



## Communication as a Factor of Achieving a Holistic Being in the Age of Networked Media

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**Abstract:** The problem of communication has always been in the center of attention of philosophers. Today it became of current interest because the world is changing and becoming very complicated. Human's position in the world is unstable and it is becoming difficult to survive in a total communication. Virtual communication "displaces" real "meeting" I and Thou. Media just complicate existing structures of communication. In this turbulent world the younger generation (Digital Natives) still needs mentors which are able to direct their intuition and energy in creative direction, to create a sphere of dialogue, to cultivate harmonious personalities. Communication is the substance of human existence, but in the discourse of the media features of communication complicated, they take the nature of rhizome, become chaotic. At the same time human can establish harmony with the outside world and him- (or her-) self. But he (or she) can't overcome the effects of the media (the acceleration of information; the simplification of information; the likening of information; the "dissolution" of person) alone. Therefore, finding ways to harmonize communication in the era of networked media becomes the priority. That is why the main result of the study is identifying requirements of communication which can help human to find announced harmony.

**Keywords:** communication, media, modernity, integrity, holistic being,

### 1. Introduction

In one of his last performances in front of scientific audience M. Mamardashvili suggested the person to be an artificial being. Human has been made, not born. Human formation occurs in the complex combination of processes, training, socialization, education and communication. Philosophical

tradition has given special attention to communication. The problem of communication has always been the center of attention of philosophers, artists, theologians, etc., but it acquires special significance in the modern world, "today", in "techno-reality" that determines calculation (M. Heidegger). Communication of modern human is implemented in a



turbulent world (A. Toffler), when everything is going to change in an instant, in some cases, is going to change to be destroyed. In such destruction human doesn't have so much time to understand human: there is no time to understand him-(her-) self, no time to "penetrate" in the other. "Dead" stamps replaced "living" words, functionally-role communication dominated the personality-oriented communication. Manipulative communication components are enhanced through the promotion the information about technology manipulative behavior and neuro-linguistic programming. But the problem is not just that. The world is changing and becoming so more and more complicated. Human's position in the world is unstable. It is becoming difficult to survive in a world of total communication. Virtual communication "displaces" real "meeting" I and Thou.

The problem of the culture of communication is not new. Many researchers pay close attention to the different sections of this problem. Recently rarer works of the problems of culture and communication are increasingly working on particular aspects of the stated problems: the culture of the

business and professional communication (C. Hoelscher, M. Kramer, A. Zanini, etc.), the foreign language communication culture (M. Rezvani, N. Safahani), the culture of communication in terms of computerization (J. Brommelhoff, S. Curtis, S. Horning, R. Melrose, T. Narvaez). Particular attention in this study should be given to those few works that focus on the culture of communication itself. One of the most popular points of view expressed by the German researcher G. Ershoff, who had been paraphrasing J. Berlin, the position, which can be expressed as a dyad: communication "from" and communication "for". It seems, that G. Ershoff defends the position of communication "from" and the culture of communication perceived as a direct set of rules and restrictions, organizing a space for life. In turn, the authors of this manuscript uphold the position of communication "for", perceiving communication culture not as hard rules engine, but as a way to harmonize human life in the era of networked media.

## **2. Being of human in the age of networked media**

With the introduction media into the world of the XX-XXI centuries



there is a need to analyze changing patterns of life, to understand how these changes have affected the human being. Modern human lives in an era of networked media. It is not necessary to draw conclusions about what the most people completely and permanently immersed in virtual reality and completely lost touch with the outside world (that showed us films "The Matrix", "eXistenZ", "Videodrome" and others). Modern human moved the key components of his being (work, study and leisure) into the world of media and, above all, in the Internet. The fact is that today's children have become "digital natives" (M. Prensky). This phenomenon should not be criticized, the criticism is not effective. We should work with this phenomenon. One of the priorities could be the organization of productive dialogue and the formation of identity in terms of communicative culture, which could help this formatted identity successfully master the modern communicative situation.

