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ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION: A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

COMUNICAÇÃO ORGANIZACIONAL: UMA DISCUSSÃO TEÓRICA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to present the theoretical-conceptual trajectory of communication in organizations. Currently, the communication studies use the input of several disciplines, acquiring an interdisciplinary nature. Usually, communicative objectives are cut out and treated according to the perspectives chosen among the fruitful diversity of views. In the organizational context, communication has assumed an important role in the management process. Communication in organizations must be treated in an integral way, permeating all organizational actions, making permanent the construction of their culture and identity and marking a unique style and their ways of projecting themselves outwardly aiming at the construction of their image. In this sense, organizations are seen as collective units of action constituted to achieve specific ends and directed by a power that establishes a form of authority that determines the status and the role of their members. Information in the communication process starts now to be considered an intermediate variable between communication and organization. The way how the information is perceived and interpreted by the receivers determines the concretization of communication.

Keywords: Communication, Organizational Communication, Communication Theories, Information.

RESUMO

Este estudo tem como objetivo apresentar a trajetória teórica-conceitual da comunicação nas organizações. Atualmente, os estudos de comunicação utilizam o aporte de diversas disciplinas, assumindo uma natureza interdisciplinar. Geralmente, os objetos comunicativos são recortados e tratados conforme as perspectivas escolhidas entre a fecunda diversidade de olhares. No contexto organizacional, a comunicação tem assumido papel importante no processo de gestão. A comunicação nas organizações deve ser tratada de forma integral, permeando todas as ações organizacionais, viabilizando de maneira permanente a construção de sua cultura e identidade, e marcando um estilo próprio e suas formas de projetar-se exteriormente objetivando a construção de sua imagem. Nesse sentido, as organizações são vistas como unidades coletivas de ação constituídas para atingir fins específicos, e dirigidas por um poder que estabelece uma forma de autoridade que determina o status e o papel de seus membros. A informação no processo de comunicação passa a ser considerada uma variável intermediária entre a comunicação e a organização. A forma como a informação é percebida e interpretada pelos receptores determina a efetivação da comunicação.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação, Comunicação Organizacional, Teorias da Comunicação, Informação.

1. Introduction

Communication has been presented as a vital element of human relationship and society, through which there is a continuous movement towards the future. History itself records a permanent effort of humanity to communicate, from the simplest forms to the technological advances that shorten time and distance and introduce new channels that facilitate the man's action. This means that there are enormous difficulties of social interaction without communication. The power of communication "is undeniable to convince, influence, create expectations, unite, separate and change the course of occurrences" (CARDOSO, 2006, p.1).

In the specialized literature, it is possible to find a multitude of concepts that seek to make explicit the importance and objectives of communication. In dealing with the communicative importance, Torquato (2001) affirms that it is by means of communication that an organization establishes a typology of consent, forming congruence, equalization, homogenization of ideas and integration of purposes. Cloutier (1995) states that communication is the process of causing to take part an individual, a group of individuals or an organism, situated in a given time and place, in the experiences of another, using common elements.

It is checked in the previous definitions that communication involves aspects of interpersonal, intergroup and interorganizational interactions, emphasizing the transmission of messages, experiences, behaviors, ways of life, daily practices and viewpoints. It also brings to light the idea of forming one image before the other and obtaining a response of this image, among other purposes.

In the organizational sphere, from the 1990s, communication takes a new direction. This, until then, was very fragmented and limited to the tactical level, starts to assume a strongly strategic role, integrating itself to the decision making process in all the organization's sectors and departments. From then on, communication begins to assume a "systemic dimension that makes it possible to unify the concept of the organization, to gather interests together and to avoid its fragmentation". In order to communication manages to "establish the company's dialogue with its internal and external publics, it must meet the specific characteristics of each public segment, creating channels and vehicles directed to their needs, aspirations and expectations" (CARDOSO, 2006, p. 1)

Through its scope, communication establishes the company's dialogue with its internal and external publics through the interaction among several issuers and receivers at the same time. In this sense, communication is a transportation system of an idea, a concept, a philosophical body and the actions undertaken by an organization (TORQUATO, 2010).

