

A Comparative Study Of The Function Of Small Talk Between Arab And Malay Communication

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Abstract

Small talk is defined as an informal dialogue or conversation that does not cover an important topic of conversation. It is a polite conversation about insignificant matters. To date, the small talk function of Arab and Malay communication has not been clearly understood due to a lack of research in this field. This study compares the part of small talk in Arab and Malay communication based on three communication phases: beginning, middle, and closing. The study is descriptive and employs a qualitative approach. The data from the small talk was analyzed using Malinowski's Phatic Communion Theory (1923). The researchers obtained data from an Arabic drama called "أوراق الزمن المر" and a Malay drama called "Nur 2". ATLAS.tiV9 was used to analyze and code small talk expressions. The findings revealed similarities and differences in the small talk function used in each conversation phase between Arab and Malay communication. Regarding the use of small talk in the middle stage of communication, the Arab and Malay communities are similar. Among the differences, the Arab community was discovered to like to interrupt conversations with small talk while having a conversation. In contrast, the Malay community rarely interrupts conversations with small talk while interacting. Overall, this study discovered that the Arab community demonstrated a broader function of small talk than the Malay community. This study will likely benefit both the field of intercultural communication and the use of small talk in learning and teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

Keywords: Communication; Function; Small Talk; Communication Phase; Arab; Malay Society

INTRODUCTION

Communication skills are an essential aspect that is needed in human social life. Individuals in society communicate with one another to exchange information, opinions, and desires, as well as to exchange views. Wilbur (1949) explains that two twin data that cannot be separated from each other are communication and society (quoted from Said, 2018). The occurrence of a situation that affects a person's actions as a result of the process of presenting information or messaging from one side to the other is referred to as communication. When the sender and receiver of information reach an understanding while communicating, the communication is considered successful because the main goal of the communication has been realized. Good cooperation between two parties that interact, the clarity of the information presented, and the politeness between the two speakers when conversing are all determinants of communication success. Matthews &

Thakkar (2012) insist that life in the days of globalization makes the communication process vulnerable to various challenges. This is true when it comes to international interactions involving different cultures. He noted that many examples show weaknesses in communication that ultimately affect the performance of an organization.

When communicating, politeness should be emphasized, especially when greeting others by using appropriate expressions for the situation. Proper language must be used when communicating to highlight the value of civility in conversation. Small talk is an integral part of the communication process. They are using small talk when speaking improves the communication process because small talk can create a positive relationship or bond between two parties. According to Jumanto (2014), small talk is a branch of phatic communication. Small talk and phatic communication are the same thing, and as previous reviewers have stated, these two terms have the same purpose, which is to maintain social relations and create intimacy between two people who speak. As a result, even if the content of the interaction is unimportant, small talk serves a social function. Some shy people disregard small talk and choose not to interact with those around them. This attitude not only hurts the individual's communication skills but also impacts the structure of social organization in society.

The rapid globalization with today's modernization has prompted the world community and the Arab community to work with each other in achieving their goals in terms of business, education, medicine, agriculture, and tourism. This requires a robust communication process to exchange opinions and thoughts directly or indirectly. Competency in communication is advantageous in the context of interpersonal, social, and professional relationships (Seong, 2019). Therefore, the multi-cultural world community needs to understand the communication culture of other communities, including the culture of the Arab community, for the interaction process to be smooth. Many studies reveal failures in communication caused by misunderstandings and a lack of understanding of different cultures, such as Shammas (1995), Hamza (2007), Al-Zubeiry, (2013), Raddawi (2014), Ghazzoul (2019) and Thirlwall et al. (2021). The findings of this study demonstrate the need to understand the culture of a foreign society to make communication a success and avoid misunderstandings. Communication failure will not only prevent the two parties from reaching an agreement on a matter but will also trigger a negative perception of a particular culture.

