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A FUNDAMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENDING COMMUNICATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Abstract

Communication in science is a complex socio-cultural system that has closely interrelated components. This significantly expands the possibilities for its study. Different theories from various fields of scientific thought offer competing views on the specific details and essence of scientific communication. These theories include linguistic, sociological, philosophical, psychological, and cybernetic approaches. However, there is currently a lack of a unified theoretical and methodological basis in the sociology of science that could integrate the accumulated knowledge from socio-philosophy and sociology regarding the specifics and significance of scientific communication in light of the changes occurring in professional scientific communication due to globalization.

Information and communication processes in modern society, and the formation of an information society in Kazakhstan, pose the challenge for humanitarians to find new ways to understand and predict the processes that are taking place. Factors such as globalization and the intense influence of mass communication on individuals have significantly changed the communication behavior of modern people, making the study of the role of media in today's information society extremely important, especially in the era of internet development.

Today, the impact of the internet on society continues to grow, with the information society seen as an evolutionary extension of the industrial era. Sectors related to information creation and consumption are rapidly growing, as are new information and communication technologies arising from scientific and technological advancements. This revolution is transforming the way we communicate, produce, process, and transmit information, becoming a powerful force that significantly influences social, economic, and political processes.

In this context, the need for rethinking mass communication theory and practice becomes urgent. For Kazakhstan, sociology of mass communication is a relatively new field, and Kazakh scientists are likely currently conducting scattered empirical research in the area of media studies.

Keywords: sociology of communications, mass communication, semiology, information society.

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ҚАЗІРГІ ҚОҒАМДАҒЫ КОММУНИКАЦИЯЛЫҚ ПРОЦЕСТЕРДІ ЗЕРТТЕУДІҢ НЕГІЗГІ ПАРАДИГМАСЫ

Аңдатпа

Ғылымдағы байланыс-бұл күрделі әлеуметтік-мәдени жүйе, оның компоненттері бір-бірімен тығыз байланысты, бұл оны зерттеу мүмкіндіктерін едәуір кеңейтеді. Ғылыми коммуникацияның ерекшелігі мен мәні туралы әртүрлі көзқарастарды ұсынатын заманауи теориялар ғылыми ойдың әртүрлі салаларындағы бәсекелес ұғымдармен ұсынылған. Ғылыми коммуникацияны зерттеу лингвистикалық, әлеуметтанулық, философиялық, психологиялық, кибернетикалық және басқа да көптеген теорияларды қолдануды талап

етеді. Қазіргі уақытта жаһандану жағдайында кәсіби ғылыми қарым-қатынаста болып жатқан өзгерістерді ескере отырып, ғылыми коммуникацияның ерекшелігі мен мәні туралы Әлеуметтік-философиялық және әлеуметтанулық ойдың жинақталған әлеуетін қорытындылай алатын ғылым әлеуметтануындағы теориялық және әдіснамалық базаның жеткіліксіз дамуы байқалады.

Қазіргі қоғамдағы ақпараттық-коммуникациялық процестер және Қазақстанда ақпараттық қоғамды қалыптастыру гуманитарлық ғалымдардың алдына болып жатқан процестерді түсіндірудің және оларды болжаудың жаңа тәсілдерін іздеу міндетін қояды. Жаһандану және бұқаралық коммуникацияның жеке тұлғаға қарқынды әсері сияқты факторлар қазіргі адамның коммуникативті мінез-құлқын айтарлықтай өзгертті, бұл қазіргі ақпараттық қоғамдағы бұқаралық ақпарат құралдарының рөлін зерттеуді, әсіресе Интернеттің жаһандық даму дәуірінде өте өзекті етеді.

Бүгінгі таңда интернеттің қоғамның дамуына әсері өсуде. Ақпараттық қоғам ақпаратты құруға және тұтынуға байланысты секторлар, сондай-ақ ғылыми-техникалық прогресстің арқасында пайда болған жаңа ақпараттық-коммуникациялық технологиялар қарқынды дамып келе жатқан индустриалды саланың эволюциялық жалғасы ретінде қарастырылады. Бұл революция коммуникацияның, өндірістің, ақпаратты өңдеудің және берудің сипатын өзгертеді, қуатты өндірістік күшке айналады және әлеуметтік, экономикалық және саяси процестерге айтарлықтай әсер етеді. Осылайша, осы кезеңде бұқаралық коммуникация теориясы мен практикасын қайта қарау міндеттері өзекті болып отыр. Қазақстандық әлеуметтану үшін бұқаралық коммуникация әлеуметтануы жаңа пән болып табылады және дамудың бастапқы сатысында тұр. Бәлкім, қазақстандық ғылым қазір медиа зерттеулер саласында әзірге бытыраңқы эмпирикалық зерттеулер жинаумен айналысып жатқан шығар.

Түйін сөздер: коммуникациялар социологиясы, бұқаралық коммуникация, семиология, ақпараттық қоғам

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ОСНОВНЫЕ ПАРАДИГМЫ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ КОММУНИКАЦИОННЫХ ПРОЦЕССОВ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

Аннотация

Научная коммуникация представляет собой сложную социокультурную систему, включающую элементы, значительно расширяющие возможности ее анализа. Современные концепции научной коммуникации охватывают различные подходы к ее сути и специфике, предвосхищая включение конкурирующих теорий из научных областей разных стран. Изучение этого предмета требует применения лингвистических, социологических, философских, психологических, кибернетических и других теорий. В настоящее время в социологии науки отсутствует теоретико-методологическая база, которая могла бы интегрировать накопленные знания о научной коммуникации и учитывать последние изменения в профессиональном научном сообществе в условиях глобализации.

