

**“THOSE ARE JUST RUMOURS,
OR NOT?”**

The most told stories about migrants



FACTS
MYTHS

COMMUNICATION

From Latin *commūnicāre*, meaning "to share" (Harper, Douglas. „Communication". Online Etymology Dictionary. Retrieved 2013-06-23.)

Communication is the act of conveying intended meanings from one entity or group to another, through the use of mutually understood signs and semiotic or signs rules.

Communication includes acts that confer knowledge and experiences, give advice and commands, and ask questions. These acts may take many forms, which depends on the abilities of the group communicating.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication#cite_note-1)

Models of Communication

Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver described a simple model, often referred to as the transmission model or standard view of communication:
Information or content (e.g. a message in natural language)

is sent in some form (as spoken language)

from an emisor/ sender/ encoder

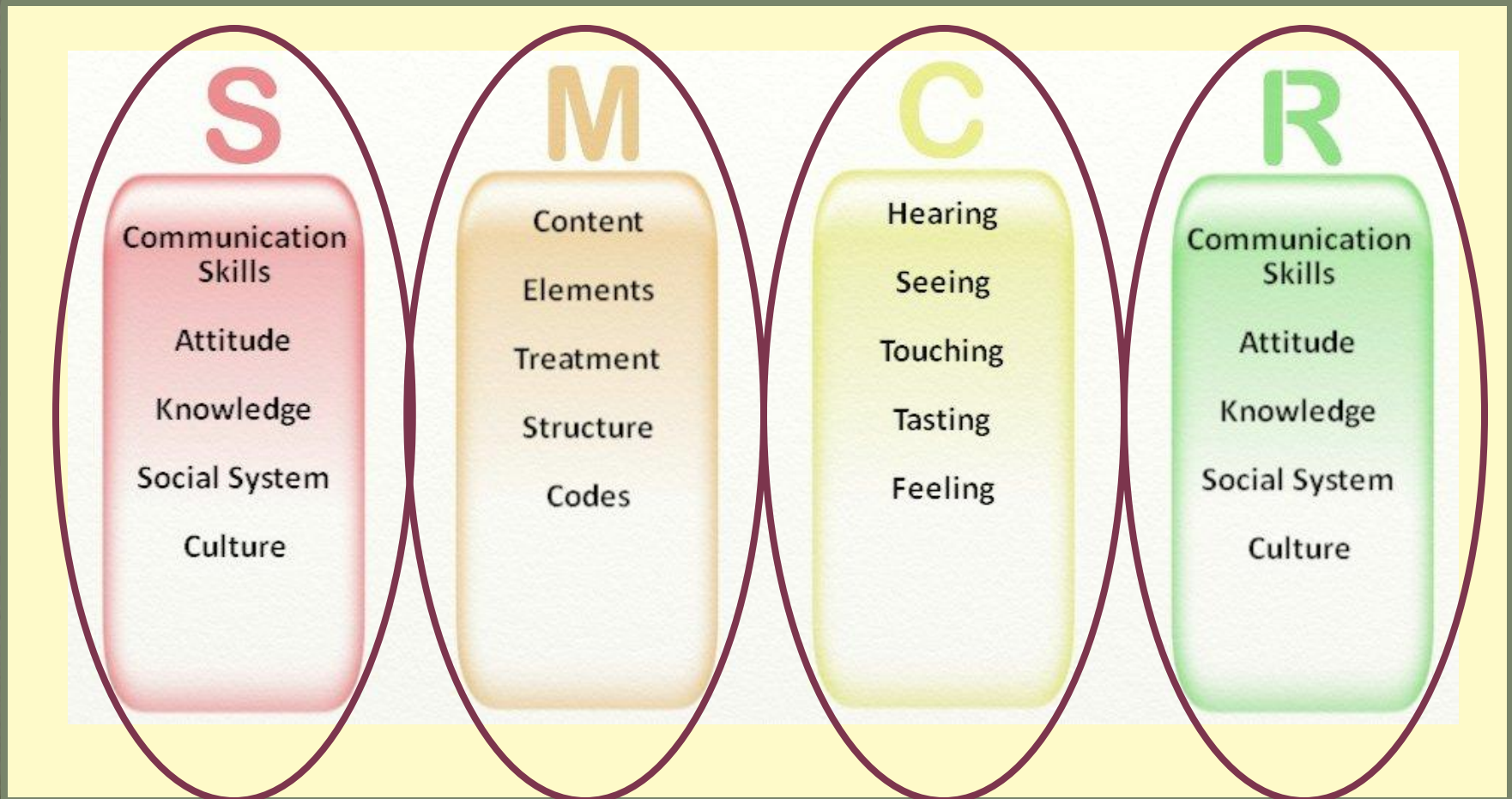
to a destination/ receiver/ decoder.

