

# **Reflections on Communication Culture in the Knowledge-Based Economy**

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## **Abstract**

*Known is that the pillars of the knowledge-based economy are information, connection of information and communication. Complexity of the processes taking place in the knowledge-based economy and structural changes posed by this leads to highlighting required versatility and increased ambiguity in terms of both information and communication. This is because knowledge-based economy is not limiting his horizons, but rather help to build content and communication complexity. Thus, in the digital economy, communication meets new horizons and endless possibilities of achievement.*

*Today the world is conquered by communication and cultural communication has become a familiar subject to many entities. As such, the study assumes communication approach of information and integrative perspective, highlighting specific elements of culture communication in the knowledge society.*

**Keywords:** communication, culture, information, knowledge

**JEL:** D83, D85, F63

## **1. Communication and culture**

There are a lot of reasons why “communication” is studied, reasons that justify the interest of theorists and managers regarding this subject, in fashion today. As a proof, the many articles and editorial publications focus on the concept of communication. In a dynamic environment, emphasized by deep changes, people find hard to act appropriate and adapt to these changes.

In this way, the individuals have three main options regarding the attempt of controlling the incertitude of the environment and its potential impact: to adapt the environment elements, to try to influence the favorable character of the existing environment and to change the field of activity. However, all these options cannot be successfully followed if men don't take into consideration the competences and the community of communication. Communication is the only thing that helps the people identify the changes, offering them the possibility to adapt to the environment.

In the same time, **the culture of communication** seems to be the main subject of some academic and professional manifestations. This is because the communicational behavior is responsible for all the institutional, organizational and social deficits from Romanian society. More than that, the development without precedent of electronic communication means in the economy based on knowledge has determined a generalization of the social-economic evaluation of communication acts. [8].

### **1.1. Communication**

The term of communication has several meanings because it has been developed by a series of different sciences like: philosophy, history, geography, psychology, sociology, ethnology, economy, politic sciences, biology, linguistic, cybernetic, cognitive sciences, etiology etc. Therefore,

each **knowledge field has definitions that stress one meaning or another of term communication: case, exchange, transfer, energy, information** etc. The seemingly contradiction of terms that exist in present is caused by the fact that most of the definitions are elaborated from a perspective and a certain field and therefore, each definition is reported to a system proper to that certain field.

Therefore, communication - the field of social sciences - presents many situations, generated by a fully specialized literature which uses in a different way this notion

Communication is essentially a phenomenon, a process, an art and a necessary science of men. Many times communication is reduced to a smile (the famous source of *Giaconda*), to a meaningful look sent to another man or another flower or to a whisper, till the obsession of a song or a definition.

The individual is the one who communicates, voluntary or involuntary, and develops his skills and communication abilities on one hand, and on the other hand he changes his behavior in a positive or negative way. Man is always meaning and never object, non-communication is impossible, the same way as without the cultural space created in a miraculous way by man, it cannot be defined by itself and concept as humanity, humanism won't have any meanings. Communication is determined culturally and the human existence is a cultural existence.

In present, there are different material and immaterial means of communication, the science and technique offer plenty possibilities of communication. Even if there isn't a definition unanimous recognized by specialists regarding communication, fact which obviously generates controversies, communication is necessary. More than that, communication represents the interaction of humans and it focuses on the interaction process.

The term communication is closely used with the following terms: signs and symbols, language, code and language, behavior, information.

The first two terms are often used as equivalents and sometimes there is a clear different meaning. Each term receive new significations if it's associated with a specific attribute. Therefore, communication can be verbal or non-verbal, interpersonal or intrapersonal etc. The language can be national or international. The language can be verbal, non-verbal and Para verbal. It can also be artistic, mathematic, philosophic, economic, emotional etc.. The behavior can be positive or negative, verbal or non-verbal. Any behavior has a *major communicative value*, which can be considered in the human process of communication. In modern terms, information means: news, knowledge. The information offered and received are juridical, technological, managerial, political, journalistic, electromagnetic, biological, linguistic etc..

For a better understanding of cultural concept of communication and communicational culture it is necessary to present the concept of culture.