Информационно-коммуникационные процессы, а также развитие информационного общества в Казахстане требуют разработки учеными-гуманитариями новых методов объяснения и прогнозирования происходящих изменений. Факторы глобализации и воздействие коммуникации на личность существенно изменили коммуникативное поведение человека, делая изучение средств массовой информации важным фактором современного информационного общества, особенно в эпоху Интернета.

Сегодня влияние Интернета на развитие общества продолжает расти. Информационное общество рассматривается как продолжение индустриальной эпохи, отмеченной быстрым прогрессом в секторах, связанных с производством и потреблением информации, а также новыми информационно-коммуникационными технологиями, которые появились в результате научно-технического прогресса. Эта революция трансформирует методы коммуникации, обработки и передачи информации, обеспечивая более надежные гарантии для производства и усиливая влияние на социальные, физические и психические процессы.

В этом контексте переосмысление теории и практики визуальной коммуникации становится решающим. Для казахстанской социологии социология влияния коммуникации является новой дисциплиной, которая находится на ранних стадиях развития.

В настоящее время казахстанская наука, вероятно, занимается сбором разрозненных эмпирических исследований в области медиатехнологий.

Ключевые слова: социология коммуникаций, массовая коммуникация, семиология, информационное общество

INTRODUCTION

The sociology of communications is a branch of sociology that explores the role and significance of communication within society, as well as its impact on individuals' consciousness and behavior. The phenomenon of communication is multifaceted and diverse in nature, encompassing various forms and manifestations.

Communication can take the form of direct conversations, television programs, satellite transmissions, visual appearances, or journalistic articles, among other examples. These manifestations are numerous and varied. Some notable examples include:

- "Communication is a form of interaction between individuals in the course of their activities that involves exchanging messages containing the results of human reflection on reality" [17, p. 13].

- "Methods of communication allow for the transmission and reception of diverse information" [2, p.33].

• Communication is the process of conveying information, ideas, values, or emotions from one individual or group to another using symbols. [6, p.57].

• It is also defined as social interaction carried out through messages [10, p.12].

There is a variety of definitions for communication because researchers often focus on different types, which exist in real life. Therefore, it is important to understand the classification of communication.

One example is the typology proposed by V.P. Konetskaya [15, p.79], which is based on the scale of communication in society. She identified the following levels:

- Mass communication (at the level of society)
- Limited communication (within social groups, such as companies or organizations)
• local (within microgroups, such as associations and professional groups);
• intra-group (within small groups and the family);
• inter-personal (between individuals);
• self-communication (between an individual and electronic media).

A pyramid of communication is emerging, each level of which can be the subject of study for various social sciences and humanities. Sociology, with its sociocultural approach, primarily focuses on the study of information transfer among social groups, rather than interpersonal communication, which is mainly studied by psychology. Therefore, the term "sociology of communication" is often replaced by "sociology of mass communication".

Therefore, it is no coincidence that there is a wide variety of definitions of communication as a subject of study. The history of researching this issue in global sociology has a long tradition. The chronological scope of the first phase of studying mass communication in Western academia covers the period from the early 20th century to the 1940s. This timeframe is

characterized by an overemphasis on the role of mass communication systems in society. This was influenced by events such as the First and Second World Wars and the rise of totalitarian regimes in Germany and the Soviet Union. During this stage, theories of mass communication emphasized the vulnerability of individuals and public opinion to media influence.

At the second stage, from the 1940s to 1980s, the conclusions of sociologists regarding the functioning of mass media were influenced by the socio-political context.

By the middle of the 20th century, the amount of empirical research had grown, and Western sociology of mass communication had gathered a substantial body of data. This enabled researchers to conclude that individuals could establish fundamental barriers to the influx of information. [12, p.24].

The third phase in the evolution of ideas about the role of media in society and individuals during the last few decades of the 20th century was marked by a surge in interest in media due to the advent of the internet. This stage's key findings include the process of declining trust in media as a social institution.

MAIN PART

Media-oriented perspectives are founded on the idea that mass communication operates with a certain level of autonomy within society. As a result, these approaches focus on analyzing mass communication as a driving force behind social transformation, with technological advancements or media content itself considered as key contributors to change.

On the other hand, socially-oriented perspectives argue that the nature of mass communication is influenced by wider sociocultural factors. These approaches highlight elements such as politics, economics, and culture, among others, as shaping forces.

Another way to differentiate approaches to studying mass communication in society is by exploring the interaction between cultural and economic factors. This distinction leads to two main approaches: cultural and traditional.

Cultural approaches focus on the ideas, values, and perceptions shaped by mass media and their societal impact. They emphasize the social dimensions of media production and consumption and examine the roles that media play in fulfilling various societal functions.

Traditional approaches, in contrast, concentrate on the ownership structure and market dynamics within mass communication. They view mass media as a reflection of the economic and material conditions in society, seeing it as a tool of capitalism that mirrors the interests of media owners.

Each of these approaches has its advantages and limitations, and understanding both is essential for developing a thorough understanding of mass communication.

These four approaches are not strictly defined; in line with Max Weber's concept, they are "ideal-typical constructs." Nevertheless, their existence must be considered when analyzing communication phenomena. It is also essential to acknowledge the variations in how mass communication is studied across different scientific disciplines, as these fields are interrelated and influence one another. Now, let's explore the sociological, psychological, and cultural approaches to studying mass communication.