This paper aims to present the communication theoretical-conceptual trajectory in organizations. The role of communication and the circulation of information in the internal and external organizational environment has attracted the researchers' attention and led to the development of different conceptual, paradigmatic and theoretical approaches about the subject. However, the difficulties of applicability of relevant communicative processes in the organizations' environment becomes a stimulus to reflect on the new concepts and applicability of organizational communication.

Organizations need to rethink, complement and refine their traditional theoretical and methodological frameworks, formulating and disseminating strategies that take into account communicational processes as effective and competent supports for their acting and existence (FLECK; PONS; DALMORO, 2013).

2. Studies about communication

2.1 Interdisciplinarity in the communication study

What is the purpose of communication? In spite of the controversies surrounding this theme, in general lines, one can identify two objects of communication: the means of communication and the communicative process. The mass means of communication or media (contemporary designation) is performed or mediated by the new technologies. The presence of media communication is an empirical object of great visibility and impact, a tangible aspect of current reality, which involves the communication technologies development (RÜDIGER, 2011).

The origins of the Communication Theory at the beginning of the 20th century were turned toward the characterization and analysis of the new communicative practices that emerged at the end of the 19th century and marked the 20th century (the emergence of the mass media - radio, television and cinema). The evidence of this object has increased in the latest decades, with the centrality increasingly assumed by the media, the emergence of digital media and telematic networks, the determining role of information (CARDOSO, 1990).

The objects of the world are not given beforehand, nor are cut out by their intrinsic laws – but constituted and arranged by the men's view and intervention. So, the means of communication or the media, in their apparent objectivity and simplicity are not so much like this, but they unfold into multiple dimensions (technique, politics, economics, consumption, urban life, cultural practices, sociability, etc.). (BALDISSERA, 2014). Thus, it is found that today an analysis of any aspect of social life evokes a reference to the means of communication and to information flows, since all contemporary reflections within the field of social sciences involves communication studies (MATTELART; MATTELART, 2005).

The communication studies originated from the contribution of several disciplines. The communicative practices aroused the view and became an object of study of the various sciences. Thus, the communication studies have an interdisciplinary nature, based on the crossing of different contributions (FRANÇA, 2008).

Currently, the communication studies are anchored on different theoretical affiliations. Communicative objects are cut out and treated according to the chosen perspectives among the fruitful diversity of views. Thus, the communication studies can be marked by a perspective that is of the communication itself, but can also assume sociological, political, linguistic analysis perspectives, etc. Analyzes of communicative objects marked by the confluence of various contributions are often seen-or shredded and distributed among the various disciplines (MATTELART; MATTELART, 2005).

Communication theories generally present as the communication studies v the so-called "American School", founded in the 1930s in the United States, turned to the analysis of the functions and effects of "mass means of communication." These studies were based on functionalist sociology and social psychology (behaviorist orientation) (FRANÇA, 2008).

In the 1930s to 1960s, scholars of the Frankfurt School (notably T. Adorno, Horkheimer, Benjamin) created the Critical Theory that brought contributions to the communication study. Heir of the Critical Theory, J. Habermas has been developing a singular and consistent contribution on communicative action (PRADO, 2015). Also, the Chicago School and symbolic interactionism (focused on everyday interactions, for urban scenes), bring important contributions to the communication studies. In France, authors linked to the structuralist approach (such as R. Barthes) have become significant references for communication researchers in the field of cultural semiology and discourse analysis. In the analysis of the mass culture, the contributions of Edgar Morin stand out. In Italy, the vast intellectual production of Umberto Eco and other researchers who deal with communication policies stand out (WOLF, 2003).

From the 1970s, Latin American scholars (such as Paulo Freire, Luiz Beltrão, Antonio Pasquali, Jorge González, Jesús Martín-Barbero, Juan Díaz Bordenave, Mario Kaplun, Horácio Martins de Carvalho, José Marques de Melo, among others), developed a conceptual perspective of their own, unfolded into two lines: cultural imperialism and communitarian communication. After a period of great effervescence and influence, today these studies are practically almost forgotten. Currently, studies on reception and communication technology are the ones that have gained a prominent place in the field of Latin American research on communication, with the contributions of a number of authors (GUSHIKEN, 2006).

