

THE LANGUAGE-COMMUNICATION TANDEM

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0. The absolute link

There is no communication without a language and no language in the absence of communication. Language was born to fill in the basic necessity for communication.

Language is the means and the expressions of communication through a combination of vocal sounds into words, phrases, sentences, text and speech, and the combination of such sounds to which we attribute meanings (Webster's, op.cit).

The term communication by itself embodies the essential or the sine qua non condition for the existence and survival of a human community; to mean that we do not need any further explanation to stress out the importance of this couple of concepts and their link.

Life would be unimaginable in any community without the help of the communicative dimension of a language; no field of activity, neither social nor scientific would function, given to the fact that as humans we think and we act in a language. Language is one of the foundation of our cultural expressions and communication the energy that conveys that cultural expression.

Abstract: Il n'existe pas de communication sans langage, tout comme il n'existe pas de langage en l'absence de communication. Le langage est né pour répondre au besoin fondamental de communiquer.

Le langage constitue à la fois le moyen et l'expression de la communication. Il repose sur la combinaison de sons vocaux formant des mots, des groupes de mots, des phrases, des textes et des discours, auxquels les êtres humains attribuent des significations (Webster's, op. cit.).

Le terme communication, à lui seul, renferme la condition essentielle, voire indispensable (sine qua non), à l'existence et à la survie de toute communauté humaine. Cela signifie qu'il n'est pas nécessaire d'insister davantage pour démontrer l'importance de ces deux concepts ainsi que le lien étroit qui les unit.

La vie serait inconcevable au sein d'une communauté sans la dimension communicative du langage. Aucun domaine d'activité, qu'il soit social ou scientifique, ne pourrait fonctionner, puisque les êtres humains pensent et agissent au moyen d'une langue. Le langage constitue ainsi l'un des fondements de nos expressions culturelles, tandis que la communication représente l'énergie qui permet de transmettre et de diffuser ces expressions culturelles.

1. Etymology and definition

Communication is language in action, language in use, to mark the absolute link between the two concepts as one cannot exist without the other and constitute a response to

the fundamental, innate need for a human, the essential condition for an organized community life. By its root, we understand communication as or like:

- Cum, the Latin for the English with;
- Communis, the Latin for common or shared by all or many (webster's, op.cit): in communion
- Communicate, communicare, the Latin for to communicate or to impart, to share, to pass along, to transmit some information, some news, some impressions, some feelings...
- Communiqué, the French and now borrowed by English, to mean a piece of news, notice, message.

2. Role and importance of communication

The term is close to the concept of sharing (Christian communion) and participation (Larousse, Dictionnaire Etymologique et Historique du Français, les grands Dictionnaires Larousse, Paris, 2001), so much as it concerns interpersonal contacts.

Communication is the action, also, the result and the retroaction/feedback between the sender and the receiver. The objector message communicated may be material (documents, data) or immaterial (ideas, feelings).

Communication works out for the visibility of a community and of any company (Lohisse J., la communication: de la transmission à la relation, De Boeck, Brussels, Ed. 2001, P.48).

