

# *Metaverse Virtual Communication Through Roblox Games For Teenagers*

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**Abstract** – The sophistication of technology has given rise to new trends among teenagers which are not only used to fill the need for information, but can also be used as entertainment that can be accessed without the limitations of space and time. Virtual communication is one way for teenagers to convey messages without having to meet in person. This is inseparable from the presence of the metaverse which has emerged as part of a means of communication which indirectly plays a role in forming interaction patterns in exchanging information among teenagers, one of which can be accessed through the Roblox game. The aim of this research is to determine virtual communication in the metaverse world among teenagers through the Roblox game. This research method is descriptive qualitative with theory using the basic concepts of virtual communication Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard with data collection techniques using observation, interviews and literature study. The result is virtual metaverse communication through the Roblox game for teenagers, where in Roblox there is voice chat which is a means of virtual communication.

**Keywords** – Communication, Virtual, Roblox, Metaverse.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creatures who require a communication process. The flow of communication is increasingly growing day by day. Even Manuel Castells, a Spanish sociologist who researches society, information, communication and globalization, stated that information is no longer just a matter of technology. It has become a matter of social transformation, where technology is an inseparable element of social, economic and political trends (Fakhrurroji, 2017: 13). The sophistication of technology has given rise to new trends among teenagers which are not only used to fill the need for information, but can also be used as entertainment that can be accessed without the limitations of space and time. Metaverse is present as part of a communication tool that indirectly plays a role in shaping interaction patterns in exchanging information in society, especially among teenagers as part of a generation that is often in contact with the digital world. The metaverse is slowly starting to develop, one of which is through the Roblox game (Rolly, 2022).

These metaverse games are persistent games where players control avatars and make them do certain things, and each player can connect and talk to every other player. The presence of the metaverse allows humans to enter the virtual world to carry out certain activities, including the process of interaction and communication between humans. In everyday life, humans definitely carry out the process of exchanging messages that have an impact.

From this interaction, interaction will be formed which conveys messages through a reciprocal communication process. This is because a spectacle is entertainment for the personal needs of the community itself (Simon, 1994: 271). With the emergence of

metaverse games, gamers enter a three-dimensional space that can connect the real world with the virtual world which changes the human experience in using technology that can go beyond physical reality (Alexander, 2022).

The communication patterns that occur when playing online games can bring about a shift in information outside the context of online games. This phenomenon is a picture of the future development of human life which could occur in a new dimensional space or what is called the Metaverse. Metaverse is a virtual living space that looks real thanks to the support of sophisticated technology. Humans will be able to carry out various activities in the metaverse dimension just like real life (Alexander, 2022: 12).

The presence of the metaverse allows humans to enter the virtual world to carry out certain activities, including the process of interaction and communication between humans. In everyday life, humans definitely carry out the process of exchanging messages that have an impact. From this interaction, interaction will be formed which conveys messages through a reciprocal communication process. With the emergence of metaverse games, gamers enter a three-dimensional space that can connect the real world with the virtual world, changing the human experience in using technology that can go beyond physical reality.

A lot of information has been disseminated in the mass media (Marini, 2021) regarding the development of communication technology that can bring human life to a virtual space or what is known as the metaverse. Human civilization will continue to change along with developments in science and technology. Such as developments in the field of communication technology that have changed social communication into virtual communication.

Roblox is part of the metaverse which is liked by many teenagers because it can interact virtually with voice chat in games. Roblox itself is a game creation system and game platform that allows users to program and play games created by other developers (Rolly, 2022, p: 1). With voice chat, gamers on Roblox can communicate virtually with each other.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Virtual Communication

The existence of the internet has made significant changes in the process of exchanging messages. Virtual communication is one part of innovation from the development of new media which is part of the process of packaging messages through technology (Mc Luhan, 2001: 154). Virtual communication is the process of sending and receiving messages using cyberspace. Which is the basic concept of visual communication via the internet network (Warner, 2001: 445-450). Virtual communication is a way to convey information without the limitations of space and time.