For centuries, society evolved tradition, according to which the experience was handed down from generation to generation. The productivity of this tradition is not

in doubt. Fathers passed on the knowledge to their children. This knowledge was often practical, it has a direct impact on the specific existential structure. Confucius in "Lun Yu" approved norm: the eldest in the family is the father (no matter how many years he may has); order in the house after the death of his father must be saved for three years. The Confucius' philosophical discourse introduced the principle "li" as a structural beginning of the universe: the veneration of elders as the holders of a unique life experience. Today, fathers are often "ask" for knowledge to children. This idea resonates with the concept of M. Prensky about Digital Natives and Digital Tribes (Prensky, 2001). People, who were born in the digital era, the American writer calls the "digital natives", the rest of us – "immigrants". In other words, the age-old tradition of generating and transmitting knowledge has been mutated. Today children taught the older generation, for example, how to communicate in the network. It changes the structure of knowledge; new forms of communication have been appeared. Digital natives, in comparison with their parents, have the organic skills of knowing, how to use equipment and technologies.



Today person is not required to be a source of information. Human should find the information, especially the one, which was created by someone else. If technology is the "habitat" of natives, natives are the owners of the knowledge.

M. Prensky's position about digital natives is, no doubt, optimistic. Moreover, it is techno optimistic. The problem with this approach lies in the fact that the "children" are intuitive to technology, technology is available to them, but children do not create technology. Moreover, they do not tend to penetrate on the mental level of technology or to understand how these techniques work. D. Rushkoff has considered this problem from a different angle, pointing to the fact that the younger generation is only capable of adapting to the existing technology, rather than to learn how to adjust the technology to fit their needs and requirements (Rushkoff, 2010). It is the consumer's position, rather than the creator's. Using smartphone or tablet by a child under the age of one year does not guarantee the ripening him (or her) as expert in the field of IT-technologies. "Children" naturally exist in the

world of media technology. But this world is created for them by their "fathers", the most advanced in the field of media technology. Media just complicate existing structures of being. In this turbulent world the younger generation still need mentors, which are able to direct intuition and the energy of youth in creative direction, to create a sphere of dialogue, to cultivate harmonious personalities.

### **3. The theme of communication in philosophical discourse**

A the problem of harmonization of communication in media' term is one of the most complicated. Communication is understood by us as the type of activity (communication for communication, i. e. for the sake of the values that it signed) and as a subsystem of all activities (communication, "interwoven" in the substantive work and its causes). The concept of "communication" covers any interaction: direct and indirect, real and imagined, socially positive and negative, that is caused by "malicious feelings". Generic in relation to the concept of "dialogue" serves the philosophical category of "interaction". Community necessarily implies the interaction of two or more people. Only as a result



of communication person perceives others as himself. Communication is the substance of human existence. Paraphrasing J.-P. Sartre, human doomed to communicate even in conditions of strict sensory deprivation. In this case, there is a "self-communication" (K. Stanislavsky) or auto communication. However, loneliness is the constant companion of communication. In contrast to the loneliness communication is not substantial. The experience of loneliness means that our expectations regarding communication with the world, whether the human world or spiritual beings were not justified. Do not confuse loneliness with solitude. Person chooses solitude freely; loneliness is not the result of free choice.

In the context of our study we would like to make a few comments on some of the important properties of the communication. Firstly, communication, unlike other forms of interaction is expressed by a verbal constituent. Secondly, communication provides us with considerable freedom. But it isn't about absolute freedom. Let us recall the concept of I. Kant of unsociable sociability and the I.

Ilyin's thought about communication in the broad sense of the term, which is the unintended and arbitrary, semi-conscious experience of two people in one place. Freedom implies the communicant's responsibility for the field of communication and his (or her) role in it.

Moreover, it is logical to accept communication as a necessary form of homo sapiens' existence. People come into a situation of communication for not to lose their human nature. Finally, communication is interaction. There are cases when people come into the situation of communication without getting anything in return. However, not every act of interaction can be called communication. Meanwhile, today in any communication person receives new information, including excess information, which is irrelevant to him (or her).

