

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nowadays people would communicate without seeing each other in person, through social media, such as *LINE*, *Path*, *Wechat*, *Whatsapp*, *Facebook*, and *Twitter*. Path is an app that is used for mobile messaging app to talk with other people (path.com/talk, 2015). WhatsApp is a cross-platform mobile messaging app, which allows people to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS. WhatsApp Messenger is available for iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Windows Phone and Nokia and those phones can all send messages to each other because WhatsApp used the same internet data plan that people use for email and web browsing, there is no cost to message and stay in touch with their friends. In addition to basic messaging WhatsApp users can create groups, send each other unlimited images, video and audio media messages (whatsapp.com, 2015). LINE is an app that is used for exchanging free instant messages with friends whenever and wherever with one-on-one and group chats. LINE is available on all smartphone devices (iphone, android, windows phone, blackberry) and even on PC (line.me, 2015). In addition, people (gamers) would consider using Playstation 4 as social media. Playstation 4 is a console for playing online games or offline games. People will gather in a virtual party using Playstation 4 also known as PS4. Using PS4, people from different countries can speak to each other and gather in a virtual party while playing. PS4 users use the Party function to chat via voice and text with up to seven of the user's friends and fellow players on the PS4 and PS Vita. PS Vita is a handheld console created by Sony Playstation. The Party function is available while using a game or other application, even if the other people in the chat are using different games or applications.

An additional benefit of party is that they make it easy to invite people into the game while users play, so users can keep everyone together from game to game.



Picture 1.1. PS4 Party

One of PS4 party which is interesting to be observed is called No Drama Zone!. Four of the No Drama Zone! group members were from the same country (Indonesia) while others were from Philippines, India, and U.S.A. and these people known each other from a game called the Last of Us (online action shooter game). The Last of Us is a third person action shooter game, there are two groups in one match and each group consist four persons.

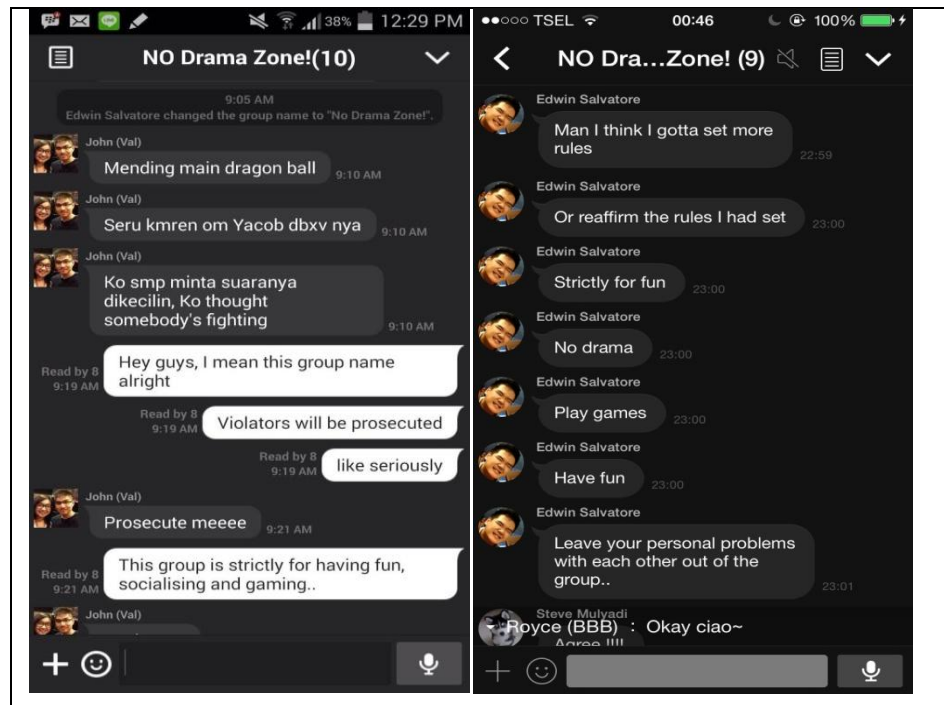
At the beginning they had a hard time to communicate with others. According to the group's founder, Indonesians and Singaporeans were more sociable than the Filipino, Indian or American (Interview with Edwin Salvatore, March 5, 2015). Previously the group communication in this party was not effective. The researcher found in the preliminary observation that Indonesian would say "Hi, my name is John how do you do? Where do you live?" Meanwhile the Filipino and American were more expressive than the Indonesian. They would often shout while playing, such as "OMG, they gunned me!", and it disturbed the other members (Observation within the group, July, 2014). This was very problematic because two

of the group member felt disturbed by the shouting (Interview with Kanishka, an ex member of the group, January 23, 2015) but as time passed they grew closer and could give advice to the Filipino and American, such as “How about changing your harsh words with words like meow meow?”(Interview with Bemz, one of the group member on March 2, 2015). Having been in the same party for some time, conversation barriers such as the awkwardness in communicating ex: silence during gathering in party, conversation changed from games related to hobbies and social life ex: Bracer begun to disclose herself to the group, Steve reveal that he has been an orphan since he was twelve years old. No Drama Zone! group used English as their primary language (both in Ps4 and in LINE), English is a language that the group can understand. Some of the members even disclosed their personal life such as their family situations, family member, and what they want to be in the future. However, disclosure regarding personal life had caused problems. Two of the members (Kanishka and Jacob) initiated the drama in the group and fought with other member (Steve) in the group (March 5, 2015). One of the example the researcher found was Steve’s conversation with other members when someone was leaving the group, Kanishka (Indian) asked: “what happened? Why did he leave the group?” Steve answered her with jokes “I do not know, I did not do any shit to him.” Everyone was laughing, but it turned out this joke offended Kanishka, and she was angry with everybody within the group. (Interview with Edwin Salvatore, Steve Mulyadi, & Royce March 3, 2015)

This problem was soon followed by Edwin’s (one of the member) conversation about Kanishka “Goodness, I am so pissed. I decided not to involve you guys about this. But ok, our wein dick (online id: wein_dix) saga is over. And Kanishka (ex member of this group) saga is over.” Therefore Edwin changed the group name from TLOU to No Drama Zone! and created rules for this group to keep the peace and tranquility of the group (Observation within the group, from March 3 to March 7, 2015).