Based on the highlights of the previous studies, it was found that there is still a lack in the study of small talk comparisons between Arab and Malay communities. Even though Arab and Malay communities today are seen to have close cooperation in various aspects such as religion, economy, education, etc. It was found that small talk studies that researchers had conducted were more widely conducted in Western communities, while studies within Arab societies were still less widely carried out. Among the recent studies of small talk in other cultures are the reflections of Bakalar (2014), Di Ferrante (2013), Bayles (2009), Radovanovic & Ragnedda (2012), and Tsang (2008).

It can also be noted that the small talk expression in the Arab community has differences with the Malay culture. For example, it is noted that the Arab community tends to use small talk to respect and speak with other speakers. In verbal communication for example, the Arab community likes to repeat greetings such as "Ahlan wa sahlan" even though the expression has been mentioned at the beginning of the meeting. The same applies to praises that are sometimes considered excessive. This

is not the case in the Malay community. If is not well understood, such a situation will create awkwardness and displeasure especially in the communication of between Arab and Malay speakers. Cui (2015) who noted that without well-established sociolinguistic skills, things will be complicated when it comes to communication with individuals of different cultures. Hence, this study focuses on comparing the small talk functions of the Arab and Malay communities so that it can be well understood to avoid misunderstanding and confusion. It is hoped that understanding this comparison will result in a clear understanding in terms of the use of small talk and its function in communication between two different cultures.

Communication is used by individuals as the main medium for conveying information. Communication affects people in all aspects of life and can be interpreted from various angles and perspectives. According to Yusof et al., (2017) communication is considered a process as a dynamic and open system is needed in every organization. This is supported by Saodah et al., (in Said, 2018) , who explained that communication is fundamental in social structure. The same applies to shelter, clothing and food that are the basic human needs for survival. Humans cannot meet such needs without the process of communication. In addition, Parikh (2000) explains that communication is the process of presenting information that occurs with the exchange of ideas, messages or information whether in the form of behavior, writing, gestures, speech and visuals. This communication process takes place between two or more people in order to reach a mutual agreement.

According to Zakaria (2001), communication is a process of sending messages to get the response of others. Communication between the two parties takes place to obtain a response or response to ensure that the information to be communicated is well understood. According to Johnson (1977), the meaning of communication is the process of uniting individuals into a group. When in the same group, the behavior of the individual can be standardized and a good relationship between them can be built to achieve the same goal. Communication pursuant to Dwihartanti (2004) is the delivery of information and intent from one individual to another. This means that two parties interact for the discussion of important issues and the sharing of ideas in the process of socialization because human beings are constantly in need of each other.

Phatic communication is a form of expression that plays a role in establishing a more friendly relationship between the two parties when chatting. Burnard (2003) states phatic communication does not work to convey information. It is a communication used to increase intimacy between individuals who perform communication. Malinowski (1923) explained in his theory that language is an act of the concept of phatic communication as a type of speech in which the warmth of the relationship is established with the conversation alone and emphasizes how the relationship between two parties can be generated through communication. According to Kaddi (2013), utterances such as "how are you" and "good morning" are frequently used in everyday communication, both consciously and unconsciously, to show friendliness with others. This communication is named as phatic communication.

The theory used by researchers in this study is the Malinowski's Phatic Communion Theory (1923). Based on Figure 2.1, the combined results of the Theory of Phatic Communion founded by Malinowski (1923) and Three Language Function by Bühler (1918) who proposed 3 language functions namely expressive, appellative and

representative, then built Jakobson's Six Language Function (1960) as emotive, connative, referential, phatic, metalingual and phoetic. Later, the phatic concept which is one of the elements of Jakobson's Six Language Function is referred by linguists such as Leech (1983), Cook (1989), Holmes (1992), Kridalaksana (2004), O'Sullivan (1994), Renkema (1993), Schiffrin (1994), Abercrombie (1998), Verschueren (1999), and Saviile-Troike (2003) to conduct more detailed research. As a result of the discussion of the linguists, Jumanto (2014) has formulated 12 functions of phatic communication to maintain good social relations between two parties. The functions of phatic communication are: breaking the silence, starting a conversation, small talk, gossip, extend a conversation, unity or union, creating harmony, creating comfort, expressing empathy, expressing friendship, expressing respect, and courtesy

