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The Significance of Communication and Communion: Conceptual Framework and Theological Perspective

Abstract

In this article I will emphasize the importance and significance of the terms communication and communion, analyzing the conceptual framework (definition, etymology, evolution and meaning of the terms, particularities, process and forms of communication, structural elements and functions of language in the act of communication) and the theological perspective (the primary language, the Tower of Babel and the Descent of the Holy Spirit - from the separation by words to reunification through the Holy Spirit, communication - something more than the transmission of a message: interpersonal experience).

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Keywords

Communication, the primary language, Tower of Babel, Descent of the Holy Spirit, interpersonal experience, communion

1   Definition, etymology, evolution, and meaning of the terms "communication" and "communion"

Definition of communication

The definitions of human communication contain the following common elements: communication consists in a process of transmission of information, ideas, and opinions, either from one individual to another or from one social group to another.[1] There are numerous definitions of communication, and they depend on the particularities of each subject, on the theoretical models and the methodological approaches. Thus, they provide different dimensions of communication: *the transfer of information* (ideas, knowledge, thoughts, messages), *the idea of influence or effect*, the expression of messages through signs, the mechanism of inter-human relations, *the sharing and understanding* of signs by those who communicate. Therefore, communication is defined by the following items: *action*, *interaction*, common interpretation, and *relationship*, assuming at least three elements („founding triad"): *communicator*, *message* and *receiver*.[2]

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[1]   Vasile TRAN, Irina STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării (Theory of communication),* (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), p. 12.

[2]   Ioan DRĂGAN, *Comunicarea, paradigme şi teorii (Communiation, paradigms and theories)*, vol. I, (Bucureşti: Ed. RAO International Publishing Company, 2007), pp. 18-19.

Usually, human relationships - and not only them - are communicational interactions. Through communication, not only information but also meanings are transmitted, because human relationships have a symbolical dimension: „human interactions would be impossible without the use of sign systems and codes in order to convey and receive messages. We exist for each other and interact with each other *as we communicate with each other*, transmit and receive signals, encode and decode messages. Messages modify (the degree and quality of) information of the receiver, and perhaps of his behavior"[3].

Theologically, communication is „the interpersonal relationship established between man (as a person and spiritual being) and God the One in Being and Threefold in Persons or between man and other spiritual beings, especially his fellow men and has as an immediate effect a closeness of his soul to God, and his salvation as a purpose. Therefore, the communication of man with God produces a transformation, a transfiguration of the praying man, who seeks God"[4].

The Christian communication has its roots „in symbols, sounds and gestures, images, objects and places that serve as a meeting point for a community of people… The Christian communication starts with the gratitude for the existence of the fellow men and with the fellow men's honoring and prayer for the peace of everybody"[5].

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[3] Ibidem, p. 11.
[4] Vasile CREŢU, „Valenţe religioase ale comunicării" („Religious meanings of communication"), in: *Ortodoxia*, LV (2004), 1-2, p. 183.
[5] Gordon W. LATHROP, „Life together in Word and Sacrament: Insights from Dietrich Bonhoeffer on Liturgy as a Communications Model", in: *International Journal of Orthodox Theology*, 3:2, 2012, pp. 45-56.

Etymology of terms

Communication has been perceived as a fundamental element of human existence since antiquity. The very etymology of the term indicates this aspect: the word „communication" comes from Latin (*communis* = to agree, to be in relation with, to be in relationship) and it was used in the vocabulary of the ancient people also in the sense of „transmitting to others, to share something with somebody"[6].

The root of the Latin verb *comunico, -are* is the adjective *munis, -e*, which means: benevolent, obliging, who does his duty. Thus, appeared the word *communis* which means „somebody who is sharing the burden with someone else", and then, in the classical age, with the following meaning „what belongs to many or to all". The initial sense of *communico, -are* was the pooling of things, no matter of what kind[7].