Edwin made three rules within this group, (1) The Group’s purpose is strictly for having fun, socializing and gaming, (2) Do not bring any personal problem they

have with each other into this group (3) Men and Women are equal within this group.
 (Interview with Edwin and observation on March 5, 2015)



Picture 1.2. No Drama Zone! Rules

No Drama Zone! group was a small group of people from different countries and culture. In intercultural communication, two or more of the participants from different cultural backgrounds perform a symbolic exchange that is through verbal and non-verbal means (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.39). Intercultural communication is complex, the barriers can arise from a variety of elements there, both from participants and the environment were involved in the communication process (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p.40).

This research focused on Mediated Intercultural Communication Barriers within the No Drama Zone group. According to Novinger there are three types of communication barriers: perception barriers, verbal barriers, and nonverbal barriers (2001, p.24-25). These three barriers are related. Verbal communication barriers and nonverbal communication barriers occurred due to differences in perception. Perception barriers in communication occurred because of the resistance of verbal and nonverbal barriers. According to Fredrik Barth (2002, in Kosch, 2009's journal)

“culture is knowledge”. The difference between the culture and the knowledge concept is not too big, the surplus of this new paradigm lies mainly in the disaggregation of the culture concept. This small variation is a fundamental one and has significant consequences for the conceptualization of investigations, as Barth suggests. "Knowledge provides people with materials for reflection and premises for action, whereas 'culture' too readily comes to embrace also those reflections and those actions. Thus the concept of 'knowledge' situates its items in a particular and unequivocal way relative to events, actions, and social relationships” (Barth, 2002, p.1). In conclusion different knowledge (cultural behavior) will influence how people communicate, act, and react through things.

According to Fujishin (2013. p. 3) the minimum number of individuals needed to constitute a small group is three people. Two people do not make a group because their interaction is that of a couple, or dyad. In a dyad, one person speaks, the other listens and responds, and then the original speaker considers what is being said. No third individual witnesses the event or influences the interaction. A dyad normally encourages more self-disclosure, simply because no audience or third party is present. The researcher found supporting data regarding Intercultural communication or Cross culture in Mark Ward’s research (2010). Mark Ward’s research (2010) stated that new players enter a game world lacking the cognitive models needed to accurately fill in missing information; to receive communications from the game and from other players that could be from different countries, and then swiftly make the mental shortcuts needed to arrive at culturally correct conclusions. The journal explained that game world can be considered to have its own culture and because people from different countries can interact and be considered intercultural communication, in-game communication can be considered intercultural communication. The differences between Ward’s research and this research were, this research study focused on one specific group (No Drama Zone!) mediated intercultural communication. While Ward’s research was more general in explaining new player joined society of the game world.

Another research that was used as reference of this research study was “A Study of Non-verbal Expressions in a Computer-Mediated Communication context (CMC)” (Park & Harada). Their research study was about observing non-verbal communication in CMC, analyzing the content of the communication such as stickers or emoticon within CMC. This research study used PS4 and LINE as communication medium. Park and Harada’s study were useful as reference to analyzed CMC in No Drama Zone! group.

Although technology is not a new theme, studying mediated intercultural communication revealed a need to explore the barriers in that communication process. [w1]This research study was regarding intercultural communication in a small group that is mediated by PS 4 and LINE. This study aimed to portray the mediated intercultural barriers in No Drama Zone! group.

1.2. Research Question

How are the mediated intercultural communication barriers in No Drama Zone! group?

1.3. Research Purposes

This research is aimed to discover the mediated intercultural communication barriers in NO Drama Zone! group.

1.4. Benefits of Research

1. Academicals Benefits

The benefit of the research study was to enrich knowledge regarding mediated intercultural communication barriers in small group. Furthermore this research could be used as reference for the future research in communication studies.

2. Practical Benefits

The benefit of the research study was to give people information about using PS4 as a medium to connect or communicate with people around the world to the extension of forming small groups with other people from other countries and to describe the intercultural communication barriers within the No Drama Zone! group.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

This research study focused on observing mediated intercultural communication barriers in No Drama Zone! group which used Playstation 4 as a communication medium to gather and communicate in a party when players are online. This group also used LINE as a medium to stay connected when other players are offline. No Drama Zone! group consisted of twelve person. Researcher observed this group from March to October 2015.

1.6. Writing Systematics

i. Chapter 1 : Introduction

This chapter explained the phenomenon that is used as the research study, the introduction and background, problems, research purposes, benefits of research, and limitations of the research.

ii. Chapter 2 : Theories

This chapter explained theories that are used as supporting data for this research. Theories within this chapter are: Intercultural Communication theories, Computer Mediated Communication theories, Relationship between cultures and knowledge and how culture will affect communications.

iii. Chapter 3 : Research Method

This chapter described the variables from the research's conceptual and operational definition. It also explains the types of research, research method, Research objectives, the unit of analysis, and Data collection technique.

iv. Chapter 4 : Data Analysis

This chapter presented about the analysis of the research study, data finding, research setting and informants' profiles.

v. Chapter 5 : Conclusion

This chapter concluded the entire research study and defines the barriers in mediated intercultural communication.