

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNET COMMUNICATION
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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17949968>
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON LINGUISTICS & TRANSLATION
Scientific Open Access Conference

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 13th December 2025

Accepted: 14th December 2025

Online: 15th December 2025

KEYWORDS

Internet communication, spatial freedom, temporal freedom, anonymity, information speed, electronic culture (netiquette), mediated conversational discourse.

ABSTRACT

The distinctive features of Internet communication are characterized by freedom of space and time, rapid information exchange, anonymity, the mediatized system of non-verbal means, the principles of electronic culture (netiquette), and the emergence of new forms of interaction. These features significantly transform traditional communicative practices and contribute to the formation of a new communicative environment in the digital age.

Internet communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, messages, and emotions between individuals through the Internet. As a result of the rapid development of modern technologies, Internet communication has become an integral part of everyday life. Social networks, messengers, e-mail services, and video conferencing platforms enable people to communicate regardless of distance and time constraints. In the current era of globalization, Internet communication occupies an important place in all spheres of society, including education, business, social life, and culture. Within a relatively short period, it has significantly facilitated distance communication and contributed to the formation of a global information space.

Firstly, Internet communication ensures freedom of space and time. While traditional face-to-face communication requires physical co-presence, Internet-mediated interaction allows individuals to communicate from different locations with ease. Moreover, messages can be exchanged either in real time or asynchronously, depending on the communicative situation.

Secondly, anonymity plays a crucial role in Internet communication. Users may conceal their real names, age, and other personal information if they wish. While this anonymity can provide a sense of freedom and psychological comfort, it may also lead to negative consequences such as fake profiles, deception, and manipulation.

Thirdly, Internet communication employs a specific semiotic system of non-verbal means. Emojis, stickers, and GIFs function as mediating tools that enhance emotional expressiveness and help compensate for the absence of face-to-face non-verbal cues.

Fourthly, the speed of information exchange is of great significance in Internet communication. Messages, images, videos, and documents can be transmitted to any part of the world within seconds. However, such rapid communication also results in information

overload, commonly referred to as “infonoise.” In this context, the ability to identify and select relevant and reliable information becomes increasingly important.

Fifthly, Internet communication is governed by a specific form of electronic culture known as netiquette. Netiquette refers to the norms of politeness, respect, and ethical behavior in online interaction. The term “netiquette” (net + etiquette) was first introduced into scholarly discourse in 1994 by Virginia Shea¹. The main principles of netiquette include the following requirements:

- treating others with respect and avoiding intrusion into their personal space;
- refraining from using excessive capital letters, which are perceived as shouting or aggressive behavior;
- avoiding offensive or abusive language;
- not sending excessive spam, advertisements, or irrelevant messages;
- respecting other users’ time and attention.

Russian scientist M.Yu.Ryabova emphasizes that the fundamental principle of virtual communication ethics is the obligation to maintain politeness, which serves as a regulatory mechanism for communicative behavior in general and online interaction in particular. According to the author, the general requirements for speech culture in online communication include greeting interlocutors and addressing them by name, limiting excessive use of emoticons, avoiding rude or offensive expressions, not abusing abbreviations, observing basic punctuation rules of the relevant language, presenting one’s real name, and adhering to platform-specific communication norms². These views demonstrate that, alongside traditional speech culture, new requirements have emerged within the communicative framework of Internet interaction.

Internet communication offers numerous advantages. It enables distance learning and remote work, facilitates the formation of new social connections, and creates opportunities for intercultural interaction. It also allows individuals to express themselves freely, develop ideas, and engage in creative activities. Online platforms simplify communication within communities and interest-based groups.

Nevertheless, Internet communication also has certain drawbacks. These include the spread of fake information, the existence of false profiles, cyberbullying (online harassment or threats), unauthorized dissemination of personal data, and a decline in emotional sensitivity. Furthermore, excessive Internet use may reduce the need for real-life communication and negatively affect individuals’ psychological well-being.

Internet communication is realized through various forms, such as correspondence on social networks, chats in messengers, e-mail communication, discussions on forums and blogs, and video conferences (e.g., Zoom or Google Meet). Each form has its own communicative conventions and interaction patterns.

From a linguistic perspective, scholars have increasingly focused on the nature of speech forms used in Internet communication. In this regard, a dual approach can be identified. In the first type, due to the extensive audiovisual capabilities of the Internet, voice messages

¹ Shea V. Netiquette. San-Francisco: Albion Books, 2004, 155.

² Рябова М.Ю. Особенности этикета виртуальной коммуникации // Виртуальная коммуникация и социальные сети 2023. Том 2. № 4. – С.239-245

represent a form of “mediated oral speech.” In such cases, spoken conversational discourse retains its traditional characteristics.

In the second type, interaction between communicants is recorded in a graphic, that is, written form. Researchers consider the revival of the epistolary genre to be one of the advantages of online communication. “If we take the act of recording speech as the primary and most significant criterion, it becomes evident that written discourse serves as the foundation of online interaction, since Internet communication is mediated by written signs and presupposes spatial distance between communicants. Although written language predominates in Internet communication, such texts cannot be equated with carefully planned, pre-edited, and polished traditional written texts”³.

In general, Internet communication plays a significant role in modern society. It provides individuals with extensive opportunities, speed, and convenience. However, adherence to communicative culture, attention to information security, and responsible Internet use are essential. While Internet communication simplifies human life, it is crucial to remain aware of its potential risks and negative aspects. Thus, Internet communication constitutes an integral part of contemporary society, simultaneously offering convenience and imposing responsibility. Effective use of the Internet is possible through understanding its specific features, observing communicative norms, and ensuring information security.

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³ Лутовинова О.В. Интернет как новая “устно-письменная” система коммуникации // <https://cyberleninka.ru>