On the philosophical status of the transmission metaphor

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ABSTRACT: The view on the communication process as a process in which something is communicated (transmitted), is a collective view and as such must be regarded as subject to historical changes. This article aims to analyse the metaphorical conceptualizations, which form part of the collective view, and which are important research subjects of communicology. A new division introduced in the article is the distinction between the pre-theoretical and the theoretical metaphorical conceptualization in relation to communication processes. This procedure allows for an analysis of the relationship between pre-theoretical views (conduit, container metaphor) and theoretical ones (transfer metaphor). The author suggests how the introduction of the diachronic perspective to the study of defining of communication helps to better understand the genesis of the modern understanding of communication practices.

KEYWORDS: transmission metaphor, philosophy of communication, communicology, metaphorical conceptualization, collective view

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INTRODUCTION

In the previous century, communication became one of the most important phenomena studied in the humanities and social sciences. Communication is not just another social process — it is the key process by which many other phenomena and activities may be undertaken and maintained. Thus understood, the communication process becomes a prerequisite and a guarantee of the existence of sociocultural phenomena through the (re)production of social reality.

The purpose of this article is to show that the idea of the communication process as a process in which something is communicated (transmitted), is a collective view, and as such must be regarded as subject to historical changes. Assuming a philosophical perspective, I will discuss the cognitive linguistics position and communication studies, which — considering the issue — does not always emphasize the historical nature of the idea. I assume, therefore, that in the consideration over how to define communication a diachronic perspective should be adopted.

This article is an attempt to identify and discuss the philosophical status of the transmission metaphor as a key tool to define and characterize the communication process and communication practices at the theoretical level. I understand the philosophical status as a way to characterize and talk about a given concept, phenomenon, idea, using the philosophical tools. The research problem undertaken in this article is the possibility of a historical description of the transmission metaphor by way of assuming it is a collective view on the communication process. This is meant to place the discussion on how to define the communication process within the framework of the communication history and historical communicology (as a communicology sub-discipline).

It is a common assumption in communication theories that communication consists in communicating and transferring information, ideas and feelings. This approach is accepted by linguists (Reddy, 1993), social psychologists (Newcomb et al., 1975), as well as media experts (McQuail, 2010). They acknowledge that such a theoretical description of communication coincides with its colloquial understanding. In this article, on the basis of the works of such authors as William Short (2013) and Rob Wiseman (2005), I attempt to demonstrate that communicating about communication as a transmission is a cultural product which is subject to historical changes — it is, therefore, not universal, as e.g. Michael Reddy (1993) claims. Thus, I join in the ongoing discussion on the possibility of practising communication history (Simonson et al., 2013) and demonstrate how communication-historical research, concerning the "what" and "how" we think of our communication, may be performed.

The structure of this argument is contained in six parts. The present one, an introduction, describes the aim of the study, the research problem and clarifies the scope of the analysed object. The second part introduces a distinction between two basic ways of characterizing the communication process. The third part defines the theoretical and pre-theoretical metaphorical conceptualization and introduces the key characteristics of the transmission metaphor representing the core of theoretical transmission models. Building on these considerations, in the fourth part the pre-theoretical conceptualization is characterized, based on three metaphors constituting each other: the conduit metaphor, the container metaphor and the transfer metaphor. In the fifth part of this article I undertake to characterize the transmission metaphor as a collective view and to show the resulting consequences for the methodology of historical research on communication. The last part is devoted to a discussion of the theoretical consequences of such an approach for further research on communication.

TWO BASIC APPROACHES TO DEFINING COMMUNICATION

The modern understanding of the concept of communication is relatively young and grew out of nineteenth and twentieth century ideas. Communication has become a key phenomenon that has come to be regarded as a fundamental social

phenomenon. That is why we talk about the "age of communication" or a "rule of communication." Until the end of the second half of the nineteenth century, the concept of communication did not receive much attention in the humanities: the focus was primarily on language and signs. Of course, recently, these historical studies are increasingly included in the scope of studies on communication (Dues & Brown, 2001, pp. 2–30). The concept of communication is constantly being negotiated — however, this means that its understanding is determined by the socio-cultural context. Theodore Clevenger points out that despite many attempts to build one definition of communication (acceptable to all researchers), no one was able to do it — it is simply impossible, as the term "communication" is used in so many different ways that you cannot satisfactorily describe that to which it refers (Clevenger, 1991, p. 351). Also, an attempt to indicate a closed set of "conceptual components," from which the "concepts" of communication are built, failed (see Dance, 1970).