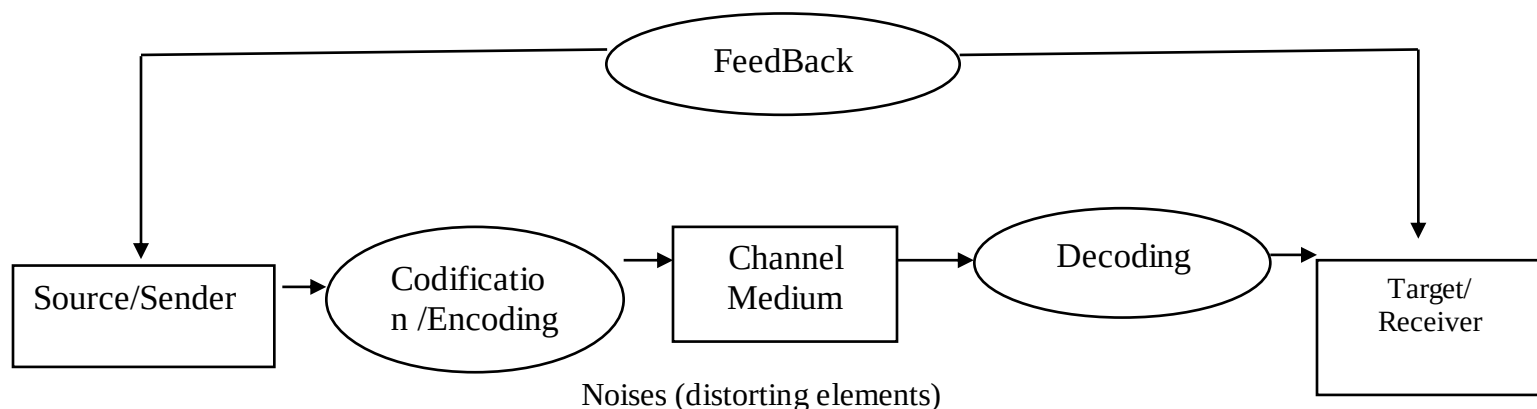
Communication circulates everywhere as "an indefinite choice of exercise places in all domains of activity possible" (Aubree C., les Métiers de la Communication, Ed. Dunod, Paris, P.9. Communication is everywhere, all the time, from anyone to anyone, like language, the message carrier, communication is illimited. It shows the same dynamism and novelty, it is creative, which makes it, likewise, different from the animal's one as this appears limited, inborn or innate whereas a human has to learn the system and develop some capacity to use it in both way (verbal, non verbal) and produce communication intelligently.

What is communication finally, how is it performed, what is its role and importance?

Communication, communicate, community, common, belong all to the same root and go together. Communication is the foundation of life in common, in a community, like language, it does not occur outside a community, whether human animal or vegetal, to mean a life regroupment. Communication is an attribute of life, just like food and breath. Communication is defined as a process of transmission, sharing of messages, information, news, impressions and feelings via any form of language, verbal or non verbal (paralanguage, between a source/sender and a target/receiver as presented by the following graph (Mulenda Nadège, TFC, ISC/KIN, 2013-2014).

3. The Communication Process

As it appears on the graph, communication involves five fundamental elements; but there are eight of them in fact: the source, the message, the medium and the receiver. To the source we may add the codification and to the receiver the decoding process. Let us put it on a graph: communication Process:



1. The source or the sender may be anything (person, object, animal) that sends/emits the message;
2. Codification or the idea translation mechanism, also called symbols;
3. The message: the whole of the signs transmitted by the source: information, news, requests, impressions, feelings, ideas...
4. The medium or the channel: the course or means through which something moves, a message is conveyed, any means of passage or message carrier; language, as it happens, in all its forms, to mean from the most basic to the most complex expression of lyer (a sound, a voice, gesture, a colour, a sculpture, everything that media and technology (TIC).
5. Decoding on the part of the receiver or the process of the translation of the signs into ideas to obtain the meaning of the message;
6. The receiver or the addressee; this is the targeted person to whom the message is sent.

The two remaining elements come out or follow as the result of transmission of the message, these are in relation with the feed-back or the response of the receiver, which is a sort of role inversion between the two communicators.

Seen as it appears, the act of communication seems so simple that we would take it for granted. But, and far from this, its process is a long way, and its content is so complex and involves more elements than the few which are reported on the diagram, whatever auxiliary (means) is used to communicate.

For example, we have not mentioned the voice among the channels or the means of transmission although it stands for the basic and certainly the most important, the air or gravity, the ear, the eyes, the body and other sensorial organs, the quality of the message, the ability of both the sender and the receiver to execute properly their own roles to encode and send and to decode and respond (send the feed-back), their perception capacity, the

geography (environment) and the context. All the factors may, as a matter of fact, arise as obstacles or, on the contrary, as facilitators to the message for a successful process of communication.

Some authors consider that communication exists or takes place only when it is effective. They are right if we have to account for the results.

But how does the communication process function in regard to all (and others) factors listed here above its departure and arrival points are subject to the perception organs. This is why we have to talk about our perception system, starting with the brain.

