



Socio-psychological conditions of satisfaction with textual online communication

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This article presents the results of the study of socio-psychological conditions of mutual understanding in textual personal online communication in social networks. The connection with certain theories of computer-mediated communication which consider the possibility of establishing a qualitative social contact using online communication is mentioned. The study was conducted in two stages: the exploratory research, in which the leading conditions of mutual understanding between the interlocutors in online communication were determined, and the experimental research, in which the connection between these conditions was established with the understanding and satisfaction of the process and the result of the conversation. The methods of factor analysis and hierarchical cluster analyses were used. The types of users of social networks are highlighted and their psychological characteristics are described. The article contains a description of diagnostic tools, the process of experiment and experimental tasks, a description of the samples of participants, the main results of two stages of research and the prospects for further research in the field of computer-mediated communication.

Keywords: Computer-mediated communication; dialogue; mutual understanding; social networks; media-activity.

Introduction

With the passage of time and the development of science, computer technology takes on more and more functions and has an increasing influence in all spheres of our lives. In particular, computer-mediated communication is increasingly distributed among people of youth, young people and adults every year. It is difficult to imagine today's education and business communication without using Internet. Thus, the study of student online communication in 2005 (Kornev, 2007). showed that only 17% of students used the Internet every day, and 42% of the interviewed students indicated that they used the Internet "seldom". In the poll that took place in 2014 (Kryshovs'ka, 2017) and was attended by people aged 18 to 56, 85% of respondents used the Internet every day. The Internet communications survey of 2016, which is the subject of this article, showed that 98% of people who have pages in social networks, aged 18 to 35 and are urban residents use their social networks accounts every day. Half of them have connection with social networks "almost all the time", and the other half - "several times a day". Despite the fact that studies were conducted

with different samples and in different countries, the enormous growth in the number of Internet users and of the frequency of its use is unconditional.

The researchers investigate various aspects of computer-mediated communication. A.E.Zhychkina, S.F.Barysheva, O.E.Voyskunsky, S.A.Zolotukhin (Zolotukhyn, 2014) explore the peculiarities of various types and genres of online communication and their impact on a personality. Dialogical form of Internet communication investigates T.N.Kolokoltseva. Features of synchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) are described in the works of N.M.A.Ziegler (2013). An overview of the theories of CMC, which appeared from the very beginning of its existence, is presented in articles by J.B.Walter (2011). Features of the perception of time in a virtual space is studied by G.V.Abanina. Communication on the Internet as an aspect of media culture of a person is investigated by L.A.Naidionova, O.L.Voznesenska (Bary'shpolecz, Najd'onova, Abanina, Golubyeva, Rizun, 2009; Voznesens'ka, 2011).

The first attempts to analyze this kind of communication, for example, the theory of filtered signals (Culnan, & Markus,

1987), were accompanied by a description of the constraints specific to CMC, and a list of its shortcomings in comparison with indirect communication, which, according to the authors, is an insurmountable obstacle for the establishment of qualitative and functional social connections. Newer theories, for example, the theory of channel expansion (Carlson & Zmud, 1999), contain evidence that when people get more experience working with a particular communication environment, this environment becomes richer for them, and more capable of solving ambiguous and personally oriented communication tasks. The Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) argues that when nonverbal signals are unavailable, communicators are able to adapt their relationships and communications so that signals remain available through the channel they use. With experience, users will learn how to encode and decode emotionally colored messages using a specific channel (Walther, 2011).

Online communication has its own etiquette and rules that come from the conditions in which this communication takes place. In order to increase the efficiency of online-communication in education and business, considering its growing role in society, it would be advisable to provide some online-etiquette or effective online communication trainings or educational courses, and such courses should be preceded by a comprehensive study of the peculiarities and conditions of the existence of mutual understanding in online communication. Unfortunately, at the moment, education does not include enough courses and occupations for children and adolescents that would develop media competence.

Goal of the article is to highlight the conditions that conduct mutual understanding in the textual dialogical computer-mediated communication in social networks.

Presenting main material

In 2014 an exploratory research was conducted, and the results of this research has allowed to create a conceptual model of mutual understanding in online communication. 67 Internet users (30 men and 37 women) aged 17 to 56 years old were involved in the study. The respondents answered the 10 questions of the questionnaire, which related to their perception of what is mutual understanding, what are the best to reach mutual understanding in online communication and in what way it can be hindered. The results of the study indicate that there are obstacles and difficulties in mutual understanding in online communication. The Internet is recognized as a place where reaching understanding is much more difficult than face to face even by experienced users.

