The Phenomena of Emoticon Use on Facebook and Blackberry Messenger as the Alternative of Non-Verbal Communication and the Accomplishment of the Sender's Emotion to the Receiver

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ABSTRACT
The article aims to describe the phenomena in social media dealing with non-verbal communication by using the application of emoticon. The social media are Facebook (FB) and Blackberry Messenger (BBM). There is the application of emoticon in both social media. The problems that are discussed in the research are to describe the meaning of the emoticon and the determinant factors of emoticon that are used in social media (FB and BBM) to express the sender’s emotion to the receiver. The theories used to analyze the problems are communication that is divided into two, that is, non-verbal and visual communication, and semiotics. The data used in the research are the chats of FB and BBM users. The research uses descriptive qualitative method. Moreover, referential equivalent and pragmatic equivalent methods are used to analyze the data. The findings of the research are that there are some emoticons that are often used to express the sender’s emotion to the receiver and vise versa. There are three determinant factors of emoticon used in FB and BBM to express the sender’s emotion to the receiver, they are, proximity of personal relationship, situational or social conditional of the utterance and communication efficiency factors. Emoticon is non-verbal communication device that can represent the sender’s emotion to the receiver, even though it sometimes cannot represent the whole meaning of the message sent by social media (FB and BBM)

KEYWORDS: Emoticon, Semiotic, Non-Verbal Communication, Social Media

Emoticon stands for emotional and icon. It is now very familiar in social media, such as facebook (FB) and blackberry messenger (BBM). The users of facebook (FB) and blackberry messenger (BBM) tend to use emoticon as alternative of non-verbal
communication in the chatting. They feel like using emoticons in their posting because they represent their emotion clearly. Communication using emoticon can express non-verbal communication, such as smiling, crying, feeling shy, feeling angry and so forth. Non-verbal communication is created as the response of communication alternation in the process of creating the similarity of meaning for the users of FB and BBM. For analyzing a meaning that is implied in an icon or emoticon can be studied through the semiotic analysis.

Language features consist of symbol and meaning. Symbol is a sign that has conventional relationship with the signified, such as emoticon. Zoest states that a word with its signified is a symbol because its relation is conventional (1996: 9).

The use of emoticon enables the senders of the message obtain their emotional image. It shows that emoticon functions as non-verbal communication. Emoticon also influences message comprehension that has been sent. Emoticon in social media chatting can avoid the misunderstanding of the sent message. However, it can also create the misunderstanding because the emoticon that has been used is not appropriate in the chatting. In line with the situation, the research dealing with the emoticons as the alternative of non-verbal communication is interested to be conducted because emoticon is able to emphasize the meaning, show the feeling to others, and alternate some certain words in message chatting.

In order to reveal the topic of research dealing with the phenomena of the use of emoticon in FB and BBM as the alternative of non-verbal communication and the accomplishment of the sender’s emotion, the researchers formulate two problems as follows:

1. What is the meaning of the emoticon that is used in social media (FB dan BBM) to reveal the sender’s emotion to the receiver?
2. What are the factors that determine the emoticon which is used to reveal the sender’s emotion to the receiver?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Communication

People’s life can never be separated from what is called communication. By communication, they can exchange information, ideas, ideas, and experiences. Communication will form a complex network of interactions for people. The elements of communication is source (communicator), message, channel, communicant and its effects.

Pearson and Nelson state that communication has two main functions, that is, for the survival and to maintain the viability of the community, by building social relationships and developing the existence of a society (Mulyana, 2000: 4).

Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is often used to describe feeling and emotion. If the message received through verbal system does not show the power of the message, the signs of other non-verbal can be accepted as the support. Non-verbal communication is often called the silent communication or communication without words.

Non-verbal language is a kind of communication that is often used in presentation in which its delivery is not stated with words or sound but by body language. Besides that, the use of non-verbal language can through eye contact, the use of objects such as clothes, haircuts, and the use of symbols. Through non-verbal communication, people can take a conclusion about kinds of feelings: happy, hate, love, missing someone and so forth. Non-verbal communication is often used to describe the feeling and emotion. If the message received through verbal system does
not show the power of the message, the signs of other non-verbal can be accepted as the supporte (Liliweri, 1994:89).