This simple model was structured based on the following elements:

- An information source, which **produces a message**;
- A **transmitter**, which encodes the message into signals;
- A **channel**, to which signals are adapted for transmission;
- A noise source, which **distorts** the signal while it propagates through the channel;
- A receiver, which 'decodes' (**reconstructs**) the message from the signal;
- A destination, where the **message arrives**.

Berlo's Model of Communication

In 1960, David Berlo created the SMCR Model of communication (Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver) and each category has its own features:



ELEMENTS TO EXAMINE

Anyway, communication is usually described along a few major dimensions that we must examine when we communicate:

- **Message** (what type of things are communicated),
- **Source** / Emisor / Sender / Encoder (by whom), 
- **Form** (in which form),
- **Channel** (through which medium),
- **Destination** / Receiver / Target / Decoder (to whom),
The target can be oneself, another person or being, another entity (such as a corporation or group of beings).
- And, **Receiver and the impact** that a message has (both desired and undesired) on the target of the message.

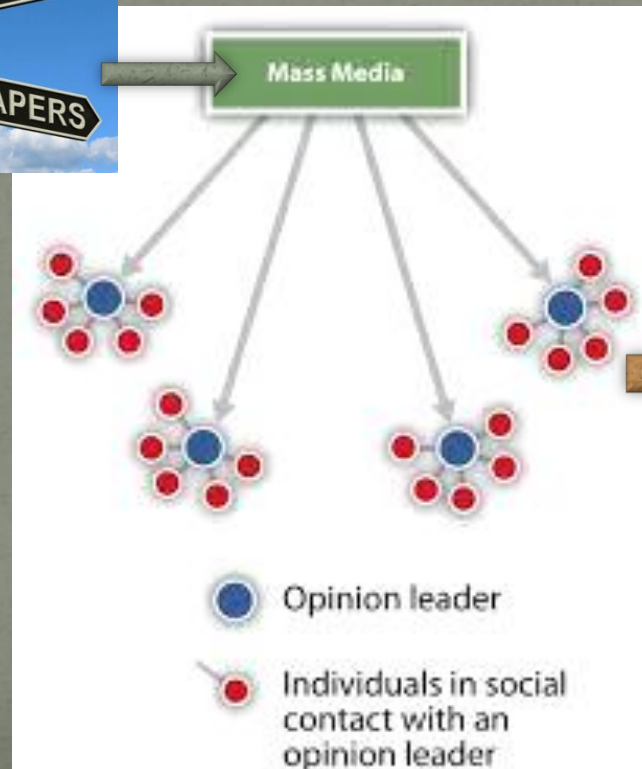
(Wilbur Schram, 1954)

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CONTEMPORARY MODEL OF COMMUNICATION IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL MASS MEDIA AND VIRTUAL SOCIAL NETWORKS



CONTEMPORARY MYTHS AND RUMOURS

Contemporary myth also known as **urban legend**, **popular legend**, **urban myth**, **urban tale**, or **contemporary legend** is a story pertaining to contemporary *folklore*; it is a type of legend or popular belief that is presented as actual events happened today, despite containing supernatural or implausible elements.

Since the end of the 20th century, the Internet has contributed significantly to the spread of urban legends, especially through the virtual social networks. The adaptations of these legends on the Web are also characterized by adding, for example, phrases with catastrophic alerts or overly dramatic statements, citing reliable sources (media, state forces, etc.) and begging the dissemination of information to prevent more people from being affected.



CONTEMPORARY MYTHS AND RUMOURS

So the features of the **contemporary myths** are:

- It must be disseminated spontaneously as true and information reaches a certain popular recognition, in that way, a fictional story will become an urban legend.
- It may be **entirely untrue or, in some cases, partly true.**
- Nowadays generally it circulate through the Internet, but which turns out to be not exactly as told at the beginning.
- It can be inspired by any source, but often includes a mysterious or incomprehensible element.
- It is rarely possible to locate the exact origin of an urban legend. However, a story may be started by someone in a chatroom, through e-mails, based on events that the originator had actually witnessed.
- They are of an international character.
- It is possible to find several stories of the same story spread over different areas, built from the same scheme, but adorned with very varied details according to their location.
- When it starts to circulate and is retold by different people, the story gathers momentum and a logic of its own, becoming an urban legend. (Marcel Danesi, Dictionary of Media and Communications, page 296, 2009).