In addition to the tendencies already mentioned, it is possible to list punctually several others: the discussion of postmodernity had its echoes in the communication field; today the central emphasis is on globalization and multiculturalism. There is also a growing recovery of authors who deal with subjectivity, intersubjectivity, everyday, experience, social production of meaning. Studies on language, discourse and meaning are increasingly present in the reflection on communication; the influences and the referential of semiotics gain increasing importance (FRANÇA, 2008).

From the last decades of the twentieth century the world has become the scene of profound transformations in the systems of thought; the very model of science was shaken by complex thinking. In this context, like the other sciences, communication was touched by the debates, bringing to its reflection field the theoretical references and the authors who have most instigated and helped to think the contemporary reality (KUNSCH, 2009).

Among this range of studies are the studies of communication in organizations, the main object of this study. Bouzon and Oliveira (2015) affirm that organizational communication as a whole is polydoxical, that is, shared among different doxas, each with the freedom to express their world view without being qualified as dogmatic.

2.2 Main paradigms in communicational studies

It is realized in the communication studies, an openness to seek and assimilate the contributions from Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, Linguistics, Semiotics, Anthropology, Education, Information Sciences, and even from more distant fields. The incorporation of different reflections that punctuate current thinking is vital. However, it is imperative to remember that the existence of different perspectives implies on the possibility that the same phenomena studied undergo many and different readings (ARAÚJO, 2005; BORBA et al., 2012).

França (2008) states that the influences of other areas for the communication study field are considerable, but it is important to organize its absorption according to a specific problem, to a unique matter - that is communication itself. It deals, in other words, with the communicative model of the area paradigm.

When it is about the communication paradigm, a reference to the triggered theories is not done, but to the cognitive scheme that leads and instructs the researcher to see a thing and not another. The problems of the communication object is that it has been little attentive to that which it does. Working with many contributions, the communication studies analyze and answer many aspects (lightened by the chosen theories), address elements present in the communicative process and fail to answer and seize communication in a practical way (FRANÇA, 2001). Torquato (2010) defends that this same problematic is present in organizations. As a result of that dissonance between theory and practice, the communicative actions in organizations, many times do not reach the expected objectives.

In this sense, Wolf (2003) observes that the studies about communication make use of elaborate social theories, but they work with a simplifying communication model, which is the informational paradigm. By the side of this practically homogeneous model he adds two others – the semiotic-informational and the semiotic-textual.

The informational paradigm understands communication as a message-transmitting process from an sender to a receiver, provoking certain effects. Nevertheless, this paradigm has been receiving a number of criticisms. The semiotic-informational model proposed by Wolf (2003) adds to the former the understanding of the semiotic nature of the messages. Here the messages are more than a transported inert material, for they are carried with meaning. This understanding causes an analytical movement centered on the structures of the messages signification. This sort of study evokes particularly the language sciences contribution.

The semantic-textual model of Wolf (2003) breaks the unitary character of the messages, and seeks to read them in their intertextuality, evoking a semiotic of the culture. However, França (2008) states that in this model the presence and the role of social subjects, even the work of production and reception, are neglected due to the emphasis on the symbolic dimension and senses produced.

Thus, França (2008) highlights the dialogic model, which distinguishes communication from the process bilaterality, from the equality of conditions and functions established among the interlocutors. In this model the emphasis is all centered on the nature of the relationship between the two poles, erasing or ignoring the other aspects of the process (including the nature of the messages and the meanings produced).

However, it is up to this study to focus more its discussion around the theoretical conceptual communication trajectory, pointing out its role in the organizational context.