In sociology, the structural approach serves as the primary framework for examining mass communication. This perspective focuses on the functions of mass communication as a system, its various organizations, and their interrelationships with other societal elements. It also incorporates insights from historical science, law, and economics in its analysis. Within this structural framework, content analysis primarily looks at how mass communication is shaped by social structures and the specific characteristics of its operations. Empirical data, such as representative surveys and statistical information, form the foundation of this approach.

Behavioral approaches, which draw on both psychology and sociology, focus on individual behaviors in relation to the selection, perception, and reaction to mass communication. These approaches make use of experimental methods from psychology and multidimensional data

analysis from sociological surveys. Participant observation is also frequently used when studying mass communication organizations.

Cultural approaches are rooted in the analytical traditions of disciplines such as philosophy, literary criticism, anthropology, and linguistics. These approaches are used to examine issues related to the meaning, significance, and language of mass communication messages. While they do not prioritize empirical conclusions or broad generalizations, they concentrate on analyzing specific cases and communication contexts. Qualitative, in-depth research methods are the main tools employed in this type of analysis.

These diverse research focuses and methodologies in communication studies complement each other, allowing researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity and nuances of communication as both a process and a phenomenon. This facilitates the development of a more integrated approach to studying communication.

In its broadest sense, social communication can be understood as the exchange of meaning within a social context of space and time. When a message is disseminated to a large number of people or groups with varying interests and backgrounds, it transforms into mass communication.

Mass communication refers to the structured dissemination of messages to a wide audience, aiming to influence their attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. It involves a sender (the source), a receiver (the audience), and a medium (such as television, radio, or the internet) that facilitates the transmission of the message.

Materials and Methods: The growing interest among domestic researchers in exploring the theoretical and methodological foundations for the development of an information society, as well as the role of media and the internet in this process, began to emerge in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This trend was particularly evident among sociologists in the United States and Russia. The ideas of the "post-industrial" and "information" society were articulated by thinkers such as D. Bell, Z. Brzezinski, J. Galbraith, and M. Castells.

In Russian academia, the development of an information society and the potential of new information and communication technologies have been explored by scholars such as F.I. Sharkov, V.P. Konetskaya, T.V. Naumenko, T.A. Goryunova, S.P. Barmatova, L.N. Fedotova, O.G. Filatova, and others.

In Kazakhstan, the study of information society formation and the theory and practice of communication processes emerged somewhat later as a scientific field. A significant contribution to the development and popularization of this area has been made by blogger A. Lyakhov and A. Kolosov, the creator and director of the Kazakhstan Internet Federation. Prominent Kazakh scholars like Ibraeva G. Zh., Petrenko S. Yu., Buluktaev Yu. O., Jalilov A. V., Nurmakov A. I., and Indzhigolyan A.A. are also actively engaged in addressing the challenges of media and communication development. [14]

Communication can take both verbal forms, such as speech and language, and non-verbal forms, like letters, texts, drawings, and videos. The study of these forms raises important questions about understanding and meaning, as well as how the receiver processes and decodes information. In sociology, cognitive understanding of communication is explored through the field of hermeneutics. This field both challenges the concept of "understanding" and examines the situations in which meaning is assigned. The idea of an unattainably high level of communication comprehension often leads to skepticism about people's ability to truly understand each other. This issue is addressed in both classical foreign literature and Russian sociolinguistics. Literary critic D.N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovsky suggested that complete understanding between individuals would only be possible if the perceiver became entirely like the speaker, losing their unique personal traits. To fully comprehend Pushkin, for instance, it isn't enough to read all the books he read; one must also avoid reading those he did not. [5, p.8].

Yu. B. Boreev further elaborated on D. N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovsky's concept, asserting that "understanding is not a contact of souls at all. We understand an author's thought to the extent that we are congruent with them... The scope of an author's spiritual world surpasses even the

most extensive text they have written. Understanding pertains to the text, not to the individual's spiritual world, although they are interconnected" [7, p.10].

The challenge of understanding is further complicated by the fact that it is always accompanied by the "attribution of meaning" by the recipient. This creates a phenomenon of "super understanding," which A.A. Potebnya described: "The listener can often understand much more than the speaker about what is hidden behind a word, and the reader can grasp the idea of a work better than the author himself... The essence and power of such work lie not in what the author intended, but in how it affects the reader" [4, p.15]. In fact, scholars of hermeneutics might uncover revelations in the writings of medieval alchemists that were previously unsuspected.

Among the channels of information flow and methods of communication, we can distinguish three main categories: 1) mass media, 2) tools of mass influence, and 3) technological means.

Mass media include:

1. Print media (newspapers, magazines, books, brochures, leaflets),
2. Audio and visual media (radio and television stations, broadcasters, receivers),
3. Recorded media (gramophone records, tapes, CDs),
4. The internet.

Tools of mass influence include:

1. Cinema, with its constant supply of films and network of theaters,
2. Advertising, which uses various methods to influence consumers?
3. Social media, which allows users to share information and ideas.

2) Theater, circus, and other forms of entertainment, which are distinct by their appeal to the general public.

Technical communication methods (telephone, telegraph, teletypewriter, etc.) have a limited reach and the information they carry is mostly personal or group-oriented.

The terms "media" and "MSM" are often used interchangeably, but the latter is more accurate as it encompasses a wider range of media. The term "media" emphasizes the role of informing the public, while "MSM" refers to all forms of communication.