These positions create a sketch of what is communication. In the discourse of the media features of communication complicated, they take the nature of rhizome, become chaotic. Tradition of media philosophy resonates with this thesis. Media philosophy considers



media not only as means of communication, but as a medium in which modern human lives. Media has turned from the information agent into the sphere of human existence. It has a direct impact on the specificity of human existence in the XXI century, including the impact on the shape and the nature of the communication. Therefore, thinking about the culture of communication we should ask about the formation of conditions and prerequisites for harmonious communication which are adequate to media modernity.

#### **4. Media as an environment of communication**

The problem of interpretation of media is the cornerstone of humanitarian thought. We can designate effects in the media reality: the acceleration of information; the simplification of information; the likening of information; the "dissolution" of person.

The acceleration of information seems intuitive in comparison with the others. The instantaneous transmission of information is extremely reduced distance between people by telephone and Internet. In fact, for communication I and Thou

(M. Buber) do not have to be in a single spatial dimension, they can be separated by kilometers, keeping, however, the attitude toward each other as to "Thou". Information is renewable and self-renewable. Updating occurs in an extremely short time. Modern human, in turn, is obliged to follow the relevant information. This leads to the necessity of reduction the form and the content. Just few people today are able to "boast" of their acquaintance with the original "The Creation of Adam" by Michelangelo or "Mona Lisa" by L. da Vinci. However, the vast majority are familiar with the copies, which are wandering over the Internet or were settled in the print media. Some people start their acquaintance with the work of high art not even with a replica, but, for example, with demotivators which are often contrary to the original. This is reductio, but thanks to a distorted copy of Internet users come into contact with art. Paradoxically, sometimes a copy creates for ones, who stare, pure aesthetic pleasure. N. Zorkaya in one of her research gave us the example of the Soviet schoolgirl who was disappointed by the original of "Mona Lisa". Not the enigmatic smile that is hidden in the walls of the Louvre forced a young





girl to feel the work of the great master. Soviet postcard or reproduction in the magazine, which was available to thousands or even millions of other Soviet citizens encouraged young mind to seek beauty.

M. Buber distinguished between two forms of human's relationship with other: I – Thou and I – It. Speaking to Thou is to be an equal to yourself. Today communication put this truth under the question. Talking to not closed ones turns modern human to a continuous search for favorable / beneficial relations. The illustration of "It" is Johnny Mnemonic, who lost his human nature, turned into an ordinary flash card. "Johnny Mnemonic" is only a fiction, filmed cyberpunk. However, the relation to other only as to the source of information is distributed in the situation of communication. Thou transformed into He / She or It. Communication is profitable only if He / She possess the information, otherwise they are not interesting. This situation can be described by the formula: know / willing to share information – you are interesting for me; if you do not know information you have to find it; you cannot / do not wish to receive information – he / she are not interesting for me.

- In D. Camper's work we find the following lines:
- Three, two, one, zero
- Space, area, line, point
- Body, image, letter, time
- Feeling, vision, reading, calculation (Kamper, 2010: 78).

And further: "When it is delivered to the point and finally converted human experience from the reading to the calculation thinking, acting and suffering humanity falls into nothingness. In this case the world devoid of spirit (human) and the callous body (ground) faced in irresistible ratio. It is the "top" and the end of the Cartesian" (Kamper, 2010: 78-79). What should we read in marginal philosopher's lines? Probably, that we should recognize the XXI century as the result of the progress, the bricks at the base of which were laid in the rationalist thought of the XVII century. This rationalism movement goes from space to the point, from fullness to emptiness, from being to nothingness. From themes of transhumanism we take very questionable images of people, who were transformed in information ("Lucy", "Transcendence"). However, referring to the reality, we refer to



real people who violate harmony between body and spirit, desire and thought.

Establish harmony with the outside world and him- (or her-) self-modern human can. But he (or she) can't overcome the effects of the media alone. Therefore, finding ways to harmonize human communication in the era of networked media becomes the priority.