3. A brief theoretical trajectory of organizational communication

The studies of organizational communication are marked by two great distinct periods: from 1900-1970 and from 1970 until the present moment. From 1900 to 1970, the different concepts and theories developed were fundamentally based on the Traditional Rhetoric Doctrine, Human Relations Theory and Organizational Management Theory. However, the recent works of organizational communication were shaped by the interest in entrepreneurial and industrial communication (from the 1920s to the 1950s) and by the influence of the school of human relations (from the 1950s to the mid-1970s). (PUTNAM; PHILLIPS; CHAPMAN, 2004).

In the late 1970s, theoretical approaches focused on Modern or Empirical Theory, Naturalistic Theory and Critical Theory. Modern or empirical theory had its goals turned towards measurement and control. The emphasis was in quantitative empiricism. The organization was had as an objective reality which could be "measured". Organizations were viewed as rational and instrumental entities; thus, communication incorporated a utilitarian or instrumental bias. During this period, communication was understood as a tool that enabled the achievement of organizational objectives and goals (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

In the 1980s, research contributed to a shift in the academic knowledge of organizational communication, yet without a complete break with the past. In this context new theoretical currents emerge, such as Naturalistic Theory and Critical Theory. The Naturalist Theory considers organizational reality as a fruit of social construction, that is, it was historically constructed and revealed from a "truth" that was outside of it. The organization was seen as an organism and was represented through

images and perceived as a permeable entity in relation to its surroundings. It was a specific cultural entity, conceived as a unique community of language and other forms of symbolic action. Communication is an integral part of the organization, in the sense that communication does the organization, that is, it is the necessary condition of the organization. Naturalists have taken a pluralistic stance by viewing organizational life through multiple perspectives, not just administrative ones (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

Critical Theory arises in the late 1980s, having its theoretical foundations in dialectical materialism. Under this perspective, the organization is seen as an arena of perennial conflicts, that is, a battlefield (the locus of class conflict). The organizational reality is the reflection of these conflicts, being considered as an instrument of domination and oppression. In this context, communication assumes a role as a "masking" mechanism of the material realities of the organization. It emphasizes the ideological aspects of communication, admitting it as the cause of a false consciousness between managers and workers (SCROFERNEKER, 2006). This orientation broadened the social constructivist perspective in focusing on power and control (PUTNAM; PHILLIPS; CHAPMAN, 2004).

In the 1990s, a series of theories and proposals emerge that sought to see organizations and (re) interpret them. Among them, Postmodern Narrative Theory and Team-Based Management Theory stand out. These were the basic proposals that fed the communication of the organizations in that decade (URIBE; ZULUAGA, 2003).

The Postmodern Narrative Theory is composed of three fundamental narratives: the postmodern condition, the pastiche economy and the simulacrum. In the postmodern condition, history is the great product and is understood as a metanarrative that defines culture and its possibilities. The pastiche economy is characterized by the collapse of multiple dominant narratives in modernity. It is a hybrid of ideas, a mixture whose results come from analysis and criticism. The simulacrum, in turn, is the space in which the empirical and symbolic reality becomes empty signs (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

The Theory of Team Based Management is essentially characterized by multidirectional communication in organizations. The role of leaders, identified as responsible for generating strong and cohesive work groups (URIBE; ZULUAGA, 2003), is highlighted. This theory is close to the communication dialogical model highlighted by França (2008) and which is consistent with the reality of the current organizational communication that sees the organization as a living and open system. These theoretical perspectives significantly impacted organizations and strengthened their communication practices (SCROFERNEKER; CASTILHOS; AMORIM, 2013).

Organizational communication is also considered a process through which the members of the organization obtain relevant information about it and the changes that occur in it. In this perspective, organizational communication plays a role of information source (data-gathering) for the organization members. Information is an intermediate variable that links communication to the organization (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

In Goldhaber's view (2003) the organization is a living and open system connected by a flow of information among people occupying different positions and representing different roles. In this sense, the author defines organizational communication as being the flow of messages processed in a network of interdependent relationships. From this definition, the author defends the existence of

four key concepts to be considered in the scope of organizational communication. These are: (i) messages; (i) network; (ii) relationships and; (v) interdependence.