**Visual communication**

Visual communication is one form of archetypical message that utilizes visual elements (shape, colour, composition, logo and so forth). We live in a very fast visual media, starting from two static dimension to dynamic three dimension. Those visual images are in newspapers, books, clothes, billboard, computer monitor, handphone, television and excetera. One of those images can be a sign, that is, emoticon.

The first person who used emoticon is Scott Fahlman, a computer expert from Carnegie Mellon University, US. He sent an e-mail to his university that was about his suggestion dealing with symbols that differentiate which was serious message and not serious one. The symbols that he used were :-) (not serious) and :-(( serious).

![Figure 1. Emoticons in Facebook](image1)

![Figure 2. Emoticons in Blackberry Messenger](image2)

The appeal of these emoticons is how emoticons can be perceived as an expression. The perceptions may appear because the users of emoticon use their emotion and feeling to process a visual sign.

**Semiotic**

Semiotic is the study of signs. Ferdinand de Saussure (in Zoest: 1992) formulates a mark as a union of two fields that can not be separated – like a sheet of
paper (signifier) or a form (signified): concept or meaning. Dealing with sign, signified and signifier, Saussure affirms that semiotic theory is the importance of social convention, that is, language community about the meaning of a sign.

Furthermore, Charles Sanders Peirce (in Zoest: 1992) pointed out that we can only think with the medium of sign. People can only communicate through sign. Sign in human’s life can be motion sign or body language. Waving hand that may be meant calling or nodding head may be interpreted as agreement. Sounds are, such as flute, trumpet, drum, human’s sound or phone sound. Written signs are alphabets and numbers and many others.

Semiotic is a study of sign and anything dealing with it: how it functions, its relation to other signs, its senders, and its receivers. Sign is something physical that could be human’s senses. Generally, a sign is a visual form or physical one that can be caught by human’s sense. Semiotic systems try to probe the nature of the sign that ignores the rules of grammar and syntax and meaning of the text governing the complex, hidden, and depending on the culture. It raises concern on connotative and denotative meaning, the relation and impression revealed through the use of sign and sign combination.

Social Media

In social communication, social network is a network of a special nature that occurs between a number of people who give the same meaning to a value, has a particular interest. The members of social network can be known through the relationship and social interactions that is formed. The development of technology affects the world so much. Everything becomes unlimited. Technology dealing with information has taken an important role to improve the social life. There are some
social media, such as facebook, blackberry messenger, twitter, linkedin, google+ and many more.

Simamora (2006:75) states that integrated strategy of marketing communication mix advertisement, personal sale, sale promotion, and publicity into a coordinated program to communicate with the buyers and others who influence purchasing decisions. Facebook is one of such social media. It is one of marketing communication forms that can create the interaction among the consumers and business owners.

Facebook is one of free social networks in which the users can create their networks and invite their friends. By having such network, the users can pay attention to their activities, follow or join a game that is recommended, add friends or network based on their former schools and raise more social life. Facebook also has various and innovative features and contents (including game features, survey, applications and so forth). It makes Facebook become more popular than other social media.

Another major social media is BBM that stands for Blackberry Messenger. It is an instant application that is used only by its users. It is specially designed for the users to communicate or send some files to other Blackberry users. Every BBM has different PIN (Personal Identification Number) as the ID for the users. BBM can display the users’ contacts by entering the users’ PIN. Interestingly, besides chatting with other similar BBM users, BBM also has feature status.

RESEARCH METHOD

The data that are used in the research are collected from the source of data, that is, the chatting of FB and BBM users. FB and BBM are chosen as the source of data because both social media are popular. Most users tend to use application of emoticon
as the alternative of non-verbal communication. Data population of the research are the whole chatting of FB and BBM users.

Referential equivalent and pragmatic equivalent methods are used to analyze the emoticons that are used by the users of FB and BBM. Referential equivalent method is applied in the research to determine kinds of emoticons in FB and BBM and the meanings of emoticons to reveal the sender’s emotion to the receiver as the alternative of non-verbal communication.