In this context, the term „dialogue", which can be defined as „two-person conversation"[8], should also be mentioned. The very etymological meaning of the word *dialogue* (διάλογος = speaking between... / by word) shows the idea of communication. Thus, the dialogue facilitates the communication[9]. The term „communion" comes from the Latin *communio, -*

[6]   Vasile TRAN, Irina STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării,* (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), p. 12.
[7]   Mihai DINU, *Comunicarea. Repere fundamentale*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Orizonturi, 2010), p. 24.
[8]   *Dicţionar Explicativ al Limbii Române*, Vasile Breban (ed.), (Bucureşti: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1998), p. 281
[9]   Vasile GORDON, „Fără dialog nu e posibilă comunicarea" („Communication is not possible without dialogue"), in: *Ziarul Lumina*, 6 Noiembrie 2011, www.ziarullumina.ro/opinii/fara-dialog-nu-e-posibila-comunicarea (5.05.2018).

onis.[10] In Greek, we have the term κοινωνία = fellowship, communion, sharing, participation, union, association, comradeship, sharing, connection[11].

„Word" comes from the Latin *conventus* = gathering, reunion; *conventum* = agreement, convention; where the French word *convent* (monastery) comes from[12]; in Greek, we have λόγος = reason, cause, word, God's Word-Logos[13].

With the spread of Christianity, *the sacramental, eucharistical* sense of communication was revealed: the Holy Communion of believers in the liturgical service.

From this last sense, appeared the opposite term *excommunication,* which means the prohibition to receive communion, equivalent to the exclusion from the community[14].

In Romanian, the Latin *communication* was inherited in the term *Communion*. Thus, there is a dual dimension of communication: communal and *sacred*[15].

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[10] Ion BRIA (ed.), *Dicţionar de Teologie Ortodoxă de la A la Z (Dictionary of Orthodox Theology from A to Z)*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1994), p. 95

[11] *Dicţionar grec-român al Noului Testament (Greek-Romanian Dictionary of the New Testament)* Maurice CARREZ, François MOREL, traducere de Gheorghe Badea, (Bucureşti: Ed. Societatea Biblică Interconfesională din România, 1999), p. 163.

[12] *Dicţionar Explicativ al Limbii Române*, Vasile Breban (ed.), (Bucureşti Ed. Enciclopedică, 1998), p. 242.

[13] *Dicţionar grec-român al Noului Testament (Greek-Romanian Dictionary of the New Testament)* Maurice CARREZ, François MOREL, traducere de Gheorghe Badea, (Bucureşti: Ed. Societatea Biblică Interconfesională din România, 1999), p. 175.

[14] Mihai DINU, *Comunicarea. Repere fundamentale*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Orizonturi, 2010), pp. 24-25.

[15] Ibidem, p. 25.

The primary language

Umberto Eco, the famous semiotician, analyzes the myth of „Primary Languages", in a speech titled „On the Tracks of the Perfect Language in the European Culture". This language is called in different ways, such as: Perfect Language, Mother Language, Eden Language, or Secrete Language. Thus, Eco emphasizes the relationship between Genesis and the „Primary Language" in the first book of the Old Testament, where is said that God had mandated Adam to give names to the animals *(Genesis 2:19*)[16].

In the fourteenth century, Dante was asking: „In which language has Adam spoken to God in Paradise?". Moreover, he also formulates the most interesting version of the „Primary Language": „God would not have given Adam a ready-made language, but only a gift of the language, more abstract and primitive than a language, a so-called *forma locutionis* (in modern terms, a linguistic matrix or a universal grammar)"[17].

Jean Kovalevsky distinguishes three categories of languages: „divine, adamic and post-fall or primordial"[18].

Because the Divinity decides to communicate with people using a human language, that language becomes sacred. „The Divinity connects with people and chooses a language of communication of His will. The divine choice gives to that language the gift of sacredness. Sanskrit, Hebrew or Arabic are venerated in the

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[16] Umberto ECO, *Pe urmele limbii perfecte în cultura europeană (*„On the Tracks of the Perfect Language in the European Culture"*)*, (Constanţa: Ed. Pontica, 1996), p. 13 *apud* Dumitru BORŢUN, *Semiotică. Teorii ale limbajului (Semiotics. Theories of language)*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), p. 48.

[17] Ibidem, p. 14.

[18] Jean KOVALEVSKY, *Taina Originilor (The mystery of Origins)*, Cuvânt înainte şi trad. de Dora Mezdra, (Bucureşti: Ed. Anastasia, 1996), p. 127.

related religious environments as sacred languages, ways of communicating with Heaven(...); only within the prayer, words get in touch with the light of sacredness, every tongue on earth is called to communicate beyond words"[19].