Looking back, during periods of social and technological revolutions, communication media have become increasingly widespread and accessible. New forms of media have emerged, with the internet being the most recent example. These transformations have influenced our knowledge, thoughts, and behavior, which can occur both intentionally and spontaneously. There are four primary scientifically measurable consequences of these changes. [2]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Behavioral consequences are the effects of social media's influence that are most vividly expressed in behavior. This can include actions such as violence, buying products, voting in elections, or laughing at comedy episodes after seeing someone else behave similarly.

Social stereotypes of behavior are spread through mass media communication, which is an important tool for socialization. While behavior may seem like the most obvious type of outcome, it can be difficult to measure, and even more difficult to determine with certainty if it was caused by social media. For example, we can know if a person saw a commercial and bought the product advertised, but it's harder to prove that this was due to the advertising rather than some unrelated factor. Or, for example, when a teenager commits a school shooting after having seen a similar scene in a film recently, it is difficult, both legally and scientifically, to establish a causal relationship between the film and the tragic events that followed. [2]

In the last decade and a half, there has been lively discussion about the topic of postmodernity. Postmodernity can be understood as a new stage of modernity, and postmodernism can be seen as a way of understanding this new stage. Initially, postmodernism was associated with cultural changes in architecture, film, art, and literature that occurred in the second half of the 20th century. At the same time, the works of many authors, whether explicitly or implicitly, conveyed the idea that the world had entered a new social

era—post-modernity—characterized by significant economic, political, and social changes. One of the most notable features of postmodernity is the unprecedented growth and influence of mass communication, particularly audiovisual media, which has given rise to a new "virtual" dimension of time and space. The revolution in media, on which postmodernism relies for its constructs, also implies a new social organization formed under the influence of information and communication technologies. This organization is called the information society, where the nature of information production and distribution, as well as information inequality, begin to play a role in structuring social reality.

Significant contributions to the development of the theory of the information society have been made by scholars such as D. Bell, O. Toffler, M. McLuhan, M. Castells, and D. Tapscott. The term "information society" is credited to Yu. Hayashi, a professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

The outlines of the information society were defined in reports presented to the Japanese government by several organizations, including the Economic Planning Agency, JACUDI (Japan Computer Usage Development Institute), and the Industrial Structure Council. These reports include titles such as "Japanese Information Society: Topics and Approaches," "Plan for the Information Society," and "Policy Outlines for Promoting the Informatization of Japanese Society."

And so, the structure of the internet has its own principles of organization, which you need to know in order to be able to navigate the internet space quickly. The internet has a number of technical features related to its use, as well as social ones that arise from the impact of these technical capabilities on society and individuals.

However, we must remember that the internet is only a tool, and it can be used for different purposes. The positive features we mentioned above can, under certain circumstances, become negative. For example, psychologists have found that some people develop internet addiction, or psychological dependence on the internet, games, and other forms of online communication. [4]

The lack of censorship on the internet has led to the publication of extremist content, "rumors," and pornography, among other things.. The extent of the impact of the internet on society has yet to be fully understood, but the current trend in its development gives us reason for cautious optimism. To investigate the influence of the internet on the communication behavior of modern students, the author conducted a study among first- and second-year students at the Abylkan Saginov Karaganda Technical University. The participants were internet users. The aim of the study was to determine the attitudes of these users towards the internet and its impact on their communication behavior. The results revealed that many users have a positive attitude towards the internet, which they use for various purposes, including communication and information seeking. However, some users also expressed concerns about the potential negative effects of excessive internet use, such as addiction and social isolation. Therefore, it is important to continue researching the impact of the internet on individuals and society in order to better understand its implications and develop strategies to address any potential challenges.

RESULTS

The method used to collect information was a questionnaire survey. After analyzing the responses, we were able to draw the following conclusions:

We interviewed 70 people, consisting of 29 women and 31 men, with an average age of approximately 19 years. Additionally, we found that the average speed of information transfer was 128 Kbps, and the funds spent on the service amounted to 6,000 tenge.

Based on diagram 1, we divided the respondents into three categories according to their area of study: 15% information, 42% economics, and 40% engineering.

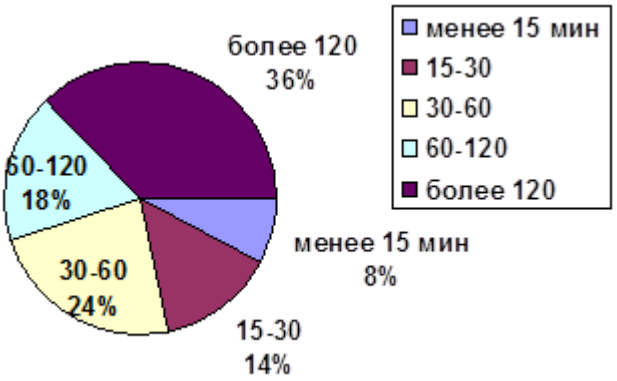
Diagram 1. **Field of professional activity:**

The vast majority of 69% of respondents use the internet daily, which is likely related to their type of activity - studying at Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University. [8]

Diagram 2. **How often do you use Internet services?**

The surveyed respondents, who are mostly users, spend more than two hours on the computer and the internet, which greatly affects their health. According to generally accepted recommendations, the recommended time for sitting at a PC should be two hours, after which a break or a change in activity is necessary. Only a small percentage of respondents, 8%, spend less than 15 minutes on the internet each day.

