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Human Being as a Communication Portal: The Construction of the Profile on Mobile Phones

A Fidalgo [CV] Beira Interior University, UBI, Covilha, Portugal [ORCID] [Exit] [GGS] fidalgo@ubi.pt

A Serrano Tellería [CV] UBI [ORCID] [RID] [GGS] ana.telleria@labcom.ubi.pt

JR Carvalheiro [CV] UBI [ORCID] [GGS] jose.carvalheiro@labcom.ubi.pt

J Canavilhas [CV] UBI [RID] [GGS] jc@ubi.pt

JC Correia [CV] Beira Interior University, UBI [RID] [GGS] jcorreia@ubi.pt

Abstract

[EN] **Introduction.** The incorporation of mobile phones in the daily life of human being not only alters space and time dimensions, but it also changes the perception and the way we relate with the ecosystem. **Methodology.** The state of the art is analyzed from the technological concept of intimacy, used by Boyce and Hancock, which describes the levels of interaction between man and technology. Then, a methodology to explore issues increasingly pressing is proposed, especially, concerning the delimitation of public and private spheres and the interaction in the common space. **Results and conclusions.** Following in particular the theories of Castells, Heidegger, Meyrowitz and Habermas; a set of categories for deepening the concepts of spatialization, willingness and profile are articulated. These concepts are identified as key elements in this first stage of the project for the analysis of the human being as a communication portal.

Keywords: human being; communication portal; profile; mobile phone

Contents: 1. Introduction. 2. Method. 2.1. Internal perspective. 2.2. External extension. 2.3. Interpersonal interactions. 2.4. Societal reflection. 3. Conclusions. 4. Bibliography. 5. Notes.

1. Introduction

At a time when it is possible to be permanently visible, available and connected through mobile devices¹[1], each new contact with a technology refers to fundamental questions. The change, development and amplification of space-time reference points, of perceptions and interactions and

the definition and configuration of the public and private spheres are the main aspects surveyed regarding the transposition of identity² [2] of individuals to online profiles³[3]. This paper presents a first approach to the state of the art in the field of mobile communications in order to raise issues which enable a further deepen study.

In this sense, the first feature that Castells confers to mobile communication is autonomy, more than typical mobility, because the majority of calls turn out to be made from places where there are also landlines (2008: 448). Therefore, in the network society, each person has its own definition of networks and is, at the same time, a linking node. For the author, wireless communication rescues the concept of pos-patriarchal family formed by individuals who claim their autonomy, including children, and, simultaneously, the need of constant coordination –according to the spatial or social context, for example, the question "where are you?" that replaces the "how are you?"– and for monitoring, support and backup systems.

This autonomous communication, coupled with the increasing number of mobile phones and Internet access, also extends to the field of socio-political mobilization. "The network is rather a more social creation than a technical one", Keen says recalling the words of Berners-Lee, the original architect of the World Wide Web, that considers the social issue at the core of Internet: "I designed it to have a social effect –to help people work together– and not to be a technical toy" (Keen, 2012: 118).

The second feature that Castells (2008: 449) highlights, in this process of communicational transformation, is the space of flows and timeless time, inadequately characterized as multitasking. The space of flows simply means that simultaneous social interaction can be achieved without territorial contiguity. The timeless time, in turn, relates to the ability to take the time in free moments. However, Castells warns that (2008: 45): "It is not that we have become slaves to technology. Instead, we chose the technology to enslave our freedom, because we are free to do so (freedom can be used for self-destruction, as history shows)".

Concerning space, Lemos (2013: 55) points out the importance of Heidegger's perspective on deepening relationship between "space, locative media, and actor-network theory." "The space is designed as *vorhanden* (present-at-hand, the object in itself, 'theory') and *zuhanden* (ready-to-hand, the object for our use, the 'region', the place where we move, 'practice')". Therefore, space has a dual mode of being perceived so that existence is a spatial constant. This mode of existence occurs from the separation (that of which is near or far), and directionality (the direction of movement), which in turn expanded through the networks techniques (Arisaka, 1945: 460).

With our demonstrated ability to handle multiple cognitive and operational tasks, involving technology, we are still able to simultaneously fulfil social common rituals, without incurring a substantial loss of our "face" in the sense of Goffman (Ling, 2008). We use it as part of our strategic considerations and communication tactics (Baron, 2008). This state is, however, influenced by the idea of continuous partial attention described by Stone⁴ [4], we have the ability to always be connected with the risk of entering into a state of stress. And, again, information anxiety (Wurman, 2000) has reminded us of the importance of digital literacy and information management in these times of continuous flow and data abundance.

