

**THE REFLEXIVITY OF MODERN COMMUNICATION**  
**AS A FACTOR OF SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES (NOTE)**

Elena Chankova

Associated professor  
Russian state social university  
chev3@yandex.ru

**Abstract**

Nowadays communications are concentrated in network structures. These structures often provide people an opportunity to position themselves using convenient notations, such as fictitious names and icons, without fixing social status. This article examines the reasons for the emergence of such ways of communication and socio-cultural consequences of the changing ways of communication.

**Résumé**

Aujourd'hui, les communications sont concentrées dans des structures de réseau. Ces structures fournissent souvent aux gens la possibilité de se positionner en utilisant les notations commodes, comme les noms et les icônes fictives, sans fixer le statut social. Cet article examine les raisons de l'émergence de la recherche de moyens de communication et les conséquences socio-culturelles de l'évolution des moyens de communication.

**Key words**

Uncertainty of virtual communication, reflexivity and self-regulation of Internet communication, socio-cultural consequences.

**Mots clés**

Incertitude de la communication virtuelle, réflexivité et d'auto-régulation de la communication Internet, les conséquences socio-culturelles.

## INTRODUCTION

Networks and communities are defining a new trend of communication (Fresno G.,<sup>1</sup> Scott J.,<sup>2</sup> Boraw K.,<sup>3</sup> Bauman Z.,<sup>4</sup> Ritzer G.<sup>5</sup> and so on) based on a different approach, where social status isn't taken into account and socio-cultural norms are not necessarily used.

The main factors that are changing the way of communication can be identified by comparing linear and non-linear types of social structures.

## THE MAIN RESULTS

We compare the factors that regulate communication in the linear and non-linear types of social structures.

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<sup>1</sup> Garsio Fresno Identifying the new influences in the Internet Era: Social Media and Social Network Analysis. Journal of Product Innovation Management v 33, issue 2, p. 201-216, March 2016.

<sup>2</sup> J. Scott Social network analysis. SAGE Publications Ltd, London, 2013, p. 191.

<sup>3</sup> Boraw K. Microblogging for language learning: Using Twitter to train Communicative and Cultural Competence. Shanghai, China, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Bauman, Z., Donskis, L. Moral Blindness The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press. 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Ritzer, G. The McDonaldization of Society. University of Maryland Sage, 2013

.№	Society with linear social structure	Society with nonlinear social structure
1.	The social relations are determined by the structure of society and by social institutes. They are directed on reproduction of the social system.	The structure of the society becomes a network. Social network is composed of groups of social actors and relations between them. The personality, social systems and culture are also included to the concept of “life world”.
2.	In the institutional structure, its vital capacity is determined by relations between the personality, social systems and culture (according to T. Parsons). It is the base of the attitude choice for communicative behavior of the personality.	The participants of network communications base their choice of behaviour on the concept of “life world” (J. Habermas, A. Schutz). In the concept of “life world” are the personality, social systems and culture too (as T. Parsons stated).
3.	These elements include the certainty of the communicative behavior and determine the status-role set of participants in the interaction.	In network these elements bound otherwise. They are located in the mind of personality as genetic map, a genetic memory about the old linean social structure. And so, the properties of "life world" of the individual allowed such autonomies from culture norm as a social structure to consolidate with a partner in accordance with the situation, on the basis of its specificity.
4.	The communicative behavior in accordance with the norms and values of a social system determines the communicative competence of the personality.	<p>When the actors have reflexive relation to culture norms in an uncertain situation of communication, they design a new norm of communication. They have to agree on the norm of interaction in this situation.</p> <p>The changing role of social institutions leads to uncertainty and interaction which manifests itself in a reflexive attitude to it. According to A. Giddens, claiming that reflexivity manifests itself in the ability of self making under uncertain conditions of time and space.</p>

Therefore, the relevance of the issue is related to the:

- changes in the social structure of society;
- increase non-linear social processes;
- strengthening of an increasing role of a personality in functioning of social structures.

This phenomenon clearly appears in virtual milieu in Internet. On one hand the participant of network communication is creative, reflective and autonomous in relation to the existing norm of communication within culture. But communication inherently contains a risk factor in itself. It means that the modern user of networks is at risk of ineffective communication with social consequences unfavorable for life which brings this issue to the level of the social problem of everyday life.

Consider an illustration. In online communities, it is customary to position oneself under the so-called "Nicknames", a fictitious internet name that does not reveal the status-role position of the communicator. And so communicators are deprived of the usual benchmarks that are set by social statuses. They identify familiar cultural framework of communication correlated with specific norms and values communication. It is not the coordinate system as described by T. Parsons for industrial society. There is only a partner for solution of the communicative task in an uncertain situation. What to do?

On the household point of view they must do something. But on the sociological point of view - this communicative task has the fundamentally different solution. This solution has no cultural and social institutional protection and there is no the result guaranteed by social system. Actors have no social and cultural mechanisms guaranteeing social life.

This different approach of communication is created at the moment of interaction between communicants considering the specific situation of communication and the individual conception of participants' life-world. That is, it takes the ability to co-create agreements in area without ready-made rules. This ability requires reflexive relation for the institutional norm that still exist in culture, but no longer relevant to online communities. Thus personal creativity and innovation are becoming essential.

Two homogeneous categories of respondents from Russia (Moscow and Moscow region) were interviewed on a survey we conducted. The target group is characterized by its access to the Internet or lack of it.

The most significant result are:

- the communicative competence of personality acquires the following characteristics: reflexivity and self-regulation rules of communication and behavior;
- these characteristics appear by the reason of reduction of the social institutes role in Internet and by increasing of the social processes' uncertainty.

An internet user has to solve the following problems by himself, instead of expecting solutions from the social institutes:

- \* be able to relate to communication situations reflexively;
- \* design the methods and rules of communication;
- \* create his own world for interaction.

## **CONCLUSION**

It was revealed that in the conditions of declining values and normative regulators of social institutions the level of competition and anomie is increased.

On one hand, the innovative potential of the personality is growing. On the other, the level of partnership and cooperation is reduced.

The main socio-cultural consequences:

- the destruction of sociality in its original form with its values and norms;
- also the return of society to the “natural” pre-cultural state; which was typical for European civilization before the era of the “social contract”.

The current state of communication in virtual milieu in Internet, in terms of synergistic , can be called chaos that is seeking order. According to some authors, this order is of postmodern type. Therefore, the future is in the next “social contract”.

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