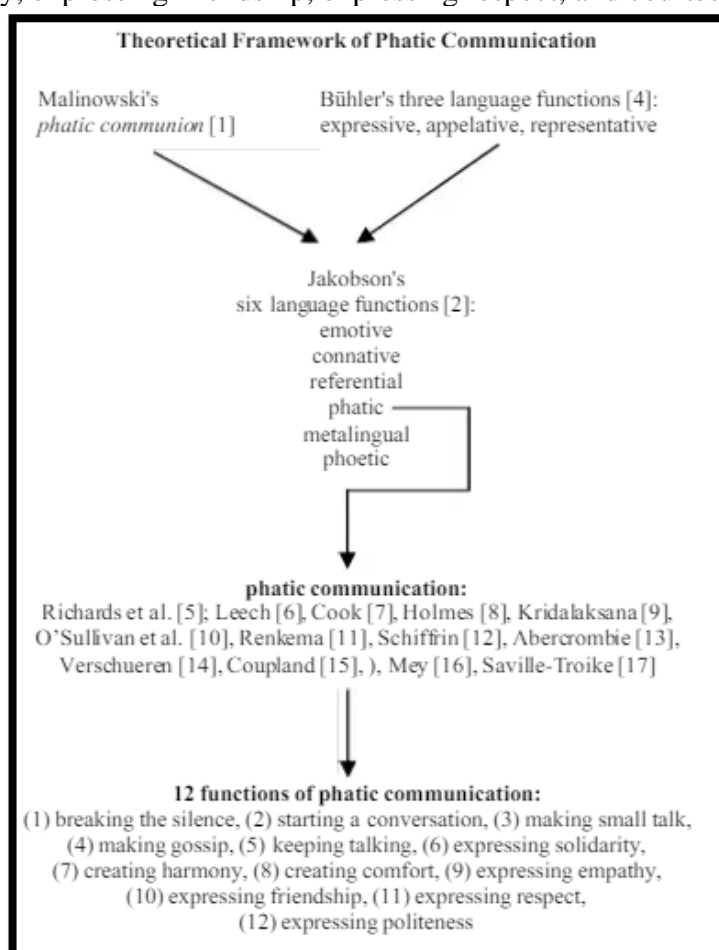


Figure 1: Phatic Communication Theory Framework (Jumanto, 2014)

Small talk is one of the functions of phatic communication. Some past researchers are of the opinion that the two terms are the same. This is supported by the statements of Maíz-Arévalo (2017) and Li (2012), that the phatic communication by Malinowski (1923) is the same as small talk. Schneider (1987) in turn considered it a synonym for phatic communication. Based on these views, it can be concluded here that small talk is the same as phatic communication.

On the general perception, small talk is seen as a trivial, small, light and unimportant thing. Although small talk is a small element of the phatic element of

communication, some people may ignore it and not realize its importance (Indarti, 2016). In fact, small talk helps people to speak well while creating a feeling of harmony and smoothness when interacting. Linguists explain that small talk is a conversation that has no specific topic and is not bound by a clear purpose when two speakers sit down once (Coupland, 2000). Small talk is more about social relationships than the essence of the conversation because according to McCarthy (2003), small talk plays a role in filling the silence and avoiding the situation from becoming cold and unfriendly. Another role of small talk according to (Aslan, 2019) is being able to achieve social goals such as facilitating other people's affairs, forging friendly bonds, winning arguments based on one's perspective.

According to Hazaymeh (2012), small talk or greeting is an important element of polite language. According to him, by greeting a person, the speaker exhibits his friendly and friendly attitude towards the interlocutor. Indirectly, this can build a good and comfortable relationship between them and the communication process goes smoothly. In order to achieve a satisfactory level of efficiency in the use of small talk, some researchers have discussed several steps to use small talk in the study, namely rationality, playing the role of eye contact, displaying non-verbal communication, the use of other people's names, attracting others to tell stories about them, maintaining a light conversation and highlighting positive things (McKay-Semmler & Semmler, 2013). Although small talk is considered a frivolous communication, the ability to interact comfortably and build closer relationships can be achieved by applying the way of using small talk correctly.