Mobile communication improves several dimensions of freedom and increases our choices in life, while it may also be turned against the user: invading personal privacy and causing emotional, political and technological distress, summarizes Katz (2008). In this regard, Keen (2012: 198) warns: “In the great exhibitionism of our world of the hypervisible Web 3.0, where we are always on public display, always revealing to the camera, we lost the ability to remain ourselves”, and adds: “We are forgetting who we really are”. As another feature is the possibility of choice, “the practice of self-multiface”; where I (Self) changes for multi-tasking to multi-lives, as Turkle described (2011: 192).

Criticising Bentham, Stuart Mill argues that to remain human, the individual should occasionally disconnect himself from society so to be able to continue private, independent and secret. Keen uses Mill speech to criticize the claim of the extreme advocates of Social Media (Keen, 2008: 34-35) like Mark Zuckerberg (“we want to ensure that every experience you have is social”), John Doerr (“large third wave”), Jeff Jarvis and his manifesto for transparency (“the centre of gravity of the Internet”) or Reid Hoffman (“to give society a magnifying glass to examine who we are and who we should be”, *Ibidem*: 53).

Following this line of reasoning, our specificity as species would be in the ability to stand out from the crowd, to free ourselves from society, to be left alone, to think and act on our own; as argued by Keen (2008: 200): “The future, therefore, should be anything but social” (*Ibid*: 201).

In a global economy –towards a network economy, of a social and confidence economy (“network transparency reward integrity”, says Hoffman cited by Keen, 2012: 58)– there are now companies specialized in data erasure and safeguarding the reputation on the Internet. Some of the areas in which further research is necessary are E-government and wireless connections –considered today essential tools–, the volatility of privacy policies, the lack of depth on the impact of the operating system, applications that use personal data, automatic geolocation systems and surveillance without permission, among others.

Information portal means a space that binds and disseminates information organized according to a set of criteria. The great advantage of these online repositories is the wealth of knowledge available in one place, but also the speed of response to requests from users.

In the mobile ecosystem, knowledge tends to be redefined as information, and the learning process is materialized in a cycle, in which the right information is delivered to the right person in the shortest possible time (Myerson, 2001). In this perspective, the ability to maintain a permanent connection to the network and the fact that mobile phones are personal use devices (Goodman, 2003) turn its owner in such a portal that, unlike online portals, is accessible not only to its geography friendships, but also to a spectrum of potential new contacts, still unknown.

Human being as a communication portal⁵[5] handles the management of continuous data stream that flows into a space (Castells, 2008: 449) and a change or transposition of the common time (interpretation that arises towards the Castells’ timeless time, *Ibid*). There, the management of tasks according to their priority should be checked, taking into account the state of permanent contact (Katz, Aakhaus, 2002) and the difference, in this conception, between human as a communication portal and the rest of the users. Therefore, we exist configuring some kind of virtual spatialization where directionality and distance are confused or undefined.

2. Method

This review starts from the perspective of human being as a communication portal, in which the human condition is defined by attitude and way of dealing with the human ecosystem (see for example Bateson 1979, 1991). This notion of relationship and interdependence had been, in fact, addressed by authors such as Elias (1980: 134): “The image of man in relation has to be before the people in the plural. Obviously, we have to start with the image of a crowd of people, one of each establishing an open and interdependent process”.

In this sense, we start from a perspective that examines the relationship of humans with technology and proposes the concept of "technology of intimacy" proposed by Boyce and Hancock (2012) in order to split the state of the art in four dimensions: the internal perspective, the external extension, interpersonal interactions and the societal reflection. This is a first draft analysis that helps clarify issues for further researcher, where in the rating of the findings of the studies presented was made according to its primacy and highlight aspectal though others could be included in other possible dimensions.

Boyce and Hancock (2012) explain in their analysis of the growing intimacy, how to establish the relationship between humans and technology. With the development of each one of the most innovative and intimate systems, the line between man and machine is increasingly blurred. The concepts of human *qua* human and machine *qua* machine are no longer located in the extreme: on the one hand, human spectrum; on the other, automation. Instead, man and machine are a converging dyad that has been developed towards a hybrid "commonality".

The relationship between the user and the technology can have different degrees. This relationship gives rise to the construction of technology of intimacy, which is the identification of the emotional and physical connection between a human and a technological system (Bennett, 2011; Carnegie, 2002).