Another task of the questionnaire was to find out an explanation of the words "mutual understanding" that exists in Internet users' minds. Therefore, in open questions of the questionnaire, they had to explain the concept of "mutual understanding" in their own words. Using the method of content analysis, it was calculated that the most used word is "answer" – it can be seen in 31% of respondents' questionnaires, "reaction" – 18%, "adequate", "question", "common" – 14%, "clarify" – 11%. With using these and other commonly used words and phrases it became possible

to make such a definition of the understanding that Internet users keep in mind. Consequently, mutual understanding is the ability of the interlocutors to listen and to hear the point of view of each other during the process of communication, to respond adequately and eventually to come to something common (Kryshovska, 2017).

The second stage of the study of the conditions of mutual understanding in online communication was conducted with an ascertaining experiment. 140 active social networks users of both sexes aged 18 to 35 years old were invited. The participants were united in pairs and had to communicate with each other, using private messages in social networks or programs for messaging. The essence of the experiment was to organize an online dialogue between two people and measure the objective characteristics of the dialogue and the subjective impression of the participants, as well as their personal characteristics. Dialogues were conducted on a given topic, which was one of four creative tasks (a film review, a superhero biography, a poem or a travel plan), and, as a result of the task, participants had to provide the text they created together.

Immediately after the finishing of the dialogue, the participants of the experiment were supposed to fill out a set of questionnaires, including such tests as "Communicative minimum of the manager" (by G.C.Nikiforov), "Diagnosis of motivational orientations in interpersonal communication" (by I.D.Ladanov & V.A.Urazayeva) and the author's questionnaire "MUIC" ("Mutual Understanding in Internet Communication"). The questions of this questionnaire refer to the following content areas: temporal peculiarities of the conversation, content parameters of messages, peculiarities of transmission and perception of emotions by interlocutors, historical aspect of communication with a particular interlocutor, as well as various aspects of respondent's activity in social networks (Voznesens'ka, 2011; Kryshovska, 2017).

Factor analysis of the survey results

High correlations between the scales of the MUIC questionnaire suggested that there is one factor in the structure of the questionnaire, which explains most of the variance of values of the variables. To check this assumption, an exploratory factor analysis of data was conducted. While analyzing all issues, it was found that the measure of adequacy of the sample of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), which shows the accordance of the factor model to the set of variables in the correlation matrix, was too low (0.4). In order to clear the dataset from questions with unnecessary insignificant correlations, a list of issues with the highest level of explained variance (more than 50%) was chosen. Hence there were 32 questions for which a factor model could be created with a KMO measure of the adequacy = 0.92. As a result of the factor analysis, a factor was identified which explains 67% of the variance and includes 20 questions. Other factors highlighted during this procedure contained a small number of issues and were considered insignificant. This factor explains the correlations between the "overall impression" scale, "temporal component", "content component", "historical component" and "media activity".

The content of the questions that present the general factor of mutual understanding describe what communicator thinks about a conversation that have been satisfying for him. After highlighting the content areas presented in these issues, we received a description of the impression of the communicator from a conversation characterized by the presence of mutual understanding. The components of this impression are as follows:

- conviction that the task has been fulfilled, and the purpose of communication has been achieved; lack of desire to change anything; feeling of completeness of conversation;
- feeling of satisfaction, a pleasant impression from the process of communication and its outcome;
- desire to keep contact with a partner;
- absence of difficult perception of messages of the partner, not too long messages;
- high evaluation of the partner's knowledge and vocabulary and respect for him;
- lack of awareness of the flow of time, deep immersion into the process of communication;
- a fairly fast pace of conversation;
- impression that the partner is attentive to communication.

These phenomena, which were accompanied by mutual understanding, do not contradict the hypotheses advanced after theoretical analysis of the problem of mutual

understanding in computer-mediated communication and exploratory research, except for one. The lack of awareness of the flow of time, that took place in dialogues with mutual understanding, is an unexpected condition for the emergence of mutual understanding. Before the experiment it had been assumed that planning and monitoring the time spent on the Internet, and compliance with this plan would boost mutual understanding. The perception of time while being online is different from the usual perception, the time can run at a different speed, which makes a person spend online more time than planned, and this can have negative consequences for their life out of the Internet (Bary'shpolecz', Najd'onova, Abanina, Golubyeva, Rizun, 2009). Probably, the loss of a sense of time during an enthusiastic conversation indicates focusing the attention of the interlocutor only on this particular conversation. This creates the impression of the partner's concentration on this dialogue and promotes a fast pace of conversation, since communicants are not distracted by other things.