Chart 3. **To rephrase the question more clearly: "On average, how much time do you spend on the Internet each day?"**

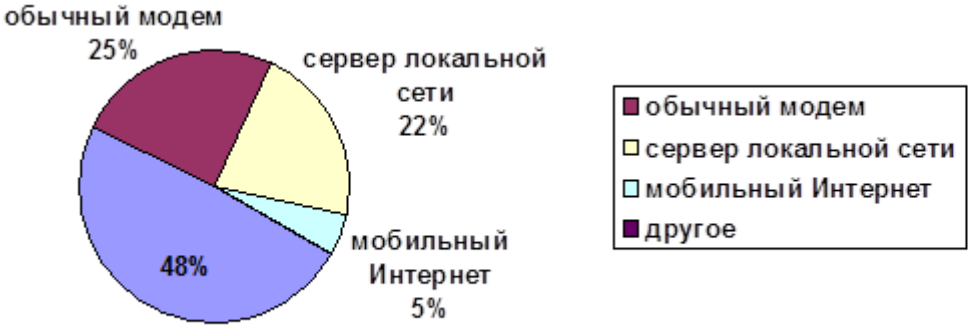


As the study revealed, the majority of respondents spend more than 120 minutes on the Internet each day.

Diagram 4: **Where do you access the Internet most often?**

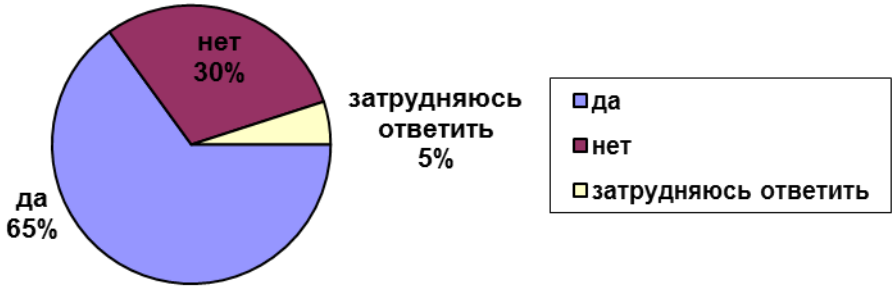
As anticipated, the majority of respondents access the internet primarily at home, which is undoubtedly more convenient for users. [6]

Diagram 5: **Which method of connecting to the Internet do you most often use?**



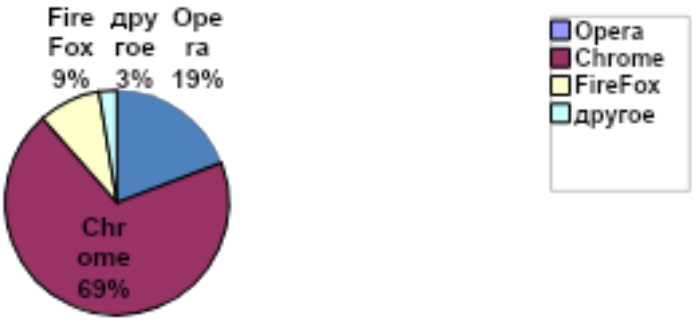
Users predominantly select this type of connection, likely due to its versatility. However, it is worth noting that local network servers are significantly more efficient at handling internet connectivity. These servers have only recently been introduced and have not yet achieved widespread adoption.

Diagram 6: **Are you satisfied with your connection method (data transfer speed, reliability, etc.)?**



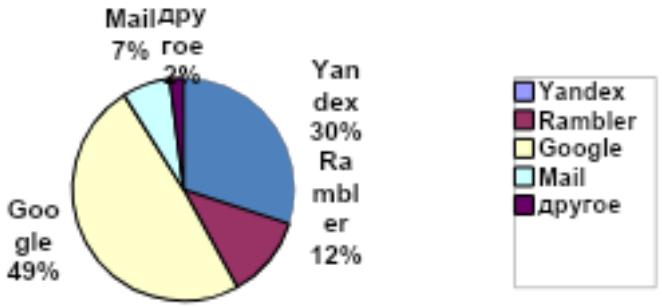
More than half of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their connection, particularly regarding speed, reliability, functionality, mobility, and other factors.

Diagram 7: **What Internet browser are you using?**



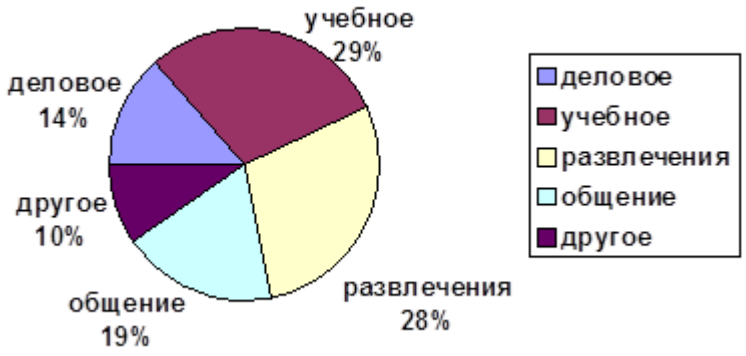
The majority of users surveyed prefer Google Chrome, likely due to its well-designed program, user-friendly interface, and mobility.