2.1. Internal perspective

This dimension represents a level of technology acceptance for the individual, which can go beyond mere "physicality" of the interaction and also addresses the cognitive processes such as attention, problem solving or decision making. The way an individual decides to take advantage of technological intimacy can be physically linked to how the brain advises the need for interaction, given the state of the world today (Hancock & Hancock, 2009).

Isabella (2009: 1) questions herself if the fact that people live this way continuously – acting on permanent public execution, with a high degree of mobility and the relationship of time and space disembodied (or displaced; Giddens, 1990) – is a way to legitimize and being "real". She adds that Web 2.0 is not a "place" where people can experience with identities and play with parts of their selves, but a way to legitimize themselves through the consensus of Internet users, being cell phone an instrument of access to this parallel world (Turkle, 2005, 2008).

The phone –as an extension and amplification of our body– is a device that, in the words of Groening (2010) is the newest and most versatile electronic media, allowing the assumption and propagation of identity. Its problem, such as television, is that strengthens the separation, loneliness and isolation while offering commonality virtual, intimacy and connection: is the possibility of social interaction without the burden of social obligation (2010: 14).

We could refer, this way, to social capital in relations mediated by mobile phone, that is created and reinforced by the increased frequency of interactions and permanent contact (Ling, 2004), of SMS messages that maintain peripheral relations (Goodman, 2003), and even gossiping, which reinforces the cohesion of the groups (Fox, 2001). However, this decreases when the users become unavailable for face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, strengthening cohesion make the borders less permeable, dividing society into closed groups (Ling, 2004: 190-192).

Ultimately, it is an idea also explored by the continuous partial attention concept described by Stone⁶ [6], since it affects the quality that we deliver to each of our tasks, in other words, under less "mind share". So far we are focused on the identity, how people think about their lives and priorities is also affected. In this regard, the "Self" may lose the sense of conscious communication choice, since the media are always on hold in the background (Turkle, 2008: 129).

It was not long ago that the media visibility gained a value in itself, explains Fidalgo (2007): "The idealistic precept *esse est percipi* (to be is to be perceived) becomes the maximum of media, the real is what is reported" (ibid: 2). The most "democratic" fact and the difference between the previous media and the so called social (Web 2.0 and/or 3.0) would be in the fact that, now, are the other who else decide when and how to get to this stage of public attention, without prejudice to the assessment criteria used by each platform. The economy of attention, as noted Fidalgo (ibid: 4)citing Frank (1998), is commercialized, accumulated, earned interest, focused, or dispersed, lost, etc.

"Personal information is the new lubricant in Internet and the new currency of the digital world", warns the European Commissioner for consumer, Meglena Kuneva (2009; Keen, 2012: 87). In this "vital principle" that moves the advertising (Gleick, 2011), "the global economy of knowledge " (Keen, 2012: 87), "where the race to learn as much as possible about you has become the central battle of the era of Internet giants" (Pariser, 2011), there has been a decrease in the effectiveness of online marketing, about 65%, when the tracking of online users has become regulated, explains Tucker (Segupta, 2011).

The transformation of people into merchandise (Bauman, 2008) occurs in a society where "a curious reversal redefined this private sphere –which was characterized by the right to confidentiality– as a sphere that has become prey to the right to publicity. The expropriation was disguised as a gift, the break is done under the guise of emancipation" (Bauman, 2000: 71).

A technology, as architecture of intimacy (Turkle, 2011) and architecture of disclosure, that allows, in the case of Facebook strategy, modifying the interface in favour of the sense of control by the user, even with the final intent to lead to the addition of more and more personal data (Marichal, 2012). The platform design has thus evolved towards increasingly share user content and become more transparent under the pretext that provides greater control over data and profile, although this does not happen in reality.

Concrete examples and more controversial in violation of Facebook's privacy are the platform 'Open Graph', which shares contents automatically (*The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Independent* now offer tools to avoid its use) and the labeling process of images by the technique of facial recognition.

The emergence and growth of companies dedicated to safeguarding online reputation reflects the users concern regarding privacy (84%), with 47% of them admitting not to interfere in this regard, according to a Microsoft study on April 2013 (Snapp, 2013). The "Right to be forgotten" and the EU proposal that aims to assign a date for the expiration of personal data, which shall be applied in the specific context of social networking sites, reflect the current social and political concern.

Another advance is the program *X-Pire*⁷[7], developed by the University of Saarland in Germany, which assigns an expiration date for images in jpeg conveyed through the Firefox browser, marking them with a coded key. We should also mention in this connection a technology developed at the University of Twente (Netherlands), which allows information to degrade with time (Heerde, 2010).

