Comunicar

Interactive Youth: New Forms of Citizenship between Social Networks and School

INDEXED INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL

Comunicar©

SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL OF MEDIA EDUCATION

40, XX

C O N T E N T S

Comunicar, 40, XX, 2013

Interactive Youth:

New Citizenship between Social Networks and School Settings

FOREWORD

DOSSIER

C O N T E N T S

Comunicar, 40, XX, 2013

KALEIDOSCOPE

Submission guidelines

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Comunicar, Scientific Journal of Media Education, is published by Grupo Comunicar Ediciones (VAT: V21116603). This established non-profit professional group, founded in 1988 in Spain, specialises in the field of media education. The journal has been in print continuously since 1994, published every six months in March and October of each year.

Contents are moderated by means of peer review, in accordance with the publication standards established in the APA (American Psychological Association) manual. Compliance with these requirements facilitates indexation in the main databases of international journals in this field, which increases the dissemination of the papers published and therefore raises the profile of the authors and their centres.

«Comunicar» is indexed in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Journal Citation Reports (JCR), Scisearch, Scopus and over 210 databases, catalogues, search engines and international repertoires worldwide.

Each issue of the journal comes in a printed (ISSN:134-3478) and electronic format (www.comunicarjournal.com) (e-ISSN: 1988-3293), identifying each submission with a DOI (Digital Object Identifier System).

2. SCOPE AND POLICY

2.1. Subject Matter: Fundamentally, research papers related to communication and education, and especially the intersection between the two fields: media education, educational media and resources, educational technology, IT and electronic resources, audiovisual, technologies... Reports, studies and experiments relating to these subjects are also accepted.

2.2. Contributions: «Comunicar» publishes research results, studies, experiments and bibliographic reviews especially in relation to Latin America and Europe and regarding the convergence between education and communication, preferably written in Spanish although submissions are also accepted in English. The contributions to this journal may be: Research papers: between 5,000 and 6,000 words of text (including references), Reports, Studies and Experiments: Between 4,500 and 6,000 words of text (references included), and Reviews (620/640 words).

Unsolicited manuscripts sent in by authors are initially placed in the Miscellaneous section of the journal. The Topics section is organized by an editor through a system of Call for Paper and specific commissions to experts in the field. If we receive manuscripts within the deadline for a particular topic, the journal editor can pass on the manuscript to the Topics editor for assessment and possible publication in this monographic section. The deadline for each Topic section is at least nine months before publication.

3. EDITORIAL PROCESS

«Comunicar» confirms receipt of all articles submitted by authors and keeps the authors informed of the process of acceptance/rejection, as well as the editing process, in the event of acceptance. The webpage www.comunicarjournal.com also provides information about manuscript editing procedures, full guidelines for publication, as well as the Annexes: review protocol prior to submission, manuscript structure protocol, external review protocol…

In general, once the external reports have been seen, the criteria that justify the editors' decision to accept or reject submissions are as follows: a) Topical and new. b) Relevance: applicability of the results to the resolution of specific problems. c) Originality: valuable information, repetition of known results. d) Significance: advancement of scientific knowledge. e) Reliability and scientific validity: verified methodological quality. f) Organisation (logical coherence and material presentation). g) Presentation: good written style.

4. PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF ORIGINAL PAPERS

Manuscripts must be sent exclusively through the journal management centre (http://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/comunicar/index). These publication guidelines are based on the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA): (http://books.apa.org/books.cfm?id=4200061&toc=yes).

Structure: The following three files must be sent together: cover letter, title page and manuscript (main text): 1) Cover Letter; 2) Title Page and 3) Manuscript.

5. ETHICAL COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each author must submit a statement of authorship and text originality. Previously published material will not be accepted. The covering letter must specify the transfer of copyright ownership of the manuscript for its publication in «Comunicar».

www.comunicarjournal.com

Editorial

Media Programme (EU) - International Support for Media Education

El Programa «Media» de la Comisión Europea, apoyo internacional a la educación en medios

Dr. J. Ignacio Aguaded-Gómez
Editor of «Comunicar»

For more than a decade, the European Union (EU) has decisively supported the promotion of media literacy within the framework of European Member States, i.e. with the objective of promoting a more active, critical, and participative citizenship in Information Society.

The volume of information that the EU receives, in addition to new forms of media access and communication processing, requires a new set of skills to access, analyze and evaluate images, sound and text, which, from a wider perspective, incorporate audio-visual and multimedia support in digital environments. In this sense, the European Commission considers media literacy as a key strategic objective in modern democracies, namely where traditional literacy at the start of the 20th century was formerly a challenge for schools and modern societies, whereas today, media literacy is a key requirement of the 21st century's technically advanced society – in other words, «the digital world». In this sense, media literacy can be understood as having access to the media, knowing about its various facets, having a critical perspective of its contents, and creating communication in multiple contexts.

Over the last few years, the Commission has provided finance with the following aims: to analyze the various manifestations of mass communication and its values from a multi-media perspective; to promote, produce, and distribute mass media with significant content; to encourage the usage of mass media with the objective of promoting greater participation in social and community life; to create networks in education for media purposes; and lastly, to implement media literacy initiatives such as establishing linkages between the media industry and the world of education.

The culminating moment of the role of the Commission in the institutional development of media education occurred in late 2007, i.e. when a Directive was approved within the field of European audio-visual policy and media literacy. For the first time, Article 33 stipulated that all Member States were to inform the Commission about their media literacy levels. The Commission's initiative was thus a timely answer to the growing petitions of industry and the European Parliament. A year later, in 2008, the Council and the European Parliament approved the conclusions and the report on the media literacy initiative, respectively.

In 2009, however, the Commission presented a Recommendation for Media Literacy, requesting that all the countries in the EU engage in the promotion and dissemination of media in its various formats of spreading messages and support: cinema, TV, Internet, etc. The 6494 Recommendation (2009) on Media Literacy in Digital Environments for a More Competitive Audio-visual Industry in an Inclusive Knowledge Society can be viewed online here: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/c_2009_-6464_es_1.pdf

On November 27th 2009, the Council approved a Recommendation on Media Literacy for Digital Environments, which was adopted by the European Council for Education, Youth and Culture (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/-media/media-content/media-literacy/council_adoption_ml_27112009.pdf), thus reaffirming its commitment to literacy by means of Recommendation 6464 (August 20th, 2009). Please see: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/-c_2009_6464_en_1.pdf for more details.

Editorial

The European Commission also aims to promote norms of practice and financial projects via programs such as: «Media», «Media Mundus», and through other reports and investigations. The webpage for the program can be accessed online at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-literacy-/index_en.htm.

Following these activities, the Commission facilitated the creation of a Group of Experts on Media Literacy, whose initial phase commenced in 2006 and terminated in 2010. Then, a year later, in 2011, the Group of Experts received important, additional backing for the project. As a result of the 2009 Recommendation on Media Literacy in Digital Environments, the Commission urged Member States to open up a debate on the possible inclusion of media literacy in the curriculum of obligatory education. For this reason, this group was to be comprised of representatives from all Member States. Its objective is to examine the current state of media literacy in schools in all the represented countries, and to debate its possible inclusion in formal education. Please see: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-literacy/expert-group-2011_en.htm.

Another important initiative of the Commission has been its support of the audio-visual sector and European cinema from the perspective of media literacy, i.e. within the framework of the Creative Europe proposal. In this case, the European Commission carried out a macro-survey of all the European audio-visual media sectors, including television and cinema, radio and music, printed media, the Internet, and new technologies used in digitally recorded communication. It was concluded that within the context of European cinema there existed a need to obtain the interest of a younger audience. For this reason, media literacy became an essential component within the framework of obligatory education. The survey's respondents highlighted that training should likewise focus on teachers, journalists, and media literacy professionals. By the same token, the survey underlined the importance of increasing both the availability of European films for today's youth and establishing a cinematic patrimony of European cinema.

On the other hand, research and reports also form an integral part of the main strategic lines of action of the European Union. Among the studies that the Commission has promoted, we can highlight the following: Criteria for Media Evaluation: Literacy Levels in Europe (2010), which can be found online (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/final-report-ml-study-2011.pdf); A Study on the Evaluation of Literacy Criteria and Levels (2009); and An Integral Vision of the Concept of Media Literacy and Strategies of How to Evaluate Media Literacy Levels in Europe: (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/eavi_study_assess_crit_media_lit_levels_europe_finrep.pdf), the latter of which was carried out by CLEMI, France; the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB); EAVI- Belgium; the Catholic University of Louvain, and the University of Tampere (Finland).

Finally, we must not forget that another interesting study of the group was: Current Trends and Foci of Media Literacy in Europe (2007), which covered the twenty-seven Member States of the European Union and EEA Member States. This project was carried out by the UAB Initiative: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/eavi_study_assess_crit_media_lit_levels_europe_finrep.pdf).

Among the more current programs of the Commission, we can highlight the following: Media Mundus (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/mediamundus/index_en.htm); Creative Europe: (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/creative-europe/index_en.htm); Digital Distribution: (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/digitaldistribution/index_en.htm), and, of course, Media Literacy (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-literacy/index_en.htm), the latter of which is a core strategic objective of our proposal.

Dossier

Interactive Youth:
New Citizenship between
Social Networks
and School Settings

Introduction

Interactive Youth: New Citizenship between Social Networks and School Settings

Guest-Edited Special Issue:
Dr. David Buckingham, University of Loughborough (UK)
Dr. Juan Bautista Martínez-Rodríguez, University of Granada (Spain)

The relationship between media and education has long been the focus of both hopes and fears. In the early years of the cinema, Thomas Edison made the optimistic claim that motion pictures would «revolutionize» learning and ultimately make teachers superfluous. Similar claims were made about radio and television in the mid-twentieth century; yet they were also challenged by those who saw these media as a dangerous threat to the work of teachers and schools. Neil Postman, for example, famously condemned television as fundamentally detrimental to the purpose of education, and indeed to childhood itself.

In recent years, we have seen similarly polarized views about computers. Like television, digital media have been condemned for creating distraction and superficial thinking, and for trivializing and instrumentalizing education. Yet they have also been heralded as means of creating more authentic, effective and student-centred learning. Such optimistic assertions about the promise of technology have been made by governments seeking solutions to the apparent crisis of public education; yet they have also been driven by technology companies who see schools as a lucrative new market.

Today, schools are no longer children's first point of contact with computers: digital media are a central part of their out-of-school experiences, and of their everyday relationships and identities. Children's lives today are thoroughly «mediatized». The question is not whether educators should make use of digital media, but how they should do so. And as we seek to answer this question, we clearly need to look beyond the idea that using technology will be instantly motivating, or indeed that it will somehow teach itself.

The advent of «social media» –or so-called «Media 2.0»– represents a further stage in this history. The internet is no longer a tool simply for disseminating and retrieving information, but for dialogue and sharing, for interpersonal communication and for entertainment. While only a minority of young people have yet become creative media producers in any developed sense, there is a level of «vernacular creativity» (or even «mundane creativity») apparent in social networking, blogging and online sharing that has become widely available.

Of course, we should beware of the hyperbole that often surrounds these developments: these tools that appear to offer so much democratic promise also permit forms of marketing and surveillance that are much more pervasive and intrusive. Yet these developments may have particular implications for learning and for the institution of the school. Educational researchers are now struggling to take account of the changing relations between schools and these new digital spaces in which young people spend increasing amounts of their time. While some fall back on the notion that the school's primary

Introduction

role is to protect children from risk, others proclaim a faith in technology as somehow inherently democratic and empowering.

In this new environment, a range of new issues is emerging. How far can we trust the information that is available online? How are identities being constructed and lived out in an age where «self-advertising» has become a social necessity? Where are we to draw the line between the public and the private, or has this distinction become meaningless? How can we address continuing inequalities, both in access to technology and in the skills and competencies that are required to use it?

In this special issue of Comunicar, we focus on one particular aspect of this relationship: the potential of technology for civic learning. Here again, the debate often seems quite polarized. While some see media and technology as a primary cause of the decline of «social capital» and of civic participation, others look to the internet in particular as a means of creating new forms of «networked citizenship». Young people are often seen to be in the vanguard of a new form of politics, facilitated and promoted through the use of these new digital tools and services – and for some, this will help to overcome the «democratic deficit» of modern societies.

Yet there is a need to move beyond these polarized arguments. The media are not solely responsible for the apparent decline in democracy; but neither are they likely to save it. Educators can play a vital role here, but the regeneration of civic life that many see as an urgent necessity for modern societies will be a long-term and difficult process. Addressing these issues means that we need to move beyond the instrumental view of technology and the disingenuous separation of technology from society that characterizes a good deal of discussion of «educational technology».

Young people today are growing up in a context that is saturated with relational technologies and mediated communications; and in these new digital spaces, they develop preliminary frameworks for interpreting life, sets of opinions and prejudices, stereotypes and dilemmas, that guide their understanding of the meanings of everyday actions. It is also here that the experience of citizenship is at stake. This is a context in which young people represent and share their life stories, feelings and experiences, construct their identities, and learn the norms of peer group behaviour. Educators and researchers urgently need to focus on these informal spaces, which are barely recognized in most technological, political and educational studies.

These developments have complex implications for how we address the interface between the school and digital environments, between education and the media. In broad terms, we need to develop a social and political view of both school and digital scenarios. We also need to challenge the forms of curricular, pedagogic and digital secrecy that censor and conceal power relationships, create opacity in respect of decision-makers, steer the engagement or participation of citizens in particular directions, and determine the framing of issues in the mediated public sphere. Research in this field needs to address the relations between meaning and power in these digital networks, but also consider the potential for changing them.

In the process, we need to address the contradictory narratives that exist among the mass media, the network society and schools – narratives that embody and promote different styles of learning and of civic or political education in particular. In the arenas of both old and new media, the school is often identified as a field of struggle between conflicting group interests, and is constantly being assigned functions that are impossible to fulfill. Meanwhile, new social movements also adopt particular educational practices, not least through their use of social media. In Spain, and in other countries, there is growing tension in respect of political decision-making processes, in which young people are playing an increasingly important role in setting the civic agenda and in promoting more deliberative forms of politics.

Our contributors in this special issue address some of the overt and underlying struggles over the meanings of public space, politics and civic engagement that are emerging in the interface between educational and virtual spaces. They explore how young people feel, live and experience democratic citizenship within and between schools and the digital world. In the process, they challenge simple distinctions between online and offline, between learning and leisure, and between the formal and the informal; and they ask fundamental questions about the meanings of concepts such as participation, citizenship and identity.

The first three contributions confirm that in Spain –as in many other countries– young people are participating in online spaces at an ever-younger age. In addition to using the internet as a source of information, they are increasingly using it as a forum for conducting relationships and building social identities. Digital media have become a resource in young people's efforts to build their social capital, to create community and to learn about the wider world. In the process, they are having to learn to handle risks, and to make complex judgments about the relationships between the public and the private.

The article by Colas-Bravos, Gonzales-Ramirez and De Pablos-Pons outlines recent statistics on young Andalucians» use of social networking sites outside of formal educational contexts. While the overall picture is of exponential growth, they also point to some significant gender differences (not so much in access as in the purposes of use) and a continuing level of non-participation or limited participation among some social groups. Bernal and Angulo provide a further report on the same large-scale survey, confirming the extensive use of the internet for personal contact and for «identity work»; while the contribution by Muros, Aragon and Bustos, which is based on qualitative research, argues that in using these media, young people are developing their own ways of ensuring their safety online. The latter authors also draw attention to gender differences, which are much more apparent in the world of online games than in social networking. All these contributions discuss the potential of these media as means of developing social capital and active citizenship, although they also point to the challenges for education in this respect.

The following two articles provide some cautionary notes as regards the democratic potential of digital media. Marta, Martinez and Sanchez discuss the role of marketing in online spaces via a case study of the Coca-Cola corporation's use of the Spanish social network Tuenti. As they suggest, there is an appearance of «participation» here, but the aim is primarily to secure users» multiple interactions with the brand. This is a highly managed space, in which negative messages are excluded; and users may not always be aware of the extent or the nature of the marketing that is taking place. The article by Buckingham and Hoyos provides a related analysis of Habbo, a commercial «virtual world» for young people. In focusing on the rules that are enforced in this world, they suggest that the site offers lessons about citizenship that are quite different from the democratic, creative, fun-filled rhetoric of its marketing appeals. Taken together, these two papers present a significant challenge to optimistic accounts about the possibilities of informal online learning that are promoted by some commentators in the field.

The two articles that follow focus more directly on the civic dimensions of the use of social media. Hernandez, Robles and Martinez provide an account of the 15-M social movement, addressing its role as model for learning, a «school without walls». They discuss the movement's use of digital media as spaces for deliberation and the exercise of political agency; although they also point to some new challenges that arise in this development of collective political knowledge. Banaji discusses a very different case, the online responses to the video of a racist outburst that was shared online. As she argues, the emotional and sometimes aggressive nature of these responses could be taken as a depressing reflection on the communicative possibilities of online spaces; but she also argues that such debates can nevertheless provide a resource for civic learning.

In different ways, all these papers point to the potential role for formal education, as a means of developing critical media literacy as well as mere technical skills. They also suggest that if we are to take advantage of the opportunities for civic participation that are offered here, we need to find ways of teaching «civility», or more constructive and ethical ways of engaging online. These new spaces raise difficult new challenges to do with trust and credibility; and they require new critical and deliberative capabilities. Rather than assuming that the technology itself will teach these qualities, or that the so-called «digital generation» will spontaneously develop them, formal education may have a new role to play here.

The final three papers take up these challenges in different ways, but all point to the need to build connections between young people's in-school and out-of-school experiences. Hull and her colleagues (Stornaiuolo, DiZio and Hellmich) explore how «community» can be brought into being through the process of communication; and in doing so, how young people negotiate different «public» and «private» identities, and make judgments about truth and authenticity. Likewise, Erstad, Gilje and Arnseth look at how learners move between and participate in different learning contexts, both formal and informal, online and offline, in school and out of school. Crucially, they argue that these contexts are not given, but constituted by learners themselves, not least through their use of (digital) tools and signs. Finally, Middaugh and Kahne discuss the role of digital media in «service learning», a practical, task-focused approach to citizenship education. They describe the challenges of this approach as it comes up against the institutional routines and relationships and the ideological constraints of schooling; but they also make specific recommendations for ways of using games and social networking sites, and the internet more generally, in order to support more authentic learning for citizenship.

As these articles suggest, the use of digital media in this context presents some concrete pedagogical challenges. While some commentators still appear to be inflating the bubble of technological hyperbole, or tolling the bell of digital doom, there are many researchers and educators who are moving ahead with the job of working out how we can make the best of the opportunities that are arising here. We hope this special issue will make a further contribution to this difficult but essential task.

● P. Colás, T. González and J. de Pablos
Sevilla (Spain)

Young People and Social Networks: Motivations and Preferred Uses

Juventud y redes sociales: Motivaciones y usos preferentes

ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of a study on the use of social networks among young Andalusians. The main objectives are to know the uses of social networks, their frequency and the motives behind their use. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample includes 1487 adolescents in Andalusia. The results show that young people, for the most part, consistently used social networks. We identified two motivational aspects in this use: one social and the other psychological. There are not significant gender differences in frequency of use, but rather in the motivations for access. Boys tend to be the more emotional type, while girls were dominated by a more relational motivation. The results show similarities with international researches in environments that vary greatly from the present work. The conclusions suggest the need for future lines of work. This study also identifies the implications of social network uses for active citizenship and participatory training and social integration. These results are also important for the enrichment of dimensions such as social capital development and education.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio sobre la utilización que hacen los jóvenes andaluces de las redes sociales. Los objetivos fundamentales son: conocer los usos preferentes de las redes sociales, su frecuencia y los motivos que les impulsan a su utilización. Además se estudia si existen diferencias de sexo tanto en la frecuencia como en las motivaciones de uso. Se aplica un cuestionario para la recogida de datos. La muestra es de 1.487 adolescentes de Andalucía. Los resultados muestran que los jóvenes en su mayoría usan de manera habitual las redes sociales y se identifican dos vertientes motivacionales en su uso: una social y otra psicológica. No se hallan diferencias significativas entre sexos en cuanto a frecuencia de uso, pero sí en las motivaciones para su acceso. Las de los chicos son de tipo emocional, mientras que en las chicas predomina la motivación de carácter relacional. Los resultados obtenidos muestran coincidencias con investigaciones internacionales realizadas en contextos muy diferentes al presente estudio. En la discusión de resultados se plantean futuras líneas de trabajo, a la vez que se identifican implicaciones que los usos de las redes sociales tienen para la formación e integración social de una ciudadanía activa y participativa, así como para el enriquecimiento de dimensiones como el desarrollo del capital social y la educación.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Young people, adolescence, social networks, sex, social compensation, social capital, education, citizenship.
Juventud, adolescencia, redes sociales, sexo, compensación social, capital social, educación, ciudadanía.

◆ Dr. Pilar Colás-Bravo is Full Professor of the Department of Research & Diagnostic Methods of the Faculty of Education at the University of Seville (Spain) (pcolas@us.es).

◆ Dr. Teresa González-Ramírez is Professor of the Department of Research & Diagnostic Methods of the Faculty of Education at the University of Seville (Spain) (tgonzale@us.es).

◆ Dr. Juan de Pablos-Pons is Full Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Seville (Spain) (jpablos@us.es).

1. Introduction and state of the question

Virtual social networks constitute an important phase in the development and use of Internet, and are increasingly the focus of research although their history as a resource is relatively recent. In this regard, Boyd and Ellison (2008) reviewed the launching of social networks through their identification of three phases since 1997. The first period spans the onset in 1997 up to 2001 and is characterized by the creation of numerous virtual communities to provide space for a diverse combination of user profiles. A new era began in 2001, characterized by these networks' approach to business. In other words, professional exchange and business networks were created to become a powerful instrument in global economy. In the third stage –today– social networks attract the attention of researchers in a number of disciplines and fields with their enormous potential as an object of study. This has resulted in virtual social networks becoming privileged scenarios to carry out promising lines of research. An indicator of this tendency is the fact that international journals and magazines the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication includes this topic in its editorial when noting that research can help us understand the practices, implications, culture and meanings of virtual spaces. From this perspective, researchers are urged to make use of the various research methodologies, theoretical focuses and treatment of the data analysed.

In this research scenario, demographic niches, that is to say, specific populations constitute sample units that are the object of scientific interest. Thus, the populations of young people and adolescents have attracted the attention of recent international studies (Zheng & Cheok, 2011, Jung Lee, 2009, Notley, 2009 (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008; Subrahmanyam and Lin, 2007; Subrahmanyam, Greenfield, and Tynes, 2004) which approach two key questions: the frequency these networks are used and the motivations for use. These researchers justify the relevance of studying this population sector based on the fact that young people increasingly prefer to express themselves through virtual communication systems while social networks are becoming more and more extensive. On the other hand, studying the social networks used by young people is especially relevant due to the fact that they favour these communication forms over other more traditional means as they offer direct personal contact.

Recently, Zheng and Cheok (2011) analysed young people's use of social networks and suggest that

it is necessary for this type of information to be updated given the rapid changes these technologies generate. While in 2008 only 30% of the young people from Singapore made use of social networks, by 2011 99% of young people between 7 and 24 years of age had become social network users. In our study, we seek to obtain this type of information for a population of young people and adolescents who study in state-funded schools in Andalusia (Spain).

Another line of work focuses on the detection of factors that explain the use of social networks. In this regard, Notley (2009) identified the key factors affecting the use that young Australians and adolescents make of social networks. Through a narrative methodology, the author establishes an explanatory theoretical model composed of four dimensions: personal interests, necessities, relationships and technological competencies.

This research studies the concept of social digital exclusion and inclusion, to detect sectors of young people excluded from these technologies. This same topic was approached by other authors in various geographical areas (Zheng, Flygare, & Dahl, 2009, Burrow-Sanchez & al. 2011) using a quantitative methodological focus. International scientific production prefers to identify two lines of work: the first focuses on the motivations behind social network usage from the psychological point of view. In this case, individual differences in the uses of social networks (Flygare & Dahl, 2009), motivations (Leese, 2009) and identity
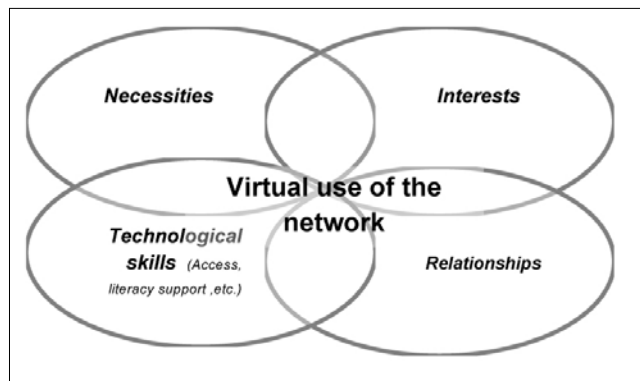
Notley (2009: 1.214).

(Calvert, 2002) are studied. The second line of work reviews more social perspective to incorporate concepts such as social capital and/or welfare.

Complementarily to these two positions, some authors (Burrow-Sanchez, Donnelly, Call & Drew, 2011) indicate the need to research social networks from a holistic perspective, establishing relationships

between the psychological, social and cognitive dimensions. In this regard, some studies (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005; Eastin, 2005; Lin, 2006; Subrahmanyam, Smehal, and Greenfield, 2006; Valkenburg & Peter, 2007) show that young people's online social communication is influenced by the perception of their identity and self-esteem, as well as social compensation and environment. On the other hand, Subrahmanyam & col. (2006) research the self-construction of adolescent identity within the context of on-line social communication, establishing relationships between identity and social behaviour.

Furthermore, this connection between personal psychological characteristics and social behaviour was the object of the work by Gross (2004); Williams and Merten, (2008), who concluded that although extroverts use social networks more frequently, the potential of Internet, such as anonymity, flexibility and multiple interactions, as well as languages and means of expression, stimulate introverted people to communicate with others. In contrast, Internet reduces visual and auditory signals which could alleviate the social anxiety introverted people experience to more quickly develop positive relationships with the others.

From a social perspective, the field is currently working with a number of references and constructs. Thus, the social compensation construct has recently been recaptured to explain the behaviour of young people in social networks. This construct arose in the twenties and was attributed to Kohler (1926). It translates the idea that the achievements of a group depend on the relationship of each person with other members of that group. Authors such as Chak and Leung (2004); Valkenburg and Peter (2007); Valkenburg, Peter and Schouten, (2006) incorporate this into their social network research. Other studies suggest it is a tool to facilitate social inclusion (Notley, 2009).

Current research incorporates the term «social capital» into social networks. Despite the debates generated, there is consensus that capital stock is a set of resources or benefits available to people through their social interactions (Lin, 1999). More specifically, capital stock could be understood as accessible resources integrated into the social structure, which are mobilized by individuals through intentional actions (Lin, 1999: 35). Recent studies incorporate this construct into their research into online social networks. Greenhow and Burton (2011) approach the potential of social networks in the creation of social capital. The fact that social networks –composed of groups and networks– are generally used to share, collaborate and interact with others makes this construct especially valuable as a conceptual tool to research this subject.

The lines of work and research mentioned to date place the accent on the relationship of young people with social networks, focusing basically on variables that explain why they use them.

> For young people, on-line social networks are a source of resources used to fulfil needs, both psychological and social. However, the differences between genders in these variables demonstrate that they play a compensatory role; males generally use them to cover emotional aspects and reinforce their self-esteem, while for young women, the relational function prevails

Our contribution seeks to add to this line of work, with the main scientific objective being to learn what young people make of social networks such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc. We specifically seek to answer the following questions:

• At what age do young people begin participating in social networks and how is the intensity of use distributed according to the age groups?

• How often are social networks used?

• Are young people free to connect to the network whenever they want to?

• What are the reasons that lead them to use social networks?

• Are there differences between sexes in the use and motivations behind the use of social networks?

2. Material and methods

Data was collected using the questionnaire we designed, based on non-excluding nominal scales. The resulting scale (table 1) was created by taking the theoretical reviews (psychological and social reasons)

as a reference, as well as the ideas of information technology experts, plus direct information supplied by young people in advance through open interviews about the reasons why they use social networks. Basic general information about the study sample was collected: sex, age, nationality, type of school, educational level and year.

Questionnaire items were designed to collect information about frequency of use and reasons why they connected to the social network. The following table shows the items included.

The initial version of the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts (n=8) all of whom were specialist researchers in Educational Technology. This review improved the items proposed, both in content and drafting. Subsequently, an electronic version of the questionnaire was designed for completion via Internet. The schools participating in this study granted consent for the participation of their students. Students included in the sample were informed about the study and were requested to participate. The estimated completion time was 10 minutes.

The data presented in this study is representative of young Andalusians and makes up part of the Research for Excellency, financed through a public summons, titled «Scenarios, digital technologies and young people in Andalusia», which is currently ongoing. Of the total population of young Andalusians, which included 283,423 subjects, a sample of 2,509

represents a confidence level of 95% and a sample error of ± 2.3% for the total population). The discrepancy between the theoretical and real sample is due to incidences that frequently converge in field work: null questionnaires, questionnaires with incomplete items, forgetting the identification, etc. Participants in this research studied at IT centres (schools integrating Information Technologies into the curriculum). This sample includes 49.5% boys and 50.5% girls. Most subjects included were studying secondary education: 54.14% in 4th ESO and 44.12% in 3rd ESO (years 11 & 10 of secondary school, respectively).

3. Analysis and results

For the first objective of our research –identify the age when young people begin using social networks– the data obtained indicates that the average age is approximately 12 and a half years, the median being 13 and mode 12.

Graph 1 illustrates this variability. As indicated, 71.7% of Andalusian youth join social networks between the ages of twelve and fourteen; a percentage that reaches 94.99% upon expanding the age range from 10 to 15 years old. The remaining 5% is distributed between prior periods that range from 6 to 10 and another later section, ranging from 15 to 17 years of age.

Therefore, this indicates that it is, in fact, during the onset of puberty when young people begin online social relationships. This data coincides with psychological developmental theories that consider this stage the beginning of their social relationships and the value given to friendship among peers. However, a limited percentage begins at an earlier or later age.

The data obtained about the frequency of social network use indicates that 64.4% of all young people connected to social networks daily; this added

Age when you started using the social network:	
Frequency of use: ☐ Daily ☐ A few days a week ☐ A few days a month ☐ Occasionally	
Can you connect whenever you want? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
MOTIVATION TO USE SOCIAL NETWORKS	
To keep in contact and share experiences with my friends	
To make new friends	
It makes me feel good when I'm sad	
I like knowing what my friends say about the photos I upload, our experiences…	
I like knowing I am liked by my friends and how they appreciate me	
I can be more sincere with my friends than when I'm with them	
The network gives me the possibility of exploring and doing things that I would not do otherwise	
Social networks are not only places where we can meet, but rather they are a way of life	
Other uses (Please specify):	

Table 1. Questionnaire items used to collect information.

subjects was obtained using stratified probabilistic sampling and conglomerates, with an estimated level of confidence of 95% and a sampling error of ± 2%. We worked with a real sample of 1,487 young people from the Region of Andalusia between 13 and 19 years of age, with 15 years being the average age (this

to the 26% who connect a few days a week accounts for a total of 90% of young Andalusians who habitually use social networks. These results coincide with those obtained in other recent studies into the population of young Andalusians (Gomez, Roses & Farias, 2012), which indicated that 91.2% of young university stu-

dents, with an average age of 21 years, use social networks. It also coincides with international studies by Zheng and Cheok, (2011) in which the percentage is even higher – 99%; or related studies by Greenhow and Burton (2011), referring to various international populations, around 90%. Graph 2 indicates the percentages obtained in all the response ranges.

Despite the high percentage identified, almost 10%
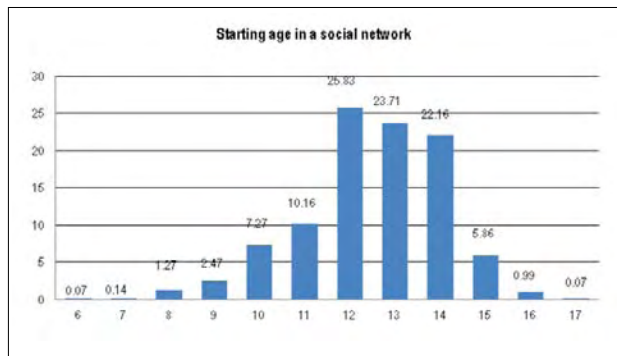
Graph 1. Ages when young people join social networks, in percentages.

fail to use these resources with any degree of frequency. A possible explanation may be due to paternal or family control, or the digital gap. However, this small percentage of non-users was also indicated in a previous study when referring to a university population (Gómez, Roses & Farias, 2012). This coincidence leads us to believe that the digital gap may be a plausible explanation, together with other factors such as the origin of the subjects, gender, or their personal characteristics, etc.

Analysing the degree of family control could shed light on this variant; thus we researched this question further. The results obtained indicate that more than three quarters of all young people connect to social networks whenever they want to, with no limitations being imposed by the family; 22.3% appear to have certain limits. This would explain the previous 10% and would leave another 12% who break family rules in this regard.

Consequently, we could state that 94.99% of young Andalusians connect to social networks at an age ranging from 10 to 15 years, and that 90% routinely use social networks. Only 22.3% have rules for use; the rest access the network with no limits of any type.

The high percentage of social network usage by Andalusian adolescents led us to think about another important question: What drives this use? The results obtained are presented in graph 3 (next page).

As seen in graph 3, the main reason is «to share

experiences with friends» (82.8%), followed by «knowing what my friends say about the photos I upload and our experiences» (51%) and «make new friends» (45.6%). These three reasons have a common denominator: cover young people's social need to interact with peers. This is followed by 20-25% in which the responses are linked to the more psychological and affective aspects; for example «I am satisfied to know that my friends like and appreciate me» (24.9%), «it makes me feel good when I am sad» (23.5%) and «I can be more sincere with my friends than when I am with them» (20.6%).

The least indicated reasons are: «the network gives me the possibility to explore and do things that I would not do otherwise» (17.3%), followed by: «social networks are a way of life» (9.3%). These last two options could be understood as an intense level of use of social networks, or an innovative and creative use which may be the reason why they were chosen less.

In summary, we can conclude that there are two basic motivational areas why youth use social networks: one social –covering 50% of the population– and another psychological which accounts for 20% of the sample studied. These two dimensions cover young people's basic needs during this developmental phase. These results are coherent and coincide with the current lines of research and conclusions reached. International studies show that young people's on-line, social network behaviour is motivated by factors such as self-identity, self-confidence, social compensation and social environment (Williams & Merten, 2008; Bianchi & Phillips, 2005; Eastin, 2005; Lin, 2006; Subrahmanyam, Smehal & Greenfield, 2006; Valkenburg & Peter, 2007).
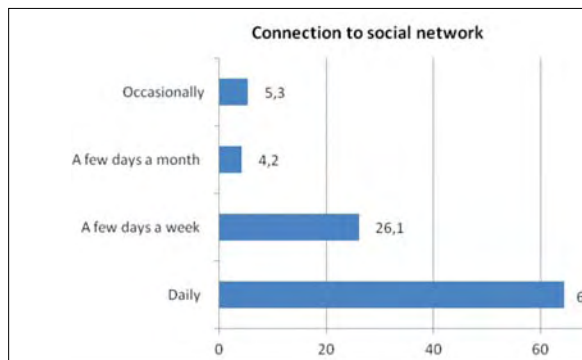
Graph 2. Frequency percentages when young people connect to Social Networks.

Given the strong impact of the sex variable in a large proportion of the current research, we procee-
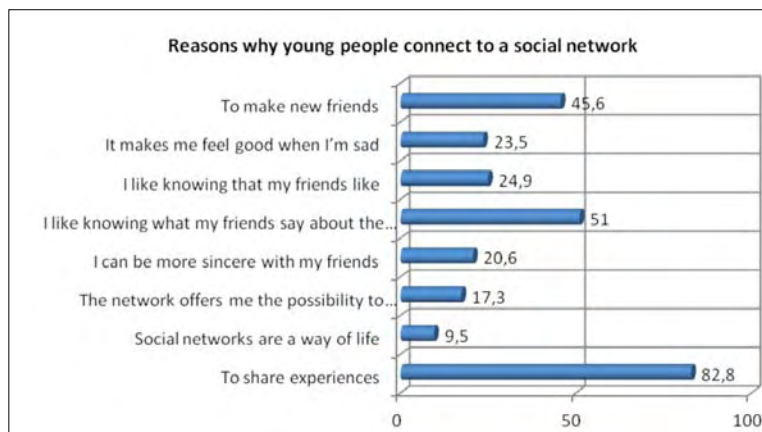
Graph 3. Reasons identified by young people for connecting to a social network, in percentages.

ded to study whether this variable constitutes a significant differential factor, both in the frequency of use of social networks and in the usage types and motivations for use. Given the nominal scale of data collection used, we applied the χ^2 for contingency to test these hypotheses.

The results obtained indicate that there are no significant differences between sexes when it comes to the frequency of social network usage ($\chi 2=2.005$; $p=.367$). The correlation between the sex variable and uses of social networks is not significant either (contingency Coefficient$=.046$ $p=.367$). Graph 4 illustrates the positions of both genders on this question. This visualization shows the similarity of behaviour between sexes.

Nevertheless, the differences between sexes may lie with uses rather than frequency, in which case, we decided to statistically compare whether there were differences in the reasons for connecting to social networks. The results obtained indicate that there are significant differences in three variables: to make new friends (χ; $p=.$, 002), with a significant correlation (contingency Coefficient$=.102$ $p=.002$); it makes me feel good when I am sad, ($\chi 2=$ 13.267; $p=.$,004), with a significant correlation (contingency Coefficient $=.117$ $p=.004$); and I like knowing what my friends say about the photos that I upload ($\chi 2=13.920$; $p=.$,00), with a significant correlation (contingency Coefficient$=$ .120 $p=.000$). These differences are presented in graph 5:

Graph 5 shows that girls use social networks to make friends to a greater extent than boys. However, boys surpas-

sed girls in the reasons: I like knowing what my friends say about the photos I upload and it makes me feel good when I am sad. Therefore, these results seem to indicate that in the case of boys, the motivation is basically psychological in nature and for personal recognition, while a relational/social use prevails in girls. These results could be interpreted from the perspective of gender roles and/or gender psychology. Previous works (Ertl & Helling, 2011; Lawlor, 2006) show the relevance of the gender variable in the study of young people's behaviour in social networks.

There is another possible interpretation of the results from the social capital theory. For young people, on-line social networks are a source of resources used to fulfil needs, both psychological and social. However, the differences between genders in these variables demonstrate that they play a compensatory role; males generally use them to cover emotional aspects and reinforce their self-esteem, while for young women, the relational function prevails

4. Discussion and conclusions

The results obtained in this work allow us to verify, and therefore establish the main conclusions of the study, which is that 94.99% of young Andalusians connect to social networks at an age ranging from 10 to 15 years. 90% routinely use social networks. Only 22.3% have some rules for use; the rest have unlimited
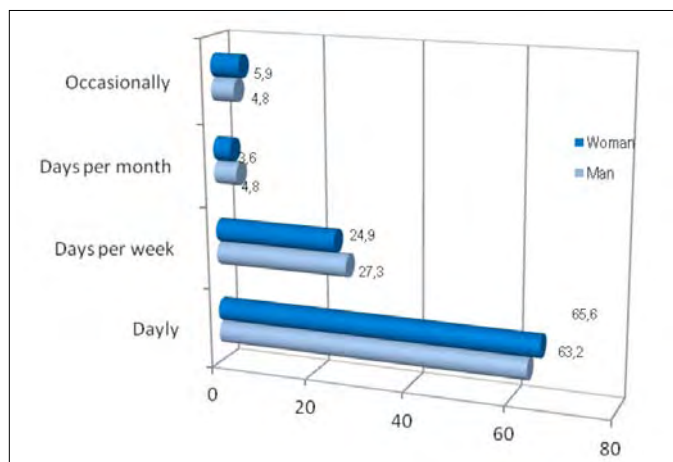
Graph 4. Frequency of use of virtual social networks based on gender.
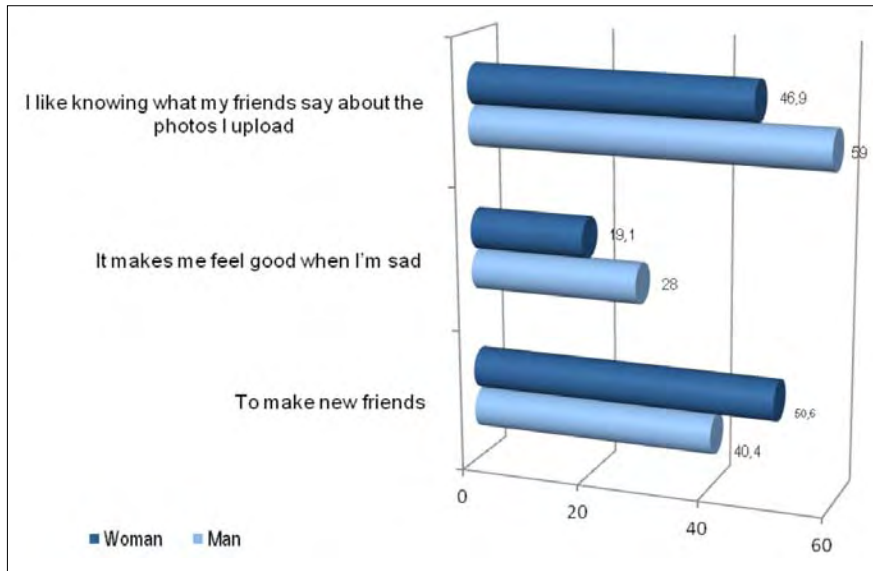
Graph 5. Variables where there are significant difference between genders.

These results could also be interpreted in the light of the three constructs that have supported the realization of this research: social compensation, social capital, and online atmosphere.

From the «social compensation» construct, given the extensive use of social networks by young Andalusians from a very early age, the results obtained indicate the potential that this resource could have

access. The driving force behind this use falls between two extremes: seeking to cover the social need young people have to share experiences, and activity being recognised by others, thus establishing new social relationships.

Regarding young people's motivations, these are preferably of an individual nature, aimed at covering an emotional dimension; the social network is a virtual space that is emotionally gratifying and allows young people to express their intimate feelings through the perception others have of them. Comparing these results based on sex, we saw that there are no differences regarding the frequency of use; however, there are differences with regards to the reasons behind this use. Three variables are statistically significant: «I like knowing what my friends say about the photos that I upload», «it makes me feel good when I am sad» and «to make new friends». In the case of Andalusian girls, the fundamental reason for use is social and relational (to make new friends), while for boys, it is more individual in nature, aimed at reinforcing internal variables of the subject as an individual, specifically reinforcing self-esteem (I like knowing what my friends say about the photos that I upload) and emotional (It makes me feel good when I am sad). These results fit the model by Notley (2009) to the extent that the motivations to use social networks falls within the sphere of personal interests, as well as social needs of a relational nature. But they are also in keeping with other international studies such as those by Costa, (2011), Flores, (2009) and De Haro (2010), which impact on the social and personal value of social networks for young people.

to train young people in social construction and inclusion processes. Today's society demands that young people develop collaboration-related skills; from this perspective, social networks are a platform to research how group achievements are obtained, starting with the relationship established by each individual with other members of the group. In this sense, it would connect with the work by Watts, (2006) and Christakis and Fowler (2010). This aspect has immense prospective value when faced with how to educate young people to attain achievements, both personal and professional, in group construct processes and finally, social improvement.

This result, verified in our study, is directly related to another construct that has been the basis for the data obtained, which is social capital. In this regard, social networks not only «train» young people in group processes aimed at attaining achievements, but they also become resources where each one «looks for or uses» what they need at any given moment. This result is not only important in training social capital, as suggested by Greenhow and Burton (2011), but also, it can be an important educational resource to favour equality and the development of more inclusive schools (Notley, 2008).

Our results coincide with other international studies (Rudd & Walker, 2010). This research indicates that young people make extensive use of the 2.0 technologies, essentially relating with their peers and channelling their opinions. However, there is a minority of young people who do not use these technologies, which must be explained by economic factors or other

barriers. Thus, the resulting recommendations are of interest to agencies dedicated to understanding young people's behaviour in social networks, and who are working with inclusion. The study by Notley (2009) clarifies this question.

There is also international data about the spheres where young people make use of social networks. It has been concluded that most young people use their social networks outside of school. Based on such results, the recommendations for professionals are aimed at promoting greater informal development of «e-skills». These practices are seen as beneficial for education in democratic citizenship values, since they facilitate knowing the opinions of young people, who

education, both in personal and social values, as indicated by De Haro (2010) and Bryant (2007). Although research into these subjects is still scarce, it could shed light on the processes that shape social interaction as the basis for personal and social improvement.

Support

References

BIANCHI, A. & PHILLIPS, J. (2005). Psychological Predictors of Problem Mobile Phone Use. Cyber-Psychology & Behavior, 8 (1), 39-51.
BOYD, D. & ELLISON, N. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 13, 210-230.
BURROW-SANCHEZ, J., CALL, M., ZHENG, R. & DREW, C. (2011). Are Youth at Risk for Internet Predators?: What Counselors Need to Know. Journal of Counseling and Development, 89 (1), 3-10.
BRYANT, L. (2007). Emerging trends in social software for education. In Becta. Emerging Technologies for Learning, 2. Coventry: Becta.
CALVERT, S.L. (2002). Identity Construction on the Internet. In S.L. CALVERT, A.B. JORDAN & R. COCKING (Eds.), Children in the Digital Age: Influences of Electronic Media on Development (pp. 57-70). Westport, CT: Praeger.
CHAK, K. & LEUNG, L. (2004). Shyness and Locus of Control as Predictors of Internet Addiction and

> Our results coincide with other international studies (Rudd & Walker, 2010). This research indicates that young people make extensive use of the 2.0 technologies, essentially relating with their peers and channelling their opinions. However, there is a minority of young people who do not use these technologies, which must be explained by economic factors or other barriers. Thus, the resulting recommendations are of interest to agencies dedicated to understanding young people's behaviour in social networks, and who are working with inclusion.

in turn become active agents, not only in the local policies, but also at the regional and national level, thus reinforcing participative democracy. In this regard, there are already a number of good practices, as the idea is to incorporate these technological resources into the organizational structures of educational centres to grant students a voice through a means that is a standard aspect of their communication, while at the same time breaking down personal barriers found at that age: shyness, insecurity, embarrassment, etc. Recent studies (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung & Valenzuela, 2012) into how social networks can contribute to democratic processes and the creation of social capital.

In conclusion, the ideas expressed herein back up the claim that social networks are of major educational value in addition to being an important resource for

Internet Use. CyberPsychology & Behavior, 7(5), 559-570.
COSTA, J. (2011). Los jóvenes portugueses de los 10 a los 19 años: ¿qué hacen con los ordenadores? Teoría de la Educación. Educación y Cultura en la Sociedad de la Información, 12 (1), 209-239.
CHRISTAKIS, N. & FOWLER, J. (2010). Conectados. El sorprendente poder de las redes sociales y cómo afectan nuestras vidas. Madrid: Taurus.
EASTIN, M.S. (2005). Teen Internet Use: Relating Social Perceptions and Cognitive Models to Behavior. CyberPsychology & Behavior, 8 (1), 62-75.
ERTL, B. & HELLING, K. (2011). Promoting Gender Equality in Digital Literacy. Journal Educational Computing Research, Vol. 45 (4), 477-503.
DE HARO, J.J. (2010). Redes sociales para la educación. Madrid: Anaya.
FLORES, J.M. (2009). Nuevos modelos de comunicación, perfiles y tendencias en las redes sociales. Comunicar, 33, XVII, 73-81.
GIL-DE-ZÚÑIGA, H., JUNG, N. & VALENZUELA, S. (2012). Social Media Use for News and Individuals' Social Capital, Civic Enga-

gement and Political Participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 17*, 319-336.

GÓMEZ, M., ROSES, S. & FARIAS, P. (2012). El uso académico de las redes sociales en universitarios. *Comunicar, 38, XIX*, 131-138.

GREENHOW, C. & BURTON, L. (2011). Help from my «Friends´ Social Capital in the Social Networks Site of Low-Income Students. *Journal Educational Computing Research, 45 (2)*, 223-245.

GROSS, E.F. (2004). Adolescent Internet Use: What We Expect, What Teens Report. *Applied Developmental Psychology, 25*, 633-649.

JUNG-LEE, S. (2009). Online Communication and Adolescent Social Ties: Who Benefits More from Internet use? *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 14*, 509–531.

LAWLOR, C. (2006).Gendered Interactions in Computer-mediated Computer Conferencing. *Journal of Distance Education, 21(2)*, 26-43.

LEESE, M. (2009). Out of Class – Out of Mind? The Use of a Virtual Learning Environment to Encourage Student Engagement in Out of Class Activities. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 40 (1)*, 70-77.

LIN, H.F. (2006). Understanding Behavioral Intention to Participate in Virtual Communities. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 9(5)*, 540-547.

LIN, N. (1999). Building a Network Theory of Social Capital. *Connections, 22 (1)*, 28-51.

NOTLEY, T. (2009). Young People, Online Networks, and Social Inclusion. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 14*, 1208-1227.

NOTLEY, T. (2008). Online Network Use in Schools: Social and Educational Opportunities. *The Journal of Youth Studies Australia, 27*, 20-29.

SUBRAHMANYAM, K. & GREENFIELD, P. (2008). Online Communica-

tion and Adolescent Relationships. *Future of Children, 18(1)*, 119-146.

SUBRAHMANYAM, K. & LIN, G. (2007). Adolescents on the Net: Internet Use and Well-being. *Adolescence, 42*, 659-667.

SUBRAHMANYAM, K., GREENFIELD, P. & TYNES, B. (2004). Constructing Sexuality and Identity in an Internet Teen Chatroom. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 25*, 651-666.

SUBRAHMANYAM, K., SMEHAL, D., & GREENFIELD, P. (2006). Connecting Developmental Constructions to the internet: Identity Presentation and Sexual Exploration in Online Teen Chat Rooms. *Developmental Psychology, 42(3)*, 395-406.

VALKENBURG, P.M. & PETER, J. (2007). Preadolescents and Adolescents Online Communication and their Closeness to Friends. *Developmental Psychology, 43*, 267-277.

VALKENBURG, P., PETER, J., & SCHOUTEN, A.P. (2006). Friend Networking Sites and their Relationship to Adolescents Well-being and Social Self-esteem. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 9(5)*, 584-590.

WATTS, D. (2006). *Seis grados de separación. La ciencia de las redes en la era del acceso*. Barcelona, Paidós.

WILLIAMS, A.L., & MERTEN, M.J. (2008). A Review of Online Social Networking Profiles by Adolescents: Implications for Future Research and Intervention. *Adolescence, 43*, 253-274.

ZHENG, R. & CHEOK, A. (2011). Singaporean Adolescents´ Perceptions of On-line Social Communication: An Exploratory Factor Analysis. *Journal Educational Computing Research, Vol. 45(2)*, 203-221.

ZHENG, R., FLYGARE, J., & DAHL, L. (2009). Style Matching or Ability Building? An Empirical Study on FDI Learners' Learning in Well-structured and Ill-structured Asynchronous Online Learning Environments. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 41(2)*, 195-226.

● César Bernal and Félix Angulo
Almería / Cádiz (Spain)

Interactions of Young Andalusian People inside Social Networks

Interacciones de los jóvenes andaluces en las redes sociales

ABSTRACT

Several studies on youth and social networks have generally revealed extensive usage of these Internet services, widespread access from almost any location and the special importance that the youth attach to these services in building their social relations. This article presents part of the analyses and results from a research questionnaire on «Scenarios, digital technologies and youth in Andalusia», administered to a population of 1,487 youth between the ages of 13 and 19. The discussion on young Andalusians and social networks revolves around the structure and configuration of their profiles, intended uses and the privacy and security involved. The results reveal a population with nearly unlimited access to social networks and with very little adult monitoring; moreover, those connecting are younger than the legal minimum age defined by the Internet services themselves. The motivations of Andalusian youth for using social networks fall into three areas. The first two, social and psychological/affective motivations, are also commonly found in other studies; the third refers to the need to use social networks in matters concerning everyday life. This paper suggests certain new aspects in its conclusions in order to explain the nature and meaning of the practices of Andalusian youth in social networks.

RESUMEN

Diversos estudios sobre jóvenes y redes sociales han demostrado, en general, el alto consumo de estos servicios de Internet, generalizándose su uso en casi todo tipo de ubicaciones y valorando su importancia en la construcción de las relaciones sociales entre la juventud. En este artículo se presenta parte de los análisis y resultados del cuestionario de la investigación sobre los «Escenarios, tecnologías digitales y juventud en Andalucía», administrada a una población de 1.487 jóvenes entre los 13 y 19. La discusión sobre jóvenes andaluces y redes sociales gira en torno a la estructura y configuración de sus perfiles, a las finalidades de uso, y a la privacidad y seguridad en las mismas. Los resultados destacados muestran una población con acceso a las redes sociales sin casi restricciones y con poco seguimiento adulto, y además las edades de acceso son menores de las legalmente definidas por los propios servicios de Internet. Las motivaciones de los jóvenes andaluces para el uso de las redes sociales se pueden agrupar en tres áreas; las dos primeras están presentes en otras investigaciones: motivación social y la psicológico-afectiva; y menos la tercera: la necesidad ligada a la vida cotidiana. Este trabajo aporta en sus conclusiones nuevos aspectos para explicar la naturaleza y los significados de las prácticas de los jóvenes andaluces con las redes sociales.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Social Networks, youth, social role of the media, life styles, internet use, cyberbulling, social relationship, research. Redes sociales, juventud, función social de los medios, estilos de vida, uso de Internet, ciberacoso, relaciones sociales, investigación.

◆ Dr. César Bernal is Tenured Professor in the Research Center for Communication and Society (CySOC), at the University of Almería (Spain) (cbernal@ual.es).

◆ Dr. J. Félix Angulo is Full Professor and Head of the LACE Research Group at the University of Cádiz (Spain) (felix.angulo@uca.es).

1. Introduction

Social networks are web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a system managed by a third party, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and, depending on the self-defined privacy of their profiles, view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd, 2007; Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Social networks open an interaction space that has increasingly been occupied by youth, as shown by recent international studies (Chew & al., 2011; Mazur & Richards, 2011; Mikami & al., 2010; Pfiel & al., 2009; Subrahmanyam & al., 2008; Gross & al., 2002) as well as studies in Spain (TCA, 2012; EU Kidsonline, 2011; Injuve, 2009). Use of social networks is spreading independently of the family income of Internet users (TCA, 2011).

The location where access is established, perhaps due to mobile devices and free wifi networks, has expanded to include streets, squares and public spaces, although the majority of connections continue to take place from home (OIA, 2010; Inteco, 2009), at the expense of school, due to the Avanza plan and the Escuela 2.0 plan. For all these reasons, using and connecting to social networks has become a new socialization environment for youth, a space for constructing one's social identity with one's peers, sometimes without any parental advice or control, despite the realization that youth are connecting at younger and younger ages, and below the minimum age allowed (Inteco, 2009). On the other hand, the youth themselves manage and maintain certain levels of safety and protection over the profiles they create (OIA, 2012; Inteco, 2012).

Research studies with large samples (Bringué & Sádaba, 2009; 2011; Sánchez & Fernández, 2010; Inteco, 2009; TCA, 2008, 2010, 2011) have inquired into horizontal social networks as a new social space for youth, which they can connect to from any screen or device; they describe the main reason for creating an account on one or more social networks as communication, perhaps because communication barriers are removed (Barker, 2009; Ellison, 2007). This could be understood, on the one hand, as the need to be available and present at whatever may be occurring in this environment (Bringué & Sádaba, 2009), thus associated with values such as social inclusion, i.e., the process of making friends among one's peers (Mazur & Richards, 2011; Pfiel & al., 2009) and strengthening friendship relations from outside the Net (Subrahmanyam & al., 2008; Gross & al., 2002), as well as self-affirmation before the other members of the network, where one maintains relationship patterns over time, online and offline (Mikami & al., 2010), and as social recognition, according to the number of one's followers (TCA, 2008). On the other hand, since there is a desire to relate to others, to meet members of the network, including strangers, the social networks are interpreted as a consumer item in its most recreational dimension. The popularity of social networks, as a fashion, converts them into services/products that must be consumed (TCA, 2010).

These studies also describe user profiles in terms of frequency of access and social network application, revealing age differences. Taking into account only the data that refer to a sample similar to the one presented in this paper (ages 13 to 19), the evidence shows that between the ages of 10 and 18, social network activity constitutes 70.7% of their Internet use (Bringué & Sádaba, 2009), with 55% of users connecting daily and only 22% connecting less than once per month (TCA, 2010); also, starting at 16, more than 71% have profiles on more than one network (TCA, 2009). Under 20, the network of preference is Tuenti, incorporating between 60% (Bringué & Sábada, 2011a) and 92% of the population (TCA, 2009), followed by Facebook and, unlike earlier studies, no gender difference is found in these age groups.

In summary, the profile that emerges from these studies may be considered fairly consistent, drawing a picture of youth who use social networks, in particular, and the Internet in general, for instrumental purposes; the events that occur in these services and the actions taken are limited to tools for meeting specific ends, falling within the range of four themes: communicating, getting to know, sharing and consuming (Bringué & Sábada, 2009). Although differences can still be found within such a homogeneous group, the fact of sharing a single space where the individuals carry on a more or less stable set of relations results in the generation of common interests among the members. Along with common interests, relationships within the community tend to generate shared behavioral norms, accepted either implicitly or explicitly by the members. Identity and a sense of belonging are other group dimensions encouraged by interacting within the community (Robles, 2008: 39).