Therefore, in the literature, instead of identifying and enumerating the subsequent definitions of communication, we tend to talk about the two main approaches to defining and characterizing communication. The first approach focuses on the transmissivity of the process and points to the words, ideas and emotions which are transmitted in its course. Models built on the basis of this approach are called transmission, hydraulic or telegraph models (Wendland, 2013). One could indicate here such mathematical ideas as Claude Shannon's information theory (Shannon, 1948), Roman Jakobson's communication model (Jakobson, 1995) and Theodore Newcomb's model (Newcomb et al., 1975). The transmission metaphor, which is the subject of this study, is the basic conceptualization used to build models within the scope of such an approach.

The second approach (called constitutive, ritualistic, orchestral) focuses on participation and interaction (symbolic one) between partakers of the process. The emphasis is put not so much on the transmission as on maintaining ties and the co-creation, "production" of relationships and social phenomena. Symbolic interactionism of George Herbert Mead (1946), James Carey's cultural understanding of communication (2009), or Eric Rothenbuler's ritual approach (1998) can be considered the classic approaches.

These two approaches are not antithetical, since participation does not always reject conveying or transmission of information. The ritual requires a "transmission" (e.g. rules, beliefs, values), while the transmission requires rituals (meaning: established ways to perform practices and achievement of objectives). However, the dominant way of defining the communication processes is transmission, which, thanks to the prevalence of e.g. Shannon-Weaver and Roman Jakobson's models, has become a key tool for humanities and social studies on communication.

Understanding of the communication process adopted in this article stems from the constitutive approaches to communication (Carey, 2009; Craig, 2005; Rothenbuhler, 1993). Therefore, I do not reject the transmission nature of the process (and hence defining based on the transmission metaphor), but I recognize that such a characterization is philosophically unsatisfactory.

Therefore, I assume that communication is a kind of action that can be understood by the participant (or observer) on the basis of a given culture. I accept the understanding of culture after Ward Goodenough, who defines it as all that an entity should know, or what to believe in, in order to act in the society in such a way as to make it acceptable (Goodenough, 2003, p. 6).

Thus recognized, communication can be clarified as interpersonal, group, organizational, institutional communication, which means that many of its levels may be pointed out, and one could highlight the means and the forms used in the particular communication activities. A collection of such activities I call the practice of communication, which — in line with the ritualistic approaches — is the basis for the (re)production of a culture. James Carey writes: "communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (Carey, 2009, p. 19). Therefore, a specific communication action acquires its cultural meaning by being part of a wider communication practice. However, if we consider the state of a given culture is the result of e.g. historical changes, it should be acknowledged that the process allowing the (re)production of this state — that is communication — is also formed in a historical process. This means that the transmission metaphor, which is "communicating about communication," must also be considered a construct, the shape of which is conditioned by historical changes. However, it is important to realize that this will cause a problem of self-reference. We can talk about communication only by means of communication. Adding the awareness of the necessity for a historical account of the process, we see that this is a matter not only philosophically interesting, but also complex.

LEVELS OF METAPHORICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

A metaphor is a tool enabling understanding one thing by means of another — understanding a concept in terms of another concept (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 5–6). Thus a metaphor is treated as a tool for conceptualization (conceptual metaphor), and not just a figure of speech. The metaphorical conceptualization therefore determines the understanding as well as the method of use of the concept, while the metaphorical conceptualization may be affected by (this relation operates both ways) the collective views of a given community (both pre-theoretical and theoretical).