## **1.2. Culture**

The analyses of culture, with all its aspects, can contribute to the increase of understanding capacity of the complex evolutions of communication as science and art.

Culture represents the basis of thinking, feeling and individual actions, organizational and national. Etymologically, the term "culture" comes from Latin. The root of the term is the verb "colere" which means in the first place "to cultivate" certain things, with the meaning of "taking care" in order to increase their quality and productivity. Horatius used it with the meaning of cultivation of the spirit, and Cicero as „agrorum culture" and „animi culture", with the meaning of an educational effort with a great effect for the soul, educational effort that includes both the educational process and the personal experience of each individual[1].

Later, in 1871, E. B. Taylor, the English anthropologist said: „The culture is a complex that includes the knowledge, beliefs, art, moral, laws

and all the other dispositions, attitudes achieved by man as a member of society”[2]. For Taylor culture means” any complex that includes knowledge, religion, art, moral, law, habits and all capacities and customs which the individual achieves as member of society” [2].

G. Rocher considered culture as “the total ways of thinking, feeling and acting, more or less formal, which are learned and become commune to many persons and are used in a symbolic and subjective way to develop some persons in the social community”[1].

Other two great anthropologists, Malinowski and Boas, include in culture the manufactured products, goods, processes, techniques, ideas, customs and values[10]. In their concept culture expresses both the symbolic and morphologic order[9].

Culture is not just an immaterial version of the universe of objects and people’s souls; it also includes “the material equipment”, the supra-individual reality, techniques, processes, institutions [10]. This combination gives to the community its own cultural identity.

Culture is not just an accumulation of artistic, literary and scientific knowledge; it includes also practices that were inherited, accepted beliefs, judgments and emotions. Through these ethnologic, sociologic and anthropologic meanings, cultures reduces to the cultivate individual in a restrained meaning. The way of seeing, drinking, eating, reuniting in a society is part of culture in a sociologic meaning.

An important role in improving the meanings of culture is the romantic tendency, through the extension of popular culture, the art and custom’s tradition of people that will create, in time, an authentic nucleus of national cultures as specific and original manifestations of human spirituality.

More than that, according to S. Freud, one of the founders of modern psychology, culture includes on one hand „the total science and techniques achieved by man with the purpose of controlling the nature forces and satisfying the human needs” and on the other hand “the

necessary institutions regarding the establishment of human reports and especially the distribution of accessible goods" [3].

By adding the term of culture to the term of communication it generates a new concept which operates both in theory and practice: the culture of communication or the communicational culture. This concept can be approached and defined both in a restrained meaning and in a general one. Obviously, *in a general meaning, the cultural of communication refers to the cultural processes, the communicational processes attached to the modern culture (brand, logo, advertising speech, advertising banner, corporate image etc.), the forms of met communication, objects, types, structures, communication instruments (typical and not-typical), Internet, communication institutions communicational behavior patterns, techniques and communication strategies. In a restrained meaning, communicational culture represents the professional culture of communicators (journalists, PR people, spokesmen etc).*

## **2. Communication approaches in an economy based on knowledge**

To a first sight, in a society based on knowledge and in which *the three pylons are information, the connection of the information and communication*, we can affirm that the definition and the meaning of the term "communication" can be easily understood and everyone can tell what communication or information means. However, the complexity of the processes that develop in the new economy and also the structural changes underline the complex and the increased equivocal regarding both the information and the communication. This is because the new economy not only limits the horizons but also contributes to the increment of the content and the complexity of communication.

In an informal society, the communication approach can be made according to two **perspectives: the informational one and the integration one**[6].