Previous studies have produced many findings from communication scholars on the function of phatic communication. Phatic communication plays a role in human interaction especially interpersonal interaction. This is because phatic communication aims to launch conversations, avoid the atmosphere of being quiet and maintain interpersonal relationships among social societies (Bickmore & Cassell, 2000). Mulyana & Rachmad (2005) explained in their study that phatic communication aims to meet the needs of an individual, as entertainment to oneself and others and to launch communication. Although phatic communication seems trivial, it is characterized as a tool to describe good social ties with people around by celebrating the presence of others to strengthen relationships. Thomas et al., (2007) argue that the function of phatic communication is to launch social relationships. Phatic communication is said by Waridin (2008) to have a social function that is used to be friendly and strengthen the social bond between two speakers who communicate. Added Waridin (2008) again, this situation is realized by exchanging words in small talk or brief conversations to form a good social relationship.

Referring to Tubbs & Moss (2012), the function of phatic communication is to strengthen social relationships between each other in addition to developing the personality of a person who is a speaker. In another study, phatic communication served to increase familiarity and make communication more effective when chatting (Kaddi, 2013). According to Kaddi (2013) again, phatic communication also serves as a space filler to avoid the environment becoming stiff and causing intimacy between speakers. It can be seen that phatic communication plays a role in creating intimacy between speakers and is not intended to obtain information (Ramadhanty, 2014). Saputra &

Sofiah (2014) argue that phatic communication can avoid conflict and maintain emotions when interacting with society.

Based on Hanson's (2016) study, the main goal of phatic communication is to maintain a relationship between the two speaking parties. According to Anggraeni (2017) phatic communication is a form of expression or a stale language that plays a role in establishing a more friendly relationship between the two chatting parties. This means that this communication does not place emphasis on the information contained in the interaction. Anggraeni (2017) further explained that multilingual community involvement in phatic communication increases the efficiency of cross-cultural communication. Next, phatic communication also plays a role in terms of showing courtesy, decency, friendliness and maintaining a speaker's relationship with another speaker (Porter, 2017). The essence of phatic communication is less relevant in terms of information content but has maximum importance in the construction of human relations (Gradinaru, 2018). According to Gradinaru (2018) again, although considered a trivial type of speech and having a common quality of information, phatic communication serves to establish a personal bond between two speakers on the basis of friendship without having to fulfill the purpose of conveying an idea.

The role of phatic communication according to Yusuf (2019) is interpersonal communication that serves to showcase friendliness, intimacy and celebrating those around to maintain bonds with others. Vatsadze (2019) explains that phatic communication does not work to exchange information on facts, but it does serve to create a friendly atmosphere, fill the space between communication and to avoid a sense of awkwardness when the atmosphere suddenly falls silent during a conversation. Phatic communication plays a role in creating or building harmonious social bonds through the exchange of words (Sutrisno, 2019). In other words, phatic communication is a kind of unofficial conversation that does not include specific topics of discussion or issues that need to be addressed (Widiana et al., 2020). According to Hidayati & Wardi (2020), phatic communication plays an important role in building, maintaining and managing social relations between two individuals who speak. In the opinion of Niemelä-Nyrhinen & Seppänen (2020), phatic communication is communication with the function of strengthening social ties by establishing and maintaining friendly relationships in interpersonal relationships. To achieve effective phatic communication, politeness and guidance need to be prioritized to interact. This is because phatic communication is a culture of politeness when interacting with each other (Ilmi, 2021). Referring to the function of fat communication that has been discussed, it is seen that this phenomenon is related to the aspect of politeness. The use of phatic communication by communicators while interacting is intended to support the interlocutor and this action is considered polite. To maintain good relationships between speakers, speech that has a phatic function needs to be spoken well so that communication runs smoothly in a harmonious atmosphere. It can also be concluded that communication accompanied by a strategy of politeness has a good impact, especially in terms of social relations.