Studies with large samples of Andalusian youth (Bringué & Sábada, 2011b; OIA, 2010; 2012; INE, 2011; 2012) have not inquired directly into the use and interactions within social networks, with the exception of the Infancia 2.0 paper on emerging social networks and technological uses in the native Anda-

lusian online population (Rodríguez & al, 2012).

This emerging phenomenon of the use of social networks has been explained in earlier studies in terms of the types of use, activities and content associated with Internet, but there are no concrete data about these. For this reason, the Infancia 2.0 research, along with the research presented in this article, are the only two studies that inquire into the relationship of children (ages 11 to 18) or youth (ages 13 to 19) in Andalusia with social networks; together with demographic and socioeconomic data from the National Institute of Statistics, they describe a fairly accurate picture of this social phenomenon.

In terms of frequency of Internet connection, in Andalusian youth (ages 16 to 24) as well as youth from Canary Islands, Castilla-León, and Extremadura, there are seven percentage points of difference between those who access the Internet once every three months, and those with weekly access over the same three month period; in the remaining regions of Spain there is no more than 2 points difference (INE, 2012).

The presence of broadband networks in homes varies between 50 and 71% according to monthly incomes, with categories falling between the extremes of less than 1100 euros per month and more than 2700 euros. The regions that fall between 60 and 71% are, in order, Melilla, Castilla-León, Extremadura, La Rioja, Andalusia, Murcia, Navarra, Asturias and Ceuta (INE, 2012).

On the other hand, when analyzing the percentage difference of Internet access in children under 16, for the two extremes of monthly household incomes (less than 1100 euros and more than 2700 euros), we find a difference of 29 percentage points for the regions of Ceuta, Galicia, Valencia, Castilla-La Mancha, La Rioja and Melilla. Between 19 and 10 points of difference, we find Andalusia, Cantabria, Castilla-León, Murcia, Madrid, Extremadura, Basque Country, and Catalonia. And with less than 7 points difference we find Canary Islands, Asturias and Navarra. The Balearic Islands are a special case requiring a separate study, since the differential found was minus twenty-one; in other words, minors under 16 with the lowest household incomes were the most frequent Internet users.

Difference in family income is a key factor in the quality (in terms of speed) of Internet access. This difference exists in the homes of young people regardless of the device being used, and is fundamental to the use of social networks, thereby creating a gap that should be studied (Rodríguez & al., 2012).

Just as we have seen in nationwide studies, Andalusian youth create a profile in social networks before the legal age, males more than females, and naturally the above affirmations about the importance of social networks in youth sociability also apply to them. At the

> Using and connecting to social networks has become a new socialization environment for youth, a space for constructing one's social identity with one's peers, sometimes without any parental advice or control, despite the realization that youth are connecting at younger and younger ages, and below the minimum age allowed (Inteco, 2009). On the other hand, the youth themselves manage and maintain certain levels of safety and protection over the profiles they create.

same time a lack of security is acknowledged, meaning a lack of behaviors that encourage proper use and consumption of social network services (Rodríguez & al., 2012).

2. Methodology

This investigation, in line with the general trend of analyzing several socio-educational scenarios, has made combined use of qualitative methodologies (interviews, case studies, discussion groups) and quantitative methodology (a questionnaire); the latter seeks to expand on results from the former through applying a questionnaire to a representative population of Andalusian youth (Facer, Furlong & al., 2003; Livingstone & Bovill, 1999).

Although questionnaires are widely used in social and educational research, it is often overlooked that an inverse approach may ensure greater relevance of the instrument's content. Carr-Hill (1984) recommends that more qualitative strategies be taken into consideration in drawing up a questionnaire. For this reason, the questionnaire applied in this study was developed in

light of the results from ethnographic interviews that were carried out, such that the questions forming the instrument would have an initial validity made possible by the qualitative data.

Use of this procedure is justified on two accounts: on the one hand, to «verify» the results obtained, primarily from the interviews, but also from the case studies and discussion groups; on the other hand, to allow the results to be generalized to the youth and adolescent population of Andalusia.

The questionnaire was therefore organized around topic areas that emerged from using the qualitative strategies. Due to the substantial body of qualitative data already collected, the questionnaire gave priority to closed ended questions (Bell, 2002; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2006).

Questionnaire specifications can be summarized as follows: a universe of the teenaged population (ages 13 to 19) enrolled in public schools in Andalusia, with a province-stratified sample of 1487 cases, distributed across the eight Andalusian provinces, ultimately weighted by gender and age. The confidence interval was 95% and sampling error was p=q=0.5 of ± 2%. Sample composition was 49.5 % boys and 50.5 % girls.

The statistical analysis used was descriptive analysis based on frequencies and percentages.

3. Results

The study characterizes Andalusian youth (between ages 13 and 19; mean age 15) as perceiving themselves to be good students (72%), creating their first profile on a social network at the mean age of 12, beginning cell phone usage between the ages of 8 and 12 (80.1%), 62.3% connecting to Internet on a daily basis, and 69.2% connecting in order to contact their friends. The primary location for connecting to social networks is the bedroom (74.3%), followed by the living room (25.4%). More than 90% receive in excess of 1000 visits to their social network profile.

Results from this study on social networks and youth can be grouped into three sections, the first having to do with the structure and configuration of their profiles, where the youth make decisions about what to show to the other members of their list. In this study, 92.8% of youth modify their profile by adding a photograph and information on how they can be contacted, and 14.5% have modified the initial structure, for example, moving the location or size of elements on the page, adding a certain gadget or external plugin, or modifying the default template.

The reasons given for making such profile changes are, in 51.7% of the cases, to show their true self, or, in 8.6%, to show a different image of themselves. Another notable reason for these changes was to have control over the content and information that is visible to others (21.4%).

The work involved in this personalization of profiles and content on social networks is oriented toward the people with whom one interacts or wishes to interact. The study shows that friends, at 45.6%, are the primary communication partners on social networks, followed by acquaintances at 22.9%, while strangers take last place at 6.7%, behind family members (24.6%) and boyfriends/girlfriends (32.8%).

The main use of social networks among Andalusian youth is chatting (86.7%). A form of staying in contact with one's social reference group, chatting creates a placeholder by uploading images created by the members themselves (69.2%), when the environment or event does not allow them any other option. What emerges as most important in social networks is that they open the door to personal confidences, users can share with friends how they are feeling (41%), and they can meet new people, usually friends of friends (41.2%), or meet people who have the same

> The youth seek personal contact and construction of their social personhood in social networks. Future studies should delve further into one aspect that is present, but inconclusive, in both studies: the repercussions of the quality of the Internet connection, as the obligatory gateway to social networks. Also to be considered is the importance of the cultural background of families and communities to the relationships, practices and culture that are shared in and through social networks.

hobbies or interests (24%). It is important to stress that the vast majority do not look on social networks as a resource for making yourself known (19.1%); on the contrary, social networks are adopted as a complementary, necessary resource in today's world for staying in contact and sharing experiences with your friends (83.5%), for expanding your personal network (46.5%), but above all for becoming closer to your network of contacts. Thus, 50.7% of participants like to know what their friends say about the photos that they post, or the experiences that they tell about, because it is important to them to know that they are liked and valued by their friends (26.1%), on the social network they can be more open than when physically together, and get the chance to feel better when they are sad (24.2%), and they can explore and do things that they would not do otherwise (21.2%).

Finally, Andalusian youth are aware of the importance of managing privacy and security on social networks, and they give access only to their friends (84.5%), that is, to the contacts on their list, those that they have accepted or those that they requested access to and were in turn accepted. Only 4.4% have set their profile to be open to all, in other words, to all who use the same service and even to those who do not.

Managing one's privacy and security is meaningful to them mainly because of harassment and bullying situations. Even though they are aware of the dangers of valuable information being stolen, or that someone might crack their password and enter their accounts, they consider this to be unlikely, in the first case. As one young woman said, «What are they going to get into my account for, I don't have anything. If they break into some account, it would be a bank or something that's worth money» (EF15). Another girl argued, «If they wanted to screw me, what would bother me the most is if they started to insult me or post crappy photos of me» (EM14). In the second case, it is usually classmates, friends or acquaintances that get hold of passwords either due to carelessness or excessive familiarity; they usually give them back to the same people that they steal them from. Therefore, the concern of the youth, and what they pursue when managing their profiles, is proper safekeeping of the image they have constructed, of the relationships established, and in general their own position within the network. As for aggression between members of a network, two profiles emerge. The first profile includes two main causes for aggression: (1) arguments and fights, at 39.7%, and (2) envy, at 38.5%. The type of aggression is verbal (56.4%), this being the main type of harassment occurring on the social network. The second

profile has to do with stereotypes –geeks with 24%, nerds with 13.2% and leaders with 12% – where the type of aggression is psychological (43.5%), and consists of confronting and discrediting that stereotype.

Finally, regarding the bully profile, there are two clear typologies, one is found among the people closest to the victim, a male or female friend (22.2%), or the friend of a sibling or a friend (6.6%); the other is an adult male (17.7%).

4. Discussion

Findings from this scientific study and from the Infancia 2.0 research (Rodríguez, 2012) are complementary. On the one hand, they mutually support each other with similar conclusions and results; on the other hand, they describe different aspects of children and youth as social network users, useful for posing further questions in the future.

Certain aspects of this study are especially useful. First, it has been demonstrated that the practices of youth, with and within the social networks, fulfill roles that go beyond what has been described or demonstrated to date. For example, Andalusian youth are knowledgeable about the risks and benefits of social networks in their daily use; moreover, they themselves develop and manage different ways to avoid risk, through the means offered by the system itself, and also through usage styles. Second, it has been observed that the youth seek personal contact and construction of their social personhood in social networks.

Future studies should delve further into one aspect that is present, but inconclusive, in both studies: the repercussions of the quality of the Internet connection, as the obligatory gateway to social networks. Also to be considered is the importance of the cultural background of families and communities to the relationships, practices and culture that are shared in and through social networks.

References
BARKER, V. (2009). Older Adolescents' Motivations for Social Network Site Use: The Influence of Gender, Group Identity, and Collective Self-Esteem. *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 12 (2)*, 209-213.
BELL, J. (2002). *Cómo hacer tu primer trabajo de investigación*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

BOYD, D.M. & ELLISON, N.B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-mediated Comunication*, 13 (1), 210-230.

BOYD, D. (2007). Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life. In D. BUCKINGHAM (Ed.), *MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Learning – Youth, Identity, and Digital Media Volume*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

BRINGUÉ, X. & SÁDABA, C. (2009). *La generación interactiva en España. Niños y adolescentes ante las pantallas. Resumen ejecutivo*. Madrid: Foro Generaciones Interactivas, Fundación Telefónica.

BRINGUÉ, X. & SÁDABA, C. (2011a). *Menores y redes sociales*. Madrid: Foro Generaciones Interactivas, Fundación Telefónica. (www.generacionesinteractivas.org/wp–content/uploads/2011/01/Libro–Menores–y–Redes–Sociales_Fin.pdf). (22-02-11).

BRINGUÉ, X. & SÁDABA, C. (2011b). *La generación interactiva en Andalucía. Niños y adolescentes ante las pantallas*. Madrid: Foro Generaciones Interactivas, Colección Fundación Telefónica.

CARR-HILL, R.A. (1984). Radicalising Survey Methodology. *Quality & Quantity. 18 (3)*, 275-292

CHEW, H.E., LaROSE, R., STEINFIELD, C. & AL. (2011). The Use of Online Social Networking by Rural Youth and its Effects on Community Attachment. *Information, Communication & Society, 14 (5)*, 726-747.

COHEN, L., MANION, L. & MORRISON, K. (2006). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

ELLISON, N.B., STEINFIELD, C. & LAMPE, C. (2007). The Benefits of Facebook «Friends': Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12 (4)*, 5-27.

FACER, K., FURLONG, J., FURLONG, R. & SUTHERLAND, R. (2003). *Screen Play. Children and Computing in the Home*. London: Routledge Falmer.

GARMENDIA, M., GARITAONANDIA, C., MARTÍNEZ, G. & CASADO, M.A. (2011). *Riesgos y seguridad en Internet: Los menores españoles en el contexto europeo*. Bilbao: EU Kids Online, Universidad del País Vasco.

GROSS, E.F., JUVONEN, J. & GABLE, S.L. (2002). Internet Use and Well-being in Adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues, 58 (1)*, 75-90.

INE (Ed.) (2011). *Encuesta sobre equipamiento y uso de tecnologías de la información y comunicación en los hogares*. Madrid: Instituto Nacional de Estadística.

INE (Ed.) (2012). *Encuesta sobre equipamiento y uso de tecnologías de la información y comunicación en los hogares*. Madrid: Instituto Nacional de Estadística.

INJUVE (Ed.) (2009). *Adolescentes y jóvenes en la Red: factores de oportunidad*. Directora: Ángeles Rubio Gil. Madrid: INJUVE.

INTECO (Ed.) (2009). *Estudio sobre hábitos seguros en el uso de las TIC por niños y adolescentes y e-confianza de sus padres. Observatorio de la Seguridad de la Información*. Ministerio de Industria, Energía y Turismo

INTECO (Ed.) (2012). *Estudio sobre la seguridad de la información y la e-confianza de los hogares españoles*. Madrid: Ministerio de Industria, Energía y Turismo.

LIVINGSTONE, S. & BOVILL, M. (1999). *Young people and new media*. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

MAZUR, E. & RICHARDS, L. (2011). Adolescents and emerging adults' social networking online: Homophily or diversity? *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 32*, 180-188.

MIKAMI, A.Y., SZWEDO, D.E., ALLEN, J.P. & AL. (2010). Adolescent Peer Relationships and Behavior Problems Predict Young Adults' Communication on Social Networking Websites. *Developmental Psychology, 46 (1)*, 46-56.

OBSERVATORIO DE LA INFANCIA EN ANDALUCÍA (Ed.) (2010). *Actividades y usos de TIC entre los chicos y chicas de Andalucía. Informe 2010*. Granada: Fundación Andaluza de Servicios Sociales, Consejería de Innovación.

OBSERVATORIO DE LA INFANCIA EN ANDALUCÍA (Ed.) (2012). *Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación*. Serie: Estado de la Infancia y Adolescencia en Andalucía. Granada: Consejería para la Igualdad y Bienestar Social, Agencia de Servicios Sociales.

PFEIL, U., ARJAN, R. & ZAPHIRIS, P. (2009). Age Differences in Online Social Networking – A Study of User Profiles and the Social Capital Divide among Teenagers and Older Users in MySpace. *Computers in Human Behavior, 25 (3)*, 643-654.

SÁNCHEZ-BURON, A. & FERNÁNDEZ-MARÍN, M. (2010). *Generación 2.0, Hábitos de los adolescentes en el uso de las redes sociales*. Madrid: Universidad Camilo Jose Cela (www.slideshare.net/ucjc/generacin-20-hbitos-de-los-ad (20-04-2011).

SUBRAHMANYAM, K., REICH, S.M., WAECHTER, N. & AL. (2008). Online and Offline Social Networks: Use of Social Networking Sites by Emerging Adults. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 29 (6)*, 420-433.

ROBLES, J.M. (2008). *Ciudadanía digital. Una introducción a un nuevo concepto de ciudadano*. Barcelona: UOC.

RODRÍGUEZ, I. & AL. (2012). *La población infantil ante las nuevas tecnologías de la información Una aproximación a la realidad de los nativos digitales andaluces*. Sevilla: Fundación Pública Andaluza Centro de Estudios Andaluces de la Junta de Andalucía.

THE COCKTAIL ANALYSIS (Ed.) (2008). *Herramientas de comunicación on-line: las redes sociales*. (www.tcanalysis.com/uploads/2008/11/informe_observatorio_redes_sociales.pdf) (20-03-2011).

THE COCKTAIL ANALYSIS (Ed.) (2009). *Estudio de eficacia de formatos publicitarios de display y actitudes de los usuarios de redes sociales ante la publicidad en estas plataformas*. http://tcanalysis.com/uploads/2009/06/IAB_SPAIN_Eficacia_Formatos_primera_oleada.pdf (22-03-2011).

THE COCKTAIL ANALYSIS (Ed.) (2010). *Informe de resultados. Observatorio Redes Sociales 2ª oleada*. (http://tcanalysis.com/uploads/2010/02/tca–2a_ola_observatorio_redes_informe_publico.pdf) (22-03-2011).

THE COCKTAIL ANALYSIS (Ed.) (2011). *III Oleada. Informe de Resultados. Observatorio Redes Sociales*. (www.tcanalysis.com/uploads/2011/02/Observatorio-RedesSociales2011.pdf) (03-11-2011).

THE COCKTAIL ANALYSIS (Ed.) (2012). IV Oleada. Observatorio de *Redes Sociales Informe Público de Resultados*. (www.slideshare.net/TCAnalysis/4-oleada-observatorio-de-redes-sociales) (05-05-2012).

● B. Muros, Y. Aragón and A. Bustos
Madrid / Granada (Spain)

Youth's Usage of Leisure Time with Video Games and Social Networks

La ocupación del tiempo libre de jóvenes en el uso de videojuegos y redes

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to understand the behaviour of Secondary Education students during their leisure time when using some different virtual spaces. We report a study carried out in a Community Centre offering training and leisure services for youngsters. Due to the large number of technological activities offered, this study paves the way for analysis and reflection about the hidden reasons and motivations young people have to use virtual spaces. We also show the interpretations and reflections of youngsters in their personal relationships and models of cohabitation. Our study likewise approaches the relation that youngsters establish between real and virtual spaces, focusing our attention on the construction of interactions which stems from their personal experiences. For data collection we carried out observations, conversations, analysis of documents and interviews. We analyzed with special interest the meanings that youngsters assign to their experiences in relation with mediatic and civic processes during their leisure time. The results of the study help to know the initiative, motivations and manner of acting that the youngsters of this study have on their ways of socialization in community. Concretely, the aspects allied with the search of pleasure, entertainment, the maintenance of social ties and continuous stimulation uses.

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como finalidad comprender los comportamientos de jóvenes de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria durante el tiempo libre en el uso de diferentes entornos virtuales. Presenta un estudio realizado en un centro de servicios comunitarios, formativos y de ocio orientado a la juventud. Debido a la oferta de actividades lúdicas de carácter tecnológico que en este lugar se realiza, el estudio abre vías de análisis y reflexión sobre los planteamientos y las motivaciones en el uso de los entornos virtuales, sobre las interpretaciones y reflexiones de los jóvenes en cuanto a relaciones personales y modelos de convivencia. En el trabajo se realiza una aproximación a la relación que establece la juventud entre el escenario presencial y virtual, centrando la atención en la construcción de interacciones de un modo vivencial. Para la recogida de información se realizaron observaciones, conversaciones, análisis de documentos y entrevistas. Se han analizado con especial interés los sentidos que se atribuían a las experiencias en relación con los procesos mediáticos y cívicos en la ocupación del tiempo libre. Los resultados del trabajo ayudan a conocer los planteamientos, las motivaciones y las conductas que los jóvenes de este estudio tienen sobre sus formas de socialización en red. Concretamente, los aspectos relacionados con la búsqueda del placer, el entretenimiento, el mantenimiento de lazos sociales, y la estimulación continua en los usos.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Media competence, socialisation, youth, citizenship, videogames, social networks, case study, leisure time.
Competencia mediática, socialización, juventud, ciudadanía, videojuegos, redes sociales, estudio de casos, tiempo libre.

◆ Dr. Beatriz Muros-Ruiz is Professor of the Department of Didactics at the University of Alcala (Spain) (beatriz.muros@uah.es).

◆ Dr. Yolanda Aragón-Carretero is a Visiting Professor of the Department of Didactics and School Organization at the University of Granada (Spain) (yaragon@ugr.es).

◆ Dr. Antonio Bustos-Jiménez is a Teacher working for the Ministry of Education of the Andalusian Regional Government (Spain) (abustosj@gmail.com).

1. Introduction and review of background material
1.1. Connecting media competence with civic competence

The European Union has tried by means of different recommendations and communications to promote media literacy as a pre-requisite for full, active citizenship, thereby implying a reciprocal influence between media and citizenship[1]. In line with recent contributions from Aguaded et al. (2011), and Ferrés and Piscitelli (2012), institutional approaches and findings from different studies increasingly coincide on the significant role of media competence in the development of citizenship. The aforementioned authors advocate that media competence should contribute to citizens' personal autonomy, and to their social and cultural engagement. Their proposals focus on dimensions encompassing different aspects of knowledge and behaviour: languages; technology; reception and audience; production and programming processes; ideology and values; and the aesthetic dimension (Aguaded & al., 2011). Ferrés and Piscitelli (2012: 77-78) claimed that «a person has to develop his media competence by critically interacting with messages produced by others, and by being capable of producing and disseminating his own messages in an active, participatory, play-based way». In this sense, Jenkins (2009) and Tucho (2005) underline that media competence should combine the potentiality for both participatory culture and the development of critical capacity. A media- and politically-literate society can contribute to building fairer societies, through the study, and particularly, through the exercise of citizenship.

1.2. Meanings attributed to the use of video games and social networks by young people

In keeping with the relationship between media and civic competences, recent contributions present virtual environments as influential scenarios in social, educational, and cultural development. The contexts in which young people develop and build citizenship through the use of these environments show how models are articulated for coexistence, based on the regulation and generation of specific behaviours. They provide images of how people behave, reflect, and deliberate on shared democratic responsibilities (Gozálvez, 2011). The virtual scenario may become a space for conflicts and clashes of interests, but it can also be a place to cultivate narratives for play, education, and personal communication.

If we focus on the use of video games and social networks, the dramatic increase in their use by young people has unquestionably led us to look more closely at their possible contribution to social and civic development. We are talking here of multidisciplinary training, in diverse spaces, with no formal set times, and with a broad spectrum of uses and possibilities for individual and group participation. The civic processes that emerge from the use of these environments are currently topics of interest in research and pedagogical literature.

In the case of video games, studies by Haste (2010), and Aragón (2011) enable us to learn about some of their potential uses for educational purposes: video games can foster development of organizational capacities, contribute to the development of content, and enhance skills and abilities. A reorientation of their use to address social contact, and the development of critical and analytical capacities, would seem to be a way to advance in their educational input. When their use is programmed for educational purposes, they can be considered learning nodes (Salen, 2008). The findings of studies by Díez (2004), for example, also provide information about their possible contribution to social and educational fields. An aspect relating to the content of the study described in this article, and which is identified by the aforementioned author, is the differentiated use of video games by gender. The author shows, for example, that dominant roles are usually to be found in the games chosen by males, and passive roles in the games chosen by females.

From the perspective of video-gaming for fun and evasion, other studies point out the possibilities of creating groups, activities, and games that foster social relationships. In most cases, these readings reflect the fact that people mainly play video games purely for fun, without giving consideration to any other aspect. The notion of evasion also emerges as one of the main motivations for their use. In this respect, studies have been published on the implicit disconnection from the real world. (Marqués, 2009; Ito & Bittanti, 2010; Huizinga, 2000). This relationship between real life and virtual life in the use of video games also appears in other studies on the power of transferring virtual behaviour to real behaviour (Stevens, Satwicz & McCarthy, 2008). In other words, the possibility that what is happening on the video console screen might have a direct influence in the real space. Other studies deal with the differences in behaviour in each of the two spaces (Selwyn, 2011).

Furthermore, in the use of social networks, there are also relationships between the aforementioned competences. In this sense, the main aspects that are considered relevant in the case of this study are the socializing and interactions that take place and facilita-

te identity building. Hampton and Wellman (2001), and Reid (2011) show how these can contribute to developing a sense of belonging to a group with a «common culture», common aims, and shared learning. Following this line of research, an important contribution is that video-gaming can enhance cognitive and emotional reciprocity; in other words, how certain personal interests of individuals belonging to these networks can be satisfied through a common space (Hayes & Gee, 2009).

If we again relate their use to fun and entertainment, there are studies and contributions the ONTSI (Spanish National Observatory for Telecommunications and the Information Society) reports (2011 and 2012), and Fuentes (2011), which report that social networks are mainly used by young people to keep in touch with their friends, and very often, to create social ties and friendships (hanging out) (Horst, Herr-Stephenson & Robinson, 2010), for gossiping or «flirting» (Livingstone, 2008; Pascoe, 2010; boyd, 2010), or to keep in touch with other young people whom they have previously met in person (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

2. Material and methods

The research reported in this manuscript is based on ethnographic methods in order to understand the meanings established by young people relating to civic use of certain technological media. The case is presented as an example of a theory that was selected to provide findings for the research project in which it is enframed[2]. In line with the proposals put forward by Stake (1995), and Simons (2009), it would be described as an illustrative case study that has been selected to enable better understanding of a reality. The setting is a community centre that offers community, training and leisure services, focussing on educational and leisure-time activities for young people.

The unique aspect of this centre lies in the rules, codes, and languages that develop around the range of technology-based, recreational activities available. The strategic, social and educational significance of the centre, at a local level, and the existence of technological resources, make it an ideal place to carry out

research on the use of social networks and online video-gaming.

The data-collection instruments and strategies were justified by the aim to achieve a greater degree of understanding of the processes and relationships emerging on a day-to-day basis at the centre. The methodological approach was based on recent contributions to the study of ethnography and virtual environments (Hine, 2004; Mosquera, 2008; Álvarez, 2009). Data was gathered as follows:

• Documentary data collection and analysis. We analysed the centre's documentation in order to understand its functional and organizational structure. The documentary data collection and analysis revea-

> The European Union has tried by means of different recommendations and communications to promote media literacy as a pre-requisite for full, active citizenship, thereby implying a reciprocal influence between media and citizenship. Institutional approaches and findings from different studies increasingly coincide on the significant role of media competence in the development of citizenship.

led the ideas held by the young people attending the centre regarding the development of media competence. For this purpose, six of the centre's documents were classified and indexed under the following headings: video games; social networks; and co-existence.

• Conversations. During the study, conversations were held with young people, and staff at the centre. This encouraged more familiarity between the research team and the people at the centre, and also provided important data for researchers' field logs. During the first phase, these conversations also helped to focus the research and define the issues for content analysis.

• Observations. These helped to define the rest of the strategies and instruments for data collection once the study was underway. Our observations were made over a period of two-and-a-half months, and enabled us to obtain knowledge about the spaces, and the way in which people used them.

• Semi-structured one-to-one interviews. Young

secondary students (five interviews), and staff (three interviews) were interviewed. The interviews were used to collect respondents' points of view, assumptions, perceptions, analysis, and opinions, and contributed to obtaining a deeper understanding of the different issues identified during observations and which were not self-revealing. Based on these interviews, an analysis of theme content was made. Transcriptions were used to identify the codes established in the deductive classification process, and the codes obtained from actual data during the study were inductively added; the data was subsequently grouped for interpretation.

> These known and shared codes mean that everyone is part of the community created by the actual video games (digital niches; Gozálvez, 2011). Video games, in fact, become the focus of social relationships among colleagues, acquaintances, etc., as they enable players to compete on line. There are frequent online conversations and discussions that are parallel to the game, and the importance of this lies in the fact that they share a specific language, which they identify as their own.

The dynamic used to break the ice, and foster familiarity between the study group and the research team comprised play-based technology. Bearing in mind that the group of young people who attended the centre where the majority of the technological activities took place, was large and varied throughout the centre's opening times, tasks were prepared using the LIM (multimedia interactive books) environment, to be implemented on the computer equipment at the centre by participants in the study. The activity was given the name of «Technological Gymkhana», and enabled interrelational approaches to be established among the group of young people and the research team.

3. Results
3.1. Use of Tuenti and social relationships
Social networks were the main focus of interest in this study. Based on the information obtained from the interviews, it can be assumed that Tuenti is the social network most-used by participants. Frequency of use (media diet, Ferrés & Piscitelli, 2012) is usually two hours per week, provided that friends are connected.

All of the young people in the study began using this social network at an early age, through a friend, and because they identified with the «logic» established by the network, i.e. young teenagers, between 12 and 16 years of age, sharing information with people in their environment. This aspect is important, as they do not consider that they use the network to forge new friendships. Furthermore, there exists a form of filter or shield to avoid strangers entering the group, whose members are considered friends and personal acquaintances by respondents. According to the results, the purpose of using Tuenti is the underlying fun and entertainment to be found in speaking to close friends. Nonetheless, this use is defined in different ways: sometimes, as pointless fun for fun's sake – as a form of evasion and escape, or «to pass the time before going to bed», as Carlos[4] or Germán told us; sometimes, as entertainment for the purpose of learning information about their friends, making themselves known through photographs, etc., and for forging affective ties with other people. Occasionally, their conversations are focussed on sharing information about photographs – usually group photographs. Juana says, «For example, you post some photos, you make comments about them; the chat is there and you can go on the chat and speak to people… I don't know, they notify you too – in Tuenti, they notify you about birthdays and stuff». Thus, for young people, it's a way of keeping themselves informed (dates for activities, birthdays, etc.), and also of keeping in touch with friends and/or relatives living elsewhere. Manuel said, «Well, yes, that's it… it's for communicating from your own home with other people out there... like my cousins, who live in Badajoz – well, I can talk to them». What is important is that the participants feel the need to use the network, to be «connected» in order to know what is happening around them.

In other cases, Tuenti is used by both boys and girls to flirt. Juana summarizes this, saying, «Maybe

you like (someone), and if you are on Tuenti, you usually don't feel as shy as you would if you were face-to-face. Then, maybe you feel too shy to speak to them. But if you are talking on Tuenti, well, maybe...». Furthermore, respondents considered that it encouraged disinhibition, albeit with limitations: «It's good for talking to other people, but it also inhibits you from talking in person. Because you talk a lot here and there, but then you don't know what to say because you don't have the person in front of you» (Germán). And risks: «Maybe they'll say that a girl is a prude; then again, maybe they'll say, come here, I'm going to take you and smash you into tiny pieces». And other things that are not very nice either, like, I'm going to beat you up...» (Germán).

If we look further into the risks that young people think about, they mention lack of privacy and the possibility that users might adopt a false online identity. The main problem they describe is that, as they are minors, there could be adults who, in some cases, might try to take advantage of the situation and pretend to be young people in order to establish online contact. For whatever reason, some of the respondents have developed their own safety mechanisms to try and avoid the risk of their being misled by someone using a false identity, e.g. asking questions that only they know the answer to (colour of the t-shirt that he/she was wearing at school that morning; what they spoke about the previous evening, etc.), or checking out photographs of the person, and accepting their friend request depending on whether they know the person, etc. Similarly, they establish measures for self-regulation of their own identity in the network (Op. cit.). For example, Celia says: «When your Tuenti is closed, only the people you have on your Tuenti can see it. Yes, but strangers can only send you private messages».

Lastly, when asked about media leisure as an opportunity for learning (Op. cit), young people do not consider that frequent use affects their academic performance. Some of the respondents pointed out that it affects them insofar as the use of abbreviations is concerned, and the lack of spelling and grammar rules. As Juana points out, «For example, the fact that you write (...) You don't write correctly. You shorten words when you write and then... Well, that does affect us».

They also sporadically agree that it can help them do school activities. This was pointed out by Juana and Manuel who said, «Well, I don't know. Look – lots of times I don't know what homework I have to do, and I ask on Tuenti. And then I know what homework there is. I ask a classmate and all that».

3.2. The use of video games and interactions – from the video console to personal relationships

Another aspect of this project was the study of the use of video games and their interaction with social relationships (in the case of a media diet of between 1 and 4 hours). Respondents preferred sports-related video games (FIFA, mainly), and war games («Metal Gear Solid», «Assassin´s Creeds»), the latter having a high content of risk and violence. This may be a matter of fun through action, represented on the one hand by football and the predominance of physical attributes (strength, speed, agility, etc.), and on the other hand, by violence (here again, the predominance of physical capacity). In both cases, a common denominator is the feeling of adrenalin release inherent to the tense situations caused by the strategies for play. Germán says, «I like the type of 'rah-tah-tah' action better».

On the contrary, other types of games, e.g. games of logic, puzzles, or table games are rejected because they are considered to be for «freaks». The reason for this, in Germán's opinion, is «because you have to think more, you have to search for more things». It seems to be a matter of «playing simply for the sake of playing», without having to think, and finding entertainment in the search for action.

Online games seem to find great acceptance among respondents. They are more fun because «you're talking and listening» (Germán) while you are playing. Furthermore, this increases the possibilities of actually feeling the risk and fun, because «you are being told to 'make your way to such-and-such a place' or 'go to this meeting-point'» (Germán). «You show the other guy's screen, you show where he is, and your companion will kill him...» (Manuel).

Nevertheless, although Juana believes that the violent attitudes in these video games may lead to this behaviour being reproduced, the rest of the respondents didn't agree. They distinguish perfectly well between «violent action and fun». What is more, according to Manuel, the reason they like this type of game is not because of the actual violence, but more «because you go online, we all go online together, and it's fun. If they invented a different game that didn't involve shooting, and it was a good game... well, we would like it too». In any case, the respondents said that they were aware of the PEGI regulation code: «For example, if it shows a fist, that means violence. If it shows a syringe, that's... that's drugs. If it shows –I think– three people, that means discrimination. If it shows two symbols for people –a man and a woman– that means sex. And I think if it shows a speech bubble, that means inappropriate language». (Juana).

On the contrary, the girls who were interviewed prefer video games like «Sing Star» or «Sims». In the latter case, their reading is that the game fosters behaviours that will influence their future models for action. Furthermore, the perception of some of the male respondents seems to associate the use of individual games with boys, and group games with girls. Germán told us: «I think so. From what I've seen, I would say so. Maybe there are some games where it's not the case, but in the majority, it is. A game I've seen girls playing, and which I've played with them, is Guitar Hero. But it's because it's a game to play in a group. But I have never seen any girls playing a game like this; it wouldn't be something 'normal'». Germán added, «But girls never play alone. They're in another world. (…). They have a different way of thinking (...) as if they think they are more grown up (...). They are tougher mentally». According to Carlos, «Girls don't like FIFA. When they come (to the centre), they only like Tuenti, and meantime, we play computer games. They do their own thing».

Regarding respondents' awareness of the «body image values projected by video game characters», young people clearly identify the main caracters –mainly male– as heroes who have the following physical features: «tall, strong, handsome, or weird» (Germán); and related with «certain» social success: «the good guys, the superheroes, the great guys, the champions» (Carlos). In the case of the main female characters: «Maybe they are very thin, or they make them very pretty and... they show them as superperfect» (Juana) Respondents also mentioned other specific attributes, i.e. «they are unpretentious, because they are kind and because they help people» (Juana)

Finally, games are usually swapped around among friends. There is a «certain» degree of organization in swapping video games that are available on the market. We are looking at loyalty codes among those who accept each other as «players». Germán tells us, «That way, we all get to play. Very often, when a new game is about to come out, we even tell each other, «I'll buy this game, and you buy that one and we'll swap» (...). And then we swap with each other». These known and shared codes mean that everyone is part of the community created by the actual video games (digital niches; Gozálvez, 2011). Video games, in fact, become the focus of social relationships among colleagues, acquaintances, etc., as they enable players to compete on line. There are frequent online conversations and discussions that are parallel to the game, and the importance of this lies in the fact that they share a specific language, which they identify as their own.

4. Discussion and conclusions

Perhaps the main conclusion reached from our study is that young people use Tuenti and video games for fun – for entertainment. It's a simple matter of «talking for the sake of talking», or «playing for the sake of playing», with no further complication involved. As our findings show, respondents feel the desire to satisfy their needs for pleasure and communication by using these environments (which coincides with the findings of studies and reports from different governmental and non-governmental organizations, e.g. those mentioned in the review made by Fuentes, 2011); at least, that is how Germán or Carlos see it.

There could be a problem if the pursuit of pleasure were to become endless and remain unfulfilled. In this sense, the fact that they are unaware of their daily media diet, and likewise, of their need to be constantly online, leads us to think that the limits to the use of social networks and video games are not clear (particularly, if we take WiFi connections into consideration).

On the one hand, if we look at the search for pleasure, we would need to look at the means employed in its attainment. In our study, the means are the actual Tuenti network, and video games. In the case of the latter, boys' preferences (football and war) do lead to some controversy, from a humane point of view. To obtain pleasure-fun from violence, from the abuse of strength, from suffering, would be contrary to common sense, and to humankind's very existence (macro level). However, there is another possible reading: on a micro level (individual), to justify fun in a hedonistic fashion (referring to the person) may contribute to their well-being, i.e. as a way of escaping from certain situations, everyday stressful experiences, anxiety, exhaustion, etc. Fun –in a hedonistic sense– can become an everyday experience that creates the harmony necessary for our happiness. Here again, it is a matter of learning the weight and the importance of each of these activities in our daily life.

Furthermore, the need for constant stimulation leads respondents to search for adrenalin release, perhaps motivated by the subsequent feelings of euphoria, energy, and subsequent relaxation. Sedentary lives in urban populations, and everyday stress encourage people to search for stimuli that will make them feel «alive» and «fulfilled». Because of their immediacy, the constant urgency (live or die, score a goal or miss), and unpredictability, video games (whether war games or sports games) can foster an addiction to adrenalin release. Similarly, as the contributions of Lenhart and Madden (2007), and Subrahmanyam and Greenfield

(2008) show, another notable aspect is respondents' readiness to share information, photographs, and to stay up-to-date on what others are doing, as a way of maintaining social ties and previously existing relationships (hanging out)... There is a certain obligation to show a part of ourselves, a part of our lives. This «sort» of exhibitionism takes the form of projecting a self-image of the participants, in which other people's opinions are valued and taken into consideration (even if they are people in our own environment). We are talking about a relative return to childhood where the child, through his actions, strives to gain the attention of adults, the people from whom he demands affection, in order to be the centre of their attention. Thus, we wonder whether respondents feel the need to ratify their own role within their group of friends.

Using Tuenti to flirt (Livingstone, 2008; Pascoe, 2010; boyd, 2010), to talk about their lives, and play certain video games (leaving aside those that require «thinking») has become quite a fad among participants – a reference point for young people, «something to follow». From this perspective, the fad becomes a powerful socializing agent among young people. A new fashion of online socializing (Castells, 2003) that builds on the relationships between friends, relatives, etc. They like it and imitate it; they reproduce languages (e.g. languages proper to video games), behavioural codes, attitudes (greater disinhibition), lifestyles (usage routines), which make them feel as if they belong to the social group (digital niches) that represents their age group. And although, for some, the fad might be a superficial factor of social integration (Téramo, 2006), its power to form judgements and meanings should not be underestimated, particularly during the construction stage of our individuality, of our identity (our online self), as shown by the contributions of Muros (2011).

Nonetheless, if a fad exists –an example to follow– it is because there is a market behind it that offers these possibilities; a marketing structure that «sells» these models, but which also reflects the preferences in the sector. It is a vicious circle which can only be broken by educational dynamics targeting themes, usage times, etc., and by fostering critical capacity in respect of the body image and the different values projected by the main players in video games, i.e. broadly speaking, strength, roughness, assignment of dominant, active roles, in the case of males, compared to the delicate nature, coordination, and aesthetic sense of passive, submissive females, at the service of the community (Díez, 2004; Aragón, 2011). In other words, the classic, stereotypical view of gender applied to video games, in the form of their main characters. Nonetheless, although most respondents recognized these clichés, this is not the only image

> Boys' preferences (football and war) do lead to some controversy, from a humane point of view. To obtain pleasure-fun from violence, from the abuse of strength, from suffering, would be contrary to common sense, and to humankind's very existence (macro level). However, there is another possible reading: on a micro level (individual), to justify fun in a hedonistic fashion (referring to the person) may contribute to their well-being, i.e. as a way of escaping from certain situations, everyday stressful experiences, anxiety, exhaustion, etc.

symbolized in video games. Occasionally, we find a female with manly attributes, characterizing an androgynous woman, who would be in line with postmodernist visions, where what is hybrid and relative becomes relevant. Nowadays, despite having reached levels of equality in social terms, and despite the existence of alternatives, there still remains a dualistic vision of the values and roles inherent to each gender at least among the young people who participated in the study. This leads us to think that, in some cases, we still have a long way to go.

Similarly, we find it interesting to look at respondents' opinions regarding the scarcity or non-existence of parental control of content. All respondents coincided in that they themselves regulated their use, and time employed online. This situation reflects their capa-

city to act autonomously and independently. Social networks and video games are no different to any other area of young people's lives, precisely because of their everyday nature; this implies that they can foster the development of media competence. Young people should know what information is harmful or illegal, what implications it might have, and take decisions accordingly (e.g. self-regulation, online/offline identity, control of own and others' private information, discriminatory content, etc.). It is not a question of censoring use and time, but rather of building critical capacity and fostering a participatory culture, both online and offline, that is based on freedom of expression and is conducive to values such as equality, respect and dignity.

What seems to be obvious throughout these pages is that social networks and video games open a gateway to a symbolical world, to new systems of representation that define a reality, at times non-face-to-face, at times face-to-face, but real nonetheless. Accordingly, we definitely advocate the learning of online civility (Castells, 2003), based on social and play-based experiences that reinforce social and cultural engagement.

Notes

[1] In this respect, see the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, of 20 December 2007 – A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment; and the Commission Recommendation 2009/625/EC, of 20 August 2009, on media literacy in the digital environment for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society.

[2] RDI Project, «Civic experience of secondary students (compulsory secondary education) in the new virtual and school environments: relationships and implications» (EDU2010-18585).

[3] This is an environment indicated for the creation of school activities. It is free-of-cost, and has unrestricted distribution and few technical requirements. The technology used is Macromedia Flash. It is easily accessible on Internet. Different activities can be played, e.g. alphabet soup, dictation, hidden words, operations, image classification, etc.

[4] The names of the respondents shown in this article are fictitious.

Research Support

References

AGUADED, J.I. & AL. (2011). *Informe de investigación: el grado de competencia mediática en la ciudadanía andaluza*. Huelva: Grupo Comunicar Ediciones/Grupo de Investigación Ágora de la Universidad de Huelva.

ÁLVAREZ, G.M. (2009). Etnografía virtual: explotación de una opción metodológica para la investigación en entornos virtuales de aprendizaje. *Revista Q, 3* (6) (revistaq.upb.edu.co/principalSeccion.php?seccion=6&idArticulo=270) (18-03-2012).

ARAGÓN, Y. (2011). Desarmando el poder antisocial de los videojuegos. REIFOP, 14 (2), 97-103. (www.aufop.com/aufop/revistas/arta/digital/163/1667) (18-02-2012).

BOYD, D. (2010). Friendship. In M. ITO & AL. (Eds.), *Hanging out*, *Messing around and Geeking Out*. *Kids Living and Learning with New Media* (pp. 79-84). Cambridge (Massachusetts): MIT Press.

CASTELLS, M. (2003). *La Galaxia Internet*. Barcelona: Mondadori.

DÍEZ, E.J. (2004) (Coord.). *Investigación desde la práctica. Guía didáctica para el análisis de los videojuegos*. Madrid: Instituto de la Mujer (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales) y CIDE (Ministerio de Educación). (www.educacion.es/cide/espanol/publicaciones/colecciones/mujeres/colm006/colm006pc.pdf.) (04-03-2011).

FERRÉS, J. & PISCITELLI, A. (2012). La competencia mediática: propuesta articulada de dimensiones e indicadores. *Comunicar, 38*, 75-82. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C38-2011-02-08).

FUENTES, J.A. (2011). Características de la actividad cívica de los adolescentes y jóvenes españoles: e-ciudadanía. *REIFOP, 14* (2), 115-126. (www.aufop.com/aufop/revistas/arta/digital/163/1669) (01-12-2011).

GOZÁLVEZ, V. (2011). Educación para la ciudadanía democrática en la cultura digital. *Comunicar, 36*, 131-138. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C36-2011-03-04).

HAMPTOM, K. & WELLMAN, B. (2001). Long Distance Community in the Network Society. Contact and support beyond Netville. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 45, 476-495. (DOI: 10.1177/00027640121957303).

HASTE, H. (2010). Citizenship Education: A Critical Look at a Contested Field. En L.R. SHERROD, J. TORNEY-PURTA & C.A. FLANAGAN (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth* (pp. 161-188). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

HAYES, E. & GEE, J. (2009). Public Pedagogy through Video games: Design, Resources and Affinity Spaces. In J.A. SANDLIN, B.D. SCHULTZ & J. BURDICK (Eds.), *Handbook of Public Pedagogy: Education and Learning beyond schooling* (pp. 185-193). New York: Routledge.

HINE, C. (2004). *Etnografía virtual*. Barcelona: Editorial UOC.

HORST, H.A., HERR-STEPHENSON, B. & ROBINSON, L. (2010). Media Ecologies. En M. ITO & AL.(Eds.), *Hanging out*, *Messing around and Geeking Out*. *Kids Living and Learning with New Media* (pp. 29-31). Cambridge (Massachusetts): The MIT Press.

HUIZINGA, J. (2000). *Homo Ludens*. Madrid: Alianza.

ITO, M. & BITANNI, M. (2010). Gaming. En M. ITO & AL. (Eds.), *Hanging out*, *Messing around and Geeking Out*. *Kids Living and Learning with New Media* (pp. 195-203). Cambridge (Massachusetts): MIT Press.

JENKINS, H. & AL. (2009). *Confronting the Challenges of Partipatory Culture. Media Education for the 21st Century*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.

LENHART, A. & MADDEN, M. (2007). S*ocial Networking Websites and Teens: An Overview. Pew Internet & American Life Project*. Washington, DC: Pew/Internet.

LIVINGSTONE, S. (2008). Taking Risky Opportunities in Youthful Content Creation: Teenagers´ Use of Social Networking Sites of Social Networking Sites for Intimacy, Privacy and Self Expression. *New Media Society*, 10 (3), 393-411.

MARQUÉS, P. (2009). *Los videojuegos* (http://peremarques.pangea.org/videojue.htm) (20-03-2011). New Media. MIT Press: USA.

MOSQUERA, M.A. (2008). De la etnografía antropológica a la etnografía virtual. Estudio de las relaciones sociales mediadas por Internet. *Fermentum*, *18 (53)*, 523-549.

MUROS, B. (2011). El concepto de identidad en el mundo virtual: el «yo» on-line. *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado, 37 (14,2)*, 49-56.

ONTSI (Ed.) (2011). *Las redes sociales en Internet* (www.ontsi.red.es/ontsi/sites/default/files/redes_sociales-documento_0.pdf) (19-01-2012).

ONTSI (Ed.) (2012). *Perfiles* (www.ontsi.red.es/ontsi/sites/default/files/perfil_sociodemografico_de_los_internautas._analisis_de_datos_ine_2011.pdf) (25-01-2012).

PASCOE, C.J. (2010). Intimacy. En M. ITO & AL. (Eds.), *Hanging out, Messing around and Geeking Out. Kids Living and Learning with New Media* (pp. 117-132). Cambridge (Massachusetts): The MIT Press.

REID, A. (2011). Social Media, Public Pedagoy and the End of Private Learning. *Handbook of Public Pedagogy, 22*, 194-199. London: Routledge.

SALEN, K. (Ed.) (2008). *The Ecology of Games. Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning*. Masachusetts: The MIT Press.

SELWYN, N. (2011). *Citizenship, Technology and Learning. A Review of Recent Literature.* (www.futurelab.org.uk/litreviews).

SIMONS, H. (2009). *Case Study. Research and Practice.* London: Sage Publications.

STAKE, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Research*. ThousandOaks, CA: Sage Publications.

STEVENS, R., SATWICZ, T. & MCCARTHY, L. (2008). In-Game, In-Room, In-World: Reconnecting Video Game Play to the Rest of Kids´lives. In K. SALEN (Ed.), *The Ecology of Games. Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning* (pp. 41-66). Masachusetts: The MIT Press.

SUBRAHMANYAM, K. & GREENFIELD, P. (2008). Online Communication and Adolescent Relationships. *The Future of Children, 18 (1)*, 119-46.

TÉRAMO, M.T. (2006). Modas adolescentes y medios de comunicación como agentes socializadores. *Comunicar, 27*, 85-91.

TUCHO, F. (2005). La educación en comunicación como eje de una educación para la ciudadanía. *Comunicar 26*, 83-88.

● C. Marta, E. Martínez and L. Sánchez
Zaragoza / Granada (Spain)

The «i-Generation» and its Interaction in Social Networks. An Analysis of Coca-Cola on Tuenti

La «i-Generación» y su interacción en las redes sociales. Análisis de Coca-Cola en Tuenti

ABSTRACT

Teenagers and young adults are increasingly using social networks as a means to interact and participate in constructing a multiple speech. Companies take direct options with followers in networks and use these virtual structures to approach their target. The purpose of this paper is to study, using empirical and observational methodology, how to build «Coca-Cola» brand image in «Tuenti», followed by the network over the public sector. Among other things, we will see how involved the brand and how followers, what are the issues that are introduced on the inputs and through what kind of formats. In conclusion, we noted that the interest in the brand of free speech to let the followers is just a strategy, the actual entries of «Coca-Cola» are very rare but they all have a high effect, a language that challenges the user to activate and resume his speech so directed. Moreover, there is no mechanism differentiating between information, entertainment and advertising, which combined with continued exposure to advertising impacts across different formats, leads us to propose the need for media education to encourage responsible use critic and social networks by young people.

RESUMEN

Los adolescentes y jóvenes utilizan cada vez más las redes sociales como medio para interactuar y participar en la construcción de un discurso múltiple. Las empresas aprovechan las opciones de relación directa con los seguidores en las redes y utilizan estas estructuras virtuales para acercarse a su «target». El objeto de este artículo es estudiar, mediante una metodología empírica y observacional, cómo construye «Coca-Cola» su imagen de marca en «Tuenti», la red más seguida por este sector del público. Entre otros aspectos, observaremos de qué modo interviene la marca y cómo los seguidores; cuáles son los temas que se introducen en las entradas y a través de qué tipo de formatos. Como conclusión, advertimos que el interés de la marca de dejar libertad de expresión a los seguidores es solo una estrategia, en realidad las entradas de «Coca-Cola» son muy escasas pero todas ellas tienen un elevado efecto «gancho», con un lenguaje que interpela al usuario para que se active y retome su discurso de manera dirigida. Además, no existe ningún tipo de mecanismo diferenciador entre la información, el entretenimiento y la publicidad, lo que, unido a la exposición continuada a impactos publicitarios a través de diferentes formatos, nos lleva a proponer la necesidad de una educación mediática para fomentar el uso responsable y crítico de las redes sociales por parte de los jóvenes.

◆ Dr. Carmen Marta-Lazo is Full Professor of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the University of Zaragoza (Spain) (cmarta@unizar.es).

◆ Dr. Estrella Martínez-Rodrigo is Professor of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the University of Granada (Spain) (emrodrigo@ugr.es).

◆ Lourdes Sánchez-Martín is a Researcher of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the University of Granada (Spain) (lousanm@correo.ugr.es).

1. Introduction and state of the question

The «i-Generation», as its name implies, refers to those «interactive young people» (Martínez-Rodrigo & Marta-Lazo, 2011) born and brought up in a world in which screens are a natural part of their everyday habitat. The social communication media environment with its multiple permeable screens has gone from being a macro-context to a basic socializing factor of the first degree, in other words a micro-context that is widely used and always to hand. The opportunity to interact via social networks makes social relations easier to achieve, and this socializing agent has become a prime reference system for young people to construct their own social network of friendships and relationships.

In recent years we have seen how young people have progressively migrated from the TV to the computer screen. Viewing figures show how TV consumption among 13- to 24-year-olds has dropped year-by-year while Internet use has risen. Cáceres, Ruiz-San-Román & Brändle (2011: 28) state that «not only is almost every young person connected but they also use this technology in a highly intensive way».

Data from Kantar Media show how TV consumption among 13- to 24-year-olds has fallen by over 20 minutes a day in the last 10 years, while the study of «Attitudes towards Information and Communication Technologies» carried out by the CIS (2011) among 15- to 29-year-olds shows that 63.2% use Internet several times a day and 18.8% use the Internet once a day. This report states that young people mainly use the Internet to search for information or documents (82%), for interacting on social networks (79.6%) and checking emails (76.3%). A total of 47.8% use the social networks several times a day and 27.3% once a day. Young people use the social networks to: «keep in touch with those who they do not see very often» (73.9%), «see or share photos, videos, etc» (51.5%) and «out of curiosity, to find out what others are doing or saying on their social network» (38.4%).

Besides this, the time consumed and frequency of use of these multi-screen environments in youngsters' scenarios has increased, and the range of usage is more diversified. The Pfizer Foundation states that both Messenger and the mobile phone have been crucial tools for young people to organize, socialize and communicate but Internet use via mobile terminals is fast becoming the platform of preference for keeping their social diaries up to date. This institution adds that the social networks are an ideal setting for opening up and consolidating connections that become relationships and friendships with a greater or lesser degree of

intensity: 71% of users have more than 46 friendships and the average number of contacts is 116. And users are joining social networks at an ever early age, as demonstrated in the «Study of safe behaviors in ICTs usage by children and young people and the e-confidence of their parents» by INTECO in 2009. The report states that the starting age for ICTs use is between 10- and 11-years-old, with half of this age group connecting to the Internet on a daily basis, and spending an average of 14 and a half hours per week online.

Companies aware of the vast amount of time teenagers and young people spend on their social networks and their potential as an interactive medium have started to use these platforms to promote their products among this population segment, which is seen as a direct consumer with influence on the family whose loyalty is worth cultivating for the future (Sánchez-Pardo & al., 2004: 58).

Channeling a positive brand image and the chance to interact with their target consumers are keys to company marketing on the Net. Strategies are based on the analysis of «digital sociability» which means discovering consumer needs and preferences in order to get ahead of the competition by using these virtual environments (Hernández & Ramón, 2009: 19-36). Teenagers and young people striving to become adults demand to take part and feel independent when they communicate online, and this has led to a business strategy to promote brands through the medium of social networks to target this segment (Exler, 2006). As Tur & Ramos-Soler (2008: 119) suggest: «In order to make an emotional connection, a brand must allow young people to interact with it by providing them with an environment that enables them to be themselves».

The brand, as a design or symbol aimed at identifying a product with specific features that make it stand out from the rest, joins the social networks to seek out a strategic and effective market position based on interactivity (Hensen, Shneiderman & Smith, 2011). The advantages over traditional media are considerable, as Hernández & Ramón (2010: 48) point out, because «some one billion active users could see your advert without the excessive cost associated with advertising in the traditional media».

The potential and appeal of the social networks together with the closeness that brands have been able to generate within these environments attract young people and convert them into the brand's social constructors. An example of this is the «Happing» online platform created by «Coca-Cola», the company under

study in this article, which encourages the involvement of the «Emerec» (Cloutier, 2001: 91-92), or prosumer, who not only selects what s/he wants to read but also adds comments to a communal text as a message constructor in a collaborative campaign created by «smart mobs» (Rheingold, 2002: 13). An analysis of this platform by Llorente (2009: 174-200) concludes that «users and the brand are satisfied with the results of this type of campaign; the users because they have a platform on which to express themselves free of charge, and the brand because it can execute a creative marketing campaign at very low cost». As a result the social networks are «transforming the laws of marketing techniques (Caldevilla, 2010: 65).

The relation of the «i-Generation» to advertising via social networks is creating new models of interaction with the brand and provides further opportunities for internauts to participate in the creation of the corporate image. Companies also take advantage of these interaction and multiple creation platforms to profile the consumer and let them take part in producing campaigns, which enables them to feel as if they were co-creators. This is the case with «Coca-Cola» with its corporate communication strategies that enable it to «strengthen its brand and extract information from all the conversations that take place on its website; and also (…) benefit from the fact that some users get very excited about taking part in creating a discourse» (Llorente, 2009: 194).

«Coca-Cola» operates within several social networks including «Tuenti», the most widely used among Spanish teenagers and young people with more than 12 million users. According to the latest study, «Observatorio de redes sociales IV Oleada» (2012), 32% of «Tuenti» users have made contact with a company or brand and 55% state that they find it interesting to follow a brand that they like. The typical «Tuenti» user profile is of a person aged between 12 and 24 studying, or having studied, at secondary school up to the age of 16 (Alexa, 2012). With this age segment in mind, «Coca-Cola» joined this social network to approach this target group and to develop various strategies. Its website not only includes information about the brand but also promotes activities with the

aim of getting close to each user individually, such as sending a congratulatory message on joining its community and on their birthday.

«Coca-Cola» was one of the first brands to adopt the Net as an effective medium for getting close to young people (Alet, 2004: 80). In 2001, it created the «The Coca-Cola Movement» virtual platform which achieved high levels of regular and active participation among its users (Coca-Cola, 2004: 30-31). It set up the first social community with spaces for young people to meet and relate, with opportunities to take part in communal activities, themes and content: music, electronic, mobile phones, videogames, sports and outdoor activities, travel, fashion and financial products.

> Teenagers and young people need to be trained in media literacy so that they are aware of the type of strategy brands deploy on the social networks, to understand advertising tactics and when an authentic shared discourse is taking place, so that they can follow the brand intervention from a critical viewpoint and become responsible contributors to the co-creation of content.

The platform also enabled young people to interact among themselves and with the brand via text or voice, and to construct their own image in a virtual society by using an avatar. Participation increased year-by-year (table 1) (next page):

This community yielded considerable benefits for the brand by fomenting relations between young people and allowing it to insert advertising content within a social and entertainment environment. More than one million people signed up and 50,000 accessed the site daily. The company increased its sales by 4% in just one year with a turnover of 2.5 billion euros (Sicilia & Palazón, 2006).

Despite its success, «The Coca-Cola Movement» closed down in 2008 as young people started signing up to «Tuenti» and «Facebook». These social networks attracted the most users and offered greater scope for interaction and creation because their technology enabled instant and fluid communication with friends, brands and a diversity of formats, etc.

Year	Number of users
2001	183,145
2002	600,000
2003	900,000
2004	1,100,000

Table 1. Number of users of «The Coca-Cola Movement» («Coca-Cola» Social Report, 2004: 31).

S o «Coca-Cola» opted to get in direct contact with its fans in Spain through various formats on «Tuenti» and is now one of the biggest advertisers on that social network. Neither is it a coincidence that a brand that identifies itself with well-being should have selected a network that describes itself as «bursting with vitality» (Caldevilla, 2010: 51).

