# **Communication Beings: Four Communication Prototypical Figures**

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### Abstract

The study falls within the Communication Ontology (Fundamentals of Communication Science component). It addressed the issue of fundamental ontological element of communication: communication being.

First, communication being is defined as tangible, modular, computational and functional element. Then, investigation is developed on two axes. On the diachronic axis is made an inventory of denomination of communication beings since the establishment of communication as paradigmatic discipline. It is found that over the three paradigms (1950-1970, 1970-2000, 2000 - ...) talked about source-destination, sender-receiver, speaker-receiver, addresser-addressee, communicator-communicatee, participants etc. On synchronic axis is performing a taxonomy of communication beings. Bring several arguments in favor of the thesis that, in terms of categories, there are four communication prototypical figures: arhireceptor, participant, actor and agent.

Keywords: communication being, communication ontology, communication prototypical figures

#### 1. Introduction

Communicators agents are tangible, modular, computational and functional elements of communication system. They are ontological and teleological factors of communication system. They generate intangible elements, give energy to non-modular elements, form and modulate teleological the communication. As primordial factor of communication, the communicator is initiator of communication process. He carry out inside of it the following functions: element of a social relation, releasing of communication act and subject of communication fact, subject of communication action, originator or only emitter (transmitter) of the message, that one who suggest the communication code, message codification, producer of discourse (who express the message) and its modalities, person I of enouncing, creator of discourse instance and who suggest the communication situation terms and of communication contract, strategically centre of deixis, implementer of language acts, assumptions creator, mental operation object of auto-surveillance, feedback and feedforward mediator, auto-correction performer.

Communicator can be a real presence (in oral communication, paraverbal communication and nonverbal one) or virtual presence (in written communication or computer-mediated communication). Anyway, in each case its presence is recognizable and can be detached its essential attributes as producer of discourse (understood as language producer that bring coherent and cohesive assembly of significations named message); from logical and pragmatically

assumptions that receiver perform them at receiving and from verbal elements whereby are developed themselves as subject (source) of discourse, speaks about discourse instance in context and co-text parameters. It is producer of discourse; also he is subject of its enunciation (first person). In relation with enunciation, he can be subject or object. Communicator, as source of discourse, as producer of it, rank and hierarchies it, also is implicit or explicit auto defining, auto communicating, is enunciating own position of speaker and defines communication situation in which he is; he is placed (as volume, time and space) and qualify also the role, statute, time and space of receiver.

We have to take into consideration also the mode in which the communicator is related to himself opinion (auto perception theory), the mode how is responding to dissonant messages (cognitive dissonance theory) and how is built causal representation of each event that is invoked in his discourse (assignment theory). It can be added that the enunciation subject can be detected in his discourse (discourse modalities) and aspectual forms. The signification of communication act can be achieved efficiently and correct only if at enouncing signification are added the significations of enunciation act that specify the manner in which has to be understood what was said, the speaker intentions at enunciation producing.

The "communicator", we say, is the communication partner of the communicator. To occupy rightfully the position, he has to carry out the following conditions: a purpose or the possibility to supply a useful result, a status expressed by concrete and susceptible of variation motions through modification of external conditions in which is placed, ordering (suggestible, influential) – possibility to react to external invocations applied through his central command organ (brain).

#### 2. Diachronic denominations

In communication history and paradigms area were used as ontological concepts dyadic to appoint who communicate, among other things source-destination (Shannon & Weaver, 1949, p. 99; Sebeok, 1991, p. 29), sender-receiver (Berlo, 1960), speaker-receiver, addresser-addressee (Jakobson, 1987, p. 60) etc.

C. W. Morris and J. L. Austin, in years 1946-1962, chose for "communicator ('the speaker')" and "communicatee (,the audience')" (Austin, 1950, p. 121) and (Morris C.W., 1946, p. 118). Among those who direct accepted to handover these concepts, is Francois Recanati who shows "it would be preferable to use the pair terms "communicator" and "communicatee" "(Recanati, 1987, p. 160).

