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CHARACTERISTICS OF ONLINE COMMUNICATION. ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

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Title: "Characteristics of Online Communication. Advantages and Limitations"
Abstract. Online communication remains today predominant in influencing members of society through the use of new technical ways of communication. Traditional communication is thus being replaced by new ways. The media plays a huge role in disseminating information. According to Trappel, online media is a stand-alone genre. They meet first of all the defining characteristics of the media: they are public (they can be accessed by anyone), they are technically transmitted, they are addressed to a wide audience, they are characterized by periodicity and they relate to reality. On top of that, online media also have their own characteristics: they are multimedia (exceeding the limits imposed on print or classic media), they are digital (and therefore can be processed and dispersed) and they are interactive (they allow direct feedback). Especially the hypermedia possibilities of the internet bring an enormous flexibility in the creation and transmission of information. The period marked by the pandemic brought online communication to its peak. However, the online press must maintain a vital role in raising awareness of the masses in order to counteract the harmful effects of communication manipulation. The benefits of online communication must lead to an increase in the level of training of users, both in terms of media education and in terms of online education. Certainly, the online school will remain in the future, not only as an alternative, but also as an independent component of education.
Keywords: *media; online; communication; hypertext; education; homeschooling;*

1. Functions and forms of modern communication

Research shows (Schmitz 1995) that the functions and forms of communication have been analyzed in traditional means of communication and now, in recent years, in modern forms of communication. It is observed that in online communication the written aspect is strongly influenced by the spoken language, because the new means of communication often do not have a purely oral character, nor a written character in the classical sense. Dialogues written online are done all over the world, in a hybrid way, which is close to bilingualism. Such dialogues are based on a colloquial syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Most research on these issues focuses on English. Naomi Baron (2000:187) points out, with regard to the English language, that the texts of the 80's are short and have a so-called "light punctuation". She focuses mainly on emails that she considers having an "e-style", because they are partly written texts and partly oral texts, like a combination of patchwork, which is not a strictly individual text. This brings these texts closer to others that also have an oral character, such as those in audio-visual, television texts, for example.

2. Characteristics of modern communication

The content of modern communication is characterized not only by orality and scripturality, but also by verbality and nonverbality. More than a telephone call or a letter, not only the optical or acoustic signal is missing in the computer-mediated written communication, but also those related to nonverbal personal communication (Schmitz 1995). This is how personalized logos called “smileys” developed in the early 80's, the paralinguistic signs that typographically represent the representation of nonverbal signals. With the so-called "emoticons" are represented iconically the appearance, behavior, attitude, personal appreciation and emotions. They are used in internet chat, also in SMS texts or emails. Kallmeyer (2000:295) believes that this aspect is important in the communication of young people on the Internet, precisely because it allows a greater freedom of style.

Traditional communication is thus being replaced by new ways. According to Baron (2000:9) and Severinson (1994:197), this is explained by the fact that new ways, such as e-mail, offer a number of characteristics that distinguish them from written communication: it is more impersonal and less insistent than a telephone or a letter, it is a cheaper or even free communication. Anonymity also applies to chat. Such ways of communication reflect both cultural conventions and characteristics of the system used. But also, the change of the social label through a less rigid attitude towards spelling. In the e-mail communication, the information sent is often no longer corrected. According to Schütte (2000:149), the public character of media communication involves a mixture of areas of life and styles: the public presentation of the private sphere and the "private", personal stylization of public self-presentation. This is the case of the way simple people present themselves, but especially public figures on various online channels: b / vlogs, facebook, twitter, instagram, etc., each depending on age and the audience they interact with.

To this is added the fact that the new technical modalities intervene much more radically in the communication conditions, by the fact that the multimedia integration can be done through almost all semiotic channels. Some of the forms in classical media such as the press, advertising or audio-visual tend to increasingly integrate text into the image, until the text plays only a secondary role (Schmitz 1995).

3. Hypertext structure

Hypertext is a completely new and computer-dependent type of text through which information is presented on several levels and often multimedia. Gerd Fritz (1999:221) is of the opinion that the literature on hypertext was written until recently only by computer specialists and not by linguists. He shows that hypertexts can be defined as texts that are composed of textual elements of type T1 ... Tn, which are sentences or fragments of sentences and which are used to generate a sequence of linguistic acts. That sequence that is produced while browsing the internet is called a "path". Such sequences can be generated in two different ways:

either predefined or chosen. Predefined paths resemble linear text. The possibility to choose from several alternatives, reminds of the activity of the speakers in a dialogue. The reader can and must choose his own path from the semiotic offer.

Among the basic features of hypertexts are the following features (Storrer 2000:227): hypertext is not linearly organized, hypertext allows multiple encoding of data in different symbol systems and their transmission on multiple channels, these texts are computer-administered texts. They compensate on the one hand through interactivity and communication functions disadvantages that the concluded texts have, fixed in writing to the speech. On the other hand, however, the specific intertwining of text, image, sound and film, the nonlinear way of reading and writing, the elimination of the limits of a tangible physical text, the rapid change of roles between producers and receivers make the chalice representation of the text change and lead to the question of whether such constructions are still the object of study of the linguistics of the text. Angelika Storrer (2000:231) is of the opinion that yes, because hypertext can be seen as something "more than a text", "something that is not yet a text", as "an interactive text" or "a moving text". The term "moving text" is best suited for online newspapers, as topicality is the central feature, while interactivity supports partial and selective text reception, as text reception on a computer monitor is much slower and tiring than on paper.