### B. Metaverse

Metaverse is defined as a decentralized futuristic space that connects virtual/augmented reality. Meta is Greek for beyond, and verse represents the totality of something. Thus, the metaverse changes the human experience using technology to transcend physical reality (Ariesto, 2022). In simple terms, metaverse is the next literacy of the internet with a decentralized network of virtual spaces where users can socialize, learn and play (Ariesto, 2022). The impact of technological developments on the existence of real human culture has merged and formed digital culture. The above statement is clarified by the evolution of new technology, namely the metaverse. Metaverse is a digital environment created like the real world with the aim of innovating the way people interact (Librita, 2022).

Metaverse is the forerunner of future human interaction which will have an influence on life because it will have an impact on changes in interactions in communication. The existence of the metaverse will make information shift to virtual which seems to be close to actual physical reality.

### C. Roblox

Roblox is part of the metaverse which comes with the latest sophisticated technology. Roblox was founded in 2004 by company co-founders David Bazucki and Erik Cassel and still exists today (Rolly, 2022: 4). Roblox itself is starting to be liked by many teenagers because it is easy to access and easy to use. There are many benefits of Roblox that are popular, starting from *bonding* without having to meet, communicate long distance, relieve stress, hone creativity, learn coding and create game platforms, expand the scope of friendship (Rolly, 2022: 5). According to a survey conducted by Roblox, currently there are 150 million monthly active players, most of whom are teenagers aged 13-18 years. What makes teenagers prefer to communicate

virtually with their online friends compared to friends in the real world.

### D. Game Online

This research aims to measure the level of effectiveness of communication patterns in online games as a reality in the metaverse dimension and analyze the influence of changes in communication patterns from online games through the metaverse.

Online Game is a combination of two words originating from English. Game means game and online means online (on the network). If these two words are combined, a new meaning will be formed which is not far from the basic meaning of the two words.

The definition of online games is actually a type of video game that can only be played if the device used to play the game is connected to an internet network. So, if someone wants to play online games, the device they have must be connected to the internet. If not, then there is a big possibility that the online game cannot be played.

Online games usually allow game players to connect with other players. So it also allows him and other players to come into contact with each other, either in the form of games (such as hitting, shooting) or sending messages. This is indeed similar to a social media networking service. The development of online games itself cannot be separated from the development of computer technology and computer networks. The explosion of online games is a reflection of the rapid development of computer networks that were previously small scale (small local networks) to become the internet and continue to develop to this day.

The increasing activity of internet users through sophisticated devices this century, such as computers and cellphones, has made many game development and publishing companies take advantage of this gap. In a very short period of time, online games have experienced very, very rapid development until now. Even among children and young adults, online gaming has become a lifestyle that they usually do when they have free time. (Kukuh, A.I, 2012).

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research method is descriptive qualitative with theory using the basic concepts of virtual communication Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard with data collection techniques using observation, interviews and literature study. Researchers selected five Roblox players to obtain information as part of the research. The informants in this study were five teenagers who actively played the Roblox game and met the criteria to be interviewed. Apart from that, this research also uses literature studies such as books, journal articles, and others.

In this research there is a theory *hyper reality* and *hyper personality*, which *onehyper reality* symbols are used to replace real objects and experiences (Baudrillard, 1998). and hyper personality occurs when users experience similarity over communication through limited signal channels.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research focuses on virtual communication in the metaverse world, of which Roblox is part of the metaverse. Virtual communication itself focuses on the communication system for playing Roblox games, which focuses on the Voice chat page as a means of conveying messages between fellow Roblox gamers. Roblox is a metaverse game that is loved by teenagers. Apart from easy access, the choice of games is also large and varied. Apart from that, through virtual metaverse communication on Roblox, game players can still interact with each other.