Diagram 8: **What search engine do you use?**



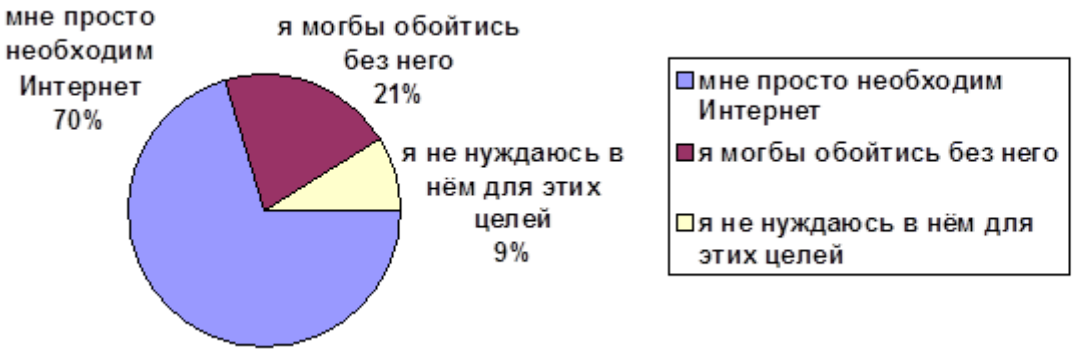
Fewer respondents selected the Google search engine. While it may not be the best search engine, it shouldn't be judged too harshly. In our view, its main advantage is the quick access to Google.com. [5]

Diagram 9: **What do you most often search for on the Internet?**



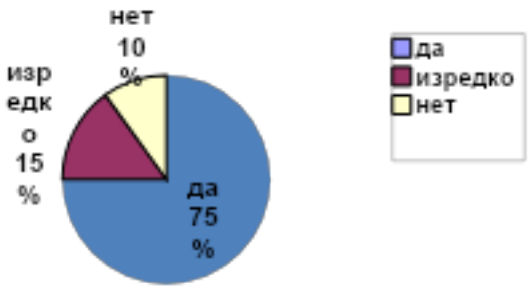
Almost a third of the surveyed users use the internet to search for information related to their studies, and a similar percentage searches for entertainment. This is positive, as they are utilizing the internet in both a productive and enjoyable way, balancing study with relaxation.

Diagram 10: **Do you need Internet services for your work/studies?**



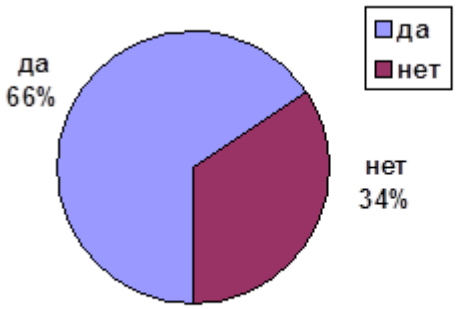
Seventy percent of the surveyed users stated that they simply need the Internet for work or study, as it has become the primary source of any information today.

Diagram 11: **Do you order goods on the Internet?**



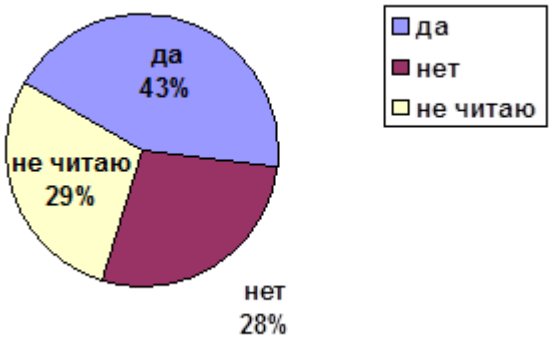
Most users prefer to order goods from the Internet.

Diagram 12: **Have you ever found friends/good acquaintances via the Internet?**



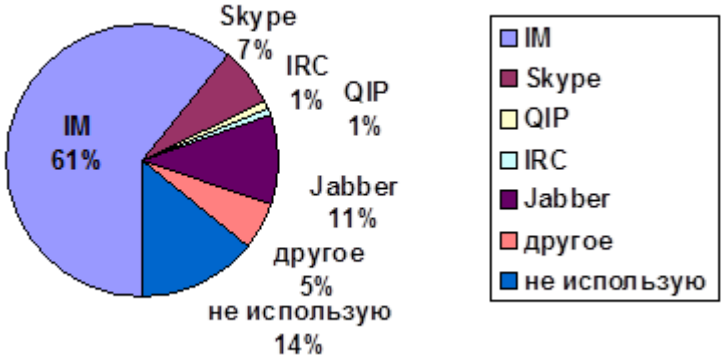
Most users find friends and good acquaintances through the internet. This is due to the emergence of popular social media platforms such as "Vkontakte", "Instagram", "Tic Tok", and "Facebook", as well as communication through chats and forums.

Diagram 13. **Do you read books in electronic format?**



Approximately 28% of Internet users prefer using regular books over their electronic versions, despite the fact that the electronic format offers significant savings.

Diagram 14: **What online communication services do you use? (Select no more than two options)**



Most users prefer using instant messaging (IM) as a communication service, which is understandable due to its simplicity, mobility, and ease of use.