#### **5. Communication requirements of modernity to a person who has fallen into a situation of communication**

Analysis of the current media reality shows that the most "deficit" may be performed by emotional and voluntary active components of communication. Communicative situation characterizes the external conditions of communication, and defines a set of communicative qualities required for the implementation of the need for communication. Communicative situation takes into account the dominant need for communication and less urgent, but nonetheless essential terms of the aforesaid needs. At this level of analysis, we can approximately determine the determinants of subjective

preferences of a communicatively-compensatory stream.

Social and psychological "barriers", progressing in the modern business and private contacts make high demands to the presence of the person in reasonable activity in communication. This activity is not discouraging in communication; it's a failure in communication. The vector of communicative activity can have two directions: on themselves and on others. In the case of focus on the completion of missing communication it takes place in the context of consumption, with a predominance of the consumption of the active component of communication. This orientation mostly characterizes people with hyperactivity level of emotional control on basal emotional regulation. "The huge demand of communication makes the subject of indiscriminate contacts. Entering into any random community, he seeks to learn from the sudden contact the maximum pleasure to feel the approval, the sympathy of all its members" (Lebedinsky, 1990: 54-55). Despite the fact that the study of V. Lebedinsky is devoted to the study of emotional disorders in childhood, it can be extrapolated to other age groups. For a person in





the present format compensatory intercourse the important fact is the momentary emotional reinforcement. At first a teen getting these reinforcements, becomes a member of small social groups, subcultures. Some of them still exist today, others were formed on the previously existed ruins.

That what the cosplay is, members of which find themselves not strange and abnormal, but such as they are in the company of their movement. It is an expression of blissful satisfaction. Continuous expectation of emotional support is an opposite effect. For example, Homo Media can constant update his (or her) profile pages in anticipation of everlasting message or changing information in the profiles of "friends".

Excessive focus on getting emotional components through communication facilitates the absorption of the individual with addictive behavior, which is characterized by "the desire to escape from reality by changing his mental state" (Lebedinsky, 1990: 5). Note that among the means used by the addicted there are indicated not only psychotropic substances, and certain forms of activity (activities). Communication as an activity may

really well act as one of the common ways of addictive behavior.

The transfer of the choice of the activity in dealing with yourself on other, strengthening the activity of the beginning, followed by the real overcompensation is accompanied by personal growth. It is inevitably linked with the optimization of the circle of communication on the basis of its thorough selectivity.

Selectivity in communication is a necessary requirement to the culture of communication. It is closely connected with the responsibility of communicating. A sense of responsibility to You, We, to their own I should be preceded by the election of a circle, content, style of communication. "Being responsible – wrote V. L. Frankl – means to be selective". (Frankl, 1990: 39).

Aristotle drew attention to the need to select the best social circle and applying to the friendships he wrote: "If there are a lot of friends, it is difficult to give them Love individually" (Aristotle, 1984: 373-374). Even more categorical idea of fruitfulness for



the individual reduction of unnecessary contacts, the desire to avoid a multiplicity of intentional interpersonal relations is expressed by V. V. Rozanov: "The society, surrounding people make our soul less, rather than bigger ... Those you can find one or two in a lifetime. Only in them the soul blossoms" (Rozanov, 1990: 88). In this statement it's rightly pointed out that, guided by a plurality of contacts, people just wasting themselves and get really only in the rare relationships that represent a special work of the soul.

Thus, it is necessary to distinguish between purposeful, rational due to a narrowing of the circle of friends by forced, imposed on the individual development of its individual features of the emotional sphere. In the first case the subject of communication is not burdened by the restriction of the circle of communication, because it is done on the basis of free choice, in the second there is the ambivalence of communicative experiences of the individual. So, with the weakening of the functions of emotional regulation at the level of emotional control a person avoids communication due to be tested in the process of implementation of

discomfort. In a situation similar to the subject of a dialogue "cannot resist the pressure of the other person's effectiveness, cannot refuse him, and pays for it a feeling of exhaustion, fatigue, sacrifices his own sensory preferences" (Lebedinsky, 1990: 64). At the same time, "like people usually feel the need to communicate and often violate the prudent avoidance rule, which gives them a special roughness in contact" (Lebedinsky, 1990: 64). Such is the communication of young people on the Internet, when they lose the thread of regulation of their time, transformed into "prisoners" of communication mediated by technology.

