

## THE COMMUNICATIVE PERSONALITY OF THE SOCIOLOGY STUDENT IN LEARNING PANDEMIC DISCOURSE

### *A PERSONALIDADE COMUNICATIVA DO ESTUDANTE DE SOCIOLOGIA NA APRENDIZAGEM DO DISCURSO PANDÊMICO*

### *LA PERSONALIDAD COMUNICATIVA DEL ESTUDIANTE DE SOCIOLOGÍA EN EL APRENDIZAJE EN EL DISCURSO PANDÉMICO*

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**ABSTRACT:** The article studies the transformation of the communicative personality in terms of learning space digitalization and formation of the main components of the sociology students' communicative competence in the transition to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis of a communicative personality is performed. In-depth interviews and group interviews were used as data collection methods. The interviewees are students of the Faculty of Sociology of MSU attended their graduation courses in full-time and distantly. The interview guide is represented by questions corresponding to individual parameters of the communicative personality. The empirical data analysis method is axial coding. The specificity of individual characteristics of the students' communicative personality, remotely learning the profession of a sociologist, was revealed. The article highlights the motivation for entering the educational communicative process, the absence of the cognitive aspect's direct influence on the new education format, and the transformation of ethical component of communicative personality.

**KEYWORDS:** Communicative competence. Distance education. Digital education.

**RESUMO:** O artigo estuda a transformação da personalidade comunicativa em termos de digitalização do espaço de aprendizagem e formação dos principais componentes da competência comunicativa dos alunos de sociologia na transição para o ensino à distância durante a pandemia COVID-19. Entrevistas em profundidade e em grupo foram utilizadas como métodos de coleta de dados. Os entrevistados são alunos da Faculdade de Sociologia da MSU que frequentaram cursos de graduação em tempo integral e a distância. O guia de entrevista é representado por perguntas que correspondem a parâmetros individuais da personalidade comunicativa. O método de análise de dados empíricos é a codificação axial. Revelou-se a especificidade das características individuais da personalidade comunicativa

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*dos alunos, aprendendo à distância a profissão de sociólogo. O artigo destaca motivação para o ingresso no processo comunicativo educacional, ausência de influência direta do aspecto cognitivo no novo formato de educação e transformação do componente ético da personalidade comunicativa.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Competência comunicativa. Educação à distância. Educação digital.*

**RESUMEN:** *El artículo estudia la transformación de la personalidad comunicativa en términos de digitalización del espacio de aprendizaje y formación de los principales componentes de la competencia comunicativa de los estudiantes de sociología en la transición a la educación a distancia durante la pandemia de COVID-19. Se utilizaron entrevistas en profundidad y grupales como métodos de recopilación de datos. Los entrevistados son estudiantes de la Facultad de Sociología de MSU que asistieron a cursos de graduación en tiempo completo y a distancia. El método de análisis de datos empíricos es la codificación axial. Se reveló la especificidad de las características individuales de la personalidad comunicativa de los estudiantes, aprendiendo a distancia la profesión de sociólogo. El artículo destaca la motivación para ingresar al proceso comunicativo educativo, la ausencia de la influencia directa del aspecto cognitivo en el nuevo formato educativo y la transformación del componente ético de la personalidad comunicativa.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Competencia comunicativa. Educación a distancia. Educación digital.*

## Introduction

Society in its development is changing so rapidly that the approaches to training specialists who study society need to be constantly updated. Informatization, mediatization, and globalization of social processes allow blurring interstate boundaries in the education, developing the online environment as a new communicative educational space. The pandemic was a powerful incentive for its inevitably accelerated development. The forced transition to digital and distance learning has led to new realities in acquiring knowledge, both positive and negative. On the other hand, the new format of the educational process demanded from science a new look at the education itself, the development of new conceptual foundations and new concepts. In our opinion, one of these concepts is the *communicative personality*. The categorization and operationalization of this concept allows better understanding students' problems; their detailed elaboration and concretization will allow developing educational techniques and methods for new conditions of the learning process.

At present, in connection with the transition of training to a virtual mode, the forced loss of the quality of education in medical and technical specialties is often discussed. However, the new format, along with its positive aspects, poses a threat to the training quality and those professionals whose occupation is based on communication. In particular, this

relates to the professional sociologists' training. The development of a profession is largely determined by its social functions, according to which a certain professional standard is created. The main goal of a sociologist's professional activity is to obtain the necessary information for making and substantiating management decisions in various spheres of society and presenting the results of fundamental or applied sociological research to various audiences (PROFESSIONAL STANDARD). Using the concept of *communicative personality* to analyze both components of this goal proves to be productive.

