

Internet Communications in Education

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ABSTRACT

A necessary condition for the existence of any society is effective communication, including Internet communication, which is becoming increasingly important in the modern world. This paper considers the functions of Internet communication, their specific characteristics in comparison to the communications off-line, and its use in educational systems.

Keywords

Internet communications, educational environment, communication functions, digital social networks, virtual communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Life in a society involves a constant interaction with each other, so the development of civilization depends largely on the degree of development of communication links between people who are constantly modified and improved. Mail, telegraph, telephone as the means of communication have now largely delegated their powers to Internet communication.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Internet as a mean of communication transforms interpersonal and mass communication, affecting the number of communicants and the quality of the whole process. On the one hand, communication can become more stable – individuals who find it difficult to interact "tightly" in reality can build a stable communication in a virtual environment. On the other hand, quite often communication in digital social networks is unstable, transient due to the uncontrolled amount of connections and a high degree of anonymity of its participants. In addition, thanks to the Internet proximity to the communicant for direct interaction, because digital social networks allow us to be constantly "connected" even being at a great distance from the Communicator. Another specific feature of Internet communication is the possibility of obtaining a direct simultaneous response from an arbitrarily large audience (the number of subscribers on some resources can reach a few million and more). These opportunities and limitations of digital social networks are widely used in modern education.

3. DETAILS

As any type of communication, Internet communication serves a number of important functions that are specifically implemented in a virtual environment in comparison with an off-line type of communication:

1. Communicative function (education always involves communication both between the teacher and the student, and within these groups. In modern education, digital social networks are widely used for communication as a platform for the rapid exchange of both educational and non-educational information.

- In Internet communication, users form a virtual image of the interlocutor, giving characteristics that do not always correspond to the real characteristics of the communicants.

- The advantage of communication in virtual networks is the availability of relevant topics for discussion, such as any current events, news, acute social problems. Discussion of these topics contributes to the rapid establishment of mutual understanding, or, conversely, leads to acute controversy.

- A distinctive feature of Internet communication is the simplification of language, familiarity in communication, etc.

- The communicative space of the Internet allows you to participate in a huge number of communicative acts (often simultaneously).

- Characteristic features of communication on the Internet are [1]:

- anonymity: the network is minimal risk of negative assessment by others and the risk of exposure, so often people allow themselves more freedom of action and expression
- remoteness
- mediation
- availability of computer ethics
- semantic mosaic
- creativity

It is possible to speak about this phenomenon as alienation of communicative function – the people, tired of the constant, sometimes intrusive, communication, communication to minimize or even stop to chat.

2. Information function (a very important function for education, because thanks to it a person can access necessary information for the learning process):

- Increasing the amount of information available almost around the clock.

- Ability to correctly set information requests, interpret the information received and be a member of virtual communities.

- A variety of information resources, including those containing false information.

3. Socializing function (education is one of the most important institutions of socialization, which is modified in the process of internetization):

- The main users of Internet networks are teenagers, whose personality is not fully formed yet and can be easily corrected [2].

- Virtual communication expands communication opportunities for people with disabilities, as well as people with psychological problems (such as shyness).

4. Identification function, self-presentation (thanks to this function, self-assessment of both students and teachers is formed).

It is through the identification of people formed their social identity, a comparison of themselves and others, the choice of the reference group. In modern society, as we know, there are principles of division into in-groups and out-groups, and with the help of digital social networks to share them has become much easier. Using the search parameters, you can

easily find like-minded people with similar hobbies and interests. Any profile in digital social networks has such features as the degree of privacy (anonymity), which varies from "fully closed", "partially closed" to "open"; as well as the realism of the profile (as the profile picture can serve any image, and instead of the name and surname often use nicknames).

For many people who interact on the internet, the image becomes a unique protector from the outside world as a virtual image often replaces the former real image of an individual. The key of successful communication is the correct creation of your own virtual image: the manner of communication on the Internet, the choice of images and profile picture, publication of records, etc.