Although the social networks appear to offer a broad landscape where opinions can be freely aired, the majority of companies shield themselves from the possibility of anti-brand users posting negative messages, by deploying control and filter mechanisms to guard and protect their image (Hernández & Ramón, 2010: 55). So it is that campaigns such as «Coca-Cola's» «Happing», far from the impression they give of offering a free speech forum, are in reality Corporate Communication-controlled strategies, since «it is unthinkable for «Coca-Cola» to tolerate opinions that do not conform to the positive Corporate Image» (Llorente, 2009: 197). To counter these control mechanisms which operate inside the social networks, teenagers and young people should be given media literacy guidelines so that they can be aware of the real function of these brands on the social networks and know how to analyze the discourses and understand their objectives, be they to inform, to entertain or advertise.

If the Internet user does not reach this state of awareness via a series of mediations, he/she cannot move up to the next stage which is to appropriate content and adopt a critical and reflective attitude towards the messages, knowing how to interpret them both in form and content, understanding what their objective is and thus allowing them to become true «perceptive participants» (Marta-Lazo, 2008: 36).

2. Material and methods

«Coca-Cola» created a site on «Tuenti» in May 2010, the same month that brands were given permission to launch their own websites on social networks and engage in interaction with users via these virtual communities. It quickly attracted a lot of visitors and became one of the most widely followed brands on «Tuenti» (table 2).

The aim of this study is to analyze the communication strategies at work on the «Coca-Cola» website on «Tuenti» through various activities developed by the brand and the users of this social network. Firstly, we categorize the different formats used by «Coca-Cola», such as «Advergame», which is a gallery of ima-

Date	Number of users
February 2011	201,000
October 2011	219,000
May 2012	332,000

Table 2. Number of followers of the «Coca-Cola» website on «Tuenti» (Compiled by the authors from data supplied by «Tuenti»).

ges and videos, «Entertainment» and direct communication. The latter is the focus of our study as it involves more interaction between the brand and its followers, and unlike the other two formats it is a horizontal form of communication.

Our objectives are to: 1) Note the type of themes around which communication between «Coca-Cola» and young people takes place; 2) Measure the extent of the interaction between both on «Tuenti»; 3) Describe the brand image promoted by «Coca-Cola» on «Tuenti».

This study is part of a broader investigation that allowed us to know beforehand which month of 2011 saw the highest levels of participation among its followers; as a result we selected December of that year, which was also when the brand celebrated its 125th anniversary. The sample contains the complete direct communication activity between the brand and its followers during that month: 14 interventions by «Coca-Cola» and 3,425 responses by young people. The variables analyzed by means of empirical and observational methodology and which help to define the brand strategy on «Tuenti» are: the themes presented by the brand; the number of «Coca-Cola» interventions; the frequency of brand publications throughout the month; the number of responses to these interventions by young people.

3. Analysis and results

Our analysis showed that «Coca-Cola» made only 14 interventions in December 2011 but they generated considerable user activity. The themes presented by the brand that month were cinema, gifts, social awareness and interventions directly related to «Coca-Cola» itself. However, one theme was missing in December that had been present in previous months and which is usually very popular among young people: music.

The themes presented in December 2011 were typical of that time of year, in particular gifts. Some

interventions combined themes with the objective of grabbing young people's attention even more. This was the case of cinema and gifts, and cinema and «Coca-Cola» (figure 1), in which free tickets were given away to see the latest films, emphasizing that it was the brand inviting the fan to the cinema, or of the pleasure of consuming the brand while watching a good film.

Most of the interventions were themes related to the brand (28.5%), followed by cinema and gifts (21.4%); to which we can add the combinations of the two. The «social awareness» theme only appeared once that month (7.1%) from which we deduce that it merely represents a formula by which the brand can

fans as We and communicates with them directly with the singular or plural You; it repeatedly resorts to exclamations to emphasize those elements that interest young people, to interrogative constructions to encourage user participation and imperatives to stimulate them into action. It often uses «emoticons» at the end of sentences, those smiley faces that so aptly match the brand's narrative.

In terms of the second objective, relating to the extent of the interaction between young people and the brand, we see that «Coca-Cola» always starts the conversation via its interventions. It normally launches a new intervention each day, although December was different in that no intervention appeared on public holidays (December 6th and 8th, Christmas Day and on New Year's Eve) or on most weekends. However, it intensified its activity on the days after December 6th-8th and on the following weekend with two interventions per day. Also, there was a daily intervention on each of the three days leading up to New Year (figure 3). The brand strategy on this social network seems to follow the lifestyle pattern of young people who spend those days with family and friends, values which the brand promotes in many of its adverts.
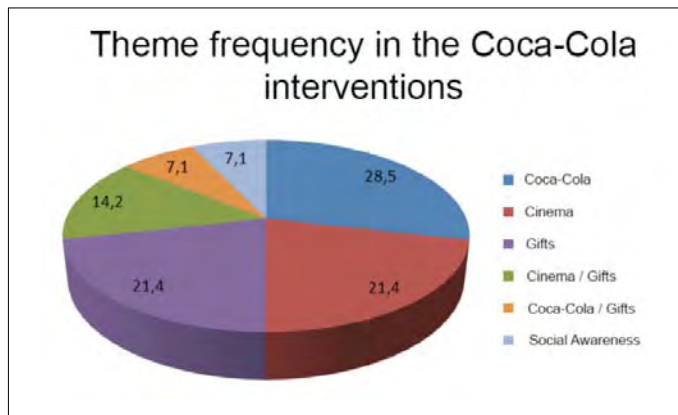
Figure 1. Proportion of the themes in the interventions by «Coca-Cola».

be identified with certain good causes in a symbolic and hardly representative way. Yet the intervention that aroused most young people to take part was precisely «social awareness», with statements that refer to building a better world, bringing about global change or highlighting the «good things» in life.

It is important to note that all themes used by the brand contain references to «Coca-Cola», but there are no mechanisms to help the user to separate informative content from advertising. All the interventions allude to the product indirectly, thus cloaking the advertising at work, and associate the brand with the many advantages that young people can find within product profile, especially gifts and entertaining experiences (Martínez-Rodrigo & Sánchez-Martín, 2012: 478).

Also noteworthy is how the brand attracts followers by using a style that is tailored to young people (figure 2). The brand addresses itself to its

This analysis reveals the importance of dates to highlight a fact that we mentioned previously related to the themes, that the only time «Coca-Cola» used the «social awareness» theme was at the end of December (in the middle of Christmas festivities and at the year's end), which justified the brand's choice of theme and which elicited a huge response by its followers with 1,500 reactions. In this way «Coca-Cola» aligns itself with young people's sensibilities and the Christmas spirit that society exudes over this period.

Our records show that the 14 interventions generated a total of 3,425 responses from young people. Figure 4 shows that the number of responses increased as the month progressed. While interventions 6 and 7 elicited few responses (4 and 2, respectively) others stimulated greater participation, such as interventions 13 and 14 on December 29th and 30th
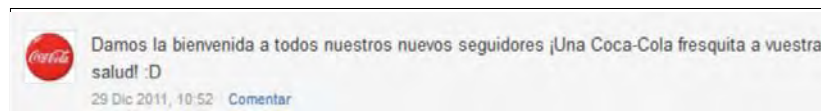
Figure 2. Example of a «Coca-Cola» intervention on «Tuenti» with its welcome message to young people (www.tuenti.com/cocacola).
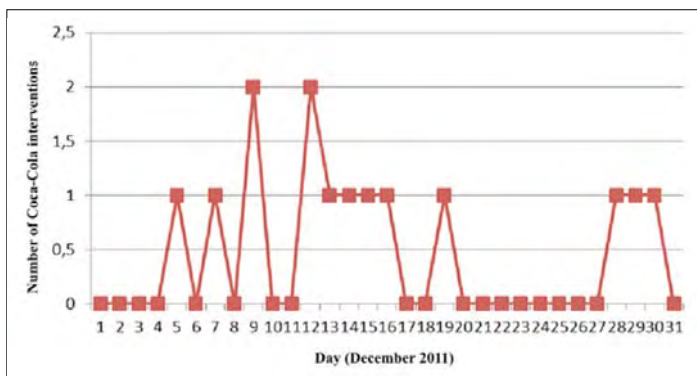
Figure 3. Frequency of interventions by «Coca-Cola» on «Tuenti» in December 2011.

which saw 1,055 and 1,514 responses respectively. Young users respond spontaneously and directly, as is their way, via short text messages that are rarely mediated, with frequent use of «emoticons»; syntactic and morphological errors abound in about 80% of the messages, as do spelling mistakes. We also recorded the number of responses made by the brand in the interventions, which amounted to no more than two per intervention and whose purpose was to encourage young people to take part, speed up dialogue or answer specific questions from users seeking information. In these brand responses, «Coca-Cola» even calls users by their first names, personalizing its responses and calling on them directly to take part and get actively involved in the group. However, this personal contact in the interventions does not go beyond the use of the singular You or We, as pointed out previously.

The considerable activity of young people within this brand area, where they talk about their tastes, interests and even expressing repeatedly their predilection for the product, means that it is the followers themselves who contribute towards the creation and conception of the brand, and even act as its ambassadors by publicizing the soft drink. They also influence other individuals and provide the brand with important feedback for future interventions or campaigns aimed at this same target audience.

In the third objective of our study, to describe the image pro-

moted by «Coca-Cola» on «Tuenti», we found that all the followers' messages sent to the brand were positive which would imply that some kind of filter was in place that enabled the brand to weed out any undesirable messages that might damage its image, a common tactic among major companies when using these networks. A positive image is also reinforced by the fact that the users can only respond to conversations initiated by the brand which in reality limits freedom of expression. The lack of maturity normal to the average age of users of this social network might make it easier for «Coca-Cola» to restrict them within its brand discourse, since the responses always seem to suit the interests of the brand and followers are rewarded with gifts that placate them or distract them from exercising their critical faculties.

4. Discussion and conclusions

As a final synthesis of our analysis of the subject, we have drawn the following conclusions:

1) The unstoppable youth migration towards the computer and, particularly in recent years towards the Internet, and away from TV has made social networks an ideal medium for companies to engage in the social construction of their brands with the public. The mass presence of young people in this virtual environment
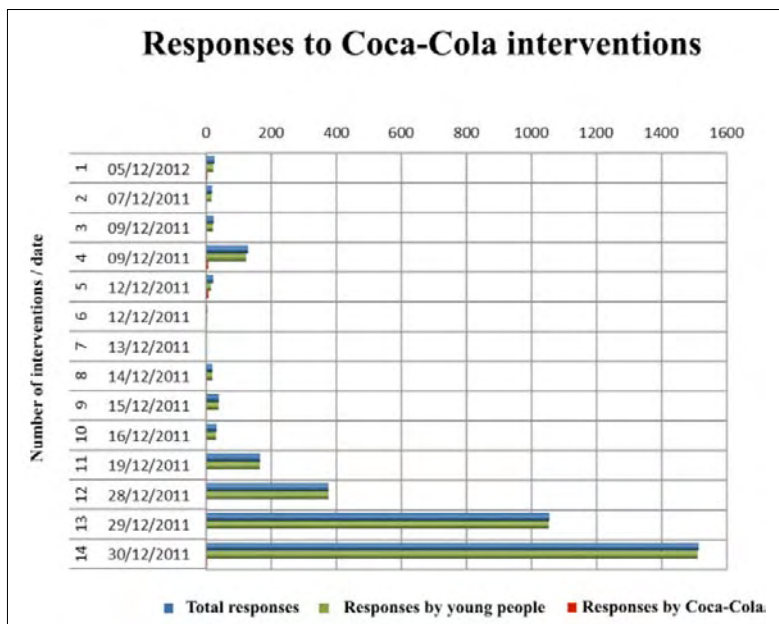
Figure 4. Interaction between «Coca-Cola» and young people on «Tuenti».

represents a big shift towards a new scenario where users maintain multiple interactions with brands.

2) Since teenagers and young people represent a special sector of the public that can be targeted to foment loyalty to their products from an early age, brands such as «Coca-Cola» use the social networks where this segment is grouped in greater numbers and have switched their advertising campaigns away from traditional outlets to new communication platforms such as «Tuenti».

3) Companies normally use the social networks as a medium to get to know their target clients, and to control their tastes and preferences via low-cost, high-impact campaigns.

4) The image that these social network users project of free expression and «participative culture» (Jenkins & Deuze, 2008) is conditioned by brand strategies that deploy messages to grab the users' attention and motivate their followers to participate in restricted themes proposed and managed by the brands.

5) «Coca-Cola», like all brands that focus on teenagers and young people, use formats and themes that interest this target consumer. They make symbolic use of certain themes to establish a link between the brand and its commitment to social causes, which our study shows actually created more impact than other more conventional and popular themes.

6) The brand habitually mixes information, entertainment and advertising content without defining or declaring which format the theme belongs to, so young people are continually bombarded by advertising in different formats.

7) Teenagers and young people need to be trained in media literacy so that they are aware of the type of strategy brands deploy on the social networks, to understand advertising tactics and when an authentic shared discourse is taking place, so that they can follow the brand intervention from a critical viewpoint and become responsible contributors to the co-creation of content.

References

ALET, J. (2004). Los eficaces efectos de la Comunidad de Coca-Cola. *MK Marketing+Ventas*, *192*, 1-5 (http://pdfs.wke.es/9/3/4/4/pd0000019344.pdf) (10-05-2012)

ALEXA (Ed.) (2012). *Audience Demographics for Tuenti*. *The web information company*. (www.alexa.com/siteinfo/tuenti.com#) (30-09-2012).

CÁCERES, M.D., RUIZ-SAN-ROMÁN, J.A. & BRÄNDLE, G. (2011). El uso de la televisión en un contexto multipantallas: viejas prácticas en nuevos medios. *Anàlisi*, *43*, 21-44.

CALDEVILLA, D. (2010). *Las redes sociales. Tipología, uso y consumo de las redes 2.0 en la sociedad digital actual*. Documentación de las Ciencias de la Información, *33*, 45-68. (http://revistas.ucm.es/inf/02104210/articulos/DCIN1010110045A.PDF) (01-10-2012)

CIS (2011). *Actitudes hacia las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación*. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, n° 2.889. (www.cis.es/cis/opencm/ES/1_encuestas/estudios/ver.jsp?estudio=12624) (30-09-2012).

CLOUTIER, J. (2001). *Petit traité de communication. Emerec à l heure des technologies numériques*. Montreal: Carte Blanche.

COCA-COLA (Ed.) (2004). *Memoria social Coca-Cola*. (http://conoce.cocacola.es/img/conocenos/informes/Memoria_Social_04.pdf) (11-05-2012).

EXLER, A. (2006). *Global Players. Coca-Cola: Vom selbstgebrauten Aufputschmittel zur amerikanischen Ikone*. Hamburgo: Europäische Verlagsanstalt.

FUNDACIÓN PFIZER (Ed.) (2009). *La juventud y las redes sociales en Internet*. (www.fundacionpfizer.org/pdf/INFORME_FINAL_Encuesta_Juventud_y_Redes_Sociales.pdf) (11-03-2012).

HENSEN, D., SHNEIDERMAN, B. & SMITH, M.A. (2011). *Analyzing Social Media Networks with NodeXL: Insights from a Connected World*. Boston: Elsevier.

HERNÁNDEZ-FERNÁNDEZ, A. & RAMÓN-FERNÁNDEZ, F. (2009). El derecho a la propia imagen de los menores en las redes sociales y medios de comunicación. *Revista Aranzadi de Derecho y Nuevas Tecnologías*, *20*, 19-36.

INTECO (Ed.) (2009). *Estudio sobre hábitos seguros en el uso de las TIC por niños y adolescentes y e-confianza de sus padres*. Madrid: Instituto Nacional de Tecnologías de la Comunicación. (www.inteco.es/Seguridad/Observatorio/Estudios_e_Informes/Estudios_e_Informes_1/Estudio_ninos) (12-05-2012).

JENKINS, H. & DEUZE, M. (2008). Convergence Culture. Convergence: *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, *14*, 1, 5-12.

LLORENTE, C. (2009): Happing: Nativos digitales al servicio de la imagen corporativa de Coca-Cola. *Icono 14*, *12*, 174-200.

MARTA-LAZO, C. (2008). El proceso de recepción televisiva como interacción de contextos. *Comunicar*, *31*, 35-40. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/c31-2008-01-004).

MARTÍNEZ-RODRIGO, E. & SÁNCHEZ-MARTÍN, L. (2012). Publicidad en Internet: nuevas vinculaciones en las redes sociales. *Vivat Academia*, *117*, 469-480. (www.ucm.es/info/vivataca/numeros/n117-E/DATOSS.htm) (03-04-2012)

MARTÍNEZ-RODRIGO, E. & MARTA-LAZO, C. (2011). *Jóvenes interactivos. Nuevos modos de comunicarse*. La Coruña: Netbiblo.

RHEINGOLD, H. (2002). *Multitudes inteligentes. La próxima revolución social*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

SÁNCHEZ-PARDO, L. & al. (2004). *Jóvenes y publicidad: valores en la comunicación publicitaria para jóvenes*. (www.fad.es/sala_lectura/jovenesypublicidad.pdf) (03-03-2012)

SICILIA, M. & PALAZÓN, M. (2006). El movimiento Coca-COLA. In S. RUIZ-DE-MAYA & I. GRANDE-ESTEBAN, I. (Eds.), *Comportamientos de compra del consumidor. 29 casos reales*. Madrid: ESIC.

TUR, V. & RAMOS, I. (2008). *Marketing y niños*. Madrid: ESIC.

● David Buckingham and Carlos Rodríguez
Loughnorough (UK) / Santander (Spain)

Learning about Power and Citizenship in an Online Virtual World

Aprendiendo sobre el poder y la ciudadanía en un mundo virtual

ABSTRACT

This work presents a research study designed to analyse the development of power relations in a virtual world, known as Habbo Hotel, aimed at the child and teenage market. What motivated this work was the desire to understand how this company wielded its power through the different agents responsible for taking decisions on the behaviour of the users within this virtual world. Simultaneously, this research went deeply into the type of lessons learnt by users as to citizenship springing from the behaviour rules imposed by the company owning this space. In order to understand what young people were learning about the wielding of power, and the prototype model citizen within the virtual world, we analyse the systems of rules that govern what users can or cannot do, and we proceed to analyse the contents of spaces in which users will talk about the reasons why the company had expelled them from Habbo Hotel. The findings of this work reveal that the application of rules on the part of the company results in the experience inside this virtual world not always being fun, democratic, creative, participative or completely satisfying. This thus questions some of the main arguments proposed by different writers on these new forms of communication.

RESUMEN

En este trabajo se presenta una investigación orientada a analizar cómo se desarrollan las relaciones de poder dentro de un mundo virtual dirigido al público infantil y adolescente (Habbo Hotel). Se pretendía llegar a comprender cómo estaba la compañía propietaria de ese espacio moderando, y por lo tanto ejerciendo su poder, a través de los diferentes actores encargados de tomar decisiones sobre el comportamiento de los usuarios dentro del mundo virtual. Al mismo tiempo, se profundizó en el tipo de lecciones que aprenden los usuarios sobre el ejercicio de la ciudadanía, derivadas de las normas de comportamiento impuestas por la compañía. Para comprender qué estaban aprendiendo los menores sobre el ejercicio del poder y sobre el prototipo de ciudadano modelo dentro del mundo virtual, analizamos los sistemas de reglas que regulan aquello que pueden o no hacer los usuarios y procedimos al análisis del contenido de espacios en los que los usuarios hablaban sobre los motivos por los que la compañía los había expulsado de «Habbo Hotel». Los resultados de este trabajo ponen de manifiesto que la aplicación del sistema de reglas por parte de la compañía hace que la experiencia dentro del mundo virtual no sea siempre lúdica, democrática, creativa, participativa o plenamente satisfactoria. Esto pone en entredicho algunos de los principales argumentos esgrimidos por diferentes autores en defensa de estos nuevos medios de comunicación.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Virtual communities, youth culture, digital society, participation, democratization, media contents, virtual worlds.
Comunidades virtuales, cultura juvenil, sociedad digital, participación, democratización, contenidos multimedia, mundos virtuales.

◆ Dr. David Buckingham is Full Professor of the Department of Social Sciences of the Faculty of Social Sciences
at Loughborough University (United Kingdom) (D.Buckingham@lboro.ac.uk).

◆ Dr. Carlos Rodríguez-Hoyos is Lecturer of the Department of Education of the Faculty of Education
at the University of Cantabria (Spain) (rodriguezhc@unican.es).

1. Introduction

Digital technology has often been seen to provide forms of learning that are less constrained and more empowering than those of traditional schooling. According to its advocates, «technology-enhanced learning» is not simply more efficient than old-fashioned face-to-face methods, but also more creative, more collaborative and more child-centred. For example, authors such as Gee (2003) and Prensky (2006) contrast what they see as the compelling, authentic and pleasurable learning afforded by computer games with the constraining and authoritarian approach of traditional schooling. Similar assertions have been made about virtual worlds, celebrating their transformative possibilities for experiential learning, empowerment and learner control (Dede & al., 2005). Virtual worlds are seen to provide positive opportunities for children «to construct, re-construct and perform identities» through play (Marsh, 2010: 36).

Such arguments about technology are often aligned with broader discourses within education about creativity, personalisation and informal learning (for a general critique of such arguments, see Buckingham 2007). In relation to media, they also overlap with celebratory assertions about the emergence of a more democratic «participatory culture» (Jenkins, 2006) – that is, the possibilities for amateur creativity, «user-generated content» and «prosumption» (the blurring of production and consumption) that are apparently evident in online fan activities and sharing platforms such as YouTube, as well as in social networking sites, online games and virtual worlds.

In this article, we raise some critical questions about such claims by means of a case study of Habbo Hotel, an internationally popular virtual world mainly aimed at teenagers. Our analysis focuses on the power relationships between moderators and users in this world, which are very different from the benign and egalitarian picture that is painted by some enthusiasts – and indeed by the company that produces Habbo.

2. Mapping the field

While some virtual worlds have been in existence for more than a decade, research in this field is still at an early stage. In respect of learning, much of the research derives from the fields of educational technology and user-centred design: the aim here is primarily to identify how virtual worlds might be used as tools or resources for learning, especially in science education. In a meta-analysis of this work, Iqbal & al. (2010) find evidence that the use of virtual worlds can have positive effects on test scores, as well as on learners' moti-vation and behaviour, but that this depends on the extent to which the learning is (in their words) «inquiry-based, experiential [and] socio-collaborative». Other research from the user-centred design perspective has explored users' motivations in engaging in these spaces (Jung & Kang, 2010; Zhou & al., 2011), and how the analysis of users' experiences might inform the work of developers (Johnson, 2007); while economists have considered how users' interactions might be monetized more effectively (Mantymaki & Salo, 2011).

Some studies have used more ethnographic approaches to explore the use of virtual worlds in formal or informal educational settings. For example, Wohlwend & al. (2011) used «geosemiotic» methods to analyze the relationships children established in an after-school club around their use of the virtual world Webkinz. Merchant (2010) investigated the possibility of using virtual worlds for literacy learning in a mainstream classroom. Both studies point to the crucial role of contextual factors, and some of the complexities at stake in the interaction between online and offline experiences. However, both ultimately seem to repeat the polarization between the «free» world of the online community and the constrained world of educational institutions. Merchant, for example, discusses «how the social control of pedagogic practice mitigates against significant innovation, as new literacy practices are pressed into the service of older ones» (Merchant, 2010: 147) – an argument that implicitly positions the «new literacy practices» of the virtual world on the side of «innovation» and in opposition to the «social control» of traditional pedagogy.

A couple of studies come somewhat closer to our main concerns here. Lehdonvirta & al. (2009) discuss what they call the «simulated consumption play» or «virtual consumption» that occurs in Habbo Hotel, which is made possible through the exchange of virtual commodities for real money. They describe forms of consumer behaviour in Habbo that are manifested in participants' clothing styles, their display of possessions and their decoration of personal spaces; and they show how these serve to establish membership of exclusive social groups and to maintain status hierarchies. According to these authors, participants in Habbo are learning to be consumers, and to adopt preferred consumption styles; although they also argue that these practices may have inadvertently «green» environmental consequences, insofar as they provide an alternative to the accumulation of material goods.

Meanwhile, Ruckenstein (2011) offers a detailed case study of Habbo Hotel that raises broader ques-

tions about what Boelstorff (2008) terms «creationist capitalism» – that is, the move towards «participatory culture» or «prosumption» briefly identified above. Ruckenstein argues that children's interactions in these worlds demonstrate «the interlinking of children's social interactions and economic profit-making» (Ruckenstein, 2011: 1062): the commercial success of the operation depends upon children's «activity» and even their «creativity» (Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003). However, Ruckenstein adopts a somewhat uncritical stance towards the role of the producers: statements of company representatives –and their claims that the creation of the world is «in the hands of the users»– are largely taken at face value. The company, she argues, creates a sense of «intimacy» with its customers (Ruckenstein, 2011: 1068); it offers children «consumer choices, recognition, and involvement» (Ruckenstein, 2011: 1073); and it is a «child-friendly environment» in which «children are acknowledged as «beings» rather than as incomplete becomings» (Ruckenstein, 2011: 1074). While Ruckenstein is clearly aware of the profit-seeking motivations of «creationist capitalism», she ultimately appears to accept the view of enterprises such as Habbo Hotel as providing «a space of autonomy and independence for children» (Ruckenstein, 2011: 1067). Our research provides significant grounds for challenging such claims.

3. Habbo Hotel

Habbo Hotel is a virtual world, similar in some respects to the adult Second Life. Users create digital avatars and furnish virtual «rooms» in which they live, and are able to engage in a range of interactions (including chat, competitions and games) with other users. Habbo Hotel was created in the year 2000 by the Finnish company Sulake Corporation. Unlike other virtual worlds such as Second Life, Habbo Hotel aims at a teenage audience: approximately 90% of registered members are between 13 and 18 years old.

Sulake's overall revenue grew by more than 20% between 2009 and 2010: its income during that year was over €56 million, and its gross profit was €5.4 million, at 9.5% of revenue. In common with some other virtual worlds, Habbo's business model is prima-

rily based on «micropayments» rather than subscription.

Habbo purports to be a safe social environment for children, and reassures parents of this in its online parents' guide. Users are informed about the Habbo Way, a simple set of «community guidelines» to be followed online (which will be discussed below); and there is a «panic button» through which users can access a child protection help-line (run in the UK by a police agency called CEOP, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre). However, the site also presents itself as a world that is created by its users: a pro-

> We raise some critical questions about such claims by means of a case study of Habbo Hotel, an internationally popular virtual world mainly aimed at teenagers. Our analysis focuses on the power relationships between moderators and users in this world, which are very different from the benign and egalitarian picture that is painted by some enthusiasts – and indeed by the company that produces Habbo.

motional video in the Parents' Guide claims that the Hotel is not created by a «mysterious genius» but by «other Habbos just like [you]» – «the genius of Habbo is its users!». In line with arguments about «the wisdom of crowds», the aspiration appears to be that the community will be self-regulating: users develop creative activities in collaboration with each other, and are effectively in control of the conduct and development of the world itself. According to its self-promotional texts, Habbo is a free and democratic environment where the only limitations and restrictions are those that derive from the lack of imagination of its users. In practice, however, the operation of the world is governed and monitored by several different categories of staff.

4. Research questions and methodology

Our focus here is on the forms of economic and political learning that are occurring in this virtual world. To what extent can we see Habbo Hotel as a free space, created only by its users? How do the constraints it imposes – the rules and forms of surveillance that are in operation – serve to produce certain

types of behaviour and prevent others? How do the producers of Habbo Hotel seek to construct a certain kind of user – a «model citizen», perhaps, or a self-regulating consumer? And in what ways do users themselves respond to this, and resist it?

Our analysis is carried out in two stages. Firstly, we have looked at the explicit rules that are identified by the company in documents such as its Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, Habbo Way and it's Official Parents' Guide. Secondly, and at greater length, we have explored users' accounts of how these rule sys-

official documentation. In some instances, users' accounts of practices in Habbo appeared to contradict the guarantees the company gives to parents about security. Yet in other cases, Sulake's official reasons for banning users, and their accounts of the process by which this took place, were at odds with the experiences described in the forums, where users frequently protested about apparently arbitrary and unaccountable expulsions.

Our interest here was not to conduct a statistical analysis of the most frequent reasons for expulsion, but rather to understand how the company was moderating, and therefore exercising power over, the actions of users. In particular, we wanted to understand the processes through which expulsion took place, how it was explained by the company, how users perceived and responded to this experience, and the consequences it had for them. We also needed to explore the roles of the various actors involved – the company, its official moderators, the volunteer hobbas and users themselves. Our approach draws on critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2006), in the sense that we are interested in how power operates both in the form of the language and in the

> In line with arguments about «the wisdom of crowds», the aspiration appears to be that the community will be self-regulating: users develop creative activities in collaboration with each other, and are effectively in control of the conduct and development of the world itself. According to its self-promotional texts, Habbo is a free and democratic environment where the only limitations and restrictions are those that derive from the lack of imagination of its users. In practice, however, the operation of the world is governed and monitored by several different categories of staff.

tems and power relationships operate in practice, using data drawn from user or fan forums, written both in English and in Spanish. As we started to explore these forums, we became particularly interested in the large number of complaints posted by users who had been expelled or banned from the Hotel, either permanently or temporarily. Although we began by looking only at official forums, we found that Sulake had disabled some of the groups in which these complaints were voiced. We therefore analyzed the content of two official forums and five unofficial forums where users talked about these experiences.

We found that there were some significant contradictions and inconsistencies between the official rules and the accounts given by users. The forms of power and discipline at work in Hotel seemed at some times more permissive and at other times much more authoritarian than those that were described in the

content, for example of the system of rules that operates in Hotel.

The data compilation process in the different message-boards analyzed covered the period February to May 2102. The total number of posts we analyzed across the seven forums was 2650. In order to conduct a qualitative analysis of the data compiled from the message-boards we created a system of categories and codes generated by means of an inductive-deductive process that allowed us to carry out a thematic coding of contents. This way, we identified units with meanings to which we assigned one of the codes included in the defined categories system. This process followed the phases highlighted by Huber (2003) for qualitative data analysis, i.e. the reduction of data compiled in the different message-boards, the reconstruction of structures and the comparison of analyzed cases.

5. Results
5.1. Making the rules

The somewhat sinisterly-named Habbo Way is a brief statement of the rules that apparently govern this virtual world. With the exception of the imperatives in the final sentences, it is worth noting that all these rules are framed as negative constructions. However, the potential beneficiaries of observing these rules are diverse.

While some of the rules appear to proscribe behaviour that would harm other users, several relate to behaviour that would primarily harm the company (by disrupting its business model or its technological control). Others –such as the rule relating to sexual activities– would seem to reflect adults' perceptions of what is inappropriate for children. Yet in all these respects, children appear to be defined primarily in terms of what they cannot or should not do.

Secondly, despite the force of the concluding reference to «crime», there is somewhat of a contradiction between this document and the legal framework that the company observes. While The Habbo Way offers a comprehensive list of banned behaviours, the company itself, in section 2.2 of its Terms and Conditions, states that «Habbo UK and Habbo Affiliates have no obligation to monitor visitor postings to the website». This effectively assigns responsibility to users themselves for monitoring and regulating their own behaviour.

Part of the explanation for this contradiction may lie in the different audiences for these documents. The straightforward language of The Habbo Way suggests that it is targeted at children; although its placement on the parents' section of the site also contributes to the establishment of a «brand identity» premised on safety. In light of high levels of parental anxiety about children's online activities, the existence of such rules – and their negative framing– reassures parents that this is an environment in which their children can safely socialize. Once inside the Hotel, it appears that the control exerted by the company is by no means as tight, at least in some respects.

For example, there are rooms in which avatars can «have intercourse« (complete with product placements in the form of Durex contraceptive vending machines). While such rooms are nominally unavailable to minors, they can be accessed freely as there is no verification of the age requirement. Our analysis of the user forums suggests that users themselves frequently do not access these documents, and hence appear to be unaware of rules until they are enforced (often unexpectedly and without warning).

5.2. Power in play

Theoretically, one could argue that there are two types of power in operation here – or perhaps a continuum between them. On the one hand, there is a form of «hard» power, of the kind embodied in systems of negative rules with clear penalties for infringement; while on the other, there is a form of «soft» power, which seeks to cultivate forms of self-regulation within the community itself. While the former is characteristic of what Foucault (1977) terms a «disciplinary society», where power is imposed upon populations from above, the latter could be seen to represent a «late modern» form of governmentality, in which citizens are responsible for controlling their own behaviour (see also Rose, 1999). In the world of Habbo, both systems are in operation. On the one hand, users are expected to internalise systems of rules by engaging in self-surveillance and self-policing; yet on the other, «hard» power –and the technologies and procedures that sustain it– comes into play when self-regulation apparently fails.

Looking in more detail at the reasons why users are expelled or banned from Habbo, the operation of power appears to be both more detailed (or «capillary», as Foucault would have it) and yet also more arbitrary. The Habbo «help» entry on «what have I been banned for?» lists a range of official reasons for expulsion (see table 1).

Both the system of disciplinary classification and the range of sanctions identified here are more elaborated than in The Habbo Way. A wider range of practices is named, including several that appear to undermine the company's technological control (such as «flooding», «scripting» and «hacking») and/or its economic control (owning «a retro hotel» or advertising «free credit scams»). Others, such as sexual contact via webcams, sharing child pornography or attempting to sell drugs, are illegal or deemed inappropriate, and might not perhaps be tactful to mention in Habbo Way designed to be read by parents. Yet while the system of sanctions is more detailed, these rules also leave significant room for interpretation – for example, as regards the «severity» or «extremity» of an

1. Disruption Bans
2. Sexually Explicit Behavior Bans
3. Personal Identifying Information Bans
4. Harassment Bans
5. Hate Speech Ban
6. Scamming Ban
7. Terms & Conditions Ban
8. Inappropriate Name/Room/Group Ban

Table 1: Official reasons for expulsion.

offence, the exact number of times it has been committed, the period of time over which it has occurred, or the reasons why it might be deemed «inappropriate». The need for such a detailed specification is notable in itself, as it would seem to conflict both with the assurances about safety provided to parents and the model of the self-regulating community that is invoked elsewhere in Sulake's texts.

5.3. Practicing discipline

When we look at the user forums, however, numerous further reasons for banning or expulsion are identified. These range from reasonably straightforward («organizing competitions») to relatively obscure («wearing the uniform of a blocking team» or «suspicion of spending too much money»). However, in a great many cases users profess either that they do not know why they have been banned or that they do not understand the explanation they have been given. Very many also complain that they have been falsely accused, either by the moderators or by other users; that their behaviour (especially joking) has been misinterpreted; that the company has banned them without investigating the complaints against them; or that they did not know that they were committing an offence in the first place (for example, being in an «illegal» room without knowing that it was illegal). In some instances, adult moderators appear to have detected sexual connotations, for instance in user names, where it is claimed that none were intended. The forums suggest that the imposition of discipline is much less consistent and accountable than the official rules propose: declared rules may or may not be enforced, they may be interpreted or explained in very different ways, and previously undeclared rules may be invoked.

One issue that attracts considerable attention is to do with the ways in which the company interacts with users, especially when reporting on the reasons for expulsion. Users who are banned either permanently or temporarily receive an automatically generated email that very briefly explains both the reasons and the date and duration of the ban. Our analysis reveals a considerable degree of dissatisfaction with this practice: users frequently complain that these standardized messages fail to explain clearly the reasons why they have been expelled. This is a form of automated, one-way communication that provides no opportunity for dialogue, let alone accountability: «Credits.US@-Sulake.com for more information (id: 1386423). The ban will expire at 10/16/214:32 AM Eastern Time».

Furthermore, several users complained about how difficult it was to contact the people responsible for the moderation: «They replied to my e-mail after a week (…) you were banned for a reason and if you send us an e-mail again, your e-mail will be ignored. (…) They do not pay any close attention to the help system. They simply read the first 3 words and pick a reply from the set replies» (warhodes, 11-22-2009, 09:41 AM).

In these examples, there are frequent complaints about both the arbitrariness and the inflexibility of the moderators. On the one hand, users' activities are subjected to a filter that automatically identifies banned terms whose usage can mean immediate expulsion; while on the other, the application of the code of conduct also seems to depend on the moderators' interpretations of the rules, which are frequently unpredictable. The forums are full of the explosions of frustration that result :«I reported and got press ignore seriously ignore cant stop trades, lol and here i get banned for 1 day, idc about 1 day but why me, is there something in me that they smell and ban me?» (01-21-2010, 07:41 AM).

As this posting implies, the disciplinary system operates partly through users «reporting» (or informing upon) other users who are seen to be contravening the rules. However, our research suggests that this system is itself open to abuse: some users abuse or blackmail others by threatening or bringing false charges against them.

This particular combination of arbitrary authority and self-policing resembles that of a totalitarian state. Users are coerced into following the rules that are imposed, even if they do not agree with them or understand them; but they also learn that benefits will accrue to them if they monitor and report on the activities of other users (even if these claims are false). They learn that the company and its agents (the moderators) have ultimate power, but also that they can gain advantages by exercising power at the expense of other, weaker users: «I used to report people who gave out Habbo fansite URL's. They would get permanently banned for scamming, and I don't regret it» (PumpkinLamp, 25-04-2009, 3:27 PM) (Official site).

It is common on the forums to find messages from users who complain that they were harassed or bothered by other avatars, and that they were finally expelled because the avatars who were harassing them made false claims about them to the moderators: «He immediately starts role playing attacking me and what not. (…). He then says add dead to your name, i look at him and explain to him why i am not going to do that. (…). He walks out of the room five minutes la 8er it logs me off and says Ive been banned for 1 week

for harassment! (…)» (jordan657, 04-30-2010, 02:19 PM).

As these messages suggest, such claims are not investigated or verified during the moderation process: those who have been reported by other users are just automatically expelled. Unlike in any other legal process, there appears to be no presumption of innocence: on the contrary, the company seems to convey to users that they are always guilty of the accusations to which they are subjected. While some users employ this to their own advantage –making accusations against any avatar whom they happen to dislike– others appear to enjoy testing the limits of the rules for their own amusement: «i got banned for sayin hello would u like to buy some dru.s from me and plus i was kidding god how is a 15 year old gonna get his hands on some dru.s» (prince.trunks, Jan 13, 2008 (7:33 PM) (Official site).

5.4. The consequences of discipline

As these examples suggest, it is possible for users to open additional accounts (albeit from another IP address) and re-enter the world as a different avatar. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that expulsion is often an event with serious consequences, in which users stand to lose both economic and social capital that they may have accumulated over a considerable time.

With regard to economic capital, users who are expelled cannot recover the virtual items (such as pets or furnishings) they have purchased. Although users can manipulate such items for the duration of their stay in the Hotel, they continue to be «owned» by Sulake. As we have indicated, the company's marketing rhetoric places great emphasis on users' creativity. However, in practice users are not permitted to make or import their own virtual assets or designs: their creative possibilities are limited to the selection and (limited) manipulation of products from the company's catalogue. What users can do with these objects is also comprehensively monitored by the company, and the objects cannot be exported to other virtual environments.

The primary appeal of Habbo Hotel, we would argue, is not so much the limited opportunity for crea-

tivity it affords but the social interaction between the users. Yet, as is characteristic of all «consumer societies», products (in this case, virtual products) are the means through which that interaction takes place, and it is these that enable the users' interactions to be monetized: who you are is very largely a question of what you can buy. From a traditional Marxist viewpoint, we might argue that users are engaging in forms of work (time-consuming «creative» labour) that serve to create surplus value in the form of social capital – that is, social relationships that function as a form of currency.

Expulsion also means the loss of this social capital.

> Our analysis suggests that Habbo Hotel is very far from being the free, democratic, creative space proclaimed by the company that produces it – and indeed celebrated by some academic enthusiasts for «technology-enhanced learning». It would perhaps be an exaggeration to describe it as an online police state, but it certainly bears comparison with real-life authoritarian regimes and «total institutions» such as prisons.

Users who are expelled summarily lose not only their «possessions» but also their «friends»: they have no way of maintaining the relationships they had established within the virtual world – not least because the rules forbid them to exchange data about their accounts on other communication platforms. Sulake also owns any social capital that users generate within the world, and this serves as a further means of keeping users captive. The serious social and economic consequences of expulsion are reflected in the strong sense of disempowerment that runs through the forum postings: «believe me, i know whats its like to get ***** up by these mods. you spend money and they dont even think for a second about your friends, money spent, etc.» (long and fat, 04-30-2010, 05:50 PM).

As this latter post suggests, users have little trust in the accountability of the company or its moderators. Like this user, some try to contact the company staff to ask for the removal of the penalties imposed, on the grounds that they are unfair. However, many complain that they receive no reply –or very inadequate

and uninformative replies– when they use the available channels; and some resort to using unofficial forums to contact the moderators, albeit with little success. Others simply beg the company for readmission: some confess to having broken rules, but earnestly promise never to break them again. On the unofficial forums, the sense of disappointment and discomfort leads on to a tone of cynical resignation that one could see as characteristic of oppressed groups more broadly. The actions of the company (those in power) are routinely condemned as «stupid», «lame» or «retarded», but there is an abiding sense that little can be

ting or threatening either the company or the individual moderators (whose names are announced on the official website). Others develop plans to bankrupt Habbo Hotel, for example by hacking the company servers, creating online replicas of the Hotel and developing tools to unlock IP addresses that have been banned. Others have recourse to more conventional forms of consumer activism. There is much discussion among US users about the use of the Better Business Bureau, an agency that seeks redress for consumer complaints. Other users have organized virtual demonstrations; while in the Hispanic community there is a group of users calling itself «Habbo Revolutionary Union».

What are they learning? Our analysis suggests, firstly, that they are learning particular economic lessons. They are learning to be diligent consumers, buying virtual products that will help to construct their identities and relationships. They are also learning to be workers, undertaking forms of labour that produce surplus value in the form of social capital. They are doing both of these things in a context where everything they produce and everything they appear to possess is in fact owned by a company that remains largely unaccountable for its business practices.

6. Conclusion

We have directly challenged several of the claims that are made about the educational, social and political value of online virtual worlds. Of course, several of our arguments may well be specific to this particular case, and may not apply elsewhere. However, our analysis suggests that Habbo Hotel is very far from being the free, democratic, creative space proclaimed by the company that produces it – and indeed celebrated by some academic enthusiasts for «technology-enhanced learning». It would perhaps be an exagge-

done to change matters.

Some users are clearly able to identify the economic imperatives at stake here –imperatives that are often ignored by academic enthusiasts for new media– although they tend to accept these simply as an inevitable fact of life: «Habbo wants your money, so they don't ban HC subscribers for fun. Keeping paid subscribers around = more money = if anything they'd be more lenient towards them» (Jan 16, 2008 5:23 PM) (Official site).

The fact that children are the primary «consumers» of Habbo may make them more vulnerable to unfair business practices: compared with adults, they generally have fewer resources with which to defend themselves. In many cases, this sense of disempowerment leads to anger and to forms of activism, which are much in evidence on the unofficial forums. Some users respond to what they regard as injustice by insul-

ration to describe it as an online police state, but it certainly bears comparison with real-life authoritarian regimes and «total institutions» such as prisons. Far from constructing its users as competent, empowered «digital natives», it operates a system of surveillance and discipline that exerts considerable control over their behaviour. Users are required to regulate their own activity, but in line with rules that are strictly and summarily (but also often arbitrarily) enforced. The forms of creativity that are available are constrained and commoditized, and subject to similarly authoritarian forms of discipline.

We do not in any sense wish to deny that kids can have fun in virtual spaces like Habbo Hotel, or indeed that they may be learning a great deal. However, the question that needs to be answered is: what are they learning? Our analysis suggests, firstly, that they are learning particular economic lessons. They are lear-

ning to be diligent consumers, buying virtual products that will help to construct their identities and relationships. They are also learning to be workers, undertaking forms of labour that produce surplus value in the form of social capital. They are doing both of these things in a context where everything they produce and everything they appear to possess is in fact owned by a company that remains largely unaccountable for its business practices. Following from this, they are also learning particular political lessons, about the operation of social power. They are learning to function in a situation where the powerful enjoy absolute authority, and are able to exercise power in ways that are both rigid and yet sometimes quite arbitrary. This is a world in which there is little scope for appealing against injustice, and limited potential for resistance. Far from being empowered in this environment, the citizens of this virtual world are in fact extraordinarily powerless: their only option is to obey, something far from a model of critical citizenship (DeJaeghere, 2009).

Finally, to return to the issues with which we began, it is interesting to compare this virtual world as a learning environment with other institutions and environments in which children learn, such as the family and the school. Far from being more free and democratic, as some enthusiasts suggest, this world actually seems to be much less so. Within most modern schools and families, children have the power to question and challenge the authority of parents or teachers (Aarsand, 2009). While there are certainly limits in this respect, power in these institutions cannot simply be imposed: it has to be negotiated, and it has to win the consent of those who would be governed. By comparison, this virtual world appears to offer a much more authoritarian and much less empowering form of learning.

References

AARSAND, P.A. (2009). Gaming and Territorial Negotiations in Family Life. *Childhood, 16(4)*, 497-517.
BOELSTORFF, T. (2008). *Coming of Age in Second Life*. Princeton, NJ (USA): Princeton University Press.
BUCKINGHAM, D. (2007). *Beyond Technology: Children's Learning in the Age of Digital Culture*. Cambridge: Polity.
BUCKINGHAM, D. & SEFTON-GREEN, J. (2003). Gotta Catch «em All: Structure, Agency and Pedagogy in Children's Media Culture. *Media, Culture and Society, 25(3)*, 379-399.
DEJAEGHERE, J. (2009). Critical Citizenship Education for Multicul-

tural Societies. *Interamerican Journal of Education for Democracy, 2 (2)*, 223-236.
DEDE, C., CLARKE, J. & AL. (2005). *Fostering Motivation, Learning and Transfer in Multi-user Virtual Environments*. American Educational Research Association Conference. Montreal: Canada (http://muve.gse.harvard.edu/rivercityproject/documents/Dede_Games_Symposium_AERA_2005.pdf) (07-05-2012).
FOUCAULT, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Harmondsworth: Allen Lane.
GEE, J.P. (2003). *What Video Games Have To Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
HUBER, G.L. (2003). Introducción al análisis cualitativo de datos. In A. MEDINA, A. & S. CASTILLO (Coords.), *Metodología para la realización de proyectos de investigación y tesis doctorales*. Madrid: Universitas, 91-129.
IQBAL, A., KANKAANRANTA, M. & NEITTAANMAKI, P. (2010). Engaging Learners through Virtual Worlds. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*, 3198-205.
Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture*. New York: New York University Press.
JOHNSON, M. (2007). Unscrambling the «Average User» of Habbo Hotel. *Human Technology, 3(2)*, 127-153.
JUNG, Y. & KANG, H. (2010). User Goals in Social Virtual Worlds: A Means-ends Chain Approach. *Computers in Human Behavior, 26*, 218-225.
LEHDONVIRTA, V., WILSKA, T.A. & JOHNSON, M. (2009). Virtual Consumerism: Case Habbo Hotel. *Information, Communication and Society, 12(7)*, 1059-1079.
MANTYMAKI, M. & SALO, J. (2011). Teenagers in Social Virtual Worlds: Continuous Use and Purchasing behavior in Habbo Hotel. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*, 2088-2097.
Marsh, J. (2010). Young children's play in online virtual worlds. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 8(1)*, 23-39.
MERCHANT, G. (2010). 3D Virtual Worlds as Environments for Literacy Learning. *Educational Research, 52(2)*, 135-150.
PRENSKY, M. (2006). *Don't Bother Me, Mom – I'm Learning!*' St. Paul, MN: Paragon House.
Rose, N. (1999). *Governing the Soul*. London: Free Association.
RUCKENSTEIN, M. (2011). Children in Creationist Capitalism: The Corporate Value of Sociality. *Information, Communication and Society, 14(7)*, 1060-1076.
VAN DIJK, T. (2006). Discourse, Context and Cognition. *Discourse Studies, 8(1)*, 159-177.
WOHLWEND, K. & AL. (2011). Navigating Discourses in place in the World of Webkinz. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 11(2)*, 141-163.
ZHOU, Z., JIN, X.L. & AL. (2011). Individual Motivations and Demographic Differences in Social World Uses: an Exploratory Investigation in Second Life. *International Journal of Information Management, 31*, 261-271.

● E. Hernández, M.C. Robles and J.B. Martínez
Granada (Spain)

Interactive Youth and Civic Cultures: The Educational, Mediatic and Political Meaning of the 15M

Jóvenes interactivos y culturas cívicas: sentido educativo, mediático y político del 15M

ABSTRACT

This contribution is justified by the necessity of analyzing the participative content that the interactive youth transmitted in the use of ICTs and social networks in the origin of the social movement of the Spanish Revolution. Our objectives have been focused on proving how young people feel, live and experience the democratic citizenship by means of audiovisual display systems, participating in public open spaces where a better informed digital citizenship is being formed among the technological convergence, hypertextuality and non linearity. We have tried to identify both the educational content of their interactions and implications and the use of audiovisual display systems in their organization as a group. The methodology we have used is the in-depth case study in the days when people occupied public spaces. We collected observations, interviews, information from the social networks (Twitter, Facebook, n-1, Tuenti), news in the media and also information, posters and photographs generated during the occupation by the participants themselves. From this techno-educational point of view we analyze how these young people widen their communicative relationships and get connected on line creating new meanings for educational, social and political issues. The analysis of their speeches shows us a reappropriation of the ICTs by these young people who express and communicate publicly and contributing in this way with new points of view for the citizenship education.

RESUMEN

Esta aportación se justifica en la necesidad de analizar el contenido participativo que los jóvenes interactivos transmiten en el uso de TIC y de las redes sociales durante el origen del movimiento social del 15M. Los objetivos se han dirigido a comprobar cómo los jóvenes sienten, viven y experimentan la ciudadanía democrática a través de los soportes digitales y mediáticos, participando en el lugar público de la plaza donde se está formando una más informada ciudadanía digital entre la convergencia tecnológica, la hipertextualidad y la no linealidad. Se ha tratado de identificar tanto el contenido educativo de sus interacciones e implicaciones como el uso de los soportes digitales mediáticos en su organización colectiva. La metodología utilizada es el estudio de caso en profundidad, durante los días de la acampada en la plaza pública, recogiendo observaciones, entrevistas, información de las redes sociales (Twitter, Facebook, n-1 y Tuenti), noticias de los medios de comunicación así como de los medios generados en la acampada, y todas las fotografías y cartelería del evento. Desde esta perspectiva tecnoeducativa se analiza cómo estos jóvenes ensanchan sus relaciones comunicativas y se conectan en red construyendo nuevos significados de lo educativo, lo social y lo político. El análisis de sus discursos nos descubre una reapropiación de los jóvenes de las TIC participando en la comunicación pública y aportando nuevas perspectivas para la educación ciudadana.

◆ Elisa Hernández-Merayo is an FPU Fellow of the Department of Teaching and School Organization of the Faculty of Education at the University of Granada (Spain) (ehm@ugr.es).

◆ Dr. María Carmen Vílchez-Robles is Assistant Professor of the Department of Teaching and School Organization of the Faculty of Education and Humanities of Melilla at the University of Granada (Spain) (mcrobles@ugr.es).

◆ Dr. Juan Bautista Martínez-Rodríguez is Professor of the Department of Teaching and School Organization of the Faculty of Education at the University of Granada (Spain) (jbmr@ugr.es).

1. Introduction

The origin of this work focuses on one of the most significant phenomena of our present history, played out by the so-called 15-M movement, which has had a surprising impact on the media and produced political effects that have altered the civic-social orthodoxy in our country. Such social mobilization would not have been possible without the use of ICTs, for ideas and projects require technologies for implementation – technologies which, in turn, contain and implement ideas and actions. In this regard, it is essential to describe not only the types of technologies and their uses but also the content transmitted by them, the values and experiences of citizens involved in public life and ICTs users who disseminate alternative ideas. At the same time, we see how institutions like the family and the school have lost strength and capacity due in part to outdated ideas in their teaching, and how the media and peer relationships have gained strength, cultivated by youth through interactive media and digital media (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008). The situation was ripe for a significant number of them, socialized in the new media devices, especially in recreational and leisure contexts, to acquire a specific role in the strategic moment prior to the municipal elections in the spring of 2011, and to organize a citizens' platform made up of more than six hundred organizations that stormed the streets on May 15, involving a significant portion of the dissatisfied and indignant population.

This social movement is relevant here because of the narratives generated in the processes of communication and education, through which a number of strategies are put into action, a set of attitudes are developed, and a system of relations is established which defines the role and prominence of people who interact and participate in public activities. The evolution in the understanding of media education –including concern for the analysis of the syntax and semantics of visual language, the teaching of the use of the tools and the necessary analysis of the messages, content and meaning transmitted in the media– is an important development and responsibility for those doing research in these two interrelated fields. In this trajectory, Web 2.0 is considered to be a social site where users in the 15-M movement have generated their own content and shared their own production, thus converting themselves into educational, political and social agents. This justifies the interest in qualitatively addressing the disappearance of the hierarchical relationship between academic knowledge and popular knowledge in the media, between the professional political tradition and citizens' own experience, and between the content covered by the law and the demands for alternative interpretations of the law. Networks, newspapers, signs and photographs now circulate the criticisms of those who have taken control of the media and seek to reappropriate a new style of civic behaviour.

In the above conditions, theorizing which presents, in an appropriate way, the understanding of the Spanish Revolution as a social, educational and mediatic movement, explored from the perspective of citizenship education, is based on Dahlgren's civic cultures (2011), the appropriation a new communication paradigm (Morales, Alvarez & Loyola, 2011) and contributions from Douglas Kellner's cultural studies (2011).

• Civic cultures are the framework intended to assist and illustrate the specific conditions that are necessary for participation, which comprises those cultural resources that can be used by citizens and which is supported largely through the media. Therefore, this framework is to specify the ways in which the media –especially Internet– facilitate active civic behaviour. More generally, it is recognized that the basic parameters of civic cultures derive from the structural relations of social power, the economy, the legal system and the possibilities of organization, and all of them can have their own impacts. However, from the perspective of the actor, what characterizes civic behaviour is access to the centrality of the media. Its form, content, specific logic and modes of use are the media of civic culture. Dahlgren presents six dimensions with a certain reciprocity amongst them, the first three are made known through the established tradition of political communication and the last three come from the currents of contemporary cultural theory: 1) knowledge for active ownership, 2) democratic values, 3) confidence in collective participation, 4) physical and virtual spaces for communication, 5) new practices and civic skills, 6) strong civic identities (Dahlgren & Olsson, 2008; Dahlgren, 2011: 6-9).

• Appropriation as a new communication paradigm can be used to explain the relationship between subjects and the media with different modalities. The fact that the 15-M movement's social groups appropriate the media and ICTs is connected with and extends to the appropriation of basic concepts of citizen organization: what is right or wrong, the legality or illegality of certain actions, the resignification of education, the demands of real democratization, participation in public decision making. Appropriating the media and educational meanings means the emergence of new practical proposals for a different possible society. The utility of appropriation as a process that

defines the relationship of subjects/users to the media and to the communication technologies of the competent citizen becomes relevant in order to address the significance and meanings that circulate through the media in the hands of the participants in the 15-M movement. This process continues to be controversial and confrontational when other groups or communities come into conflict or when people begin to question socio-educational traditions or obsolete systems of civic delegation.

• Finally, contributions from the media through cultural studies help us to understand how the media can condition the processes of socialization and education. According to Kellner, cultural texts in the media are neither mere vehicles for the dominant ideology nor pure and innocent entertainment. Rather, they are an artefact that embodies complex social and political discourses, the analysis and interpretation of which require critical reading methods that articulate their insertion into political economy, social relations and the political environment in which they are produced, circulated and are received (Kellner, 2011: 11). In politics, media images have produced a new kind of politics of slogans and statements that places the media at the centre of political life. In social interactions, mass-produced pictures guide personal presentation in everyday life, people's ways of relating to others and the creation of social values and goals (Kellner, 2011: 24). Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the meaning of placards, signs, slogans, videos posted on the web or shouted at assemblies and demonstrations. The simplification that participants in the Spanish Revolution make of social and political issues is directed at the average citizen, taking on an eminently pedagogical character.

The purpose of the study is to identify, within a new social situation, the democratic «ethos» understood to be the experience or feeling of young people when interacting and communicating with others, as a symbolic order that makes rules to regulate the behaviour that is desirable or not, within the framework of

the R&D&I Project «Citizenship in new digital and school settings: relationships and implications for students of compulsory secondary education (ESO)».

2. Materials and methods

The 15-M movement has a global dimension in which, for purposes of this research, a spatiotemporal cut was made, located in Granada for thirty-two intense days which chronicled the origin, development and local effects on the urban context and which were organized and carried out by the groups «Asamblea

> The evolution in the understanding of media education –including concern for the analysis of the syntax and semantics of visual language, the teaching of the use of the tools and the necessary analysis of the messages, content and meaning transmitted in the media– is an important development and responsibility for those doing research in these two interrelated fields. In this trajectory, Web 2.0 is considered to be a social site where users in the 15-M movement have generated their own content and shared their own production, thus converting themselves into educational, political and social agents.

Plaza del Carmen» (Plaza del Carmen Assembly) and «#AcampadaGranada» (#GranadaCamp). The design, more emergent than prefixed, due to the unpredictability of the actions, is articulated in a case study (Stake, 2007) appropriate for the study of people and their interactions in the physical setting of the square and the virtual stage built by movement participants. Applying a strict ethical code, access by the research participant in #GranadaCamp was simple although the dynamics of the square were extremely complex, and keeping the field diary involved a wide variety of dense descriptions, semi-structured interviews and collection of materials.