This work is aimed to identify the specifics of individual characteristics of the students' communicative personality, remotely learning sociology profession, and in this regard, to develop recommendations for the relevant improvement of the educational process.

## Literature Review

The concept of *communicative personality* is relatively new for scientific discourse, although it already has a history of application in Russian theoretical and applied research. Sociology considers a person from the standpoint of the totality of their social relations (ANDREEV, 2003; LOGUNOVA, 2018). It follows from this that the development of a personality is associated with its field of social interaction, which in turn is carried out mainly through communication. This social position of communication substantiates the emergence of the concept of *communicative personality*. Historically, the emergence of this concept was preceded by the introduction of the concept of *linguistic personality* (KARAULOV, 2010), which continues to be successfully developed in the discourse of the sciences regarding language and society, giving rise to new terminology: a secondary linguistic personality (KORYAKINA, 2016), a multicultural linguistic personality (NURGALIEVA *et al.*, 2018), a marginal linguistic personality (KARASIK, 2004), etc. An undoubted theoretical contribution against this background was the development of the concept of *communicative personality* by Konetskaya (1997, p. 169, our translation), who state that it is:

one of the manifestations of a personality, conditioned by the totality of its individual properties and features, which are determined by the degree of its communicative needs, the cognitive range formed in the process of cognitive experience, and communicative competence—the ability to choose a communicative code that provides adequate perception and targeted transmission of information in a particular situation.

Thus, the author not only substantiates this concept, but also formulates parameters (motivational, cognitive, and functional) for its operationalization. Later, Gavra (2011)

proposed a different ground for the introduction of the *communicative personality* concept, comparing it with the concept of personality as such. To do this, he concretizes the concept of personality, narrowing its social roles to the roles of only communicative actors, and reveals the *communicative personality* through diversified detailing of the concept of *communicative competence*, highlighting the motivational, habilitation, cognitive, and operational components.

Currently, the scientific discussion of the definition of this concept continues and at the same time the representation of a communicative personality in various institutional discourses is being investigated, which in turn gives rise to new derivative concepts, for example, *professional communicative personality* (LUSHCHINSKAYA, 2018). The concepts of a linguistic and communicative personality are terminologically used to a greater extent in Russia; however, conceptually they are also present in foreign multidirectional case studies: regarding particular social groups (LEHTONEN *et al.*, 2018), in the analysis of the relationship between language proficiency and revealing creative abilities (FÜRST; GRIN, 2018, 2021), concerning cultural competence required in intercultural interaction, online, and offline (ALVAREZ; DOMENECH RODRIGUEZ, 2020), in the analysis of collaborative competence (BORGE *et al.*, 2020; BORGE; WHITE, 2016), etc.

Since a communicative personality is closely related to the social environment of which it is a part (CHUDNOVSKAYA, 2021, p. 137-147), then, as the social environment becomes more complex and enriched, the communicative personality's features expand and its typology is replenished. A separate direction in the study of personality in modern society is the analysis of the role of the digital personality and digital competence. A single definition of a digital personality does not yet exist, and its essence is revealed through such categories as a discourse personality, capable of entering and leaving the communicative space at any time (POPOVA, 2017), an active, passive, and imaginary digital personality (KATERMINA; SHESTAKOVA, 2018). However, along with this concept, according to a number of authors, it is worth speaking about the personality of a digital society (CHERNAVIN, 2021), digital identification, and an online personality (FEHER, 2021). Digital competence is considered as an important condition for a successful existence in a digital society, subject to human mastery and effective use of constantly changing digital tools (MARTZOUKOU *et al.*, 2021), skills of searching, selecting and critically thinking about relevant information, creating new knowledge, media representation, and communication with other people through digital technologies, achieving various goals related to education, work, leisure, social and other activities (FERRARI, 2012; KOLMYKOVA; MISHCHENKO, 2021; MARTIN;

GRUDZIECKI, 2006; SOROCHINSKIY; NIKULINA, 2020). According to some researchers, its main structural components are such interrelated areas as information and digital literacy, communication and collaboration skills (EPANCHINTSEVA; BUKHTIYAROVA; PANICH, 2021; BUTARBUTAR *et al.*, 2021), digital content creation, and universal components of security and the ability to solve problems in digital space (VUORIKARI *et al.*, 2016).