The Tower of Babel and the Descent of the Holy Spirit - from the separation by words to reunification through the Holy Spirit
The history of the Tower of Babel „validated the possibility of a primary language"[20]. The episode of the Tower of Babel is significant in describing the uniqueness and universality of the human language: „at that time there was one language and one verse in all the earth" (Genesis 11: 1), but also to highlight the splitting of the universal language, which was caused by the arrogance and the vanity of those who wanted to build a tower that would reach heaven, to God, but without the help of God (Genesis 11:4).

That is why, during the construction of the Tower of Babel, God decides to mix up the languages: „Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined doing. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the

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[19] Nicolae DASCĂLU, *Parabola făcliei aprinse. Comunicarea religioasă în era informațională (The parable of the burning torch. Religious communication in the informational era)*, (București: Ed. Basilica, 2012), p. 83.

[20] Horia Roman PATAPIEVICI, *Cerul văzut prin lentil (The sky seen through the lens)*, (București: Ed. Nemira, 1995), p. 345 *apud* Fr. Ilie IVAN, *Cuvântul în slujirea mântuirii (Word in the ministry of salvation)*, Teză de doctorat, Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Universitatea București, 1997, p. 31.

name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth (Genesis 11:6-9).

There was, therefore, a degradation of the primary language. „A degradation of the original words is registered, of the paradise language, which was the only language of real communion between God and man. Disobedience to the commandment of God meant the decay of the man from the *Word* and the alteration of the word. The Tower of Babel is also the second fall of man and decomposition and multiplication of the primary words until the creative force of the Logos is lost[21].

Father Dumitru Stăniloae said that „the pride in the uprising of the Tower of Babel has led them to the point of not having the same language or not having the words as a means of unity"[22].

The primary language could have been an opportunity to develop the interpersonal communion, but people missed this chance, out of pride, thus losing the unity of language and the unifying power of words. „At that time, people had one language and could understand each other. Instead of using this to increase communion with one another and with God, they unite in a haughty consciousness to build through themselves a tower whose peak reaches the sky. Instead of being the basis of unity, this tower will be the premise of division between people, the separation between them, of a mixture of disagreements and confusions. It is worth mentioning that the Tradition of the Church teaches us that the restoration of the lost unity hap-

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[21]   Ilie IVAN, *Cuvântul în slujirea mântuirii (Word in the ministry of salvation)*, Teză de doctorat, Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Universitatea Bucureşti, 1997, pp. 31-32.

[22]   Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Chipul nemuritor al lui Dumnezeu (The Immortal Image of God)*, (Craiova: Ed. Mitropoliei Olteniei, 1987), p. 259.

pened through the moment of Pentecost, an antipode of the Tower of Babel"[23].

In this regard, we can look at the Episode of the Tower of Babel as a moment of division and alteration of words, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit as a feast of the restoration of words and personal reunification. „If in Babylon the pride of the great achievements in the material side of the world led to the separation of tongues or to the divisions through the words supposed to unite the people, at Pentecost, the Spirit of love among the Persons of the Holy Trinity, poured upon them, reunites them in Christ, The Word or the true Reason of God, embodied as a man"[24].

By the Incarnation of the Word of God and by the Descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of „tongues as for fire" (Acts 2, 3), „words recover the force of creative unity"[25].

The Church was born out of „the Holy Spirit's tongues of fire"[26] rebuilding the unity of the primordial language, „melted by the wickedness of men at the Tower of Babel, thus creating a single tongue, the tongue of fire of the Holy Spirit. (...) It is the language of the Holy Spirit, that speaks within the depth of the human being, silencing and realizing the communion between

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[23] Adrian LEMENI, Diac. Sorin MIHALACHE, Fr. Răzvan IONESCU, Fr. Cristinel IOJA, *Apologetica Ortodoxă, Dialogul cu ştiinţele contemporane (Orthodox Apologetics, Dialogue with Contemporary Sciences)*, vol. II, (Bucureşti: Ed. Basilica, 2014), p. 345.