In this article, I assume that the transmission metaphor is used to describe and define the communication process within the framework of the communication theory. This means that the transmission metaphor is a theoretical tool which serves e.g. to create transmission models of the communication process, that is those which acknowledge that communication consists in a transmission of ideas, meanings and emotions (Kulczycki, 2012). The communication process can be divided into components and stages: inserting thoughts or ideas into words, transmitting messages,

receiving messages, and — depending on the modification of the metaphor — decoding the content or accessing it. The factors forming the transmission metaphor which interest me in this article are: (1) the commonsensical collective views on communication, and (2) the theoretical collective views on communication.

The commonsensical views on communication are expressed in everyday communication. In the case of the transmission metaphor they are embodied in the components of the transmission metaphor. These components include: (1) the conduit metaphor, (2) the container metaphor, and (3) the transfer metaphor. The commonsensical (pre-theoretical) ways to conceptualize communication influenced the theoretical conceptualization which is the basis of the transmission models. What I call commonsensical views on communication which shape the ways of thinking about this abstract process, William Michael Short calls the folks models. Analysing the issue of the ancient Romans' metaphorical conceptualization on communication, he writes "they are the 'ready-made' ways of thinking that a society's members rely upon implicitly in organizing, reasoning, and hence speaking about their experience" (Short, 2013, p. 206).

The second element shaping the transmission metaphor, are the theoretical views. This refers for example to the impact that cryptography (Krippendorff, 2009, pp. 58–59) or mathematics (Shannon, 1948) has had on the transmission metaphor.

Such a way to distinguish the two is not typical in the literature on the subject. According to Michael Reddy the conduit metaphor includes the container metaphor and the transfer metaphor (Reddy, 1993, pp. 290–291), and the conduit metaphor itself can be found in the theoretical descriptions (Reddy, 1993, pp. 305–306). According to the American linguist the conduit metaphor is "the same" metaphor both in the theoretical as well as the pre-theoretical conceptualization. As noted by Perry L. Blackburn, Reddy "does not employ the term conceptual metaphor in addressing the conduit metaphor, a classic conceptual metaphor of communication, he does suggest, via use, the term metaphorism" (Blackburn, 2007, p. 8). Whereas John Graddy, in *The "Conduit Metaphor" Revisited: A Reassessment of Metaphors for Communication*, indicates that the conduit metaphor consists of five metaphors: (1) constituents are contents, (2) becoming accessible is emerging, (3) transmission of energy is transfer, (4) achieving a purpose is acquiring a desired object, (5) repertoire members are possessions (see Grady, 1998). Another categorization is used by Klaus Krippendorff, who, in the metaphorical talk about communication, distinguishes the hydraulic metaphor (in his earlier studies he used the term "transmission metaphor"), conduit and container metaphor, as well as others such as the war metaphor, ritual metaphor, control metaphor, etc. However, in his overview of the methods of conceptualization he does not focus on distinguishing between those at the theoretical level and those that occur in daily communication (Krippendorff, 1990, p. 14; 2009, pp. 51–61).

An examination of other metaphorical conceptualizations of communication at the theoretical level would require an analysis of other metaphors (components). If

we were to analyse the ritualistic metaphor which is the theoretical conceptualization of the constitutive approaches (ritualistic ones), then research on the dance metaphors, the orchestra metaphor, the war metaphor, etc., should be proposed.

In this study, however, this distinction is very important because I assume that the way of describing communication (and thus a self-referential communication practice) is shaped e.g. by collective views (a researcher has access to these views e.g. through the study of metaphorical conceptualization). Therefore, I assume that the commonsensical way of metaphorical conceptualization of communication (conduit metaphor, container metaphor, transfer metaphor) formed the way of the theoretical defining of communication (transmission metaphor), but is not identical to it. How this shaping, development and transformation commenced may be indeed a subject of historical research on communication. Thus, research on the development of metaphors can provide evidence to explain what reasons (motives) are behind the transformations of the given metaphors about communication.
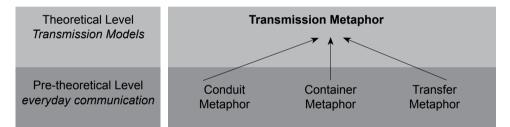

Figure 1. Levels of metaphorical conceptualization of communication processes in the framework of the transmissive approaches

Source: author.