Today, the field of higher education is actively looking for new strategies and models, which was most clearly manifested during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, a number of researchers pay special attention to understanding the digital transformation of education (ROZIN, 2021), increasing the role of digital competence as a component of academic competence in the transition to distance learning (MOROZOV, 2021), applying innovative methods with digital technologies in education (TULCHINSKY, 2017), highlighting the key success factors in the formation of media competencies in online learning (KUATBEKOV *et al.*, 2021), etc. Recent events have updated research on the use of modern educational technologies in an educational institution when working remotely (PILILYAN, 2020) and forms of organizing distance learning (MAZNICHENKO; SAMOILOVA, 2021), the impact of distance learning during a pandemic on learning outcomes (YAKOBYUK, 2020), the role of distance learning in the formation of the university student's communicative competence (KHACHIKYAN; ZABORINA; KONKINA, 2021), the positive and negative aspects of education in distance learning (LIPATOVA, 2021).

## Materials and Methods

The students' communicative personality was considered based on the characteristics of its communicative competence, which is understood as "the ability of the individual to function normally (that is, within the range specified by the relevant social norms) as a communicative actor" (GAVRA, 2011, p. 207, our translation). The complex structural model of communicative competence includes 1) the motivational competence; 2) the habilitation (revealing the level of development of such parameters as perceptivity, response speed, attentiveness, memory, the ability to transmit and process information arrays, empathy, charm, introspection, and reflexivity; 3) the cognitive one (revealing the level of knowledge of the basic codes and signs, communication channels, and elements of the society's culture; 4) the operational one (revealing the level of skills and abilities of communicative interaction in various dynamic cultural and communicative contexts).

The data collection method was in-depth interviews (n = 12) and group interviews (n = 21). Comprehensive audio and video data regarding the study are not publicly available for ethical reasons and are available upon request from the authors of the article. The interviewees meet the following selection criteria: they are students of the Faculty of Sociology at Moscow State University (Moscow), of which 33 are young people and 37 are girls who attended their graduation courses in full-time and distance learning before and during the pandemic. The time of the event is September–October 2021, i.e., respondents have experience of continuous distance learning throughout the year. The interview guide is presented by four blocks of questions, which include individual parameters of the communicative personality, representing each of the four indicated groups of sociology students' communicative competence. They include motivational component, empathy, ethical component, knowledge, and skills in the field of codes and communication channels.

Axial coding (by Strauss and Corbin's method) became the methods for analyzing empirical data (STRAUSS, 2011). The following codes were identified: motivational component, empathy, ethical component, knowledge and skills in the area of codes, and communication channels.

The empirical data from the interviews received were analyzed using MAXQDA, a professional data analysis software focused on social sciences.

## **Results and Discussion**

As for the motivational component, answering the question about what can involve students in active educational communication during a lecture and a seminar in distance learning, interview respondents noted the motives prompting them to focus on and master the material at virtual lessons. It is noteworthy that answering this block of questions, students, first of all, talk about the requirements regarding the teacher.

Most of the answers mention the teacher's pedagogical skill, sensibility, and interest in the subject and in receiving feedback ("boring reading without different accents causes rejection", "the teacher's active disposition: gestures, facial expressions, involvement in the work process, and the ability to involve others in it", "the teacher's openness, the ability to act according to the situation, joke and be this kind of person").

Also, students distinguish the following factors for intense communicative motivation:

- High-quality preparation and demonstration of the material by the teacher (“it attracts when the presentation is well done and can be used when preparing for the seminar”, “it is important to have a presentation where the main points will be highlighted, and not just pictures or solid text”);
- The teacher’s technical literacy, the ability to use an electronic board in class, interactive use of Internet resources;
- Interesting forms used by the teacher in the classroom (“engaging presentation of the material”, appropriate humor, practical lesson’s orientation [not only listening to reports, but, for example, discussions/tests/assignments in seminars]”, “interdisciplinary communication”);
- Availability of examples.

Along with the requirements for the teacher, motivational requirements for the structure and format of the lesson are put forward.

To increase the audience’s motivation at online classes, students suggested introducing interactivity (“this is missing in online communication”), using the advantages of being directly in front of the screens (“in a lecture in a remote training, you can watch a scientific or feature film corresponding to the topic of the lecture, and then discuss it at the seminar”). They would also like to see “interesting presentations with pictures, real life examples” in the classroom; “everyone has cameras on, a five-minute warm up on the camera so as not to fall asleep, more communication with the audience”. In their opinion, some quizzes in the middle or at the end of a lecture/seminar can increase the motivation to be involved into educational communication.