At intersection of three paradigms was set a neutral ontological concept: communicator. As Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss remark, in majority, the specialists appeal to the communicator concept: "Many of us begin our thinking about communication with the communicator. Several generalizations characterize the individual as communicator" (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008, p. 94). It is also appealed relative improper concept of "participants", "participant" (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981, p. 63; Kincaid, 2009, p. 190).

Aside of these as instances as capture instances were defined also co-speaker and supra-receiver. Mihail Bahtin identifies in dialogue communication three participants: speaker, receiver and supra-receiver (Apud Cosmescu A, 2012, p. 191). Supra-receiver is a generic instance. In "emitting" vision, supra-receiver is ideal receiver. He constitute ideal prototype of receiver to whom is oriented communication intention of emitting. It can be said that supra-receiver is the receiver prototype of communication act. To him are oriented strict intentioned significations generated by emitting. Antoine Culioli introduces for receiver appellative co-emitting. He understand the concept as defining the communication status of receiver who during emitting is sending him a message

involve together with him to understand much better (Culioli, 1990, pp. 12-19). We can say that coemitting is a kindly receiver.

Gerald R. Miller and Mark Steinberg are first that used the concept of "transactant" with sense of communicator with anticipative and "pre-programmed" behaviour (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 304). Then, W. B. Gudykunst, L. P. Stewart and S. Ting-Toomey add to concept the act ant signification "an intercultural bargaining situation" (Gudykunst, Stewart & Ting-Toomey, 1985, p. 100). In the volume coordinated by Charles R. Berger and Steven H. Chafee (1987), Gerald R. Miller use the concept of "transactant", "transactants", in context of using codes: "the verbal and nonverbal code systems employed by the transactants" (Miller, 1987, p. 451). On the side of "communication being" it is consolidated using of "transactant" concept.

Transactant is specific communicator Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3.

The transactant is a communicator agent

- (1) aware of own purposes,
- (2) communicating according to a plan and
- (3) having a communication strategic-proactive-negotiation behavior, kindly and open to consensus.

We situate this profile of transactant in Charles R. Berger's ideas about "goals, plans, and understanding", "plan-based approach to communication" şi "message plans" (Berger, 1988; Berger, 1995; Berger, 1997; Berger, 2007; Berger, 2010) and in Goals-Planning-Action Theory" a lui J. P. Dillard (Dillard, 2004; Dillard, 2008a; Dillard, 2008b; Dillard, 2008c). Also, our opinions concerning theories of two famous communicologists can be upgraded to enter all of a piece with generic ideas of actual paradigm of communication. The extension can be made through thinking of "Actions" component in of negotiations "Transactions". As a matter of fact, still from years 1980, I. W. Zartmann (1976) observed that the world was orinted on "the negotiation age" (Zartmann, 1976, p. 2), and Ellis Paul Torrance remarked: "We live in an age of negotiation" (Apud Raina, 2000, p. 51).

Later, M. K. Raina notes sinteticaly "age of negotiation" as "age of constructive collaboration" (Raina, 2000, p. 117). Howard A. Raiffa ascertain a "pattern" of "negotiation dance" (Raiffa, 1982, p. 47). Otherwise, communication was anticipative, "trasactional". On this idea, corroborated with that actual paradigm of communication is also a trasactional-constructive-colaborative, creates the way to think a Goals-Strategy-Transactions. This conceptual combination does not make carrier until now. However in conditions that we live in Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3, is normal that "actants" that are in transactional process to be named "transactants": "actions" to be seen as transactions.