It is worth noting that the research conducted on the grounds of cognitive linguistics focuses mainly on contemporary expressions. Of course, there are studies analysing their historical transformations (Sweetser, 1991), but the literature on the key subject of this article — the collective views on communication — is not extensive.

Already at the pre-theoretical stage we can point to other metaphors used to describe communication processes, such as the war metaphor and the ritual metaphor (Krippendorff, 2009, pp. 59–60), the adornment metaphor (Wiseman, 2007, pp. 64–66), the enlightenment metaphor (Domaradzki, 2012, pp. 4–6). However, they induce a different way of defining communication at the theoretical level: for example, the orchestra metaphor is crucial for the constitutive models of communication (Craig, 1999, pp. 124–128).

The transmission metaphor is the object for metatheoretical considerations and, therefore, in this article I do not focus on the relevance and usefulness of this method of conceptualization. These analyses I regard as metatheoretical because

what interests me is not how the communication practice is described in communication theories. I am rather interested in what the rationale and the assumptions which form the basis for a structure of a given theoretical approach are. This means that the subject of such considerations is the role and status of the transmission metaphor in the communication theories, not the "transmissivity" of the process itself as it is encapsulated in the theoretical reflection.

It is essential for me to consider the status of this metaphor, and to show that the level of theoretical reflections on communication arises directly from the common-sensical ways of talking about communication practices, whereas the mentioned ways of talking are shaped by the collective views of a community. This understanding legitimises talking about a possibility or even a necessity of studying this metaphor (and its components) in a diachronic perspective.

I assume, therefore, that defining the transmission metaphor as collective views which are subject to historical changes is necessary in order to be able to conduct historical research on communication practices. The transmission metaphor is a collective view, i.e. it is a part of an "image of the world" of a given society.

Therefore, I do not undertake to enter discussion with communication theorists who emphasize the "artificiality" and the uselessness of such a conceptualization method. Niklas Luhmann evaluates the transmission metaphor in such a way as to indicate that it is useless, because it implies too strong an ontology and focuses on the "what" is transmitted from the sender to the recipient. According to the German thinker, "this is already incorrect because the sender does not give up anything in the sense of losing it" (Luhmann, 1995, p. 139). Moreover, the transmission metaphor assumes the identity of such a transmitted package — at the point of origin and reception, e.g. at the moment of speaking and listening — (cf. Vanderstraeten, 2000, p. 586). The source of such an understanding of the status of the package does not lie in the transmission metaphor, but in the transfer metaphor which co-constitutes the former metaphor.

The three indicated main component metaphors (the conduit, container and transfer) are analysed mainly in cognitive linguistics works, on the basis of the modern way of talking about communication. However, each of these metaphors can be found in the historical views on communication (both theoretical and pre-theoretical). The conduit metaphor can be found in the Homeric epics and identified as a component of the ancient Romans' "image of the world" (Wiseman, 2007). The container metaphor, as demonstrated by Christopher Gauker (1992) and John Durham Peters (1989) — reveals itself in John Locke's conceptualizations included in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Whereas the transfer metaphor is sometimes equated with the conduit metaphor (Reddy, 1993, pp. 286–287), however — as asserted by Rob Wiseman — there is a key difference between them, which is evident when we examine the historical development of metaphorical conceptualization. According to Wiseman "the concept of 'transfer-ring' from one person to another was relatively new to Rome in the 1st centuries

BC and AD, and the Romans had not developed a large terminology to refer to it. They relied on a few highly generalized terms to imply 'passing' or 'carrying' to extend the basic model dating from times before extensive writing and travel were familiar to the Romans" (Wiseman, 2007, p. 52). The key element in the transfer metaphor is "what" is being transferred, and whatever is being transferred changes its location and owner. Whereas during the transmission (according to the conceptualization process within the framework of the transmission metaphor) the owner does not change. In other words, within the transfer metaphor — ideas, emotions and feelings are transmitted to the other person, while within the transmission metaphor — ideas, emotions, feelings, meanings are expressed (in words) and transmitted. Of course, it may occur that a given transfer metaphor (pre-theoretical level) is used in an almost unchanged form in a given theory — then I shall refer to it as transmission metaphor due to the level of theorising.

