered. Based on the background above, the research problem is how Communication
Accommodation Theory has been situated in the interaction between counseling teacher and SMA Petra 1 Surabaya students during online pedagogy. The scope of research was determined because SMA Petra 1 Surabaya is one of the places where Communication Accommodation Theory took place during Covid-19 pandemic and data have been collected from September 2021 to January 2022.

Several research were cited as reference in the topic of pedagogy. First publication was conducted by Prayoga & Palupi (2020) with the title *Strategi Akomodasi Komunikasi dalam Proses Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia* (Communication Accommodation Strategy in the Indonesian Language Learning Process). The research discusses the ability of teacher and students in carrying out the process of teaching and learning activities, which in fact showing that there is a fairly strong influence of the communication process between these two agents in learning language. In order to create an interactive communication process and produce a reciprocal communication process between teacher and students, they must be able to make adaptation through communication accommodation during the learning process. The research was conducted in order to explain the use of an accommodation strategy in the communication process, however it can also explain the reasons that influence the use of communication accommodation strategies between teacher and students during Indonesian language learning process. The next research that we cite here was written by Prasetyo (2018) with the title of *Komunikasi Interpersonal Antara Guru Bimbingan Konseling (BK) Dengan Siswa dalam Meningkatkan Prestasi di SMK Negeri 10 Surabaya* (Interpersonal Communication Between Counseling Teachers and Students in Improving Achievement at SMK Negeri 10 Surabaya). The result signifies on how to understand interpersonal communication that occurs between a counseling teacher and the students in improving leaning achievements at SMK Negeri 10 Surabaya. The results shows that the communication process between the counseling teacher and the students exists and very open. In addition to open communication, it turns out that the interpersonal communication is also based on a sense of affection between the counseling teacher and the students.

Another research was conducted by Alwi, 2018) with the title *Proses Komunikasi Guru Bimbingan Konseling Dalam Mengatasi Siswa yang Bermasalah dalam Proses Belajar* (The Communication Process of Counseling Guidance Teachers in Overcoming Students with Problems in the Learning Process) which discusses the communication process carried out by counseling teachers dealing with students who are experiencing problems. The results of the study are first to see the existence of an obstacle or problem coming from the students, such as not concentrating during pedagogy activities, feeling lazy, and sometimes many students falling asleep during the lessons. There are stages that are carried out by counseling guidance teachers when trying to overcome students who have problems in the learning process through the first stage using the
preparation stage, then second stage is the formation stage, and finally through the evaluation stage. The latest we refer quoted from Andung et al., 2019) entitled Akomodasi Komunikasi pada Mahasiswa Beda Budaya di Kota Kupang (Communication Accommodations for Students of Different Cultures in Kupang City) in which the study discusses the gaps that occur in intercultural communication among students outside the region as well as they often experience obstacles in terms of adapting to the culture and conditions in Kupang. The results show that an accommodation must be made to overcome the gap in intercultural communication.

All the preceding research above can be used as references in this research so that we can find out how communication accommodation can occur between counseling teacher and SMA Petra 1 Surabaya students during a pandemic. All referred research use a qualitative approach and data collection is done by in-depth interviews to make the data collecting more accurate and significant. In addition, the research above also departs from communication accommodation theory. The gap comes along with the research is the background of research problems that occur in a pandemic situation. The Covid-19 pandemic has become a determinant of the research, as well as the results showing the novelty that communication accommodation by counseling teachers and students also involves the use of technology. Communication accommodation in this study also shows a form of symmetrical communication, not only explaining forms of accommodation and non-accommodation.

According to Budyatna (2015) Communication Accommodation Theory or also known as CAT is one of the theories of interpersonal communication which focuses on the interaction and behavior patterns of one individual with other individuals in communicating, receiving responses, and providing feedback. In this case, individuals can actually determine their own communication strategy, so that by using various methods or strategies they are finally able to show different personality while communicating. Communication Accommodation Theory studies how we as individuals can make adjustments in terms of communication behavior when communicating with other people or our interlocutors. The basic assumption of this theory is to discuss the similarities or differences arise when communicating or interacting with the other person so that this can be done as an effort to provide a point of view on how to communicate by other people (Gamble & Gamble, 2013).