4. The tools of Communication

a) The Brain

The Brain is the center of the human nervous system, the organ which receives and translates sensory impulses and transmits motor impulses (Webster's, Op.cit.) in living beings. The brain forms the main part of the spinal cord, indeed; made up of gray matter (the outer context of nerve cells) and white matter (the innermass of nerve fibers), it is thought to be the center of thought and thus the seat of what we named previously the inner language, the seat of our reasoning.

The role of the outer organs of our body here after numbered (1 to 5) is to transmit or convey the sensations and any impression they are submitted to the brain for interpretation.

The brain is comparable to the central processing unit of a Computer. As a two way process for reaching mutual understanding in which the participants not only exchange, but also encode and decode in formation, news, ideas, feelings, etc. as already state/above, communication is dependant on a number of factors among which human physical organs, geographic factors, man-made technologic apparatuses.

b) The human Voice

A product of the vocal cords, defined as any of the two (2) pairs of membraneous cords or folds in the larynx consisting of a thicker upper pair (false vocal cords) and a lower pair (true vocal cords). True voice cords produce the voice with the help of the air coming from the lungs which causes them to vibrate.

The control of the pitch is ensured by the variation of the tension on the cords and the volume by the regulation of the air passing through the larynx. Hence the human voice bears an energy charge.

Like any sound or noise it is conveyed by air vibrations. It may be powered and transported on unestimate distances by the new technology.

c) The Perception Process and its Organs in the Transmission of Communication

Perception, from the verb to perceive and its Latin etymology percipere (per for the English through and capere as to seize, to take note of) is concerned with how people or any living being make sense of the information that they receive through their sensorial organs.

The perception process represents an important phase of the communication one; it is the terminal where from the feedback or the reaction to the message is formulated and sent back to the initiator of the whole process.

As such, perception requires a number of tools and conditions or physical organs, the same as the sender needs for the obtention of the feedback in order to conclude the exchange.

There are five visible main sensors, all fairly complex in their composition, with each, a proper function. Their role, as external body organs is in fact, the one of transmitting the different sensations that they perceive to the brain for identification and the subsequent triggering of the appropriate reaction.

1) **A pair of eyes**, one on each side of the nose. They compose the organ of sight and help us to perceive the presence of objects in our immediate environment. This is, otherwise named vision.

2) **A pair of ears**: located on both sides of the head, one on each side like a real parabole and which must have inspired the shaping of the television disk areal and the satellite disk. They stand for perceptors of the sound/noise and compose the organ of hearing.

3) **The nose with its pair of nostrils**:

In the middle of the face, with a pair of nostrils, it exerts two functions which are breathing and smelling, both intervene in the communication process; for example for the production of the voice, for an utterance, we need air and breath. We perceive the smell with our nose and nostrils by inhaling. This is the organ of smell.

4) **The mouth**:

It is a multiple function organ by its different parts which permit the giving off of language in association: the lips, the tongue, the teeth, the larynx, the palate, the alveole, the vocal cords in the throat.

We generally think of the mouth as the organ of speech and feeding; but the tongue is also and mainly the organ of taste.

For instance a person deprived of his/her tongue cannot speak or articulate correctly his/her sounds, nor can he/she feel the taste of food and beverage.

In modeling the sounds of language, we recourse to the various parts of the mouth, indeed, and these give the names of auxiliaries or means (sounds), such as nasals, labials, dentals, palatals, labio-dentals, etc...

5) **The Skin**:

It covers the entire surface of the human body, the skin helps us to feel temperature in our surrounding, to perceive the conditions around us. It is the organ of touch sense.

Human senses or sensors or receptor organs, for sure, also play a role in the perception of inner feelings and emotions (fear, anger, love, hatred) as auxiliaries in the transmission of impressions and inspirations to the inner organs of the body (heart, stomach, nervous system via the brain).

6) The human body

Communication also happens/is in the individual him/her self before all. This is what we call sensations or perceptions, to mean that the message come from outside or our surrounding world as well as from our own inner body. So we attribute a double role to our sensorial organs like this:

Inside world outside world
(human body) ←————→

Another reason to focus on our perceptions is the abundance of information we are bombarded with at any time and which has to reach our brain in a sparse way through the five sensorial organs and the nervous system (Hayes N., Foundations of Psychology Introduction Text, Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1996). Briefly, Perception is the process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets information from sensations in order to create a meaningful picture of the world.