Video link was mentioned as an important aspect of motivation. It is characteristic that its importance is noted not only for students, but also for teachers (“because the teacher’s camera is off, students lose interest in the subject, and because students’ cameras are off, the teacher cannot understand their attitude to the lecture”).

During the interview, a difference was revealed in the communication motives depending on the lesson form (lecture/seminar). So, the motivational factors for the seminars were: the need to be present with the camera turned on; the homework with questions to be discussed at the seminar, and a technical barrier that prevents the proper flow of information, in this connection, the lesson fails, and the students lose their motivation: “[...] problems with communication, awkwardness of being in the classroom with the camera, and the conference

participants' communication delay (because of this, two or more participants begin to speak simultaneously, and the speech of each becomes incomprehensible)".

During the interview, there also was a comparative task to find out what is the difference between motivation for communication in the classroom online and in the traditional learning system. Although opinions were expressed that "motivation does not differ from the traditional form (the smaller the number of students, the more motivation to be active at the lesson)"; nevertheless, according to students, real full-fledged communication is possible only in traditional face-to-face classes ("you can build a certain mental connection with the teacher, feel his energy, in contrast to distance classes, where the teacher rather acts as a radio [...], so you can turn on the lecture and go to bed").

On the other hand, interest in a subject is an important motivation both in online and offline learning: "I can use my phone at lessons that are not interesting to me as well as at online lessons". The possibility of informal contact outside the class was also singled out: "prepandemic training was more personalized, perhaps precisely due to the size of the groups and the possibility of asking questions privately (for example, you can personally approach the teacher and ask something, rather than ask a question through a general chat (aloud after a lesson where people are still present), and via mail, which is slow and considered too formal)".

The student's need for visual materials for the lesson was also noted: "I consider a presentation that can be easily downloaded before (ideally) or after the lesson an advantage of online learning; teachers did not often share them at face-to-face lessons".

Students consider that online learning can be very effective for gaining knowledge, but this requires "a clear course structure and an inverted lesson format, suggesting at the very beginning of the lesson a clear understanding of the volume of material, time spent on listening and processing, access to the lecture stuff and thought-out seminars", "if it is convenient to listen to recorded lectures, then good online seminars require more time from the teacher than face-to-face ones. Personal acquaintance with the teacher is encouraged, but it does not fulfill an educational function, but rather a function of socialization".

In comparison with the specified students' requirements to the teacher and the format of conducting distance learning, the respondents put forward requirements to the students to a much lesser extent. Students are motivated to be involved into the communicative educational process in distance learning due to their own interest in a specific subject, the desire to clarify the issue with the teacher, confidence in their own knowledge ("I am involved only if I know what others do not know"), the opportunity to receive a file with a lesson record to



successfully pass the test, and the opportunity to receive additional points for active participation in a lesson.

One of the research goals was to find out to what extent the lack of personal contact in educational communication affects the students' perception, understanding the educational material, and having feedback with the teacher and classmates, and to find out the presence of empathy in online learning.

During the interviews, most of the students spoke about the lack of such contact, the lack of a *learning atmosphere* in online classes, that information is more difficult to perceive outside the classroom, especially at home, in a distraction-full environment. Students argue that in the remote format it is more difficult to concentrate and motivate oneself to perceive the material, "there is no such educational atmosphere in which one wants to work", "the atmosphere at home disposes to recreation, but not to scientific activity", "due to a slight delay in online classes and the need to turn on the microphone, the possibility to instantly react, which plays a significant role, disappears", "in the traditional form, there is a closer connection with the teacher, you give your energy to each other and are involved in the learning process". The perception of the educational material becomes more relaxed ("I know that in any case there will be high-quality screenshots of the lecture material, and therefore I can be distracted"). The online format does not allow full immersion in the educational process, in the educational atmosphere, especially for people from large families, and students living in a hostel. Many people lack personal communication with classmates and teachers: "the lack of personal contact with the teacher and classmates greatly affects the feedback and depth of communication".

Nevertheless, for some students, the difference between personal communication with the lecturer and the mediated one is not fundamental: "I don't really feel the difference here", "It does not affect perception and understanding, but reduces the feedback with the teacher", "I don't see much difference; you can catch the mood of both the teacher and the students by voice or by learning about it at the beginning of the lesson, having established a trusting relationship with the group before that".

