

Globalization and Social Communication – Threats and Chances

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The processes of globalization is usually described in the context of economic exchange and growth of the role of politics in the world. In addition to economic and political globalization the cultural dimension is also taken into account, manifested by the loss of diversity and originality. Globalization of culture has a direct relationship with the processes of social communication. Less interested to me would be the impact of communication on the globalization, as this fact is described in many ways and is indeed one of the elements of all the phenomena of globalization. I will deal with the effects that globalization has on the processes of social communication, so the communication between people.

Main thesis is, therefore, that the impact of communication on the globalization is obvious, but the impact in the opposite direction is equally important. The world becomes a global village, but in the opposite direction - the global village becomes the world.

In describing the global phenomena in the intellectual and spiritual world can be used similar determinants, as those that characterize the globalization understood in a general sense. So let us look at various indicators of globalization applied to the sphere of social communication.

Organizations

Direct impact on the dynamics of globalization have undoubtedly the emergence of international organizations, intended to support the development of the world, but at the same time coordinating and controlling business processes in the whole world. Mention three major organizational structures. This is the World Bank, whose aim is to assist in the reconstruction and development and which mainly finances investment projects with participation of member countries own capital. This is the International Monetary Fund, which coordinates the financial policies of the Member States and acts as a consultative and information center in the field of international monetary relations. It is the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), who aims at the promotion of

sustainable economic growth, and also coordinates the commercial and economic policy towards the countries not belonging to this organization. These organizations and many other specific global bodies control the sphere of global economics and financial policy, but more important is their auxiliary role in ensuring the existence of a framework for the formation of economic networks across the globe.

In the sphere of communication the role of such "global framework" play the media, especially the Internet with multiple instrumentation: data explorers, email, interactive exchange of information in real time (online), portals, vortals, interest groups, forums, multimedia communication (webcams, audio and video channels), chat-rooms, blogs, social networks, microblogs, interactive games, virtual worlds, etc. But in addition to the Web world media such as satellite TV, radio networks and mobile telephony are developing in the direction of globalization too. Great organizational network consists also of the great events in the media (music events, sports and film), involving indirectly the world of social communication and creating a conceptual grid used by all users.

Free movement of capital

Removal of customs and trade facilitation causes disappearance of borders for business. Analogue of this feature of economic globalization in the sphere of communication is, of course, freedom of a flow of information. Although at present access to information still encounters technological and educational barriers, but in the long run there will be virtually no limits for the transmission of information. Already assistance to developing countries is often based not on improving access to consumer goods, but on increasing access to information. As the mobility of capital is derived from economic development, such freedom of access to information is derived from the development of civilization in which education plays a fundamental role.

Liberal economy

Liberal economy is described as a tool of globalization's success. Indeed, the changing economic situation in Western countries in the postwar period resulted mainly from the liberal reforms, eliminating a plethora of "welfare state". The counterpart of the success of economic freedom, achieved through the promotion of private property, entrepreneurship, and reducing social security charges and state tax burdens on citizens in the communications field is limitless freedom of communication. It became possible only thanks to a fully interactive media, where even what someone wants to hide in the transmission, is revealed by a different route.

Consolidation

In the processes of economic globalization often occur the phenomenon of consolidation companies on a larger scale than before. The most conspicuous example of consolidation in the field of social communication is the unification of the global Internet (WWW - World Wide Web), which absorbed most of the existing network of smaller scale and scope, bringing the true globalization of the virtual world.

Modern technologies

In the rapid development of globalization crucial role played the processes such as rapid transit and new ICT, especially the Internet. It changed the shape of business, work and trade. Modernity of technology, directly influences the quality of communication, its relative cheap and fast access.

As one can see, the characteristics of globalization has close counterparts in the characteristics of the phenomenon of globalization of social communication. But this is where the similarities end. There are also unique indications, found only in the sphere of social communication, such as language change, interactivity, telepresence, and virtuality. Each of these features we will review shortly.

Language changes

Using the national language was replaced with a modern lingua franca of interpersonal, especially network communication, i.e. English language. What's more, it is rather a kind of sub-language, the so-called "netspeak", which is also transferred to the actual contacts. Shortcuts of colloquial expressions, using of the so-called "emoticons", slang terms from the field of computing - all made a conversation between people, young people in particular, to the schematic interaction via a computer network. The habits of the use of rapid interactive media cause a change in dynamics and tension of real emotional contact. Frequent and sudden changes in the subject of conversation, interrupted discourse, reducing the level of emotional involvement – all these are the effects of the transfer of non-mandatory rules of the mode of network contact, e-mail or an SMS, where there is the lack of a direct presence, and even lack the authentic identity of the dialogue partners. Children spending many hours in front of computer screens, replacing them a window to the real world, begin to not only "talk network", but actually "think network".