5. Forms of Communication

When a single individual plays the role of both the Sender or the source and the receiver or the target of the message, this is if he/she speaks to him/her self, we call this Intra-Personal communication. It is often silent and internal monologue, initiated by the inner language (the thought). Sometime, some people cannot help talk or speak to themselves, they cannot think or reason silently despite the negative attitude of the community towards this. It is thought to be abnormal in the eyes of some opinions, even insane.

But this is one more proof of the fundamental and natural necessity of communication, commanded by instinct. Self communication or communicating to oneself is monologue (from the Greek monos and logos). When communication takes place between two people, then this is a dialogue following the Greek etymon (di and logos).

When it extends to more people, it becomes a dialogue or a conversation, a debate, a discussion, a conference. If used to ridicule or mock people, amuse them, we talk of humour, jokes, irony, sarcasm. In fact we distinguish three levels of communication, which could be named sorts or forms of communication:

- (i) At a basic scale we call this an interpersonal communication, from an individual to an individual;
- (ii) At mid scale, a group communication between one person and a group of persons or among groups of people: meetings, conferences, seminars...
- (iii) At a large scale, mass communication from one sender/emitter or more to a large number of receivers, a crowd, a community, a nation or nation the world, with the use of mass media technology: radio, television, public campaigns...

6. Modes of Communication

People communicate by two means! Verbal and non-verbal language with two codes, digital and analogical. Digital codes are words, numbers, to mean symbols and not necessarily related to the objects or ideas that they represent. Analogical codes use/unspoken or silent language. They are embodied by signs: traffic posts.

According to psychologists, fifty-five percent of the effectiveness of speech depends on visual cues (unspoken) and the thirty-five other percentage of the verbal message is interpreted by the tone of the voice, the voice pitch and pace (Kianda K.M. (Phd dissertation). And that the greater the difference between their systems of relevancies, the fewer the chances for the success of the communication... (Potter & Margaret, Discourse and Social Psychology. Beyond Attitudes and Behaviours, Saga, London, 1987).

Giving and receiving a feedback, for example, is an important part of the communication process that makes it clear whether the message is interpreted by the receiver as it was intended by the Sender. Communication composes a major part of the human active life as a social activity, pursued verbally through speech, reading and writing or not verbally via body language.

The benefits of effective communication are too many to be enlisted here. They enhance all the aspects of life from personal to professional. Linguistic anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists of language define communicative style as the ways that language is used and understood within a particular culture. Culture is all around people and it is reinforced by communication.

7. Obstacles to Communication

Human communication is as a matter of fact, a complex process filled with countless elements all of which play an important role. This complexity increases when other forms of communication intervene, such as cross, cultural communication, language barriers, mannerism.

Factors like a cultural context, the interlocutor's age, personality, gender, psychologic state or nature and the degree of motivation are primarily elements that affect the message.

There are secondary factors like noise, the immediate surrounding, ergonomics, physical elements which may also significantly influence communication. Some other historic factors that appeared to be barriers to communication, just in order to mention a few, distance, absence of oxygen in deep waters, outer Space, gravity...; but as from now there will be no more limitation to communication thanks to the New Technologies (NTIC); we are reaching to a universal dimension, to the "creation".

How far into space can a rocket convey probes that can send back photographs and messages to the earth! Now known as NTIC (The New Technology of Information and Communication or TIC (Technology of Information and Communication), this one has brought a wide range of tools (material) for mass media, office work (bureautics), business

(local, long distance communication, outer Space exploration (telematics), research in all domains of activity (education, health care, agriculture, environment).

Just to mention a few:

- Telegraphy
- The computer
- Fax, telefax
- Telephone
- Internet

Modern communication means have solved the problems of communication related to distance: teleconference, nets, electronic signature, direct contacts although security requirements especially for the data on transfer subsist.

8. Verbal vs. graphic Communication

Finally, even though verbal communication may seem to be invasive, non verbal communication is not less spread and we see this throughout the presence of all sorts of signs and writings: Fine Letters, written press, Media...

Media, for instance, mix different means of communication: graphic, gestural, sounds, as it appears to be a reproduction of real life.