Interpersonal group communication at the lesson differs in tasks: it may be necessary directly at the lesson and initiated by the teacher, or it occurs "behind the scenes", in parallel with the lesson.

The lack of personal contact was characterized in different ways by the respondents, depending on the form of the lesson. Thus, "at seminars, this influences the perception, understanding the educational material, since it is the practical exercises that are aimed to

discuss the topic, dialogue, i.e., for direct interaction between people, exchange of not only thoughts, but also emotions, and does not affect perception in lectures”, “it affects to a large extent if seminars are held in the format of a colloquium, active discussion on questions and homework; if seminars involve reports or just an explanation of something in the curriculum, the impact is not so strong”.

As for lectures, many students even prefer online format (“I think that lectures are much more convenient to listen to online, and even better in video format”).

Despite the lack of personal contact in online learning and the lack of direct interaction with the teacher, the majority of respondents note that maintaining communication with classmates outside of the videoconference becomes even more active than in traditional classes—commenting on the lecture in conversations, sharing materials, students’ communication in person or in groups at face-to-face classes; communication takes place on the Internet to complete individual assignments (correspondence, sometimes videoconferences). Students in general “communicate with each other conveniently online, but the offline format is necessary in any case”:

“At the beginning of the quarantine, I really did not have enough live communication. And then I somehow got used to remote learning and even rethought some of my connections. Interaction with the teacher depends on the students’ conscientiousness”.

While communicating online, some *students*, nevertheless, miss traditional communication: “Before the pandemic, our group practiced joint assignments after classes in libraries or in the faculty classrooms, helped each other, discussed assignments, and communicated. It brought us closer together”.

In the empirical research, it was clarified how students try to replace the lack or absence of nonverbal interaction with participants in the educational process, what means they use to express their own thoughts and emotions. In general, the lack of nonverbal interaction is compensated for by up-to-date technical means.

Depending on the type of *student-teacher* or *student-class* interaction, the choice of the means of expressing emotions varies. Basically, the responses contained such forms as chats on platforms where lectures take place, conversations on social networks and instant messengers, photo reactions, and voice messages.

When communicating with a teacher, voice communication is preferable; a raised hand sign, a text message in a chat, and emojis are a compromise option for expressing feelings. However, students are upset that “some teachers do not respond to raised hands; they

cannot always see the chat promptly”, “there is a communication with classmates on social networks; unfortunately, there is no such communication with teachers”.

The student compensates for the lack of nonverbal interaction “by communicating in social networks, mainly with group members, but sometimes with faculty members and just other people”, “we communicate with classmates in a general chat including during class, we joke and have fun, if there is a reason”.

In some cases, the lack of nonverbal communication leads to the impossibility to master the educational material: “During the remote seminars, I practically did not express my thoughts, I was uncomfortable, I could not master the material, so problems began during the session. Students expressed their thoughts simultaneously, you might not be heard, so all the motivation in discussing the material disappeared. In face-to-face classes, you can at least make sure that your thought is noticed and is not missing”.

The communication channels that students use in the classroom corresponded to the listed forms of nonverbal communication. As a rule, directly in the classroom, the named channels are the tools of the platform on which the training takes place (MS Teams, Zoom)—chat, stickers, and emoji. For parallel communication with the group, common social networks are mainly used, such as VKontakte, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, and email. Up to five channels can be simultaneously used for formal and informal communication.

The advantages were that the online platform chat of the lesson is a very convenient format to “capture everyone’s thoughts and discussions that I did not have time to express”, “during lectures, we can also write to each other in the Zoom in personal messages (for example, ‘what a cool tie the lecturer has!’ or ‘Are you free after five today?’)”; nevertheless, “during classes, we usually communicate in a general conversation with classmates on VKontakte, in addition, we write personal messages on VKontakte and Instagram; moreover, since I live in a hostel, then I also communicate offline with my roommates”.

In the interview guide, there was a question about the ethical component of communication in the educational process during the transition from offline to online learning; the authors were interested in what, according to students, these changes are. The respondents’ answers on this question are quite diverse and raise the problem of the appearance of both students and teachers, private correspondence in the general chat, interfering sounds, *black screens*, the language of communication, etc.