Moreover, analyzing technology, Zittrain (2008) proposes a division between "generative" and "tethered". The first involves personal computers and the ability of users to produce spontaneous changes. For example, anyone can program in a computer, run these codes on a variety of platforms and share them. In general, generative technologies are useful for performing tasks, are adaptable, easy to master and do not require permission. However, in the name of consumer safety, the author believes that we have moved away from generative technologies, such as PC, and adopted the "tethered" ones as the iPhone or TiVo.

The "tethered" are therefore not "generative", that is to say, they do not have the ability to produce a change driven by users, which means that the consumer must use the product according to the manufacturer's standards. Thus, they are not adaptable or accessible, even easy to master. However, the author adds to our surprise that: "There is no problem with these technologies"; even if they reduce innovation and creation by users –which, as we believe, ought to be an important aspect.

2.2. External extension

This dimension describes the change in functional capacity of performing tasks, since they often let you map properly human functions (cognitive, physiological and physical) in accordance with the requirements of the performance of systems or devices (Cooper *et al.*, 2008).

Stald (2008), in a study focused on youth, identity and mobile communications, introduces the concept of "mobile identity", characterized mainly by "fluidity of identity" –constantly to be negotiated– based on four axis: 1) availability; 2) experience of presence - social presence in public space being invaded by mobile communication in progress; 3) personal log for activities, networking and communication of experiences –a role which has implications both for the relationship between the individual and the group, as for the emotional experience; and 4) learning of social norms.

In this context of communicative functions, Jin Park (2011) analyzes in his study three dimensions of the impact of digital literacy behaviors related to online privacy: a) familiarity with the technical

aspects of the Internet, b) awareness of common and institutional aspects and c) understanding of the current privacy policy. The analysis showed a strong predictive capability of the user's knowledge, but the results were mixed when representing the interaction between knowledge and experiences on the Internet. There were limitations on extensions of knowledge and action related to personalized information. Moreover, these limitations are divided by socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income and education. The study demonstrates the presence of a second-level digital divide in Internet privacy, apart from the level of access –both strongly influenced by temporal priority.

In this sense, returning to another characteristic of mobile communications is significant: how these media give the individual the possibility of transforming the "unproductive" time of everyday life into "productive" one; "(...) aware of the contingency of contemporary life and the risk of dispersion, thus trying to create anchors " (Isabella, 2009: 7).

The state of perpetual contact (Katz, Aakhus, 2002) enables people to recreate a network of protection similar to that of traditional societies (Isabella, 2009: 7), where people maintain a nomadic intimacy within a social system based less on location and more on themselves, so one can stay in touch on the go (Fortunaty, 2002). "This create a kind of nomadic intimacy in which the public space is no longer a full itinerary, lived in all its aspects, stimuli and prospects, but is kept in the background of an itinerant 'cellular intimacy'" (Ibidem).

Remembering Goffman (1959), daily life is like a performance where people move between the front-stage and the back-stage, between public and private. Celebrating the integration of remote communications in the flow of life may be underestimating the importance of face-to-face interactions (Mazmanian, 2005), and undermining the traditional rituals of separation in different spheres of life (Turkle, 2008: 128). The fact of having a personal page on a social network seems to legitimize the existence itself. However, this visibility in a community requires much time and care (Isabella, 2009: 6).

Meyrowitz, in *No Sense of Place* (1985), already described how electronic media overlaps various social spheres that were previously distinct. Starting from the thesis of McLuhan and Goffman, he pointed out what he considers the strengths and weaknesses of each and how they are complementary: Goffman focuses only on the study of face-to-face interaction and ignores the influence and effects of the media on the variables it describes; McLuhan focuses on the effects of media and ignores the structural aspects of face-to-face interaction. To carry on the analysis, this author developed a categorization based on information modes: communication vs. expression, discursive vs. presentation, digital vs. analog, personal vs. impersonal response and imprint vs. report on.

In these communication processes, Habermas' Universal Pragmatic proposes an analytical model that helps to establish a useful starting point and that fits in the classical rhetoric development (*Ethos*, *Pathos* and *Logos*) observed in the social media Facebook (Berlanga, García, Victoria; 2013).

Aspects of the Analysis	Universal Pragmatic
Theory of elementary phrase	Acts of identification and predication
Theory of intentional expression	Linguistic expression of intentions
Theory of illocutionary acts	Establishment of interpersonal relationships

Source: Figalco, 1998: 108; Habermas, 1984, 1987.