Likewise, an analysis was made of documents generated by the assembly itself (press releases, reports, the newspaper «Ágora», videos from the channel Vimeo and from YouTube, livestreaming

reports on «Televisión Acampada» (Camp TV); signs and slogans developed by activists, news articles published in the local press (Ideal, Granada Hoy) and other selected national media reports. In addition to these documents over 500 photos were taken and multiple videos. Regarding the extension of the camp into the virtual environment, data were collected from the social networks Twitter, Facebook, n-1 and Tuenti.

All material collected was designed to identify the interpretive framework of #GranadaCamp activists,

> We performed a deep examination, a cut into a local reality –as a hologram of the overall reality– which allowed us to understand the discourses and practices produced on the stage of a social movement such as the Plaza del Carmen Assembly, and their interdependence with socio-political experiences of citizenship built and located in other geographical and virtual areas.

related to their democratic experience in relations, communications and experiences of their own involvement or disaffection in collective actions. The process of data reduction and transformation soon led to the generation of issues and topics related to the purpose of the study. Analysis and interpretation of data were carried out under the qualitative criteria hailing unique groups, critical subjectivity, researcher reflexivity and reciprocity (Simon, 2011: 181).

In this respect we performed a deep examination, a cut into a local reality –as a hologram of the overall reality– which allowed us to understand the discourses and practices produced on the stage of a social movement such as the Plaza del Carmen Assembly, and their interdependence with socio-political experiences of citizenship built and located in other geographical and virtual areas.

3. Results

Although the results of this case study will also be presented through computer technology, using only the images collected, the account presented here marks an underlying narrative structure with which to interpret the case: a chronological, evolving sequence, in which to emphasize the educational and communicative milestones that guarantee the results.

3.1. Origin: The Plaza del Carmen Assembly and the virtualization of #GranadaCamp

The massive response to the call for the demonstration on 15 May 2011 led by Democracia Real Ya (Real Democracy Now) was unexpected in every city, and even more so in Granada, a city where more than 5,000 people gathered[1]. Equally unexpected was the initiative of a group of young people who decided to continue the political protest in Madrid's Puerta del Sol square but were violently evicted by police that same morning, prompting the emergence of camps by activists all across the country as show of support and solidarity with their comrades in Madrid.

After the first night of the solidarity camp in Granada and parallel to this event, activists used social networks and personal networks to convene the first «citizens' assembly» on May 17 at Granada's Paseo del Salón boulevard, bringing together around 100 people. The result of this first meeting was to achieve one of the key consensuses on forming a movement in Granada: the decision to camp in Plaza del Carmen (where the City Hall is located) in order to create a permanent workspace that would allow the movement to organize. Simultaneously and in a similar way the #GranadaCamp virtual space was born, which would interact in a continuous process with the dynamics of the square.

3.2. Formation and organization: in person and virtual

In this emerging movement, the early stages were key to the implementation of dynamic interaction and an organizational base that would be the seed for all subsequent activity. These principles were adopted from the first assembly and referred to the following aspects: horizontality, turnover, involvement of everyone, listening to the views with special attention to minority opinions, consensus. The assembly also consolidated the core ideology of the General Open Plaza del Carmen Assembly in the minimum consensus,

constituting it as openly non-union, nonpartisan, non-denominational, pacifist, creative, open, and collectively responsible[2].

The camp, as a political tool in the service of the Assembly, was a process of self-organization within which working groups emerged from perceived needs: a logistics group and a legal group, a proposals group and a group for spreading the movement (in schools, neighbourhoods and villages), a media-attention group and, subsequently, groups for action, debate and reflection, with the responsibilities of the General Assembly decentralizing through the growing autonomy and the birth of neighbourhood assemblies and towns and university faculties with their own working groups.

Camp and assembly faced critical moments throughout their development: the meeting of the 15-M demonstration with the procession of the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary, the eviction of the camp on the night of May 17, the spatiotemporal coincidence of the General Assembly with the convening of an act of an Andalusian Association. Moreover, the camps were declared illegal by the Central Electoral Board for the municipal elections of May 22, the police evicted the Occupied Social Centre Indiskreta, a logistical partner in the movement, and local football fans celebrated the rise of FC Granada to first division football as well as the results of other football matches. These potential conflicts were resolved by opting for debate, dialogue and respect for other organizations and citizen groups, sharing spaces, and activists opted for peaceful civil disobedience against administrative decisions: «What is right can never be illegal and we decided to skip legality in order to do honour to justice» (informative leaflets of the June 19 demonstration).

3.3. Slogans against politicians, bankers and media

Three critical axes became central in the assembly, materialized in a crisis of representation thereof: a) the political class; b) banks and banking: «We are not goods in the hands of politicians and bankers»; and c) the mass media: «Someone named the banks as enemy number one, I want to name the media; I propose the creation of a subgroup to be responsible for countering all the mass media's misinformation» (General Assembly, May 21).

Faced with the apparent rejection of a political class wearing red high heels, print dresses in electric blue and grapefruit green, the movement proposed that politics should be constructed by all people, going beyond the walls of the city council and flooding the

daily interaction of everyday life. Attitudes of rejection towards politics, due to its association with maligned institutional policies, were shifting towards an alternative process of political construction, moving from an apolitical vision towards a defence of non-partisanship. With this move towards a reconceptualization of politics in its broadest and most unlimited sense, the dichotomy between political struggles and social struggles is overcome: the social is political, and politics is social.

In this sense, the assembly approaches politics from a local perspective (at both the municipal and national levels), focusing on what the movement considers its true range of action, postponing proposals of a global order (European or international). At the meeting of May 21 an agreement was reached on some measures and urgent demands, in an attempt to bring together the full range of proposals (about 600) that citizens had developed in the days before: the repeal of labour reform and of pension-law reform, the real right to decent housing, the guaranteed provision for social services and needs, the repeal of the Civic Ordinance of Granada.

One voice emerges regarding the relationship with politicians and bankers: «We will not pay for your crisis»; «There is not enough bread for so much 'chorizo'» (a word meaning both «sausage» and «criminal»); «There's not a lack of money but an excess of thieves». The political, social and economic climate is criticized, denouncing both the supremacy of the influence of the market (an identifiable market, not just an invisible hand) over public policy –«Why should the market rule if I never voted for it?»– as well as a «political caste» serving not only the market but also corruption –«In the next elections vote for Ali Baba– he's only got 40 thieves».

3.4. Media relations and networking

Relations with the media, marked by the rejection of media manipulation by large corporations that control the current media –«tele-lie», «mass-manipulation media»– were characterized by activists' sensitivity to information about the movement that was published in the press, and thus by constant vigilance in order to refute or criticize the information if necessary. Thus, the press of every political viewpoint was examined – proof of which was the information table which every morning held one copy of each newspaper.

What the local newspapers «Ideal» and «Granada Hoy» interpreted from Granada Camp's messages is revealed in a selection of articles that focus quantitatively on incidents and show a tendency to give a sen-

sationalistic emphasis to events surrounding concrete actions (the police «evicted» activists from the square when actually they were just moved fifty meters away, the police evicted the «squatters» of Indiskreta, a small group aiding with camp logistics).

Faced with these situations a decision was made to disclose «statements or press releases» generated by the assembly, adopted by consensus and published on the website acampadagranada.org, in an effort to ensure that the voice of the assembly regarding these and other incidents would not be distorted. The aim was to report and inform the members of the assembly and the general public; however, most of these notes were motivated by the contamination of the news produced by the most conservative national media and, to a lesser extent, by the contamination by national media groups of the local media.

Likewise, faced with this distrust of the traditional media, the assembly created their own alternative media in an attempt to take control of the media coverage and not to be reinterpreted: the newspaper «Agora» and GranadaTV livestreaming come into being, as well as a dedicated radio space within the community project Radio Pluto. And, especially, a large deployment of citizen journalism channelled through various social networks. This is how they answer: «We are not savages, we're not lazy, we are not members of any nostalgia club, we are not a caste» (Press release May 26: A week of outrage: what we are not).

3.5. Interactive (and outraged) youth

Although the presence of young people between 20 and 35 years old is what stood out, the movement valued the richness offered by the learning exchange between generations, with their discussions and alliances in political and community affairs. Men and women who participated in the social protests of the 70s together with young daughters and sons of democracy – «We are the children of comfort, but we will not be the parents of conformism».

Within this plurality should be noted the large presence of the middle class, which in a society increasingly polarized between lower class and upper class, is undergoing a process of class downgrading. Generations see how their expectations fail to be met; job insecurity and job scarcity prevents many workers from reaching positions commensurate with their training; the purchase of a home is becoming a more distant possibility, and lost purchasing power puts the pressure on families – «I have month left over at the end of my salary».

The youth took advantage of their visibility and prominence to recover from the maligned image that they had been experiencing in the media. They answered prejudices such as:

• The «nini generation»: the «neither-nor» generation. Neither do I inquire, nor do I care; neither PP (Popular Party) nor PSOE (Socialist Party); no home, no work; no pension, no fear.

• «Apathetic youth»: disconnected from political life, apathy is cured with rebellion (sign at the Plaza del Carmen);

• Prejudices associated with a particular «perroflauta» (flute-dog) aesthetic: I'm a «perroflauta». So what? I'm a citizen too!; I'm a «perroflauta» because the crisis has made me one... (sign at the ceremony of investiture of the mayor of Granada).

The abundant profile of student and unemployed university graduate has made visible the presence of a generation with a rich political and cultural capital but no space in the labour market. This was one of the expressions of outrage from what is possibly the most educated generation in history in the poorest working conditions in relation to their level of education – «Shall I clean your car with my college degree?». We cannot forget the growing unrest that had already begun to emerge in this group before the 15-M dissatisfaction because of the neoliberal policies of the university.

3.6. Virtual spaces, shared knowledge and education as a political project

We are presented with a need for political pedagogy, and education reappears as a political project in which decisions are made as part of the collective construction of knowledge that goes beyond the mere transmission of selected, apparently aseptic curricula.

In this open «school» of citizenship, with an emerging curriculum, there is negotiation and (re)construction of concepts such as social justice, legality, ethics, violence (physical, symbolic and economic –earning 600 euros a month is a form of violence), freedom, rights and duties of citizenship, and popular sovereignty– making use of not just physical but virtual settings to carry this all out. A «school without walls» or «connected school» in which young people learn through hypertextual, multisituated language, and in which multiple and nonlinear channels (re)construct meaning through digital and face-to-face interactivity; meanings that emerge from the crucible of heterogeneities found in the Plaza del Carmen and «virtual spaces» of #GranadaCamp.

They argue that pedagogical meaning lies in the

horizontality of relationships, the complex rather than over-simplified treatment of problems, the recognition of being active and historical subjects, the proposed internal and personal revolution along with the collective and social one, the consideration of the importance and of the slow pace of new learning, the admission of dreams and utopia as an active reference point, the support from networks and new technologies that allow greater protagonism, the respect for minorities and consideration of their views, the transgression of the conventional, the respect for legality and the reinterpretation of its principles and laws, the critical attitude towards the role of political and economic subjects and their media. The law should conform to ethics, not the other way around, which is what seems to be happening. In this scenario Touraine's words (2009: 246) make sense: After centuries of conquest of the world by reason, technology and weapons, we have entered a place where all roads lead to ourselves, towards this personal construction dedicated mainly to bringing back together that which a certain rationalism had dissociated and opposed.

This proposed learning advocates the need to develop a political culture based on the awareness and knowledge of the current situation, learning that is not based solely on naïve good intentions but one that requires content and theoretical debate on socio-political and economic conditions. The assemblies, thought cycles, the group of theoretical debate, the school of philosophy –among many other groups– posters and signs, links to documentaries on various subjects, but mostly the daily, informal exchange –virtual as well as in person– constitute a new form of network transmission and horizontal construction of a collective political knowledge.

3.7. Virtual social networks and power relations

Social networks, not exempt from corporate and business interests that are not forgotten in the thoughts and considerations of the assembly, are presented as

paradoxical tools that become simultaneously inclusive and exclusive: inclusive as they allow the participation of those who dare not to speak because of the strong social pressure to speak in public, and of all those who do not have the time to personally attend all the events in the square; and exclusive inasmuch as the great divides in digital access and network usage continue to persist. This process of technological literacy is seen as a learning process required in the long run in order to

> Social networks, not exempt from corporate and business interests that are not forgotten in the thoughts and considerations of the assembly, are presented as paradoxical tools that become simultaneously inclusive and exclusive: inclusive as they allow the participation of those who dare not to speak because of the strong social pressure to speak in public, and of all those who do not have the time to personally attend all the events in the square; and exclusive inasmuch as the great divides in digital access and network usage continue to persist. This process of technological literacy is seen as a learning process required in the long run in order to achieve the opportunities offered by a (utopian?) e-democracy.

achieve the opportunities offered by a (utopian?) e-democracy (Levy, 2004).

The idea of the Internet as public space is reflected in the virtual social networks which become multiple and often simultaneous communication channels, through which different contents are transmitted with communicative/activist purposes that are also varied and different: the blogs (blogspot and its further development, tomalacalle.org) and the actual construction of the virtual image of the movement, the virtual collective identity; YouTube for spreading the movement through the dissemination of videos of calls to action and of previous actions; immediate microblogging and the use of hyperlinks to theoretical references and complex thought on Twitter (denouncement of

the general situation or specific aspects of it, calls for popular demonstrations, spreading of slogans, actual policy proposals, technical proposals to help resolve the conflict, etc.); Facebook posts, less immediate than tweets, and discussions ranging from political issues to issues of political life at the square (especially in the critical moments: assembly moderation by the anti-capitalist left's candidate for mayor and the eviction of the Indiskreta CSO); Wikipedia for the creation of a socio-political truth of the movement through crowd-sourcing including the perspectives not only of the actual participants but others outside the movement. And the failed attempt of n-1, a free software platform whose philosophy matches that of the movement, for the «media elite» which demonstrated the need for technological literacy, banishing the myth of the Net Generation.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The use of ICTs in #GranadaCamp has accompanied the various proposals in an attempt to multiply the capacity of the social movement itself, a task which has required constant exploration of new media or devices, some of which have been met with a lack of proper skills and even with time restraints or technical connection difficulties. Moreover, spontaneous access and the role played by social networking has emphasized the support and involvement of certain sectors, hindering participation by others and channelling proposals and political speeches that defended the experimentation of the civic agency itself, which would have required a more democratic use of ICTs.

The features of educational demands and slogans in public assemblies correspond to the characteristics of the growth of civic cultures, because the movement produces support for schools and universities as physical communication spaces, and the desire increases for a virtual public sphere, as evidenced by the creation of multiple hashtags whose contents supported a redefining of democracy, the discovery of renewed ways to experience the ethos, and a new education as a political process, characterized by reliance on collective participation and the production of shared knowledge.

A rather idealistic perspective of the educational model has been taken which has not allowed a deepening in educational processes understood as a setting for competing interests, for power struggles ranging from interest in social change to interest in the reproduction of the status quo in society, and the tension between salvation school and meritocracy school (Martin-Criado, 2010). However, such analysis occurred more naturally upon assessing the role of the tra-

ditional media that the camp activists monitored particularly closely. In short, there was an uneven, heterogeneous collective attitude towards the use of the media.

The majority use of commercial social networking for activist purposes has shown, in this case, that it is not possible for designers to predict the uses that the public will end up lending to certain commercial spaces. Without losing sight of the economic interests of such networks one cannot belittle the ability of citizens to use them in a creative and fruitful way (Sádaba & Gordo, 2008) despite the adoption of the Sinde-Wert law, which prompted the emergence of #nolesvotes (#dontvoteforthem) – or repeated attempts to cut the town hall's WIFI network, comtrend, used by camp activists, who demanded access to it, changing its name to «vivalarevolución» (longlivetherevolution).

Regarding the development of the assembly and the profile of its components, there was clearly a melting pot of heterogeneities that overwhelms the theory of the «two souls» advocated by Taibo (2011), which allows for the presence of both «activists of previous social movements» and of «angry youths». In this case, it has been verified that the ideological and discursive varieties go beyond this double vision, and it is precisely this plurality which can create the controversy that will advance the movement toward deliberation and occasionally complicated consensus-building. Moreover, the assemblies' condition of presentiality and the situated nature of the camp have produced uneven effects on the possibilities of certain social sectors' participating. The insistent proposal to use ICTs has connected predisposed sectors with the professional, domestic and geographical conditions to get involved, and the time to do so.

Issues such as the legitimacy and authority of Governments and public institutions have also been questioned and revised: some laws have been respected while others have been challenged based on a concept of social justice as priority. Precisely along these same lines, Guttman (2001) reflects on democratic education, considering that to achieve the democratic ideal of sharing political sovereignty it is not only necessary to behave in accordance with authority but also to learn to think critically about it. And precisely in this quest for autonomy, squares, schools and virtual public spaces are privileged places for deliberation and consensus-building, places conducive to becoming open spaces in which to develop political agency and experience citizenship.

The concepts of democracy, citizenship, education, information, communication and dominant politi-

cal discourse have been questioned by «los indigna-dos» (the outraged), who propose expansion and extension in the practice of these concepts in order to reconstruct, in a more public way, educational vision and renewed politics in accordance with modern society and its information and communication possibi-lities. In a sense, their discourse points out some com-mon assumptions aimed at politics of everyday rela-tionships, and not just major decisions; moving towards lifestyle politics (Bennet, 1998) which extends the space of the speakable and amends formal condi-tions of participation (Moreno-Pestaña, 2011), towards politics where the division between public and private vanishes, in line with an interconnected world that develops offline and online, which com-bines actions here and now in a present time that can-not wait on deliberative processes that are by necessity slow and meditated in the immediacy of postmoder-nism, politics capable of showing deep and informed indignation through creative actions, and which uses ironic language, in a humorous light, as a way to cari-caturize nonsense while at the same time expressing deep meanings.

And precisely in this imperfect search of auto-nomy, having analyzed the experience of the camp activists in this case, we can say that squares, schools and digital settings appear as privileged places for deli-beration and consensus building among youth; along with the digital public space, open spaces have been identified to rehearse political agency, experience democracy, learn to think independently in the face of controversial decisions; to communicate, to dissent from the authority, and build a new model of shared collective learning.

Notes

[1] www.ideal.es/granada/v/20110516/granada/personas-toman-calles-granada-20110516.html.
[2] http://acampadagranada.org/minimos.

References

BENNET, L.W. (1998). The UnCivic Culture: Communication, Identity, and the Rise of Lifestyle Politics. *Political Science and Politics. 31: 4*, 740-761.
DAHLGREN, P. & OLSSON, T. (2008). Faciliting Political Participa-tion: Young Citizens, Internet and Civic Cultures. In K. DROTNER & S. LIVINGSTONE (Eds.), T*he International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: Sage.
DAHLGREN, P. (2011). Jóvenes y participación política Los medios en la Red y la cultura cívica. *Telos, 89*, 12-22.
GUTMANN, A. (2001). *La educación democrática: una teoría polí-tica de la educación*. Barcelona: Paidós.
KELLNER, D. (2011). C*ultura mediática: Estudios culturales, iden-tidad y política entre lo moderno y lo posmoderno*. Madrid: Akal.
LEVY, P. (2004). *Inteligencia colectiva. Por una antropología del ciberespacio*. (http://inteligenciacolectiva.bvsalud.org/public/docu-ments/pdf/es/inteligenciaColectiva.pdf) (26-04-2012).
DROTNER, K. & LIVINGSTONE, S. (Eds.) (2008). *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: Sage.
MARTÍN-CRIADO, E. (2010). *La escuela sin funciones. Crítica de la sociología de la educación crítica*. Barcelona: Bellaterra.
MORALES, S., ÁLVAREZ, A. Y LOYOLA, M.I. (2011). Apropiación de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación e interactividad juvenil: realidades y desafíos. In E. MARTÍNEZ. & C. MARTA (Eds.), *Jóvenes interactivos. Nuevos modos de comunicarse*. A Coruña: Netbiblo.
MORENO-PESTAÑA, J.L. (2011). *Foucault y la política*. Madrid: Tierradenadie.
SÁDABA, I. & GORDO, Á.J. (Coords.) (2008). *Cultura digital y movi-mientos sociales*. Madrid: Catarata.
SIMON, H. (2011). *El estudio de caso: Teoría y práctica*. Madrid: Morata.
STAKE, R.E. (2007). *Investigación con estudio de casos*. Madrid: Morata.
TAIBO, C. (2011). *El 15-M en sesenta preguntas*. Madrid: Catarata.
TOURAINE, A. (2009). *La mirada social*. Barcelona: Paidós.

● Shakuntala Banaji
London (UK)

Everyday Racism and «My Tram Experience»: Emotion, Civic Performance and Learning on YouTube

El racismo cotidiano y «Mi experiencia en un tranvía»: emoción, comportamiento cívico y aprendizaje en YouTube

ABSTRACT

Does the public expression and performance of shock, distress, anger, frustration and ideological disapproval of particular sorts of politics constitute a form of collective political expression from which individuals can learn about being citizens? When it comes to the expression of feelings of racial and other types of prejudice, has political correctness led to a deepening of entrenched racist beliefs with no channel for discussion? This article engages with such questions through a case study of YouTube responses to «My Tram Experience» a commuter-uploaded mobile-phone video of a racist diatribe on a tram in the UK. Using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis, it describes how these performed, networked and distributed moments of citizen angst demonstrate a limited but interesting range of civic engagements with and positionings towards racism, immigration, class and nationalism. For one reason or another these are not allowed to occur in other public for a such as the mainstream media or schools. The article argues that these vlogs are both a wide-ranging potentially therapeutic resource for those needing validation for their racist or anti-racist views, or for those who wish to express and garner solidarity for discomfort and pain caused by racism; they are also a significant though currently uncurated resource for citizenship education both formal and informal because of their engagements with technology, social context, emotional context and political rhetoric.

RESUMEN

¿La manifestación pública de sentimientos de conmoción, angustia, ira, frustración y desaprobación ideológica de ciertos tipos de hacer política constituyen una forma de expresión colectiva que permiten a las personas aprender a ser ciudadanos? En expresiones de prejuicios raciales u otros, ¿es posible que la «corrección política» haya llevado a una profundización de creencias racistas arraigadas? Este artículo interpela estos interrogantes a tfravés de las respuestas en YouTube al vídeo «Mi experiencia en un tranvía», realizado por un viajero con teléfono móvil a partir de una diatriba racista ocurrida en un tranvía del Reino Unido. Tras un análisis cuantitativo de contenido y un análisis temático, se describe cómo momentos de angustia ciudadana –compartidos y distribuidos por la Red– demuestran un rango limitado y a la vez interesante de relaciones cívicas, así como posicionamientos ante el racismo, la inmigración, la clase social y el nacionalismo. Por diferentes motivos, estos posicionamientos no están presentes en otgros foros públicos como los medios y las escuelas. Se argumenta que estos videoblogs son un recurso terapéutico para aquellos que necesitan el reconocimiento de sus puntos de vista racistas o anti-racistas, o para aquellos que desean expresar o provocar solidaridad en momentos incómodos y dolorosos causados por el racismo. Además son un recurso significativo, aunque todavía no considerado, en la educación para la ciudadanía, tanto la formal como la informal, debido a sus compromisos con la tecnología, el contexto social, el contexto emocional y la retórica política.

◆ Dr. Shakuntala Banaji is Lecturer in Media and Communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science (United Kingdom) (s.banaji@lse.ac.uk).

1. Introduction

Is a discussion still rational if it is articulated in explicitly emotional or creative ways? Does the public expression and performance of shock, distress, anger, frustration and ideological disapproval of particular sorts of politics constitute a form of collective political expression from which individuals can learn about being citizens? When it comes to the expression of feelings of racial and other types of prejudice, is it a case of «better out than in» – or the more open debate the healthier the society? On the 28th November 2011 a commuter on a tram in the London borough of Croydon in the UK filmed a young, Caucasian mother, with a child on her lap, having a seemingly unprovoked xenophobic and racist rant against her fellow passengers. These fellow passengers included people of all races, some of whom moved away and others who ultimately began to challenge the «ranter». The mobile-phone video clip of the incident was uploaded onto YouTube and went viral in the course of the next 24 hours. Over the following days and months, it attracted a not unprecedented[1] but nevertheless striking series of mediated responses from YouTubers and those new to YouTube. It was also picked up by local, international or national radio, newspapers and television. It was highlighted as an example of often silently experienced racial tension and social malaise before being dropped. Subsequently, other first-person accounts of racism began to emerge[2]. On YouTube the incident was extensively and fiercely considered in relation to themes such as racism, bad parenting, class, transport rage, xenophobia, multiculturalism in the UK, nationalism, fascism, immigration, the «aptness» of racism as a response to immigration, humanity and social cohesion. Participants in these responses included both naive and considered anti-racist and white supremacist organisations and individuals: some evinced logically articulated and precise political opinions and social agendas; others expressed themselves via references to feelings of confusion, anger and shock against or solidarity with the racist woman in the original video. Many of the responses also formed the basis for further video «rants» and comments.

These performed, networked and distributed moments of citizen angst throw up the key research questions that motivate this study: First, what forms of civic learning, if any, are embodied by YouTube commentaries, vlogs, skits, satirical cartoons and other user generated responses to the phone-uploaded racist encounter «my tram experience»? And second, to what extent can we conceptualise these mediated products as emotional or even as embodying cathartic resources and repertoires for understanding and making sense of politically charged situations in everyday life? While such civic-oriented YouTube content generated by an external event/phenomenon has previously been approached in interesting ways, these will only be outlined in the discussion which follows. I proceed now to a laying out of the methods and findings of this study so as to enable a «first view» of the data, unencumbered by conceptual expectations.

2. Methods and sample

In previous studies, content analysis, network analysis and discourse analysis have shown themselves popular for researching the implications of YouTube for civic participation and the qualities of civic participation therein (Chu, 2009; Van Zoonen, Vis & Mihelj, 2011). This study uses a range of textual analytic methods to answer the research questions discussed above. Thus, in succession, qualitative open coding of just over 200 vlogs, skits, and clips was undertaken. This was carried out independently by four coders on the first 200 uploaded videos (out of more than 800 available) in a search on YouTube of the term «My tram experience» in February and March 2012 and in May 2012. The following features were noted: content, theme and topic; key linguistic phrases; political or social attitudes; relationship to other uploads – direct or indirect references/debate/abuse; genre; age, ethnicity or race of ranter/YouTuber; the balance of «emotional opinion» and «rational argument»; length of segment and whether the YouTuber was a newbie or an experienced community member. The survey spreadsheets and the urls of the videos showed that at least two coders had examined 188 overlapping uploads ranging from the shortest of 08 seconds to the longest of 14 minutes and 09 seconds. Three coders overlapped in coding 169 uploads and all four coders analysed 146 overlapping uploads. There was a high degree of agreement (9.5 out of 10 cases were noted in the same way) with the categorisations of genre, tone, content, politics and affect; only in the exact noting of «key linguistic cues and phrases» was there a greater range of notations. Given our differing intellectual and national backgrounds, this signalled only that coders gave slightly different emphases to particular discursive phrases in relation to race, ethnicity and nationalism.

Following this broader qualitative survey of the material which looked for patterns and gaps or absences in the performance of citizenship and the expression of social outrage/solidarity in relation to the «tram experience», 10 videos were selected for in-depth tex-

tual analysis. Alongside semiotic analysis looking at linguistic and visual cues of comfort and discomfort, civic experience and inexperience, a thematic analysis examining the tensions between apparently factual statements and apparently emotional assertions about «self» and «other» in these videos was undertaken. The ways in which people referred to themselves and their racial or ethnic identity, to civic allegiance and the purpose of their vlog are also the particular foci of this analysis. The results of both content and thematic analyses are presented in the following section.

3. Results
3.1. Broad qualitative content analysis

Videos posted ranged from stand-up comedy and cartoons through social commentary, reasoned argument, political lament and satire to angry diatribe and distressed confessional. «Vlogs» are the prevalent generic mode used across the sample. 163 out of 188 videos (approximately 80%) belong to this genre, with the YouTuber or videomaker talking directly to the camera about «my tram experience». In addition, there are 12 animations (where a voiceover references the incident but the animation is gleaned from popular culture), 5 videos in the style of stand up comedy, 3 videos in the style of news segments and 4 skits re-enacting the incident in humorous or satirical ways. The remainder are a miscellaneous selection of film trailers, political propaganda or rap music.

More than 70% of the vlogs adopt an intimate discussion or confessional format, addressing the audience directly from behind (or at an angle to) the camera in a car, an outdoor landscape or the interior of room. Vloggers make eye-contact frequently. They create a sense of dialogue through the use of the pronoun «you» or phrases such as «now, you might say»; in other cases, the perpetrator of the racist diatribe is drawn into a debate. Around 18% of the vlogs use re-edited footage of the incident, overlaying this with dialogue and/or interspersing it with other visual footage. Only 2% (5 videos) feature group discussions of the tram incident. Finally there are a few blank screens in which there is evidence of some struggle with techno

logy, and an overriding wish to communicate regardless. In the more detailed descriptions of 10 videos (below), an attempt is made to outline the ways in which this desire to communicate intersects with technological ability and normative discourses on citizenship, race, racism and immigration.

Moving to the question of the links between overtly emotional and rational points of view on the «tram experience», 96 of the videos –just over 50%– are explicitly mixtures of emotional (angry, distressed, shocked, frightened, disgusted) and reasoned (evidence-based, logical, precise, avoiding references to emotion) reactions to the incident. A further 40 present themselves as entirely rational, avoiding discussion of sentiment or personal emotion. 16 satirise the incident

> What forms of civic learning, if any, are embodied by YouTube commentaries, vlogs, skits, satirical cartoons and other user generated responses to the phone-uploaded racist encounter «my tram experience»? And second, to what extent can we conceptualise these mediated products as emotional or even as embodying cathartic resources and repertoires for understanding and making sense of politically charged situations in everyday life?

from both racist and anti-racist points of view and a further 16 use edited footage or montage to draw attention to the surreal or socially repulsive aspects of the incident. Only 14 videos were categorised by all four coders as exploring with complete seriousness 'emotional response' and overtly uninterested in reasoned political intervention.

Examples of vlog comments suggest the varieties of rational intervention that might be made. All relate to feelings of anger based on opinions about the connections between global political actions and discourses on race or imperialism and local responses to interpersonal racism:

– Poster B: (20-something, British-Asian man) «I've worked all my life in this country. I've given everything for this country», «I'm proud to be a British Asian in Britain», «What else do you want us to do?», «What are we going to do to be accepted in this country?».

– Poster M: (20-something, Caribbean-British man): «the British were the first to go to Africa and rob and steal», «if they are to be asked to pay back now, they would not even afford to pay back», «I think her kid was the shield... people could not really kick her ass because she was holding this kid», «the reason we're in Libya is because of oil – everybody knows it».

– Poster T: (White, middle-aged, gay British woman): «I understand why she's frustrated, but... she's

views and beliefs but not for her public tirade. For example:

– Poster L: (Teenage/20-something White US woman): «She has every right as white woman to be dissatisfied with the massive amount of non-white immigration to her formerly white homeland of Britain», «And whites don't like non-white immigration for this reason – because of the crime that accompanies non-white immigration», «I don't understand why whites don't have any right to object to their homeland being flooded by non-whites... they are not allowed to be angry... because if they do, they're racist».

Through these comments it is possible to gain some insight into how comments delineate particular political orientations towards race, multicultural society and citizenship. However, a sense of the roles that making and uploading the vlogs play in individual poster's lives and civic identities will be easier to identify in the following section, which moves to more holistic descriptions of the vlog material.

> the idea that top-down political correctness might be driving the most aggressive racist sentiments underground so that they remain resilient but surface only in private moments between friends and family or erupt through public ones like the one captured in «My tram experience». So, the kind of learning that can be seen taking place repeatedly in the performances of shock, annoyance, disgust, ethnic supremacism, anti-racism, apology and humour within the sample is very specific: it is learning about what people may «actually» think beneath the surface of 21st century democratic public speech.

3.2. Textual analysis: the semiotics of civic comment

The original tram incident[3], was filmed contingently by commuters and hence cannot be subjected to the same kind of considered thematic analysis as the responses. However, examining both denotative and connotative aspects of the selection of the responses throws up interesting issues for discussion. Video 1[4], which is approximately 3 minutes long, contains a young Caucasian YouTube. The positioning of the camera in a corner of a room with a used drinking glass on a table and a poster on the wall connote comfortable routines. He is experienced at vlogging and does not bother with formal language, addressing the racist woman on the tram as «possibly the scummiest person I've ever seen». He speaks both to «us» the public and also to her, the perpetrator, directly – «you are...» «you would have...» 174,947 views indicate that others are indeed ready to watch and respond, though comments such as the following also suggest caution about the complicated positions viewers might take up in response to his sim-

got it completely wrong», «Only people who live on proper council estates... refer to England as «my Britain», «the white people in Britain didn't want to do the shit jobs back then...», «This is a Christian country... you don't come... and demand [Sharia] law».

– Poster R: (20-something Arabic-British woman): «In every country, in every place, you're going to find really stupid, ignorant, racist people. But that shouldn't really shake your faith in the good of... every single person in the world».

Thematically, the majority of the vlogs stress the idea that the young Caucasian woman protagonist of «my tram experience», is in the wrong, either for being racist, for making hate speeches in public or for swearing in front of children. There are, however, exceptions to the disapproval. Nine videos express wholehearted, partial or covert support for Emma West's xenophobia; a further two express support for her

ple «racism-is-wrong» stance: «What she said was racist but at least she had the courage to voice her concerns about her culture, she just went about it the wrong way, swearing in front of her boy and insulting people. And anyway she was the «minority» on this tram, in her own country. The left and right should stick together to save our culture and do so in a civilized peaceful way with respect for other cultures».

In contrast, video 2[5] (which has now been placed on a private setting following nasty comments about it) features a young black British woman showing distress and annoyance at the racism of the white woman on the tram – but asserts she is «obviously mentally ill...» thus stereotyping another group of people and exhibiting a prejudice about mental illness. This prejudice – the idea that racism is a mental illness and that no one «sane» or «in their right mind» could be racist – permeates at least a fifth of the posts and vlogs on this issue. This poster comments on media representations of race as a problem in misrepresenting the black community, providing some evidence for her sentiments; however, she then goes on to make assertive comments about «[w]hat white people want to see...», reframing the debate in terms of further essential racial audience traits. Her facial expressions, frowns and movements are all indicative of her dialogue with the public she imagines, and suggest her attempts to connect with them as citizens.

In video 3, which has now been removed from YouTube by the user following British far right flaming, a Caucasian teenager vlogs from his bedroom – «I would have gone straight round and...», while making a strangling motion with his hands. He adds: «but I'd have probably gone to jail for that» and «Let me tell you my thoughts on racism...». He invokes a series of arguments against racism and discrimination, remains relaxed, looks directly at the camera and seems both practiced at making arguments and comfortable with the technology. Like some of the flames posted in response to video 3, video 4[6] is a 20 second film-clip of a British flag with subtitles announcing: «Emma West Heroine of Free Speech». It has a British far right ethos in terms of aesthetics and content, including subtitles about «White power/white genocide». The poster comments extensively below his video: «We need to understand that this poor woman had no idea what she was getting into. She snapped in a moment of rage. She was obviously provoked. Instead of criticizing her, you anti-whites should feel deeply sorry for her. She's being deprived of her freedom & her family, just before Christmas [...]. She will be made an example of, in order to terro-

rize other Whites into shutting their mouths & tolerating the destruction of their race & country. What she needs is for fellow Whites to come to her aid & support her by 'John Whitee'».

These comments draw on assertive racist discourses that will be familiar to those reading discussions of Anders Breivik and his views. They are also reminiscent of the postings of far right Hindutva groups in India (Banaji, 2008).

In video 5[7], a greenhaired girl with a US accent, looking to be in her late teens, responds adopting a precise, descriptive, pedagogic tone. Initially her talk seems addressed to a group of imagined youth like herself living in the US. Her voice is gentle rather than fierce at first and she calls on humanist and egalitarian discourses about race equality and «colour-blindness». She thanks commuters in the video who stood up against racism. The last minute of the 3 minutes is the most uncontrolled. Here she expresses overt anger towards the racist woman, wishing that «someone would kick her in the face» or «take the tampon out of her ass» because «I hate racists».

The movement from subdued discussion to aggressive disgust at the racist is mirrored in dozens of the videos on this topic by women posters, testifying to the fact that expressing anger at perceived injustice is an equally if not more satisfying form of participation than debate. If the preceding vlogs and clips all centred on the feelings of the posters, video 6[8] breaks this mould. Here a young Caucasian university student in the UK analyses the position of the racist ranter on the tram as well as other arguments used against anti-racist posters. He calls on explicitly scientific and rational arguments from Darwinian evolution to postcolonial history and sociology of the inner city asserting that «[i]t's not because they're black that they're committing crimes...».

He suggests instead that «[w]e all come from Africans» and deals with the race/crime accusations he has heard in other vlogs, signalling wider YouTube postings on this topic as the arena of debate. The pace is rapid, and though the interior is a bedroom, he makes a series of professional edits in the video to make his points more succinct. The style is overtly pedagogic, with nuanced corrections to possible perceived bias. This poster also says explicitly that he does not consider himself a «vlogger» but has been drawn to the medium because of the topic and situation.

Returning us once more to the overt emotion of the previous posters, video 7[9] shows a Caucasian woman/teenager saying «I just watched it and quite

frankly I feel physically sick». This vlog is also shot in a bedroom with a large Barbie poster on the wall in the frame. The speaker is comfortable with the technology, evidently wanting to convey her hope that people «don't think that all white British people are like that». Her motivation is to refute racism and to show her shame, but she notes that making the video has made her «feel a little bit better». She also addresses those who support the racist woman through their videos and concludes with a series of «Fuck you» statements to the racist commuter. In response, there are many racist flames and comments under this vlog.

Video 8[10] is an animated version from a children's cartoon series «Thomas the Tank Engine» with the racist's voiceover and other passengers spoken by train cartoons. Nothing happens in the video apart from the trains talking animatedly to each other, and the whole thing appears spoof-like until the point emerges: the actual racist diatribe took place in front of young children. It was on a tram. It was real life. And a small frisson of recognition might hit a viewer who stuck with the clip to the end.

Video 9[11] depicts a black screen, with an anti-racist commentary by a woman who sounds young and claims to be English and white talking about government and mainstream media which, she asserts, make people racist. This poster is possibly not proficient with technology, as sounds of a struggle and the blank screen testify. She tells people to «think for themselves» about why anyone would come to the country to live on «123 pounds-per-week of benefit which are barely enough to keep body and soul together».

Video 10[12] depicts a modest, explicitly anti-racist Australian man from Perth talking about the «undercurrent» of racism which is more dangerous than open debate – «the underlying danger of unspoken views». He positions himself in his garden, a calm outdoors setting with birds chirping, and a dog barks several times. The intellectual content of this video goes beyond either immediate agreements with anti-immigration policy or refutations of racism to make a philosophical argument about the expression of negative and racist feelings in society, political correctness and the dangers of self-censorship. He references a range of events and issues including the mainstream media's representation of the London riots of 2011, calling unspoken racism «an undercurrent of a core feeling towards other human beings, more destructive than the overt racism of the BNP».

His message might be seen as a reframing of the injunction: «better out than in» in relation to the repression of racist views – who knows how they transmute or grow when they are not in the public sphere?

4. Theorising YouTube citizenship: Discussion, performance, deliberation, action?

The most popular conceptual approach for communications scholars to the online video-sharing platform YouTube and citizenship has been via the question of whether new digital technologies, and the internet in particular, are enabling an ideal transnational public sphere (Turnšek-Hančič, 2008), new public sphere (Papacharissi, 2004) or «vlogosphere» (Griffith & Papacharissi, 2010). Habermas-inspired discussions of a public sphere defined by the presence of «rational deliberation» and Chantal Mouffe's nuanced elaboration of «pluralist agonism» have proved fruitful springboards for a number of such discussions. Van Zoonen, Vis and Mihelj, for instance, have addressed the significance of YouTube for public sphere theories in several papers. Using a custom-made cybermetric network analysis tool to measure the interactions between posters, they discuss the online video battle arising from Geert Wilder's viciously Islamophobic film «Fitna». Their primary question is «whether, how and why online reactions and interactions contribute to rational deliberation or agonistic pluralism» (Van-Zoonen, Vis & Mihelj, 2011: 5). They conclude that «only 13 percent or fewer of the posters interacted with each other through comments, subscriptions or friendship»... YouTube enabled a multiplication of views rather than an exchange or dialogue between them [2011: 1, emphasis added]. Examining the «performance» of citizenship evinced in the styles of different types of online discursive intervention (2010) the same authors conclude that «a desire to make a connection to dispersed others is... what binds both the occasional acts and embedded practices of political and religious performance in reaction to Fitna on YouTube» (2010, 260).

They further argue that «these attempts are molded in cognitive, emotional, humorous, denigrating, amiable, absurdist and other ways, but that none of them were violent or aggressive» (Ibid), unusual in the context of a tool and medium where self-expression is also associated with aggressive flamers and trolls (Lange 2007, Burgess & Green, 2008). Elsewhere, Vis, Van-Zoonen and Mihelj (2011) call on Isin and Neilsen's conceptualisation of civic identity as elaborated through «acts of citizenship». This conceptualisation has the advantage of freeing individuals in society from some of the more tenuous normative assumptions tied to the idea of being a citizen. Here citizenship is not

conceived as a series of competencies or «rights and responsibilities». Instead, it allows an evaluation and critique of single interventions by individuals in political or civic life – something particularly suited to the interrupted, intermittent nature of clusters of online interventions. So, how might such «acts» of networked video citizenship be further theorised?

Dervin uses linguistic discourse analysis to examine attitudes to multiculturalism expressed by online racist rants. He is interested in two sets of questions, one around the ways in which multiculturalism is perceived and misconceptualised and another around the types of people and institutions intervening in the my tram experience debate to defend or critique racism (2012: 179-180). Based on written comments left below the videos, he suggests that we should «retain five types of comments: racist, anti-racist, (neo-) colonizing, comments about language and meta-analysis of the rants» (2012: 187). These kinds of categorisations offer codes which can be used in either quantitative or qualitative studies. Theorising the comments, Dervin maintains that «[b]oundaries and borders between the ranters and their victims rely on such aspects as nationality origins and language» (2012: 190). Nevertheless, linguistic analysis is methodologically limited because it does not address aspects of the videos such as the commitment to a particular political stance, emotional engagement embodied in voice modulation and iconography, or the civic and affective aspects of revealing or performing racism or anti-racism in front of a camera as a person with a particular accent and skin colour. Dealing with precisely such an inadequacy of traditional linguistic-oriented discourse analysis for YouTube, Elizabetta Adami (2009) argues that «[a]t a theoretical and methodological level... video-interaction works on the participants» interest-driven exploitation of the prompts offered by the initial video» [p395, emphasis added]. She maintains that «this makes... the heuristic notion of an interest-driven prompt-response relation [seem] more appropriate for accounting for sign-making patterns in video-interaction» (2009: 395). This is precisely the method with which the coders in this paper have engaged[13].

Having described both the broader trends and the details of a number of the videos about «My tram experience» (see table, next page) in the previous section and looked across other studies examining YouTube citizenship, it becomes apparent that learning of many different types is occurring across the field of videos. First, there are ways in which YouTubers are thinking through acceptable and unacceptable modes of speech and expression in what sometimes is and sometimes clearly is not a public sphere of the sort envisaged by Habermas, Frazer and Mouffe. This includes knowledge of the technology, the framing of rooms and spaces, the modulations of voice and rhetoric, the controlled or uncontrolled expression of negative emotion, as well as the angling of cameras

> It is possible to assert that taken together the video responses to «My tram experience» are a rich but as yet uncurated resource for civic learning and an elaborate, potentially therapeutic resource for coping with stressful social interactions around race. Apparently, many people make the videos and post them online simply in order to «feel better».

such aspects as nationality origins and language» (2012: 190). Nevertheless, linguistic analysis is methodologically limited because it does not address aspects of the videos such as the commitment to a particular political stance, emotional engagement embodied in voice modulation and iconography, or the civic and affective aspects of revealing or performing racism or anti-racism in front of a camera as a person with a particular accent and skin colour. Dealing with precisely such an inadequacy of traditional linguistic-oriented discourse analysis for YouTube, Elizabetta Adami (2009) argues that «[a]t a theoretical and methodological level... video-interaction works on the participants» interest-driven exploitation of the prompts offered by the initial video» [p395, emphasis added]. She maintains that «this makes... the heuristic notion of an interest-driven prompt-response relation [seem] more appropriate for accounting for sign-making patterns in video-interaction» (2009: 395). This is precisely the method with which the coders in this paper have engaged[13].

Having described both the broader trends and the

to include other symbols such as posters, flags, piercings, hair, hand movements and close-ups. The fact that at least a fifth of the videos with uninhibited exhibitions of anger, passion, dislike or hatred have now – five months later– been taken down or placed on private settings suggests that the experience of privateness and publicness in political debate is also a negotiated learning process. Second, people posting on this topic seem to be «learning through doing». While examples of rhetorically accomplished anti-racist and pro-migrant positions emerge, the majority build arguments as they go along, thinking about what counts as evidence in favour of mixed-race societies or against immigration, thinking about causes and social context and trying to address imagined questioners while the camera records. Thus, although it is tempting to go along with the idea that the videos examined here display a multiplication of views rather than a dialogue between views, this study suggests that civic debate is taking place, though it is happening between a limited series of positions. However, what we can name dialogue needs to be conceptualised as embodied not

necessarily by direct responses of one poster to another on YouTube –although these do exist– but as happening between different ideological camps or series of ideas about race, citizenship, migration, racial mixing, crime, racism, ethnicity, nationalism, parenting, mental health, class and education level. In about a third of the videos, patterns of racism stemming from the mainstream media, government policies, laws and schooling are connected to the diatribe witnessed and blame is displaced from the individual woman to the type of society which produced her. When this happens, the comments on the videos become even more vitriolic, suggesting that entrenched positions are indeed challenged by such clear public discussion as they would be in a newspaper editorial or documentary.

Finally, and most substantively, this study opens up the issue expressed by the YouTuber in video 10: the idea that top-down political correctness might be driving the most aggressive racist sentiments underground so that they remain resilient but surface only in private moments between friends and family or erupt through public ones like the one captured in «My tram experience». So, the kind of learning that can be seen taking place repeatedly in the performances of shock, annoyance, disgust, ethnic supremacism, anti-racism, apology and humour within the sample is very specific: it is learning about what people may «actually» think beneath the surface of 21st century democratic public speech. It is also a type of learning about how citizens cope with being the «other» of such speech –dozens of non-white posters recount private traumatic experiences of racism till now undisclosed– and how one copes with «becoming the other» through association with ideas that are no longer acceptable to express. The majority of white YouTubers posting on the topic want to emphasise that they are not like the racist ranter on the tram, that they do not share such views. Some do this by talking about the physical disgust she

makes them feel, and their wish to beat her up, kick or punish her for spewing forth hate speech. Others do it by denigrating her class or educational level, doubting her sobriety and often her sanity. The vlogs supporting the racist rant and its context explicitly try to «educate» viewers about the «danger» in which «white British» people find themselves.

Arising from these three interrelated types of learning –about oneself, about a specific topic/event and about the social world– it is possible to assert that taken together the video responses to «My tram experience» are a rich but as yet uncurated resource for civic learning and an elaborate, potentially therapeutic resource for coping with stressful social interactions around race. Apparently, many people make the videos and post them online simply in order to «feel better». In fact, they assert that they do feel better –less upset, less alone– having shared their views. When the comments posted on their vlogs become too hurtful, they retract and feel worse, often making a decision to close comment functions or make videos private. It is possible, then, to find tensions across the sample. These exist both between a variety of emotions linked to a range of rational stances about politics, the self and society and between potentially persuasive and therapeutic intentions.

Where civic persuasion is the goal of a video, efforts are made to present coherent arguments in logical sequences, to build evidence while avoiding sentiment and to come to a calm, rational conclusion. However, the fact that all this is spurred by an uncontrolled racist outburst on public transport, and that arguments ostensibly against racism and xenophobia often also betray prejudices about class or mental health or contain reverse racism or negative feelings towards particular religious groups testifies to the significant and motivating affective undertow to most civic and political discussion on or offline.

	Age, race, nationality, gender of poster and	Experience of poster on YouTube	Type of Post
1	Young Caucasian male	Experienced	Racism is wrong, vlog
2	Young black British woman	Newbie	Distress, anger, vlog
3	Caucasian teenager, male	Experienced	Anger, anti-racist vlog
4	Older, male, British, Caucasian	Experienced	Far right racist film clip
5	Young, Caucasian female, US	Newbie	Comment, anti-racist vlog
6	Young, male, Caucasian university student, UK	Newbie	Political debate, vlog
7	Caucasian female teenager, UK	Experienced	Anti-racist rant, vlog
8	Unknown	Unknown	Satire, filmclip with voice over
9	Caucasian female, young, UK	Newbie	Political comment, blank screen only voice
10	Caucasian, male, early-thirties, Australia	Experienced	Considered discussion on causes and effects of racist belief, vlog

Table of information on the ten clips subjected to qualitative analysis.

Notes

[1] Other experiences of passenger abusiveness or rage on public transport have had even greater numbers of viewers and responses – for instance the Singaporean «bus uncle» incident from 2006 discussed by Donna Chu (2009).

[2] www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2067692/Racist-train-rant-The-thugs-threatened-child.html; www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/nabeela-zahir/my-tram-experience-race_b_1119605.html.

[3] www.youtube.com/watch?v=e48_ee-b18I&feature=related .

[4] www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LV5h4F3H4Q&feature=related.

[5] www.youtube.com/watch?v=r18NwDqjRFQ&feature=related.

[6] www.youtube.com/watch?v=CyfDcRtF3ko.

[7] www.youtube.com/watch?v=IITZSLPRZrs&feature=related.

[8] www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEdBBFwYMTY&feature=related.

[9] www.youtube.com/watch?v=Htc2ELQVUWo.

[10] www.youtube.com/watch?v=wumjoTQ13YY.

[11] www.youtube.com/watch?v=NH4ho-3Nomo.

[12] www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3Blna_k3Nw.

[13] I would like to acknowledge the careful assistance of Moses Lemuel and two other graduate students, in coding and categorising the data used in this article.

References

ADAMI, E. (2009). We/YouTube: Exploring Sign-making in Video-interaction. *Visual Communication*, 8, 4, 379-399. (DOI: 10.1177/1470357209343357).

BANAJI, S. (2008). Fascist Imaginaries and Clandestine Critiques: Young Hindi Film Viewers Respond to Love, Violence and Xenophobia in Cross-border Romances. In M. BHARAT & N. KUMAR (Eds.), *War, Enemy and Hindi Films: Filming the Line of Control*. New Delhi: Routledge.

BURGESS, J.E. & GREEN, J.B. (2008). Agency and Controversy in the YouTube Community. En Proceedings IR 9.0: Rethinking Communities, Rethinking Place – Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR). Conference, IT University of Copenhagen (Denmark) (http://eprints.qut.edu.au/15383/1/15383.pdf) (19-06-2012).

CHU, D. (2009). Collective Behaviour in YouTube: A Case Study of «Bus Uncle» Online Videos. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 19, 3, 337-353. (DOI: 10.1080/01292980903039038).

DERVIN, F. (2012). Rants Against Multiculturalism Caught on Camera in Britain: Racism Without Races? *Workshop Proceedings: Debating Multiculturalism 2*. (www.dialoguesociety.org/publications/DebatingMultiCulturalism2.pdf#page=180) (19-06-2012).

GRIFFITH, M. & PAPACHARISSI, Z. (2010). Looking for You: An Analysis of Video Blogs. *First Monday*, 15, 1. (http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2769/2430) (19-06-2012).

LANGE, P.G. (2007). *Commenting on Comments: Investigating Responses to Antagonism on YouTube. Presented at: Society for Applied Anthropology Conference*. Tampa: Florida, March 31, 2007.

PAPACHARISSI, Z. (2004). Democracy On-line: Civility, Politeness, and the Democratic Potential of On-line Political Discussion Groups. *New Media & Society*. 6, 2, 259-284. (DOI: 10.1177/1461444804041444).

TURNŠEK-HANČIČ, M. (2008). *The Public and New Media in Processes of Globalisation*. University of Llubjliana (Slovenia): Tesis doctoral no publicada.

VAN-ZOONEN, L., VIZ, F. & SABINA M. (2010). Performing Citizenship on YouTube: Activism, Satire and Online Debate around the Anti-Islam Video Fitna. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 7, 4, 249-262. (DOI: 10.1080/17405904.2010.511831).

VAN ZOONEN, L., MIHELJ, S. & VIS, F. (2011). YouTube Interactions between Agonism, Antagonism and Dialogue: Video Responses to the Anti-Islam Film Fitna. *New Media and Society*, 13, 8, 1283-1300. (DOI: 10.1177/1461444811405020).

VIS, F., VAN-ZOONEN, L. & MIHEL, S. (2011). Women Responding to The Anti-Islam Film Fitna: Voices and Acts of Citizenship on YouTube. *Feminist Review*, 97, 110-129. (DOI:10.1057/fr.2010.29).

● A. Stornaiuolo, J.K. DiZio and E.A. Hellmich
Philadelphia / Berkeley (USA)

Expanding Community: Youth, Social Networking, and Schools

Desarrollando la comunidad: jóvenes, redes sociales y escuelas

ABSTRACT

This study examined the construct of community and its development in online spaces through a qualitative analysis of middle school students' participation in a private social network. Drawing on notions of community inspired by philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy, we found that students, despite not knowing one another previously, were willing both to encounter and come to know each other, using the resources of the network to build the trust that became foundational to their online social relationships. They did so primarily through two kinds of interactional effort that we call «public work» and «proximity work». Negotiating their positions relative to one another (proximity work) and across public/private spaces (public work), youth used a variety of semiotic tools to establish relationships and address the considerable challenges of digitally mediated communication with unknown others. This study suggests that educationally focused social networks can be designed for, or their uses primed toward, communicative purposes and activities foregrounding reciprocal exchange that is ethically alert and socially aware, and that schools and other educational institutions, though historically resistant to technological innovation, have an important role to play in this process.

RESUMEN

Inspiradas por las nociones de comunidad del filósofo Jean-Luc Nancy, nuestro estudio examina el concepto de comunidad y su desarrollo en entornos virtuales a través de un análisis cualitativo de la participación de alumnos de educación secundaria obligatoria (de 11 a 14 años de edad) en una red social privada. Nuestros datos indican que los alumnos, a pesar de no conocerse previamente, estaban dispuestos a conocerse y relacionarse, y a utilizar recursos de una red social privada para desarrollar la confianza necesaria para mantener sus amistades virtuales. Para lograrlo, los estudiantes usaron dos métodos de interrelación que llamamos «trabajo público» y «trabajo de proximidad». Al negociar sus posiciones relativas a los otros estudiantes (trabajo de proximidad) y a través de espacios públicos y privados (trabajo público), los jóvenes utilizaron diversos instrumentos semióticos para entablar amistad y para enfrentarse a los numerosos retos de la comunicación con desconocidos a través de medios digitales. Este estudio indica que las redes sociales educativas pueden ser diseñadas con fines comunicativos y para actividades que ponen de relieve los intercambios recíprocos que son éticamente y socialmente conscientes. Por último, los resultados sugieren que, aunque históricamente han demostrado una resistencia a la innovación tecnológica, las escuelas y otras instituciones educativas tienen un papel importante que desempeñar en este proceso.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Social networking, youth, community, digital media, new literacies, hospitality.
Redes sociales, jóvenes, comunidad, medios digitales, nuevas alfabetizaciones, hospitalidad.

◆ Dr. Amy Stornaiuolo is Assistant Professor of the School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania
(USA) (amystorn@gse.upenn.edu).

◆ Jennifer K. DiZio is at the Graduate of the School of Education at the University of California,
in Berkeley (USA) (jendizio@berkely.edu).

◆ Emily A. Hellmich is at the Graduate of the School of Education University of California,
in Berkeley (USA) (eahellmich@berkely.edu).

1. Introduction[1]

– Hannah: Hey

– Jay: Who the hell are u?

– Hannah: God u dnt hve to b mean!!!! :{

– Jay: Who are u what skool you go to?

In this chat exchange on a social network, two children who attended different middle schools in northern California (USA) met here for the first time as part of an after-school digital media program. Held twice weekly at five participating schools, these after-school classes were designed to help young people learn to communicate effectively and responsibly via a private social network with other young people they did not yet know. Despite 13-year-old Hannah's inno-cuous effort to reach out to a new person on the social network, 12-year-old Jay reacted suspiciously to being contacted by someone he did not know. As young people in our study communicated with unfamiliar peers, some of them, like Jay, were understandably cautious about interacting with «strangers». Hannah, however, helped to socialize Jay into conversational norms for talking with unfamiliar peers online; after she chastised him for being «mean», Jay softened his aggressive tone and asked questions that opened the conversational door (indeed, their exchange righted itself and continued for 44 turns). We have been inte-rested in tracing the evolution of what came to be a vibrant online community of young people, particularly their efforts to negotiate how to be respectfully cau-tious as they learned to communicate with one ano-ther at once playfully, ethically, and critically.