- Business/Companies, Schools, Churches, organisations use what is called institutional communication whose main goals/role are:
- Naming or identifying oneself by means of symbols, logos, Signature...
- Situating oneself through social position, image
- Self legitimation: by one's action and its validity and authorship;
- Improvement of one's legibility: clarity
- Self implication;
- Keeping in relationship by the creation of opportunities.

And all this is to be achieved with the use of different tools:

- Graphics, photographs, pictures
- Parrainage, sponsoring and sponsorship
- Events
- Critical
- Relations with press
- Written supports; posters, press review
- Suggestion box
- Flash
- Audio-visual, video
- Meetings.

9. Mass Communication

Nowadays, Mass Communication has gained an undisputable position in the world and in the different communities and domains such as politics, human rights campaigns, business, health and especially when we are concerned with pandemic diseases such as the Corona-Virus and environmental concerns which occupy the floor in the relations of the nations of the world and their top organizations (UNO) for conferences and meetings, sensitization campaigns, advertising and diplomacy, thanks to the progress of communication which has brought everything so close to all via the New Technology of Information and Communication.

Mass communication is an important field which mainly characterizes our epoch in such domains as broadcasting and the spreading of knowledge and science.

Furthermore, mass communication translates “the Art of developing and achieving good understanding among people” (Irwin R.D., translated by Terry G.R. and Franklyn S.G., Economica Ed, Paris, 1982, P.41).

That is why Potter J. and Margaret W. sustain that successful communication is possible only between persons, social groups, nations, etc. who share a substantially similar systems of redevancies.

Finally communication is certainly restricting the borders of ignorance by accelerating public awareness and progress through cooperation between the nations of the world and the removal of obstacles to contacts.

10. The Arts of Speech/Discourse and Communication

Apart from High Technology, Mass Communication calls for some artistic skills in speech. As a matter of fact, some people develop some special ability to use a language and turn it into oratory art, so revealing themselves to be especially gifted at verbal communication in different forms:

- Written as in poetry, drama, comedy and other literary genres;
- Spoken like in harangues, speech for defence, palaver, humour and in order to complete the series and illustrate the point, let us take notice of the following;
- Orator: a person who exhibits a special ability, art or skill in the use of speech; he can also debate, use rhetorics, act as a spokesperson, deliver conferences and harangue audiences. He/she is a good locutor and interlocutor, he/she is eloquent and has a good elocution.

Such people were highly praised in the Roman time when orators could receive recognition as skillful eloquent public speakers, for instance Cicero, then known as “orator et consul”.

Previously to the Romans, the Greeks had developed the rhetoric Art. Rhetor stood for the Greek equivalent of the Latin Orator and the French Orateur, from the verb eirein, synonym of to speak (Webster’s, op.cit.). Whence we obtain words such as rhetoric/rhetorical, rhetorician, rhetorical question.

The African equivalent of these schools could be “The African Palaver”, a judicial assembly/meeting, discussion, a gathering anyway, often under the shade of a big tree, a court or a tribunal where sentences are pronounced after particularly long debates for the defence characterized by oratory speeches on both sides (defence and accusation), an exercise of eloquence and oratory art, wisdom and knowledge of law and customs.

The word finds its origin in the Portuguese term Palavra (the word or speech) from the Latin Parabola, an ecclesiastic root (Parabola) for the English parable or bargaining and with reference to the conference and discussions between the African Natives (Traditional Chiefs) and the European explorers and traders.

CONCLUSION

Language and communication make an unseparable couple: there is not one without the other. Communication embodies the concept of share and as such stands for a basic need, a sine qua non condition to the good running and the existence of life in community. Logically needs precede solutions. Hence, as a medium to carry out messages, language comes as a solution to the need of any living being for communication, in all its aspects and representations: cultural, scientific, economic, social, philosophic...

This justifies the tireless efforts devoted to the development of communication technologies by the present century. The New Technology of Information and Communication (NTIC/TIC) has brought together the different parts of our planet into a “Global city”, including “Creation”.

If communication is essential to man and his/her community, a language appears then to be the absolute solution to the situation. A good use of language is the key to a successful communication between human beings.

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