Choosing where necessary compensatory communicative channel is justified by a number of other psychological characteristics of the individual and their dominant behavior-based forms. Typical in this respect are those forms of behavior as narcissistic and conformism. "People with narcissistic behavior disorders, – noted C. Korolenko and T. Donskaya – are characterized by a grandiose sense of self-worth. They constantly exaggerate their abilities, achievements ... They need



compliments" (Korolenko, 1990: 189). It seems that Instagram was created with the purpose of nurturing the Narcissus themselves.

Human adaptability in communication knows no boundaries and results in a total unique human ability to "transformations" (E. Canneti). But at the same time there is always a danger of conformity. For a conformist real communication gives a sense of social identity with a group. In principle, any person "if he does not belong to any community, if his life does not get any sense or direction, feels like a speck of dust" (Fromm, 1989: 28). Conformity in communion is manifested on consumer orientation level: dissolving in the group the subject does not bring in his personal capacity standing, but only "makes" something of value out of it. It does not enrich the group with his presence in it, for showing "little confidence" (Rozanov). "Weak, infantile" real me, – said E. T. Sokolova – tends to converge with strong or great people, compensating for the weakness of their own exploitation force others" (Sokolova, 1989: 76). This applies primarily to associations, epitomizes

prestige to the individual interests and activities.

Surprisingly, the exaggerated focus on the huge success makes real gains unattractive, does not bring joy. Surroundings themselves do not cause interest, sympathy, manipulating objects often serve to confirm the extremely inflated self-esteem. Hence, the greatest preference in communication is sycophants, deceitful, unprincipled people conformists. That is, those who can allow such manipulation. The said above makes it quite understandable inclination of narcissistic personality to the illusory forms of self-assertion and overcompensation by means of communication. For itself "narcissism – according to Erich Fromm – is an excessive compensation for the lack of self-love" (Fromm, 1989: 104). Compensation sometimes is quite aggressive. Especially evident is in the stage of fading compensation, accompanied by explosions of narcissistic aggression towards others, not confirmatory grandiose "self" of the subject of narcissistic behavior. In crisis situations this aggression can be pointed to the subject and himself, creating the possibility of suicidal behavior.



In recognition of the total heterogeneity of modern society, often accompanied by an explosion that destroys its intolerance of any manifestations of otherness, an essential component of the culture of communication should recognize tolerance in communication. V. A. Lektorsky, for example, analyzes four models of tolerance "tolerance as indifference", "tolerance as the impossibility of mutual understanding," "tolerance as condescending" and "tolerance as an extension of its own experience and critical dialogue" (Lektorsky 2001: 19-31). Only the latest definition of tolerance in communication contains an intention to real overcompensation.

The high pace of change of communication environment created by modern communicative situation requires considerable communicative personality mobility, variability of communicative behavior, ability to move quickly and efficiently.

Communicative activity overcomes communication barriers not only in the dialogue, but possesses also a communicative appeal of the subject, which makes it a desirable partner in communication. It is necessary to

distinguish the attractiveness manifested in short-term relationships and long-term relationships. Depending on the success in the emotional, intellectual and good-will contact an attraction in communication can occur on these levels, with the predominance in any of them. These features make the appeal in communicating complex its unambiguous assessment. Dominating in any of the things makes up the communicative appeal; it affects the choice of the direction of communicatively-compensatory bonds. It can be assumed that the ease and success of the establishment of the surface or noncommittal contacts, while it is difficult in maintaining and deepening the long-term, personalized relationship forms, a type of a peculiar sprinter in communication. The attractiveness and charm is enough for a long period of time. The stronger the first impression is, the faster it dissipates at a close acquaintance. Sprinter knows about it, feels frustrated by constant defeats in the long-term relationship and begins to avoid them. Desire to dominate makes a "sprinter" unscrupulous in contacts. Search for new sensations and new sources easily includes him in the



scope of the secondary compensation thirst for confirmation of self-worth, pushing him into the way of overcompensation through illusory means of communication.