Our research to illuminate how young people for-med a nascent but lively online community in a relati-vely short period of time has challenged our expecta-tions about the process of community-building in vir-tual spaces. We have, in fact, as we will discuss below, been led to reconsider the often-contested notion of «community» in relation to educational spa-ces. In its idealized form, community has traditionally signified a space of safety, connection, and commu-nion. Yet many actual communities in our time and place stand in deep contrast, indexing danger, aliena-tion, and disconnection. Parents of the children in our study worried, and not without reason, about keeping their children safe in real neighborhoods and virtual spaces. «Bad things can happen to little girls online», one child warned us, revealing an oft-heard wariness of digital spaces where strangers could lurk. In such a digital and dangerous world, what notions of commu-nity, of self in relation to others, do young people develop? And what responsibility might schools and other educational agencies assume to influence that

process? Recent findings suggest that the potential for virtual communities to connect young people in new ways across school and out-of-school spaces is promi-sing (Banaji & Buckingham, 2010; boyd, 2011; Poyntz, 2009). Yet we know little about how youthful online communities are constituted, develop, and ope-rate – and to what extent educators might facilitate and nurture them. How do young people interact with one another to build communities across virtual and physical spaces, and what roles might there be for schools in this process?

As virtual communities challenge traditional defini-tions of community that rely on geography and physi-cal proximity, we are interested in how digital net-works and participatory cultures can help us reframe how we think about «belonging» and «proximity», two central concepts in literatures pertaining to community, the public sphere, and cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2003; Hansen, 2010; Papacharissi, 2002). We are especially keen to understand how today's children and youth become socialized into understandings of self in relation to other, and the role of opportunities for virtual interaction in this process. Unparalleled cha-llenges for youth around identity formation in fractured local spaces, not to mention the coming of age in a glo-balizing world, make such concerns especially acute. To theorize these issues we draw on the work of phi-losopher Jean-Luc Nancy (1991, 2000), especially his understanding of community as constituted by a fluid process of communication based on reciprocal recog-nition and exchange. According to Nancy, building community involves two dialectical processes: expo-sing and bridging distances. That is, individuals with different belief systems, experiences, and identities both appear before one another and engage in reci-procal interaction as they work to «be in common». The challenge, particularly for schools, is how to cre-ate opportunities for communication that provide the conditions for community to emerge. We suggest that educationally focused social networks offer considera-ble promise in this regard; that is, they can be designed for, or their uses primed toward, youth-driven com-municative activities that foreground reciprocal exchange that is ethically alert and socially aware.

2. Community as Communication

As we become more connected to more people across wider distances –geographical and metaphori-cal– we face challenges in how to describe and theo-rize new social practices (Willson, 2010). The con-cept of «community» has a long history as a theoretical construct for exploring forms of sociality (Delanty,

2003), but it has been critiqued as too utopian, too totalizing, or too broad a term to be useful (Postill, 2008). In addition, traditional definitions of community in which locality and physical proximity are central have been challenged by the proliferation of «virtual communities» (Rheingold, 1993) that offer new ways to connect. Scholars exploring new kinds of relationality with mediated technologies have described these communities as «imagined» (Anderson, 1983) or «networked» (Castells, 1996), conjoined primarily by people's feelings of fellowship or joint participation. For our inquiry into one youth-driven social network, we have focused on a dimension of community that is common to most definitions, and that is the question of belonging, which essentially asks: in what ways are we connected with one another?

This question lies at the heart of the philosophy of Nancy (1991: 29), who argues that members of a community are not fused into one cohesive group –a «common being»– but rather occupy a state of «being in common». «Being» for Nancy is fundamentally social: existence is always coexistence; I is not prior to we. As a fundamentally human enterprise, being in a community is always «being in common», a fluid state that recognizes plurality and difference and that allows for «mutual interpellations». Engaging in a community does not then require a commitment to a set of common beliefs but does assume a willingness to associate with others, especially across differences.

Indeed, it is this understanding of community as fundamentally constituted by difference, and a willingness to communicate across difference, that we find particularly generative. Nancy (2000) describes our relationship with others as a kind of interlacing, in which strands remain separate even within the knot (p. 5). We are in proximity to one another but only insofar as the closeness between us makes manifest the distance. That is, it is impossible to come together as a common being (i.e., close the distance between us completely) because it is in the act of sharing the space between us that meaning is made. The distance between us is thus not a gap to be filled or a space to be closed but a recognition of ourselves in the other and the other in ourselves. This distance is communica-

tion: to communicate is to expose the «with», the shared, the between. And thus community is communication – the process of reciprocal interaction. It is actively created and continuously produced as people expose themselves (i.e., mutually appear) to one another.

If, as Nancy proposes, community is the active and fluid process of communication, then the new global forms of communication, afforded by mobile and digital technologies, offer potentials for «new ways of belonging» (Delanty, 2003: 151). In this article we explore one such way that belonging can be negotiated in digital contexts by looking at how youth constituted, co-constructed, and negotiated contexts through

> In its idealized form, community has traditionally signified a space of safety, connection, and communion. Yet many actual communities in our time and place stand in deep contrast, indexing danger, alienation, and disconnection. Parents of the children in our study worried, and not without reason, about keeping their children safe in real neighborhoods and virtual spaces.

joint communicative effort. As contexts collapse in virtual spaces, people who do not share a context need to co-create it through their semiotic work (boyd, 2011; Haas, Carr & Takayoshi, 2011). With fewer material resources available, interlocutors in digitally mediated contexts like social networks must build referentiality into their interactions, creating shared networks of meaning that orient and ground participants in relation to one another. Thus, we looked at how a social network, as a space oriented to communication, afforded participants new opportunities for developing community; that is, the space provided multiple avenues for building shared viewpoints through the use of diverse semiotic tools.

We also attended closely to the challenges youth faced as they exposed and bridged the distances between them, for online communication is fraught with the potential for misunderstanding, particularly for young people who are just beginning to explore how to position themselves online in relation to diverse, interactive audiences.

3. Data collection and analysis

In 2011, we worked with teachers, administrators, and staff members from five schools in contiguous urban neighborhoods in Northern California to design an eight-week digital and social media course for middle school students (ages 11-14). Within the after-school classes, young people created films that they shared and discussed on a private social network called S28[2]. Similar to other social networks, S28 allowed users to designate friends, post text and media on their profile pages, and communicate through a variety of functionalities (messages, chat, blogs). The curriculum of the class was designed around the notion of hospitality, which teachers helped students think about critically through concepts like friendship and media representation. In part because these classes were situated in private and parochial schools, many of which were characterized by a welcoming and inclusive ethos, students seemed to take to these concepts readily, even while teachers pushed them to do so critically and reflexively.

Located within the San Francisco Bay Area, the five schools shared several characteristics, including operating outside the public school system as a Catholic school or, in the case of one of the schools, as a public charter. Additionally, they each served students from low-income backgrounds who hailed from under-resourced neighborhoods. These students represented the diversity that is typical of many urban areas in the US, with more recent immigrants from Latin America and parts of Asia living alongside long-standing African American populations. The schools themselves, though linked through religious affiliation and/or participation in the consortium that was made possible by 21st Century funding, differed from one another in terms of school cultures and the ethnicities of their particular student populations. The youthful participants in this study faced additional challenges beyond those that typically accompany adolescence – namely, situating themselves within a nation that has historically marginalized many minorities and that has been unsuccessful in closing achievement gaps between white and certain Asian students and all the rest. Closing those gaps provided the impetus for the 21st Century program, and giving the youth access to technological tools, skills, and practices was one means of doing so.

Across the five schools, we worked with 59 participants over three months, collecting a wide variety of qualitative and quantitative data. For this study, we began by analyzing all material posted on the social network, which was available via a detailed and customized tracking system that archived all online content. From these analytics, we created a set of matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to illuminate participation patterns across youth and across time. Employing the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), we looked across the various functions of the site and examined how young people engaged in different activities online. In addition to the online data, we analyzed data collected in the after-school classes, including pre- and post-surveys, field notes, teacher memos, video- and audio-recordings of the sessions, creative materials (e.g., storyboards, drawings), and participant pre- and post-interviews. In this article, we focus on a subset of the data, the public and private postings and messages on the social network. We present excerpts and quotations from students' work in their original form, which included texting conventions, IM language, popular cultural references, and slang. Children were not discouraged from communicating in these ways or admonished to use standard forms of English. They were, in fact, free to communicate however they chose, and their communicative choices and conundrums on occasion served in their after-school classes as generative contexts for discussions about language use.

4. «Being in Common»: Young people's efforts to know each other

Despite some initial cautiousness about talking to unfamiliar peers, youth embraced the S28 social network and quickly became avid contributors in the networked space. All 59 participants created an online public presence by designing their personal profile pages and posting images, text, and music in various combinations to an individual page that could be viewed by other members of the network. We interpret these efforts to craft a presence in the networked space to be the adoption of a stance of openness toward others (Hull, Stornaiuolo & Sterponi, in press), a willingness to reveal something about themselves and make a visible mark in the fledgling community. Young people explained that their willingness to reveal themselves was connected to feeling «safer» participating in a space in which a limited number of participants could view their online efforts. While they could publicly participate in the S28 network by posting information about themselves for other members to see, the «privately public» (Lange, 2008) nature of S28 offered them the opportunity to do so surrounded by peers enrolled in the same program and engaged in the same kinds of activities. Furthermore, adults monitored the network, contributing to the «safe» feeling while

also influencing how young people engaged online. As youth communicated with one another more easily and regularly over time, building on the public personas they crafted, they developed trust – an important component for initiating and deepening relationships with one another that in turn constituted the foundation of their emergent community.

4.1. Openness to Encountering Others: A Dimension of Students' «Public Work»

In posting messages, photos, videos, and music across the network, all 59 young people left visible traces in the public areas of the network, in effect creating a public persona. They referenced favorite foods, pop culture icons, and fictional characters alongside personal and popular photos, videos, and music – all in an effort to craft an online identity visible to other members of the network. The act of participating in the public areas of the social network served to ground students in the space, locating them as active members of the community and allowing others to peruse their displays at will. We found that young people's «mutual exposure» (Nancy, 1991) to one another online –that is, their efforts to appear to each other in the S28 public arena– anchored them in the networked space in ways that proved important for forging new social relationships.

Young people participated publicly on the site across forum discussions, comments, media postings, blogs, and youth-created interest groups, but their greatest efforts (and most frequent postings) were expended on their personal profile pages. In one example of a young man's profile page (Figure 1), Sebastian, going

by his chosen username «monster in the dark», represented himself with an avatar photo of the well-known cartoon character Woody Woodpecker and a decorative wallpaper background featuring the popular band Linkin Park.

By publicly articulating his popular cultural affiliations on his page, in what Liu (2008) has called a «taste performance», Sebastian established his presence as an active member of the networked community by offering personal information. He revealed more about his home life and his tastes by posting a short biography and writing regularly changing status messages. In these ways, Sebastian made himself «knowable» to others in the network. He gave others the opportunity to engage with him in the networked space by creating a public persona of a young man who liked popular music and soccer, loved his family, and watched cartoons and current movies – all potential conversational entry points for his audience. In attending so carefully to these public performances, young people seemed to signal an openness to others, helping others know more about them through self-revelation. Youth drew on these public displays as resources in learning about each other throughout the whole program – looking at them before reaching out for the first time, referencing them in conversations, and using them to establish common ground with unfamiliar interlocutors.

4.2. Negotiating Private Spaces: A Dimension of Students' «Public Work»

While the public areas proved important for displaying particular identities and stances –visible of course to many audiences, including familiar and unknown peers and adults– the private areas made possible different ways of coming to know one another. In these private domains, young people referenced the public personas that were important to establishing youthful presence, but they went beyond those identity statements to negotiating interpersonal relationships that formed the cornerstone of the new community. Chats and private messages, as dyadic spaces out of view of peers and teachers, offered synchronous and asynchronous opportunities for youth to negotiate relationships and learn about one another privately. Since students did not need to worry about others publicly viewing these conversations, we found that they took more
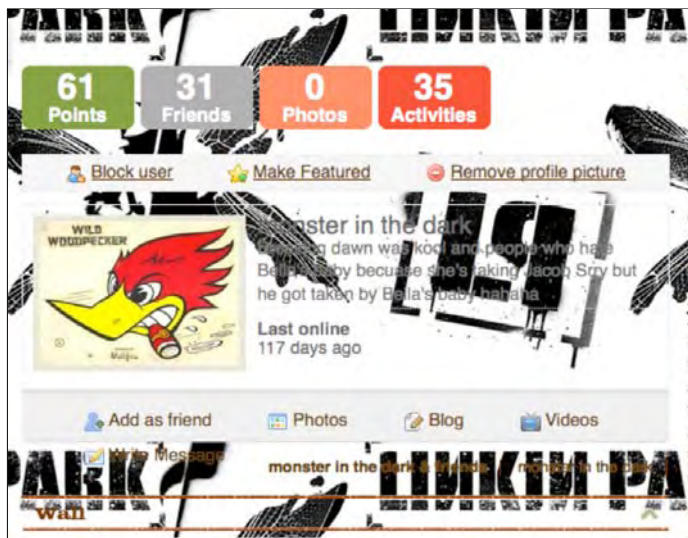
Figure 1. Sebastian's profile page.

risks than they did in the public domain. One young man Julio, for example, felt comfortable expressing his emotions to his online friend Isabel, writing, «I love you as a friend». While the public spaces offered young people the opportunity to play multimodally with performances of self, the private spaces provided needed opportunities to negotiate those relationships, sticky as that process might be at times, and take risks in sharing emotions and information with peers out of view of others.

> We interpret these efforts to craft a presence in the networked space to be the adoption of a stance of openness toward others (Hull, Stornaiuolo & Sterponi, in press), a willingness to reveal something about themselves and make a visible mark in the fledgling community. Young people explained that their willingness to reveal themselves was connected to feeling «safer» participating in a space in which a limited number of participants could view their online efforts.

One of the most important ways that young people earned trust and deepened their relationships was to tell the «truth» about themselves, certainly a risky proposition online with others one did not know. Youth constantly evaluated whether others could be trusted, searching their profiles, talking to them online, and trying to figure out whether the information they provided was «authentic». Personal photos were often exchanged as a means to establish trust between members of the community, or to further extend an already-established connection. These exhibitions assumed heightened importance, operating as a form of «unveiling» in which users gradually divulged facets of personal information as a means to establish deeper relationships with other members of the community. After instigating a connection based on shared cultural contexts, users wanted to see the «real» person behind the avatar. For example, after chatting for 23 lines in the private space, Sofia asked Chris, «wht do u looke like? Who r u on the piks?» (referring to the class photos posted on the site), to which he responded, «Im 11

and the one next to the guy who points the finger». Personal photographs served as a primary means of making one's participation as a «real» person in the community visible, opening the door to and deepening burgeoning friendships.

Another way to further fortify these connections was to ask the interlocutor to reveal his or her «real» name. Users would often ask outright, as Michael did after chatting with Asha for 33 lines: «th4ts koo 4nd wh4ts ur n4m3». Other times young people would reveal their names when they felt they had established a rapport, as Julio and Arturo did after two months of interaction, when they faced the prospect of meeting face-to-face:

– Julio: Are your going to berkeley on this friday to se everyone whos in space 2 create because im going and my real name is [julio chavez].

– Arturo: Yes and my name is [Arturo Flores] or u can call me [Arty].

Often the request to reveal one's real name was part of a larger initiation process by which the youth verified that the user wasn't a «fake» friend. While the users' screen name, avatar and profile page allowed them to present a carefully crafted public face to the network, disclosing personal information such as a photograph or real name signified that the parties were willing to take off these masks, reveal a «truer» self, and thereby enact and establish trust.

Not all of the «truth-telling» was straightforward or uncomplicated, particularly for young people who were developing their sense of identity in a networked community. In one interchange that illustrates the complexity of this endeavor, Jay and Serena tried to «place» the other in terms of familiar identity categories, in this case gender:

– Jay: U a gurl right.
– Serena: Yewwwp.
– Jay: Yay i was right.
– Serena: Yeah ur a gurl too.
– Jay: No im not.
– Jay: Im a dude a dude.
– Serena: Oh ok.

After chatting for several lines, Jay thought he had figured out that Serena was a girl, a way of identifying

her «real» identity that helped him locate himself in relation to her. When she responded that she thought he was a girl as well, Jay affirmed emphatically that he was «a dude». These negotiations about what constituted one's «true self» served as warrants for future interaction, and they became foundational for building community.

4.3. «Proximity Work»: Youth situating themselves

While young people generally adopted an open stance toward others online, that did not obviate the challenges of participating in a mediated space, where they could not rely on embodied social cues to guide communication. One of the ways that youth managed these challenges was through «proximity work'— efforts to name and manage their relationships to one another in the mediated space. Whether by announcing to the networked community, «I am at home now», posting a photo of themselves at school with classmates, or uploading a video about their family life, students used a wide variety of strategies to situate themselves in relation to other people, texts, and contexts. By locating themselves in relation (to other people, to texts, to contexts), young people exposed the distances between themselves and others, revealing where they metaphorically stood in the networked community. They also used proximity work to negotiate and bridge those distances, collaboratively determining where they stood in relation to one another and attempting to mitigate that distance as they worked toward mutual understanding. Through joint effort, young people built shared meaning together – in turn building their relationships and providing a strong foundation for an emerging sense of community.

Much of the proximity work on the network took the form of negotiation, as young people worked together to build shared meaning. By negotiating meaning jointly, participants created a shared set of texts and common experiences on the network, a repertoire that served to bind members of the network together. One means of using this repertoire to build relationships was through the creation of inside jokes, humor shared only by members of the community. One such in-joke centered on the affinity towards eating fried chicken, which Isabel began by posting a background image of fried chicken, which caught on across the network as more and more users accessed the «fried-chicken» trope to build a sense of affiliation and community belonging. This sense of belonging was reinforced by inclusive language and references to shared experiences. For example, participants regularly used third person plural pronouns (we, us) to frame expe-

riences as shared, and they often wrote «shout-outs» addressed to the community at large, like Virginia's compliment, written as a status message: «I enjoyed everyones videos last night they were great!». She referred to a shared experience, a film night that brought all participants together in person to screen their films, her message joining everyone in the networked space to remember it and convey «we're in this together».

Not all of the negotiation was smooth, however, and young people often had to work diligently to locate themselves in relation to one another in ways that would be «heard» and recognized. One means of addressing these difficulties was by posting and referring to personal photos and videos, which anchored students in the networked community, making visible their presence and providing a common touchstone. In the following example, Hannah and James negotiated a potential misunderstanding by using photos to close the distance between them:

– Hannah: Hey.
– James: Hey.
– James: Wat school u go 2.
– Hannah: [Name1].
– Hannah: Wht about u?
– James: [Name2] where all the hot boys are.
– Hannah: U thimk u hot?
– James: That not a pic of me its my friends.
– Hannah: R u sure abut tht?
– James: Yea for real.
– James: I hella hot and taken.
– Hannah: Sure wht eva cn i c a pik of u?
– James: So how about u u taken or not u probbly ugly.
– James: Wait im putting my photo.
– Hannah: Kk and no i am not ugly and i am not taken:}
– James: So tell me about u.
– Hannah: Ive to play soccer.

While the conversation began cordially enough, James' comment that he was located «where all the hot boys are» shifted the course of the conversation and invoked a teasing/flirting discourse. James continued his show of bravado, a marked departure from the discourse of cordiality on the network, by claiming he was «hella hot and taken» before insulting Hannah by saying she was «probbly ugly». Hannah, instead of taking umbrage at the insult or abandoning the conversation altogether, referred James to photos to challenge his assertions and expressed skepticism about his claims. Users like Hannah, who modeled how to situate themselves in the space in grounded ways, opened up possibilities for bridging distances (and leaving

open the possibility of questions like James, «so tell me about us»). The use of photos in this interchange helped Hannah and James' overcome potential misunderstandings and communicative missteps by relying on texts and contexts they built together.

5. The «Communication Work» of the S28 Community

Though young people in our study certainly encountered challenges in communicating with unfamiliar others, we continue to be struck by the fortitude, imagination, and creativity they displayed in their mutual efforts to learn about, from, and with one another. Our participants engaged in the key processes of community development suggested by Nancy: they remained open to knowing one another and they cooperatively worked to bridge distances between them. We found that youth did so by primarily engaging in two kinds of «communication work» in building relationships across differences – what we call «public work» and «proximity work».

In their «public work», youth negotiated the different publics of the networked space by adapting and shifting their rhetorical strategies across communal and private spaces. In the communal spaces of the network, students built public personas that served as communicative bridges to others, engaging in civil discourse there that bred good will and modeled site-appropriate behavior for one other. In the private spaces, young people adopted different communicative styles, taking more interpersonal risks in sharing personal information and challenging one another to reveal their «true» selves. In their «proximity work», participants located themselves in the mediated space in relation to others, in turn creating shared cultural contexts and forging common bonds. Through both their public and proximity work, youth engaged in the central labor of any community – exposing and bridging distances between people through communication. By putting themselves into the community, youth signaled they were open and willing to engage each other; by negotiating their positions in the community relative to one another, they dwelled in the spaces between them, learning about each other and themselves in the process. This, as Nancy says, is «being in common», recognizing ourselves in the other and the other in ourselves.

We do not mean to suggest that these efforts were uncomplicated. Certainly one must only look to the increasingly divisive discourses that separate us from one another to know that building community and communicating across differences are daunting. Intro-na and Brigham (2007) argue that the central ethical burden of community is hospitality (Silverstone, 2007), which must be invented and negotiated at every turn. This study illustrates that educationally-focused social networks like S28 offer multiple avenues for young people to engage in hospitable practices, make mistakes and work through them, and develop capacities to be «response-able» communicators in a global world – all the while being supported by an educational framework. The need for an ethically-attuned educational framework is particularly pressing as more communities face troubling challenges and deep cultural and social divisions. These are further compounded by the new responsibilities and challenges that digitally-mediated communication brings to the fore. Unfortunately, even though the majority of US schools now have access to digital technologies that have the potential to connect people in new ways, there remains a wide disparity between the rich learning opportunities that these technologies afford and the constrained technology practices prevalent in many schools (Cuban, 2001). This disparity is even starker in terms of schools incorporating «Web 2.0» technologies like social networking, which are often banned or viewed as tangential to instruction and learning (Hutchison & Reinking, 2011).

As this study indicates, however, educational institutions have an important role to play in fostering the kinds of hospitable practices that allow community to flourish. In particular, educationally-focused social networks, with their emphasis on co-constructed, collaborative meaning making with a variety of semiotic tools, can be a generative means of supporting important 21st century communication skills. As we have illustrated, perhaps some of the most salient capacities that educators can now help foster are young people's dispositions to be thoughtful, critical, and hospitable interlocutors, willing to «be in common» with others who may seem quite different from and alien to themselves, despite living in contiguous communities and sharing a national identity and a range of affinities and affiliations. Using a repertoire of semiotic tools, participants on social networks can negotiate multiple spaces and mediated distances through their public and proximity work, building relations in a world in which our capacities to interact and to build connections can seem at times remarkably tenuous – though never more important.

Acknowledgements

Notes

References

ANDERSON, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
BANAJI, S. & BUCKINGHAM, D. (2010). Young People, the Internet, and Civic Participation: An Overview of Key Findings from the CivicWeb Project. *IJLM, 2(1)*, 15-24. (DOI:10.1162/ijlm_a_000-38).
BOYD, D. (2011). Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics, and Implications. In Z. PAPACHARISSI (Ed.), *Networked Self.* (pp. 38-57). New York: Routledge.
CASTELLS, M. (1996). *The Rise of the Network Society*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
CUBAN, L. (2001). *Oversold and Underused: Computers in the Classroom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
DELANTY, G. (2003). *Community*. London: Routledge.
GLASER, B.G. & STRAUSS, A.L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
HAAS, C., CARR, B.J. & TAKAYOSHI, P. (2011). Building and Maintaining Contexts in Interactive Networked Writing: An Examination of Deixis and Intertextuality in Instant Messaging. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 25(3)*, 276-298. (DOI: 10.11-77/1050651911401248).
HANSEN, D.T. (2010). Cosmopolitanism and Education: A View from the Ground. *Teachers College Record, 112(1)*, 1-30.

HULL, G.A., STORNAIUOLO, A. & STERPONI, L. (in press). Imagined Readers and Hospitable Texts: Global Youth Connect Online. In D. ALVERMANN, N. UNRAU & R. RUDDELL (Eds.), *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*, 6th edition. IRA.
HUTCHISON, A. & REINKING, D. (2011). Teachers' Perceptions of Integrating Information and Communication Technologies into Literacy Instruction: A National Survey in the United States. *Reading Research Quarterly, 46(4)*, 312-333.
INTRONA, L.D. & BRIGHAM, M. (2007). Reconsidering Community and the Stranger in the Age of Virtuality. *Society and Business Review, 2(2)*, 166-178. (DOI:10.1108/17465680710757385).
LANGE, P.G. (2008). Publicly Private and Privately Public: Social Networking on YouTube. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1)*, 361-380. (DOI:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00400.x).
LIU, H. (2008). Social Network Profiles as Taste Performances. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1)*, 252-275. (DOI:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00395.x).
MILES, M.B. & HUBERMAN, M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
NANCY, J.L. (1991). *The Inoperative Community*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
NANCY, J.L. (2000). *Being Singular Plural*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP.
PAPACHARISSI, Z. (2002). The Virtual Sphere: The Internet as a Public Sphere. *New Media & Society, 4(1)*, 9-27. (DOI:10.1177/-14614440222226244).
POSTILL, J. (2008). Localizing the Internet Beyond Communities and Networks. *New Media & Society, 10(3)*, 413-431. (DOI:10.1177/1461444808089416).
POYNTZ, S.R. (2009). «On Behalf of a Shared World»: Arendtian Politics in a Culture of Youth Media Participation. Review of Education, *Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies, 31(4)*, 365-386.
RHEINGOLD, H. (1993). The Virtual Community. Addison Wesley.
SILVERSTONE, R. (2007). *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
WILLSON, M. (2010). Technology, Networks and Communities. *Information, Communication & Society, 13(5)*, 747-764. (DOI: 10.1080/13691180903271572).

● O. Erstad, Ø. Gilje and H.C. Arnseth
Oslo (Norway)

Learning Lives Connected: Digital Youth across School and Community Spaces

Vidas de aprendizaje conectadas: Jóvenes digitales en espacios escolares y comunitarios

ABSTRACT

Whereas most studies of learning explore intra-institutional experiences, our interest is to track individual learning trajectories across domains. Research on young people's use of different media outside schools shows how practices of using digital media are different from practices in schools in both form and content. The major challenge today, however, is to find ways of understanding the interconnections and networking between these two lifeworlds as experienced by young people. Important elements here are adapted concepts like context, trajectories and identity related to activity networks. We will present data from the ongoing «learning lives project» in a multicultural community in Oslo. We will especially focus on students of Media and Communication studies at upper secondary school level. Using an ethnographic approach we will focus on how learners' identities are constructed and negotiated across different kinds of learning relationships. The data will consist of both researcher-generated data (interviews, video-observations, field notes) and informant-generated data (photos, diaries, maps).

RESUMEN

Aunque la mayoría de los estudios sobre el aprendizaje hablan de las experiencias intra-institucionales, nuestro interés se centra en el seguimiento de las trayectorias de aprendizaje individuales a través de distintos dominios. Las investigaciones sobre el uso de los diferentes medios por los jóvenes en el entorno extraescolar muestran cómo las prácticas aplicadas en el uso de medios digitales difieren de las prácticas en el entorno escolar, tanto en forma como en contenido. El reto principal actualmente consiste en encontrar formas de entender las interconexiones y la creación de redes entre estos dos mundos de la vida, tal y como las experimentan los jóvenes. Aquí los elementos importantes son los conceptos adaptados como contexto, trayectorias e identidad, relacionados con las redes de actividades. Presentamos datos del «proyecto sobre vidas de aprendizaje» actualmente en curso en una comunidad multicultural de Oslo. Nos centraremos especialmente en los alumnos de educación secundaria post obligatoria que cursan estudios de Medios y Comunicación. Con un enfoque etnográfico, nos centraremos en la forma en que se construyen y se negocian las identidades del alumno en distintos tipos de relaciones de aprendizaje. Los datos incluyen datos generados por los investigadores (entrevistas, observaciones a través de vídeos, anotaciones de campo) y datos generados por los participantes (fotografías, diarios, mapas).

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Learning lives, learning trajectories, school, community, connections, identity, ethnography, social networks.
Vidas de aprendizaje, trayectorias de aprendizaje, escuela, comunidad, conexiones, identidad, etnografía, redes.

◆ Dr. Ola Erstad is Professor of the Department of Educational Research of the Faculty of Education at the University of Oslo (Norway) (ola.erstad@ped.uio.no).

◆ Dr. Øystein Gilje is Post-Doctoral Researcher of the Department of Educational Research of the Faculty of Education at the University of Oslo (Norway) (oystein.gilje@ped.uio.no).

◆ Dr. Hans Christian Arnseth is Associate Professor of the Department of Educational Research of the Faculty of Education at the University of Oslo (Norway) (h.c.arnseth@ped.uio.no).

1. Introduction

The changing role of media in our societies, and especially the impact of digital technologies since the mid-1990s, has implications for where and how learning might happen, whether situated or distributed online or offline. On one level, being a learner has always meant operating within and across different spaces and places. Traditionally connections between sites have been framed within the hotly debated issue of transfer (Perkins & Salomon, 1992; Beach, 1999), which dominates both popular and academic mindsets. Still, current opportunities to move across «sites of learning» means that understanding how one context for learning relates to another has become a key concern when conceptualizing and investigating learning and knowledge in the 21st century (Edwards, Biesta & Thorpe, 2009, Leander & al., 2010).

Educational research has mainly been focusing on learning activities within the classroom (Sawyer, 2006). During the last decade the influence of digital technologies on classroom activities has become a key area of educational research. This research shows how teachers and students struggle to implement and define fruitful learning practices using digital media in different subjects and on different levels in school (Law, Pelgrum & Plomp, 2008). Furthermore, institutional practices are often described as barriers to school development related to the integrated use of such media. Several critical voices have also been raised about the strategies pushing the implementation and use of digital media in schools (Selwyn, 2011). In contrast, research on young people's use of different media outside school shows how practices using digital media vary from practices inside school in both form and content. Leisure time activities employing digital media have been described as an alternative route to engagement and learning that are better adapted to 21st century needs than traditional school learning and future employment within the creative industry (Gee, 2007; Ito & al., 2010). These developments imply a need to better understand the connections between different practices, exploring media as an embedded part of everyday activities.

Our discussion is informed by the following two research questions:

• How are learning and literacy practices among young people connected between different contexts and over time?

• How can we study connected practices as part of young people's evolving learning identities?

A major challenge today is to find ways of understanding the interconnections and networking between different life-worlds as experienced by young people. During the last decade there has been a growing interest in the research community across disciplines to better understand how knowledge travels from one setting to another, and how this is experienced by learners in their everyday lives and practices, online and offline. This can be seen in the rethinking of key concepts like «context» (Edwards & al., 2009), «trajectories» (Dreier, 2003) and «identity» (Lemke, 2007; Wortham, 2006). In this article we will present data from an ongoing project in Oslo, Norway. We will concentrate our analysis on one 18-year-old boy and one school project he took part in to exemplify ways of studying learning lives and how practices connect.

2. Connected lives – learning, literacy and identity

In studying connected lives, we need to go beyond issues of access and context-bound use and look more closely at the everyday practices of young people and how digital media create different trajectories of learning for different people. Ito and colleagues (2010) in the US describe this as «media ecologies». In the large scale «Digital Youth» project, they manage to document the broader social and cultural contours, as well as the overall diversity, in youth engagement with digital media. The concept of ecology is used strategically to highlight that: «The everyday practices of youth, existing structural conditions, infrastructures of place, and technologies are all dynamically interrelated; the meanings, uses, functions, flows, and interconnections in young people's daily lives that are located in specific settings are also situated within young people's wider media ecologies… Similarly, we see adult's and children's cultural worlds as dynamically co-constituted, and likewise, the different locations where youth navigate, such as school, after-school, home, and online places» (Ito & al., 2010: 31).

In their findings, they refer to certain genres of participation, in what they describe as «friendship driven» and «interest driven» categories. Furthermore, they have identified different levels of commitment and intensity in new media practices. These genres of participation are then interpreted as being «intertwined with young people's practices, learning, and identity formation within these varied and dynamic media ecologies» (ibid.). However, we should be careful when emphasizing differences between online and offline activities. As Nunes (2006) has made explicit, we live in the intersection between the online and offline as part of our everyday practices. In exploring digital youth, it is also important not to get caught up in con-

ceptions that might be too general (Buckingham & Willett, 2006). The level of digital competence and technological interest among young people varies greatly.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in linking learning and identity formation as interrelated practices connected to the capacity to adapt to changing roles within different contexts (Holland, Lachicotte Jr, Skinner & Cain, 1998; Moje & Luke, 2009). Many of these studies have criticised the institutional practices of education, claiming that the resources, identities, and experiences students develop in other settings are not properly recognised or used as an anchor for developing their skills and knowledge in school (Heath, 1983; Kumpulainen & Lipponen, 2011; Wortham, 2009). In the same vein, scholars have started to question the relevance of educational practices for the future workplace and for civil society, suggesting that students are not sufficiently able to re-contextualise the curriculum and make it relevant to managing problems and challenges in practices outside educational institutions (Guile, 2010). In policy, coordinating the skills and knowledge required, and likewise, the dynamic, changing relations in the economy and society, is crucial. A dual focus on learning and identity allows us to analyse how learners move between and interweave different contexts, by looking at their positioning practices over time (see also McLeod & Yates, 2006; Thomson, 2009). Furthermore, we are inspired by Wortham (2006; 2009), who empirically showed how communities and institutions shape young people into specific kinds of learners.

The notion of «trajectory» provides an analytical means for understanding learning activities across time and space. Participation trajectories are closely linked to identity as a «capacity for particular forms of action and hence a capacity to interpret and use environmental affordances to support action» (Edwards & Mackenzie, 2008: 165). We use the notion of trajectory as a way of identifying the pathways that a person, or an object for that matter, follows within and across

situations, over time. Edwards and Mackenzie (2005) argued for a detailed analysis of the formation, disruption, reformation and support of trajectories of participation in the opportunities for action provided (p. 287). We ought, then, to explore how participants are not merely situated in time and space, but also how they are actively networking learning resources across space-time (Leander, Phillips & Taylor, 2010: 8). If we merely point out that learning is situated in context, we will be missing the fact that people themselves

> A major challenge today is to find ways of understanding the interconnections and networking between different life-worlds as experienced by young people. During the last decade there has been a growing interest in the research community across disciplines to better understand how knowledge travels from one setting to another, and how this is experienced by learners in their everyday lives and practices, online and offline. This can be seen in the rethinking of key concepts like «context», «trajectories» and «identity».

actively establish contexts of meaningful action (Van Oers, 1998). To analyse how people do this is particularly important in knowledge economies, in which people are regularly faced with new challenges that require an innovative use of knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, new technologies enable faster access to, and distribution of, texts, pictures, or other knowledge resources. When researching these issues, we need to understand how these new phenomena may be adapted to other contexts, e.g. a school essay, or a mash-up video on YouTube (Burgess, Green, Jenkins & Hartley, 2009; Warschauer & Matuchniak, 2010).

In the case of socio-cultural approaches, issues of identity are treated as closely interwoven with learning in order to participate in various kinds of practices (Linell, 2009). To become a proficient member of a practice is also to take on a certain identity – as a gamer, a skateboarder, or a chess player. These identities are made available through practice –as observa-

ble action, language use, texts or other types of cultural resources– and newcomers can take on or appropriate these identities as they become more central members of the practice (Gee, 2000). People perform multiple identities and participate in a range of practices. At times, there may be connections, other times there may be tensions, and sometimes, there might be no relation whatsoever (Silseth & Arnseth, 2011). How these connections or tensions are established has consequences for a person's participation trajectories.

3. Learning lives

«Learning lives» refers to the coherence between learning, identity and agency in the individual, framed

> If you pursue more practical subjects in high school, e.g. media production, then skills, experiences, and identities pursued outside formal settings, i.e. having made digital videos of you skateboarding with friends after school, might be very important to succeed.

by a biographical approach which studies peoples' learning trajectories over their life course. Personal histories and future orientations are used to create «narratives of self'; these selves are central to productive learning. In a «learning lives» approach, the connection between learning and identity is important because it specifies how different learners engage in learning activities across settings. Learning does not end when one leaves the school grounds at the end of the day.

Challenging our conceptions of «context» is important because it informs us, in an analytical sense, of the way we interpret and understand the interrelationship between people, their learning identities, and the circumstances they are involved in at different times and in different places. Edwards, Biesta and Thorpe (2009) relate the discussion on context to the broader discourse of lifelong learning where context is an outcome of an activity or is itself a set of practices. To emphasize the process of networking between people and environments, they use the term contextualizing rather than context. Practices are not bound by context, but emerge relationally and are polycontextual, i.e. they have the potential to be realized in a range of strata and situations based on participation in multiple

settings. Once one looks beyond the context of conventional situations for education and training, allowing learning contexts to be extended to the dimension of relationships between people, artefacts and variously-defined others mediated through a range of social, organizational and technological factors, then the limitations of a large part of conventional pedagogy becomes clear (Edwards & al., 2009: 3). This raises an important point concerning how contextualizing and networking involves different types of learning and different contents, and implies different purposes, which might be variables in the values defined for them.

To pursue this issue further, it is possible to address three different focal points: 1) by concentrating on people as they move in and between practices, and examining how they are enabled to sustain their participation; 2) by focusing directly on the tools and signs to determine how they are interpreted, communicated, and made available in a practice; 3) by scrutinizing the structuring of the practice itself, i.e. how is it organised and how is it made learnable for newcomers. In this article, we will focus primarily on persons, as we draw on different data types from a wide range of practices and situations to produce condensed portraits of the selected participants.

4. Methods and context

We will draw on data from a comprehensive study involving ethnographic fieldwork related to three different age cohorts: 5-6-year-olds; 15-16-year-olds; and 18-19-year-olds. We monitored children and teenagers in these cohorts as they went through important transitions in their formal education, and we studied the changes and transitions in and between their institutional and everyday lives. An important aim is to analyse how identities are shaped and developed in different settings over time.

In our project, we have focused on one particular community in Oslo, with a dense multi-ethnic population. Both historically and discursively, this area is representative of the broader changes in Norwegian society over the last three decades. In the 1950s and 1960s, working-class and lower-middle-class families moved to this area, and many people were able to obtain low-interest, government-subsidized loans to

purchase their own homes. During the past twenty years, several different immigrant groups have either arrived in Norway and moved directly to apartments in this area, or have moved to the area from other parts of Oslo, looking for the less expensive, more spacious properties here. For this reason, public discourse has always presented this area of Oslo as a challenge, and at the same time, as the image of the new, multi-ethnic Norway. In this regard, the population is culturally and linguistically diverse; such cultural diversity in urban areas is a relatively new phenomenon in Norway. The Municipality of Oslo, supported by large investments from the State, has undertaken to transform the community over the next 10 years, and we felt that we could use the intervention program as a unique opportunity to develop a community-based understanding of the learning lives of young people in and out-of-school, and to frame the analytical perspectives within a particular social and geographical context.

We used an ethnographic approach, based on recorded interviews and other data collection tools, in order to create detailed descriptions of the learning lives and learning contexts of three cohorts of young people. The study consists of interviews, observations and field notes, video recordings of selected episodes and activities, participant-generated materials in the form of diaries and photos, and maps produced together with the participants. At the time of writing, we are starting to sort the data and are in the process of developing analytical categories that will facilitate systematic comparison across the data sets, which will be analysed to produce meaningful studies of learning moments, learning processes, learning contexts, and their interconnections.

Our challenge has been to develop and use methods that enable us to understand how learning occurs across different sites and locations, including: learning across institutional frames, between informal, semi-formal and formal locations; learning on- and off-line; learning through play; and learning across a range of cultural and interest-driven spaces.

While there has been considerable interest in the academic, policymaking, and innovation spheres in learning across contexts as a way to harness the energies of actual learners (Thomas & Brown, 2011), it is still a challenge for researchers to understand and describe how this takes place. As pointed out by Leander et al. (2010), «following» learners across and between sites is complex. Sites are varied and include physical sites, such as home, school, or with peers; virtual spaces, such as online environments, gaming, social networks, and mobile technologies; and conceptual sites

(tracing, translation, and re-configuration of understanding across contexts).

While we can understand a great deal about how people make connections between spaces and experiences, we still face the challenge of gaining knowledge on how these resources actually move between contexts, how people appropriate them in one set of circumstances and are enabled to use them in other contexts. Methodological challenges are practical (how to track and physically follow learners), ethical/legal (how to ensure access and trust across social domains), and conceptual (the circumscription of what might actually constitute evidence of learning) (Bloome, 2005; Edwards & Mackenzie, 2005; Erstad, Gilje, Sefton-Green & Vasbø, 2009; Sinha, 1999; Wortham, 2006).

5. Researcher-generated and participant-generated data

Each student was given specific assignments: to take different kinds of photos, such as pictures of their school route, places they remembered from childhood, and photos of their homes. Altogether, we collected more than 200 digital photos during spring of 2011. As a result of these relatively open-ended assignments, the informants provided us with a large number of very diverse photographs. One of the most interesting aspects was the way in which immigrant children included pictures of their relatives, as well as photos from their journeys and visits back to their countries of origin. As part of the research design, we used these artefacts as a starting point in follow-up interviews. As more than half of the informants in the study would be leaving their local community during summer 2011, we intended to compare those who left the local community to those who chose to stay.

Based upon a preliminary analysis of the interviews, several issues have emerged. An important (albeit unsurprising) finding is that most of the pupils in secondary school moved across a very limited local community, close to their homes. When talking about place and movement, many of the participants made it clear that they recognised some invisible border in their local neighbourhood, which they did not cross. The interview data enabled us to understand how they positioned themselves in relation to other socio-economic groups.

In order to attain our objective of tracing movement and flow, we needed a flexible means of data collection and analysis. A possible solution is to combine a detailed analysis of interaction with the analysis of texts, models, or artefacts of any kind, alongside

observation of action in and between situations (Baker, Green & Skukauskaite, 2008), thereby alternating between different levels of analysis.

On the one hand, an interaction analysis can show detailed instances of emergence, whereas observation and the analysis of photographs, maps and artefacts can provide insight into broader changes and flows. Detailed studies can enable us to problematize some of the broader claims or provide richer and more detailed descriptions of generic patterns. Observations over time can provide us with knowledge that might force us to reconsider the analytical claims resulting from studies conducted over a much shorter time span. By analysing these different kinds of data, we aim to understand the trajectories of young learners during their crucial educational transitions. Bearing in mind that we have just started to analyse our data, we will limit our analysis to providing a telling example of one participant. We are unable to provide a detailed analysis of how participation trajectories are actually negotiated; nonetheless, we shall provide an overview of how some of the youth we have studied managed their learning and identities across practices and over time.

It is not our intention to provide a whole list of the practices and activities in which young people engage, as this would be too complex and demanding. The aim is rather to provide some background to the following analytic example, insofar as this helps us suggest and point to connections and boundaries between practices, which may have an impact on young people's participation over time. In our analytical perspective, there are multiple trajectories of development and participation. How people become who they are is the result of complex negotiations and cannot be reduced to societal and individual variables.

6. A portrait of a young learner

Mathias lives with his mother in an apartment block. His parents are divorced. He has spent his summer vacation in the mountains ever since he was a young child. He describes these experiences as life-changing moments for him. There are 4 computers in his home, and he has both a laptop (Mac) and a desktop computer in his room. He has always practised sports and currently attends Thai boxing training sessions several times a week. He uses Facebook actively every day, and reads newspapers online. Mathias is not very motivated at school and that was partly why he chose «Media and Communication» studies. From his perspective, this is an easy subject with a lot of freedom, which suits him. In class, he is very sociable, but

spends a lot of time on different projects with a friend. He wanted to start higher education in order to become a real estate agent because his career as a musician in the community was not a serious option for future employment and that is why he gave it up on starting upper secondary school. After secondary school, he started military service and was considering the possibility of a military career, which would seem to satisfy his interest in nature and his serious training efforts.

7. Mathias and the «Street Art» project

In one «Media and Communication» class we studied from November 2010 until May 2011, five boys did a project on graffiti in urban spaces in Oslo. It was a school project, in the sense that the whole class had to do a project for a certain length of time. Students were free to choose the theme for their project and their co-workers. The idea for the project had to be approved by the teacher before they began, and the final product was to be evaluated by the teacher.

Two of the five boys in the group knew a couple of local graffiti artists; they invited the other three to join their group. The basic idea was to create a portrait of the two artists. The boys submitted their proposal to their teacher, who approved their idea and also made some suggestions about making the project along the lines of a TV documentary about graffiti in urban spaces in Oslo.

At that time, there was a broader discourse in the city among politicians and the general public about the pros and cons of graffiti. The boys agreed that this might make the production more interesting and started to outline their plans for the documentary. They searched for public information and newspaper articles about graffiti in Oslo, and they drew up a list of people they might interview. They also read books about graffiti artists like Banksy, which were available at school or at the local library.

The students spent a couple of weeks reading and writing in preparation for the different sequences of the documentary. They needed to plan how they were going to do things and to determine who should be responsible for what. They also had to make arrangements with the people they wanted to interview. We focused on two of the boys in the group, whom we were also studying in some other projects. Considering that one of the boys was a former rapper in the community and was used to being «on stage», and another had done quite a lot of filming and editing in his leisure time, it was decided that one of them would be the reporter in the documentary and the other the camera operator.

Image 1: One of the boys filming the two graffiti artists out in the community.

The documentary is approximately ten minutes in length. Our interest lay not so much in the actual documentary, but more in the example it provided of how practices and knowledge are connected in the process of its implementation as a school assignment. The main theme in the film is the contrast between the bottom-up perspective of street artists who paint graffiti, and the top-down perspective of politicians concerned about the costs of cleaning graffiti from public buildings, etc. The film starts with footage from the local community of the students themselves, and then Mathias, who is the reporter, comes on screen explaining that they are going to discuss the question of graffiti from a bottom-up and top-down perspective. Most of the film is comprised of snatches of interviews with the two graffiti artists and the politician, followed by a few sequences of the graffiti artists painting graffiti on a public wall where this is permitted. The film then shows some interviews with students from their school giving their opinions on graffiti. The film was not well-rated by the teacher, mainly because of the poor sound and film quality of most of the sequences, due to the technical problems the students had with the camera.

Nonetheless, this project, just like several other projects we followed during this period, is an example of the ways in which students can use the community as a learning space and draw on different «funds of knowledge» from their own experiences of having been brought up in the community where their school is located. The community becomes a resource that they can draw on as part of their school projects. In the case of Mathias, this connection between school activities, i.e. making this film, and his own experiences and practices in the community

was expressed in several ways.

Mathias plays a lead role in this project because the theme is something he is particularly engaged with. On one level, he sees the issue of graffiti as being important in relation to his having grown up in this community. Graffiti is something that is discussed in the community, and in the city itself, as a controversial issue in the tensions between youth culture and the adult discourse, which considers it a problem. Mathias can see the pros and cons of both positions, but he knows the two graffiti artists in the film personally and therefore has a special involvement in this issue.

Urban space is something that plays an important role for Mathias in several ways, and something that the film specifically focuses on. Mathias grew up in this community, and in the interviews and in his own documentation of his learning life, different spaces and places are important to him. This is partly due to his interest in sports and his experiences as a rap artist.

The youth club where the two graffiti artists operate and which is portrayed in the film, is the same club where Mathias used to record and perform his rap music.

While we were there, it was obvious that he knew many of the people at the club, adults and young people alike. He seemed to have a special status as a youngster who had been active in the club, even though he no longer had any relationship with this club. While we were there, Mathias showed us around the recording studio and the club, and told us about when he performed concerts with several hun-

Image 2: Mathias showing me the recording studio where he recorded his rap-music.

Image 3: Mathias at Thai-boxing practice.

dred young people present, which was obviously very important for him. He talked about this as a way in which he performed himself as a person, changing from a rather shy person to someone who was «on stage» performing in front of others. When discussing this period in his life, which is also part of the «Street Art» film through the different spaces portrayed therein, Mathias explained, as follows, the role it had in his life then, and the impact it has on his learning life now.

– I: When did you start to be interested in rap?

– Jo: I guess I started in 7th grade. I wasn't very old at the time. After that, it just developed and kept on growing. However, over the past year, it has become less important. I've lost interest because I want to put my efforts into other things, like school and things. It is a risky future to be a rapper in Norway. It's not really a smart choice.

– I: How did you feel about school at that time, in 7th grade?

– Jo: In 8th grade it was worse, and in 10th grade I had to get good grades to get to where I am now. But while I was at upper secondary, I thought more about the future and that is why I became less interested in music. The sensible mind took over. I was probably

not the smartest at school, but what I did with music – that was what I could do and there was no one that could do it better than me at that time. I felt like, this is my thing. I feel like I manage school, and also I have trained a lot. I feel that I am still good at music. I know many musicians that are very good, but it is not enough to be good. Everything has to connect.

Being a rapper feels like life-changing moments for Mathias. However, he also talks a lot about being close to nature, in the mountains with his grandfather, as special moments for him as a person. He has two sides to his learning identity. One is connected to being bored with school, and his interest in rap; the other is about sports and body discipline, which is obvious from his interest in Thai boxing and his future orientation towards a military career. After starting military service when he left upper secondary school, he wrote in his diary about his very disciplined life and about the learning trajectories involved therein, where he can draw on his experiences from Thai-boxing.

Mathias and the students in the group used the community as a resource to make their film for a specific school project. The theme is something they were engaged with, and something they had opinions about, thus defining this learning process as more authentic. On a more personal level, it is clear that for Mathias, the main person in the film project, this connects to many sides of both his previous and current learning life in the community. He negotiates learning trajectories that he defines as important for the project; at the same time, he makes connections regarding his life outside school and the importance it has had for his positioning towards learning and school.

8. Concluding remarks

Through our illustrations, and especially, through the example of Mathias and one of the projects he was involved in as part of a school assignment, we have attempted to provide examples of connections and boundaries between practices. From kindergarten through primary school, children learn schooling. They learn to engage with objects in certain ways, to behave as students, and to negotiate their identities in relation to subjects and peers. In school, they learn discipline and focused attention, and that it takes work to succeed. Sometimes, they find that the skills and identities developed, or the resources available in the community, are useful and can be re-contextualised and mobilised in school to manage the tasks and problems they encounter. With peers, they may learn that it is important to be skilled at football, or that it is more important to run faster than the others than to be better

at maths. In upper secondary school, the same focus and attention is required to succeed and get good grades. If you do not succeed academically, there are certain trajectories that close down in terms of pursuing a more theoretical education. Certain activities, like engaging in volunteer work, sports activities, or political organisations, might be a source of support, as they foster organisation of time, hard work, and discussion. Again, success here might enable you to pursue a career in upper-secondary school, where you have more freedom to choose subjects that interest you. Nonetheless, any such choice also means that certain trajectories are no longer possible. If you pursue more practical subjects in high school, e.g. media production, then skills, experiences, and identities pursued outside formal settings, i.e. having made digital videos of you skateboarding with friends after school, might be very important to succeed.

We have tried to show that activities and practices provide different ways of structuring activities that can make it easier or more difficult to re-contextualise skills and identities developed in other practices. It is the complex negotiation work in and between these practices that determines whether individuals are able to successfully engage in their learning lives.

References

BAKER, W.D., GREEN, J.L. & SKUKAUSKAITE, A. (2008). *Video-enabled Ethnographic Research: A Micro Ethnographic Perspective*. In WALFORD, G. (Ed.). *How do You do Educational Ethnography* (pp. 76-114). London: Tufnell Press.

BEACH, K. (1999). Consequential Transitions: A Sociocultural Expedition Beyond Transfer in Education. *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 101-139.

BLOOME, D. (2005). *Discourse Analysis & the Study of Classroom Language & Literacy Events: A Microethnographic Perspective*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

BUCKINGHAM, D. & WILLETT, R. (Eds.) (2006). *Digital Generations. Children, Young People, and New Media*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

BURGESS, J., GREEN, J., JENKINS, H. & HARTLEY, J. (2009). *You-Tube: Online Video and Participatory Culture*. Cambridge: Polity.

DREIER, O. (2003). Learning in Personal Trajectories of Participation. In N. STEPHENSON, H.L. RADTKE, R.J. JORNA & H.J. STAM (Eds.), *Theoretical Psychology. Critical Contributions* (pp. 20-29). Concord, Canada: Captus University Publications.

EDWARDS, R., BIESTA, G. & THORPE, M. (Eds.) (2009). *Rethinking Contexts for Learning and Teaching. Communities, Activities and Networks*. London: Routledge.

EDWARDS, A. & MACKENZIE, L. (2005). Steps towards Participation: The Social Support of Learning Trajectories. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 24(4), 287-302.

Edwards, A. & Mackenzie, L. (2008). Identity Shifts in Informal Learning Trajectories. In B. VAN OERS, W. WARDEKKER, E. ELBERS, & R. VAN DER VEER (Eds.), T*he Transformation of Learning: Advances in Cultural-historical Activity Theory*. (pp. 163-181). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

ERSTAD, O., GILJE, Ø., SEFTON-GREEN, J. & VASBØ, K. (2009). Exploring'learning Lives': Community, Identity, *Literacy and Meaning*. *Literacy, 43(2)*, 100-106.

GEE, J.P. (2000). Identity as an Analytic Lens for Research in Education. *Review of Research in Education*, 25, 99-125.

GEE, J.P. (2007). *What Video Games Have to Teach us about Learning and Literacy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

GUILE, D.J. (2010). Learning to Work in the Creative and Cultural Sector: New Spaces, Pedagogies and Expertise. *Journal of Education Policy, 25(4)*, 465-484.

HEATH, S. B. (1983). *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

HOLLAND, D., LACHICOTTE JR, W., SKINNER, D. & CAIN, C. (1998). *Agency and Identity in Cultural Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

ITO, M., BAUMER, S. BITTANTI, M., BOYD, D. & AL. (2010). *Hanging out, Messing around, and Geeking out*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

LAW, N., PELGRUM, W.J. & PLOMP, T. (2008). *Pedagogy and ICT Use in Schools around the World. Findings from the IEA SITES 2006 Study*. Hong Kong: Springer Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong.

LEANDER, K., PHILLIPS, N. & TAYLOR, K.H. (2010). The Changing Social Spaces of Learning: Mapping New Mobilities. *Review of Research in Education, 34*, 329-394.

LEMKE, J. (2007). Identity, Development, and Desire: Critical Discourses and Contested Identities. In C.R. CALDAS-COULTHARD & R. IEDEMA (Eds.), *Identity Trouble: Critical Discourse and Contested Identities* (pp. 17-42). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

LINELL, P. (2009). *Rethinking Language, Mind, and World Dialogically: Interactional and Contextual Theories of Human Sense-making*. Charlotte, N.C.: Information Age Publ.

McLEOD, J. & YATES, L. (2006). *Making Modern Lives: Subjectivity, Schooling, and Social Change*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.

MOJE, E. & LUKE, A. (2009). Review of Research: Literacy and Identity: Examining the Metaphors in History and Contemporary Research. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44(4)*, 415-437.

NUNES, M. (2006). *Cyberspaces of Everyday Life*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

PERKINS, D. & SALOMON, G. (1992). Transfer of Learning. In *International Encyclopaedia of Education*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

SAWYER, R.K. (Ed.). (2006). *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

SELWYN, N. (2011). *Schools and Schooling in the Digital Age. A Critical Analysis*. London: Routledge.

SILSETH, K. & ARNSETH, H.C. (2011). Learning and Identity Construction across Sites: A Dialogical Approach to Analysing the Construction of Learning Selves. *Culture & Psychology, 17(1)*, 65-80.

SINHA, C. (1999). *Situated Selves: Learning to be a Learner*. In J. BLISS, R. SÄLJÖ & P. LIGHT (Eds.), *Technological resources for learning*. (pp. 32-46). Oxford: Pergamon.

THOMAS, D. & BROWN, J.S. (2011). *A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change: CreateSpace*. Lexington, KY: Douglas Thomas / John Seely Brown.

THOMSON, R. (2009). *Unfolding Lives: Youth, Gender and Change*. Bristol: England: The Policy Press.

VAN OERS, B. (1998). From Context to Contextualizing. *Learning and Instruction, 8(6)*, 473-488.

WARSCHAUER, M. & MATUCHNIAK, T. (2010). New Technology and Digital Worlds: Analyzing Evidence of Equity in Access, Use,

and Outcomes. *Review of Research in Education, 34(1),* 179-225.
WORTHAM, S. (2006). *Learning Identity: The Joint Emergence of Social Identification and Academic Learning.* Cambridge Univer-sity Press New York.
WORTHAM, S. (2009). The Objectification of Identity across Events. *Linguistics and Education, 19(3),* 294-311.

● Ellen Middaugh and Joseph Kahne
　Oakland (USA)

New Media as a Tool for Civic Learning

Nuevos medios como herramienta para el aprendizaje cívico

ABSTRACT

Service-Learning, a popular approach to citizenship education in the US, provides youth with opportunities to define and address public needs while reflecting on the knowledge, skills, and relationships needed to do such work. This approach assumes education for democratic citizenship must help youth understand themselves as part of a larger community, increase their sense of agency and efficacy as civic actors, and increase their ability to analyze social and political issues. It also assumes that these outcomes are best learned through experience. Creating these conditions can be quite challenging in the context of schools, where students are typically separated from the community, highly controlled in their activities, and have limited time to grasp the complexities of a given topic. This piece responds to the growing role of new media in civic and political activity. Specifically, it examines how the integration of new media into service learning may facilitate or challenge the core pedagogical goals of this approach to civic education and the implications for the practice of supporting youth civic engagement in school settings. Based on a review of existing programs and research, the authors illustrate how new media can be used to support four primary goals of service learning – designing authentic learning environments, connecting to community, supporting youth voice, and encouraging engagement with issues of social justice.