Hierarchical cluster data analysis was conducted to group the experiment participants and describe the representative differences of these groups. Four clusters were formed based on the scores of the three tests scales passed by participants. The average values of these scales for each cluster are given in Table 1.

Table 1.
Comparison of mean values of the indicators of different components of mutual understanding among the groups of respondents, allocated by the method of cluster analysis

	Cluster 1 (81 person)	Cluster 2 (5 person)	Cluster 3 (6 person)	Cluster 4 (8 person)
Temporal component	54,96	40,65	49,56	52,02
Emotional component	54,62	51,97	42,9	55,44
Historical component	55,43	39,77	46,04	49,73
Media-activity	53,31	54,79	47,17	56,11
Content component	53,12	45,9	43,08	49,35
Conversation skills	49,22	53,04	55,32	51,99
Motivational orientation to accept the opinion of the interlocutor	52,96	36,85	47,95	26
Adequacy	53,25	28,36	48	28,99
Motivational orientation to achieve a compromise	51,80	38,63	52,95	34,4
Common mutual understanding indicator	55,47	42,56	50,93	50,17
Overall impression from the dialogue	55,52	40,84	51,27	48,65

Names and Characteristics of 4 Types of Online Communicators:

Type 1: "Harmonious" – this type is applicable to most of the Internet users we interviewed. They operate well in virtual reality, have experience in online communication, clearly formulate their own thoughts in text messages, strive for adequate perception of the partner, and at the end of a session show high level of satisfaction with communication. The level of media activity is average.

Type 2: Self-assured – present themselves as media-active and communicatively competent, but not inclined either to adequately perceive a partner, to compromise, or to accept the opinion of a partner. Additionally, they have insufficient experience in online communication and as a result are not satisfied with communication and have a low level of mutual understanding. These respondents somewhat inadequately assess their experience and their

own activity in the virtual space and can be frustrated by the Internet communication.

Type 3: "Migrants from off-line" – not very well express their emotions and have difficulty in interpreting the emotions of the interlocutor as well as in the presentation of their own thoughts in text messages. They have a somewhat low level of media activity, but at the same time adequately evaluate their communicative competence. In a conversation this type is compromise oriented and is mostly satisfied with communication at the end of the session. The respondents of this type are good online communicators, but they do not have enough experience in this field. The forecast for them is positive: it is most likely that if they continue active online communication, they will be able to adapt to the specifics of this environment.

Type 4: "Unmotivated" – are able to convey their emotions and interpret the emotions of the interlocutor; media-active, well-oriented in time but lack all kinds of motivation. Also have a low level of satisfaction with communication. A key reason for dissatisfaction is the lack of motivation, perhaps they were not interested in participating in an experiment or for various reasons became discouraged during the conversation.

Conclusion

Online communication is characterized by the presence of special conditions that cause difficulties and barriers to establishing contact and the emergence of mutual understanding. Even by experienced users the Internet is recognized as a place where it is more difficult to reach mutual understanding if compared to a face-to-face communication. However, some theories of CMC allow for the establishment of quality contact and the achievement of the purpose of communication with the use of means of communication mediation. To this end, internet users need to make some effort, using the means to offset the constraints of the transmission channels and spending somewhat more time on online communication than it would take for face-to-face communication. According to the results of the experimental study, the terms of mutual understanding in online communication are high esteem for the knowledge and vocabulary of the partner, general respect and trust in him, the rapid pace of conversation, awareness of his own intentions to communicate and motivate a partner, etc. There were also identified types of communicators that show different levels of mutual understanding in social networks, depending on their willingness to compromise, attentiveness to the interlocutor, activity in social networks, the adequacy of the expression of own thoughts and emotions in online conversations, etc.

The results of this study can be used to create a training program on increasing media literacy, whose goal is to increase the communicative competence in online communication and prevent the mediatraumatization of Internet users. It is also relevant to involve the older generation in using new and unusual communication technologies, which is important for maintaining their social activity and completeness of their lives.

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