This research involved five teenagers consisting of students in Baturaja, South Sumatra who often play Roblox. The informant provided information on whether message exchange via the Roblox game was effective. Apart from having Voice Chat, it can also make it easier for other users to interact with each other without having to meet. The effectiveness of this game can be seen when people cannot meet and happened during the last pandemic. Roblox games are increasingly mushrooming, especially during the pandemic which forces people to stay at home. From interviews with Roblox players, they revealed that Roblox is present and can be easily played on various platforms. Apart from that, the Roblox game is also easy to play and there are many game choices. The excitement of playing Roblox can also relieve fatigue for teenagers who are still students, besides that it can also hone creativity, expand the circle of friends, create their own virtual world with Roblox.

However, from virtual communication theory, Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard wrote that there are several basic concepts that are part of virtual communication, namely cyberspace where the communication process occurs virtually and is

connected to the internet network. Apart from that, Roblox game players can interact via Voice Chat which connects and communicates.



Figure 1: Roblox Game Illustration

The informant also said that virtual communication exists in the metaverse world, especially through the Roblox game. In fact, the communication process becomes more varied and enjoyable because it can be presented in other entertaining forms. Apart from that, there is the effectiveness of communication when connected in the metaverse world on Roblox. Effectiveness in communication itself is an element of achieving a goal or target where the target has been determined (Wanda, 2020). If it is related to communication, communication effectiveness is how far the target is achieved to convey a message by someone to another person. The communication process can be said to be effective if the information conveyed by the sender of the message can be well received by Roblox game players in the metaverse. According to Hardjana, communication effectiveness is measured by six dimensions, namely: (Hardjana, 2000: 23)

A. Receiver

Messages are objects that are measured based on the accuracy of who will receive the message. A message can be said to be effective if the recipient of the message matches the intended recipient. In the Roblox game, the message sender sends the message and is received by the message receiver so that virtual communication occurs.

B. Message Content (Content)

The content of the message is the suitability of the communication objectives with objective and accurate information that will be received by gamers. Moreover, during the message exchange process, there is message content or information conveyed via voice chat on Roblox.

C. Communication Media (Media)

It is a medium that is used or used for the process of delivering messages according to the needs and expectations of the sender and the recipient of the message. In Roblox, which is part of the metaverse, it uses Voice chat which is connected to the internet network.

D. Message Format (Format)

It is a format that is adapted to what is conveyed by the sender of the message so that the message conveyed can be trusted among fellow Roblox game players.

E. Message Source (Source)

The source of the message refers to the credible credibility of the message conveyed.

F. Timeliness (Timing)

It is the message conveyed by the sender of the message to the recipient of the message that can be received on time. Moreover, in the metaverse world, a digital world connected to the internet, the message conveyed will be received immediately without the limitations of space and time.

Richard A. Bartle, one of the creators of MUD (Multi-User Domain, a type of text-based online game that was also a predecessor to MMORPG) observed the behavior of MUD players. From the results of his observations and conversations with the players, he formulated a type of player (Rosy, Marini, 2022):

1. Achievers

Namely those who play to achieve certain goals and improve their abilities in the game. According to sources, they said that by playing Roblox in the metaverse, their goal in playing games is to win and there is a sense of achievement that they feel while playing online games.

2. Explorers

Namely those who like to explore and investigate the world of games. In the world of Roblox, there are many game choices that make Roblox users free to choose the game according to their wishes.

3. Socializers

Namely those who like to socialize and connect with other players and not always in the context of the game. With the existence of Roblox, the interviewees revealed that they felt that having Roblox made them make lots of friends in cyberspace, especially with Voice Chat which made them connected to each other. Which there is *hyper reality* and *hyper personality* what Roblox players feel when playing the game for a long time.

### V. CONCLUSION

From the research above, the Roblox game is part of the metaverse which is a means of virtual communication. This virtual communication is established effectively because of the exchange of messages via voice chat from Roblox. In the Roblox game there is virtual communication which focuses on the Voice chat page as a means of conveying messages between fellow Roblox gamers. Roblox is a metaverse game that is loved by teenagers. Apart from easy access, the choice of games is also large and varied. Apart from that, through virtual metaverse communication on Roblox, game players can still interact with each other. Virtual communication can be established effectively because of the message recipient, content, communication media, message format, message source, and accurate timing. *hyper reality* and *hyper personality* what Roblox players feel when playing the game for a long time.

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