Modes of communication	Types of speech acts	Theme	Validity claims
Cognitive	Constative	Propositional content	Truth
Interactive	Regulative	Interpersonal relationship	Adequacy, correction
Expressive	Representative	Intention	Elocutor veracity

Source: Figalco, 1998: 114; Habermas, 1984, 1987.

Framework of communication model			
Domains of reality	Modes of reference to reality	Implicit claims	Functions of speech acts
Exterior nature	Objectivity	Truth	Presentation
Society	Normativity	Correction, pertinence	Communication
Interior nature	Subjectivity	Veracity	Expression
Language	Inter-subjectivity	Understanding	

Source: Figalco, 1998: 118; Habermas, 1984, 1987.

In the current context, the structure of content distribution as the concept of application (or app) and their integration into hierarchical access repositories are the basis of a distribution model designed at the beginning of the mobility industry, consolidated from the massive spread of *smartphones* and *tablets* (Aguado, 2013: 10). The routines of consumption –such as cloud storage, synchronization between different devices (coordinate experiment and the sequence of use) as well as the ubiquity and portability– place the mobile device in the centre of gravity of the multi-screen consumption (ibid: 13).

Thus, the relationship between science and society regarding the evolution is described by Levison on *Cellphone* (2004), as a competition between media to capture our attention. Survive those that best meet our needs, as described by Streeck (2013) when comparing Monsen and Downs (1971) argument in relation to the transition from "an economy of care needs to another of care wishes, of a market-centred seller to a market-centred buyer".

2.3. Interpersonal interactions

These interactions describe how technology affects the intimacy of those who interact with the primary user and his/her technology. In any relationship there is a development of trust between two

entities (Hancock *et al.* 2011). This technology becomes an integral part of the structure of the person and the person becomes one with technology. To accomplish this task, the bodies have, however, to fit each other in such a way that complement each other, thereby creating what might be considered within an individual intimacy (Hancock & Hancock, 2009; Moravec, 1988).

“From mobility ecosystem, the content is the medium”, Aguado (2013) paraphrases McLuhan, attempting to describe the clash between the current ecosystem of hardware / software and the media, in a new context in which the social relations of users and contributions on mobility (sync, ubiquity and identity) radically redefine the dynamics of consumption of cultural content. This reality also produces a paradigm shift in advertising, as in the digital economy of abundance, with an inventory of formats and virtually unlimited possibilities, the reference point is the audience and no longer the support. The exposure (advertising paradigm of type "display" based on the predominance of the support) is replaced by the action (social networking, recommendation, exploration, engagement, etc.) (Varela, 2012).

According to Arendt (1997), "only action is the exclusive prerogative of a human being, nor an animal nor a god is capable of action, and only action depends entirely on the constant presence of others" (ibid: 31). The author explains how, in the creation of a common world, the reality is not guaranteed by the "common nature" of men, but because all are interested in the same subject:

“In the conditions of a common world, the reality is not guaranteed by the 'common nature' of all men who constitute it, but above all by the fact that, despite differences in position and the resulting variety of perspectives, everyone is always interested in the same object. When you can no longer discern the same object identity, no common human nature, and much less artificial conformism of a mass society, can prevent the destruction of the common world, which is usually preceded by the destruction of many ways in which the human plurality is presented" (ibid: 67).

In the destruction of this common world the human being is a prisoner of the subjectivity of his own existence, of his particular perspective:

“In both cases, human beings become entirely private, that is private to see or hear each other and private to be seen and heard by them. Are all prisoners of the subjectivity of their own singular existence, which remains singular even if the same experience is multiplied innumerable times. The common world ends when is seen only under one aspect and only allows one perspective” (ibid: 67-68).

Thus, the near ubiquity of portable computing and mobile technologies has enabled voice communication, text messaging and email. The Web access has made connectivity a common place, as Turkle (2008) explains, describing our experience with computers –programmable and customizable– as a “Second Self”, but now understood as a “New State of the Self, the Itself” (Turkle, 2005, 2008).

In this new state “on / offline” and or “Tethered”⁸ [8] *Self*, “psychologically tuned to the connections that matter” (ibid: 122), in which there is no need to hide the “electronic co-presence”. Rather, it is a symbol of importance. The author also explains how, in these times when we are insecure about our

relationships and anxious about our intimacy, we look at technology in order to meet new ways of relating and, at the same time, to protect ourselves (Turkle, 2011: xii).

