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THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article examines scientific approaches to the concept of communication and analyzes its social significance in the context of contemporary social development. The study traces the historical evolution of communication, from early forms of oral interaction to modern digital communication systems, highlighting their role in shaping social interaction and collective activity. Particular attention is paid to classical and contemporary communication theories developed by foreign and Russian scholars, including linear, systemic, and non-linear models of communication.

The article emphasizes that communication is not limited to the transmission of information but represents a complex social process involving the creation, interpretation, and exchange of meaning. The analysis demonstrates that effective communication serves as a fundamental factor in the functioning of social institutions and organizations, contributing to social cohesion, mutual understanding, and organizational efficiency. The findings confirm the interdisciplinary nature of communication studies and underscore the growing importance of communication processes in modern society.

KEYWORDS: communication, communication process, communication theory, social interaction, information exchange, communication models, social significance, organizational communication.

The process of information exchange has played a decisive role in the development of humanity since ancient times. Oral traditions of the tribal era, the invention of writing, the spread of printed texts, and the emergence of modern digital communication tools have all accelerated the flow of information in society and expanded opportunities for social cooperation.

The American scholar Jurgen Ruesch emphasized that there are more than forty different approaches to the study of communication, encompassing such fields as architecture, anthropology, psychology, politics, and many others [6; 175]. Communication is not limited to the transmission of information; it also includes the processes of understanding, interpretation, and feedback. Therefore, communication is studied at the intersection of various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, linguistics, management, journalism, and information technology.

In its original Greek form (*koinonia*) and its Latin translation (*communio*), the concept of communication referred to participation in a shared activity. However, as noted by A. Toynbee, this term primarily and at the highest level expressed the idea of joining a specific political alliance [14; 360].

The term *"communication"* is derived from the Latin *communico*, meaning "to establish a connection" or "to engage in interaction." Within human society, communication is conceptualized as a complex process of exchanging ideas, knowledge, emotions, meanings, and patterns of behavior. From a scientific perspective, communication is commonly understood as the process of information exchange between individuals through a shared system of signs and symbols, primarily linguistic signs, which ensure mutual understanding and social interaction [7; 175].

The scientific and theoretical foundations of the concept of communication have been extensively examined in the works of foreign scholars. In particular, the classical communication paradigm was formulated by H. Lasswell. Systemic models of communication were developed by C. Shannon, W. Weaver, M. DeFleur, W. Schramm, C. Osgood, P. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson, H. Gode, and D. Berlo [4; 157]. Linear models of communication were described by P. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson, H. Gode, C. Shannon, and J. Gerbner. Analyses of non-linear models reflecting continuous information exchange among participants in the communication process were presented in the scholarly works of T. Newcomb, W. Schramm, B. Westley and M. MacLean, J. and M. Riley, P. Vorster, M. Castells, and E. V. Perepelitsa [9; 7].

Furthermore, it is important to consider the scholarly perspectives on the concept of communication developed within the framework of several Russian scientific schools. According to N.A. Bondarenko and I.O. Demyanova, the term *"communication"* originates from the Latin *communicatio*, meaning "to generalize" or "to connect." It began to be used as a scientific term in the early 20th century. In contemporary understanding, communication is a socially conditioned process of transmitting and receiving information in interpersonal as well as mass communication contexts, utilizing various channels and diverse communicative means [3; 383-388].

In other words, *"communication"* serves as the foundation of social interaction, functioning as a means through which all types of social structures – possessing purpose, culture, and mission and existing over extended periods – are created and maintained.

A.P. Panfilova interprets communication as the process of information exchange, encompassing the transmission of both emotional and intellectual content. In her work *"Business Communication in Professional Activity,"*Panfilova emphasizes that, under contemporary conditions, communication constitutes a critical factor in the vital functioning of every firm, organization, and enterprise. According to management specialists, 63% of British managers, 73% of American managers, and 85% of Japanese managers consider effective communication as the most crucial condition for achieving organizational efficiency. Furthermore, these managers reported being willing to devote between 50% and 90% of their working time to communication activities [10; 12-14].

According to G.M. Andreyeva, communication is one of the three essential components of the interaction process:

- **COMMUNICATION** – as a process of transmitting information;
- **INTERACTION** – as the mutual influence of the subjects of dialogue;
- **PERCEPTION** – as the process of understanding and interpreting the communication [1; 120].

M.Yu. Kovalenko defines the communication process as follows: "Communication, as a process, is the exchange of information between individuals that carries meaning. Regardless of whether the process achieves the intended outcome, a message or signal – structured in a certain way through signs or symbols – is transmitted with a specific purpose and is received in accordance with established rules" [8; 27].

M.Yu. Kovalenko's definition provides a consistent and systematic elucidation of the essence of the communication process. In the author's approach, particular emphasis is placed on the meaning-making of information, its reception in accordance with established rules, and the fact that the process exists as a communicative act regardless of whether the anticipated outcome is achieved. This perspective demonstrates that communication is not merely the technical transmission of information, but a complex social process involving the creation and interpretation of meaning. The author's approach implies that the effectiveness of communication depends not only on the content of the transmitted message but also on the conditions, rules, and context in which it is received.

Yu.V. Taratukhina defines communication as a distinctive act of information exchange, that is, a process of conveying emotional and intellectual content. According to her, from the perspective of social psychology, communication is the process of transmitting information from a sender to a receiver [13; 462].

The approach proposed by Yu.V. Taratukhina places particular emphasis on the substantive aspect of the communication process. Her interpretation, which relates to the transmission of emotional and intellectual content, demonstrates that communication should be viewed not merely as a technical exchange of information, but as a process of interpersonal understanding and meaning-making. While the "sender–receiver" model is recognized as the primary mechanism from a social-psychological standpoint, it is advisable to complement this model with more comprehensive approaches in the context of today's interactive and digital environment.

In the textbook *Fundamentals of Communication Theory* by O.L. Gnatyuk, the term "communication" (from Latin *communicatio* – message, transmission; *communicare* – to share, converse, connect, inform, convey) is interpreted to encompass the following:

CHANNELS OF TRANSMISSION – means of delivering messages (waterways, air routes, transport communications);

FORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE – telephone, telegraph, radio, electronic mail;

INTERACTIONAL COMMUNICATION – communication and cooperation between two or more individuals based on mutual understanding (replies, opinions, gestures, requests, conversation, debate, negotiation);

INFORMATION TRANSMISSION – sending information from one person to another or to a group of people;

MASS COMMUNICATION – the process of delivering information to a large number of recipients through technical means (press, radio, cinema, television) [3; 359].

In recent studies, the concept of "communication" is understood as a process of information exchange that generates meaning between two or more individuals. Since an organization represents a structured form of relationships among people, its ability to ensure the most effective performance among available alternatives largely depends on the quality of communication [12; 287].

In conclusion, communication emerges as a strategic factor ensuring the sustainable and effective functioning of modern organizations. The success of any team primarily depends on the presence of mutual understanding among its members, the clarity and consistency of information exchange processes, and the efficiency of collaborative relationships. When employees can express their ideas and suggestions freely and accurately, and managers deliver essential information in a timely and appropriate manner, organizational management processes are optimized. Consequently, this not only enhances work productivity but also fosters a positive socio-psychological environment within the team, based on trust, responsibility, and mutual support, thereby strengthening the organization's long-term development and competitiveness.

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