[24] Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Chipul nemuritor al lui Dumnezeu (The Immortal Image of God)*, (Craiova: Ed. Mitropoliei Olteniei, 1987), p. 268.

[25] Ilie IVAN, *Cuvântul în slujirea mântuirii (Word in the ministry of salvation)*, Teză de doctorat, Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Universitatea Bucureşti, 1997, p. 32.

[26] Paul EVDOKIMOV, *Ortodoxia (Orthodoxy)*, trad. de Dr. Irineu Popa, (Bucureşti: Ed. Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române), 1996, p. 159.

God and men and between the people; it is the meta-language or the sacred language that only God speaks to all those who are full of the Holy Spirit who „boldly speak the word of God" (*Acts* 4:8 and 31)[27].

Evolution and significance of communication
The Greeks were the first to have practical preoccupations regarding the communication, for whom „the art of the word, the skill of building your speech and expressing it in the agora was an indispensable condition for the citizen status"[28].
The specific elements of the theory of communication appeared for the first time in the 6th century BC, in the study of Corax from Syracuse, „The Art of Rhetoric". However, those who had the most significant contribution to the institutionalizing of communication as a discipline were Plato and Aristotle. The Romans took over from the Greeks these communication interest, contributing to their development. Thus, they developed the first model of the communication system[29].
From 16th century (with the development of post and modern roads), the term „communication" also receives a new meaning: „to convey". From the 19th century, the meaning of „to transmit" becomes a priority, as a result of the development of modern *communications* techniques and means (train, telegraph, car, telephone) [30].

[27] Ilie IVAN, *Cuvântul în slujirea mântuirii (Word in the ministry of salvation)*, Teză de doctorat, Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Universitatea Bucureşti, 1997, pp. 102-103.
[28] Vasile TRAN, Irina STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării,* (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), p. 13.
[29] Ibidem.
[30] Ioan DRĂGAN, *Comunicarea, paradigme şi teorii (Communiation, paradigms and theories)*, vol. I, (Bucureşti: Ed. RAO International Publishing Company, 2007), p. 16.

In Romanian, there is a significant difference between *communication* (as „comunicare" and „comunicație") and *means of communication* (as „mijloace de *comunicație*" and „mijloace de *comunicare*"). The term *communication* („comunicație") describes the technical data transmission system (fax, internet, telephone, telegraph).

The means of communication („mijloacele de *comunicație*") are those which „transport" a merchandise (train, subway, etc.), whereas the means of *communication* („mijloacele de *comunicare*") „transmit" news[31], a piece of information, a message (thus, we can mention the means of media communication: written press, radio, TV, Internet).

In the context of the new media, „the appropriate term would be *communication-diffusion*. Thus, the technical communication, in addition to the natural communication, entails a change in the meaning of the term: the idea of sharing (of messages) will be doubled by the idea of transmission (instrumental communication)"[32].

Currently, in the era of communication, we are witnessing the formation of the world's first truly empire, the „media empire"[33], in which there are many challenges and risks, such as the loss of the interpersonal dimension of communication and the lack of communion.

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[31] Mihai DINU, *Comunicarea. Repere fundamentale*, (București: Ed. Orizonturi, 2010), pp. 19-20.

[32] Ioan DRĂGAN, *Comunicarea, paradigme și teorii (Communiation, paradigms and theories)*, vol. I, (București: Ed. RAO International Publishing Company, 2007), p. 16.

[33] Ibidem, p. 5.

2   Particularities of communication, the communication process, and forms of communication

The particularities of communication can be systematized as follows*:*

- communication has the role of putting people in touch with each other;
- in the process of communication, the message content aims to achieve specific purposes and to transmit certain meanings;
- any communication process has a triple dimension: *externalized communication* (verbal and nonverbal actions observable by interlocutors), *metacommunication* (what is meant beyond words) and *intrapersonal communication* (the communication made by each individual in his inner forum);
- the communication process takes place in a *context* (takes place in a particular psychological, social, cultural, physical and temporal space);
- the communication process has a *dynamic character* (it has a specific evolution and influences the persons involved in the process);
- the communication process is *irreversible* (once a message is sent, it can no longer be „stopped" on its way to the recipient);
- in crisis situations, the communication process has a faster rhythm and a larger sphere of coverage;
- the meaning given to a message may be different between both the communication act partners and the recipients of the same message;

- any message has a manifest and latent content (the lat-
  est one is more significant)[34].