# 3. Taxonomy of communication beings: four communication prototypical figures

Communication rationality is represented by practical touching of some purposes. Communication is a teleological activity. Anyone would be communication form, communication type or communication level, teleological releaser remains the same: accomplish some purposes. On this aspect, communication is an activity, that roll on achieving some objectives. As such, it is formed as a mean to carry out some objectives. So, it is itself an epistemological objective (Tudor, 2013). Even we are talking about aesthetic, literary, artistic, architectural, pictorial communication, etc. Middle characteristic is conserved. The purposes do not belong, principally, communication. But communication as mean is impregnated of purposes. Teleological factors of communication are communicational agents. Communicators are not teleological when they access communicator statute. Of his kind, human being is purposeful being (Vlăduţescu, 2004; Gîfu, 2011; Vlăduţescu &

Ciupercă, 2013). To accomplish his purposes, he uses a mean named communication. As used mean to accomplish as much efficient of a purpose, communication has to become a mean as much efficient. Thus mean improvement to carry out the purpose becomes a connective purpose. So, communication asks value, a double value. Communication is a mean by its nature and purpose by its destination. Communication accomplishing is in relation with communication of a paracommunicational purpose (see Bratosin, 2007). In communication, only efficient purposes belong to communication. The purposes that use communication are para communicational purposes.

Through its internal organization, communication generates alone purposes, which makes a mean of it. Transactants, interactants, actants, teleological agents are communicators. Communicators become actants when action to carry out some purposes which are not their one only as communicators. Communicators become actors, when, they are personages with a defined role to carry out another's purposes. Communicators without purposes in communication are participants. The only communicators that are found in communication as having own purposes, are communicators agents.

In fact, according to personal purposes, in communication we can talk about a taxonomy of persons that can appear in communication processes.

There are four communication prototypical figures: arhireceptors, participants, actors, and agents.

a) Arhireceptors are persons who observe communication.

Arhireceptors have no face, have no voice in communication.

They are not involved in communication, they are not partipating at communication, they have not functional purposes in rolling on the communication and have not power of decision in communication process. Arhireceptors are spectators, observers of communication: they have not "face" in communication, they are not part of communication system. Arhireceptors are looking to the communication performance (Vlăduţescu, 2002; Vlăduţescu, 2009a; Vlăduţescu, 2009b).

b) The participants have no personal purposes, neither communication purposes, nor paracommunication purposes. They are passive presences in communication. If the arhireceptors does not exist for communication, the participants exist. They are parts of communication system, they are taken into account. The participants have "face" in communication, but they have no "voice" in communication.

According to what it was, what it is and what communication will be, participants are put in delay. They are moved by communication, they are not moving in no wise communication. Much more, they are not parts in scenario of another type of communicator. The participants are figurants. They are doing walk-on (Vlăduţescu, 2013a; Vlăduţescu, 2013c).

c) Communication actors have face and voice which are not theirs.

Having face and voice of another one, they have not communication power (Craig, 1988; Craig, 1989; Craig, 2001; Frunză, 2011; Cojocaru, Bragaru & Ciuchi, 2012; Craig, 2013). Therefore, in communication reality, they, as real persons, have no real face and voice. Neither having personal face, neither personal voice, they have no power. The actors are marionette of communicational agents (Vlăduţescu, 2013b). Their answers and motions are of another one. They are moved from back side.

d) Communication agents do the purposes and also the games. In fact, communication takes place between the communication agents. They are those who manage all purposes: personal purposes (in which communication is in the middle), communicational purposes (in which communication is purpose, as well mean to accomplish internal purpose) and para-communicational purpose (to see communication as performance, which they write and direct it). The only

communicators with history are communicational agents. Arhireceptors, participants and actors are not historical communicational beings. On their site, the history is passing unsuccessfully: is not helping, is not affecting them. Communicational agents are parts also of real history and communication history. In real history they are making the communication history. In communication history they are those who, first of all, make the primary ontological difference between communication paradigms. An "agent" has two types of behaviors: "deliberative behavior (e.g. plan selection, task decomposition, and task allocation) and reactive behaviour (e.g. respond in a timely manner to the arrival of new data, to changes in existing data, and to varying agent commitments" (Huang, Jennings & Fox, 1995, p. 221). The agents are meant as "rational agents" (Dumitru, 2010, p. 12). Sequential or statutory, the agents appear as actants, interactants or transactants.