In further detail Budyatna (2015) states there are several main characteristics that exist in the theory, including: (1) Accommodation is a process related to how an individual can reduce or add things to differ communication process while interacting with each other. In this case, the interaction process carried out by individuals occurs at any time and anywhere so that the actual communication process can experience a disturbance if the interlocutor has problems in terms of language or dialect. Disorders arising in
the communication process usually occur in terms of language use, sentence pronunciation, or in the speed of speaking. (2) Unaccommodation is a form of obstacle that arises when communicating with other people, where in this case the interaction that occurs between one individual and another individual can gain a good response but sometimes it can also not get a response at all or even face a rejection from interlocutors during the process of interaction. In addition, this obstacle also arises due to the ability of the individuals themself who sometimes still cannot adjust the language style or point of view of the interlocutors properly when communicating directly. (3) Symmetry is a stage in the process carried out by individuals to strengthen the communication so that the communication being established can become smoother without a difference in point of view or misunderstanding between one individual and another. In addition, strengthening a communication process is quite important, because if individuals try to make adjustments in language style and communication behavior when communicating with the other person, it will help the message or information being conveyed properly without any misunderstanding.

In a communication process or conversation, an individual has several strategies that can be used to adapt, including convergence, divergence, and excessive accommodation. Convergence is a strategy implemented by someone is able to adapt the communication accommodation process carried out with the other person. In the convergence, a person will focus on the point of view, topic of conversation, and behavior of the interlocutors while communicating with each other. From the results of the convergence, there will usually be a desire to give each other a response or feedback so that the communication process goes better without any obstacles. In this case, if someone has done a convergence properly and correctly, then the results of the convergence will be able to help communicating or interacting directly with the other person. Thus, convergence can produce a good and positive response from the other person (Giles, 2016).

On the contrary, divergence is one of the strategies in the communication accommodation that is used to be able to see or show differences which are most visible from each individual both verbally and non-verbally while carrying out the communication process. In this case, divergence focuses more on the absence of effort from each individual to be able to show similarities between them. Sometimes individuals decide not to respond well to their interlocutors due to several reasons. One of the reasons is the problem of power or role differences when carrying the communication process. The differences in cultural communities holds them to maintain their social identity, this is the final reason which individuals are uneasy to adapt to the communication process. Last point is excessive accommodation. Excessive accommodation is a stage that is sometimes considered too excessive in the communication process, so this has an impact on the perspective of individuals who feel that the conversation process that occurs is a problem and makes the
communication process less smooth. It can be said that excessive accommodation is an obstacle that occurs between one individual and another, so that it can result in disruption of the ongoing communication process and ultimately has an impact on communication that becomes less communicative among the interlocutors (West & Turner, 2013).

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The research methodology used in this research is qualitative methods, while the results of this research are written in descriptive form. The subjects in this research consisted of a counseling teacher at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya, students of class X and XI in Social Science major, and the last one was senior counseling teacher at SMA Petra 5 Surabaya. Data was collected through interview and the study of documents. The in-depth interview was carried out by conducting interview sessions, the first step was conducting mutual agreement among parties, then making interview guidelines, and proceeding with the interview sessions on Zoom Meeting application. The purpose of using interview for data collecting method so that we are able to explore and find issues that are discussed deeper and more openly by asking directly about the views or opinions of the informants regarding the main research problem (Mayasari & Indraswari, 2018).

In addition, this research also assisted by the study of documents which is complementary to in-depth interview. Mayasari & Indraswari (2018) states that using in-depth interview can make the process of conducting interviews freer but still in accordance with the guidelines. The purpose of using interview is to be able to explore and find problems that are discussed more openly and without any element of coercion by asking directly about the views or opinions of the informants regarding the topic or phenomenon being discussed. Nilamsari (2014) adds that the study of documents being used as a complementary collection method has several advantages. The first advantage is that previously available documents ready to be used by researchers, the documents does not require a fee or only requires time to study it, and finally the documents can be used as a reference in triangulation to verify the sources of data and information that have been obtained by researchers.

The data analysis method in this study uses four stages as a unit of qualitative work procedure, firstly we reduce data which is collected by interview and study of document then followed by data presentation, data interpretation, then we draw the conclusion (Mukhtazar, 2020). The results of interview and study of document were processed by reducing the data until it reached a saturation point, then the data is displayed in coding in order to obtain a representative and valid data presentation. The last step is data verification and conclusions to answer the main research problems. The validity of the data in this study comes from the source triangulation method to achieve validity. Source triangulation brings together informants, namely counseling teacher at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya, senior counseling teacher at SMA Petra...
5 Surabaya, and students from class X as well as class XII majoring in Social Sciences at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya. Meanwhile, to look for reliability, we use auditing techniques to check the certainty of information with the aim of making reliable research (Rijali, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research that has been carried out at the SMA Petra 1 Surabaya, there are important findings that can explain how the communication accommodation process was situated between counseling teacher and students during online pedagogy.

Forms of Accommodation and Changes in The Online Pedagogy

In this case, the right way to coordinate between counseling teacher and students during the online learning period by using the help of mobile application and Internet, such as Line and Whatsapp chat messenger so that the coordination between these two parties will be faster and more efficient. The use of mobile application provides important information such as assignments or lesson schedules so that pandemic situation does not limit the communication and coordination. In addition, the interaction built between them also focuses on the response or feedback given by students to counseling teacher during the online pedagogy, in this case the right pattern of online pedagogy is to carry out a meaningful and multi-way interaction.