In conclusion, it can be said that hypertext systems allow the ordering of content from several eligible points of view, while the sequence, hierarchy and network can be combined anyway. Responsibility for meaning is transferred to the user.

4. Online media

New media bring with them new genres of text and remove existing ones. According to Trappel (2000:228), online media is an independent genre. They meet first of all the defining characteristics of the media: they are public (they can be accessed by anyone), they are technically transmitted, they are addressed to a wide audience, they are characterized by periodicity and they relate to reality. On top of that, online media also have their own characteristics: they are multimedia (exceeding the limits imposed on print or classic media), they are digital (and therefore can be processed and dispersed) and they are interactive (they allow direct feedback). Especially the hypermedia possibilities of the internet bring an enormous flexibility in the creation and transmission of information.

The online press is a means of creation and distribution such as books, magazines, broadcasts or on television, the web page or the CD-ROM. As a new means of communication, online newspapers appeared in 1993, when American newspaper publishers engaged online, while most European online newspaper publications appeared in 1996. Any serious publisher can no longer afford it. not to be present on the internet today. In addition to the online version of daily newspapers, there are also online newspapers. Despite the high costs and still low revenues, these offers are updated daily (Sager 2000:83).

The concept of newspaper can be used in the context of the Internet, because it retains the characteristics of the print media. According to Gerpott and Schlegel (2000:338), these are: periodicity, universality, topicality. Two features are added to online newspapers: interactivity and hypermediality. After Runkehl et al. (1998:106) it stands out that the online version is not identical to the printed newspaper. Unlike the printed newspaper, the online version is accessible to an audience from all over the world and offers a much higher degree of topicality because it is not related to the closing of the edition. In the form of representation of the content offer, the online press uses a wide range of signs. Based on the hypertext structure, the content offer can be more fragmented and thus provide more space for individual reception than the printed newspaper offers. In the modern online press traditional discourse is also essentially changed reflecting more than in other domains how discourse is embedded inside a determining historical context (Soare 2015:256).

The presence of new significations in daily expression brings with it the complex and rapid supply of content. There are primarily terms that designate new devices and procedures. In the case of new media, these are loans such as *mouse* and *menu,* but especially international English words (such as *computer* or *laptop*), often truncated (for example, *modulation / demodulation modem, fax* from *facsimile*) or abbreviations in English (*CD, ISDN*). To these are added verbs such as *to program, to reprogram.* Other studies show that especially on the internet there are many anglicisms, about 5% of the vocabulary such as: *news, software, sitemap, web, website, server, etc.*

5. Online school

The period marked by the pandemic brought online communication to its peak. Many of the multimedia features of the Internet were advantages that those who used online communication used: the ability to integrate image, sound, along with text. Interactivity has also been used, although it is very limited in time and space, compared to face-to-face communication. Online communication interconnects people over long distances, the only condition being a good internet connection and the use of a device, phone, tablet, laptop or computer.

The closure of schools made what we only occasionally saw in various parts of the world, the form of online schooling and even homeschooling, become a daily reality in our country as well. Deprivation of classical schooling has led students, parents and teachers around the world to agree for the first time: schools need to be reopened. The only ones who did not close the schools were the Swedes, who believed that until they reached the age of 16, children could not be asked to be responsible for their own education. Thus, in Sweden, online education was organized only for older students and students.

Some aspects turned out to be the same everywhere, regardless of country or culture: teachers overworked by hygiene restrictions, fearful parents, children willing to socialize, insecure officials whether they did well or not, divided

opinions for and against, street demonstrations.

In order for a student to successfully participate in online school, he must be familiar with the necessary technique and be aware that he must learn, the responsibility often falling entirely on him, because the teacher cannot control him online as in class, than to a very small extent through homework, assessments, etc. There have been cases in which parents wanted an impeccable online education from the school and the authorities, but they did not ensure a minimum that belonged to each family, it happens that many times, the child does not even wake up to follow the lesson or to he does not know how to enter the channels provided, things that no one has verified throughout the semester.

However, the same conditions are valid for the partners of the educational act. And teachers must, on the one hand, be familiar with the technique and have the necessary equipment, and, on the other hand, be responsible for the quality of their work, because, online, even teachers, for now, cannot control so well the system, than through a few tools designed ad-hoc, which sometimes unjustifiably burdened the learning process. This was the case, for example, with topics given only to justify the activity, but which were not balanced with the subject taught or, even less so, with the rest of the topics given by other colleagues for the same reason. Some did not bother to provide information to students for various reasons: they did not know how to handle the technique, did not have the necessary devices, or others gave the children absurd homework, for example, to record how they exercise to prove that they did.

For those dedicated, however, online school is a challenge to learn new techniques, to improve in teaching, not necessarily because they are required, but because it is a new situation, coming as a confrontation to be won, because the job of a teacher is a job that always allows reinvention, allows experimentation and creativity. Many dedicated teachers acknowledged that the period of online teaching was a tiring period, and also because, regardless of the level of teaching, success in online communication requires a good knowledge of the dialogue partner to overcome the limitation of space and especially of time.

Therefore, the preparation for teaching is longer than the actual teaching, and ideally the teaching act should be designed not only for the study group as a whole, but also for each student to ensure not only the access to education, but also the success in learning.

Certainly, the online school will remain in the future, not only as an alternative, but also as an independent component of education.

6. Conclusions

Online communication remains predominant today in influencing members of society through the use of new technical ways of communication. The media plays a huge role in disseminating information. However, the online press must maintain a vital role in raising awareness of the masses in order to counteract the harmful effects of communication manipulation. It is important that the benefits

of online communication increase the level of training of users, both in terms of media education and in terms of online education.

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