RESUMEN

El aprendizaje-servicio es un método que se utiliza con frecuencia en la educación para la ciudadanía en los EEUU. Proporciona oportunidades a los jóvenes para definir y abordar las necesidades de la población, y al mismo tiempo, reflexionar sobre los conocimientos, habilidades y relaciones que requiere dicha tarea. De acuerdo con este enfoque, la educación para la ciudadanía democrática debe ayudar a los jóvenes a comprender que forman parte de una comunidad más amplia, fomentar su sentido de función y eficacia como agentes cívicos, y mejorar su capacidad para analizar cuestiones sociales y políticas, entendiéndose que estos resultados se consiguen de mejor forma si el aprendizaje es a través de la experiencia. Crear estas condiciones puede suponer un reto en el contexto escolar donde el alumnado suele estar apartado de la comunidad, muy controlado en sus actividades, y con un tiempo limitado para comprender las complejidades de ciertos temas. El presente artículo responde al papel creciente de los nuevos medios en la actividad cívica y política. Analiza específicamente cómo la integración de los nuevos medios en el servicio-aprendizaje puede facilitar o cuestionar los objetivos pedagógicos básicos de este enfoque de la educación cívica y las implicaciones para la práctica de fomentar la participación cívica de los jóvenes en los entornos escolares. Basándose en una revisión de los programas existentes y los resultados de estudios realizados, los autores muestran la forma en que nuevos medios pueden ser utilizados para apoyar los cuatro objetivos principales del aprendizaje-servicio: el diseño de entornos de aprendizaje auténtico, la creación de enlaces con la comunidad, apoyar la voz de los jóvenes y alentar la participación en cuestiones de justicia social.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Internet, youth, civic education, media, pedagogy, service learning, civic engagement.
Internet, jóvenes, educación cívica, medios, pedagogía, aprendizaje-servicio, implicación cívica.

◆ Dr. Ellen Middaugh is Research Director of the Civic Engagement Research Group at Mills College, Oakland (USA) (emiddaug@mills.edu).

◆ Dr. Joseph Kahne is Professor of Education at Mills College, Oakland (USA) (jkahne@mills.edu).

1. Introduction

The historical portrait of US youth civic engagement suggests youth are capable of intensive participation and leadership in the right circumstances but face barriers that yield lower rates of overall engagement. While youth have played critical roles in varied social movements, their participation in regularly available avenues of civic and political participation are relatively low. The 2008 election demonstrated the possibility of energizing youth around politics, but research suggests this is more exception than rule. Recent studies find that youth under 25 vote at lower rates than their adult counterparts (Circle, 2010), and even when taking into account a variety of political acts, the majority of youth are not politically active (Cohen & Kahne, 2012).

Experiential approaches such as Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) have emerged in the US, under the umbrella of Civic Education, as an effective method for supporting youth civic engagement (Gould, 2011). This approach builds on participatory theories of democracy (Dewey, 1916; Barber, 1984) and assumes the ultimate goal of EDC is to prepare youth to work with others to define and address issues of public concern through both formal governmental channels and informal voluntary associations. Service-learning, «an instructional methodology that makes intentional links between the academic curriculum and student work that benefits the community by providing meaningful opportunities for students to apply what they learn to issues that matter to them» (Gould, 2011: 29) has been found to support a variety of civic and political outcomes (Kahne, Crow & Lee, 2012).

As new media becomes an increasingly important set of tools and contexts for civic engagement, there is a growing need to understand how changes in social networks, information access, and media production associated with the rise of new media influence what «best practice» in civic education looks like. In this piece, we consider how the integration of new media into service-learning might support, extend, or transform its pedagogical goals.

2. Service-learning – an experiential approach to civic education

Service-learning emerged in the 1990s as part of a shift towards experiential, project-based approaches to civic education – approaches that do not simply impart facts about the structure and function of government and rights and rules of citizenship, but aim to design «authentic» learning experiences. These priorities are guided by three assumptions: a) democracy is a social practice where people negotiate, compete, and collaborate to make decisions about how to prioritize and address public issues (Dewey, 1916; Barber, 1984); b) civic identity development is a process of defining what role one plays in this social practice and how central the practice of democracy is to self-definition (Youniss & Yates, 1997); and c) education should include opportunities to connect the learning of knowledge and skills to the social practices where they will be applied (Dewey, 1916; Rogoff, 2003).

The term authentic learning experiences draws attention to the last assumption. For example, Rogoff (2003) contrasts learning that is organized around «intent participation» – where youth learn and complete increasingly responsible tasks as part of inclusion in adult activity or a mature community of practice – with «assembly line instruction» where youth learn knowledge and skills in well-defined discrete chunks assigned by experts in preparation for, but not in the context of, the practice where they will be applied.

In the context of civic education, assigning youth to learn how a bill becomes a law, as one of many facts to be recalled on a test, because they will eventually vote and should understand the process, might be characterized as «assembly line instruction». Youth learning how a bill becomes a law as they work to stop a law from being passed might reflect learning through «intent participation». The strength of the latter approach is that it provides an immediate and compelling answer to the question, «Why do we need to know this?». Youth not only have a pressing and immediate motivation to learn – they have tasks to accomplish with social accountability and real-world consequences – but they also see how their learning fits into a larger set of practices.

This approach offers a few advantages that are particularly relevant for youth civic development. In addition to providing youth with opportunities to 1) engage in authentic learning for the practice of civic engagement, service-learning projects are also more likely to provide youth with opportunities to 2) connect to community and social movements; 3) exercise voice and decision-making, and 4) grapple with issues of justice and fairness. These priorities are rooted in research that suggests that each of these foci is central to the development of civic identity.

Indeed, studies have found that feeling part of «history» or «something bigger» is an important motivator for engagement in both activism and systemic forms of participation (McAdam, 1988; Cohen, 2010). Studies have also documented a close relationship be-

tween social trust (Kwak, Shah & Holbert, 2004) or sense of community (Albanesi, Cicognani & Zani, 2007) and civic and political engagement. Thus service-learning programs explicitly work to provide opportunities for youth to build community amongst themselves and to connect to broader networks of individuals working for change, which research suggests positively supports civic identity later in life (Youniss & Yates, 1997).

Furthermore, while most approaches to citizenship education assume that youth are being prepared for future, adult roles, studies of civic identity development suggest adolescence is a critical time for such development and thus an important time for engaging youth in civic and political activity (Youniss & Yates, 1997). Unfortunately, many youth who are politically interested report that their encounters with politically active adults are discouraging – they are greeted with low expectations about their commitment and ability to contribute (Gordon & Taft, 2011), challenging their chances of maintaining interest into adulthood. In contrast, it is considered best practice to prioritize «youth voice» defined as «the inclusion of young people as a meaningful part of the creation and implementation of service opportunities» (Fredericks, Kaplan & Zeisler, 2001). Service-learning programs, at their best, seek to give youth opportunities to make suggestions, give feedback, and make decisions throughout the process of selecting, designing, and evaluating service projects (Billig, Brown & Turnbull, 2008).

Finally, one of the reasons for encouraging youth civic engagement is a belief that policies and institutions constructed by a broad and diverse public are more likely to be just and fair than those constructed by a small group of elites. The questions of how to participate in ways that promote a more just and representative democracy are not easily resolved, and people hold very different ideas about what just outcomes are and how to best achieve them. If youth are going to engage actively in civic and political life, these are questions they will necessarily grapple with themselves. Youth in late adolescence and early adulthood have both the capability and motivation to think

through these questions (Erikson, 1968). Perhaps even more importantly, a concern for justice and fairness can be a powerful motivator for political engagement. For many young people, the connections between issues they find compelling and the details of civic and political life are not obvious. Those who study or practice service-learning suggest youth benefit from analyzing and reflecting on structural conditions and social forces that allow the issues they are working to address to persist (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

> As new media becomes an increasingly important set of tools and contexts for civic engagement, there is a growing need to understand how changes in social networks, information access, and media production associated with the rise of new media influence what «best practice» in civic education looks like. In this piece, we consider how the integration of new media into service-learning might support, extend, or transform its pedagogical goals.

3. Challenges of experiential civic education in the school setting

While the body of research on service-learning and other experiential approaches to civic education suggest positive results for a variety of outcomes, integrating these approaches into the typical school setting can be challenging. The power of service-learning for supporting youth civic engagement lies in its aim to engage youth in the authentic practice of doing civic work, but the norms and structures of schools do not necessarily support this kind of practice. The work of defining and addressing public needs typically takes place over long stretches of time, engages a range of knowledge and skills, and is done in collaboration with a variety of stake-holders and partners. In contrast, the structure of schooling is one in which students spend a limited amount of time with individual teachers and subjects. Furthermore, content areas are divided and schools are structurally and functionally separate from other spheres of community life.

Common challenges in service-learning programs include a tendency to adopt functional or simplistic

service activities –such as brief demonstrations to raise awareness about an issue– that do not require collaboration with community partners or very much time spent on analysis of complex social problems (Jones, Segar, & Gasiorski, 2008). While these are understandable accommodations to the pressures of time and resources that schools typically face, the risk is that students will adopt overly simplistic models of citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). The question of how to balance the need to engage students in a discrete time-limited set of actions without sacrificing their understanding of the complexity of the broader issue and the collective nature of public work is one that most service-learning programs must grapple with.

> For many young people, the connections between issues they find compelling and the details of civic and political life are not obvious. Those who study or practice service-learning suggest youth benefit from analyzing and reflecting on structural conditions and social forces that allow the issues they are working to address to persist.

Another challenge for service-learning in schools is that the desire to have students exercise their rights of participation as citizens who have valid needs and priorities tend to conflict with a school environment that more frequently emphasizes the hierarchical relationship between adults and students (Kohfeldt & al., 2011). Youth and adults both hold these expectations of hierarchy, and thus when youth are invited to take a more active role in setting goals and deciding on activities, it can be challenging for both sides (O'Donoghue, 2006). Youth may lack the experience or confidence needed to define and articulate their perspective (Kirshner, 2006).

4. Can new media help?

Developments in new media over the last 20+ years have brought about new possibilities and new challenges for participation in civic and political life. We are increasingly relying on networked technologies in both our private and public lives. Whether we are finding and sharing information, building and

maintaining social networks, sharing an opinion, or raising money, new media is more and more frequently the tool that enables and organizes our civic and political activities. This is particularly true among youth, who, for example, are more likely to interact with friends daily via text (54%) than they are face-to-face (33%) and more likely to get news online (82%) than through any other format (14-66%). New Media have become central to how we engage in a range of political activities (Zikhur, 2010).

As technology has becomes ubiquitous, questions emerge about whether this implies changes in who participates and what effective participation looks like. For example, research has begun to focus on whether varied aspects of internet participation are related to greater political activity (Neuman, Bimber & Hindman, 2011) and questions such as whether the rise of digital networks increases the likelihood that youth will be recruited into political activity (Schlozman, Verba & Brady, 2010) or provide alternative pathways to political participation (Rice, Moffett, & Madupalli, 2012). Additionally, studies are beginning to focus systematically on how youth and adults are using media and social networks to stay informed about social and political issues and connect to civic and political institutions (Smith, 2010) as well as to engage in activism (Earl & Kimport, 2010).

Little attention has been paid, however, to systematic study of the pedagogical implications for civic educators. In particular there is a need for greater articulation of how educators and youth can best tap the affordances of new media or how they are currently doing so. In the section below, we examine how digital media might support the goals of experiential civic education and potentially play a role in helping educators address some of the central challenges for experiential educators.

5. Service-Learning in the digital age

Up to this point we have noted both the power and the challenges of using service-learning as a strategy for supporting youth civic engagement. Below, we discuss how new media may support, challenge or raise questions about some of the more critical elements of the practice of service-learning.

5.1. Designing and connecting to authentic learning environments

As noted earlier, a central challenge of service-learning is to engage youth in short-term action with a clear purpose in a way that it informs their understanding of how to engage with complex social issues rather than simplifies their vision of engagement. The role of teachers in service-learning is to facilitate access for youth to seriously engage in defining and addressing civic issues and to use their curricular learning to do so, which can take a great deal of scaffolding and a great deal of teacher time.

5.1.1. Supporting practice – New media and scaffolding engagement with social issues

Non-profits and game designers have begun to develop a variety of strategies for supporting this sort of engagement.

• Web Resources: The Living Toolkit. Web resources like www.dosomething.org and www.generationon.org provide the equivalent of an electronic toolkit by creating series of steps for students wishing to engage in action. Students can log on and are invited to explore a variety of issues to discover what they might care about, provided with examples of projects and links to resources, and given a series of steps to walk through to address their issues. This model is not dramatically different than what might happen in a classroom service-learning project without digital media, but provides a set of organized and curated resources for teachers and students to draw on with the advantage that it is a live and continually updated resources.

• Games as practice or models for conceptualizing civic problems and civic action. Social issues can be incredibly complex – in most cases multiple institutions and people acting over many years feed into the problems we face today. New media educators have increasingly been thinking about how to use games and virtual worlds to help young people think systematically about complex issues and to experiment with different courses of action. They argue that this can provide scaffolding and low-risk experimentation as a tool for thinking about how to engage with complex social issues. For example, Squire (2008) has experimented with integrating popular games, like Civilization, into the curriculum to facilitate youth thinking about the structure of society and the relationship between different sectors of society. A number of serious games exist currently to help youth think about social issues. For example, Fate of the World (http://fateoftheworld.net), asks players to address global climate change through a series of simulated policy decisions to see how their actions might help or hurt climate change.

• Using games and virtual worlds to scaffold engagement with complex issues. In addition to using games to learn about complex issues and experiment with different outcomes, designers have also begun experimenting with ways that games and virtual worlds can be used to help youth move from simulation and experimentation to connect to real world action. For example, Quest Atlantis, created by Barab and colleagues at the University of Indiana is an immersive, persistent virtual world with a narrative in which youth must engage in missions to save the dying world of Atlantis (dying environmentally, economically, culturally). The narrative story of Atlantis and the virtual world introduces students to virtual solutions to abstract problems, but then, in partnership with classrooms, students engage activities to identify and address similar problems in their own communities. This strategy takes advantage of the narrative story and experimentation affordances of gaming as a back-ground to support youth thinking about social action.

5.1.2. New considerations – What counts as authentic problems and authentic action?

As youth are increasingly spending time online, what happens online matters more for their quality of life and material conditions. This raises questions about what it means to meet «authentic» community needs and what counts as «authentic» action. For example, if, as we know, 97% of US youth play video games, and as some suggest, hate speech is a persistent presence in networked gaming, do efforts to raise awareness about and address hate speech in gaming (as the GAMBIT (http://gambit.mit.edu/projects/hatespeech.php) hate speech project does) count as meeting an authentic community need? Similarly, if a class identifies a problem in their community but addresses the problem completely through virtual means – posting awareness raising facts on social network sites and linking their networks to raise funds for a cause, send letters to elected officials and broadcast media, etc. This may not look very much like community service, but may actually be as effective for addressing social issues as many face-to-face service projects.

5.2. Building community and connecting to movements

Another critical element of service-learning identified earlier is its potential to help students build a sense of connection to a broader community and to ongoing

efforts to address social issues. However, this can be challenging when the service-learning is confined to a specific setting (school) and a specific time period (semester or year).

5.2.1. Supporting practice – connecting the social dots with social networks and maps

One of the most accessible and most striking affordances of networked technology is the ability to bridge connections between time and space. Consider the following:

• Mapping as Community Building. Activists, environmentalists and educators are increasingly taking advantage of mobile technology and online interactive mapping and data visualization software to connect individual activities to a larger whole. For example, Citizen Science (http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/category/learning-methods) programs encourage individuals to contribute data observations from their communities (pictures of wildlife, specific plants, etc.) to broader efforts to track climate change. Youth engaged in such activities have a chance to see how their individual acts of data collection can help inform the broader conversation about climate change. Mapping has also been used to build and maintain coalitions. For example, Chicago youth with the support of Open Youth Networks created OurMap of Environmental Justice (http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&t=h&source=embed&msa=0&msid=103647195530581788559.00044b66339217a3e2538&ll=41.83913,-87.718105&spn=0.022381,0.036478) to draw attention to how they are impacted by environmental racism in their community, to identify assets in their community, and to «build a stronger and more vibrant environmental justice movement».

• Connecting to online youth leadership communities. A number of sites have emerged to connect youth nationally, globally, and across issues. Taking it Global (www.tigweb.org/) serves as an online resource and online community for youth and a space for «youth interested in global issues and creating positive social change». The site serves as a space for youth, educators, and organizations around the globe to access resources, share stories and information, engage in discussions, and to collaborate. Sites like this provide a structure for classrooms and organizations engaged in service-learning or organizing to connect their work to a broader, global dialogue about addressing social issues.

• Using social network sites to maintain community. Programs are increasingly using digital technology to create online spaces where youth can organize their

work together. Free, commercially available tools, like Google Sites can be used to post updates and resources, plan activities, stay in contact, record discussions and decisions. The persistence of this form of communication and the ability for the entire group to access and interact with each others' work, can, when done well, support the emergence of community in ways that episodic sharing back may not. Furthermore, as students move into and out of classrooms, these kinds of sites allow them to see the work that has come before them and that begins after they have left.

5.2.2. New considerations: Attending to the quality of online communities

Another affordance of new media is the potential to connect to communities not available in the physical space. For marginalized youth, who may feel alienated from their school or local community, digital networks can help them connect to like-minded people (Byrne, 2006) opening up the discussion of community beyond the geographic locality. However, one does not have to spend much time in the comments section of a YouTube video, a discussion board, or a networked game to realize that not all online networks lead to vibrant or healthy communities. Conversations can be fleeting or hostile. Feedback may or may not be relevant or helpful. Simply having technology doesn't mean we use it well. We highlight the practices above because they are tools that can enhance the work that young people are doing and help them stay connected to each other, build community, etc. However, intentionality is important, and the practices we use to support healthy school and classroom communities may be different than those that support healthy online communities. Efforts like CommonSense Media's (www.commonsensemedia.org) Digital Citizenship Curriculum (www.commonsensemedia.org/educators) provides a structure for teachers to work with students on creating healthy online communities in their own lives.

5.3. Supporting youth in expressing voice and making decisions

The third critical element we highlight is the importance of supporting youth in identifying and expressing their perspectives on social issues and in contributing substantively to decisions about how to address such issues.

5.3.1. Supporting practice – media production as a support for youth voice

While youth have long had opportunities to create media, advances in digital media have brought new

capacity to produce and manipulate media and to reach an audience, both of which can support youth in discovering and expressing their point of view. Remixing and responding to existing media can be a mechanism for youth to explore their own point of view. Sharing media with others and receiving comments provides youth with an opportunity to feel as if someone is listening and their point of view is important.

Currently, there are a number of Youth Media resources dedicated to providing youth with the support and tools to articulate and draw attention to and amplify their experiences and the issues that are most relevant to their well-being. These programs focus not only on how to use new media tools – video, machinima, music, photography, graphic design, but how to use them effectively to reach an audience. As an example of one such effort, Adobe Youth Voices (http://youthvoices.adobe.com), a partnership of the Adobe Foundation and The Education Development Center, provides a number of curricular tools (http://youthvoices.adobe.com/essentials) for educators to support youth-led media production focused on a variety of civic and political issues (http://youthvoices.adobe.com/youth-media-gallery). The site not only provides the tools and support for production but seeks to build connections to an audience for youth products.

5.3.2. New Considerations. Building «counter-publics» in virtual worlds and online spaces

Noting the challenges of disrupting the tendency of youth and adults to default to norms of interaction that privilege adult authority, some scholars and practitioners have drawn attention to the creation of «counter-publics» where the norms of interaction are explicitly youth-focused as a strategy for helping youth develop their skills and confidence (O'Donoghue, 2006). Youth Leaders from Youth on Board, suggest several strategies for building healthy adult-youth relationships, one of which is for adults to step outside of their comfort zone and spend time with youth in their «space and turf». For some youth, their «turf» may include online communities they are already invested in or online communities built within the group where they are able to demonstrate greater expertise in certain technical skills than adults.

Some youth leadership organizations have experimented with using virtual worlds to create such spaces. For example, Barry Joseph documents how youth in the Teen Second Life could assert ownership and autonomy in their online community – designing spa-

ces where they could meet (through their avatars), adding features to exhibits on social issues they were designing[1]. Because the area was open, teen-specific, and operating 24-7 in real time, youth were not in a physical space with adults, and adult control was secondary to expression, adult mentors in such a space are forced to think about how to work with teens on their terms.

5.4. Grappling with issues of justice and fairness

A final critical element of service-learning is that it engages youth in critical thinking about issues of justice and fairness. This requires that youth not only identify societal issues but that they consider questions of how the problem emerged and why it persists.

5.4.1. Supporting Practice: Using new media to discover and reframe narratives

New media has played an important role in helping youth engage in critical thinking about social issues for educators who work with youth in urban settings. Youth in these settings are keenly aware of issues that need to be addressed in their communities, but thinking through the structural factors that allow these issues to persist is a complicated endeavor for adults and youth alike. Media is a tool for both discovering and participating in the definition of social issues. When this activity is networked, it can becomes an exercise and grappling with differing perspectives on social issues.

For example, teacher, researcher, and blogger Antero Garcia turned a relatively routine lesson in which he assigned youth to re-tell a scene from Shakespeare into a lesson in critical analysis by putting the assignment in conversation with other youth productions. As described in his blog (www.theamericancrawl.com/?p=660) students' discovery of videos of «Ghetto Shakespeare» on YouTube by students suburban settings raised a series of questions about how their community was being represented in the broader public. The posting of an alternative version within a socially networked space, then, became an act of engaging in dialogue about how their community is represented in the public sphere.

Youth organizers and youth media programs have long used media as a tool for youth to think about and help to shape how problems are framed and represented in the public eye as part of consideration of the structural factors that allow social problems to persist (Hosang, 2006). Digital networks enhance the capacity of youth to discover these narratives and to enter into conversation with others.

5.4.2. New considerations: Internet regulation issues as issues of justice and fairness

As youth spend more time online, the rules, regulations, and experiences associated with being online are becoming issues of public concern. One change that youth civic education may need to take into account is that the issues that concern the regulation of the internet are becoming issues of justice and fairness. For example, as the internet and new media tools are becoming critical tools for economic and social life, the issue of net neutrality is moving from the domain of internet innovators to being an issue of concern for the public more broadly. Control and ownership of infrastructure has important implications for who has access to these increasingly important tools of public engagement. For organizations who are working to amplify the voices of marginalized or under-represented groups like colorofchange.org working to preserve net neutrality is an important sphere of civic and political action. Similarly, copyright and content control are becoming issues of public concern, as demonstrated by recent initiatives within the US Government to more forcefully regulate the circulation of copy-righted materials through the Stop Online Piracy Act and by the resulting widespread protests. Thus, thinking about access to the tools and materials of online life as an aspect of issues of social justice become a new consideration for service-learning.

6. Conclusion and implications

We have outlined a variety of ways that new media may be used in service of the goals of service-learning and experiential education and how new media may potentially raise new considerations for practice. We suggest that integration of new media into service-learning may help educators address some of the challenges of creating service-learning experiences that will most likely enhance youth civic development.

However, we suggest these approaches as areas for experimentation and study. The integration of new media into schools brings with it a number of risks and challenges, and we have yet to see any systematic studies of the effectiveness of these practices. What we are suggesting is more attention to how new media is currently being integrated into civic education and hoping to focus attention on the areas where we believe the role of technology can potentially make a difference.

Just as new media might enhance the ability of service-learning practitioners to connect youth to critical aspects of the authentic practice of civic engagement, there are risks as well. For example, we do not currently have sufficient research that tells us whether games genuinely support better understanding of complex social issues or whether they lead to important misconceptions or simplifications. If we are going to encourage youth to engage in online social networks, we also need to be very cautious in this practice – thinking about where they share their work or engage with other youth's work (moderated spaces that regulate the tone of the community vs. open spaces), how they interact with other youth, what they share and whether they will be comfortable with their work having what Soep (2012) refers to as a «digital afterlife».

Given that the world where many youth are and will be enacting their citizenship is increasingly saturated with new media, it is critical to support youth ability to act effectively and responsibility in such a context. As an increasing number of teachers and youth mentors are beginning to integrate new media into their practice, the time is critical to begin more systematic study of what the impacts might be on youth and how we might most effectively support their civic development.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] See Eulogy for Teen Second Life – Barry Joseph (http://business.-treet.tv/shows/bpeducation/episodes/bpe2011-049).

References

ALBANESI, C., CICOGNANI, & ZANI, B. (2007). Sense of Community, Civic Engagement and Social Well-being in Italian Adolescents. *Journal Community Appl. Soc. Psychol., 17,* 387-406. (http://dx.-doi.org/10.1002/casp.903).

BARBER, B. (1984). *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age.* Berkeley CA: University of California Press.

BILLIG, S., BROWN, S. & TURNBULL, J. (2008). *Youth Voice. RMC Research Corporation.* (www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/8312_youth_voice.pdf) (15-05-2011).

BYRNE, D. (2006). Public Discourse, Community Concerns, and Civic Engagement: Exploring Black Social networking traditions on Black-Planet.com. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1),* 319-340. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00398.x).

CIRCLE (2010). *The Youth Vote in 2010, Voter Turnout by Age, 1974-2010.* (www.civicyouth.org).

COHEN, C. (2010). *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics.* New York: Oxford University Press.

COHEN, C. & KAHNE, J. (2012). *Participatory Politics: New Media and Youth Political Action*. (http://civicsurvey.org/YPP_Survey_-Report_FULL.pdf) (28-09-2012).

DEWEY, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education*. New York: The Free Press.

EARL, J., & KIMPORT, K. (2010). Changing the World One Web page at a time: Conceptualizing and Explaining Internet Activism. *Mobilization: An International Journal, 15(4)*, 425-446.

ERIKSON, E. (1968). *Identity: Youth in Crisis*. New York: Norton.

FREDERICKS, L., KAPLAN, E. & ZEISLER, J. (2001). *Integrating Youth Voice in Service-learning. Denver, CO, Education Commissions of the States, p1*. (www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/23/67/2367.htm) (12-06-2012).

GORDON, H. & TAFT, J. (2011). Rethinking Youth Political Socialization: Teenage Activists Talk Back. *Youth & Society, 43(4)*, 1499-1527. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0044118X10386087).

GOULD, J. (Ed.) (2011). *Guardians of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*. (http://civicmissionofschools.org/site/documents/-ViewGuardianofDemocracy/view) (30-09-2012).

HOSANG, D. (2006). Beyond Policy: Ideology, Race and the Reimagining of Youth. In S. GINWRIGHT, P. NOGUERA, & J. CAMMAROTA (Eds.), *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change*. New York: Taylor Francis.

JONES, S., SEGAR, T. & GASIORSKI, A. (2008). A double-edged Sword: College Student Perceptions of Required High School Service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service-learning, 15(1)*.

KAHNE, J., CROW, D. & LEE, N.J. (2012). *Different Pedagogy, Different Politics: High School Learning Opportunities and Youth Civic Engagement. Forthcoming in Political Psychology*. (http://-civicsurvey.org/Different%20Pedagogy.pdf) (30-09-2012).

KIRSHNER, B. (2006). Apprenticeship Learning in Youth Activism. In S. GINWRIGHT, P. NOGUERA, & J. CAMMAROTA (Eds.), *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change*. New York: Taylor Francis.

KOHFELDT, D., CHHUN, L., GRACE, S. & LANGHOUT, R. (2011). Youth Empowerment in Context: Exploring Tensions in School-based yPAR. *Am. J. Community Psychology, 47*, 28-45 (http://dx.-doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9376-z).

KWAK, N., SHAH, D. & HOLBERT, R. (2004). Connecting, Trusting, and Participating: The Direct and Interactive Effects of Social Association. *Political Research Quarterly, 57*, 64. (http://dx.doi.org/-10.1177/106591290405700412).

MCADAM, D. (1988). *Freedom Summer*. New York: Oxford University Press.

NEUMAN, W. R., BIMBER, B. & HINDMAN, M. (2011). The Internet and Four Dimensions of Citizenship. In L. JACOBS & R. SHAPIRO (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of American Public Opinion and the Media*. Oxford Handbooks Online. (DOI:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780-199545636.003.0002).

O'DONOGHUE, J. (2006). «Taking Their Own Power': Urban Youth, Community-based Youth Organizations, and Public Efficacy. In S. GINWRIGHT, P. NOGUERA & J. CAMMAROTA (Eds.), *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change*. New York: Taylor Francis Group.

RICE, L., MOFFETT, K. & MADUPALLI, R. (2012). Campaign Related Social Networking and the Political Participation of College Students. *Social Science Computer Review*. (http://dx.doi.org/ 10.-1177/0894439312455474).

ROGOFF, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. Oxford: University Press.

SCHLOZMAN, K., VERBA, S. & BRADY, H. (2010). Weapon of the Strong? Participatory Inequality and the Internet. *PS: Perspectives on Politics, 8*, 487-509. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S15375927100-01210).

SMITH, A. (2010). *The Internet and Campaign 2010. A Report of the Pew Internet and American Life Project*. (http://pewinternet.-org/Reports/2011/The-Internet-and-Campaign-2010.aspx) (12-06-2012).

SOEP, E. (2012). The Digital Afterlife of Youth-made Media: Implications for Media Literacy Education. *Comunicar, 39*. (DOI:10.-3916/C38-2011-02-10).

SQUIRE, K. (2008). Open-Ended Video Games: A Model for Developing Learning for the Interactive Age. In K. SALEN (Ed). The *Ecology of Games: Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 167-198 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/-dmal.9780262693646.167).

WESTHEIMER, J. & KAHNE, J. (2004). What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy. *American Educational Research Journal, 41(2)*, 237-269.

YOUNISS, J. & YATES, M. (1997). *Community Service and Social Responsibility*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

ZIKHUR, K. (2010). *Generations 2010. A Report of the Pew Internet and American Life Project*. (www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/-Generations-2010/Trends/Online-news.aspx) (12-06-2012).
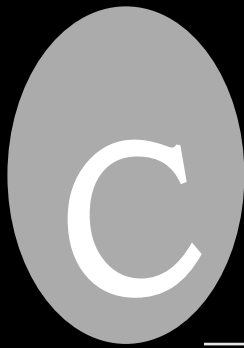
Caleidoscopio

Kaleidoscope

Research
Studies
Analysis

● C. Arcila, J.L. Piñuel and M. Calderín
Colombia, Spain and Venezuela

The e-Research on Media & Communications: Attitudes, Tools and Practices in Latin America Researchers

La e-investigación de la Comunicación: actitudes, herramientas y prácticas en investigadores iberoamericanos

ABSTRACT

e-Research is changing practices and dynamics in social research by the incorporation of advanced e-tools to process data and increase scientific collaboration. Previous research shows a positive attitude of investigators through e-Research and shows a fast incorporation of e-Tools, in despite of many cultural resistances to the change. This paper examines the current state (attitudes, tools and practices) of e-Research in the field of Media and Communication Studies in Latin America, Spain and Portugal. A total of 316 researchers of the region answered an online survey during the last 2 months of 2011. Findings confirm an optimistic attitude through e-Research and an often use of e-Tools to do research. Even though, most of them informed to use basic e-Tools (e.g. e-mail, commercial videoconference, office software and social networks) instead of advanced technologies to process huge amount of data (e.g. Grid, simulation software and Internet2) or the incorporation to Virtual Research Communities. Some of the researchers said that they had an «intensive» (31%) and «often» (53%) use of e-Tools, but only 22% stated that their computer capacity was not enough to manage and process data. The paper evidences the gap between e-Research in Communications and e-Research in other disciplines; and makes recommendations for its implementation.

RESUMEN

La e-investigación está cambiando las prácticas y dinámicas de la investigación social, gracias a la incorporación de herramientas digitales avanzadas para el procesamiento de datos y el incremento de la colaboración científica. Estudios anteriores muestran una actitud positiva de los científicos hacia la e-investigación y la rápida incorporación de herramientas digitales para el trabajo académico, a pesar de las resistencias culturales al cambio. Este artículo examina el estado actual (actitudes, herramientas y prácticas) de la e-investigación en el campo de los estudios en comunicación en Iberoamérica. Un total de 316 investigadores de la región respondieron una encuesta en línea durante los últimos dos meses de 2011. Los resultados confirman una actitud positiva hacia la e-investigación y un uso frecuente de las e-herramientas. Sin embargo, la mayor parte de ellos aseguran usar e-herramientas básicas (como correo-e, videoconferencia comercial, software de oficina o redes sociales), en vez de usar tecnologías avanzadas para procesar gran cantidad de datos (como Grids, programas de simulación o Internet2) o de incorporarse a comunidades virtuales de investigación. Algunos investigadores afirmaron tener un uso «intensivo» (31%) o «frecuente» (53%) de las e-herramientas, pero solo el 22% aseguraron que la capacidad de su computador personal era insuficiente para manejar y procesar los datos. El artículo concluye evidenciando una brecha importante entre la e-investigación en comunicación y en otras disciplinas, y establece recomendaciones para su implementación en la región.

◆ Dr. Carlos Arcila-Calderón is Lecturer and Director of the PBX Research Group in Communication and Culture at the Universidad de Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia (carcila@uninorte.edu.co).
◆ Dr. José Luis Piñuel-Raigada is Professor and Director of the «Dialectic Mediation of Social Communication» Research Group at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain (pinuel@ccinf.ucm.es).
◆ Mabel Calderín-Cruz M.A. is Researcher in the Communication Research Centre at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas, Venezeula (mcalderi@ucab.edu.ve).

1. Introduction

The paradigm of «e-Science» is currently transforming the methods and tools used in scientific research (Hey & al., 2009), increasing possibilities for researchers and allowing them to discover and investigate new objects of study. Other terms such as «cyber science» (Nentwich, 2003) or «cyber infrastructure» (Atkins Report, 2003 on «e-Infrastructure in the European environment») have been used to refer to these changes in the methods of conducting scientific research. Similarly there have been more recent developments in concepts such as Science 2.0 (Waldrop, 2008) to describe the use of tools from what has been termed Web 2.0 (active and decentralized participation by users) and Open Science (Neylon & Wu, 2009), which covers the opening up of the scientific process to practices that involve the free distribution of knowledge. Concepts such as e-Research point to new practices and methods in scientific production (Dutton & Jeffreys, 2010). Specifically, e-Research refers to the advanced and intensive use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to produce, manage and share scientific data in a collaborative context that is geographically distributed through «Collaboratories» (virtual spaces to implement research) or platforms such as Grid computing (a distributed system of computers to increase the storage and computing capacity of a research study).

This article examines the results of an investigation that had as its objective to create a diagnostic of the state of e-Research in the field of Communication Sciences in Ibero-America. Although it is generally understood that the acceptance and incorporation of an innovation is not an instantaneous act (Rogers, 2003), previous studies have found a positive attitude among social researchers towards e-Research (Dutton & Meyer, 2008), especially towards generic services and Web 2.0 platforms (Procter & al., 2010; Ponte & Simon, 2011). This reveals a rapid incorporation of many e-Tools (software, hardware and digital devices) despite some resistance to this change, expressed both culturally (Arcila, 2011) as well as in the scientific publication and production industry (Cuel & al., 2009). In this case, even though researchers from the social and human sciences are aware of the existence of the new paradigm known as e-Science (Dutton & Jeffreys, 2010), it is the exact and natural sciences – such as the High Energy Physics academic community mentioned by Gentil-Beccott and others (2009)– that have greater experience in the introduction and use of ICTs in research.

As stated by De Filippo et al. (2008), the groups that maintain a higher level of collaboration have significant potential as researchers. In fact, mainly these groups and local experts that help make possible the incorporation of technological innovations in the areas of scientific creation and production (Stewart, 2007). It is possible to affirm that the use of ICTs has serious implications in the quality and value of research (Borgman, 2007) and is now part of the success factors required for participation in Research and Development programs (Cuadros & al., 2009). In this respect, Bernius (2010) has highlighted that the open access made possible by the use of ICTs is an effective instrument for improving the management of scientific content. On the other hand, Liao (2010) has confirmed that a relationship exists between intense scientific collaboration and greater quality in the research, represented by the number of citations of a study, its impact factor, funding obtained, etc. One example of this type of scientific collaboration is the Codila Model and its later adaptation, Codila 2.0 (Collaborative Distributed Learning Activity). This program was first used in 2008 as part of an initiative for the integration of research and cooperation in software engineering, which was named «Latin American Collaboratory of eXperimental Software Engineering Research» (LCX-SER).

In the field of Communication Studies, the explosion of new digital media seems to have awoken a growing enthusiasm among researchers to analyze both the messages involved as well as the subjects that produce and receive these messages. In this sense, it appears that the greater volume of information produced by academics around the globe requires increased efforts for the preservation of this data and for researchers to engage in collaborative work. The globalization of scientific work has resulted in making the use of advanced digital technologies imperative. However, a general analysis of e-Research in the discipline of Communication Studies in the Ibero-American region indicates that this is an area that is still very young and requires a lot of investment and effort to reach the levels of the other disciplines that have traditionally made intensive use of ICTs, such as the High Energy Physics academic community in Latin America that has already demonstrated strong development in the adoption of e-Research tools and methods (Briceño, Arcila & Said, 2012).

Regarding content, information sources and compiling data, even if there exists concern around advances made in this area (Jankowski & Caldas, 2004) alongside important online resources for academics (Codina, 2009), very few specific experiences of e-Re-

search in the field of Communication Studies have been published. Among these are examples of research from the United States of America and the United Kingdom, with both countries having national organizations designed to promote e-Social Science: the National Science Foundation Office of Cyber-infrastructure in the USA and the National Centre for e-Social Science in the UK. One of the initiatives from this latter organization is the MiMeG (Mixed Media Grid) Project, finished in 2008 and based at the University of Bristol and King's College London. This program aims to generate techniques and tools for social scientists with the goal of analyzing audiovisual qualitative data and related materials in a collaborative manner. Another program focused on integrating media management with Grid platforms is the proposal by Perrott, Harmer y Levis (2008) to create a network infrastructure for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

This state of affairs poses crucial questions related to the future of scientific research in this academic field in Ibero-America. Are researchers adapting investigations in Communication Studies to the new methods of e-Research? What are the attitudes of communication researchers towards e-Research? How are e-Tools changing practices and methods in this scientific community? The answers to these questions can be used for the configuration of policies that stimulate scientific production in communication and to establish an important precedent for areas of study and research.

2. Method

With the goal of depicting the current state of e-Research in the area of Communication Studies in Ibero-America, an exploratory study that used descriptive methodologies[1] was conducted. To collect data, an online survey was designed for researchers in the region with the goal of describing: 1) The attitudes of researchers towards e-Research; 2) The use of e-Tools; 3) Practices and methods related to e-Research. Among the questions posed to academics were their perceptions of the benefits of ICTs for scientific work, the type of e-Tools and platforms used, their access to advanced digital resources, habits in collaborative work and the methods for sharing the knowledge generated by e-Research. This article includes the

general results of the survey and examines the main trends and variables that are evident in the answers of those surveyed.

In September 2011 the survey was submitted to a validation by a panel of experts and a pilot test. In addition a blog of the project was started online to share the progress of the research project. Once the instrument was reviewed and adjusted and versions were produced in both Spanish and Portuguese, the survey was distributed among specialist networks during the months of November and December of 2011. Each network contained a different number of members and each member received an email that invited them to take part in the survey. These included: ALAIC (253 members); AE-IC (557), the Latin Society for Social Communication (128); Friends of the Latin Magazine for Social Communication (583) and the Ibero-American Academic Network in Communication (104). In total 1,625 communication researchers received an invitation to participate in the
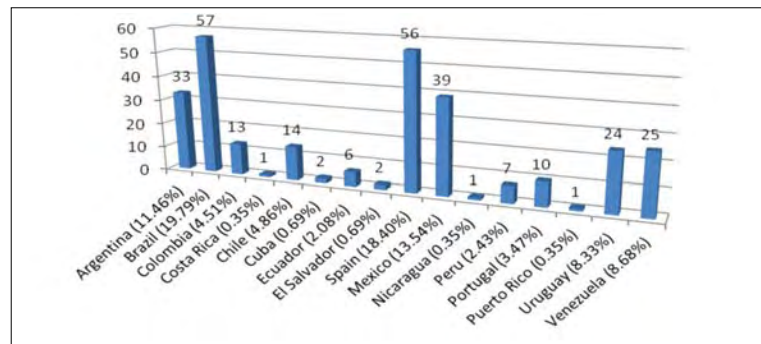
Figure 1. Geographical distribution of cases studied.

study (a number that is unknown is one that represents the universe of communication researchers in Ibero-America, although it is possible that there were duplications among members of the networks), of which 316 responses were received (a rate of effective response rate of 19.44%), which represents a population of clinical cases.

These cases involved researchers from almost all of the countries in the Ibero-American region, with the exception of participants from Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic. As can be observed in figure 1 (geographical distribution of cases studied), countries such as Brazil (19.79%), Spain (18.4%), Mexico (13.54%) and Argentina (11.46%) make up an important fraction of the sample. The researchers (54.3% females and 45.7% males) had an average age of 43 and a range of academic qualifications: bachelor's degree (18.21%), post-

graduate diploma (5.84%), master's degree (27.49%) and doctorate (48.45%), with the majority having this final academic level. A small number of respondents were affiliated to international networks such as IAMCR, ICA or ECREA, but the majority indicated that they were part of regional networks such as ALAIC (and in fewer numbers regional networks such as FELAFACS, IBERCOM, ULEPICC, RAIC and the Latin Society of Social Communication) or in national research networks (AE-IC, Invecom, AMIC, SOP-COM, REDCOM, INTERCOM, SBPJor, FNPJ, SEICOM, etc.). In addition to the descriptive analysis of the data, tests in statistical meaning (specifically using Fisher's exact test) to determine the associations between the main variables of the study (specifically between the intensive use of data, age and academic qualification) were conducted as part of the study.

Even if the respondents are part of almost all of the research lines that ALAIC is involved in, an important percentage of researchers stated that their academic work is related to the area of Internet and the Information Society (39.24%) which demonstrates proximity and affinity with the area of e-Research. This reality, combined with the fact that the survey was filled out online (through a self-selection process of participants) demonstrates the existence of this bias and the difficulty of generalizing the results from the group of researchers that participated in the study. However it also demonstrates the growing interest among communication academics in new technologies.

3. Analysis and results

The incorporation of digital technologies, specifically the use of personal computers and office software, is now common in all scientific fields because it is no longer possible to imagine academic or research activities without tools such as email or word processors. However, these tools represent an initial stage of the influence of ICTs in research and without a doubt emulate traditional research methods. What can be observed in the results of the study is that this first stage of influence by ICTs is evident and habitual in communica-

tion research, but that in the next stage, the intensive and advanced use of ICTs is only just beginning to be incorporated. The results of this survey show clear trends in the attitudes of scientists in this field towards e-Research, the e-Tools that they are using and their practices and methods in relation to e-Research.

An initial look shows that the respondents demonstrated a very positive attitude towards e-Research, with 69.14% classifying the use of digital technologies in research as «extremely beneficial». In this manner, around half of respondents agreed with the statements «e-Research increases my individual productivity» (47.78%), «e-Research increases the productivity of my research group» (53.48%) and «many of the new scientific questions in my field of study will require the use of e-Research tools» (47.78%). These figures show that for a considerable number of academics, there is a direct relationship between the quality of research and the use of ICTs. According to these researchers, the digital tools for e-Research are «useful» (70.25%), but more than half consider that further information and training in this area is necessary (52.85%).

An interesting piece of data is that 43.67% of communication academics are aware that e-Research tools imply new challenges in the area of research ethics. Likewise, it also brings up the issue of problems in financing these tools, give that only 6.96% of respondents considered that in their country or region there are sufficient funds provided for the development of e-Research. In this sense, respondents were clear in sta-

Communication and Scientific Collaboration	
Email	81.33%
Videoconferencing with Commercial Internet Providers (Skype...)	46.52%
Videoconferencing with Advanced Networks (Internet Académica, Internet2)	17.09%
Virtual Environments for Collaboration in Research Projects (EVO, Moodle...)	48.10%
Wikis	29.11%
Chat	41.14%
Social Networks (Facebook, Twiter...)	62.34%
Archive Sites and Document Sharing (Youtube, SlideShare, DropBox, Flickr...)	62.97%
Online Event Management (Indico, OCS...)	10.44%
Others	9.18%
Data Collection, Analysis and Processing	
Reference Management Software (RefWorks...)	32,28%
Spreadsheets	44,62%
Databases	57,91%
Online Survey Software	38,92%
Content Analysis Software (Atlas.ti...)	25,32%
Simulation or Web Analysis Software (Netlogo...)	8,23%
Tools for Graphic Visualization, Management and Creation	43,35%
Distributed Computing Systems (Grid, Cluster, Cloud...)	11,08%
Others	5,06%
Preservation and Dissemination of Data	
Digital Storage Sites with Open Access	53,16%
Digital Storage Sites with Restricted Access	30,70%
Digital Scientific Journals	72,47%
Blogs	48,10%
Others	3,16%

Table 1. Use of e-tools by researchers.
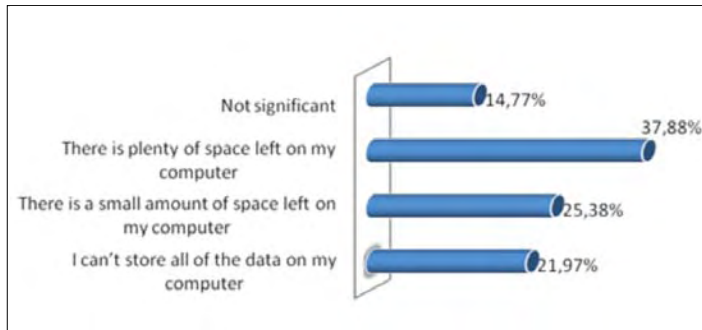
Figure 2. Intensive use of data by researchers.

ting that this financing should go more towards the development of projects and studies based on e-Research methods, such as collaborative projects (71.2%), than investment in e-Infrastructure such as advanced networks, internet, computers, etc (20.57%). This represents a strong interest in stimulating scientific practices/methods instead of improving technical infrastructure. On this last point, the majority of researchers (64.77%) stated that their institution is connected to advanced networks (Internet Académica; Internet2) while 17.05% said that their institutions were not part of these networks. A considerable percentage (18.18%) responded that they did not know if their institution used these types of networks, which demonstrates that these academics have had very little involvement with advanced e-Tools.

Communication researchers in Ibero-America consider that they frequently use (52.65%) or intensively use (31.06%) the so-called e-Tools (software, hardware and digital devices for collecting, processing and diffusing data) for a variety of research tasks. As can be seen in table 1, they demonstrated that they had used at least one e-Tool for scientific communication and collaboration, especially email (81.33%), archive sites and document sharing (62.97%) and social networks (62.34%). Similarly, an important number of respondents used video conferencing with commercial internet providers such as Skype (46.52%), chats (41.14%) and virtual environments for collaboration (48.10%). Apart from this last tool, which includes platforms such as EVO and Moodle (a virtual education tool but one that is also used for the design of collaborative projects (Arroyave & al., 2011), all of the other applications are commercial internet tools that have a wide diffusion amongst users. Tools such as video conferencing with advanced networks (17.09%) or organizing online scientific events (10.44%) are less commonly used.

Regarding the use of e-tools for data collection, analysis and processing, more than half of respondents (57.91%) stated that they had used databases while less respondents (44.62%) used spreadsheets and software for data visualization (43.35%). Other e-Tools such as online survey software (38.92%), reference management software (38.92%), reference management tools (32.28%) and content analysis software (25.32%) were also mentioned. However, it is important to note that simulation programs (8.23%) and distributed computing platforms like Grids or Clusters (11.08%) are not commonly used by researchers. In the area of preserving and disseminating data, many communication researchers opt for digital scientific journals (72.47%) and an important number use open access online data storage (53.16%) –with less respondents using restricted access storage– and blogs (48.10%).

The results of the survey show that until now a large amount of researchers have used different digital tools, however if the concept of e-Research is examined (advanced and intensive use of ICTs), it is clear that a large number of the tools are for extensive use and often commercial. What represents intensive and advanced use of ICTs is most probably the quantity of data processed and the strength of the scientific collaboration. In this sense, the quantity of data produced by the use of e-Tools was a key question to make a diagnostic of the current state of e-Research in the communication field. As can be seen in figure 2, only 21.97% answered that the space in their personal computer was not sufficient to store and process data that they were producing in their research, while 37.38% stated that they still had a lot of space on their computers after storing data from their research.

Considering that the intensive use of data is the most important category in our exploratory study (given the proposal that it demonstrates real advances in the use of e-Research in the field), these results were crossed with variables in age and educational level to determine if a significant statistical relationship exists between them and whether age and educational level influence in a direct manner the intensive use of data by researchers. For this statistical analysis Fisher's exact test was used to create a cross tabulation contingency table, concluding that: 1) there was no association observed between the categories of intensive use of data and educational level categories given that the value «p» in the contingency tables for each one of the variable categories of age range was greater than 0.05; 2) no association was observed between the catego-

ries of intensive use of data and the categories defined by age range without including the academic level of the respondent, given that the value «p» in the contingency tables for each one of the categories in academic levels was greater than 0.05.

Regarding the area of scientific collaboration (figure 3), the data shows that an important percentage of researchers carry out academic work in an isolated manner, demonstrating that the dream of a geographically distributed academic community is still far from being a reality. This statement is based on the fact that 63.32%

of communication researchers in Ibero-America have not presented any research project with peers from other institutions that are different to their own and more than half of these (51.25%) have not been a part of a virtual academic community. These findings demonstrate the possibility of more geographically distributed groups in future –and more intensive– collaborations occurring, which will result in the presentation of joint projects as well as the organization of specialized events. When academics were asked about their experiences in virtual research communities, classifying their satisfaction with these experiences on a scale between 1 and 10, the majority of respondents demonstrated high levels of satisfaction, scoring them with 7 (16.20%), 8 (33.1%) y 9 (18.31%). Researchers stated that in these communities, the protocols or rules of collaboration had generally been established during the process (64.79%) by those involved and in very few cases these guidelines had been verbally discussed (11.27%) or written (13.38%).

One aspect that is related to not just scientific collaboration but also to the dissemination of data is the direct publication (without passing for peer reviewing) of manuscripts and the distribution of primary or raw data from research projects. Both indicators show the advances made by e-Research in this field. Firstly, it is significant that communication researchers (93.46%) do not have the habit of sending their manuscripts to pre-print (digital) platforms even though it is widely known that publication times for traditional journals are very long (due to evaluation of manuscripts, printing, etc.) and that on many occasion fellow researchers are waiting for results from their colleagues so that they can advance in their own studies. It is interesting to note that less than half of researchers (38.46%) share their raw data in digital platforms, which can be indicative of predominantly individual work in the field. However, this has a significant impact on the results as it does not allow for their re-
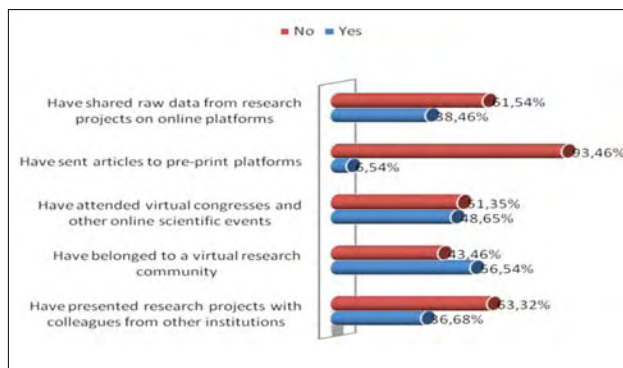
Figure 3. Scientific collaboration between researchers.

use (for example in replications of studies), comparisons with other data (verification) or more in-depth studies (for example through mining the data).

These results cover the different dimensions of e-Research in Communication Studies (attitudes, tools and practices) and can act as a summary of the current state of e-Research in Ibero-America. Below is a discussion of the results, comparing the field of Communication Studies with other disciplines and formulating final considerations that can serve as a guide for the incorporation of digital technologies in research.

4. Discussion and conclusions

If communication research is a relatively young field, there are important reasons to think that it is necessary to incorporate advanced methods and tools to reconfigure the discipline and even aspire to propose new objects of study. The results of this exploratory study, that is delimited to the Ibero-American region, demonstrates that there is a strong disposition among academics towards e-Research, a trend that seems to have extended to all of the social sciences. In the study conducted by Dutton and Meyer (2008), social researchers from the United Kingdom show a positive attitude towards e-Research and more than half of them (58.7%) believe that many of the new questions in research will require new tools, a point of view that is shared by academics in the Ibero-American region. This demonstrates, for example, that communication research continues to be a field that is highly dependent on general research in social sciences, as affirmed by Jensen y Jakowsky (1993) when they referred to qualitative methodologies. On the other hand, similar to what is occurring in other social disciplines, Communication Studies is a field that is very suited to the implementation of advanced digital technologies.

This last idea is linked to results that show communication researchers in Ibero-America are highly aware of: 1) the need for their own funding for e-Research

projects; 2) the ethical challenges implied by the use of e-Tools and the methods involved in geographically distributed collaboration. With these concerns, it was hoped researchers would demand greater information and training in these areas. Currently, the countries in the region do not have specialist government agencies that promote e-Research and in the case of Communication Studies, the specialist scientific associations (ALAIC, AE-IC, etc.) are only just starting to formalize actions in this area, which explains the lack of development of e-Research in the discipline. Even if they are not specifically focused on Communication Studies, regional organizations such as the Latin American Cooperation for Advanced Networks (RedClara) have discovered the importance of developing what is known as e-Infrastructure as well as the dynamization of scientific practices of certain academic communities through their participation in advanced networks.

In this sense, the lack of public policies and support from individual countries to encourage, invest in and include Communication Studies in the development of e-Research makes it vital for universities to establish links between colleagues and with companies and industry to seek strategies that improve geographically distributed training, exchanges, participation and collaboration through the use of advanced technology networks. As proposed by Stewart (2007), these policies should focus on local research groups and experts who will be more effective in promoting the advanced use of ICTs in research.

On the other hand, in line with the work of Codina (2009), the results of this survey can serve to help develop a guide that details the e-Research resources and tools that academics are currently using. This will not only strengthen the use of existing tools but will also encourage the adoption of e-Tools that can greatly support the work of researchers, such as Grid systems or simulators, that have a low level of acceptance among the community. Likewise, the data can also be used to contrast these practices with other communities from the same region, especially the High Energy Physics academic communities in Latin America, who have demonstrated the most intensive use of e-Tools in scientific collaboration.

A previous study (Briceño, Arcila & Said, 2012) showed that in this academic community there was a strong trend in the use of tools for online academic publication and shared management of data, yet results demonstrated a low interest in the use of commercial, mass and popular tools. This is in marked contrast to communication researchers surveyed in this present study, who demonstrated a high use (more than 60%) of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter and file-sharing sites such as Youtube, Slideshare, Dropbox and Flickr.

Even if there was no relationship found between age and educational level with the intensive and advanced use of ICTs in research – in marked difference to the results from the study of Procter & al. (2010) of researchers in the United Kingdom that found significant associations between the adoption of Web 2.0 platforms and the age, sex and academic position of the person – it can be stated that there are difficulties, some of a technical nature, that result in communication researchers in Ibero-Americana preferring commercial tools instead of advanced tools. This was demonstrated in the use of videoconference providers, in that there was a difference of almost 30% in favor of Skype. This last point however is consistent with the results found by Procter & al. (2010) in that a significant number of other researchers who participated in the study preferred the use of «generic» tools than «specific» ones.

In the case of Ibero-America, the limitations are not just of a technological nature but also a lack of knowledge of certain platforms. In the case of pre-print systems for publishing scientific research, less than 7% of researchers that responded had used them, significantly contrasting with the results of the physicists involved in high energy studies that demonstrate a high level of use of spaces such as arXiv (48.39%) or SPIRES (41.94%), sites that do not require extra technical knowledge. Additionally, given that at least half of the researchers stated that they used open access digital storage, it is evident that the existence of a specialist storage site for communication would stimulate their use of such tools.

This data suggest that there is strong level of predisposition towards e-Research among communication researchers in Ibero-America, but there are factors that make its implementation difficult. This is evident if it is taken into account that the term «e-Science» does not just refer to the use of commercial digital technologies, but above all the incorporation of advanced computing tools for the management of large quantities of data and to intensify scientific collaboration. This is linked to the attitudes and habits of researchers in their practices and methods of working, including multi-disciplinary teams, peer reviewing and joint publications, among others. Applying the Rogers curve (2003) in this case, apart from the innovators it also includes the first followers in the use of new tools for research and that generate new practices. In this sense, it is vital that efforts are focused on the creation of specialist organi-

zations in the region and the establishment of policies (financing, training, etc.) directed at strengthening research activity through the use of platforms such as Internet[2] or Grid computing systems. Similarly, it is necessary (as the researchers in the study noted) to increase incentives that encourage the creation of geographically distributed collaborative projects (much less than half of those surveyed responded that they had presented a research project with peers from other institutions), which can strengthen the creation of virtual research communities and increase the number of collaborations in the field.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] This study also had participation from Ignacio Aguaded (Spain), Cosette Castro (Brazil), Marta Barrios (Colombia), Martín Díaz (Colombia) y Elias Suárez (Colombia).

[2] The 22 groups that make up the ALAIC can be consulted at www.alaic.net.

References

ARCILA, C. (2011). La difusión digital de la investigación y las resistencias del mundo científico. In E. SAID (Ed.), *Migración, desarrollo humano, internacionalización y digitalización. Retos del siglo XXI.* (pp. 325-334). Barranquilla: UniNorte.

ARROYAVE, M., VELÁSQUEZ, A., & AL. (2011). Laboratorios remotos: diversos escenarios de trabajo. Disertaciones, *Anuario Electrónico de Estudios en Comunicación Social, 4, 2,* 83-94.

ATKINS, D.E., DROEGEMEIR, K.K., & AL. (2003). *Revolutionizing Science and Engineering through Cyberinfrastructure: Report of the National Science Foundation Blue-Ribbon Advisory Panel on Cyberinfrastructure.* Washington, DC: National Science Foundation.