The visual appeal plays an important role on the early stages of establishing the contact into communication. Observations suggest "the existence of a stereotype" means "beautiful, good" at the same time, "people with disabilities stigmatize, attributing them to various vices" (Gozman, 1987: 48). Marked stereotypes are not insurmountable and can be dispelled. However, in certain situations and for certain contingent emotional components and emotional scores can be sufficiently great. Full communication invokes difficulties, such as cosmetic defects, obesity, stuttering, many chronic diseases (Shafranskaya, 1981: 212-221; Panferov, 1968: 235-240; Sokolova, 1989: 26-35). Attributing to others exaggerated attention to the peculiarities of their physical appearance, and in fact, projecting them on their own experiences. Person builds his communicative behavior in accordance to the reactions that involves entering into contact with others. An obstacle in establishing contacts with others is

not acting such as, appearance, behavior and communication by a person that has physical disabilities and cosmetic defects.

Not having a communicative attraction some people are expelled from the prestigious, and often from quite ordinary conditions of communication or participate in them in a subordinate role. They simply cannot compete with more attractive peers. It becomes a very urgent problem of "marginalization" as a special category, encompassing not only the students, as is often assumed, but other ageing and professional category.

For example, Stepan Savelyev's story received wide fame. Stepan's classmates did not understand and did not accept him because of his childlike views and interests. Stepan's mother placed post in VKontakte, which asked users of the social network to support her son. As a result, today Stepan is the most popular account holder of VKontakte. Not having a communicative attraction boy managed to gain popularity among classmates due to the situation of the electronic communication initiated by his mother.



It would be a mistake to be limited in assessing the attractiveness of communication at the level of only the external data of the subject. Communicative competence attractiveness is inseparable from communication. Competence in communication is required on emotional, intellectual and activity levels. Subjective difficulties in establishing interpersonal contacts occur in individuals with poor social perception. Failure to properly evaluate the condition of the partner and his position in the act of communication to select the appropriate line of communicative behavior can act as a factor of dissociation of personality, with its direct domestic and industrial environments. The presence of irrational components as a result of mutual reflection communicants each other facilitates the occurrence of illusory-compensatory communication.

We mainly pointed out such subjective determinants of communicative compensatory processes that introduced the undesirable forms of compensation. They cause the greatest concern, often characterized by a negative

impact on development and creative self-realization of the individual.

## 6. Conclusion

The era of networked media has brought "new" forms and "new" formats in the communication. Many of them (for example, social networking, email, instant messages and comments on websites) significantly reduced the space between I and other. To form the communication is not necessarily to be "face to face" with your companion today. Although this form of communication took place anciently with the development of means of communication (writing, telephone, television, etc.). These funds have made communication of people very effective, expanded the range of potentially communicating. At the same time, the era of new media has brought its own rules to the game of communication. Communication via the Internet became impersonal. Under the monitor screen vanished unique personality. This is an anonymous "someone" or "something" endowed with the network code and the name. Communication with this "someone" can be started and stopped at any time. It does not require serious emotional effort, existential costs. This





communication does not use the work of the human soul. The problem lies in the fact that communicate to other, as well as to the whole world how to It, human him- (or her-) self is transformed into It (M. Heidegger). In the discourse of media philosophy the problem of human's losing existential nature is very acute. Therefore, in the article we have tried to reflect the requirements of the "new" reality to the person, who is entering into the situation of communication.

The main result of the study is the identification of communication requirements of modernity to the human who is falling into situation of communication. Among them should be marked: emotional reinforcement; selectivity in communication; overcoming narcissism and conformism; tolerance in communication; communicative activity and the attractiveness of the subject of communication; competence in communication. These requirements, according to our point of view, are able to harmonize the existence of modern human.

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