Goldhaber (2003) argues that messages involve the information regarded as significant about people, actions and objects generated during human interactions. It is the information perceived by the receivers, which are given an important meaning. Significant messages and information flow through communications networks. These are connected to the people, establishing among them different degrees (intensity) of relations.

In considering the organization as an open system, Goldhaber (2003) advocates the coexistence of subsystems that establish interdependence levels with one another that affect and are mutually affected, that is, there is interdependence in the system as a whole. Thus, for the author, there are innumerable possibilities for the study of these relations, such as: (i) the study of the conduct of the people involved in these relationships; (ii) the study of the effects of specific relationships; (iii) the effects of these relationships on employees' attitudes and moral; (iv) the effects of relationships with the external public, that is, the organization's stakeholders.

In the organizational context, in the last decades a heterogeneous group of communication activities emerged; fundamentally focused on the publics or segments with which the organization relates and depends (the stakeholders). Organizational communication configures different communication modalities: public relations, organizational strategies (public affairs), corporate marketing, corporate advertising, internal and external communication (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

Communication in organizations must be understood in an integral way, permeating all organizational actions, enabling, in a permanent way, the construction of their culture and identity, and marking their own style and their ways of projecting themselves outwardly aiming at the construction of their image. In this sense, organizations are seen as collective units of action "constituted to achieve specific ends," and directed by a power that establishes a form of authority that determines the status and role of its members (FELINTO, 2011). The organization can be perceived as a private and concrete expression of a system of historical action and of class relationships and as an activity regulated by decisions emanating from a political system. Thus, the organization becomes a nucleus of decisions whose forms of socialization (the fruit of human interaction) are decisive to the construction of its culture. Communication can then be understood and perceived as a compound that shapes the organization (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

The organizational communication process encompasses four dimensions according to Braga (2011) and Restrepo (2011):

Communication as information: it is the stable transactions that need to occur in order for the business to become viable. It involves the normative system and its forms of control (mission, values, principles, policies, etc.) that sustains the organization practice;

- **Communication as divulgation:** it is the communication in the sense of letting know and make public the organization's activities;
- **Communication as a generator of relationships:** it is the communications turned to the formation, socialization and/or the reinforcement of cultural

processes. It involves recreational activities, rituals and celebrations, among other activities.

- **Participative communication:** it is the communication with the other. Here the cycle of organizational communication becomes complete by giving the word to the other, listening to him or her and recognizing him or her. It involves teamworks, suggestion programs and other organizational practices that allow for effective participation, establishing pertinence and commitment links with the organization.

Scroferneker (2006) states that the approach developed by Restreppo and Angulo (1995) re-addresses a fundamental issue from the point of view of the relationship communication and organization, that is, the way of being of an organization can be interpreted by the forms of communication that are developed there, implying and recognizing the various organizations as meanings constructors. Another important aspect of the organizational communication analysis, proposed by Papa, Daniels and Spiker (2008) and verified by Scroferneker (2006), characterizes human organizations from three different models or perspectives, namely: (i) traditional; (ii) interpretive and; (iii) critical.

Organizational communication in the traditional model is seen as an activity whose behavior can be measured, standardized and classified. There is a relationship between communicational process and organizational efficiency. In this approach, two moments can be identified: (i) in considering the organization as a machine (mechanistic view), organizational communication is considered as a gear, a mechanical process (machinelike); (ii) from a more recent perspective, organization is understood as a system and organizational communication is an organic and dynamic process (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

In the interpretive model of communication, organizations are seen as cultures (FELINTO, 2011). In the interpretative model of communication, organizations are seen as cultures. In this perspective, the organization is a subjective phenomenon, that is, social action is only possible when people share subjective meanings. Organizational culture is considered a network of meanings (MARTINO, 2013). Interpretative research seeks to reveal the socially constructed realities in organizations. They study communication as the process through which this social construction occurs, that is, the symbols and meanings that surround the various forms of organizational behavior. The organization is also seen as a negotiating space (negotiate order), that is, the product of collective transactions and speeches (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

According to Papa, Daniels and Spiker (2008), communication in the interpretative perspective focuses on the symbolic process through which organizational reality is socially constructed through communication. This means that reality is created and maintained through the interaction among individuals. If in the traditional perspective there is the understanding that the world of social action, of interaction, is constituted in observable and tangible behaviors, the interpretive perspective tries to reveal that culture is what is behind these manifested behaviors.