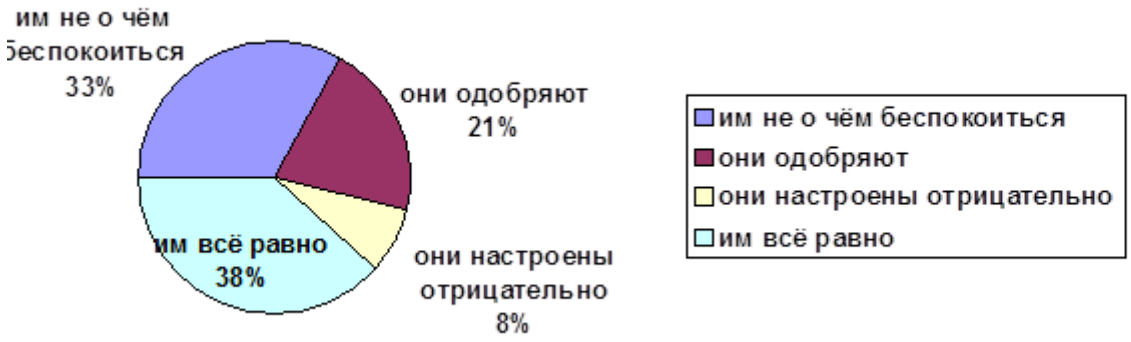
Diagram 15: **Can you call yourself a confident user?**

The respondents had varying opinions, but overall, it indicates that users are quite familiar with the network and are able to easily find the information they need without spending much time.

Diagram 16: **Do you agree that Internet addiction exists?**

In the end, we decided to ask the respondents directly whether they believe Internet addiction exists and to gather their opinions. Six out of ten users agree with this view, which is more than half.

Diagram 17: **How do your relatives (acquaintances, friends) feel about your passion for the Internet?**



Approximately 40% of the respondents' relatives (acquaintances, friends) still show an interest in the internet, although they should be reminded to take breaks from the computer.

The respondents completed the questionnaire with enthusiasm, indicating that the topic is of significant interest to them. The survey participants included both local and visiting students. Based on the results, we can confirm our hypothesis about the existence of internet addiction.

Despite being aware of guidelines for using a computer, users tend to deviate from them. The majority of respondents were students, and they rely on the internet for both academic and social purposes. [3]

With the rise of various online projects, games, and the increasing preference for virtual communication, individuals are becoming more and more drawn to the Internet.

DISCUSSION

The paper examines in detail the main characteristics of communication as a process. It overviews the main concepts and approaches to studying individual, group, and mass communication in Western, post-Soviet, and Kazakhstani societies. Based on empirical research, identifies the features of Internet communication among modern students.

Mass communication can be defined as a system that consists of a source of messages (the communicator) and a recipient, connected by a physical medium for transmitting messages (information). The main components of this process include:

- ✔ The communicator, who creates the message.
- ✔ The message itself.

- ✔ The channel, such as newspapers, television, or computer communication.
- ✔ The recipient, who receives the message.
- ✔ The effect, which refers to the change in the recipient's behavior as a result of receiving the message.

Several conceptual paradigms have been identified in the theory and practice of the sociology of communication:

- ✔ Functional paradigm: Focuses on how communication serves to maintain social stability and cohesion.
- ✔ The concept of communication as a tool for political control: Examines how communication is used by political institutions to influence public opinion and maintain power.
- ✔ Semi-logical analysis of communication: Analyzes communication through logical structures and the interpretation of symbols, seeking to understand the underlying meaning.
- ✔ Critical analysis of the role of communication: Investigates how communication systems may reinforce social inequalities and power structures, often focusing on media and its influence.

Concerning the sociology of mass communication, well-known scholars such as R. Merton, P. Lazarsfeld, G. Lasswell, and De Fleur worked within the functional analysis paradigm. This framework views mass communication as a self-governing and self-correcting subsystem that operates within specific political and institutional contexts. It is important to note that within this approach, mass communication is primarily studied as a means of maintaining societal integration and functioning.

Functionalism theory identifies several key functions of communication:

- **Surveillance**: Monitoring and providing information about societal events, trends, and developments.
- **Correlation**: Analyzing and interpreting information to make sense of societal issues and influence public opinion.
- **Transmission**: Disseminating cultural values, norms, and practices to maintain social order and cohesion.
- **Entertainment**: Providing enjoyment and recreation, which plays a role in balancing work and leisure in society.
- **Socialization**: Aiding in the process of learning social norms and behaviors, especially for younger generations.

I. Information

Providing insights into societal events and living conditions both locally and globally.

Facilitating informational support for innovative processes.

II. Social Connection

- Interpreting and commenting on ongoing events.
- Reinforcing existing norms and power dynamics.
- Facilitating socialization.
- Coordinating diverse social activities and cultivating public consensus.

In the realms of politics, economics, and social affairs, scholars have explored the concept of mass communication as a tool for political control. These experts, while offering diverse perspectives, all agree that mass communication is a crucial factor in sustaining and reinforcing existing power dynamics.

Mass communication can be seen as a means of controlling the political system, as it shapes public opinion and influences how people perceive reality. This perspective is often referred to as the "ideology" or the "media hegemony" theory in academic circles.Scholars such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Louis Althusser, and Antonio Gramsci have all contributed to our understanding of mass communication and its impact on society.

In the semiological approach, researchers focus on the source and content of communication. The primary focus of analysis is on the text itself. The concept of the «receiver» or «actor» is also different. In this approach, the receiving party (reader, viewer, listener) is more active and is expected to consider their attitudes, values, and emotions.

Prominent scholars who follow this approach include Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, Roland Barthes, and Claude Lévi-Strauss.