BERNIUS, S. (2010). The Impact of Open Access on the Management of Scientific Knowledge. *Online Information Review, 34, 4,* 583-603. (DOI: 10.1108/14684521011072990).

BORGMAN, C. (2007). *Scholarship in the Digital Age.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

BRICEÑO, Y., ARCILA, C. & SAID, E. (2012). Colaboración y comunicación científica en la comunidad latinoamericana de físicos de altas energías. *E-Colabora, 2, 4,* 131-144.

CODINA, L. (2009). Ciencia 2.0: Redes sociales y aplicaciones en línea para académicos. *Hipertext.net, 7.*

CUADROS, A., MARTÍNEZ, A. & TORRES, F. (2009). Determinantes de éxito en la participación de los grupos de investigación latinoamericanos en programas de cooperación científica internacional. *Interciencia, 33, 11,* 821-828.

CUEL, R., PONTE, D. & ROSSI, A. (2009). *Towards an Open/Web 2.0 Scientific Publishing Industry? Preliminary Findings and Open Issues.* Informe Técnico de la University de Trento. (http://wiki.liquidpub.org/mediawiki/upload/b/b3/CuelPonteRossi09.pdf) (05/10/2012).

DE FILIPPO, D., MORILLO, F. & FERNÁNDEZ, M.T. (2008). Indicadores de colaboración científica del CSIC con Latinoamérica en bases de datos internacionales. *Revista Española de Documentación Científica, 31, 1,* 66-84.

DUTTON, W.H. & MEYER, E.T. (2008). e-Social Science as an Experience Technology: Distance From, and Attitudes Toward, e-Research. *4th International Conference on e-Social Science.* Manhester (UK), 18-06-2008. (www.ncess.ac.uk/events/conference/programme/thurs/1bMeyerb.pdf) (01/10/2011).

DUTTON, W. & JEFFREYS, P. (Eds.) (2010). World Wide Research. Reshaping the Sciences and Humanities. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

GENTIL-BECCOT, A., MELE, S. & AL. (2009). Information Resources in High-Energy Physics: Surveying the Present Landscape and Charting the Future Course. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 60, 1,* 150-160

HEY, T., TANSLEY, S. & TOLLE, K. (Eds.) (2009). *The Fourth Paradigm. Data-Intensive Scientific Discovery.* Redmond Washington: Microsoft Research.

JANKOWSKI, N. & CALDAS, A. (2004). *e-Science: Principles, Projects and Possibilities for Communication and Internet Studies. Etmaal van Communicatiewetenschap Day of Communication Science.* Holland: Universidad de Twente.

JENSEN, K.B. & JANKOWSKI, N.W. (1993). *Metodologías cualitativas de investigación en comunicación de masas.* Barcelona: Bosch.

LIAO, C. (2010). How to Improve Research Quality? Examining the Impacts of Collaboration Intensity and Member Diversity in Collaboration Networks. *Scientometrics, 86,* 747-761.

NENTWICH, M. (2003). *Cyberscience: Research in the Age of the Internet.* Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences.

NEYLON, C. & WU, S. (2009). *Open Science: Tools, Approaches, and Implications. XIV Pacific Symposium on Biocomputing.* Hawaii (USA), 09-01-2009. (http://psb.stanford.edu/psb-online/proceedings/psb09/workshop-opensci.pdf) (05/10/2012).

PERROTT, R., HARMER, T. & LEVIS, R. (2008). e-Science Infrastructure for Digital Media Broadcasting. *Computer, November,* 67-72.

PONTE, D. & SIMON, J. (2011). Scholarly Communication 2.0: Exploring Researchers' Opinions on Web 2.0 for Scientific Knowledge Creation, Evaluation and Dissemination. *Serials Review, 37, 3,* 149-156.

PROCTER, R., WILLIAMS, R. & AL. (2010). Adoption and Use of Web 2.0 in Scholarly Communications. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A-Mathematical Physical, 368,* 4.029-4.056.

Rogers, E.M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations.* New York: Free Press.

STEWART, J. (2007). Local Experts in the Domestication of Information and Communication Technologies, Information. *Communication & Society, 10, 4,* 547-569

WALDROP, M. (2008). Science 2.0. Is Open Access Science the Future? Is Posting Raw Results Online, for all to See, a Great Tool or a Great Risk? *Scientific American Magazine, 21 de abril.* (www.sciamdigital.com/index.cfm?fa=products.viewissuepreview&articleid_char=3e5a5fd7-3048-8a5e-106a58838caf9bf7) (01-11-2009).

● Jurka Lepičnik and Pija Samec
   Maribor (Slovenia)

Communication Technology in the Home Environment of Four-year-old Children (Slovenia)

Uso de tecnologías en el entorno familiar en niños de cuatro años de Eslovenia

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, we cannot ignore the fact that young children are over flooded with technologies. Only a proper action and a positive attitude from adults can prevent potential negative consequences, and prepares the child for a life where the usage of communication technologies (ICTs) is necessary for an individual's social success. This article represents the child's access to information-communication technology, its usage at home, the influence of child's ICTs usage on his or hers development of competences, and the child's relation with the ICTs at home. The data was gathered with the help of 130 parents who filled out a questionnaire and provided us with their opinions about their four-year-old children and their usage of ICTs at home. We found out that four-year-old children in their home environment regularly encounter ICTs. Besides that, we were also interested whether there exist differences according to the child's gender and the parents' level of education. Moreover, we present parents' opinions at suggestions for further studying of this issue.

RESUMEN

Hoy en día, no podemos ignorar el hecho de que los niños pequeños están demasiado expuestos a las tecnologías. Solo una acción rápida y una actitud positiva por parte de los adultos puede prevenir consecuencias potencialmente negativas, y preparar a los chicos para una vida donde el uso de tecnologías de la comunicación (TIC) es necesario para el éxito social del individuo. Creemos que resulta importante estudiar la relación de la infancia con las TIC en casa, porque estamos seguros de que las TIC ejercen un gran impacto sobre el desarrollo temprano de los niños. Este artículo representa el acceso infantil a las tecnologías de la información y comunicación, su uso en casa, la influencia del uso por parte de los niños de las TIC en su desarrollo de competencias y la relación del niño con las TIC en el hogar. Los datos se recopilaron con la ayuda de 130 padres que rellenaron un cuestionario y nos proporcionaron sus opiniones sobre sus hijos de cuatro años y su uso de las TIC en el hogar. Los resultados fueron analizados con un programa por ordenador SPSS. Nos dimos cuenta de que los niños de cuatro años regularmente encuentran TIC en su entorno familiar. Además, estuvimos también interesados por si había diferencias según el sexo de los chicos y el nivel educativo de los padres. Además, presentamos las opiniones de los padres como propuestas para un posterior estudio de este tema.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Communication technology, pre-school child, home environment, competences, ICTs, literacy, digital competence, early development.
Tecnologías de la comunicación, preescolar, hogar, competencias, TIC, alfabetización, competencia digital, desarrollo temprano.

◆ Dr. Jurka Lepičnik-Vodopivec is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education at the University of Primorska (Slovenia) (jurka.lepicnik@epf.upr.si).
◆ Pija Samec is Professor of Pedagogy and Translator of English (pija.samec@gmail.com).

1. Introduction

Information-communication technology (ICTs) has in the past few years become an indispensable part of modern society. It allows us simple and quick access to information, and eases the communication processes. Besides mediating information and communicating it also helps develop individual's competences and learning skills. Among these is digital competence (Punie, 2007), which is an important part of life-long learning (Making a European Area of lifelong learning a reality, 2001). Digital competence is of great importance, for it contributes to a successful life of each individual (Markovac & Rogulja, 2009). We have to be aware that ICTs is not only used by adults, since also the youngest children can come into contact with this special type of technology. McPake, Stephen and Plowman (2007) describe children as active members of the so-called «e-society», which is based on digital connectivity. This society dictates their lives, although they are probably not aware of it. Because ICTs is becoming a widespread phenomenon, experts find it irresistible to study. Several studies explore the influence that ICTs has on the child in the kindergarten, but none of them deals with the child's usage at home. When we started studying the child's home usage of ICTs, we used a wider concept of ICTs, which reaches beyond computers and mobile technology, and which includes a variety of everyday technologies also accessible for children. These technologies are: televisions, electronic toys, interactive boards, playing games, various players, digital or video cameras, cameras, printers, and all other devices the child can encounter at home. All these types of technologies were chosen because Nikolopoulu, Gialamas and Batstuta (2010) believe that they acquaint the child with the concept of interactivity, which is also one of the most important features of ICTs. Interactivity is the possibility of active participation in the process of communication between its partakers (Hoffman and Novak, 1996), in our case, even four-year-old children.

For this reason, the purpose of our research was to find out how many types of ICTs the child's family owns, the nature of the child's access at home (limited or unlimited), how the child uses ICTs at home (independently, needs help, does not use at all), how often the child uses at home, the influences on the child's usage of ICTs at home, the influence of the child's usage on his or her development, the child's attitude towards ICTs at home, and the parents' awareness about ICTs usage in general. In doing so, we tried to find differences according to the child's gender and parents' level of education.

2. Material and methods

We used a descriptive method and a causal, non-experimental method of empirical pedagogical research. The study was implemented on a sample consisting of 130 parents (83.8% females and 16.2% males; 53.1% with a high school education and 46.9% with higher education qualifications; 46.9% were parents of girls and 42.8% of boys) of four-year-old pre-school children who attend kindergartens all over Slovenia. They filled out a questionnaire and demonstrated the child's general access, its usage and the relation that the child has towards ICTs at home. With the help of the literature we first composed a draft questionnaire, which was tested after a rational evaluation. We eliminated all possible mistakes and imperfections. We tested the questionnaire in February 2011. The final questionnaires were given to parents in April and May 2011. The survey was anonymous.

The data gathered with the questionnaire were then computer analysed with the help of a SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program. We used a method of descriptive statistics for all the questions. We defined absolute (f) and percentage (f %) frequencies, and the data were then displayed in tables. The dependent relations between the variables were tested with a χ^2 – test. For the analysis of the data gathered by evaluating scales we used the Mann-Whitney U-test.

3. Results
3.1. The presence of ICTs in the home environment of four-year-old children

As mentioned before, the broader definition of ICTs encompasses various electronic devices, media products and their applications. Nowadays, almost every family can afford most of these products and devices, among which some are intended especially for children and others for other family members. Nevertheless, the child can still access and use them together with other family members.

This table shows that almost every family owns a television (99.2%), a mobile phone (98.5%), a computer (94.6%), a CD or a DVD player (93.8%), a digital camera (92.3%), and a printer (80%). In approximately three quarters of all cases families own MP3players or iPods (74.7%), and just under half the have digital video cameras (42.3%). The fewest number of families own gaming consoles (24.6%) and portable gaming consoles (32.3%). We are glad to see that a lot of families also possess ICTs intended especially for children. A total of 102 (78.5%) families own programmable toys (remote-controlled cars, robots, tal-

Type of ICT	Family owns		Family does not own		Total	
	F	f%	f	f%	f	f%
TV	129	99.2	1	0.8	130	100.0
Computer	123	94.6	7	5.4	130	100.0
Printer	104	80.0	26	20.0	130	100.0
CD or DVD player	122	93.8	8	6.2	130	100.0
MP3 player or iPod	62	74.7	68	52.3	130	100.0
Mobile phone	128	98.5	2	1.5	130	100.0
Digital video camera	55	42.3	75	57.3	130	100.0
Digital camera	120	92.3	10	7.7	130	100.0
Gaming consoles	32	24.6	98	75.4	130	100.0
Portable gaming consoles	42	32.3	88	67.7	130	100.0
Programmable toys	102	78.5	28	21.5	130	100.0
Simulation toys	105	80.8	25	19.2	130	100.0

Table 1: Numbers (f) and structural percentages (f %) of the parents' answers to the question: «Which types of ICTs does your family own?»

king dolls…), and even more (80.8%) own simulation toys (children computers, cash-registers, irons…).

3.2. The child's access to ICTs and its usage at home

The child's access to ICTs at home can be physically restricted or non-restricted. Usually access is not restricted in the case of the child's toys or things that the child uses habitually. On the other hand, ICTs access can be limited in several different ways if these devices are placed out of the child's reach (on high shelves, or behind closed doors), while older brothers and sisters even hide their personal ICTs.

The results for the child's access to ICTs at home were not surprising. In more than half the examples children have free or unlimited access to ICT-toys, while on the other hand they find it harder to access ICTs devices such as gaming consoles, digital video cameras and digital cameras, that is, those devices that are harder to use and which are usually used only by the adult family members. In approximately half the examples, children also use TV and CD- or DVD-players. A more detailed review of the data also revealed that, in this example, girls' ICTs access was more physically restricted than that of boys.

We were also interested in why parents restrict the child's access to certain types of ICTs. Although they have stated numerous plausible reasons (complicated usage, access to functions that are vital for the operation of the device, access to delicate information and contents, damaging the ICTs device…), most parents state that the major reason for restricting the access to ICTs is their fear that the device will be harmful for the child. Parents fear that the usage of ICTs

will harm their child.

Because a lot of children need help using ICTs, we wanted to discover who most often helps them. The results have shown that help is most often given by the parents, but also by older brothers or sisters, and even grandparents. A lot of parents believe that ICTs has educational value (Rideout, Vandewater & Wartella, 2003). Kirkorian, Wartella and Anderson (2008) consider that parents should not limit the child's interactive experience with ICTs, since it helps to sustain the child's interest in an activity. Of course we expected that it would be the parents who most often help their children, for they are the closest to them, and they spend a lot of time with them. Here, we have to state that ICTs should not be used as «digital babysitters», and cause unnecessary damage (Plowman, McPake & Stephen, 2010).

3.3. The development of a child's competences through ICTs usage

It is difficult to determine when a child should start using ICTs. We chose four years of age, because the majority of studies show that after this particular age a

Child's access to ICT	Gender	$\overline{R}$	|z|	P
TV	female	66.55	0.418	0.676
	male	64.15		
Computer	female	70.75	2.267	0.023
	male	58.77		
Printer	female	68.42	1.389	0.165
	male	61.75		
CD or DVD Player	female	69.79	1.689	0.090
	male	60.01		
MP3 player or iPod	female	66.38	0.528	0.598
	male	64.38		
Mobile phone	female	70.82	2.440	0.015
	male	58.69		
Digital video camera	female	68.05	1.625	0.104
	male	62.24		
Digital camera	female	69.10	1.804	0.071
	male	60.89		
Gaming consoles	female	67.05	1.057	0.290
	male	63.52		
Portable gaming consoles	female	69.38	2.761	0.006
	male	59.96		
Programmable toys	female	73.16	3.155	0.002
	male	55.68		
Simulation toys	female	67.15	0.694	0.488
	male	63.39		

Table 2: The results of the Mann-Whitney U-test of differences in the parents' statements from S1 to S2, according to the gender of the child.

Competences	ICT most develops		ICT partially develops		ICT minimally (or does not at all) develops		I do not know		Total	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	F	f%
Motor competences	26	20.1	70	53.8	28	21.5	6	4.6	130	100.0
Learning competences	32	24.5	76	58.5	11	8.5	11	8.5	130	100.0
Language competences	30	23.1	64	49.2	30	23.1	6	4.6	130	100.0
Self-expression competences	16	12.3	70	53.8	34	26.2	10	7.7	130	100.0
Social competences	15	11.5	55	42.3	48	36.9	12	9.2	130	100.0
Cultural competences	22	16.9	67	51.5	19	14.6	22	16.9	130	100.0

Table 3: Numbers (f) and structural percentages (f%) of the parents' answers to the question: «Which competences do you think the usage of ICTs most develops?».

child's usage of ICTs starts to increase. The fourth year of life most likely denotes the beginning of a critical period that is important for a child's learning with ICTs (Wartella, Lee & Caplovitz, 2002). Until recently, learning with ICTs was mostly associated with the concept of distant learning, but this is not the case anymore. The concept of learning with ICTs is changing. ICTs is also more and more present in the homes of children, where learning with ICTs happens naturally and enhances the development of important child competences. By using ICTs, the child develops competences by which he or she can operate in a digital society. The level of these adopted competences depends upon access to equipment as well as upon the support, interest and engagement of family members. McPake et al. (2005) established three general categories of ICTs competences: technological, cultural and learning.

Based on this, we were interested in which competences a child develops most by using ICTs.

The table shows that parents are quite unified in their opinions about the development of a child's competences by using ICTs. In all examples, approximately one half of parents believe that ICTs partially develops child's competences. In their opinion, ICTs develops: motor competences (53.8%), learning competences (58.5%), language competences (49.2%), self-expression competences (53.8%), social competences (42.3%) and cultural competences (51.5%).

A more detailed analysis of the results has shown that parents with a higher level of education believe that the usage of ICTs increasingly develops certain child competences (learning competences, language competences, self-expression competences and social competences). This fact is not surprising; because we can assume that parents with a higher level of education are more ICT-competent and that they are using ICTs for their own purposes. This means that beliefs of parents with

a higher level of education about a child's usage of ICTs are more positively oriented than the opinions of parents with a lower level of education.

3.4. The child's attitude towards ICTs at home

Just like everybody else, children also have an attitude towards ICTs that is difficult to determine, because children do not yet know how to best express their feelings about ICTs (what they like and what they do not) (Plowman & Stephen, 2002).

The table shows that the majority of parents (87.7%) believe that their child is interested in ICTs and that he or she likes to use it. Parents denote this attitude positively and also approve of it, as long as it is regulated. A lot less parents (9.2%) believe that their child is overly interested in ICTs and that he or she uses it too much. Few parents (3.1%) believe that their child is not interested in ICTs at all and that he or she does not use it yet. Parents also feel that this is not bad, and they do not encourage the child to use ICTs, because they think that it is not the right time to use ICTs yet.

4. Discussion

Four-year-old children often encounter ICTs in their homes. The majority of them live in families that own a TV, a mobile phone, a computer, a CD or a DVD player, a digital camera and a printer. A lot of families also own other ICTs devices (MP3 players, iPods, digital video-cameras, gaming consoles…) that are not so common, so children encounter them rarely. Most families own ICTs devices that are designed especially for children. These are programma-

Attitude	f	f%
Child is overly interested in ICT and he/she uses it too much	12	9.2
Child is interested in ICT and he/she likes to use it	114	87.7
Child is not interested in ICT and he/she does not like to use it	4	3.1
Total	130	100.0

Table 4: Numbers (f) and structural percentages (f%) of parents' answers to the question: «What type of relationship does your child have with ICTs at home?».

ble toys (talking dolls and robots) and simulating toys (child computer, phone, kitchen appliances…).

Research has also shown that, in general, families with girls more often own various types of ICTs than families with boys. This fact is quite surprising, because we would expect the opposite. So far, a lot of studies have indicated that boys prefer to take part in ICTs activities than girls, which could consequently mean that families with boys own more various types of ICTs devices (McPake, Stephen, Sime & Downey, 2005). We also found that parents with a lower level of education more often own a personal computer than parents with a higher level of education. This is very surprising, because we would expect the opposite. We could assume that a higher level of education provides parents with a higher salary level and thus easier purchasing of a computer. A higher level of education can also be connected to the fact that those parents use their computers for work purposes more often than parents with a lower level of education. This is not always the case, because almost every family now owns at least one or more computers.

Children like to use technology, because it is entertaining. Some children at this age already develop permanent interests in certain types of play, and this is reflected in the technology they use. At the age of four, according to Piaget, a child is already capable of symbolic thought (Birch, 1997). This means that the child can use mental pictures, words and movements as symbols for denoting something else (Marjanovič, Umek & Zupančič, 2004). We have to emphasise here that children probably still comprehend and use ICTs as a toy and not as a device (Fekonja, Umek & Zupančič, 2006). We were interested in how children use ICTs at home. Do children use ICTs alone, do they need help and do they not use certain types of ICTs at all? Children use the TV, and of course ICTs toys, quite independently. ICTs toys are designed especially for them, and because of that their usage is simple and safe. On the other hand, children need help when using a computer and various other players. We were glad to see that many children almost never use other ICTs devices that they come across at home, and that their usage is limited only to basic and simple forms of ICTs. Children usually use the ICTs that is always available to them, and their usage is simple and independent. Here, we have to emphasise that children do not actually use ICTs but rather play with it, because its true purpose is not well-known to them yet. A more detailed revision of the results has shown that girls use ICTs more independently than boys, which is surprising, because McPake et al.

(2005) have shown that boys prefer to take part in activities involving ICTs. In addition, Nikolopoulu et al. (2010) suggest that boys use ICTs more independently than girls because family values demand that from them (for boys, self-dependence, independence and taking initiative are seen as the first steps towards adulthood and taking a leading role in the family). This is a more traditional view of the family that is being gradually replaced by the modern concept of gender equality in the family.

Plowman, McPake & Stephen (2008) have also proved that the usage of ICTs best develops learning competences, because learning with ICTs is in itself a natural process, evolving independently and not self-consciously. This learning happens in the child's home (informal) environment, where it is the result of cooperation in a socially situated practice. Nevertheless, learning how to use ICTs is not intentional (children see usage as a part of play); children can develop a broad spectrum of learning techniques but only by interacting with ICTs. On the other hand, we can assume that parents' belief that ICTs least develops a child's social competences is conditioned by their systems of cultural beliefs, which often originate from general public opinion. Our society is still greatly influenced by the mentality that ICTs harms the child and that the child does not benefit from it (Plowman, McPake & Stephen, 2008). This is also seen in parents' beliefs. In general, they state that the usage of ICTs offers the child the possibility of gaining new knowledge and learning. But they still think that ICTs distracts the child from interacting with family members, peers and society in general. The results of the study have also shown that a lot of parents do not know if the usage of ICTs develops the child's cultural competences, which include mostly understanding the various roles of ICTs in society and the possibilities of its usage for various social and cultural purposes (communication, work, manner of expression and entertainment).

A lot of children have a healthy relationship towards ICTs. At this age, they are already interested in ICTs and like to use it. It is important that parents see this relationship in a special way, because the child does not perceive the majority of ICTs the same way as we do. For the child, ICTs is still a toy and a source of entertainment. Stephen et al. (2008) showed that by the age of four children are sophisticated users of ICTs who asses their own accomplishments, know what they like and distinguish between their own operative competences and the possibility of taking part in ICTs activities. This cognition can also be applied in

our case, and we can conclude that children are, to some extent, aware of the concept of ICTs, its employability and the role that it has in the family.

Roberts, Foehr, Rideout & Brodie (1999) found that most children use ICTs between one to three hours per day. This usage often takes place without parents knowing it, because children have unlimited access to their own personal media. At the age of four, a child is already in potential danger if usage of ICTs is not properly regulated. That is why parents have to supervise its usage consistently. It is necessary to achieve a balance between all of a child's activities,

of our everyday way of life and because without its constant presence it would be very hard to live.

A four-year-old child is curious, and because of that there is a possibility that he or she will want to use ICTs more and more often and for longer periods of time. We have found that this (increased) desire to use ICTs is influenced by parents' (or other family members') constant usage of ICTs. These results coincide with the results of another study, that shows that a child's (increased) desire to use ICTs is most influenced by family habits (family values and expectations), which affect the relationship between the usage of traditional toys and ICTs. Even though the child's (increased) desire to use ICTs is influenced by all family members, parents still play the most important role, because they are closest to the child, spend the most time with him/her and provide help and support when needed.

> The results of the study have also shown that a lot of parents do not know if the usage of ICTs develops the child's cultural competences, which include mostly understanding the various roles of ICTs in society and the possibilities of its usage for various social and cultural purposes (communication, work, manner of expression and entertainment).

Parents believe that usage of ICTs develops a child's motor competences, learning competences, language competences, self-expression competences, social competences and cultural competences. Usage of ICTs with a young child could already have positive consequences, but excessive usage could also cause negative consequences. Experts believe that proper usage of ICTs cannot have negative effects (Technology and young children – ages 3 through 8, 1996). When we asked parents what they think about such ICTs usage, the majority of them stated that such usage could have negative and positive consequences at the same time. As negative consequences, parents mention contact with violent or inappropriate content, threats to physical health (deterioration of sight, stiffness, spinal damage due to sitting position, obesity…), associability, loss of contact with reality and even addiction. As positive consequences, parents mention the acquisition of new knowledge and skills and understanding ICTs, which will serve the child in his or her future schooling and employment. All parents agree that ICTs has to be chosen properly and the manner and time of usage controlled. Parents should be aware of the broad selection of ICTs intended for children and know how to buy products suitable for their four-year-old children and their stage of development (Aubry & Dahl, 2008). In addi-

introduce time limitations and equally distribute the child's play between outdoor and indoor activities and individual and group games. Experts have raised great differences in opinion regarding the question of how often and how much children should use ICTs. Some of them believe that usage of ICTs harms the child, while others see only positive effects from it. That is why we asked parents how often their children use certain types of ICTs at home. Parents have stated that children use the TV every day, while all other ICTs are used rarely or never. Of course, the majority of children use ICTs toys several times a week.

5. Conclusions

In accordance with the results, we can conclude that the majority of four-year-old children live in a technological environment, enriched with media, where the family supports learning through ICTs. We also support this assertion with the fact that nowadays there are few families that do not own the majority of basic ICTs devices (TV, mobile phone, computer, digital camera…), since technology has become a part

tion, the child should be given help and explanations regarding the concept of ICTs in order to use ICTs correctly in the future.

It is encouraging that all parents are acquainted with the child's usage of ICTs, because only a few parents expressed a desire for additional information: mostly about the child's usage of ICTs in the kindergarten, about the influences of ICTs on a child's development and about the proper way of introducing ICTs to a child. We would also like to point out the importance of mutual informing and cooperation of parents, educators, kindergarten administrations and other involved individuals who are in contact with the child. Only in this way can parents teach their children to use ICTs correctly, supervise the usage and prevent possible negative consequences of its usage.

Everything in life has its good and bad sides. It is the same with the question regarding the appropriateness of using ICTs among preschool children, especially the youngest ones. The ever-increasing presence of ICTs in everyday life has forced parents, educators and child proponents to question its relationship with the cognitive, social and developmental needs of preschool children. The debate soon created division between those who believe that the usage of ICTs is pernicious for the child's health and learning and those who think that using ICTs contributes to the child's social and intellectual development in an important way. Our research has shown that four-year-old children already have contact with basic types of ICTs at home and that they also gladly use it, but their usage is not yet controlled and definitely does not have any negative consequences.

Parents have expressed that they are happy with their children's ways of using ICTs, although some of them doubt its educational value, especially at such a young age. That is way we emphasise once more the importance of cooperation between parents, educators, kindergarten administrations and other involved individuals. They should share information about the child's usage of ICTs and its influences on the child as well as about all other positive or negative effects on the child's development. Only through everyone's cooperation can the child begin to learn, develop important competences for further schooling and become an active member of today's modern e-society.

References

AUBREY, C. & DAHL, S. (2008). *A Review of the Evidence on the Use of ICTs in the Early Years Fundation Stage.* (www.e-learning-centre.co.uk/Resource/CMS/Assets/5c10130e-6a9f-102c-a0be-003005bbceb4/form_uploads/review_early_years_foundation.pdf)

(06-01-2011).

BIRCH, A. (1997). *Developmental Psychology: From Infancy to Childhood.* London: McMillian Press LTD.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (Ed.) (2001). *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality.* (www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/MitteilungEng.pdf) (22-04-2011).

FEKONJA, U. (2006). Igrače. In L. MARJANOVIČ UMEK & M. ZUPANČIČ (Eds.), *Psihologija otroške igre: od rojstva do vstopa v šolo* (pp. 99-124). Ljubljana: Universidad de Ljubljana, Facultad de Artes.

HOFFMAN, D.L. & NOVAK, T.P. (1996). Marketing in Hypermedia Computer-mediated Environments: Conceptual Foundatuions. *Journal of Marketing, 60,* 50-68. JSTOR (15-04-2010).

KIRKORIAN, H.L., WARTELLA, E.A. & ANDERSON, D.R. (2008). Media and Young Children's Learning. *Future of Children, 18,* 39-61. ERIC (05-11-2010).

MARKOVAC, V. & ROGULJA, N. (2009). *Key ICTs Competences of Kindergarten Teachers.* In 8TH SPECIAL FOCUS SYMPOSIUM ON ICESKS: Information, Communication and Economic Sciences in the Knowledge Society (str. 72-77). Zadar: The Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb and ENCSI.

MARJANOVIČ UMEK, L. & ZUPANČIČ, M. (2004). *Razvojna Psihologija.* Ljubljana: Scientific and Research Institute of Faculty of Arts.

MCPAKE, J., STEPHEN, C., PLOWMAN, L., SIME, D. & DOWNEY, S. (2005), *Already at a Disadvantage? ICTs in the Home and Children's Preparation for Primary School. University of Stirling.* (www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/interplay/docs/already_at_a_disadvantage.pdf) (30-10-2010).

MCPAKE, J., STEPHEN & PLOWMAN, L. (2007). *Entering e-society. Young Children's Development of e-literacy.* University of Stirling (www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/esociety/documents/Entering e-SocietyreportJune2007.pdf) (06-12-2010).

NIKOLOPOULU, K., GIALAMAS, V. & BATSTOUTA, M. (2010). *Young Children's Access to and Use of ICT at Home.* University of Patras. (www.ecedu.upatras.gr/review/papers/4_1/4_1_25_40.pdf) (06-10-2010).

PLOWMAN, L. & STEPHEN, C. (2002). *A «benign addition»? Research on ICTs and Preschool Children.* University of Stirling (https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/459/1/Plowman%20JCAL.pdf) (21-11-2011).

PLOWMAN, L., MCPAKE, J. & STEPHEN, C. (2008). Just Picking it up? Young Children Learning with Technology at Home. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 38,* 303-319. ERIC (30-10-2010).

PLOWMAN, L., MCPAKE, J. & STEPHEN, C. (2010). The Technologisation of Childhood? Young Children and Technology in the home. *Children and Society, 24.* (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2008.00180.x/full) (30-10-2010).

PUNIE, Y. (2007). Learning Spaces: an ICT-enabled Model of Future Learning in the Knowledge-based Society. *European Journal of Education, 42.* (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2007.00302.x/full) (30-10-2010).

RIDEOUT, V.J., VANDEWATER, A.E. & WARTELLA, A.E. (2003). *Zero to Six: Electronic Media in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers.* (www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Zero-to-Six-Electronic-Media-in-the-Lives-of-Infants-Toddlers-and-Preschoolers-PDF.pdf) (30-10-2010).

ROBERTS, D.F., FOEHR, U.G., RIDEOUT, V.J. & BRODIE, M. (1999). *Kids and Media @ the New Millenium.* (www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/Kids-Media-The-New-Millennium-Report.pdf) (06-01-2011).

STEPHEN, C., MCPAKE, J., PLOWMAN, L. & BERCH-HEYMAN, S. (2008). Learning from the Children: Exploring Preschool Children's encounters with ICTs at Home. *Journal of Early Childhood Re-*

search, 6 (2), 99-117.
TECHNOLOGY AND YOUNG CHILDREN – AGES 3 THROUGHT 8 (Ed.) (1996). (www.kqed.org/assets/pdf/education/earlylearning/media-symposium/technology-children-naeyc.pdf?trackurl=true) (22-12-2012).

WARTELLA, E.A., LEE, J.H. & CAPLOVITZ, A.G. (2002). *Children and Interactive Media*. (http://74.125.155.132/scholar?q=cache:-FGj8L4ExmDAJ:scholar.google.com/+children+and+interactive+media&hl=sl&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1) (06-01-2011).

● A. Almansa, O. Fonseca and A. Castillo
   Málaga (Spain) and Bogotá (Colombia)

Social Networks and Young People. Comparative Study of Facebook between Colombia and Spain

Redes sociales y jóvenes. Uso de Facebook en la juventud colombiana y española

ABSTRACT

Social networks have become areas of social interaction among young people where they create a profile to relate with others. The way this population uses social networks has an impact on their socialization as well as the emotional and affective aspects of their development. The purpose of this investigation was to analyze how Facebook is used by young people to communicate among themselves and the experiences they gain from it. On the one hand, while teenagers claim to know the risks, they admit to accepting strangers as friends and to sharing large amounts of true data about their private lives. For this reason, it is necessary to understand the media and digital phenomenon that the youth are living through. Although they are legally prohibited from using Facebook until they are 13, the number of underage users of this social network is growing, without any restraint from parents or schools. This investigation compares the use of Facebook by youth in Colombia and Spain by using the content analysis and interview techniques. In Colombia 100 Facebook profiles were analyzed and 20 interviews carried out with students between 12- and 15-years-old attending the Institución Educativa Distrital Técnico Internacional school in Bogotá. In Spain, 100 Facebook profiles were analyzed and 20 interviews held with students of the same age group attending various secondary schools in Andalusia.

RESUMEN

Las redes sociales se han convertido en ámbitos de interacción social entre los jóvenes, que crean un perfil para relacionarse con los demás. La exposición pública en el caso de los adolescentes puede generar problemas sobre aspectos sociales, emotivos y afectivos. Esta investigación analiza cómo se usa Facebook por parte de los jóvenes y qué experiencia obtienen de ello. Aunque dicen conocer los riesgos, admiten que aceptan a desconocidos como amigos y ofrecen datos reales sobre su vida. Ante esta situación, se hace más evidente la necesidad de la alfabetización mediática y digital de estos jóvenes que, aunque no deberían estar en Facebook hasta los 13 años, cuentan con un perfil de manera mayoritaria. Para ello se ha utilizado una metodología basada en el análisis de contenido y las entrevistas en profundidad. Se trata de un estudio comparativo entre Colombia y España. En Colombia se han realizado 100 análisis de perfiles y 20 entrevistas en profundidad. La muestra ha sido de adolescentes de 12 a 15 años, de la Institución Educativa Distrital Técnico Internacional de Bogotá. En España se han analizado 100 perfiles y se han realizado 20 entrevistas a chicos de 12 a 15 años, de Institutos (IES) de Andalucía.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Social network, young people, teenagers, digital identity, media literacy, Facebook, privacy, risks.
Redes sociales, jóvenes, adolescentes, identidad digital, alfabetización mediática, Facebook, privacidad, riesgos.

◆ Dr. Ana Almansa-Martínez is Associate Professor in the Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Málaga (Spain) (anaalmansa@uma.es).

◆ Oscar Fonseca is Professor in the Department of Communication and Language at the Pontificia Javeriana University of Bogotá (Colombia) (ofonseca@javeriana.edu.co).

◆ Dr. Antonio Castillo-Esparcia is Associate Professor in the Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Málaga (Spain) (acastilloe@uma.es).

1. Introduction

Since their creation, social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, Cyworld, Bebo or Twitter have attracted millions of users (Foon-Hew, 2011), many of whom have integrated these websites in their daily activities (Boyd, 2007; Piscitelli, 2010). Schwarz (2011) suggests that the youth are moving away from the dominance of telephones and face-to-face interaction and prefer communication based on text, especially messaging, as a method of instant communication. Social networks offer a new way to communicate, to build relationships and create communities (Varas-Rojas, 2009).

Haythrnthwaite (2005) argues that what makes social networks different is not that they allow young people to meet strangers but that they enable users to articulate their social networks and make them visible thus leading to connections between individuals (Timmis, 2012).

1.1. Research background on social networks

Most research on social networks has focused on how individuals present themselves and create friendships through the online networks, their structure and privacy.

• Studies on how individuals present themselves and develop friendships through the online networks: as in other online contexts in which individuals are able to consciously construct a representation of themselves, social networks constitute an important research context for studies of the management processes of self-presentation and the development of friendships, as studied by Junco (2012), McAndrew & Jeong (2012), Ross, Orr & al. (2009) and Moore & McElroy (2012). Although, most sites invite users to create exact representations of themselves, participants usually do so at different stages (Marwick, 2005; Ong, Ang & al. 2011). Marwick found that users of social networks handle complex strategies when negotiating their real or «genuine» identities.

• Studies on the structure of social networks: researchers of social networks have also been interested in the structure of friendship networks. Skog (2005) argued that members of social networks are not passive but participate in the social evolution of the social network. Likewise, studies have been developed around the motivations for joining certain communities (Backstrom, Hottenlocher & al., 2006). Liu, Maes & Davenport (2006) stated that connections between friends are not the only network worthy of research. They examine how people's interests (music, books, movies, etc.) constitute an alternative network structure to what they call the «likes networks». And Soep (2012: 98) points out that «the youth have developed new codes of behavior and created models to support production beyond publication», and Gonzales & Hancock (2011) study the effects of Facebook use.

• Studies related to privacy: The coverage of mass social media in social networks has focused on issues of privacy, particularly on the safety of younger users (Flores, 2009: 80), cyberbullying and other possible risks (Calvete, Oru & al., 2010; Law, Shapka & Olson, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; McBride, 2011).

In one of the first academic studies on privacy and social networking sites, Gross & Acquisti (2005) analyzed 4,000 Facebook profiles and described the potential threats to privacy arising from the personal information contained on the site.

Stutzman (2006), in his study of surveys of Facebook users, described the «privacy paradox» that occurs when teenagers are not aware of the public nature of the Internet.

Jagatic, Johnson & al. (2007) used data from open-access profiles of Facebook to develop an «identity theft». Data from this study provide a more optimistic perspective and suggest that teenagers are aware of the potential threats to privacy online. The research also concludes that of the teenagers with open profiles 46% admitted to including at least some false data about themselves (Jagatic, Johnson & al., 2007: 97).

Privacy is also an issue in users' ability to control and manage their identities. Social networks are not a panacea. Preibusch, Hoser & al. (2007) argued that privacy options offered by social networks do not provide users with the flexibility they need.

In addition to these issues, a growing number of studies address aspects such as race and ethnicity (Byrne 2007), religion (Nyland & Near, 2007), how sexuality is affected by social networks (Hjorth & Kim, 2005) and the use that certain segments of the population make of social networks, as in the case of children (Valcke, De-Wever & al., 2011), teenagers (Pumper & Moreno, 2012; Moreau, Roustit & al., Chauchaud & Chabrol, 2012; Aydm & Volkan-San, 2011; Bernicot, Volckaert-Legrier & al., 2012; Mazur & Richards, 2011) and digital natives (Ng, 2012).

2. Materials and methods

This research used a mixed methodology with qualitative (in-depth interviews) and quantitative (content analysis) techniques. It is a comparative study of teenagers in Colombia and Spain comprising 100 Facebook profiles and 20 in-depth interviews of 12- to 15-years-olds in Colombia and Spain. In Colombia,

the study centered on teenagers at the «Institución Educativa Distrito Técnico Internacional», school in Bogotá. In Spain, the survey focus was boys and girls at various schools in Andalusia (Los Olivos, Torre Atalaya, El Palmeral, El Jaroso and Rey Alabez). The selection of schools was random. We analyzed the Facebook profile of those teenagers who had agreed to participate in our research, and from among these we randomly selected students for the in-depth interviews.

A template was used for content analysis of the Facebook profiles containing research variables and items such as the frequency of sign-ups, the language used, the number of pictures and their descriptions, and the number of friends and type of personal data (hobbies, likes, relationships, etc.). In relation to the in-depth interviews, the topics covered were the uses of and gratification gained from social networks and the explanation of specific aspects relating to their profiles.

The period of analysis was from May 2011 to May 2012. The study examples do not include names or pictures because all participants are minors.

3. Analysis and results
3.1. The case of Colombian teenagers
a) How do they present themselves on Facebook?

For those teenagers studied for this research, having a Facebook a profile means managing his/her personality. Creating a Facebook profile and assigning content to certain fields already pre-established in the interface is the act of creation of a being who moves in a digital environment. Although it is about presenting themselves as they are, there is also room to present themselves as the wanted to be seen. Teenagers have a clear notion of how they want to present themselves on social networks which depends on something very important at this stage of life: their socialization, both real and virtual.

In this regard, our study demonstrated how teenagers adopt a name other than their own on Facebook to describe attributes of their identity. Of the 100 profiles studied, 45 teenagers assumed a name that had little or no relation to their real names. For these teenagers, the resonance of their name is very important. One Colombian boy interviewed explains that «my name is…because it looks cool…also because I listen to Ska and Punk»; similarly another youngster justifies altering his name «on Facebook by always writing it with the C and not the E to make it different. And the name Tanz means that I belong to a group of 6 friends from my school but we also have that name on Facebook».

> Teenagers communicate on Facebook using new codes of writing that ignore conventional grammar and spelling rules, yet they type quickly and adopt the digital aesthetic. Their way of writing seems to be capricious; new ways of writing emerge in the form of «text-images» created from the keyboard, in which the letters become part of the image that means something entirely different from the linguistic meaning.

b) Profile pictures: makeup and changes in pixels

Teenagers spend more time working on pictures of themselves to post on the social network than anything else; they think about their image, design it, create it, produce it, edit it... and send it. However, in their images they stand alone. The «Profile photos» of the 100 Facebook profiles studied show the teenagers appearing by themselves, and the photograph is normally taken using a mirror.

A teenager explains how she built most of her profile pictures in which she usually appears alone: «Taking pictures in front of the mirror is not a fad, it is just easier because you know how they are going to look… for this reason I take many pictures of myself in the bathroom. There are photos that I do not like and so I do not upload them… Besides I almost always modify the photos I post… A lot of boys like my pictures… I think that is why I get so many friend requests».

The number of «Profile pictures» in the 100 Facebook profiles studied amounts to 2,612, an average of 26 per teenager, with 1 photo published in each profile. It is also interesting to note how teenage girls tend to have more pictures in their «Profile pictures» albums than boys.

c) Profile information

The «information» link in a Facebook profile contains an «About me» field. An analysis of the 100 profiles found that 33 had published personal information via this link, but even more interesting was that although the interface only allows users to include information as text, several of the teenagers had deployed their keyboard skills to copy and paste to create images.

They publish their dates of birth, though not entirely truthfully (they tend to backdate), add their home

> Teenagers spend more time working on pictures of themselves to post on the social network than anything else; they think about their image, design it, create it, produce it, edit it... and send it. However, in their images they stand alone. The «Profile photos» of the 100 Facebook profiles studied show the teenagers appearing by themselves, and the photograph is normally taken using a mirror.

addresses and the schools where they study, their favorite music, movies, television programs and activities and interests. However, they do not disclose their religious beliefs, political affiliations or name their favorite sports or books.

So, as in friendship, love is now mediated by technology. For these teenagers, a relationship presented on Facebook is a true reflection of a relationship that exists in real life. Of the 100 Facebook profiles studied, 22 posted information related to sentimental relationships with other users. In 6 cases, the teenagers described themselves as married which is certainly not true.

d) How do they interact?

For teenagers, having friends on Facebook means more than having a contact list; it is the management of friendships in another scenario where the image is the main link. This is confirmed, for example, by one Colombian youngsters interviewed, aged 13, who explains that «for me to add someone as my friend is because he has a nice picture, must be good looking or cute… (laughs) and has friends in common with me,

because I know that if any of my friends know him, he is not dangerous. However, if someone asks me to add him as a friend and we do not have friends in common, I look very closely at the pictures and if he is cute I add him».

For these young people, having a friend on Facebook does not necessarily mean meeting face to face. Several of the teenagers interviewed talked to «Facebook friends» who they had never seen. The number of friends on the 100 Facebook profiles studied totals 34,730. But, how do they get to have so many friends in their profiles? They use two criteria to add unknowns as friends: in their pictures they must be «good looking or cute» and must have friends in common. However, the former may be sufficient to accept a request to be a friend.

The decision whether to accept or reject a request to be a friend on Facebook is taken very quickly. These teenagers did not take longer than 20 seconds to accept a request to be a friend and rejected very few. Unlike the real world, in which teens interact with adults such as their teachers, parents, authority figures, etc., adults are forbidden entry to their Facebook profiles, in fact only 5 teenagers had added their parents or other relatives as friends; 2 had even added their teachers but most say they do not want their parents to find out what is in their profiles.

The conversations of teenagers on Facebook center on their image. There are few posts that have anything to do with subjects other than image. Pictures are the starting point of conversations and relationships. Most of the texts relating to images were very short compared to the large numbers of photographs. The reasons are explained by one of the girls interviewed who says that «when I post a picture and nobody comments on it, I delete it: why leave something there that nobody cares about! For instance, the pictures with most comments are the latest ones I have uploaded, so I am more and less discovering what my friends like to see… well, I think they are the sexy ones». The number of photos in the 100 Facebook profiles is 11,426, an average of 114 per user, with 26 published in each profile.

The image has also become a way to express

affection: take a picture and modify it, upload it to Facebook and share it. They call this action a «zing», derived from the English «sign», as a signature added to a photo uploaded to Facebook, with a message sent to a friend.

Teenagers communicate on Facebook using new codes of writing that ignore conventional grammar and spelling rules, yet they type quickly and adopt the digital aesthetic. Their way of writing seems to be capricious; new ways of writing emerge in the form of «text-images» created from the keyboard, in which the letters become part of the image that means something entirely different from the linguistic meaning.

e) Facebook groups: new ways of belonging

For Colombian teenagers, belonging to a Facebook group is not just feeling that they are part of something, it is having a shared image that shelters and protects its members, allowing them to act as an «I» group. Being part of a group is belonging to a real community.

3.2. Spanish teenagers
a) How do they present themselves on Facebook?

The vast majority (95%) of the Spanish youngsters sampled used their real names in their Facebook profiles. However, when interviewed about this, half of them agreed that it was dangerous to use the real name, and one of them said: «My mother always tells me that I should not give any true data, because anyone with bad intentions could find me». Therefore, the theory holds but they forget to put it into practice.

Most teenagers in our sample have all their profile content and wall open to whoever wants to read it, and only a small group limits access. When asked about this in interviews, most responded that they were unaware of the privacy option they had activated. In this sense, one of the girls stated that «nothing happens from sharing on Facebook. All of my friends do it. Because we are so many, someone is going to be interested in what I do or say». Therefore, the fact that it is common among her colleagues to share is interpreted by this girl as meaning an absence of danger.

On the other hand, when stating their age they are not so honest. Almost none gives their true age. Facebook has established a minimum age of 13 to open an account on this social network, but teenagers simply get around this by declaring they were born a few years before their actual birth date. Most teenagers analyzed use the wall to share links, pictures and to post and receive comments on photos of friends. However, with one exception, wall activity is not very common, with an average of only three or four posts per month. This was proved during profile analysis and also in interviews with these teenagers who said they posting less than five comments per month, and usually from home.

b) Teenagers' profile picture and photos on the social network

The Spanish teenagers, like their Colombian counterparts, make great use of photographs in their profiles. Of these 78% upload pictures without modification, 13% design photos, 6% use retouched photos and only 3% have no profile picture. The profile photos usually show the protagonist alone (60%), or with friends (20%). The remaining 20% is divided between photos with a partner (6%), with relatives (3%), of landscapes (6%), famous personalities like soccer players (4%) or fictional characters like The Simpsons (1%).

The pictures that teenagers upload to their profiles usually have them posing (sometimes very unnaturally). The feeling is that they are imitating their TV or media idols, and retouched or designed pictures seem to further highlight this desire to emulate their media leaders.

One of the Spanish teenagers interviewed recognized that there is some competition between friends to see who can upload the most appealing, controversial or original photo.
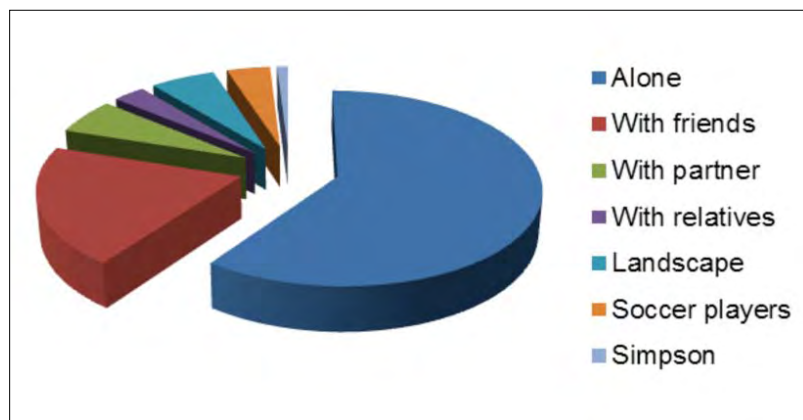

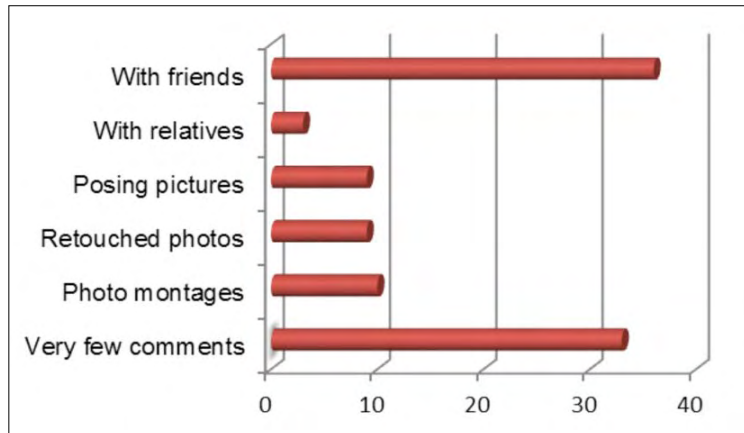Figure 1: Who appears in the profile picture?

Figure 2: Comments of photos.

do add phrases like «I like going out with my friends», «I am a shy guy, but charming», or incorporate famous sayings or express the greatest joy because they feel understood by their partner. Texts are written in the abbreviated style that usually omits vowels (spelling rules ignored). In no case did we find «text-images» similar to those produced by the teenagers in Colombia.

Three quarters of the boys and girls sampled failed to mention their sentimental status. Of those that did, 12% said they were single, 9% said they were in a relationship, 3% «engaged» and 1% said they were married (obviously not true). One the teenager interviewed justified why he never provides true data: «I say that I live in another place, I make up my data… even my name.» He says that having a false identity is not a problem because «I use a name my friends know so they know right away who I am». Nearly all the teenagers (98%) decline to give a contact phone number on Facebook while 80% give an email address which in most cases is via Hotmail.

The number of pictures per profile («Profile Pictures») ranges from one to 251. The average number of pictures per profile is 23. Curiously, as also happens in Colombia, girls have more photos in their profiles than boys.

The average number of photos in each case is considerably higher: 168. Two teenage girls have 1,116 and 1,184 photos respectively. Something similar happens with the number of albums, ranging from none to 32, with the average being 5.4.

The average for photo sharing is also high. One teenager shared up to 817 pictures, while the average is 120 photos shared per teenager. Of these pictures, the most widely discussed are those taken with friends (36%), far ahead of photo-montages (10%), posed and retouched photos (both 9%), and those taken with relatives (3%). Therefore, friends of the teenager often comment on pictures in which they appear or on pictures of people they know. Photos that have been retouched or come in montage form also seem to arouse their interest.

c) Profile information

We observed that 84% of teenagers in the sample did not indicate in their profile which languages they speak. Curiously, those who did so speak more than one language: 9% declared that they speak Spanish, English and French, 6% speak Spanish and English and 1% English, French, Spanish and Latin.

Philosophy, religion and politics are of no particular interest to teenagers. In the case of philosophy and religion, only 12% said they were Catholic, and 7% posted sayings by philosophers or famous people in their profiles. Only 2% named a political party with which they sympathize.

Teenagers do not tend to include a description of themselves in their profile («About me») and those that

d) How do they interact?

Teenagers do not use Facebook frequently or on a daily basis. They usually post three or four times per month. Similarly the average number of friends is quite low, at 202. In the Spanish sample one boy had as many as 559 friends, while another boy had only 3. Therefore, it can be deduced that these teens are only just beginning to interact with social networks and still restrict themselves to their closest circles of friends.

e) Groups and applications

Spanish teenagers do not usually participate in groups. Over 80% are not members of a group and those who do, participate on average 3.8 times per month. However, they make greater use of applications, with each teenager using an average of 2 applications, mainly games such as «Aquarium», «Pet Shop City», «Sims Social» and «Dragon City».

f) Teenagers' likes

Teenagers do not generally justify their likes although soccer registered highly (54% of profiles listed soccer as their favorite sport); 39% of teenagers do not specify a favorite sport. In cases in which they mentioned sports, soccer, tennis, volleyball, swimming,

basketball, paintball, paddle tennis and ballet are among the favorites. The music that teenagers like includes Lady Gaga, Justin Bieiber, David Guetta, Shakira, Jennifer Lopez, the Jonas Brothers, Michael Jackson, Beyonce and Selena Gomez. Favorite films are «Toy Story», «Tres metros sobre el cielo», «Twilight», «High School Musical», «Avatar» and «Harry Potter». The television programs named among their likes are usually comedies or «top trending» series such as «Tonterías las justas», «El intermedio», «El hormiguero» or «El club de la comedia»; and contests like «Tú sí que vales» or «Fama»; and series such as «El barco», «El internado» or «Friends».

4. Discussion and conclusions

Both in Colombia and Spain, the majority of teenagers between 12- and 15-years-old use Facebook to interact with their friends. Facebook has become a socialization medium as important, if not more so, than the other social networks.

In both countries, teenagers reveal their need to belong to a network and to present themselves on it in the most original way possible (or, at least, in a way they deem to be original). One such way is to adopt a personalized language in their communications that defies conventional spelling rules. Furthermore in Colombia, the use of «text-images» (images created from text) was common. This manifestation of supposed originality is also evident in their photographs. The teenagers sampled in Spain and Colombia competed with each other to upload pictures that would attract their partner's attention: posing or making suggestive gestures, retouching images, montages.

Most teenagers are over-exposed on the social networks, as shown by averages of114.6 pictures per person of the studied sample in Colombia and 168 photos per person in Spain. In the individual «Profile pictures» the average is 26.1 photos in Colombia and 23 in Spain.

But this over-exposure goes beyond pictures. Ninety-five per cent of Spanish teenagers use their real names in their Facebook profiles, while only 55% do so in Colombia. Hardly anyone expresses affiliation to a political party or religion, but a substantial group has no problem in declaring their sentimental status. Interestingly, both in Colombia and Spain some teenagers said they were «married» when this was obviously not true.

Another example of overexposure is found in the contact information. The most common indicator is an email address. However, in Spain, two teenagers gave their mobile phone numbers. But what could be even more dangerous is the fact that teenagers admit that they accept unknowns as «friends», and although they know it is dangerous they still do so. In Colombia, the teenagers acknowledged that they added unknowns to their list of friends, while in Spain most teenagers declared that they only accept people they know, yet this was proved to be untrue. In this sense, it is necessary to extend this research to other national and cultural backgrounds to make a transnational comparison.

References

AYDM, B. & VOLKAN SAN, S. (2011). Internet Addiction among Adolescents: *The Role of Self-esteem*. *Procedia-Social and Behavior Sciences*, *15*, 3500-3505. (DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.-04.325).

BACKSTROM, L., HUTTENLOCHER, D. & AL. (2006). Group Formation in Large Social Networks: Membership, Growth, and Evolution. In *Proceedings of 12th International Conference on Knowledge Discovery in Data Mining* (pp. 44-54). New York: ACM Press.

BERNICOT, J., VOLCKAERT-LEGRIER, O. & AL. (2012). Forms and Functions of SMS Messages: A Study of Variations in a Corpus Written by Adolescents. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *44 (12)*, 1701-1715. (DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.07.009).

BOYD, D. & ELLISON, N. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *13*, 210-230.

BYRNE, D. (2007). The Future of (the) Race: Identity, Discourse and the Rise of Computer Mediated Public spheres. In A. EVERETT (Ed.), *MacArthur Foundation Book Series on Digital Learning: Race and Ethnicity* (pp. 15-38). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

CALVETE, E., ORUE, I. & AL. (2010). Cyberbullying in Adolescents: Modalities and Aggressor Profile. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *26 (5)*, 1128-1135. (DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2010.03.017).

FLORES, J.M. (2009). Nuevos modelos de comunicación, perfiles y tendencias en las redes sociales. *Comunicar*, *33*, 73-81. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/c33-2009-02-007).

FOON-HEW, K. (2011). Students and Teachers Use of Facebook. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *27 (2)*, 662-676. (DOI: 10.10-16/j.chb.2010.11.020).

GONZALES, A.L. & HANCOCK, J.T. (2011). Mirror, Mirror on my Facebook Wall: Effects of Exposure to Facebook on Self-esteem. *Cyberpsychology Behavior Social Networking*, *14(1-2)*, 79-83. (DOI: 10.1089/cyber.2009.0411).

GROSS, R. & ACQUISTI, A. (2005). Information Revelation and Privacy in Online Social Networks. In *Proceedings of WPES'05* (pp. 71-80). Alexandria, VA: ACM.

HAYTHORNTHWAITE, C. (2005). Social Networks and Internet Connectivity Effects. Information. *Communication and Society*, *8*, 125-147. (DOI: 10.1080/13691180500146185).

HINDUJA, S. & PATCHIN, J.W. (2008). Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet: A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace. *Journal of Adolescence*, *31 (1)*, 125-146. (DOI:10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.05.004).

HJORTH, L. & KIM, H. (2005). Being There and Being Here: Gendered Customising of Mobile 3G Practices through a Case Study in Seoul. *Convergence*, *11 (2)*, 49-55. (DOI: 10.1177/13548565070-84421).

JAGATIC, T., JOHNSON, N.A. & AL. (2007). Social Phishing. *Communications of the ACM*, *5 (10)*, 94-100. (DOI:10.1111/j.1083-

6101.2007.00393.x).

JUNCO, R. (2012). The Relationship between Frequency of Facebook Use, Participation in Facebook Activities, and Student Engagement. *Computers and Education, 58 (1)*, 162-171. (DOI: 10.1016/j.compedu.2011.08.004).

LAW, D.M., SHAPKA, J.D. & OLSON, B.F. (2010). To Control or not Control? Parenting Behaviours and Adolescent Online Aggression. *Computers in Human Behavior, 26 (6)*, 1651-1656. (DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2010.06.013).