“I personally think it is essential for teachers to adapt to technology. In this pandemic era, it is necessary to carry out digital literacy for both teachers and students.” (ES, student)

Forms of Unaccommodating Communication and Obstacles in The Online Pedagogy

One of the obstacles that often arises and be experienced by counseling teacher in the online pedagogy is the difficulty in building an active and interactive learning atmosphere in order to build active responses given by the students. In this case, making an adjustment to the style of language and communication behavior needs to be done, so that the communication becomes better and more lively. In addition to the obstacles experienced by counseling teacher during the online learning process, it turns out that other obstacles are also experienced by students. The perceived obstacle is the problem of electronic devices and Internet network which sometimes cause interference. Furthermore, another obstacle felt by the students is that they are not supported to make an appointment with counseling teacher to consult or discuss something related to their education, it is due to the difference in students’ lesson schedule and counseling teacher’s.
“The network anyway because if we meet some obstacles, like bad network, broken sound, and all kinds of things; that’s already a problem because I try to empathize with children too.” (IA, 2022).

**Forms of Symmetry in The Online Pedagogy**

Symmetry is one of the stages in the communication process where at this stage there is an effort to strengthen existing communication between individuals. The strengthening of the communication is carried out with the aim that the communication exists between counseling teacher and students does not decrease in intensity even though in a pandemic situation. Symmetric communication can be maintained between two parties and can develop into communicative online pedagogy. In this case, both counseling teacher and students from grade X and XII in Social Science major also feel that it is important to strengthen the communication process to support online learning situation during the pandemic. Besides that, symmetric communication also maintains the relationship between counseling teacher and students better by providing information and addressing the message clearly to both parties.

**Picture 2. Symmetrical Communication Has Been Situated for Accommodating Counseling**

“In my opinion, usually counseling teachers have a broader view of the topic of material being discussed in the learning process. And after we discuss it together it turns out that the material can be a source of reference for us in doing the assignments given.” (JS, 2022).

**Forms of Convergence and Divergence in The Online Pedagogy**

In the online pedagogy during this pandemic, the convergence or adjustment is needed, one form of convergence made by counseling teacher and students is to prepare a strong Internet network. This task must be completed so that they participate without any problems. Counseling teacher and students also need digital literacy in which they learn the IT used in the online learning process so that they become more familiar and fluent. For the students themselves, they can more easily adapt to the online learning process like never before. Students from grade X and XII Social Science Program make a form of convergence by following the process of online learning activities, preparing themselves in advance, and being more disciplined in the online lesson schedule. Meanwhile, divergence is one of the stages in the communication to see the differences that arise during the communication process. In this case, the strategy taken by counseling teacher is to prepare learning materials and a stable Internet network. Counseling teacher must prepare interesting learning methods that make students become more enthusiastic in participating even in limited
situation. In addition to that, counseling teacher also maintain good relations with students to avoid problems or different perception with each other.

“In my opinion, the differences in point of view or perception are caused by several things, namely because the message or information conveyed to the students is not clear, the message received is difficult for the students to understand, or the message does not match their needs. Besides that, it is caused by the method of conveying information carried out by the counseling teacher is still not quite right.” (ES, 2022)

“I don’t think it’s too much, maybe there are some, usually the student will immediately give feedback if there is communication that is not conveyed properly, and they will definitely ask directly by responding to the question.” (IA, 2022)

**DISCUSSION**

In the main stages of this communication accommodation theory, the counseling teacher and students from X and XI grade majoring in Social Science perform accommodating actions that is continued to symmetrical communication. Meanwhile, when unaccommodating actions has been found during online counseling, pedagogy is carried out to reduce distractions and find solutions so that both parties, counseling teacher and the students, can carry out online learning activities to the fullest. Adaptation also needs to be encouraged because the Covid-19 pandemic requires online learning participants to master a variety of online learning support tools, as well as assistance applications, especially those that help expedite their communication. Scheduling is not only placed in class sessions, but is provided outside the classroom so that students can more freely make appointments with the counseling teacher guidance. Even though counseling is not the main subject at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya, the online pedagogy that is well organized and easily accessed by students really helps them to stay focused on school activities and minimize anxiety during a pandemic.