Therefore, the application of semiology in the realm of mass communication presents a multitude of possibilities. This approach concentrates on scrutinizing the internal structure of texts, enabling us to grasp aspects that may not be apparent through other methods of examining the content of mass communication. The significance of semiology lies in its capacity to analyze texts that incorporate multiple sign systems simultaneously, as is the case with most messages in contemporary media. Through semiological analysis, those who create and disseminate these materials become more transparent to us, allowing us to transcend a superficial, formal perspective of the content. The internal structure, logic, and message become more evident, providing a more profound comprehension. [14]

A critical analysis of communication is closely associated with the Frankfurt School, a group of scholars who pioneered the critical approach in the sociology of mass communication. These social scientists recognized that communication, propaganda, and media are not merely public goods but also political tools capable of mobilizing large populations in a relatively short period of time.

The issue of functional mismatch in mass communication has been clearly articulated by leading members of the Frankfurt School, such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. They argued that mass communication technologies, designed for broad audiences, often lead to social isolation among individuals, with media contributing to this phenomenon.

In this section, we will explore two key aspects of mass communication:

1. Restricting interpersonal communication.
2. Eroding social and moral bonds among individuals.

Let us first delve into the first aspect. Mass communication is predominantly viewed as a means of maintaining societal functionality. It is not considered a catalyst for social transformation. This perspective underscores the significance of media in fostering social equilibrium and stability.

Conversely, the notion of media as a vehicle for political control underscores the influential role of media in moulding public perception and imposing dominant ideologies. This viewpoint regards media as a potent instrument capable of influencing individuals both directly and indirectly through repeated exposure and covert messages.

A distinct perspective, known as semiology analysis, centers on communication as a process of constructing meanings. This perspective regards communication as an essential component of human interaction and societal fabric. [10]

The second chapter, entitled «Features of Virtual Communication on the Internet», delves into a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical framework of the Information Society, serving as a critical tool for comprehending the distinctive features of communication within the context of the evolving virtual society.

Within this chapter, the initial subsection, «Postmodern Theories of the Information Society», provides an overview of the key theoretical perspectives on the emergence and evolution of the Information Age, as articulated by prominent thinkers such as Daniel Bell, Alvin Toffler, Marshall McLuhan, Manuel Castells, and Don Tapscott.

To summarize the current perspectives on the concept of an "information society," we can say that it is viewed as:

A new type of society arising from a global social transformation driven by the rapid development and convergence of information and communication technologies.

- A knowledge-based society in which knowledge is the foundation for individual and national prosperity, achieved through unrestricted access to information and the ability to process it.

- An increasingly interconnected society characterized by an exponential growth in the frequency, speed, and number of concurrent communicators.

- A global society in which information exchange transcends temporal, spatial, and political borders, promoting cultural exchange and providing new avenues for personal expression for each community. [11]

The information society is characterized by the crucial role of acquiring, processing, storing, transmitting, distributing, and utilizing knowledge and data. This involves interactive engagement and continuous improvement of technical capabilities.

Section two, titled "Characteristics of Virtual Communities," delves deeper into the essential attributes of the information society through an examination of the defining characteristics of virtual communities and virtual communication that have emerged under the influence of the internet.

CONCLUSION

Based on the evolution of internet technology and the rise of virtual communities, several conclusions can be drawn regarding their impact. Members of these communities possess the following characteristics:

- They have specific interests related to internet usage.

- They are committed to protecting these interests.

They share a sense of identity that is rooted in specific terminology, communication norms, shared values and ideals.

Some specific attributes of virtual spaces are:

The virtual nature of modern communication has led to a fundamental shift in how we interact with others. The lack of physical proximity among members of a community has become a defining feature of the digital age. Synchronous and asynchronous forms of communication have emerged, allowing us to connect with others from a distance. However, the lack of physical presence in these interactions, where participants exist only as data or ideas, has added a new dimension to relationships.

In computer-mediated communication, self-expression is limited by the constraints of text and images. Anonymity that often comes with these interactions can lead to a loss of identity and status, especially when dealing with anonymous participants. [6]

The third subsection of Section II, "Communicative Functions of the Internet", provides a comprehensive analysis of the diverse communicative capacities of this innovative medium. The social and communication aspects of the internet present a wide range of opportunities:

- The internet facilitates the establishment of horizontal connections through various forms of communication.

- Information shared through the internet is not imposed but rather freely exchanged for consumption.

- Anyone can participate in information exchange, making it an inclusive platform.

- Unlike traditional media, the internet does not promote manipulative communication and eliminates the potential for misleading practices. Question-and-answer formats prevent misinformation and manipulation.

- Online opinions are easily accessible and understandable to all, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, the internet serves as a repository for information, preserving and protecting it from loss or inaccessibility.

The fourth section of the second chapter, entitled "Features of Communication through the Internet: A Study of Modern Students," presents the findings of a sociological study conducted by the author.

To investigate the impact of the internet on the communication patterns of contemporary students, the author conducted a survey among first- and second-year students at Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University. The study focused on internet users, whose attitudes toward the global internet and experiences with it formed the basis of the investigation. The goal of this research was to understand the opinions of these internet users about the internet, and the objective was to explore their perceptions and attitudes in greater depth.

Based on our assumptions, we hypothesize that there is a certain level of internet addiction among the users in question and that this phenomenon influences their online behavior.

We received enthusiastic responses from the respondents to the questionnaire, which allows us to confidently state that this topic is of significant interest. The participants included both local students and visitors. According to the findings of the survey, our hypothesis regarding the prevalence of internet addiction is supported.

Despite awareness of guidelines for computer use, users continue to diverge from them in various ways. Most respondents were students who naturally rely on the Internet for educational and social purposes.

The abundance of online projects, gaming platforms, and the preference for virtual communication contribute to the growing appeal of the internet to users. [6]

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