There are several previous studies that have addressed the question of small talk and aspects related to it. Among the past studies on small talk include the Maros & Mayidin (2011) study, namely the "Types and Functions of Greetings and Perception of Effects in Interaction at the Inquiry Counter". Greeting speech is classified as small talk when communicating. The results presented by the researchers included the respondent's

perception of the aspect of the effect, type and function of the word greeting. Data is collected through greeting observations as a result of initial observations. Based on simple random sampling, the selected respondents were interviewed and recorded. At the end of the study, due to lack of knowledge of Malay manners as well as lack of speaking skills proficiency, the behavior of greetings was less practiced when dealing at the inquiry counter.

Hazaymeh also published a study entitled “Greeting Patterns in Jordanian Arabic” in 2012. This study is qualitative and aims to study various patterns of greetings or small talk used by Jordanians. The study features a review of related literature in addition to discussing the ways small talk is formed in Jordanian Arabic. The study also examined and analyzed a variety of different social factors in the small talk phenomenon. The results showed that greeting patterns have an important role in improving and establishing human relationships.

In 2011, Hunter wrote the study "Small Talk: Developing Fluency, Accuracy and Complexity in Speaking". This article explores a small talk methodology that aims to resolve some tensions to encourage the use of truly communicative language in syllabus and learning sessions. In this observational study, students who are divided into groups to communicate using small talk without help from teachers. Each group is given an assignment to select a topic, prepare new questions and vocabulary to extend the interaction process. The results prove that small talk helps students to interact well in groups and strengthen communication skills.

Another study that discusses small talk is titled "No Offense Guys": Some Ambiguous Functions of Small Talk and Politeness in Workplace Discourse (Valencia, 2009). The study aims to analyze small talk that acts as a form of linguistic decency in an effort to build collaboration or unity in completing work in the workplace. The researchers presented a source of data that was taken from a meeting in Hong Kong. This qualitative study shows the results of the study that small talk plays a role in making the workplace a harmonious and productive working environment.

The next study is “Expertise in Everyday Nurse-Patient Conversations: The Importance of Small Talk”, (Macdonald, 2016). This qualitative study revolves around the importance of small talk in communication between nurses and patients. Researchers conducted this study to research the characteristics of effective communication. The conversation between the nurse and the patient is recorded in audio form as a primary source. Then, the researchers interviewed the nurses using semi-structural questions to obtain secondary data. The findings of the study prove that small talk provides benefits to nurses in terms of the effectiveness of communication with patients and makes it easier for nurses to obtain patient information as well as building close relationships. Small talk also helps nurses to achieve goals such as facilitating the patient's affairs and forging a whole bond.

Low (2021) conducted a study in the development of small talk e-modules for Mandarin in a workplace context. Module development is carried out with the development research design and ADDIE model. The e-module uses video clips and PowToon to present examples of small talk at work. Djuric (2021) also conducted a study to identify how adult language learners can learn small talk to improve their communication. The study found learners who received small talk learning improved

their achievement in small talk use and were able to use various forms of small talk learned in their communication.

Based on previous studies that have been done, it was found that small talk studies have been conducted with much diversity in terms of study focus, study methods, and small talk data analysis methods. Even so, there is a lack of small talk studies for the Arab community. Similarly, cross-cultural studies involving the Arab and Malay communities are still not widely explored. Hence, it is hoped that this study will further strengthen knowledge in areas that study small talk, such as communication, sociolinguistics, and culture.

METHOD

The study is descriptive in nature and uses a qualitative approach. Researchers also use content analysis methods in data collection and analysis. The small talk comparison between the Arab and Malay communities was made through Arabic drama and Malay drama. The Arabic drama used in this study is a Lebanese drama that uses standard Arabic (أوراق الزمن المر). Arabic small talk expression data is collected from episodes 1-5, spanning 216 minutes. For Malay dramas, researchers used Nur2 drama from episodes 1 to 5 for 206 minutes. Data collection begins with immersing and understanding small talk conversations, transcribing data, and transferring it into Microsoft Excel. Data analysis, on the other hand, is carried out by developing themes for small talk based on the communication phase (beginning, middle, and ending), coding the data, and repeated revisions. Researchers use Atlas ti V9 software to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As has been explained, small talk means informal conversations about what is considered unimportant. Using the content analysis method, the researchers analyzed data showing the function of small talk in the Arab and Malay communities through the Arabic drama "أوراق الزمن المر" and the Malay drama "Nur 2". Under the category of small talk functions in the communication of the Arab and Malay communities, the small talk expression is coded based on the division of communication phases (beginning, middle and ending) as proposed by Laver (1975). The data of this study generated 91 small Arabic talk and 100 small Malay talk. Here is an example of the small talk usage function that was collected from this study:

1. Small Talk Function in Arabic drama "أوراق الزمن المر"

- a) The function of small talk in the beginning phases of communication in the Arabic drama "أوراق الزمن المر"

Table 1: Small Talk Function In The Beginning Phase

Arabic	English	Situation	Function
دكتور خليل:	<i>Dr Khalil:</i>	The speaker awaits his son's return	Breaking the silence
تسافرين جميلة	<i>Let me look at you a little.</i>	Due to the long-undiscovered longing for her son,	Prevents the atmosphere from becoming stiff
وتعودين أجمل	<i>pretty the</i>	the speaker begins communication	Increase intimacy
دعيني أتأملك قليلا	<i>time you travel, and</i>		Small talk expressed at the beginning of communication by speakers plays a role in breaking the silence and avoiding the atmosphere becoming stiff. In the context of

even prettier with his daughter family, communication that begins with small
when you with the use of small talk can increase intimacy and strengthen the
come back talk. family structure.

- b) Small talk function in the middle phase of communication in the Arabic drama "أوراق الزمن المر"

Table 2: Small Talk Function In The Middle Phase Of Communication In Arabic Drama

Arabic	English	Situation	Function
رغدة: ولكنه شهر	<i>Raghda:</i> <i>But it's</i> <i>only a</i> <i>month</i> <i>after all</i>	The speaker retaliated for his father's nagging for having left the house for too long. The fact is that they are apart for only a month.	Develop a topic of conversation This dialogue indicates the phrase that the speaker replies to the listener in the middle of communication to develop the topic of conversation. Small talk in the middle of communication also makes communication that takes place more smoothly and not rigidly.

- c) Small talk function in the end phase of communication in the Arabic drama "أوراق الزمن المر"

Table 3: Small Talk Function In The Ending Phase Of Communication In Arabic Drama

Phrase	Terjemahan	Situation	Function
وحيد: السيدة وصال على عجلة من أمرها، رافقتكم السلامة	<i>Waheed:</i> <i>Mrs. Wesal</i> <i>is in hurry.</i> <i>Good bye.</i>	This dialogue is a dialogue rather than a speaker who wants to ask for themselves after providing help to the listener and family.	1. End a conversation 2. Rejecting the invitation well The speaker expresses small talk at the end of the communication to end the conversation and reject the listener's invitation well.

2. Small talk function in Malay drama "Nur 2"

- a) Small talk function in the beginning phase of communication in Malay drama "Nur 2"

Table 4: Small Talk Function In The Beginning Phase Of Communication

Malay	English	Situation	Function
Amirul: Wah, sedapnya bau!	<i>Amirul:</i> <i>Wow,</i> <i>that</i> <i>smells so</i> <i>good.</i>	This dialogue is spoken by speakers when in the kitchen for breakfast. The speaker responded to his mother's call and then went into the kitchen to make a speech. The speaker praised the smell of his mother's cooking at the beginning of communication.	Breaking the silence Starting a talk The speaker uses small talk at the beginning of communication to break the silence and begin to talk to his mother. The praise given again strengthened intimacy with his mother. The speech of the speaker seems unpretentious but this small talk is able to strengthen the intimacy of the relationship between two parties.