The communication process

Communication can be seen as a *process* by which a *sender* (*transmitter*) transmits information to the *receiver* using a *channel* in order to produce specific effects and *feed-backs* upon the receiver. Each communication process has a specific structure, represented by the relationship between the *emitter-message-receiver* trinomial[35].

The transmitter sends a message to the receiver in a specific *code* (language), and the receiver will initiate a decoding action of the message that was sent to him. Thus, the transmitter has the role of provider, and the receiver has the role of receiving the information.

Forms of communication

Depending on the criterion considered, we distinguish several forms of communication.

A first criterion for classifying communication forms is *the way or the technique of transmitting the message*. Thus, the following forms of communication can be identified:

- *direct communication* (interpersonal - involves person-
  al contacts between human beings; the message is
  transmitted by primary means: word, gesture, mimic);
- *indirect communication* (it implies the use of technical
  devices for the transmission of information; the mes-

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[34] Vasile TRAN, Irina STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării,* (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), p. 14.

[35] Ibidem, pp. 14-16.

sage is transmitted through secondary techniques: writing, printing, cable signals, graphic systems, etc.)[36].

Indirect communication includes five categories: 1. *printed communication* (press, magazine, book, poster) 2. *recorded communication* (film, disc, magnetic tape, etc.) 3. *wire communication* (telephone, cable communication, optical fibers), 4. *Radio-TV communication* (radio, TV) and 5. *Internet communication networks*[37].

In the information society, indirect communication (mediated by different technical devices) is widespread. Thus, we can observe the necessity and relevance of *direct, interpersonal communication*, which *involves a vivid, personal relationship*, not a virtual and impersonal one.

Depending *on how individuals participate in the communication process*, we can identify the following forms of communication:

- *intrapersonal communication* (communication in the inner forum, communication with oneself);
- *interpersonal communication* (face-to-face dialogue between two or more persons, a direct and personalized communication; besides the voice, the elements of non-verbal communication has an important role: *kinetics* - face mimics, gestures, body posture, and *proxema* - the distance between the interlocutors);
- *group communication or communication in organizations* (bringing together more persons to debate and decide on a particular issue);

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[36] Ioan DRĂGAN, *Comunicarea, paradigme şi teorii (Communiation, paradigms and theories)*, vol. I, (Bucureşti: Ed. RAO International Publishing Company, 2007), p. 17.

[37] Ibidem, p. 17.

-     *mass communication* (communication made to the general public by specialized institutions and with specific means)[38].

3   Structural elements and functions of language in the act of communication

Structural elements

The communication process has several *structural elements*:

-     the existence of at least two partners (*transmitter* and *receiver*) between which a particular relationship is established;
-     the ability of partners to issue and receive signals (messages) in a specific *code* (language) known by both of them;
-     the existence of a communication *channel* (a means, a *message* carrier, for example sound waves, radio waves, telephone cables, etc.)[39];
-     *means of communication* (*presentational communication means*: voice, face, body, those using „natural languages"; *representative means of communication*: books, paintings, architecture, etc.; *technical means* that contribute to the communication process: telephone, fax, computer, audio-video means);
-     *the environment of communication* (it is influenced using communication, including oral, written and visual media);

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38   Ibidem, pp. 17-18.
39   Ibidem, p. 18.

- - *communication barriers* (represent disruptions that may interfere within the communication process);
- - *the feedback* (the reaction, the specific message by which the issuer receives a specific response from the recipient about the message being communicated)[40].

All these structural elements contribute to the communication process. For a communication process to be effective, one has to take all the time into account the purpose of communication in the various contexts, the planning, and clarification of the ideas to be communicated, the choice of the right moment to communicate and the use of an appropriate and accessible language[41].

A message can be transmitted through *verbal* (word-of-speech), *non-verbal* (face expression, gestures, body posture) and *para-verbal* language (voice tones and inflections, speech rhythm, word breaks) [42].

In oral communication, there is the following report regarding the perception of information by the receiver: 7% words, 38% paralanguage (mainly intonation and inflection of voice) and 55% nonverbal language[43].