Some students believe that nothing has changed: “there were distracted inappropriate dialogues for the general public during traditional teaching (both at lectures and at seminars). ‘*Black screens*’ are not an indicator of lack of involvement/lack of interest, as well as working

cameras do not guarantee the actual presence at the lesson, in general, exactly as at the face-to-face class”.

But many students have noted that ethical beliefs about classes are changing: “We perceive classmates differently, seeing them in a home atmosphere; we began to relate to their appearance easier”; “the ethical component has changed a little, since being late for a lesson has become less noticeable; now the teacher is not annoyed by students who are always drinking coffee, at the same time students are present at classes in ‘unsuitable for an educational institution’ clothes, often lounging on the couch”.

Since communication takes place more on the Internet, the language of communication, according to students, is different: “due to the fact that there is some Internet etiquette, trends in its development, memes, etc., and it is impossible to use such a number of means offline, but many other means are available, intermediated by facial expressions, emotions, etc.”.

There are new rules of etiquette for online classes: “it is a good practice to turn on cameras, not spam in the chat, not interrupt, or not distract, turn off the microphones so as not to interfere with giving a lecture, prepare the presentation technically, so as not to take time from the audience”.

The issue of *black screen* is raised particularly. Black squares have become a part of the educational process, symbolizing the symptom of alienation between the teacher and the student (“despite the displayed avatar, this cannot replace live emotions when present at the lesson”). Some students “feel sorry for the teachers”, place themselves in their position: “I turn on the video link in order to show the teacher that he is not giving a lecture in front of a black screen, in order to support his morale”.

At the end of the interview, the authors asked the respondents a question about how the transition to distance learning could affect the formation of a sociologist’s communicative competence. Students note that “the spirit, the fundamental nature of knowledge is lost, in a full-time class you concentrate more strongly on what you hear, on the teacher’s terms”. If a sociology student wants to become a qualified specialist in a chosen field, “his communication skills may be lost in online learning, so full-time training is desirable”. “It is foolish to complain about the pandemic, that it took away the competence in the field of communication from sociologists. I had the experience of conducting online interviews and in all seriousness, I say that understanding and contact with the respondent can be achieved even in such conditions. It is not the means of communication that is important here, but the intentions with which you address your respondent. If you really have empathy for him, then

a good conversation with him (albeit on a smartphone) simply cannot be avoided. You can't blame your incompetence in any issue on an external factor".

Considering the empirical aspect, the respondents mentioned that "a live communication with a respondent cannot be replaced", but in general, the absence of any significant competencies was not noticed ("it seems to me that the format of online learning did not affect our competencies in referring to the research field that much").

## Conclusions

To fulfill the main goal of professional activity, the sociologist's communicative personality must have a certain set of characteristics that correspond to the criteria of communicative competence. Currently, in the conditions of forced distance learning, sociological education faces the task of developing relevant forms of education for the formation of students' communicative competence. Within the framework of this study, an attempt was made based on interviewing students with full-time and distance learning experience to identify the specifics of individual motivational, habilitating, cognitive, and operational characteristics of the students' communicative personality, mastering sociology profession remotely.

Students associate their motivation, when involved into the educational communicative process, with the requirements for the teacher's professional qualities, for structuring and selection of relevant formats for holding classes, and with the students' desire to successfully pass exams. Primarily, it comes to the verbal and nonverbal presentation of the material by the teacher, the fullness of the material with examples from life, comparisons, the presence of a high-quality supporting presentation, an interesting and emotional material presentation, and the teacher's active work: gestures, facial expressions, involvement in learning, the ability to involve others in it, self-interest in the topic and its aspects, and included video communication. Unfortunately, in the online teaching format, students perceive some classes as *radio*, if the teacher does not require visual contact (cameras turned on), or does not make students active. It is noted that students make demands on their own personality to a lesser extent when it comes to their motivation.

The study found out that, according to students, the cognitive aspect (their perception and understanding of the educational material) does not significantly depend on the new learning format, in which students find even positive features. However, the development of empathy as an indicator of habilitation competence is hampered. This should be especially

considered with the general decrease in the level of empathy in the modern individualizing world. Simultaneous direct and parallel multichannel educational communication is mentioned, which ambivalently affects the perception of material and empathy.

Objects of the ethical component of the students' communicative personality and ethical behavior are transformed in the context of digital distance education.

Sociological research often involves communicative contact with people. At the same time, according to students-sociologists, the change of the full-time format to the distance learning in conducting sociological research does not play a big role if the student has received a good professional basic theoretical training.

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