- b) Small talk function in the middle phase of communication in Malay drama "Nur 2"

Table 5: Small Talk Function In The Middle Phase Of Communication

Malay	English	Situation	Function
Ustaz Adam: Terima kasih mak	<i>Ustaz</i> <i>Adam:</i> <i>Thank</i> <i>you, mom</i>	The speaker's mother persuaded him to consult his ex-wife because they were still in the iddah period. The speaker's mother did not have the heart to see the state of the speaker who was always thinking about the ex-wife	To respect Take care of the heart and feelings Thank you as a token of appreciation for her mother giving her blessing and advice. Small talk in the middle of communication is important to express respect between the presenter and the recipient of the message in addition to maintaining the heart and feelings when communicating

c) Small talk function in the ending phase of communication in Malay drama "Nur 2"

Table 6: Small Talk Function In The End Phase Of Communication

Malay	English	Situation	Function
Ustaz Assalamualaikum	Adam: <i>Ustaz Adam: Assalamualaikum m</i>	The speaker wants to get out of work. To end the conversation and ask yourself to finish his affairs outside, the speaker reveals the expression of greetings.	To ask permission for leaving End conversations and meetings well The small talk phrase "Assalamualaikum m" is pronounced by the speaker as a sign to ask for permission for leaving. Greetings are given to end a conversation or meeting in a harmonious state

Similarities and Differences of Small Talk Functions in The Communication of Arab and Malay Communities

The similarities and differences of small talk functions in the initial phase, the middle phase and the final phase of communication for the community in both Arabic drama and Malay drama can be summarized through the following table:

Table 7: Small Talk Functions In The Beginning Phase

Arab		Malay	
Frequency	Function	Frequency	Function
9	Breaking the silence Start a conversation Increase intimacy Expressing respect for the listener Prevents the atmosphere from becoming stiff Make communication more harmonious Begging with others Creating a feeling of comfort Strengthening fraternal relations	5	Breaking the silence Start a conversation Creating intimacy Showing respect for the listener Greet the listener politely

Table 8: Small Talk Function In The Middle Phase

Arab		Malay	
Frequency	Function	Frequency	Function
10	Filling the abyss of silence Showing respect for speakers Avoiding sensitive topics Develop a topic of conversation Creating harmony Boost conversations Avoiding misunderstandings Increase intimacy	9	Filling the abyss of silence Showing respect for speakers Avoiding discussion of sensitive issues Change the topic of conversation Take care of the heart and feelings of the speaker Reject the invitation well Creating a relaxed atmosphere Respecting listeners Launching the communication process

Change the topic of
 conversation
 Interrupt the conversation

Table 9: Small Talk Function In The Ending Phase Of Communication

Arab		Malay	
Frequency	Function	Frequency	Function
7	End the conversation well Ended the meeting well Reject the invitation well Maintaining good relations Maintaining fraternal/fraternal relations Maintain warmth Avoid discouraged listeners	6	End the conversation well End the meeting well Ask yourself politely Showing respect Avoid discouraged listeners Avoiding misunderstandings

Below are the overall small talk functions found in this study (without looking into the communication phase):

Table 10: Small Talk Function In The Arabic Drama المرأى الزمن and The Malay Drama "Nur2"

Small talk function in Arabic drama	Small talk function in Malay drama
Breaking the silence	Breaking the silence
Start a conversation	Start a conversation
Increase intimacy	Creating intimacy
Expressing respect for the listener	Showing respect for the listener
Prevents the atmosphere from becoming stiff	Greet the listener politely
Make communication more harmonious	Avoiding discussion of sensitive issues
Begging with others	Change the topic of conversation
Creating a feeling of comfort	Take care of the heart and feelings of the speaker
Strengthening fraternal relations	Reject the invitation well
Avoiding sensitive topics	Creating a relaxed atmosphere
Develop a topic of conversation	Respecting listeners
Boost conversations	Launching the communication process
Avoiding misunderstandings	End the conversation well
Increase intimacy	Ended the meeting well
Change the topic of conversation	Ask yourself politely
Interrupt the conversation	Avoid discouraged listeners
End the conversation well	Avoiding misunderstandings
Ended the meeting well	
Reject the invitation well	
Maintaining good relations	
Maintain warmth	
Avoid discouraged listeners	

The researchers found there were some similarities and differences between the two societies in Arabic and Malay drama as follows:

1. Both the Arab and Malay communities showed almost the same small talk function according to the phase, namely in the initial phase of communication, the middle phase of communication and the final phase of communication. In the initial phase of communication, small talk serves to start a conversation and break the silence between the speakers. Whereas in the middle phase, small talk serves to develop a topic of conversation, boost the conversation and fill the gap in silence. In the final phase, the function of small talk is to end the conversation and the meeting well.
2. Both Arab and Malay societies show more small talk function in the middle of communication than the initial and end phases of communication.