Both verbal and nonverbal communication are essential. By verbal communication, personal and private features are also revealed. „The words give the shape to our thoughts and reveal our soul. The way we speak reveals our nature and personality, the degree of culture and education, our tastes and propensities. (…) We can get to know each other, especially by what and

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[40]   Vasile TRAN, Irina STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării,* (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), pp. 19-20.

[41]   Ibidem, p. 21.

[42]   Ibidem, p. 19.

[43]   Ibidem, p. 89, study realized by A. Mehrabian şi M. Weiner, *Decoding of inconsistent communication*.

how we speak"[44]. Moreover, nonverbal communication conveys a lot. „The body language is fascinating because it can communicate a more convincing message than words, being more authentic, more sincere, more open and having a certain emotiveness, that is being transmitted to the receiver"[45].

Father Dumitru Stăniloae perfectly describes the relationship of interdependence between verbal and nonverbal communication. „When you shake hands with someone, you tell him something; when you say a word to someone, you tell him something, you give him out of your energy, and it is some kind of union, and yet there is no confusion"[46].

Concerning the nonverbal communication, Father Stăniloae said: „But the word is not the only way of communication between persons"[47], stating that Christ communicated His teaching through miracles as expressions of his love. „The communication between Jesus Christ and men is no longer done through the spoken word, but through His love, communicated directly, in a mystical way… However, now He no longer speaks audibly, but spiritually"[48].

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[44] Ionuț BĂRBULESCU, „Comunicarea nonverbală și importanța ei în discursul laic și în predică" („*Nonverbal communication and its importance in secular speech and sermon*"), in: *Anuarul Seminarului Teologic Ortodox Nifon Mitropolitul din București*, Ed. Basilica, 2014, p. 143.

[45] Allan PEASE, *Limbajul trupului. Cum pot fi citite gândurile altora din gesturile lor? (Body language. How can other people's thoughts be read from their gestures?)*, (București: Ed. Polimark, 1993), p. 27.

[46] Arhim. Ioanichie BĂLAN (ed.), *Omagiu Memoriei Părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae (Homage to the Memory of Father Dumitru Stăniloae)*, (Iași: Ed. Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, 1994), pp. 65-66.

[47] Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Ortodoxie și Românism (Orthodoxy and Romanianism)*, (București: Ed. Basilica, 2014), pp. 255, 258.

[48] Ibidem, p. 258.

That is why the human being always pursues the receiving of light and its communication, by sharing it with his fellow men. „Human beings also communicate by word the inexhaustible light or, especially by words, common reasons in which they gather the light of the reasons of things and of the persons known to them, which also have a never-definable source in God"[49].

Father Dumitru Stăniloae underlines the importance of nonverbal communication, referring to the „sacredness of gesture": „the direct work of Jesus Christ upon other people, and by their words upon nature, that they sanctify by the word which invokes God" is being also worked through their „*blessing gestures*"[50].

Thus, we can understand that communicating means mainly significance. The word is fulfilled by the gesture, „because the gesture leads to the complete updating of the intention of the word until the meaning of the word is incorporated. It is different when someone tells me he loves me and even more different when he incorporates this declaration in the gesture of embrace. The embrace is also a word, but an achieved word. It is the word being fulfilled. The Son of God promised that He loves us not only by word, but He showed us His full love by taking a human body and allowing to be crucified for us"[51].

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[49] Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Iisus Hristos lumina lumii şi îndumnezeitorul omului (Jesus Christ: the Light of the World and the Deifier of the Human Being),* (Bucureşti: Ed. Anastasia, 1993), p. 35.

[50] Idem, „Cuvântul creator şi mântuitor şi veşnic înnoitor" („The *Word* of God: *Creator*, *Saviour* and Restaurateur for all Time"), in: *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Serie Nouă, XLII (1991), 1, p. 7.

[51] Idem, „Doctrina luterană despre justificare şi cuvânt şi câteva reflecţii ortodoxe" („Lutheran Doctrine on Justification and word and some Orthodox reflections"), in: *Ortodoxia*, XXXV (1983), 4, p. 508.

The language functions

In the communicative process, *language functions*[52] are essential, that is why I think that a digest would be appropriate.