In these virtual environments, the “holding power” offers opportunities to explore the identity, “it is not exact to think of people as tethered to their devices. People are tethered to the gratifications offered by their online selves” (ibid: 125). Thus, technology does not produce a new style of relationship but enables it, even though conditioned by the speed and brevity.

“At the moment of having a thought of feeling, one can have it validated. Or, one may need to have it validated. And further down a continuum of dependency, as thought or feeling is being formed, it may need validation to become established. The technology does not cause a new style of relating, but enables it. (...) High technology, with all its potential range and richness, has been put at the service of telegraphic speed and brevity” (ibid: 128).

Already Ling (2008), based on the work of Durkheim, Goffman and Collins and on the methodology of Höfflich and Meyrowitz, concludes that mobile phone, multidimensional, generates a mediated interaction that occupies the same place, if not even a top position, in the minds of individuals (ibid: 168). The same interaction rituals can be developed in exclusively mediated interactions and social rituals of micro-level can be achieved through mediated interactions (ibid: 170).

Fortunati (2005: 5) concluded earlier that we would have a less frequent body-to-body communication, without the help of communication technologies. “We have been forced to use all modes of communication to enable artificial, stay alive, or start developing our body-to-body communication moments”. The author emphasizes that to understand our communicative environment, we must first understand how sociality and the reproductive sphere of individuals work.

In this sense, Ling describes how the focused ritual gatherings can be spontaneous, institutionalized, expansive or discrete and how our interactions are articulated between discord and order – remembering that ignorance of the state of the other creates anxiety (Goffman)– and the phone highlights this issue (2008: 173). The use of the device places us in a social limbo in which others are unable to tell us which our true state is.

Thus we must concentrate on our lines of action so that others may know what we are doing. Our social status while individuals forces us to show others how open or close we are (ibid:174): Mediated interaction, formed by its common ritual focus and permanent attention, feeling of belonging, solidarity sense, symbolic inclusion and group revitalization may help support and maintain social interaction (ibidem).

“The great social revolution of recent years was not a great political event, but how our world was redefined by social networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Myspace* or *Bebo*”, indicates Dunbar (Keen, 2012: 182) to explain “the Dunbar number” (Dunbar, 2010: 21). According to this, we are able to remember 150 individuals, or follow the links from this number. Therefore, it constitutes our ideal social circle for which we, as a species, are designed.

A research of *Pew Research Centre* has measured that the typical user of *Facebook* has 229 friends (with an average of 7% that he/she never met) and has more "intimacy" –according to his/her perception– than the average Northamerican (Hampton, Sessions, Rainie, Purcell; 2011). The studies of Turkle (2008, 2011) reflect a particular concern about the fragility of ties that are established and their emotional failure.

It should also be noted, with regard to the youth's leisure time –defined as social, local, mobile, digital and able to efficiently manage the technology–, the findings of Viñals (2013). The author explains how the preferences of digital entertainment, communication, socialization and entertainment are designed as instruments of pleasure and as a hobby so trivial, given the absence of specific training that would help promote personal and social development.

2.4. Societal reflection

This reflection concerns the way society sees intimacy technology and its effects on the individual. That it is to say, it is the way the technology becomes more intertwined with our being, how our human *qua* human relations become mediated by machines and technology. Individuals were accustomed to see the interface as the element that provided the substance for the boundary conditions. However, an interface is more effective when it becomes less visible and its limit is less perceived. In this regard, given the difficulty of the interpenetration of mind and machine, there is a need for a recognized interface (Boyce, Hancock, 2012: 182).

In the proposal of Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), to define and classify the *Social Media* linked to Web 2.0 and user-generated content, are identified two essential elements: media research (social presence and media richness) and social processes (self-presentation and self-disclosure).

The Theory of Presence (Short, Williams, Christie, 1976) suggests that media differ in degrees of social presence –defined as the acoustic, visual and physical contact that can be achieved– between communication partners. Social presence is thus influenced by the intimacy (interpersonal vs. mediated) and the speed (asynchronous vs. synchronous) of the medium. The higher the social presence, the greater the influence the communication partners have about the other's behavior.

Already the Media Richness Theory (Daft, Lengel, 1986) assumes that the goal of all communication is the resolution of ambiguity and uncertainty reduction, in that it concerns the amount of information transmitted in a given time interval. In any social interaction, people want to check the impressions that others form of them (the concept of self-presentation of Goffman, 1959), which also happens in the case of web pages in which individuals seek to present themselves (Schau and Gilly, 2003) through self-revelation.