3. There are similarities and stacks for some functions in each phase. This situation applies to both Arabic and Malay dramas. For example, in the initial and middle phases there is the same functions that are to create warmth.
4. The function of small talk in both society in Arabic drama and Malay drama is not focused on one phase and purpose only. For example, in the Malay community, the small talk expression "Assalamualaikum" can work in the initial phase of communication to greet someone when meeting or meeting. This greeting expression also works in the final phase of communication as a sign of self-indulgence. The same applies to the Arab community which is inherently synonymous with the expression of greetings in their daily communication. The Arab community greeted others to start a conversation with the phrase "السلام عليكم" and end the conversation also with the same expression. However, there is little difference in terms of using small talk according to the function at the beginning, middle and end of communication. Here are the differences in small talk function between the Arab and Malay communities in this study:
5. The most significant difference is that society in Arabic drama uses small talk in the middle phase to interrupt the conversation. The community in the Malay drama does not interfere when others are talking. This difference symbolizes the function of small talk in the middle of communication in different Arab and Malay communities according to the situation and context of the conversation.
6. Society in Arabic dramas uses small talk in the phase of ending communication to reject the invitation of others well. While the community in Malay drama uses small talk in the middle phase of communication to reject the invitation well.
7. There are differences for some functions in each phase. This situation applies to both Arabic and Malay dramas. For example, in the initial phase of small talk is used to start a conversation and break the silence and create a sense of comfort to communicate. In the middle phase, small talk is used to increase warmth in the month. Whereas in the final phase, it is used to harmoniously end conversations and meetings.
8. The findings of this study also showed that if the small talk function was analyzed without reference to the conversation phase, it was found that the small talk function in Arabic drama (22) is more than the small talk function in Malay drama (17). This reflects the Arab culture that is very fond of snobbery and shows warmth in their daily communication.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the Arab and Malay communities attach great importance to decency and harmony in communication. Small talk in the touch of the Arab and Malay communities indeed exists and has a specific purpose and function. The Arab and Malay communities use small forms of small talk such as praise, respect, pranks, questioning, greeting, appreciation, self-asking, questioning, message, invitation, gratitude, apology, prayer, convolution, and interrupting. This diverse form of small talk makes the communication process more vibrant, and the warmth between the two parties can be nurtured in line with the definition of small talk that prioritizes social relations over the core of the conversation. The functions of the small talk used by both societies are diverse and can be identified in the early stages, the middle, and at

the end of the conversation. This study found that there was no significant difference between the small talk functions of the Arab and Malay communities in each phase of the conversation. Arabic and Malay speakers were found to use small talk either at the beginning, middle, and end of the discussion with the same function. In the early phases, both societies use small words to break the silence and start a conversation. In the middle of the communication phase, small talk is used to fill the gap of silence and develop the topic of discussion. At the end of communication, in turn, a small address is used to end the conversation and end the meeting well. However, for the small talk function as a whole (without reference to the conversation phase), it was found that the Arab community used small talk for a more comprehensive function of the Malay community. Such as interrupting conversations, strengthening relationships, maintaining family ties, and being in a relationship. However, each small talk function is closely related to the conversation phase, the context of the situation, the topic of conversation, the status of the speaker and the listener, as well as the distance of the relationship between the speaker and the listener, in addition to cultural factors.

It is hoped that studies in the field of small talk can be further expanded with new explorations with different focuses and methods. The use of other instruments in data collection can also be used, such as direct observation of other cultures around the world, the use of discourse tests (DCT) on study samples as well as the use of survey methods and interviews. Small talk studies on students at the school level should also be developed to survey the trends of today's students in using small talk. Mastering small talk that begins at an earlier age can produce a society that dominates high communication efficiency.

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