CONTEMPORARY MYTHS AND RUMOURS

Rumours are propositions designed to be believed, and are transmitted from person to person, usually orally, without any data to verify their veracity. These are unconfirmed speculations that try to give for certain with a specific objective, and to condition the behavior of others over objective information, because the transmitter can add to the original narrative exaggerated elements, or also decorated with envy, spite or resentment.

The rumors transmit with enormous efficiency the social information since they have an enormous manipulating potential to adjust the vision of the world that the others have.

The impact of rumour is rarely beneficial; in the main, rumour is corrosive of relationships, fuels suspicion and bad feeling. One dubious compensation is that the subjects, or 'victims', of rumour are generally the last to hear of it; unless, of course, they started the rumour themselves.



There are also rumors whose only purpose is fun, whether or not they have negative effects. Some of these rumors started as a joke, have no chance of being shown as false or authentic, and if they endure in time, they eventually become urban legends.

(<https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rumor>)

CONTEMPORARY MYTHS AND RUMOURS

Characteristics of the rumours:

- It is an unofficial information that threatens the communication system of the competitor or enemy.
- In the rumor, the source is never known, it is ambiguous and the message is recent and untestable.
- False information, journalistic errors, with a lot of prejudices, disinformation maneuvers, even if they are denied a posteriori, always leave doubts and create false disputes.
- It is at the center of the controversies, in particular those of the media type.
- Written as propaganda, when it is based on life stories, exemplary cases, global issues
- Joke, farce, hoax, when it is not yet revealed.
- The narration is more important than the revelation for that it does not have so much importance if it is true or false, the important thing is that it is plausible.
- It becomes viral communication.
- Rumor is not recommended for use, because it is not known when and how it will stop, and neither the damages that can cause.

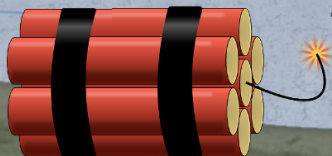
CONTEMPORARY MYTHS AND RUMOURS

Urban legends have a more complex structure than gossip, rumours and hoaxes. Unlike these, legends do not pretend to discredit a specific person, but they address a „problem” that affects many people.

Contemporary myths usually tell stories that alert us about possible dangers that can stalk us in our daily lives. So the outcome often focuses on the message or morals, as it happens in fables or fairy tales.

"Like their explosive cousins, rumours can be created and planted by nearly anybody, require limited resources to utilize, can be deadly for those in its direct path, and can instill fear"

Daniel Bernardi



DISMANTLING RUMOURS

VERIFIED INFORMATION

- Trusted sources
- Statistical data
- Academic theories
- Studies
- ...

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

- Close relatives
- Known people
- Documentary resources
- NGO's or associations
- ...

INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCES

- Anti-rumor networks
- Formation
- Spaces for dialogue and meeting
- Reliable media
- ...

When we face a rumor is not easy to give it an appropriate treatment, that is why it is necessary to be cautious, use common sens, critical thinking, distinguish between what is or is not a rumor, and make sure the reliability of an information or news before alarmed and share it. Do not to participate of their dissemination in social networks nor communicate them to other without being certain.

When you receive information about someone you do not know (well), remember:

This story from the Dialogs of Socrates corresponds to an alleged conversation between this philosopher and a friend:

„*Friend*: Do you know, Socrates what I have just heard about one of your disciples?

Socrates: Before, I would like you to pass the triple filter test. The first is the Truth.

Are you sure what you're going to tell me is true?

Friend: I just found out and ...

Socrates: So, you do not know if it is true. The second is the filter of Goodness. Do you want to tell me something good about my disciple?

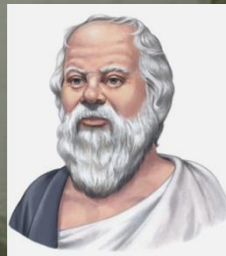
Friend: Quite the opposite.

Socrates: So you want to tell me something wrong about him without knowing if it's true.

However, you could still pass the third filter, it is about the Utility. What you want to tell me, is it going to be useful to me?

Friend: Not much.

Socrates: Then If it is not true, it is neither good and nor useful... Why tell it?"





Exercise: What a rumour!

Identify and analyze in the article the characteristics of the contemporary myths and rumours, just explained.