The critical perspective approaches the organization as an oppression instrument. It turns its attention to the oppressed organizational classes: workers,

women, minorities and other groups identified as oppressed classes. The researchers of this perspective seem to be concerned simultaneously with the social structure and the symbolic process. The authors emphasize that organizational oppression lies not only in the social structure or the symbolic process but in the relationship between social structure and the symbolic process. From this perspective, communication is seen as an instrument of domination, individuals' monitoring and exposure (BALDISSERA, 2014). From this perspective, communication is seen as a domination instrument. It is the systematic distortion of communication, which constitutes a deliberate and continuous action of the symbolic process aiming to co-opt the employees' interests. From the critical approach, for example, the stories of the founding "heroes" of the organization, myths and rites matter only to the organization's leaders who use these "stories" and procedures to involve the other organization's members (PAPA; DANIELS; SPIKER, 2008).

Eisenberg, Goodal Jr. and Trethewey (2009) present other aspects of organizational communication: (i) organizational communication as information transfer; (ii) organizational communication as a transactional process; (iii) organizational communication as a control strategy; (iv) organizational communication as a balance between creativity and constraint/coercion/constraint; (V) organizational communication as a space for dialogue. According to the authors, these organizational communication models are expressed as described below.

In communication as transference, information is transferred by "outflow" (metaphor of "plumbing"), in the sense of being passed on from one person (sender) to another (receiver). It is an asymmetric communication, usually used to convey goals and objectives of the summit to the other organization's members. It is a linear, simplified and incomplete model, since it understands that it is up to the sender to define the messages meaning by passing it on to the others. The sender acts as an active element that transmits a message to a passive receiver (SCROFERNEKER, 2004).

According to Spaho (2012) transactional communication emphasizes feedback, that is, how the message is received and understood, particularly through nonverbal manifestation. What matters is the manifested behavior, not only expressed verbally. The transactional model process differs fundamentally from the information transfer model when considering the meaning of the message, how it is received and understood, that is, how the receiver will deconstruct/construct the meaning of the message received.

In organizational communication as a control strategy, communication is seen as a tool to control the organizational environment. This model assigns communicators multiple objectives in the face of situations, that is, a competent communicator is one who properly selects strategies for achieving multiple goals in the organization. This approach describes how people can communicate in a dubious manner (strategic ambiguity) their goals, but with talent (SCROFERNEKER, 2006).

In Scroferneker's view (2006) the strategic control model ignores the idea of shared meanings as the basis or motivation for communication, admitting it as an unverifiable empirical concept, since the main communication purpose would be to organize the action. This model suggests that the organizational world is composed of independent communicators, each working to control their own environment and that

meanings exist only in people's minds. Thus, from this perspective, individual position and power acquire meaning through communication.

Aritz and Walker (2012) argue that organizational communication as a balance between creativity and constraint/coercion/subjection (constraint) comes near sociological theories as far as the relationship individual x society is concerned. These relationships present tensions between macro and micro perspective. Macro perspective perceives individual actions as conditioned by the society impositions (rules, norms, etc.) and social institutions. And micro-perspective sees them as the society creation and of its social system. The dichotomy is established at the moment that it is necessary to maintain what is established (and socially accepted, such as laws, rules, norms, etc.) and the need to promote change (understood in this perspective as creativity). Communication acts as a mediator of these tensions; it is the material manifestation of institutional subjection, of creative potential, and of the interpretation context. In this context, communication acts as the balance between creativity (what can be done and subjection) and what must be done.