The approach of communication, from the **information perspective** in the economy based on knowledge is absolutely necessary but it's not adequate to define and understand all the meanings taken into consideration. The information represents in the new economy an important production factor, more important than work. Today, people that work in a sustained way and have a cult of work are not the one rewarded but the ones that have the information and who generate the information. According to DEX, information means:

- *Communication, news that inform a person regarding a situation, words;*
- *Each new element reported to the knowledge achieved, contained in the significance of a symbol or a group of symbols (written text, spoken message, plastic images, instructions of an instrument etc.);*
- *The facts and opinions achieved every day from other person, from mass-media, from electronic data base and all types of perceivable phenomenon from the environment; knowledge received from others or achieved as a result of personal researches and investigations;*
- *Knowledge accumulated from books, reports regarding the recent or unknown events, materials from papers, newspapers or TV news; knowledge achieved from studies or trainings; knowledge deduced from direct observation and personal experience.*

Although new specialists **consider information as a mathematic term in which the cognitive value of information is irrelevant**, the important thing is the choice and the quantity of information; however, information is an ontological factor (next to material and energy) and, implicit, a production one.

In 1990, the biologist and physician T. Stonier (Information and the internal structure of the Universe) affirms that „people are the expression of the natural evolution of material, energy and information organization”.

In another meaning, the information is the creator of life and also its engine. The information is the fuel that alimnts any live structure. To support this idea, we mention the definition from Siveco dictionary according to which the information defines a material signal, capable to enable a reaction of a system. In another words, *the information is the one that enables reactions both to the receptor and the issuer, therefore it contributes to their development.*

**However, in the actual context of globalization, the most important individual and social resource of people is the information.** The proof is the appearance and the development of a branch of management: the management of informational resources.

More than that, in an economy of networks, **the information is vital because it gives a meaning to the existence of networks.** The term of *network* comes from the Latin word “retell”. In all the existing definitions we notice the usage of several words like knitting, net, crossing, bond, connection.

Therefore, in a global and digital economy, **the communication process represents the interconnection of several agents till then isolated,** and *the communication result is the creation of new constructions with a superior level, that presents new characteristics in report with the other components.* Therefore, the definition of the new economy is the networks or communications economy.

*In a period of globalization people are dynamic connected through different communication means, generating networks that represent in the content and relation plan more than the sum of individuals that compose them and this is because of the interpersonal communication between the network members. Communication produces effects on the members of the network that generate evolutional behaviors for each individual within the network (the development of the individual*



produces by communication). The individual dynamic is found first in the network dynamic.

Therefore, the logical affirmation is that the networking was, is and will be one of the concepts that give a meaning to the human development. This is because most of the people understood that it is better and easier to be connected in order to communicate, to find and establish necessary solutions for the individual, group and society development. The facile way to generate and develop inter-human relations through Internet leads to the increase of its importance but also to the need of solving the problems generated by the existence of this global network.

### **3. Specific elements of communicational culture in the economy of knowledge**

Within the digital economy, **communication reaches new horizons and unlimited possibilities of achievement.** Today the world is led by the communication. According to that, the major result of the new economy is *the tyranny of communication*. People are forced to communicate in order to survive and develop. The appearance of the new communication means forces the individuals to adapt to the new exigencies of communication. Today a professional orator must know how to use the techniques and technologies of modern communication because the oratory without audio and video technique loses its efficiency.

In present, there is a proper quantity of information that circulates through different media supports. It is know the fact that in any communication there are losses because of the channel structure, the lack of knowledge transparency, language specific etc..

Therefore the communication process presents several specific characteristics. In the period of communications, *because of the quantity of information*, the communication process presents the following components: source; transmitter; message; channel; receiver; context; sender; noise source. The source, although it produces the message,

doesn't have the necessary means to help him reach to destination. The noise is neither the unique or the most important source of non-concordance of the transmitted message with the received one, and the information that circulates is loses irreversible. However, in the actual informational context, *the information generates itself*.

The power given by knowledge is determined in an international society. The issuer, as a component of communicational process, has different sources of power that influence the communication: the reward of the receiver for the un-codified information. This reward can be both positive and negative; the legitimacy; the belonging; the experience.

Today, the concept of global economy is defined according to a triple reality: a geographic space given, the existence of two global poles of the world (SUA and UE) and the existence of two categories of areas: intermediary areas (around each pole) and marginal areas (subordinates, dependent and manipulated by two centers of power). According to this scheme communication is realized between unequal partners regarding the power, therefore the economic development theories can be applied o communication. In this meaning, the knowledge economy is developed through the usage of the Internet technologies.