1. The *expressive* (alternatively called *emotive*) function consists in highlighting the internal states of mind of the source.

2. The *conative* (persuasive or rhetorical) function engages the addressee (receiver) who is supposed to give a response.

3. The *poetic* function is focused on the message (the way of communication).

4. The *referential* function corresponds to the reference of the message (it relates to the communicational context).

5. The *metalingual* function is the use of gestures or the intonation which can be the key for decoding the message.

6. The *phatic* function relates to the characteristics of the means of communication and its control (phatic signs such as verbal confirmations or nods).

4   Communication – something more than the transmission of a message: *interpersonal experience*

Theology harnesses communication in an interpersonal way, expressing „the experience of communicating of man with God (vertically) and, moreover, pursuant this experience of man

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[52] Roman Jakobson, *Lingvistică şi poetică (Linguistics and poetics)*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Ştiinţifică, 1964) *apud* V. TRAN, I. STĂNCIUGELU, *Teoria comunicării*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Comunicare.ro, 2013), pp. 73-74.

with his fellow men (horizontally). In theology, we cannot speak of any category of communication; we refer, especially, to the interpersonal communication, that is the communication of the man-person with another man-person, but in particular with God Threefold in Persons"[53].

In Christianity, there is the possibility of a living communication of man with God, which is the basis of interpersonal communication, but which is accomplished only in the prayer, in the dialogue with God. „Christian religion is a fact of communication-based on faith, not so much in God as in the possibility of dialogue with Him. (...) The human being pursues the contact with the others. Even if communicating with the others brings more joy and satisfaction to man and contributes to his personal development, it is well known that in many situations the communication we crave for is not fully accomplished in the relationship with the others"[54].

In order to communicate, one more person, the existence of a relationship, an interpersonal communication, a dialogue and not a monologue are necessary. To communicate with others, you must know first of all how to communicate with yourself, but also to strive to communicate, through prayer, with God, the Source of communication and perfect communion. Thereby, communication defines man as a personal being. „Through communication, the man *builds himself up*, regulates his social experience, discovers and enriches the world culturally, gets to know the existential reality and influence it. (...) Man's relationship with God, whose fundamental requirement is love, is re-

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[53] Vasile CREȚU, „Valențe religioase ale comunicării", in: *Ortodoxia*, LV (2004), 1-2, p. 182.
[54] Ibidem, pp. 190-191.

flected in the communication and the inter-human communion"[55].

Thus, it can be said that the human being is „structured for communication"[56], and „It is the Church that gives the man an existential fulfillment through the awareness of communion with others and the full union with God-The Word, through the *Communion* (Eucharist). The thirst for communication with God is a constant feature of the religious man, involved in the inexhaustible act of knowledge of his Creator"[57].

Communication is *communion*, not only information: „Through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, God communicates us Life, but communication is not merely the transmission and the reception of information, but *communion with Life.* (…) The Mystery of Life is the Word Itself, which is communicated and communicating Life by His coming out of the Father's bosom and the Self-permanence in us, through the Holy Spirit"[58].

In conclusion, communication is action and interaction, relationship and interrelation, assuming at least three elements: 1. communicator, 2. message and 3. receiver („founding triad").

By communicating, not only information but also meanings are transmitted. Communication defines man as a personal being,

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[55] Marius Daniel CIOBOTĂ, „Discursul omiletic în contextul comunicării publice" („Homiletic discourse in the context of public communication"), in: *Studii Teologice*, Seria a III-a, V (2009), 3, pp. 86-87.

[56] Costin NEMŢEANU, *Comunicare sau înstrăinare? Cum să comunicăm? (Communication or alienation? How to communicate?)*, (Bucureşti: Ed. Gnosis, ²1998), p. 12.

[57] Vasile CREŢU, „Valenţe religioase ale comunicării", in: *Ortodoxia*, LV (2004), 1-2, p. 192.

[58] Ilie IVAN, *Cuvântul în slujirea mântuirii (Word in the ministry of salvation)*, Teză de doctorat, Facultatea de Teologie Ortodoxă, Universitatea Bucureşti, 1997, p. 94.

living the interpersonal experience. The man is ontologically structured for communication and has a community-focused vocation.