In communication as a space for dialogue, there is room for the emergence of a "balanced communication", that is, a communication in which each individual has the opportunity to speak and be heard (EISENBERG; GOODAL JR; TRETHERWEY, 2009). Communication, by allowing the exchange of messages, accomplishes a series of important social functions, such as informing, persuading, convincing, preventing events and even constructing identities. As the human being is, in addition to the most eminent social, that is, he or she is incapable of living isolated and solitary, it follows from the fact that the communication phenomenon is also a social phenomenon (COLPO; OLIVEIRA, 2017).

In dealing with the theoretical-conceptual trajectories of organizational communication, Scroferneker (2006) highlights the contributions of Putnam, Phillips and Chapman (2004), who researched the metaphors of organizational communication. Making use of the metaphors, the authors allow different (re) readings on the modalities that the communication assumes in the organizational scope. These authors, by positioning the communication as the organizations producer, propose to study it from seven lines of metaphors, representing the different branches of research of the organizational communication. Such metaphors are identified as: conduit, lens, linkage, performance, symbol, voice, and speech. For the authors, "metaphors reveal alternative ways of thinking about the origin and nature of the act of organizing, its processes and concepts that form its ontological roots" (PUTNAM; PHILLIPS; CHAPMAN, 2004, p. 78).

The conduit metaphor refers to the forwarding of communication, considering the organizations as channels or containers. Communication from this perspective is understood as transmission. The lens metaphor admits that organizations "filter" communication, insofar as they are considered as "perceptual or eyes" systems that everybody "sees and perceives." The linkage metaphor understands that organizations are networks or systems of interconnected individuals and communication acts to connect them (PUTNAM; PHILLIPS; CHAPMAN, 2004, p. 80).

The performance metaphor "projects communication as a social interaction [...] and organizations emerge as coordinated actions". In the metaphor of the symbol, in turn, organizations emerge from organizational culture, projecting "communication as an interpretation of literary forms, such as narrations, rites and rituals, and paradoxes."

The metaphor of the voice considers that the communication "is expression and the organization is a choir muffled and thunderous voices ". Unlike the previous metaphor, the discourse metaphor considers communication as a conversation, "in which organizations appear as texts that consist of sorts and dialogues" (PUTNAM; PHILLIPS; CHAPMAN, 2004, p. 83).

Scroferneker (2006) also states the contribution of the theoretical current identified as the Montreal School, which has in James Taylor one of its main exponents. Among the theories of the School of Montreal it is highlighted the co-orientation theory and the dynamic between the conversation and the text. Taylor et al. (2001), Taylor and Van Every (2000) claim that co-orientation refers to a trade-off relationship in which agents have their attention focused on the same object. Communication is what gives meaning to the interactions between the agents and the object of analysis.

Casali and Taylor (2009) claim that there is a continuous and circular dynamic between the text and the conversation in organizations. Conversations become texts and texts are translated into conversations. Organizational communication results from this dynamic.

In Brazil, Kunsch (2003, p.179) addresses organizational communication from an integrated perspective. Integrated communication aggregates all forms of organizational communication, which form the communication mix. A clearly defined global policy will enable strategic and tactical communication actions focused on work, efficiency and relations with stakeholders. Integrated communication covers institutional communication, marketing communication, internal communication and administrative communication. It is in reality a philosophy that encompasses "the guidelines that organizations, through their communication departments, should give to decision-making and conduct of the practices of all communicative actions" allowing a synergistic action.

In the approaches that traditionally master in the scope of corporate communication, the company's primary objective is to seek the best message and the best way to establish contacts with target audiences, aiming to change ways of thinking, influencing decisions, changing subordinates to reach organizational goals, announcing events, selling something and eliminating conflicts. However, this view of the past is not efficiently supported nowadays by its reductionism and simplicity in the face of the complexity of the world of organizations (KUNSCH, 2012).

Nowadays, the traditional organizational communication approach is not sufficient to give support to the communication objectives. This is because organizational communication should support a well-structured management model that can lead the organization to meet the increasingly competitive challenges of a society that becomes more demanding in both quality and rights. Communication is expected to fulfill its true social role: to involve the sender and recipient in an open and democratic dialogue, in which the company's management strategy is built based upon social and ethical principles (CARDOSO, 2006).