Pragmatic equivalent method is chosen to interpret the meaning of emoticon based on the external factors, such as context, background and the speakers. Moreover, it is also applied to analyze the determinant factors of emoticon used in FB and BBM to express the sender’s emotion to the receiver.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Emoticon pictorial representation of a facial expression using punctuation marks and letters is usually written to express a person’s mood. Emoticons are often used to alert a responder to the intention or the anger in a statement, and can change and improve interpretation of certain text. Emoticon can be described based on its meaning in the chatting through social media in FB and BBM.

The followings are some emoticons that are often used in the communication through social media (FB and BBM):

1. 😊 represents smile that is usually used to show happy feeling, for example:
   “Terima kasih ya 😊”.

2. 😆 represents laugh that is usually used to show something funny, for example:
   “😆 dia pakai topeng power ranger?? Bisa ga banyangin?”
3. 😘 represents kiss that is usually used to show the impression of wanting to kiss, for example: “I love you 😘”.  
4. 🤗 represents hug that is usually used to show the impression of the closeness among friends or the affectionate toward couples: “sudah lama tak jumpa 😘”.  
5. 😞 represents sadness that is usually used to show sad feeling or sympatry, for example: “aku dengar kamu ga lulus ya 😞”.  
6. 😍 represents love struck that expresses love or affection toward someone, for example: “terima kasih hadiahnya ya 😍”.  
7. 😐 represents pensive or thinking that is an emoticon usually used to show someone who is thinking of something that is happening, for example: “kira-kira teori tambahannya apa ya, ma’am 😐”.  
8. 😞 represents confused feeling that is usually used to show confusion toward something that has happened, for example: “La trus saya harus bagaimana ya 😞 ?”.  
9. 😞 represents I dunno expression that is usually used to show the ignorance of something, for example: “waduuuh materi UTS morphology apa ya?”.  

The more emoticon are increasing and the more users show the higher acceptance of emoticon publicly. Using emoticon in written communication can easily describe the sender’s emotion. Besides that, using emoticon in message chatting is easily learned. We are just asked to imagine the icons and understand by tilting the
head about 90 degrees. Because of the higher users of emoticon in social media chatting, automatically the sender has made emoticon used all the time.

There are several determinants of emoticons used on social media (FB and BBM) to express the sender’s emotion to the receiver:

a. The proximity of personal relationships

The style in communication is met with the role and the close relationship among the people who communicate. How a student communicates with his/her lecturer will be different from that of he/she communicates with his/her friends and parents. Dealing with communication, not only do people conduct exchange message but there is also some elements of affirmation. When someone delivers a message to one another, they will show how they perceive others and their relationship, and each of them would like to receive the similar response.

Personal closeness is also another dimension that helps mark a relationship. The development of a relationship can be affected by time since our knowledge of a person acquired slowly. Most users have already learned emoticon, they feel more familiar when communicating by using emoticon.

Communication using the words would be more easily controlled than using gestures or facial expressions. It happens because the nature of non-verbal communication is spontaneous. The sender and receiver that have a personal relationship would unawkwardly type emoticon that represents their feeling.

The following is an example of the use of emoticon that is influenced by personal closeness factor:

Yonathan : Morning hun 😊😊مستر
Nadia : Pagi mbem 😊😊مستر
Yonathan : Akhir” ini jarang manggil mbem kamu 🧔
The chat is between Yonathan dan Nadia. They have been dating for several months. The chatting using some emoticons describes their close relationship. Yonathan’s opening greeting ‘Morning hun’ using emoticon ‘love struck’, ‘kiss’ and ‘hug’. Nadia replies ‘Pagi mbem’ using emoticon ‘kiss’. Affectionate calling like ‘hun’ and ‘mbem’ signifies the proximity of a personal relationship between the sender and the receiver. Affectionate feeling that is revealed by using emoticons ‘love struck’, ‘kiss’ dan ‘hug’ can represent the sender’s emotion to the receiver. Emoticons used in such a chatting are often found in the communication between dating couples.

b. Situational factors or social condition of the utterance

Spoken activities can appear if there are a speaker and a hearer or the message sender and receiver in the chatting. It shows that a spoken activity is a social activity. In the moment of chatting, both the sender and the receiver realize that there are some rules that manage their action, the use of the language and their interpretation toward the action and the receiver’s utterance.

Either the sender or the receiver should understand communication pattern that they use in the chatting. Either the sender or the receiver learn their chatting situation whether the chatting is serious or relax, formal or informal. Therefore, the users of emoticon are able to understand the background of the communication in social media.

