

ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the patterns of behavior and meaning of trash-talking in Mobile Legends using Social Cognitive Theory and Heidegger's Hermeneutic Phenomenology. Trash-talking is a form of verbal communication used by players to express emotions, show dominance, or influence opponents in a competitive context. The research method is qualitative, employing a hermeneutic phenomenological approach and Van Manen's data analysis technique. The research informants are active Mobile Legends players. The results indicate that trash-talking behavior does not occur randomly but is influenced by reciprocal interactions between players, the environment, and behavior (reciprocal determinism). Additionally, factors such as behavioral ability, expectations, support, and Self-Efficacy also shape players' motivations. From a phenomenological perspective, this behavior is interpreted as a form of self-expression, emotional release, and part of the gaming culture considered normal within certain communities. Trash-talking also serves as a marker of identity, group solidarity, and even a communication strategy. This research contributes theoretically to the study of interpersonal communication in the digital realm while providing practical insights for game developers and player communities to create healthier and more meaningful gaming spaces.

Keywords: *Trash-talking, Online Game, Social Cognitive Theory, Hermeneutic Phenomenology, Interpersonal Communication.*