5. Entertainment function, relaxation (this function allows you to implement such learning technologies as gaming).

For some people, the Internet is a way to relax and unwind, but for others, spending time on the Internet for the purpose of relaxation becomes an addiction to get rid of which in some cases requires professional help. The problem is serious, as there is not enough reliable data regarding the safe time limit of Internet communication. In addition, there is a phenomenon called "surfing on the Internet", which is that a person looks through various pages, websites, virtual media, friends' feeds, their news feeds on digital social networks and this activity has no boundaries, as due to the fact that the amount of information on various topics is already becoming immense for a person. In addition, very often this activity is more exciting than reading books or watching movies and television. If there is no opportunity to use a social network the so-called "withdrawal, anxiety, irritability, depression or even a shutdown can occur.

On-line flash games in digital social networks, albeit addictive, do not have such a large scale impact on people as a full-fledged game. Often, they serve their entertainment function, that is, help to relax, get carried away, enjoy the game. It may also develop the desire to spend more time playing a game, therefore decreasing the available time dedicated to interpersonal communication in an off-line environment. The constructivist effect of the relaxation function is such a phenomenon as a flash mob. This happens when a huge number of people through the Internet agree that, at a certain time, in a certain place (usually within a few minutes), they will all perform the same action, for example, dance one dance, or all dressed the same piece of clothing and all this just to spend time together and surprise other people. People see this as a form of recreation, they do not expect benefits from it, in most cases they are not even familiar.

6. Self-actualizing function, self-development function.

People always strive for self-realization, to realize their talents, skills and abilities. But very often because of the discrepancy between social roles, daily activities and their talents, people are not able to realize certain qualities of their social identity, that is, to gain recognition. Internet space makes it possible to "be heard" by a huge audience quickly and easily, so people create their own pages, blogs.

Now, virtual networks have become unique galleries, databases for storing various products of creativity; users post their own and share other people's photos, paintings, audio recordings, videos, works of various literary genres, statements. That is, in digital social networks there is a place for creative activity and its implementation, dissemination and recognition.

7. Representative function (the function is widely used, for example, for advertising and PR-and educational institutions, including specific programs, teachers, etc.).

Representative function is expressed in the so-called virtualization of social reality, it includes people, groups, social institutions: there are "pages" that reflect the activities of social actors. Thanks to this function, the Internet has several attributes: it becomes a statistically reliable display of reality, virtualizes communication, the communication happens between most people themselves but their virtual characters.

Tens of thousands of socially adequate and socially attractive images are created on the Internet every day. A digital profile of a person on various digital platforms can serve as a business card. This may give the impression that the Internet is a parallel reality. There is even an expression of referring to something as being not represented on the Internet and, hence, non-existing. But we should not forget that the Internet is not only a social reality, but also its continuation and reflection.

Internet as a social reality is typical in a situation when something is achieved by special means, Internet technologies for Internet audience. Social classification is subject to anything from news to videos. These are things that cannot be analyzed or rated outside of the Internet. Once established, such systems can already be used by social objects to achieve goals and objectives not related to the Internet directly.

The reflection of current reality on the Internet corresponds to the actions taken in order to build a legitimizing identity.

The continuation of the reality on the Internet is a correspondence to active actions of characters (images) of social objects by means of Internet technologies for achievement of goals. These are the pages of online stores that exist in reality, chat rooms of familiar people and so on. Computers from simple computation machines have become universal tools for creating a parallel world as different analogies of real mechanisms, for example, the organization of various political rallies or rallies.

8. The psychological function of discharge (currently quite less-used in education).

Virtual networks become a place where users can "splash out" negative emotions and tell about the sore. This function is activated after a tense situation, that is, there is an opportunity to complain immediately to a large number of users.

9. The function of a personal diary or journal (this function partially coincides with the information function, the function of self-presentation, etc.).

Digital social networks have a number of technical parameters to set up in privacy settings meaning records or "pages", with the help of which the individual can make records intended only for himself, which are recorded in order not to forget the details of what happened, that is, aimed at further communication with himself.