Studying historical metaphorical conceptualizations of communication allows us to understand the genesis of the modern way of defining communication. Analysing ancient Latin texts, the researchers show that the contemporary "transmissivity" is derived from the perception of communication from the perspective of breathing (Wiseman, 2007), or preparing and eating food (Short, 2013).

THE COMMONSENSICAL DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION: CONDUIT, CONTAINER AND TRANSFER

Everyday ways to communicate about communication and the collective views shaping them have been placed in this article on the pre-theoretical level of metaphorical conceptualization. Since the 1970s — mainly due to the text of Michael Reddy (Reddy, 1993) — an intensive debate has been taking place in the study of communication on the metaphorical characterization of the communication process. Reddy, in the work "The conduit metaphor — a case of frame conflict in our language about language," undertook to discuss the consequences of the use of the conduit metaphor which includes the container and the transfer metaphors. The author, however, does not emphasise the socio-cultural context or the diachronic perspective. By asking the question: "What kinds of stories do people tell about their acts of communication?" (Reddy, 1993, p. 285), he clearly states that communicating about communication is "determined by semantic structures of the language itself" (Reddy, 1993, p. 285). Reddy cites in his analysis many examples, however, he begins with the three key ones (Reddy, 1993, p. 286):

1. Try to get your thoughts across better.
2. None of Mary's feelings came through to me with any clarity.
3. You still haven't given me any idea of what you mean.

According to the American researcher, these sentences seem like a kind of mental telepathy or clairvoyance and suggest to the communication participants that this is how communication takes place. It should be noted that inferring on what

"something" is based on how we talk about it — that is concluding about the nature of communication on the basis of how we talk about our communication can lead to many mistakes. Ludwig Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations* indicated that instead of questions about a particular action, it is better to ask "what is going on" when an action is performed (Wittgenstein, 1986). Thus, "what is going on" when two people talk to each other? Do the communication participants believe that they are communicating their thoughts to the other person and that they are putting these thoughts into boxes of words? It is impossible to adequately answer other than yes — because what affects us here is the so-called "violence of the metaphor" — we identify a way of talking about something with the essence of the thing. Of course, this process does not concern defining communication. However, we ought to realize that drawing conclusions from the commonsensical perception of the communication process affects the theoretical description of the process.

Reddy cites: "Never load a sentence with more thoughts than it can hold" (Reddy, 1993, p. 288). He correctly notes that the language users may be lead to the conclusion that the words have "insides" and "outsides" — so that thoughts can be put into these words. With the addition of the synonymy of the terms: content, ideas and meaning, we see how the metaphorical conceptualization inevitably leads us to conclude that the content of the statements is contained in the words. Someone — probably the sender — put it there. It also means that the content and the meaning of a word and a sentence is — when inserted into words — independent of the whole socio-cultural context. It was in fact in its entirety placed in container-words (we are dealing here with another metaphor: the container metaphor). This way of thinking about the process of communication as a process of inserting thoughts into words and sending them to the recipient is apparent in the classical Shannon–Weaver model in which to understand the message (or more accurately, the correct decoding) is independent of the context. Of course, this can be hindered by the so-called "communication noise" — but it is only a kind of potentially distorting factor, not an element conditioning understanding or meaning. Reddy writes: "package can be difficult or impossible to open. But, if it is undamaged, and successfully opened, who can fail to find the right things in it" (1993, p. 287).

Characterizing communication by means of the conduit metaphor leads to its description as a process consisting of various stages: inserting thoughts and emotions into words, transferring words through speaking, writing, and then, receiving the words in the process of listening and reading. If this process is not distorted, then it is assumed that communication was successful (and thus transfer is the goal, whereas the function of language amounts only to being a conduit used for transmission of thoughts).

Such an approach implies additional consequences. Thoughts, ideas and emotions are thus understood as capable of existing independently of the subject, as they can be inserted into containers of words and transferred without distortion. This way the conduit metaphor (transmission metaphor), being a collective view,

affects our other ideas and activities. According to Reddy there is no way to avoid the conduit metaphor when talking about communication. Moreover, communication theorists use the conduit metaphor unawares, without understanding the implications of its use (Reddy, 1993, pp. 299, 310).