The theory of communication accommodation is interpreted as the ability to modify, adjust, or regulate one’s behavior when interacting or carrying out communication processes between one another, so that later the response received can be in accordance with what is expected by each individual during the communicative process. The essence of this communication accommodation theory is adaptation, which in this case can be seen how counseling teacher and students make adjustments in their communication process among each other so that they can possibly adapt their actions so that they can accommodate other people (Suheri, 2019). The right way to coordinate that can be used by teachers or educators, so that they can help students communicating with teachers in the learning process, even if it is situated outside of class hours. They are encouraged to utilize social media and Internet connections. The use of social media and Internet is intended so that the coordination process can be carried out more quickly and efficiently, so that physical distance is no longer an obstacle regarding the online pedagogy. In this case IA explains that counseling
teachers and students discuss the assignments or class schedules by using Line and Whatsapp.

Accommodation itself is one of the processes carried out by someone in communicating with the other person, in which case they try to make adjustments to the differences or constraints experienced during the communication process by reducing or adding things that accommodate the parties who are involved (Budyatna, 2015). In this research, the adjustment process or form of accommodation is also felt by ES, as an expert who works as a senior counseling teacher at SMA Petra 5 Surabaya. Based on interviews with informants, there are some differences in the communication process during the online pedagogy at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya. According to IA, the difference that occurred in the online pedagogy was felt before the pandemic where usually teachers and students could have come directly to school but during a pandemic they can all only meet and carry out the online learning through the application. Furthermore, there are several obstacles that were felt by teachers or students. According to IA, the obstacles that arises is when students do not provide direct feedback during the interaction in this online learning process. The students also lack of capacity to concentrate or put their attention during designated counseling classes. The form of unaccommodating actions that often appear when people communicate with the other person. The divergence can be seen in the inability to speak which sometimes both parties cannot adjust to the language style or cannot grasp the point of view of the other parties so that sometimes misunderstanding arises during the online pedagogy. Holtgraves (2014) explains that the results of the interaction process while using application devices and Internet connection can quickly earn responses or even no responses at all so that sometimes the other person gets rejected while doing the conversation.

In this research, making adjustments to one’s language style needs to be done so that the communication becomes better and smoother so that the message or information can be conveyed perfectly without any misunderstanding between the two parties. Another unaccommodating pattern emerges when there is a mastery difference in utilizing technology. IA is more in control and often uses information technology tools; while ES, as a senior teacher, still does not understand well how to operate such tools in online pedagogy. This is in accordance with Giles’s theory (2016) which in the communication process there are strategies carried out by individuals to be able to try to adapt when communicating with the interlocutors so that the adaptation process is useful for overcoming some of the differences and obstacles. ES argues that the biggest obstacle to online learning is the difficulty in creating an active and interactive learning atmosphere. The learning process must be packaged in design to make counseling teacher and the students more active in the online pedagogy. The use of Zoom application is expected to be continuous and more interactive. In this case the counseling teacher feels that online learning via Zoom has limitation due to the teacher cannot see firsthand the student’s response. This is caused by
the limited space where learning can only be carried out via online application and Internet, so that the response from students will be very lacking and they tend to avoid being asked to answer questions of talk further. The limited space also makes the counseling teacher unable to directly control students during online pedagogy.

After an explanation of the communication accommodation and non-accommodation that manifest in convergence and divergence, we also highlight other findings in the form of communication symmetry which is one of the stages in the communication process. Strengthening the symmetrical communication has the goal that the interaction process carried out between teachers and the students does not decrease the intensity so that the online pedagogy can survive well and further develop to become more communicative even in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic. IA adapt the strategy to support online pedagogy by preparing learning materials, a stable Internet network, and adequate time portion in class so that the communication and responses given by students during the online pedagogy can be better and run smoothly without any problems. Covid-19 pandemic leads the way the counselor teacher and students communicate and study, they use social media and application devices more frequently than before. It is hoped that the use of all technology platforms can engage both parties in online pedagogy even though they cannot meet face to face. Therefore during Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to know and learn digital literacy for both teacher and students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings above, it can be concluded that in the online pedagogy during Covid-19 pandemic, counseling teacher and students try to make adaptation. SMA Petra 1 Surabaya has made an adaptation in the pedagogy by applying it to online system. In order to adapt new learning and adjust it to online system, the school has implemented digital literacy in using learning and messenger application, such as Google Meet, Zoom Meeting, Line, and Whatsapp. Besides that, these parties also have adapted the communication accommodation that appears and occurs in school environment at SMA Petra 1 Surabaya. The counselor teacher and students from X and XII grade in Social Science Program have contributed to adaptation in communication behavior and language style while carrying online interaction and conversation. In this case, the counseling teacher used simple languages and easy collection of vocabulary that was easily understood by the students, so that when communicating with each other there was no misunderstanding or different point of view. Based on this conclusions, we suggest the further research is expected to be able to use this research as one of the guidelines in making more detailed and complete research in communication the best pedagogy system or topic about adaptation language or communicative patterns.

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