Interactivity and telepresence

The scale of the presence in the interaction network is huge and growing rapidly. Internet is growing much faster than any previous communications technologies. Achieving the first 50 million users of the network took just four years, while in the case of radio it was 38 years, the computer 16 and television 13 years. This phenomenon of avalanche growth in the number of users and time spent by them in the network has an impact on the cultural and social relations. One can already speak of the emergence of a "generation @" - a new generation of "children of the network."

Constantly connected crowd of people spend a large part of their active time not in the real world but in cyberspace. This is a special kind of presence, the presence "at the end of the fingers". But involving the mind and emotions.

Virtuality

Young people live on the border between real and virtual world. A large part of this community move contacts to the "real world". However, more and more Web users prefer staying in the imaginary world of cyberspace, with no intention of replacing it by real world experiences. Here they can apply the looser rules of social relations, or no rules at all. Organizers of the virtual space try to impose standards of so-called "netiquette", ie the codes of behavior in the network, but they are difficult to enforce, and still the inhabitants of the virtual world will always find the niches, in which they will be establish their own rules of conduct.

In contemporary sociology one can apply reinterpretation of the concept of so-called "third place". It is conceived as a requirement of social communication. "Third place," according to the theory of Oldenburg, is the area (the third most important after the house and the work or school), where people can create social relationships that are not built on an emotional or structural hierarchy (as in the case of families and businesses), but are made thanks to the features of character, interests and lifestyle of the members of the group. Here occurs the interaction that gives a sense of full and joint participation. This community was provided by the public places so far: club, bar, cafe, church, park, local shop, playground, yard, etc. They provided a framework for informal public life. Here was a place to interact with other members of the community, here glowed contacts around what the group have in commons.

The development of civilization, the increase of distance and pace of life caused the disappearance of natural "third places" for local communities. Modern technology has provided alternative, computer-generated "third places", which took the virtual form (chat rooms, internet cafes, virtual conference rooms, forums, blogs, etc.). They are therefore a natural response to the hunger of social contacts, which is difficult to satisfy in the real world. "Third places" in the network are getting better and begin to not only supplement the social interactions, but even replace them. Today's children say goodbye to each other after lessons at school and did not arrange the real meeting, but after returning home "chat" with each other through web services. They still want to meet, but enough for them is a contact via computer monitors. It is a substitute for real meetings. The Internet is for many a public space, where they can easily meet other people and make new acquaintances. Therefore, more and more Internet users not only use the internet (as a tool), but also are present in it (as a place).

Threats

All these phenomena point to a number of risks and difficulties that globalization poses to communication: vagueness and poverty of the language, the shallowness of the contact, inauthenticity, weakness of commitment, and disintegration.

The language used in the web is very impoverished, deprived of its cultural properties. Followed by the disappearance of the diversity of dialects, styles of expression through standardization and hyper-accuracy.

Communication in the network is exposed to inauthenticity. Web users play with identity, through the use of substitute names and nicknames. You can never be entirely sure of the authenticity of conversation partner's personal data. Mediation of technical equipment in contact between individuals increases uncertainty and lowers the threshold of confidence in the authenticity of incoming messages.

Another type of risk is associated with the distribution of information on such a scale, for example, through discussion groups or social networks. Abuse of the opportunities offered by the Internet makes the impact on the mind of the unprepared, and even changes in their mentality. The promotion of false news, pretending to be someone else in the network in the wrong intention,

spamming and trolling (unauthorized or disruptive use of common resources in the network) are examples of such threats.

Risks relating to the level of information need to be distinguished from the more technical ones: breaking down barriers to access, hacking, etc.

Another threat to the quality of social communication in the virtual world is a superficial relationship and weakness of content.

Secondary effect of the inauthenticity of the virtual contact is the disintegration of persons involved. In an unreal society contacts occur not between individuals, but rather between the "skins" of people, phantoms, images of oneself. Sometimes the identity that one takes in cyberspace is what psychology calls the "perfect I". This handling of the "invented self" in the network causes the gradual disappearance of an integral identity. It is perhaps the biggest possible threat in the era of globalization, because who but not real persons would defend us from the globalization and uniformity of minds?

Chances and hopes

How, therefore, faced with the entire catalog of threats and dangers, one can reap optimism and look at the development of global communication without the sense of impending apocalypse? Firstly, from the awareness that the development of globalization in the field of social communication is not a top-down but bottom up process. Unbridled freedom of thought does not assume any filters and regulators also in the virtual world. Even if someone were going to conquer minds, the development of communication would effectively and permanently be prevented.

Secondly, people are still able to "think globally, act locally". In local instances there will survive longer residuum of authenticity, depth and accuracy of interpersonal communication. Thirdly, it is true that virtual worlds environment is "highly toxic" and, therefore, antibiotic therapy should be used to combat this virus of blandness and shallowness and the disappearance of an integral identity. The principle is simple: to fight with a threats in the area of social communication on a global scale one should use the same tools.

The methods and techniques of modern communication on a global scale are a double edged sword. The final results will depend on how one will use it. However, one can be sure that the unfettered human thought will defend itself from actually dangerous, but not absolutely enslaving threats.