In this "personal communication society", as described by Campbell and Jin Park (2008), which demonstrates several key areas of social change –including the symbolic meaning of technology, new forms of coordination and social networking, personalization of public spaces and youth mobile culture–, "the very act of using a mobile phone involves contracting simultaneously with more senses that we use to other computing devices, because we have to touch, see and hear through the phone to keep in touch with our friends" (Vincent, 2005).

This integration with the senses and the body attachment opens up new forms of emotional attachment and possibilities of symbolic representation of the self (ibid: 373), constituting the individual as a "portal" (Wellman, 2001: 238) and the camera phone as one of the central devices of our lives (David, 2010: 96).

The diffusion of mobile communication technology contributes substantially to the spread of the space of flows and timeless structures of everyday life (Castells *et al.*, 2007: 171). Campbell and Park Jin consider that, rather than privatization, we should refer to personalization of public space (2008: 378).

Already Ling and Yttri (2002) and Taylor and Harper (2001) distinguish between “insiders and outsiders” to refer to members of a group that integrate the network and its borders. Licoppe (2003) describes, in turn, the type of “connected presence”, where the pairs are constantly updated regarding the situation of the other. Thereby, Campbell and Yong Jin (2008: 379) add that mobile communications not only customize the public space, but also customize the communal experience of being in that place.

The “hyper-coordination” (Ling e Yttri, 2001), that Rheingold (2008: 226) names “Smart Mobs” when it comes to different cases of collective politic action, stands out for the feeling of being present of remote users (“It felt like being there”) (ibid: 234). The author concludes that the rapid adoption of multimedia media gave rise to various forms of spontaneous social experiences. In the political sphere, the powers of persuasion, organization and coordination were democratized in the world by the availability of mobile phones and text messages (ibid: 236). He adds that the most important question about the future and the increase of collective action refers to being able to distinguish between reliable and misleading, false and unsourced information (ibid: 237) – or not been able to.

In this context, Humphreys (2005) identifies –based on observation– various modifications and innovation violations of using mobile phones in relation to the tacit codes of social interactions: “cross talk, listening in, dual front interaction, three way interaction, caller hegemony, disruption of hegemony and maintenance of hegemony”. To these dimensions, Jeffery (2008) adds, in a philosophical, sociological and political perspective, the importance of concentrating the axes of the analysis on the concepts of community, authority, domestication and etiquette, as well as space.

The space changes through the use of mobile devices, where it notes specifically the privatization of public space (Lasen, 2001) –the tendency of private conversations to end up in public space–, and where the mobile corresponds to a virtual private space that always accompanies the user.

So it is interesting to reflect on the Baghai’s proposal (2012), which examines privacy at the border of different social systems: system reference of events and functional relevance of communication. Drawing on Durkheim, Simmel and Luhmann, he states the reasons for the polysemic character of privacy and its determination in the functional differentiation of social communication systems.

In this context, Fathi (2011) distinguishes the following main areas: perspective of security, authentication against impersonation, leakage resilient schemes, identity-based encryption for privacy, anonymity for privacy, private information retrieval for privacy and trust –“electronic

communication is a media by which the very idea of public life has been eliminated” (Sennett, 1974: 282)–.

The analysis⁹ [9] of the law, the privacy policy and the actions of the most common users of social media, using Facebook as the primary example, revealed a socially compelling platform that allows privacy breaches peer-to-peer, in which users damage the privacy interests of each other. However, Grimmelmann (2008) considers that the surveys are useless since they cannot involve fundamental aspects; as for instance, including how and why people use social media.

The different studies conducted with youth and social media platforms by means of closed groups and interviews, show that they know how to manage better their profile and privacy, despite abdicating of it towards achieving greater popularity and prestige for the idealized profile they want. In the case of *Facebook*, the expectations regarding the platform are scarce and respondents admit a high level of violation of privacy in information sharing. Their notion of private is increasingly linked to control over who has access and not on the amount of information available.

However, there is a decrease in the use of *Facebook* compared to *Twitter* and *Instagram*, platforms that young people are using more frequently, increasing the amount of information they share there without worrying excessively about the privacy’s issues. It is interesting to note that adults are now the ones who made more use of *Facebook*, which may also help to explain the departure of young people from this site.