There are various motivations for maintaining a personal page or blog: the implementation of literary abilities; fixation of important moments of life; the desire to "pour out the soul", to talk about emotional experiences, the need for understanding (reflection) of his life, to save the events of life from oblivion; satisfaction of the need for recognition; a way of self-expression, self-realization; self-analysis for self-improvement; transfer of information "first hand"; a need for a companion or dialogue; communication with other people when there is no opportunity to do it in person (to talk about experiences, or to reveal your inner world). Since blogs or pages are maintained for a long time, it often happens that the motives alternately replace or complement each other.

10. Constructivist function (transforming), by means of which various learning platforms are formed. It implies that the Internet is becoming an environment, where people can live and work for more and more users which creates new types of employment, such as crowdsourcing and freelancing, etc.

Internet technology significantly transforms professions and employment. Crowdsourcing is now becoming more and more popular, which is a way of delegating functions of the organization in itself that were previously served by several employees or entire departments in a form of an order. The order itself can be carried out in parts, by several people or by one person. The main condition is an open order form and an unlimited number of participants who can fulfill the order. We can see the transformation of entire professions: now a highly paid professional can be replaced by a large community of amateurs. The most popular crowdsourcing is in areas such as: research and development, marketing ideas, photography and design.

There some phenomena occur such as online journalism, where people become independent reporters and talk about the incidents they witness. Thus, during the military and political events of recent years, such "Amateur" reports, often supported by photo and video materials, often strikingly different from the information of the official media, are very popular.

According to scientists [3]: "the Impact of the Internet on young people every day becomes more noticeable and has a direct impact on interpersonal relationships, living space and educational process."

The authors conducted a survey of students of leading Moscow universities in order to determine the implementation of the described functions.

The majority of respondents communicates via digital social networks (42%) and has fun watching movies and listening to music (37%). 14% of users view the news feed, and 5% download files. There are only 2% of respondents who are looking for new acquaintances.

Among the attractive features of digital social networks, respondents identified the following:

- reachability of people (23%),
- an opportunity to learn something from other people's lives (17%),
- equally attractive features of digital social networks are access to media files and variety of information content (16%),
- social media availability (14%),
- recognition through positive response indicators (3%),
- innovation (3%),
- anonymity (2%).

According to respondents, the most popular function of virtual communication is a communicative function, which, in fact, is the main purpose of digital social networks as a leading kind of virtual communication. Assessing the possibility of replacing real communication with virtual, respondents note that virtual communication will not replace real: 65% said that they do not agree that virtual can replace real. A similar position was taken by 23% of respondents who replied that they rather disagree with this statement. 8% believe that this can happen and 4% agree that virtual communication can replace the real one.

Most respondents learn news not only from digital social networks (77%), but almost a quarter (23%) does not use other news portals [4].

Respondents tend to think that they are likely to behave in the Internet space as honestly and openly as in real life (30% of respondents). And 28% of respondents said that, on the

contrary, it is rather in the Internet environment, they express their opinion bolder.

As it has been repeatedly noted, the Internet has become an important channel of communication and information acquisition over the past decade, providing an opportunity for two-way, almost instantaneous communication with the world. This is a new communicative and cultural space. The main motive of registration in digital social networks – is communication, that is, of all the social functions of digital networks is the main communicative, then, according to the degree of importance, are socializing and identification.

The phenomenon of the Internet plays a huge role in blurring the boundaries of different types, both geographical and boundaries between personal and public. On the one hand, there is access to any kind of information, and on the other, in real time, there is access to people who may be in the next room, or on another continent, i.e., the geography of space does not matter. With the help of digital social networks, people can instantly communicate, talk and see each other.

Digital social networks are a phenomenon of the XXI century. Now it is difficult to say what impact they will have on society – positive or negative, for this virtual communication is not well studied. There are both many advantages and many disadvantages, for example, such as Internet addiction (this is an extreme and as any extreme has negative consequences, but the reason for it is quite logical – the need for communication, information, entertainment, self-realization). This dependence on modern means of communication can be called a condition dictated to us by the modern world.

The main advantages of digital social networks are the opportunity to talk about their interests and share them with other people, which makes virtual networks not only a platform for informal and formal communication, but also a platform for new, perhaps still emerging activities, including education.

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