

INFORMATIONAL ASPECTS OF EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

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Annotation. This article explores the informational and communicative aspects of email correspondence within the context of modern information technology. It highlights the transformative role of the Internet as a global medium that integrates traditional and innovative communication methods, fostering a new cultural paradigm. Email, as a prevalent form of electronic communication, blends elements of traditional letters with digital-specific features, emphasizing conciseness, interactivity, and unique structural conventions. It also addresses both the advantages, such as enhanced cognitive practices, and the drawbacks, including reduced social interaction, of Internet communication. Overall, the text underscores email's significance as a dynamic tool for personal and professional correspondence in the digital age.

Keyword: internet communication, email correspondence, information society, information and communication technologies(ICTs), electronic communication, digital medium, electronic genres, natural language, social interaction, globalization.

The Internet has become one of the most significant phenomena of the modern era. It represents a new information environment within contemporary culture, shaping new practices of communication, a novel worldview, and a distinct way of life. This new medium integrates all traditional means of communication in various forms, offering groundbreaking modes such as video conferencing, instant messaging (e.g., ICQ), web browsers, metasearch engines, online voting, forums, chats, and email. These forms do not merely replicate

traditional communication but often propose fundamentally innovative alternatives.[2]

It is crucial to underscore that the network is considered public domain, as its hardware and software infrastructure is not owned by any individual, organization, or state. It transcends the territorial jurisdiction of sovereign nations and promotes a collective understanding of shared ownership. Consequently, the World Wide Web belongs to humanity as a whole and to contemporary society in its entirety. This aligns with the concept of the "information society," where many researchers identify the production, storage, and dissemination of information as the primary economic activity. Social structures in this paradigm are predominantly based on television and electronic communication technologies.[6, 320]

Modern society is marked by the rapid development of informational technologies, distinguishing itself from earlier periods where mechanical technologies dominated. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) amplify and streamline the flow of information. Scholars such as D. Bell, E. Toffler, and A. Touraine view advancements in ICTs as a key qualitative indicator of societal progress. Unlike earlier technological revolutions, such as mechanization, ICTs are inherently tied to human agency, forming a holistic entity with human activity.

The revolutionary impact of modern ICTs is global, affecting all facets of human life and fostering profound social transformations. Consequently, the study of contemporary society increasingly focuses on how social structures evolve due to technological advancements. As noted, "since society has become technologically driven, it is impossible to understand and describe it without considering technological tools." ICTs have become deeply embedded in both social and personal spheres, reshaping the essence of daily life, including psychological perspectives, mentalities, and perceptions of time and space.

Today, the Internet is the most extensive structure in terms of audience reach and societal penetration. Initially developed for military purposes, the

ARPANET network enabled secure data transmission even under compromised communication networks. The rise of the Internet reflects a global transformation in the social fabric.

Communication remains a fundamental characteristic of any society. Humans cannot exist in isolation without interacting with others. Social communication has long been a subject of study by scholars such as G. Blumer, M.M. Bakhtin, and A. Schutz. Electronic communication, although relatively recent, has rapidly evolved into an essential tool for human interaction. Its defining features include virtuality, interactivity, hypertextuality, globalization, creativity, anonymity, and mosaic structure.[4, 53]

Due to the diverse characteristics of Internet communication, the implications of its global spread are highly uncertain. On the positive side, it expands cognitive practices, with many researchers noting the growing importance of visual thinking. However, negative consequences include reduced social interaction, narrowed social connections (sometimes leading to loneliness), depression, autism in children and adolescents, and impaired social perception.

Electronic communication, primarily facilitated by the Internet, has given rise to a new linguistic phenomenon—electronic genres. These genres are characterized by unique features tied to their digital medium, including hypertexts and multimedia elements such as diagrams, charts, animations, and audio-visual components. Common electronic genres include websites, home pages, digital libraries, online journals, emails, chats, forums, guestbooks, bulletin boards, software collections, catalogs (e.g., virtual stores), and advertising banners.[3, 228]

Forms of Internet communication include teleconferences, Internet Relay Chats (IRC), Multi-User Dimensions (MUDs), and email correspondence. Researchers classify these modes based on interactivity levels, with chats and MUDs being highly interactive, while teleconferences and emails are less so. Teleconferences and email operate offline, unlike chats and MUDs, which are real-time interactions.

In email exchanges, specific attention is given to the use of symbols, such as stylized facial expressions or emoticons, to convey emotional states. These symbols enhance written communication by allowing users to express emotions like joy, anger, or anxiety.

From a linguistic perspective, some researchers argue that the Internet relies fundamentally on natural language as a medium of communication. Thus, the analysis of natural language as a semiotic system is critical for understanding online interactions.

Emails, as a form of written communication, share similarities with traditional letters but also exhibit distinct features shaped by their electronic medium. These include unique linguistic choices, adherence to pragmatic constraints, and structural conventions. According to D. Crystal, email enables users to exchange messages via computer systems, predominantly for private communication. Its linguistic properties reflect both the general features of a given language and the specific demands of the digital medium.[1, 24]

Comparing traditional letters with emails reveals commonalities and differences, particularly in personal and business correspondence. Emails, like traditional letters, include a standard header specifying the recipient's address and a message body. However, electronic correspondence introduces unique formats and conventions, such as email addresses and digital storage.

Emails also possess distinct informational aspects, as decoding the sender's communicative intent requires the recipient to engage with the text as both a communicative and informational unit. I.R. Galperin identifies three types of informational content in texts:

- **Factual Content:** The core information conveyed by the text.
- **Conceptual Content:** Insights into the underlying ideas or themes.
- **Subtextual Content:** Implied meanings or connotations.

In a broader sense, these align with S. Todorov's three dimensions of meaning in writing:

- **Denotative Aspect:** The primary information in the message.

- **Formal Aspect:** Stylistic elements related to expression.
- **Material Aspect:** Physical attributes of the medium. [5, 40]

Emails, characterized by concise and structured text, exemplify a unique informational genre that combines both informational and phatic communication elements.

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