However — it should be stressed — the collective views are subject to historical transformations. Reddy believes the emotional detachment from the subject in the process of communication to be an obvious matter. Similarly — as shown by Wiseman — the ancient Romans believed that "one group of things that was never 'sent' were thoughts and feelings" (Wiseman, 2007, p. 61). In this context, Blackburn's assertion seems interesting: "The origins of the metaphor are unknown, but it is suspected that the metaphor has been employed for hundreds, if not thousands of years. The conduit metaphor suggests that meaning (i.e., thoughts, ideas) can be sent, as via a conduit, from speaker to hearer" (2007, p. 31). It was emphasized in this quote that the source of metaphor is unknown, however, it can be assumed that it has "functioned" in an unchanged manner for centuries. However, as studies of metaphorical conceptualization of communication demonstrate (Peters, 2001; Short, 2013; Wiseman, 2007), metaphors and collective views undergo change. In the above example by Wiseman it can be seen that the ancient Romans believed communication could also be explained in terms of the conduit and transfer, but they did not recognize the possibility of transferring feelings, or their "intrinsic" non-human existence. Likewise, one may try to show the conduit and transfer metaphor in the Homeric epics, but it will not be "the same" metaphor — as this one assumes the contemporary understanding of such terms as "mind" or "subject" (Wiseman, 2005, pp. 7–16).

TRANSMISSION METAPHOR AS A COLLECTIVE VIEW

The conceptualization of the collective experience expressed in the conduit, transmission or transfer metaphors is not only characteristic of contemporary societies. I assume that it is possible to present its changes within a community through the (re)constructional historical research of communication. It means, therefore, that I accept a certain universality of conceptualization (e.g. the idea of transmitting "something"), while acknowledging that the expression of such a conceptualization is subject to historical changes — thus the final shape of the metaphors that we use to describe the communication processes is not something absolutely universal — it depends on the socio-cultural context.

There is no doubt that describing communication processes is based on metaphors: nowadays we accept anything that we are able to describe in the conceptual framework of "transferring something," "sending" and "entering an interaction," to be communication. Linguists (Reddy, 1993; Vanparys, 1995), communication theorists (Craig, 1999; Wilmot, 1980) as well as philosophers (Apel, 1976; Habermas, 1991) are aware that communicating about communication is a reflection

which takes place at a metalevel — which, however, uses methodological tools from the level of theory. In other words, the basic problem already lies within the "tool," that is communication, which can be characterized only by means of itself: the definition of communication is being agreed upon in the course of communicating. Philosophy refers to such a difficulty as the problem of auto- or self-reference (see especially Luhmann, 1990; Vanderstraeten, 2000). Of course, it does not only apply to communication, but also e.g. to language, whose structure and features are being presented by means of the language itself. The awareness of this difficulty is essential for understanding how to understand the philosophical status of the transmission metaphor in communication studies.

Therefore, it should be noted: the transmission metaphor is (1) a collective view about the communication process, which (2) is expressed by means of the communication process itself. Whereas the communication process itself is also affected by other collective views, whose shape depends on the respective historical state of culture, which results from continuous changes. This means that the recognition of communication as "transmitting something" or "transferring by means of something" is an element of what is known as the "image of the world" in the field of the humanities. This issue was studied by e.g. Wilhelm von Humboldt, while among the contemporary philosophers it was analysed by Ludwig Wittgenstein, Hans-Georg Gadamer, or Martin Heidegger — within the concept of the world-picture.

An image of the world is a construct by which we define the various ways to rationalize experience, and which enables individuals within a given culture to establish a consistent way of rationalizing the world, e.g. through a common idea of what time and space are. Thus understood, the image of the world is subject to historical and social changes. The "image of the world" of a community consists of various collective views, in which a number of ideas related to various areas of social practices can be specified. I understand the term "collective view" as the ways of organizing the collective experience which Émile Durkheim called collective representations (see Pickering, 2002). Therefore one can talk about religious or artistic conceptions which determine how to understand and implement specific religious and artistic practices. You cannot enumerate a closed set of all collective views, as their denotation depends on the categorization and definition of the particular social practices. This article describes primarily the collective views on communication practices within which the transmission metaphor can be identified and characterized.