# 4. What is your name now, Communication Being? Transactant

To The Linear-Transmissive-Action Paradigm, P1 (1950-1970), specific is the communicator named actant. Circular-Interactional Paradigm, P2 (1970-2000), is defined by a communicator assigned as interactant. In the centre of Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3 (2000-...) is staying communicational agent recognized as transactant (in a transaction). (Incidentally, are enough coryphaeus of Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3, even mentioned by us, who still use the terms interaction and interactant). Much more, some terms died long time ago in communicational thinking arrangement (Vlădutescu, 2013d). Communicational concepts history still keep concept as "sender" or "receiver": these would be equivalent for "slave" and "patrician" for peoples' qualities in history, in actual democracies conditions. These two concepts entered long time ago into useful goods category which are sacrificed for more helpful goods. They are neither to convict, nor to gibe. A comprehensive condescension has to surround concepts which made heavy history, the pressing history of the beginning, to be among us a comfortable history of communication. In its stunning assimilation capacity and in its fascinating power to tolerate, the dominant communicational paradigm today, Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3, keeps alive and useful a lot of concepts and notions of two previous paradigms. In Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm, P3, in "approaches" set figures as nuclear message-centered approach. Concordant, communication agent, the transactant is seen as message producer. In this quality, message producer "design and deploy messages in the service of achieving their goals" (Berger, 2010, p. 123) (also Ciupercă, 2009; Tenescu, 2009). This build the message, it has an active role: "a message producer may identify what are through to be relevant audience attributes and predicate message feature choices on the attributes only to find that the attributes are irrelevant to achieving a particular goal" (Berger, 2010, p.153).

In D. A. Infante, A. S. Rancer and D. F. Womack's opinion communicator agents are "participants" (Infante, Rancer & Womack, 2003, p. 20). The same denomination is used by R. F. Verderber, K. S. Verderber şi D. D. Sellnow. These define "participants" as "individuals who assume the roles of senders and receivers during an interaction". In circlar-interactional paradigm's line, the participants are seen both as senders and as receivers. When they enter in role ofsenders, they "form and transmit messages using verbal symbols, visual images, and nonverbal behaviour". When they become receivers, participants "interpret messages that have been transmitted to them" (Verderber, Verderber & Sellnow, 2010, p. 3).

Daniela Cotoară notes that "the new models of communication" take in to consideration "emittent and receiver interchangeability, communication continuity in spite of all differences, individual various to be in control of communicational codes, opinions and attitudines role in

communication process, social and cultural context importance of the change" (Cotoară, 2003, p. 120).

In P1, person-centred communication is actant, in P2 is interactant, and in P3 is transactant. Along it was understood that is more revealing agent appellative. From the begining of Paradigm 3 (Variable Geometry-Constructive-Transactional Paradigm) there is conscience of an essential transformation of generic communicator. It is neither considered sender or receiver, nor actor. The communicable man is found to become active, interest, involved; "man, shows Dean C. Barnlund, is not a passive receptor, but an active agent" (Barnlund, 1976, p. 9). Jesse G. Delia takes into consideration also an "active agent": "an active agent who reconstructs his environment and who is a source of acts" (Delia, 1977, p. 69).

Besides its actant capabilities and interactional competence, an agent has, more, the aptitude to cooperate and colaborate on three directions: to achieve owns goals, to achieve shared comunized objectives of cooperation and to remain open to requests-needs-necessities that appears along. The transactant knows and is engaged in both of two processes that make "human communication system evolve: interacted learning and social collaboration" (Fay, Garrod, Roberts & Swoboda, 2010, p. 351).

#### 5. Conclusion

Transactional communication is an inter-agent communication. The agents are transactants. As such, transactional communication is the communication that takes place between trasactants. The transactant is an actant-interactant, engaged in cooperation and collaboration on commun goals, with anticipative behavior and open to idea of "learned lessons".

Transactant equation is as follows:

The transactant = actant + interactant + "cooperation and collaboration commitment" + message plans.

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