To make strategic communication viable, Borba et al. (2012) shows the importance of the strategic awareness development, stating that it is possible when the collectivity set shares a certain representation of the desired future. However, the study conducted by (GENELOT, 2011) shows that the elaboration of this shared strategic vision cannot be accomplished by imposition or by decree, since the

construction of shared representations involves complex and delicate aspects, such as the process of expression and the negotiation and appropriation of meanings. It is there that organizational communication should play its role, without imposing its point of view to the others. It needs to do it through shared knowledge among participants in order to build a common project.

In this new vision, the roles of those who carry out communication activities in the organization change. An activity that was previously conceived by specialists in the area is now shared by different professionals. Thus, communication will concretize its role as a strategic management tool when the company creates the true channels for communication to realize its basic social principle, that is, its democratic nature of allowing all individuals to share ideas, behaviors, attitudes and organizational culture (CARDOSO, 2006).

Corroborating with the previous idea, Chung et al. (2013) argue that while mass communication and technology theories exhibited the highest centrality, interpersonal, and persuasion network theory have become the most popular and influential communication theory. This goes beyond mass communication theories, involving interpersonal relations, technology, information system, health, gender, inter-culture, and organizational communication theories.

A study by Welch (2011) establishes links between the communicative engagement of employees and productivity. According to the author, there are practical implications of the democratic model of communication, since it encourages communicators to consider potential engagement effects of communication strategies and tactics.

This new communication perspective in organizations is consistent with the view of Habermas (2004). In this author's view, communicative action is nothing more than the need for human beings to communicate through a disputed dialogue. Arguments are almost extraordinary forms of communication and presuppose much more than human relationships. To Vizeu (2003) in organizational communication based on dialogue, the communicative process should allow any participant in the interaction or negotiation power and equal rights to question the other without resorting to coercion and their arguments must be based on adequate rationality to the context of the event. However, Prado (2015) argues that Habermas's theory of communicative action does not consider conflict, resulting in a sociological deficit.

Contrasting the idea of Prado (2015), Cardoso (2006) say that this equality of power and rights does not mean symmetry of desires, knowledge, equal purposes or positionings, but possibilities and openness in the negotiation so that possible differences and conflicts are exposed properly accompanied by the reasons that sustain them.

4. Final considerations

This study presents approaches to organizational communication in the light of some theoretical currents. As observed in the literature from the 1990s, organizational communication seems to adopt a more strategic approach in breaking out the traditional barriers that identified it in the previous decades.

Although information in the communication process can be considered an intermediate variable between communication and organization, the way in which information is perceived and interpreted by the receivers determines the communication effectiveness. It is understood that in the communication process, the dimension of communication as information presented by Restreppo and Angulo (1995) is of paramount importance since it is the stable transactions that can make the business viable.

In this sense, within the framework proposed by Casali (2004), it is believed that in order to overcome the limits of traditional organizational communication and instrumental approaches to organizational communication, the need to treat communication as a strategic process for action in a plural, dynamic and complex reality is preeminent. By making use of innovative, creative and dynamic behaviors from a strategic point of view, and that works, in a democratic way, as a disseminator of the company's goals and cultural values to internal and external publics.

Based on the approaches presented in this work, it can be said that communication in an integrated perspective must be inserted within the scope of the organization's strategies. Communication is interests to all those who are involved with the organization. As emphasized by Bueno (2005), communication should be incorporated into strategic management and assume a fundamental role in the absorption and dissemination of new entrepreneurial paradigms and strategic management tool.

Organizational communication has been assuming a new strategic dimension in organizations and has been gradually modifying old boundaries. As Genelot (2011) points out, communication takes on a much broader role, making reference to everything that concerns the social position and functioning of the organization, from its internal climate to its institutional relations. Therefore, it is no longer possible to design and execute isolated plans, projects and programs of institutional, marketing, internal or external communication, since a communication strategy integrates all the organization sectors and involves all its participants.

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