In this context, we should also mention Google+ (Brett, 2013) as a second social media site, built by networks of friends called "circles" following the standard of privacy and not of openness. “After the fiascos of advertising and market of *Buzz* and *Wave*, *Google* seems to have learned that the public does not want fully transparent networks, transmitting data to the hole world” (Keen, 2012: 178). Keen and Hoffman, in a debate about the future (Keen, 2012: 153), questioning the extent to which communities of Social Media will replace the State Nation as a source of personal identity in the twenty-first century.

3. Conclusions

The human being as a communication portal is defined in every moment by their attitude and the way of dealing with the surrounding environment, the public and private spheres and their participation in the common space. Altered dimensional coordinates of time and space, the human being becomes the manager of these spheres. The same action can be considered public or private in the same physical space depending on specific situation. Heidegger’s “*Dasein*”, in Castells’ “Space of Flows” and “Timeless Time”, lead to the relation of existing by producing spatialization in a space that flows and a time constrained by Aakhus and Katz’s “Perpetual Contact”.

“Generative” or “Tethered” technologies allow greater freedom of "creativity and innovation" or a smaller opening "in the interest of safety”, as explained by the entrepreneurs of the area. We faced a market where content is the medium and consumer is the centre, personal information is the merchandise and applications are the new presentation package; where we remember Wurman’s Information Anxiety and the importance of Digital Literacy for information and platforms management.

From the polysemic analysis of the concept of privacy –according to the communication structures and their functions proposed by Baghai–, the methodology in categorizing media that Meyrowitz applied to differentiate them on the arrival of the electronic ones and the similarity that can be established between the Habermas’ nineteenth century cafes and the Network Society in the conquest of power; the dichotomy between what is voluntary and not become a key element in the implementation of our identity to potential profiles in the Internet.

The emotional attachment of human-computer interaction with mobile phones (affective computing) reflects the union with the device and its amplifying effect in all areas encompassing: profile configuration and communication. Whenever there is a new technology, response parameters also change in accordance with the degree of exposure as shown by the various studies presented. In this case, the key difference would be the fact that the user is the physical space, the starting node, where all part and return to ongoing management.

The categorization proposed by Habermas and his Universal Pragmatic helps to define the starting point for an analysis of human communication, in which one can observe a development of Classical Rhetoric (*Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*) in Social Media. The three aspects proposed by Habermas –that is to say, the theory of elementary phrase, intentional expression and acts of speech; framed in the communication model, which divide the fields and modes of reference to that reality, the implicit claims and functions of speech acts– combine with the four dimensions described in the technological concept of intimacy and constitute a proposal for analysis.

This first approach allows us to consider the following questions for a future deepening perspective to try to distinguish what is considered public and private: Does the amplification of human abilities, which are diluted in space-time dimensions and a continuous flow of data, alter the implementation of part of the identity on the possible profiles? Are we aware of these changes and are they voluntary? How can we control such a technology which allows us to flow this way?

On the other hand, would new coordinates and dimensions in the definition of communication emerge? So do aspects of its analysis, as well as the modes and models of communication? It is possible to achieve a deep level of interaction with people we would never meet?

And finally, will the balance between authenticity and anonymity, privacy and functionality delimit the public and private spheres? Or are we placed in front of a game between obscurity and hypervisibility, that allows us to reach the spotlight of attention? What will be the scope of the common space?

In this sense, and taking into account the importance of temporal priority as a variable, it is proposed the analysis of the concepts of spatialization, profile and wilfulness on a perspective that places the human being at the centre, that is, as a communication portal.

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5. Notes

¹ Telemóvel, Smartphone e Tablet.

² Identity: Entity with respect to a space and time.

³ Building a personal image with a purpose or goal through a platform.

⁴ Personal Web URL [<http://www.lindastone.net>]

⁵ “It was I-alone that was reachable wherever I was: at a house, hotel, office, freeway or mail. Place did not matter, person did. The person has become the portal” (Wellman, 2001).

⁶ Definition: URL [<http://lindastone.net/qa/continuous-partial-attention/>]

⁷ Official Web. URL [<http://www.backes-srt.de/>]

⁸ *Tethered*:

a) *A restricting rope, chain, etc. By which an animal is tied to a particular spot.*

b) *The range of one´s endurance, etc.*

c) *At the end of one´s tether, distressed or exasperated to the limit of one´s endurance.*

⁹ Liu *et al.* (2011); Madejski, Johnson e Bellovin (2011); Stutzman, Gross e Acquist (2012); Creszenci, Arauna e Tortajada (2013); Lenhart, Kristen, Smith e Zickuhr (2010); Rainie, Smith e Duggan, 2013, *Pew Research* (2013).

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