The collective view about communication practices (shorter: a view on communication) is the ways of organizing of the collective experience, by means of which individuals in the community understand and describe, what communication is, what it is based on, how it can be "performed," when it was completed as intended. The views on communication refer to concepts related to communication processes (such as a community of communication, a message, an agreement),

beliefs ("it's good to communicate," "communication is used to establish relationships") and values ("successful communication is used to reach an agreement," "the interlocutor should be treated with kindness"). Among the views on communication I distinguish (Table 1): (1) commonsensical views about communication and (2) the theoretical views about communication. Whereas the theoretical views can be divided into: (a) pre-communicological and (b) communicological. Naturally, the ability to (re)construct descriptions of these collective views is a separate methodological issue — especially in relation to historical communities.

Table 1. The types of collective views on communication

Collective Views on Communication		
Commonsensical Views	Theoretical Views	
The ways of organizing the collective experience which is used by "ordinary" communication participants in order to perceive communication processes and to "practice" communication. One could indicate here for example an idea of effective communication, the kind that results in transferring (transmitting) information or reaching an agreement.	Theoretical views on communication are the explicit ways of organizing the collective experience expressed mostly in the form of philosophical dissertations or research papers.	
	Pre-communicological Views	Communicological Views
	Pre-communicological views are related to the theoretical views on the communication processes arising prior to the emergence of a scientific discipline — communicology (e.g. in the writings of ancient philosophers and British empiricists).	Communicological views, i.e. the ways of describing and understanding the communication processes which appear in communication theories and communicological approaches, i.e. from the beginning of the last century.

Source: author.

Each type of view includes standards and directives (values and ways of implementing them), instructions, intellectual and religious beliefs, conceptualizations, value systems, cognitive categories, etc. Therefore, I assume the collective views on communication to be the ways of shaping the experience of reality shared in a given community. Thus the collective views influence the actions and practices within a given community which shares them.

CONCLUSIONS

All these types of collective views on communication are linked. However, it is essential to differentiate between the theoretical and the commonsensical views. Theoretical reflection cannot rely solely on the use of commonsensical views on a given phenomenon and commonsensical ways of talking about a given research

subject. The pre-theoretical knowledge (which includes the commonsensical views) is reconstructed on a theoretical level — it is not falsified, because you cannot point the only correct way of "thinking about" communication. The commonsensical knowledge and views are categorized and emphasized on the theoretical level. In this process, what "ordinary" communication participants call the "naturalness" and the "intuitiveness" of the description of communication practices is reconstructed and it is pointed out that the "commonsensical descriptions and characteristics" are subject to historical transformations and are neither natural nor intuitive.

The purpose of this article was to show that the communication process and way of its conceptualization is realized in metaphors. These ways of expressing and describing the world are affected by constructs (collective views) which are used to rationalize the collective experience. This is why I emphasized that the transmission, conduit metaphor (and other metaphorical conceptualization) are also worth examining in the diachronic perspective. An important new division introduced in this article is the distinction between pre-theoretical and theoretical metaphorical conceptualization of the communication process. This operation allowed me not to identify the transmission metaphor (theoretical level) with the transfer or conduit metaphors (pre-theoretical level). Thus the research problem addressed in this paper — the possibility of a historical description of the transmission metaphor — can be discussed, and the consequences of this approach can be used for further analysis within the historical research on communication.

The results of considerations presented in this study can be used to conduct a meta-theoretical reflection within the communication history or historical communicology. Treating the collective views as factors shaping the metaphorical conceptualizations allows for the formulation of new problems and research objectives. An objective worthy of research would be an attempt to trace the influence of commonsensical views on communication — studied e.g. by Wisemann, Short and Peters — on the pre-communicological collective views that can be found in the above-mentioned works of the British empiricist, John Locke. Research carried out in the diachronic perspective will grant a different insight into the contemporary understanding of what communication is and what conditions it should fulfil.

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