The following is the example of the use of emoticon that is influenced by situational factors or social condition of the utterance:

Yudha : Mam, saya mau tanya 😊
Dosen : Iya 😊
Yudha : Kira-kira kalau skripsi saya, saya tambahin teori gimana ya?

Soalnya kemarin teorinya ada yang kurang 😞
Yudha is the message sender who is a student, while the receiver is his thesis advisor. The BBM chatting is in the informal situation. Yudha uses emoticon ‘pensieve’ that shows thinking expression meaning that he wants to ask something important. The receiver responds his message by replying ‘Iya’ with emoticon ‘smile’ meaning that she is willing to answer Yudha’s question. Yudha also adds emoticon ‘I dunno’ to state that he does not know to do to solve his problem. The addition of emoticon in the chatting shows that the communication between a lecturer and a student is in the non-formal situational context, so the use of emoticon in the chatting does not seem excessive.

c. Communication efficiency factors

Non-verbal communication using emoticon can function in text message repetition for the receiver. The use of emoticon can represent and strengthen the meaning of verbal message that is communicated. In speaking, someone is sometimes demanded to speak efficiently by means of non-verbal communication. The choice of words should be precise, brief, various and easily understood by the receiver. The receiver is stirred more emotionally and understands non-verbal communication by using emoticon.

The communication between the sender and the receiver will run well if both of them feel happy with their communication and there will be no mistakes and misunderstanding. Personal condition also influences the kind of communication people do. When someone is in a rush, angry or happy, written communication will not able to accommodate the feeling of the message sender. In line with it, the use of emoticon can be influenced by communication efficiency factors.
Emoticon can be used to state the sender’s emotion through the symbols. When the sender feels happy, the symbol of emoticon that describes the happiness included in the chatting of FB or BBM. The meaning of non-verbal communication by using emoticon is easily understood by the sender and the receiver because of its efficiency. The submission of emotion by using emoticon will be felt more comfortable because the sender can write the message briefly without stating his/her feeling by using verbal words and the receiver can catch the meaning easily.

The following is the example of the use of emoticon that is influenced by communication efficiency factors:

Yonathan : 😊

Nadia : 😊😢😢😢

Yonathan : *Wait for me* 😊

The sender (Yonathan) starts the interaction in BBM by sending emoticon smiley, without verbal words meaning that he wants to express his smile to Nadia. Nadia replies it by using some emoticons that describe the expression of sad, mourn and sick. Nadia’s message to Yonathan is the form of communication efficiency. Without using any words, Nadia wants to communicate her condition that she is sad and mourn because she feels unwell. The message that only consists emoticon can be accepted and understood well by Yonathan. The reply written by Yonathan ‘*Wait for me*’, implies something that he will come to fetch Nadia.

The complexity of meaning in an emoticon is deemed to represent a variety of emotions. The use of emoticons as an alternative to non-verbal communication can be regarded as excessive expression and potentially ambiguous understanding and suspicion of the receiver. Therefore, either the sender or the receiver of emoticon
should learn communication pattern that they have used in social media by realizing personal relationship and understand whether the chatting is serious or relax.

**CONCLUSION**

Each individual in communication must expect attainment of the objectives of the communication. In general, the purpose of communication is to expect feedback given by our interlocutor, and all the messages we convey can be accepted by them and there is the effects that occur after such communication. Nowadays, communication does not happen directly. Because of the development of technology, communication can occur through social media, such as facebook (FB) and blackberry messenger (BBM). The users of social media understand well what emoticon is. Emoticon is such a linguistic element in non-verbal communication. It is a symbol of emotional expression of the message sender that represents certain meaning.

The research aims to describe the emoticon that is used in social media (FB dan BBM) to express the emotion of the sender to the receiver and the determinant factors of emoticon that are used in social media (FB dan BBM) to reveal the sender’s emotion to the receiver.

The significance of the research that is expected is to learn kinds of emoticons which are used as the alternative of non-verbal communication in social media (FB dan BBM). The use of emoticon in communication through social media can avoid the misunderstanding that happens when the message sender reveal his/her emotion through written communication.

**REFERENCES**