The www and the communication means explosion leads to a future in which most of the business and a major part of human activities will develop in a virtual space, in a "digital" communication in order to transmit and receive the information, to promote the activities, the orders, the financial transactions. In this world *competitive companies will be the one superior in communication and information*.

The communications are the most used means to create panic and terror by interrupting the function of conventional means of communication, televisions and radios which have become completely dependent on the connections to satellites.

In present, *the security of communications to an international level is very weak*. The telephonic communications represent easy targets and the satellites can be easily destroyed. The objectives of high

importance can be interrupted, like emergency centrals, medical services, ambulances, police services, any kind of alarms connected to surveillance systems that are monitories etc. In present, governmental communication can be blocked or viruses only with the help of some orders.

*The economy of networks is an economy of all types of businesses build around the Internet.* The Internet has a key role in providing information of all kind in the global economy. The new Internet technologies contribute directly to the expansion of electronic commerce, new business patterns and e-business dematerialization of products and services. The Internet revolution also means the development of company networks like Intranet and Extranet. However, this led to the development of the new *manipulation techniques of information and communication.*

The Internet assures **a communication both on horizontal and vertical.** The global network, which is the Internet, permits people to meet in different communities and discuss or hear their favorite subjects. These *forums, that are called discussions forums, interactive discussions group (chat) or the correspondence list (mailing list) are useful both in the free time and also for business communication and they are called "virtual communities"*[7].

These are often offered as free services, in order to increase the traffic on the Internet web page and to stimulate the emotional attachment regarding it. Of course, *business communications* can be made through a service that is charged. *The direct communication channel or the video-conferences* are attractive instruments which reduce the transport costs, being used by the large companies both for scientific communications and for the commercial ones. Depending on the role of the conference administrator (company, supplier, association, foundation, educational institution) and the objectives they purpose (marketing, benefits), the taxes can be of participation or specific to the even or they are not charged at all.

*The collaboration platforms* offer a set of instruments and an informal environment in order to collaborate with the companies, with the

external partners or with the experts, acting as a *virtual company* toward the external world.

Although some specialists in communication sciences consider the Internet and its technologies as limitation of communication competences, they agree to the fact that the Internet determines a development of the *community communications*. The communication platforms are clear in this way. The evolution of an electronic written press will determine also the redefinition of its informative speech.

The ones that sustain the global network which is the Internet affirm that it develops the communication competences and consider certain ways of graphic and textual expression. The graphic, textual expression is a complex phenomenon that is less approached. As an issue and reception process, the textual communication follows the same succession of preparation techniques, elaboration, adaptation, interpretation of “materials” that form the content of the message.

The researchers from psycho-linguistic field stress the idea that the concept is created in a way that includes also the signification, therefore the receptor receives the productive germs of the meaning. *The visual communication can combine the verbal stimulus with non-verbal ways of expression – iconic signs or indicial means of representation.*

The reception of the message tries to recreate the signification of the issuer, process which is easier or harder put into function by the quantity of information transmitted.

Therefore, in order to realize a more efficient communication, that permits the understanding without difficulties of a written content, it becomes necessary to respect the following conditions (that will be considered for achieving and/or using the textual communication competences) [11]:

- The knowledge and the appreciation of the value of punctuation signs and the other graphical means;
- The distinguish between essential and accessory in a written text; the control of The question formulation techniques;

- The usage of work techniques based on written information – dictionaries, books, graphics, folders etc.;
- The perception of several abstract levels of different types of language;
- The understanding of the reports between lexical and phrase;
- The correct appreciation of the contextual values etc..

The Internet is the participation support of all individuals to the development of the economy based on knowledge through global communication, that are not developing in one way but in a communicational circle.

## **Conclusions**

In the knowledge economy, regardless of the approach or analysis of communication relevant is that it is the very essence of all human actions and processes. Entities, dynamic connected through various means of modern communication, develops evolutionary behavior communication, which causes arising in new modalities of communication. Also, increasing communication skills and communities help generate a culture of quality communication with direct implications for businesses.

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