LIU, H., MAES, P. & DAVENPORT, G. (2006). Unraveling the Taste Fabric of Social Networks. *International Journal on Semantic Web and Information Systems, 2 (1)*, 42-71. (DOI: 10.4018/jswis.2006-010102).

MARWICK, A. (2005). I'm a lot More Interesting than a Friendster Profile: Identity Presentation, Authenticity, and Power in Social Networking Services. *Congress Internet Research 6.0.* Chicago, IL, october 1. (http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=18-84356) (30/09/2012).

MAZUR, E. & RICHARDS, L. (2011). Adolescents and Emerging Adults Social Networking Online: Homophily or Diversity? *Journal of Applied Development Psychology, 32 (4)*, 180-188. (DOI:10.1016/j.appdev.2011.03.001).

MCANDREW, F. & JEONG, H.S. (2012). Who does What on Facebook? Age, Sex, and Relationship Status as Predictors of Facebook Use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 28 (6)*, 2359-2365. (DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2012.07.007).

MCBRIDE, D.L. (2011). Risks and Benefits of Social Media for Children and adolescents. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing, 26 (5)*, 498-499. (DOI: 10.1016/j.pedn.2011.05.001).

MOORE, K. & MCELROY, J. (2012). The Influence of Personality on Facebook Usage, Wall Postings, and Regret. *Computers in Human Behavior, 28 (1)*, 267-274. (DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2011.09.009).

MOREAU, A. ROUSTIT, O. & AL. (2012). L'usage de Facebook et les enjeux de l'adolescence: une étude qualitative. *Neuropsychiatire de L Enfance et de l Adolescence, 60 (6)*, 429-434. (DOI: 10.1016/j.neurenf.2012.05.530).

NG, W. (2012). Can We Teach Digital Natives Digital Literacy? *Computers and Education, 59 (3)*, 1065-1078. (DOI: 10.1016/j.compedu.2012.04.016).

NYLAND, R. & NEAR, C. (2007). Jesus is my Friend: Religiosity as a Mediating Factor in Internet Social Networking use. *AEJMC Midwinter Conference*, February 23-24, Reno, NV.

ONG, E., ANG, R. & AL. (2011). Narcissism, Extraversion and Adolescents' Self-presentation on Facebook, Personality and Individual *Differences, 50 (2)*, 180-185. (DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2010.09.022).

PISCITELLI, A. (2010). *El proyecto Facebook y la posuniversidad. Sistemas operativos sociales y entornos abiertos de aprendizaje.* Barcelona: Ariel.

PREIBUSCH, S., HOSER, B. & AL. (2007). Ubiquitous Social Networks. Opportunities and Challenges for Privacy-aware User Modelling. *Proceedings of Workshop on Data Mining for User Modeling.* Corfu, Greece.

PUMPER, M. & MORENO, M. (2012). Perception, Influence, and Social Anxiety among Adolescent Facebook Users. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 50 (2)*, S52-S53. (DOI: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.201-1.10.142).

ROSS, C. & ORR, E. (2009). Personality and Motivations Associated with Facebook Use. *Computers and Human Behavior, 25 (2)*, 578-586. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2008.12.024).

SCHWARZ, O. (2011). Who Moved my Conversation? Instant Messaging, Intertextuality and New Regimes of Intimacy and Truth. *Media Culture Society, 33 (1)*, 71–87. (DOI: 10.1177/01634437-10385501).

SOEP, E. (2012). Generación y recreación de contenidos digitales por los jóvenes: implicaciones para la alfabetización mediática. *Comunicar, 38*, 93-100. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C38-2012-02-10).

STUTZMAN, F. (2006). An Evaluation of Identity-sharing Behavior in Social Network Communities. *Journal of the International Digital Media and Arts Association, 3 (1)*, 10-18.

TIMMIS, S. (2012). Constant Companions: Instant Messaging Conversations as Sustainable Supportive Study Structures Amongst Undergraduate Peers. *Computers and Education, 59 (1)*, 3-18. (DOI: 10.1016/j.compedu.2011.09.026).

SKOG, D. (2005). Social Interaction in Virtual Communities: The Significance of Technology. International *Journal of Web Based Communities, 1 (4)*, 464-474. (DOI: 10.1504/IJWBC.2005.008111).

VALCKE, M., DE WEVER, B. & AL. (2011). Long-term Study of Safe Internet Use of Young Children. *Computers and Education, 57(1)*, 1.292-1.305. (DOI: 10.1016/j.compedu.2011.01.010).

VARAS-ROJAS, L.E. (2009). Imaginarios sociales que van naciendo en comunidades virtuales: Facebook, crisis analógica, futuro digital. *IV Congreso Online del Observatorio para la Cibersociedad*, november 12-29. (www.cibersociedad.net/congres2009/actes/html/com_imaginarios-sociales-que-van-naciendo-en-comunidades-virtuales-facebook_709.html) (30-10-2012).

135

● Miguel A. Ortiz, José A. Ruiz and Elba Díaz
Madrid (Spain)

Are Spanish TV Broadcasters Interested In A Better TV For Children? TV Broadcasters and Research on TV and Children

¿Están las cadenas de televisión interesadas en una mejor TV para los menores?
Las televisiones y la investigación en infancia y televisión

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the main contributions of the TV broadcasters in Spain to the study of the relationships between television and childhood. It is justified by the need of compile and organise these contributions. Quality contents broadcasted for children, children consumption of television and the role of TV channels to transfer a positive image of the childhood have been the mainstays of this text. The information that we report is the result of the study carried out from Observatorio Comunicación y Sociedad. Methodologically, consulting scientific bibliography about television and childhood has made possible to put our study into context. After that, the use of questionnaire to people responsible of contents broadcasted for children by the main Spanish TV channels, and the analysis of the different experiences and work papers prepared by televisions, have allowed to create a setting with the broadcasters' main contributions to a new paradigm which improves the relationship between minors and television. The conclusion from the analysis and the consultation to experts point that, except in the case of the public state television and some regional televisions, the research and the redesign of the childhood/television relationship is not one of the channels priorities. In fact, only TVE has an important scientific production in this field.

RESUMEN

Este artículo describe las principales aportaciones de las televisiones españolas al estudio y reformulación de la relación entre televisión e infancia. La necesidad de recabar y organizar a lo largo del tiempo esas contribuciones justifica este trabajo. Los contenidos infantiles de calidad, el consumo infantil de televisión, y el papel de las cadenas televisivas para trasladar a la ciudadanía una imagen positiva de la infancia, han sido los ejes vertebradores sobre los que se ha fundamentado este texto. Los datos aportados son el resultado de un estudio llevado a cabo desde el Observatorio Comunicación y Sociedad. Metodológicamente, la consulta de bibliografía científica sobre la televisión y la infancia ha permitido contextualizar este estudio. Posteriormente, la utilización de una microencuesta a los responsables de contenidos infantiles de las principales cadenas televisivas españolas, y el análisis de las diferentes experiencias y documentos de trabajo elaborados por las televisiones, han permitido construir un escenario con las principales aportaciones de las emisoras a un nuevo paradigma que mejore la relación de los menores con la televisión. Las conclusiones más destacadas extraídas del análisis y de las consultas con los expertos apuntan a que, salvo en el caso de la televisión pública estatal y de algunas televisiones autonómicas, la investigación y reformulación del binomio infancia/televisión no es un objetivo prioritario para las cadenas. De hecho, sólo TVE tiene producción científica relevante en la materia.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Infancia, menores, televisión, investigación, contenidos televisivos, programas, Internet, alfabetización audiovisual.
Children, minors, television, research, TV contents, programs, Internet, media literacy.

◆ Dr. Miguel A. Ortiz-Sobrino is Director of InfoRadio and Contract Professor at the Complutense University, Madrid (Spain) (amortiz.@ccinf.ucm.es).

◆ Dr. José A. Ruiz-San-Román is Full Professor at the Complutense University, Madrid (Spain) (jars@ccinf.ucm.es).

◆ Dr. Elba Díaz Cerveró is Researcher at the Observatorio Comunicación y Sociedad, at the CES Villanueva, Madrid (Spain) (ediaz@villanueva.edu).

1. Introduction and overview

So far this century, the issues that have aroused most interest among Spain's media researchers and the general public have been the defense of children's TV viewing (Torrecillas & Díaz-Cerveró, 2012), the quality of television contents aimed at minors, compliance with the «Self-Regulatory Code of Content» (Fernández-Martínez & López-de-Ayala, 2011), and the need for media literacy policies (Aguaded, 2007). The relationship between children and television is being heavily researched beyond our borders as well (Steemers & D'Arma, 2012: 67-85; Pereira & Pinto, 2011; Larsen, 2010: 267-283). In recent years, this interest has manifested itself in many scientific conferences and forums, such as the «Spanish-Portuguese Conference on Quality TV» and the «International Television Forum» both held in 2007 (Aguaded, 2007), or the «3rd Congress of Research Groups on Infancy and Communication» in Madrid in 2011.

Several university research groups have also contributed significant scientific material on the subject (Tolsá & Bringué, 2012). Research on the relationship between digital natives and the screen media (García, 2009: 7-30) by the SOCMEDIA Project, or investigations into the relationship between minors and television, such as the PROCOTIN Project (2008-2012) directed by Professor Núñez-Ladevéze, are just two of the initiatives undertaken in recent years in Spain. In each case, concern for quality children's television has been a constant.

This growing interest has, in some cases, brought about greater involvement by the television networks in the research and creation of a television discourse with the benefit of children in mind.

It has been the public state television broadcaster (TVE) that has developed the greatest number of initiatives in this sense, although concern for this issue has also been shown by regional television broadcasters.

Nevertheless, there are certain differences between the contributions, as well as in the styles of research carried out by the various broadcasters in the public television sector. While TVE's contribution has gone above and beyond its mere informative purpose and has usually been committed to research, as far as regional television stations are concerned the commitment has mainly been to raising professional awareness of child-related issues and the supervision of content during child-safe viewing times.

The search for standards relating to children's TV viewing at home as implemented in other countries (Seon-Kyoung & Doohwang, 2010: 389-403), the detection of screen risks for minors (Livingstone &

Haddon & al. 2010) and the creation of a positive child-viewing discourse have been the cornerstones of public state television research; and the results of these activities have been published and disseminated at various national and international conferences. For their part, regional television broadcasting companies have mainly focused on aspects related to compliance with the 2004 «Self-Regulatory Code on Television Content and Infancy», along with the use of guidelines in their Style Books for the development of children's television contents. Their collaboration with the audiovisual councils and research groups pertaining to their sphere (Millian & Pons, 2006: 825-852; Moreno, 2007) should also be kept in mind.

The case of private networks in Spain is different. Beyond subscribing to the «Self-Regulatory Code on Television Content and Infancy» and signing a protocol for collaboration between the «Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs» and the audiovisual sector on June 26, 2004, their efforts have amounted to no more than sporadic actions promoting the rights of minors. In fact, in the proposal drawn up by the association of private networks, UTECA, for the creation of a «Supreme Television Council», child viewing has largely been ignored (Del Corral, 2006).

2. Material and methods
2.1 The «Communication and Society Observatory» as context

The «Communication and Society Observatory» is an initiative of the Villanueva/UCM research group in which researchers from the Complutense University and teachers from the CES Villanueva participate. During 2010-11, the observatory carried out an investigation project as part of a programme that funded research groups promoted by the Complutense university and the «Grupo Santander» banking institution

One of the goals of the project was to draw up a report on the current state of research on children and the media in Spain (1980-2010) to identify the main research groups and papers related to the children/media issue, especially in the area of media schools and the media. To this end, research on the main television networks' contributions to this type of study and investigation was undertaken.

2.2 Material and methods

In order to evaluate their contribution, those actions carried out by the television networks that have contributed to improving television content related to children and their rights were taken into consideration. The documentary investigation technique and reading

of scientific contributions on the subject made it possible to establish the state of the matter. From this starting point, an analysis was made of both the experiences and the scientific material which the networks had produced, either on their own or in collaboration with institutions and research groups. In addition, the envisioning of campaigns and the pro-children content broadcast by various networks enabled a better understanding of the stance taken by some of the networks in favor of a new approach to the relationship of television to children. And finally, the results obtained by a telephone survey of those responsible for children's TV contents at the networks made it possible to confirm their level of commitment concerning quality children's content first hand. The conclusions included in this article were drawn from this fieldwork.

3. Analysis and results
3.1. Public state television (TVE) research on Childhood and Television

The first references to research on the relationship between children and audiovisual contents, dating back to the early years of television in Spain, can be found in the RTVE Library. One of the first documents to appear in its catalogue is the paper titled «Children and Television: a survey on television programme ratings», by Jesús María Vázquez, for the «Ministry of Information and Tourism» in 1965. The «TVE Press Dossier on Children and Advertising» (September 1979-Decembee 1980)» created by the RTVE Press Office in 1980 is another example of early documentary references to the relationship between minors and advertising.

As a member of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) TVE has, practically since its beginnings, taken part in information forums held by the European public television networks, the conclusions of which were reflected in documents such as the «Television programmes for preschool children and kids» paper by Pilar Cabrera in 1985, which presented the main fin-

dings of a seminar on school-age television promoted by the EBU.

From 1990 to 2000, studies related to children's television viewing were carried out by TVE's Marketing and Television Ratings Research Department, although its bias and aims were now clearly business-oriented given that 1989 saw the end of TVE's television broadcasting monopoly. Currently, this department continues to produce reports of a technical nature on children's television ratings drawn

> In the light of the results obtained in this study, it can be stated that TVE alone among Spain's television networks is the only company that has contributed research that aims to raise the standards of television for children. Nevertheless, some researchers (Mayugo, 2002:42-48) have been demanding alternative, quality children's programming and a new role for public television along the same lines as other European networks whose models should be taken into account. Although TVE's contribution to the debate on the need for community media literacy has been highlighted throughout this article, the public state network has declined to get involved in the various European initiative proposals on this issue in recent years.

up using audiometric data supplied by companies such as Kantar Media or EGM (General Media Study). Since 2000, research has been taken over by the «RTVE Institute», its training center.

3.1.1. The research contribution of public television to the issue of childhood and television between 2000 and 2010

The publication in 2003 of the white paper on «Education and the audiovisual environment» by the «Audiovisual Council of Catalonia» (Pérez-Tornero, 2003) marked a turning point in public television's awareness of the impact of television viewing on minors.

Following this report by Professor Pérez-Tornero, a reflective trend was set into motion that considered the possibility of reconciling television viewing with the interests of children. This has continued in recent years , from the family mediation perspective (Gabelas & Marta, 2008) and that of child-viewing habits (Pérez-Ornia & Núñez-Ladevéze, 2006:177) and their transformation in recent years (López-Vidales, González & Medina, 2010: 97-130).

Public state television has played an active part in this tendency since its beginning. To this end, TVE organized the national forum on «Family, Minors, Education and Television» in 2004, which yielded two decalogues on «good television practice», for chil-

> We propose collaboration between the public networks and universities to redesign programming content for TVE's «Clan» channel, with the intention of transforming it into a truly educational channel, as well as research aimed at minors and adolescents which might fulfill one of the main purposes of the public television service: the education and training of a discerning community.

dren and for parents, which had been drawn up earlier in joint working sessions between researchers and media professionals. The evaluation by participants in this collaboration indicated a clear need for change in the face of growing social alarm surrounding children's television viewing. Concern arose out of the scarcity of children's programming, inappropriate contents for minors broadcast by the networks and, especially, the long hours spent by children in front of the TV. Expert research had shown that children's television viewing took place mainly in the evening, a time when programming content was inappropriate for their age.

Shortly thereafter, the outcry from organizations such as the «Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs' National Observatory of Television for Infants» forced television companies to take notice of the problem. The outcome was the signing of the «Self-Regulatory Code on Television Content and Infancy» on December 9, 2004. Public state television not only subscribed to the agreement, but also made a commitment to further its work in favor of quality children's television.

3.1.2. From priority children's television content to sensitive content

In 2005, «Televisión Española», in collaboration with the «Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs», carried out a research project aimed at detecting the type of children's content being broadcast by Spanish networks, and to propose guidelines for programmers. It dealt with defining the preferred content and priority values that quality children's programming should possess. The results of the investigation were published by the «RTVE Institute» under the title of «Infant Television Programming: orientation and priority content» (Del-Río & Román, 2005), which was coordinated by Miguel del Río, co-author of the «Pigmalión Report» (Álvarez & Del-Río & Del-Río, 2003). The contents were presented at the «National Forum on «Infancy, Television and Education» organized in June 2005 by the «RTVE Institute» and the «Directorate General of Families and Infancy». The forum included representatives from the main networks and the most prestigious researchers in this field.

Also in 2005, the «RTVE Institute» organized the «Young People, Drugs and Communication» forum in collaboration with the «Foundation for Assistance in the Fight against Drug Addiction». The resulting report, as agreed by the participating researchers and called «Proposals for Action on How to Use Information about Young People and Drugs» was published by RTVE (several authors, 2005: 3-15).

In 2006, a new and powerful electronic rival to television emerged: the video game (García-Galer, 2006: 8-13). This inspired public television broadcasters to hold a national forum on «Television, Video Games and Infancy in a Multiscreen Society» in May 2006, at which the proposal arose to create a decalogue of instructions to guide families in the proper use of video games and other screen media.

In November 2007, the public state television's scientific contribution was presented at the «International Forum to «Educate our Ways of Viewing. Proposals on How to Watch Television» promoted by the «RTVE Institute», «Grupo Comunicar» and the «Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs' Directorate General of Families and Infancy», which considered

the proposal for useful guidelines for much-needed media literacy and for a conscientious viewing of children's television content. The forum's scientific contribution was reflected in issue n. 31 of the journal «Comunicar», as well as in the publication of «Educating our Ways of Viewing», edited by IORTVE and «Grupo Comunicar» (Aguaded, 2007).

Nowadays, as a result of all of these contributions by public television, its professionals can count on a series of recommendations for producing content that also guarantee the rights of minors. Hence, in June 2010 TVE unanimously approved its Style Book in which, the section on the media and sensitive content dedicates an epigraph to children that refers to standard guidelines for its professionals, its aim being to manage content for children and their rights on public television in an appropriate manner (RTVE, 2010: 52).

3.1.3. TVE in the debate on children and television

Over the last ten years, public state radio & television has been collaborating with other institutions which have promoted research on the relationship between minors and the screen media, such as the «Observatory of the Directorate General of Families and Infancy», the Ministry of Education's working groups on educational television and the various audiovisual councils. For informational purposes, we should highlight the work carried out in collaboration with the Audiovisual Council of Navarra to create awareness and promote research on issues related to children and television. This collaboration gave birth to the «Learning How to Watch TV» campaign with performances for schools, teachers and parents in that region, and in which TVE professionals took part.

Also noteworthy are other campaigns for children's rights promoted by state television. The latest was announced at the end of 2011 with the slogan «Our Commitment to Infancy». However, campaigns for literacy and awareness of healthy children's viewing of TVE programming could already be seen as far back as the 1970s and '80s. In 1988, for instance, the publicity firm «Contrapunto» conducted a campaign for this network called «Learning How to Watch Television» starring the famous dog, Pipín.

3.2. Regional public television research on children and television

The differing business structures of regional broadcasting companies and their coexistence, or not, with regional audiovisual councils, has determined the contribution of these networks to research on children and television.

3.2.1. Canal Sur

Aside from studies from a business perspective of children's ratings using audiometric data, some interesting proposals for dealing with children and television have emerged from Andalusia's regional television broadcaster. Its Style Book includes the commitment of journalists at Canal Sur to children, in line with United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child and other legal texts which have been adapted to the network's output (Canal Sur, 2004: 42). It should be emphasized that Canal Sur was one of the first television networks to incorporate these children's rights in its Style Book.

Nevertheless, this public broadcaster does not currently prioritize research on children and television, which is now mainly carried out by the existence of Audiovisual Council of Andalusia (www.consejoaudiovisualdeandalucia.es), although the network often collaborates with its investigations and with other research projects run by the regional government's Observatory of Infancy. Some of this research can be found in its website repository.

3.2.2. «Televisión de Cataluña» (TV3)

Despite being the leading regional network due to its size and its screen quota, the same considerations are applicable to TV3 as Canal Sur. Research on children and television in the region is led by the «Audiovisual Council of Catalonia» (CAC) the oldest media watchdog in Spain rather than by the Catalonian public television broadcaster. Nevertheless, the Department of Children's Programming at TV3 often collaborates with universities and the CAC, contributing evaluation and content for analysis. In addition, TV3's Style Book(«Manual d'ús») devotes an epigraph to children's programming content and the values that should guide television programme production aimed at minors. In 2011, TV3's children's programming department joined in the design of educational formats for television through the «Educlip» Project, in which the «Departament of Education» of the Generalitat (regional government) and several Catalonian universities are currently taking part. All research carried out by the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia' can be found on its website (www.cac.cat) in the «Recerca i Quaderns del CAC» section..

3.2.3. Other regional companies and a new generation of regional networks

At the three remaining networks that broadcast in their own regional languages – Euskadi, Comunidad Valenciana and Galicia, research on children related to television is limited to the consumption and evalua-

tion of data supplied by audiometric companies. Although it is true that these regions do not have their own audiovisual councils, they do have universities that generate research on this subject (López-Sánchez, Tur & García del Castillo, 2010: 553-560).

For their part, the regional networks that emerged after 2000 and which are defined as «low cost» models, RTPA, Canal Extremadura, etc., do not consider research to be one of their main goals. However, as public television broadcasters, children's rights and respect for child-safe viewing times are among their objectives.

The rest of the regional television broadcasters – Telemadrid, Castilla-LaMancha TV, etc., have made no notable contributions to research on the issue of children and television either.

3.3. Private networks and children from a research perspective

Since their creation in 1989, Spain's private networks have not shown any particular interest in the relationship between children and the screen media. The issue of children was not even included as a goal in their proposal for the creation of the «National Audiovisual Media Council», which never got off the ground (Del-Corral, 2006). Despite signing up to the «Self-Regulatory Code on Television Content and Infancy», according to the results of follow-up work to determine the degree of code compliance by these networks, the impression is that private broadcasting companies only subscribed to these agreements under pressure from the press and society in general rather than because of an apparent concern for the issue. This is backed up by data from institutions such as the «Television Viewers and Radio Listeners Association», the «Audiovisual Content Observatory» (OCTA) and the Rey Juan Carlos university. Furthermore, media convergence is not helping to improve matters. Regular viewing of conventional television content by minors, either on the Internet or through television network streaming, has further complicated self-regulatory code compliance (García-Torres, 2008: 61-67). Nevertheless, in spite of non-compliance, some networks (Tele5) have made children the focus of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts. Network content with a social interest, as in the «12 months, 12 causes» campaign which included children is one rare example.

The UTECA association, which represents the interests of the private networks in Spain, has promoted occasional research proposals, the majority from a legal perspective (Fuente-Cobo, 2010: 279-295). The most prominent work presented by UTECA has been the «Report on the Assessment of TVE Compliance» which was researched by the «Institute for the Study of Democracy» in 2008 (Núñez-Ladevéze, 2010). One of the aspects analyzed in this report was that of child-safe viewing hours. The study concluded that «La 2» was in full compliance whereas some «TVE-1» programme compliance was questionable.

4. Discussion and conclusion

In the light of the results obtained in this study, it can be stated that TVE alone among Spain's television networks is the only company that has contributed research that aims to raise the standards of television for children. Nevertheless, some researchers (Mayugo, 2002:42-48) have been demanding alternative, quality children's programming and a new role for public television along the same lines as other European networks whose models should be taken into account. Although TVE's contribution to the debate on the need for community media literacy has been highlighted throughout this article, the public state network has declined to get involved in the various European initiative proposals on this issue in recent years.

Having abandoned the idea of creating a «National Audiovisual Media Council» that would safeguard, as was planned (García Castillejo, 2011), a healthy relationship between minors and television, and given the fact that content supervision is ever more difficult due to content broadcast on the web, a greater commitment to quality content and media literacy for minors is needed from the networks. This is especially true when we take into account that it would seem that self-regulation has not exactly yielded the results expected in Spain. It is essential that the networks collaborate with research already being carried out on concrete proposals in this area (Ferrés & Piscitelli, 2012: 75-82; Aguaded & Sánchez-Carrero, 2008: 293-308), or that they work on similar experiences being promoted throughout Europe (Pérez-Tornero & Paredes & al., 2010: 85-100).

The public state television broadcaster must follow the lead of other European networks, such as the BBC (García-Matilla, 2005: 33-44), and get involved in media education for a responsible use of television, as well as for the reestablishment of viewing hours specifically for children and different youth age groups. We propose collaboration between the public networks and universities to redesign programming content for TVE's «Clan» channel, with the intention of transforming it into a truly educational channel, as

well as research aimed at minors and adolescents which might fulfill one of the main purposes of the public television service: the education and training of a discerning community.

The contribution of TVE to the consideration of priority content and values in children's television programming has already been highlighted. However, this same research should also include child-oriented advertising on TV along the lines of other studies dealing with values in TV advertising aimed at adults (Rausell-Köster & Espinar & al., 2009: 109-136). The fact that TVE is not, at the moment, subjected to market pressures guarantees that the proposal is based on positive values for children.

This article has also touched on the scarcity of scientific contributions of regional networks regarding children's viewing, and that in those regions where audiovisual councils exist it is these institutions that have to fill the research gap. This should not strike us as odd considering that the financial constraints at these regional networks impede research. It would be interesting to discover to what extent the regional audiovisual councils themselves or the recession have contributed to this lack of research. In any case, the close involvement of these networks in television policies in favor of children is essential, since it is only by taking the demands for quality children television to heart that the networks can contribute to responsible television viewing.

As for the private networks, it is noted that business interests take precedence over those of children. Their negligible interest in the relationship between minors and television is in need of a thorough motivational study. In the meantime, users and researchers retain the negative impression from research on compliance with the «Self-Regulatory Code on Content» by these private networks that demonstrate carelessness in their treatment of child-safe viewing hours (Ruiz-San-Román & Salguero, 2008; Fernández & López, 2011).

The DTT in Spain brought about more hours of child programming, as well as channels that specialize in this specific target group, such as «Clan» TV or Catalonia's «Canal Super 3». Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean better quality or a greater commitment to research. A commitment to quality children's content on the part of the independent DTT suppliers could be an area for future investigation.

Therefore, it would appear that there is sufficient evidence to state that, when television networks are faced with constant criticism for their disinterest in children, at least there is a certain predisposition on the

part of public television to progress towards better television content for young people. Moreover, in spite of the general criticism of non-compliance with the «Self-Regulatory Code on Content», especially on the part of the private networks, and in spite of the poor quality of some programming, we can confirm that, slowly but surely, the quality of content for children is improving (Tur & Grande, 2009: 33-59). For this reason, it is essential that we exercise clear judgment when dealing with the networks, keeping in mind the diversity of the initiatives undertaken by the companies in the sector, although it is evident that there is still a long way to go.

In short, our proposal can be summed up as follows: to foster collaboration between television companies and universities; to research advertising aimed at minors; to study the reasons behind the lack of research by the private networks; to analyze the level of commitment to quality on the part of content suppliers; and to study the audiovisual councils' contribution to this line of research.

References

AGUADED, J.I. & SÁNCHEZ-CARRERO, J. (2008). Niños y adolescentes tras el visor de la cámara: experiencias de alfabetización audiovisual. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico, 14*, 293-308.

AGUADED, J.I. (Ed.) (2007). *Educar la mirada: propuestas para ver la televisión*. CD. Madrid: IORTV / Grupo Comunicar.

ÁLVAREZ, A., DEL-RÍO, M. & DEL RÍO, P. (2003). El efecto Pigmalión en televisión: Orientaciones propuestas sobre la influencia de la televisión en la infancia. *Red Digital, 3*. (http://reddigital.cnice.mec.es/6/Articulos/articulo_resumen.php?articulo=6) (10-05-2012).

CANAL SUR (Ed.) (2004). *Menores de edad*. *Libro de Estilo de Canal Sur*. (www.canalsur.es) (23-12-2011).

DEL-CORRAL, J. (2006). La industria televisiva comercial y las autoridades reguladoras. *Telos, 68*, 103-105.

DEL-RÍO, M. & ROMÁN, M. (2005). *Programación infantil de televisión: orientaciones y contenidos prioritarios*. Madrid: IORTV.

FERRÉS, J. & PISCITELLI A. (2012). La competencia mediática: Propuesta articulada de dimensiones e indicadores. *Comunicar, 38*, 75-82. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C38-2012-02-08).

FERNÁNDEZ-MARTÍNEZ, A., LÓPEZ-DE-AYALA & LÓPEZ, M.C. (2011). Televisión e Infancia: cinco años después del código de autorregulación. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social, 66*, 31-62 (DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-66-2011-923-031-062).

FUENTE-COBO, C. (2010). La protección de la infancia en la nueva ley audiovisual: hacia un modelo de responsabilidad distribuida. In UTECA (Ed.), *La televisión en España. Informe 2010*. (pp. 279-295). Madrid: CIEC.

GABELAS, J.A. & MARTA, C. (2008). *Consumo y mediaciones de familias y pantallas. Nuevos modelos y propuestas de convivencia*. Zaragoza: Gobierno de Aragón.

GARCÍA, F. (2009). El mare nostrum digital: Mito, ideología y realidad de un imaginario sociotécnico. *Icono, 14*, 7-1, 7-30.

GARCÍA-CASTILLEJO, A. (2011). El Consejo Estatal de Medios Audiovisuales de España. Más de un año esperando la puesta en marcha. *Textual & Visual Media, 4*, 45-64. (www. textualvisualmedia.es/index.php/es/archivo/14) (10/03/2012).

GARCÍA-DE-TORRES, E. (2008). El uso de los nuevos medios por la audiencia infantil y juvenil. Tendencias de la investigación en Internet como sinónimo de convergencia mediática y tecnológica. *IX Congreso de Periodismo Digital*. Huesca (http://noveno.congresoperiodismo.com) (02-04-2012).

GARCÍA-GALERA, C. (2006). ¿Qué conocen los padres de los videojuegos de sus hijos? *Icono, 14*, 7. (www.icono14.net). (03/03/2010).

GARCÍA-MATILLA, A. (2005). Por una televisión para la educación en sintonía multimedia. *Comunicar, 25*, 33-44.

LARSEN, H. (2010). Legitimation Strategies of Public Service Broadcasters: The Divergent Rhetoric in Norway and Sweden. *Media, Culture & Society, 32*, 267-283. (DOI: 10.1177/0163443709355610).

LIVINGSTONE, S.; HADDON, L.; GORZIG, A. & OLAFSSON, K. (2010). *Risks and Safety on the Internet: The Perspective of European Children. Initial Findings*. London: LSE, EU Kids Online.

LÓPEZ-SÁNCHEZ, C.; TUR VIÑES, V. & GARCÍA DEL CASTILLO J.A. (2010). Evaluación del protagonista-antagonista en los contenidos audiovisuales dirigidos a la infancia en cadenas de televisión españolas. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social, 65*. (www.revistalatinacs.org/10/art3/918_Alicante/40_Tur.html) (11/05/2012). (DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-65-2010-918-553-560).

LÓPEZ-VIDALES, N.; GONZÁLEZ, P. & MEDINA E. (2010). Jóvenes y televisión en 2010: un cambio de hábitos. *Zer, 16, 30*, 97-130.

MAYUGO, C.; MOIX, M. & REÑE, S. (2002). Una producció alternativa: la televisió escolar. *Guix, 288*, 42-48.

MILIAN-I-MASANA, A. & PONS, F. (2006). *Informe Comunidades Autónomas. 2006*. Institut Dret Públic, 825-852. (www.idpbarcelona.net/cat/2_recerca/ccaa/estudis.htm) (05/03/2012).

MORENO, J.M. (2007). El Consejo Audiovisual de Andalucía: presente soñado, futuro por construir. *Telos, 71*, (http://sociedadinformacion.fundacion.telefonica.com) (12-03-2012).

NÚÑEZ-LADEVEZE, L. (2010). *Informe para la evaluación del servicio público de TVE*. (www.uteca.com/uteca_contenidos/documentos/Informe_sobre_el_grado_de_cumplimiento_del_servicio_publico_de_TVE.pdf). (20-12-2010).

PEREIRA, S. & PINTO, M. (2011). Making Sense of TV for Children: The Case of Portugal. *The Journal of Media Literacy Education,*

3, 2 (www.jmle.org/index.php/JMLE/article/view/204) (10-01-2012).

PÉREZ-ORNIA, J.R. & NÚÑEZ-LADEVEZE, L. (2006). Lo que ven los niños en televisión. *Zer, 20*, 133-177.

PÉREZ-TORNERO, J.M. (2003). *Libro Blanco: La educación en el entorno audiovisual*. Barcelona: Consejo Audiovisual Cataluña.

PÉREZ-TORNERO, J.M.; PAREDES, M.O & AL. (2010). Trends and Models of Media Literacy in Europe: Between Digital Competence and Critical Understanding. *Anàlisi, 40*, 85-100.

RAUSELL, C., ESPINAR R.E. & AL. (2009). Valores sociales en los spots publicitarios de bebidas emitidos en España en el 2006. *Comunicación y Sociedad, XXII, 1*, 109-136.

RUIZ-SAN-ROMÁN, J.A. & SALGUERO, M. (2008). Tres años de Código de Autorregulación de Contenidos Televisivos e Infancia en España, 2004-07. *Sphera Pública, 8*, 65-81.

RTVE. (2010). *Información sobre contenidos sensibles, 2010. Libro de Estilo RTVE*. Madrid: IORTV.

SEON-KYOUNGAN, A. & DOOHWANG, L. (2010). An Integrated Model of Parental Mediation: The Effect of Family Communication on Children's Perception of Television Reality and Negative Viewing Effects. *Asian Journal of Communication, 20*, 389-403. (DOI: 10.1080/01292986.2010.496864).

STEEMERS, J. & D'ARMA, A. (2012). Evaluating and Regulating the Role of Public Broadcasters in the Children's Media Ecology: The Case of Home-grown Television Content. International Journal of *Media & Cultural Politics, 8*, 67-85. (DOI: 10.1386/macp.8.1.67_1).

TORRECILLAS, T. & DÍAZ-CERVERÓ, E. (Ed.) (2012). L*a protección de la audiencia infantil*. Madrid: Universitas.

TOLSÁ, J. & BRINGUÉ, X. (2012). Leisure, interpersonal relationships, learning and consumption: the four key dimensions for the study of minors and screens. *Comunicación y Sociedad, 1*, 253-288.

TUR, V. & GRANDE, T. (2009). Violencia y prosocialidad en los contenidos televisivos infantiles visionados por menores en Alicante. *Zer, 27*, 33-59.

VARIOS (2005). Propuestas de actuación para el tratamiento de las informaciones sobre jóvenes y drogas. In M. DEL RÍO & M. ROMÁN (Ed.), *Programación infantil de televisión: orientaciones y contenidos prioritarios*. Madrid. IORTV.

● Jair Vega and Andrea Lafaurie
Barranquilla (Colombia) / Barcelona (Spain)

A Children's Observatory of Television: «Observar TV», a Space for Dialogue between Children

«Observar TV»: Un observatorio infantil de televisión para la interlocución de los niños

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of work on «Observar TV», a children's observatory of television launched in the city of Barranquilla (Colombia) in which children participated as protagonists in research, training and spaces for dialogue centred on their observations of television broadcasts. The goals of the project included: 1) to ascertain the reflection and discussion of preferences and opinions (expressed by boys and girls) regarding television; 2) to identify and discuss their imagery around citizenship in relation to coexistence and peace, multiculturalism and democratic responsibility and participation; 3) to understand the development processes that contribute to the construction of their critical thinking abilities regarding television and its consumption; 4) to increase the visibility of children as active participants in setting the public agenda of their city. This study was developed using a participatory action research approach that employed qualitative methods (focus groups, workshops, and observations) for the simultaneous execution of three components: research, training, and visibility/interaction. The results demonstrate that the child participants displayed a critical attitude toward television and expressed their likes and dislikes regarding television content. The participants took up the challenge to discuss, transform, or reaffirm their imagery relating to citizenship and strengthened their capacities in language and communication. The children expressed the reflections that came up in the work of the observatory by participating in the television program «Learning to watch television», that was produced by the regional station «Telecaribe».

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta los resultados de «Observar TV», un observatorio infantil de televisión puesto en marcha en la ciudad de Barranquilla (Colombia) en el que los niños y niñas participantes actuaron como protagonistas de los procesos de investigación, formación e interlocución llevados a cabo. El proyecto apuntó a: 1) La reflexión y discusión de las preferencias y opiniones que niños/as presentaron en relación con la televisión; 2) La identificación e interpelación de sus imaginarios de la ciudadanía alrededor de la convivencia y la paz, la interculturalidad y la participación-responsabilidad democrática; 3) El desarrollo de procesos de formación que contribuyeran a cualificar su capacidad crítica en torno a la televisión y su consumo; 4) La visibilización de los niños/as como interlocutores en la agenda pública de su ciudad. El proceso se desarrolló desde la investigación-acción participativa utilizando técnicas cualitativas (grupos focales, talleres y observación), para la ejecución de tres componentes simultáneos: investigación, formación y visibilización/interacción. Los resultados permitieron constatar que los chicos se presentaron críticos hacia la televisión, dando a conocer sus gustos y disgustos en relación con los contenidos. También que ellos asumieron el reto de discutir, transformar o reafirmar sus imaginarios de ciudadanía, y fortalecieron su capacidad expresiva al vincular las reflexiones surgidas en el observatorio dentro del programa «Aprender a ver TV», del canal regional «Telecaribe».

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Children, television, media literacy, interactivity, critical capacity, imagery of citizenship, school.
Niños, televisión, educación en medios, interactividad, capacidad crítica, imaginarios de ciudadanía, escuela.

◆ Jair Vega-Casanova is Professor and Research Professor of the Department of Social Communication at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla (Colombia) (jvega@uninorte.edu.co).

◆ Andrea Lafaurie-Molina is Professor and Research Professor at the Institute for Studies in Education at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla (Colombia) (andrelafour@gmail.com).

1. Introduction

For many years, research exploring the relationship between television and children has considered the noxious effects of television in terms of passive, easily influenced audiences, which has been supported by a number of studies (Rodríguez, 2005).

However, some researchers have investigated the active and critical capacity of children, viewing them as citizens capable of interpreting and redefining the messages of the media (Ferrés, 1994; López de la Roche & al., 1998; Aguaded, 1999; 2005). Charles and Orozco (1990) maintain that the child viewer is made, not born, which is why it is necessary to generate a critical, reflective and creative attitude in the child that sustains their dynamic role of participating in communication processes through active intervention.

A third approach, which appears to coincide with the research focusing on the critical capacities of children, considers audiences as active citizens and prioritizes efforts to strengthen the visibility of this critical capability in order to generate actions in the public sphere (Alfaro and Quezada, 2006).

However, as argued by Rincón (2008), few investigations of audiences affect the production of media and therefore do not go beyond the identification of the audience/consumer to move towards their transformation to audience/producers.

With respect to the relationships between children, television and citizenship, the results of some studies demonstrate that children tend to use a moralistic discourse, often directly adopted from the family or school environments, when contemplating the notion of being a citizen or evaluating the value of television content as being either good or bad (Vega & Castro, 2006).

Taking this into account, it is argued that space must be provided for the expression, questioning and dialogue of children's imagery around citizenship and that the institutions that influence these values and concepts must be included in the process. In this regard, the design of «Observar TV» was proposed as a children's observatory of television in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia, in which children act as protagonists of research and training processes. This is in direct contrast to observatories of children's television in which adults discuss and criticize the programming and content of television made for children.

The objectives of the «Observar TV» project were: 1) to identify the preferences and opinions of children in relation to television programming; 2) to ascertain the imagery identified by children that they have of citizenship regarding areas such as coexistence and peace, multiculturalism and democratic responsibility and participation; 3) to develop activities for the questioning of this imagery around the concept of citizenship; 4) to develop training processes that develop children's critical abilities with regard to television and its consumption; and 5) to create spaces and networks that foster dialogue and meaningful interaction among children regarding television content and to raise awareness of children as active citizens in the public agenda of their city.

1.1. Questioning of imagery around citizenship

A review of the literature reveals few studies involving children's imagery of citizenship and even fewer that prioritize research on how children develop these concepts or emphasise the child population in this area. The few studies identified suggest that these concepts play a key role in defining coexistence and citizenship. For children, the collective images that they construct of what it means to be a citizen constitute a reference for their individual actions. These studies emphasize the role that television and other media play in the configuration of imagery around citizenship (Vega & García, 2008).

This interpretation is based on the concept(s) of imagery developed by Pintos (2000), who describes these imagery as «socially constructed schemas that allow us to perceive something as real, explain it and to actively intervene in what each social system considers as reality». It is also based on discussions regarding the meaning of citizenship presented by Pineda (1999), who considers the roles of individuals and communities versus the roles of power, the State, and development. Based on the classical formulation introduced by Hobbes, the citizen is identified as a subject or beneficiary who uncritically assumes the determinations of the State and the government on understanding that he or she, by yielding to governmental power without question, will receive the benefits of being a citizen of the State. From the liberal point of view, the main proponent of which is John Locke, citizenship is recognized as the participation of citizens on equal terms under the law, which grants them rights and responsibilities; the citizen participates in governmental decisions, while the rulers are subject to the control, judgment, and approval of the citizens. The empowerment approach, classically defended by Rousseau, criticizes the alleged equality of citizens before the law and the conditions of their participation. Therefore this approach argues that individuals must be turned into subjects of power (Mouffe, 1999).

Regarding the questioning of imagery, Buenfil

(Vega & Mendivil, 2012: 447) argues that in the practice of questioning, the agent becomes an active subject, capable of incorporating new evaluative, behavioural or conceptual elements to radically transform their daily practice or make a more fundamental reassertion. In specific work carried out with young people, these authors defined the questioning of their imagery as «the discussion of the assumptions, in the formulation of the question or statement that gives visibility to that hidden behind what is conceived as the truth». As such, they promoted the questioning of this imagery and their implications through collective dialogical processes.

In «Observar TV», imagery regarding citizenship were considered in relation to the following citizenship competencies defined by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia (2004): coexistence and peace, interculturality, and democratic participation and responsibility. Competencies in coexistence and peace proposed the need to assess citizenship in terms of coexistence with and acceptance of the differences of others, exercising freedom of choice and assuming individual and collective responsibilities. The intercultural competencies were based on understanding pluralistic societies in which differences are celebrated positively as an element in the affirmation of identities (Mouffe, 1999). The competencies required for democratic participation and responsibility were related to the model for the construction of citizenship, which is based on empowerment derived from the creation and strengthening of scenarios for debate and discussion.

1.2. Media education for children

Discussions surrounding media literacy date back to the 1960s, from which time there has been a strong protectionist element, linked to the need to counter undesirable attitudes or behaviors promoted by mass media, comparing its lack of cultural values with those promoted by art or classical literature. The media was believed to exert negative influences on children and young people, who were vulnerable to being manipulated. Teachers who were considered to be safe from the unhealthy influence of the media and were aware of its intentions were thus called upon to provide tools that protected and liberated their students.

More recent perspectives have warned about the limitations of such protectionist concepts and have chosen to see the different types of media as complex cultural entities that are relevant for audiences that possess autonomy, critical thinking, capacity to make decisions and engage in participation (Buckingham, 2005). This perspective views media education as a process implies the critical comprehension of texts in the wider social context and the factors involved in the production of content.

> The design of «Observar TV» was proposed as a children's observatory of television in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia, in which children act as protagonists of research and training processes. This is in direct contrast to observatories of children's television in which adults discuss and criticize the programming and content of television made for children.

Buckingham also notes that criticism should not be limited to discovering deficiencies in the media, as this line of reasoning would degenerate into an exercise of mechanically repeating the politically correct opinions of those possessing the knowledge of ideological and economic mechanisms. In other words, criticism should not be considered as «cultural capital» (Bourdieu, 1984), which differentiates between people considered capable of revealing the bad intentions of the media (teachers, parents, adults, gifted students) and those deemed to be incapable of realizing the detrimental effects of the media (regular students). Instead, it is argued that critical training should start from the presumption that children are aware of the role that the media plays in their daily existence.

Therefore, as experienced users of media and technologies, children possess the experience, knowledge, and enjoyment necessary for the comprehension, critical assessment and creative production through their participation in educational models in which the various forms of media are understood as spaces of cultural expression.

1.3 Children as audiences and interactivity

Since the beginning of this century, when children and young people were identified as digital natives (Prensky, 2001), several assumptions have been made concerning children and young people's use of media and the relationships they form with these technologies. These include a greater willingness to use and interact and be active within the participation options provided by the media and technology.

as well as the study of perceptions of audiences and producers in relation to interactivity. This has placed emphasis on a technological perspective that focuses on the analysis of interactive communication processes and their implications. In the area of research with children and young people, interactivity has been mainly viewed as a component of communication that supports the achievement of specific goals (Masterman & Rogers, 2002; Chang & al., 2010; Dezuanni & Monroy-Hernández, 2012), or as a particular category within the generic consumption of media. This focus has observed the children and young people's development in carrying out concrete actions: sending, mails, voting online, exchanging information and ideas, creating content, etc. (Livingstone & al., 2005; Aikat, 2005).

In this sense, considering the possibilities of interactivity implies differentiating the widened, dispersed and pre-recorded consumption promoted by today's media and digital technologies (i.e., the ability to download materials at will and the resulting freedom of choice regarding when, how, and where to watch content and

> To identify the children's imagery concerning citizenship in the areas coexistence and peace, interculturality and democratic participation and responsibility, a baseline was established at the beginning of the process with a final evaluation carried out eight months later. The evaluation process was carried out using a memory reconstruction exercise known as «patchwork quilt». This technique involves participants drawing pictures in response to an inquiry about a particular life situation or an image based on that experience.

However, some authors have warned against such widespread optimism and advise that it is worth considering that complete access to technology is far from desirable to all sectors of society. Even more importantly, these authors insist that participating as an active and proactive audience within the digital culture is still not a generalized situation. There are different explanations for this idea, including that 1) Time is required for a such a cultural change to occur; 2) Audiences are used to being timid and do not express opinions as a consequence of the privileged vertical position that the mass media has held for many decades; 3) That the educational system has focussed more on developing reading competencies that writing skills, a practice that can translate into the supremacy of training for reception over training in the capacity for self-expression (Orozco & al., 2012).

Koolstra & Bos (2009) note that research on interactivity, which has been popular since the 1980s, has been characterized by the identification of interactive properties in the media and communication processes

react, chat, play, etc.) from the productive, innovative, and transcendent processes through which recipients can actually place themselves as broadcasters/producers of content, representing a distinct form of dialogue based on reflection and discussion (Orozco & al., 2012).

This latter context accommodates the concept of human agency introduced by Guiddens and cited by Muñoz and Muñoz (2008), which states that all individuals have the potential to self-manage their own existence, contributing to their socialization and finding of meaning in the living world through their own individual creativity and cultural production. Thus, human agency is a fundamental axis in the configuration of the cultural citizenship of different groups, including children and young people, whose presence results in being highly significant within cultural entities such as the mass media.

2. Material and methods

«Observar TV»[1] was developed in 2008 in five public and private schools from upper, middle and

lower socioeconomic levels in the city of Barranquilla and involved the participation of 80 fourth and fifth grade children of both gender[2] aged between 7 and 11 years as well as 5 teachers, one from each school. Through participatory action research approach that employed qualitative techniques, three simultaneous components were implemented: research, training, and socialization.

The research component first involved collecting, through focus groups, children's opinions on television, specifically regarding quality and their preferences for consumption. To identify the children's imagery concerning citizenship in the areas coexistence and peace, interculturality and democratic participation and responsibility, a baseline was established at the beginning of the process with a final evaluation carried out eight months later. The evaluation process was carried out using a memory reconstruction exercise known as «patchwork quilt». This technique involves participants drawing pictures in response to an inquiry about a particular life situation or an image based on that experience. According to Riaño (2000), this process allows researchers to go beyond simple opinions because it enables specific situations to be constructed and interpreted by individuals as well as collectively by the group.

The training component was developed via analysis of the research around the opinions and preferences regarding television consumption and the imagery around citizenship through the use of workshops on media education (critical reading, regulations, scripts, production, and postproduction). These sessions supported participants to develop skills in the reflection, discussion, and questioning of imagery concerning citizenship, violence, conflict, power and authority, gender, the stereotypes of different population groups and sexual orientation. The development of these processes allowed the children to consolidate positions from which they can interact with their media based on their own perspective as child citizens. Children had the opportunity to create scripts for their own audiovisual stories related to each group of competencies.

The socialization and interaction component permitted the dissemination of the outcomes of the processes, making children valid spokespeople in the public agenda of the city. Their opinions were included in «Aprender a ver TV» (Learning to Watch TV), a program that creates a space for the expression of audience opinions for the Telecaribe regional television channel[3]. Five videos were created in which children shared the reflections and discussions that were expressed by participants in the observatory[4].

3. Results

The main results are summarized below. First, the opinions and preferences that children formed regarding their consumption of television are discussed. Subsequently, the initial imagery expressed by the children are described, as well as the questioning of this imagery relating to citizenship competencies in the areas of coexistence and peace, interculturality, and democratic participation and responsibility.

3.1. Opinions and preferences

In regards to the opinions and preferences expressed by the students who participated in the study, both boys and girls demanded quality television characterized by the following elements: a) inclusive programming in which multiple formats for the child audience are explored, given that the children perceived a lack of quality programming in this area and also that they were saturated with imported cartoons and series; b) proper construction of characters, as the children stated that they became bored with characters who remain good or bad throughout the storyline and preferred characters more closely related to themselves with daily problems and capable of making mistakes; c) a combination of content and style in which education is combined with entertainment as the children felt many programs containing educational content were boring; and d) an adaptation of schedules given that the children felt that current programming did not consider their school, leisure, and extra-curricular activities and schedules as relevant programs were broadcasted at times when they were not available to watch TV.

Regarding regulations around their television-watching, the children stated that their parents forbade them to watch programs that were considered violent[5]. However, regarding some of these restrictions the children stated that they would like their parents to view these programs with them and explain the reasons why the parents feel that these programs are not appropriate. This desire stemmed from the children's beliefs that they were being prohibited from watching something without the parents actually knowing the content of the program. The children also expressed their desire to engage in more dialogue when they watch television and to negotiate who has possession of the remote control in family spaces.

The children indicated that their parents generated feelings of guilt associated with television viewing because their parents often associated television viewing with detrimental effects on the children's academic performance, thus presenting education and entertainment as two antagonistic components.

3.2. Imagery of citizenship in relation to television

Regarding the imagery that the children have around citizenship, the term «Before» refers to the baseline at the beginning of participation in the Observatory and the term «Redefinition» refers to information obtained after the processes of questioning imagery and media education.

3.2.1. Imagery regarding coexistence and peace

In «Before», boys and girls defined violent people according to character stereotypes propagated on television or news programs, including: «burglars»; «street kids» «guerrillas» and «paramilitaries»[6]. They associated violent spaces with images of danger seen on television, such as dark, lonely, and/or bad-smelling places inhabited by poor people where fights, robberies, murders and violence occur. The children also linked violence with the presence of weapons or physical aggression, classifying certain programs as violent, which they said they did not watch, following the regulations decreed by their teachers or guardians. In addition, the children considered conflict to be a negative situation that implies fights and violent acts. They stated that conflict could be resolved by eliminating contrary positions through agreements reached through the intervention of recognized authorities such as police or politicians.

The activities carried out for the redefinition of this imagery revealed that the children involved in this study were critical of the news services for prioritizing violence in connection with armed conflicts. However, these same children did not refer to other types of violence (such as verbal abuse) that exist in different contexts of everyday life. The children also began to assess con-

flicts as expressions of contrary positions that do not necessarily require resolution through agreements. In addition, these children valued the depiction of conflicts between television characters as an opportunity to learn about negotiation and/or amicable resolutions in which the dissenters agree to disagree.

3.2.2. Imagery pertaining to interculturality

In the «Before» phase, the children mentioned that television often presents «cachacos» as hard working and intelligent, while «costeños» are presented as happy, irresponsible and «corronchas»[7]. Colombia is also portrayed as a dangerous country that exports drugs and is inferior to countries such as the United States.

Regarding gender, the children felt that female television characters were portrayed as weak, vain, and generally working as housewives, while male characters were often working men who occupied high powered jobs positions. Regarding sexual orientations, the children felt that television depicts gay people ridiculously, always in occupations relating to beauty (i.e., stylists or managers of beauty queens), and that lesbians are more often represented as «butches» that act more like men than women.

The redefinition of imagery pertaining to multiculturalism revealed well-founded critical positions expressed by the children. For example, they noted that the racial differences presented on television increase the division between white and black people and that gender and sexual orientation are strongly stereotyped by television characters that are not necessarily representative of these identities.

Some scripts proposed by boys and girls demonstrated an interest in stories in which the characters are far removed from existing stereotypes and fight to be recognized based on their real-life differences. For instance, some girls proposed having overweight television presenters.

3.2.3. Imagery regarding democratic participation and responsibility

During the «Before» phase, children associa-

Before	Redefinition of imagery
- Associating violence with characters considered bad in terms of the media's good versus bad stereotypes.	- Critical view of characters represented as stereotypically good or bad. - Non-stereotyped construction of these characters through their own stories.
- Associating violence with weapons and physical aggression. - Associating violent spaces with stereotypically dangerous places (dark, lonely, bad-smelling, and inhabited by poor people) where fights, robberies and murders occur. - Labeling programs as «violent» based on depictions of physical assaults, consumption of drugs or use of weapons.	- Recognition of different types of violence, such as verbal abuse instead of only defining it as physical violence exclusively related to armed conflict. - Recognition that violence occurs in many forms in non-stereotypical areas, such as in the home, at school, at work, etc.
- Associating conflict with negative situations (fights and violent acts) resulting from contrary positions.	- Assessment of conflict as something that is a part of having different opinions and that it is neither positive nor negative in itself. - Assessment of the presence of conflict in television programs in terms of what can be learned from them regarding negotiation and analysis of real-life situations.
- Resolving conflicts by agreements resulting from the interventions of public authorities such as police or politicians.	- Acceptance that conflict does not necessarily lead to agreement and that contrary positions may persist.

Table 1. Imagery Regarding Coexistence and Peace.

ted good citizens with characters that have strong moral values such as solidarity, respect, obedience, responsibility, kindness, tolerance and environmental sensitivity. In contrast, the children associated bad citizens with characters who appeared to antagonize good citizens by being rude, rebellious, aggressive, violent, irresponsible, and/or greedy. Citizen participation was conceived as the ability to vote in an electoral process or attend protest marches.

Regarding the redefinition of imagery, it was observed that the children began to value other attributes of citizenship, such as empowerment, criticism, and the ability to argue after participating in the Observatory processes. They also began to question those characters that represent authority. Although some programs often show policemen as heroes, policemen can also behave badly toward citizens. Children began to consider the concept that policemen may take action according to their personal interests and convictions instead of working for the good of society on the whole.

4. Discussion

The results of the «Observar TV» project demonstrate that boys and girls are critical of television programming and are willing to express their likes, dislikes, opinions, and preferences in this regard. However, the mediation provided by families and schools for children's television viewing are either absent, limited, or counterproductive because they rely on prohibitions, threats, and punishments. Regarding such restrictive mediation of their television viewing habits, these children say they would like to watch television with their parents (accompanied mediation) and engage in dialogue with their parents regarding the content that they can or can not watch (active mediation) (Potter, 1998).

The research constituted a particularly relevant process in that it supported children to develop an awareness of their own

imagery regarding coexistence and peace, interculturality, and democratic participation and responsibility. Additionally, the questioning process amongst themselves generated reflection through which they substantiated or transformed their opinions. Along with knowledge of their preferences in relation to watching television, this created raw material for their interactions as producers and protagonists of content broadcast on the Telecaribe regional television channel.

Among the opinions defended in the videos produced in the «Aprender a Ver TV» programs, children expressed their likes and dislikes in relation to television, what should constitute quality television programming and the need to value conflict as an important part of peaceful coexistence and rejecting negotiated agreements as the only resolution available (Mouffe, 1999). They were also critical of the media's stereotypical representations regarding representations of urban and regional populations, the differences between men and women and characters with non-traditional sexual orientations. In addition, these children recognized criticism and argumentation as essential characteristics of citizen participation, suggesting a new understanding of citizenship coinciding with an empowerment-based perspective (Pineda, 1999).

Thus the boys and girls who participated in the «Observar TV» project appear well equipped to meet the challenge of interacting with television demonstrating their critical capacity as active audiences and their capacity for self-expression as content producers in contexts that enable a horizontal dialogue (Orozco & al. 2012). These children particularly value the spaces

Before	Redefinition of imagery
- In the context of national television, associating people from the centre of the country with mostly positive stereotypes and those from the regions with negative stereotypes.	- Strengthening of arguments regarding the unfair and stereotypical representation of characters on television, particularly that the people living in the interior of the country are not necessarily intelligent workers and that those from the coast are not all irresponsible and illiterate.
- Internationally, Colombia is associated with negative stereotypes (depicted as a dangerous country and an exporter of drugs), while the United States is associated with positive stereotypes (as a country of superior value).	- Reinforcement of criticism regarding Hollywood and Colombian movie stereotypes with respect to the international reputations of the United States and Colombia. - Affirmation of a desire for national programming/stories that are closer to the children's own context rather than those predominantly related to U.S. society.
- Identifying women as weak, vain and often as domestic housewives and identifying men as workers who occupy important roles.	- Disagreement with the portrayal of women on television as superficial, interested, submissive and obedient. - Manifestation of the children's preference for soap operas in which the stereotypical roles of women are redefined, such as in 'Ugly Betty'. - Questioning of why men are not represented as weak or unemployed as is evident in everyday life.
- Identifying television stereotypes of gay people as ridiculous or effeminate.	- Redefinition of the homosexual men as men who like other men, criticising television programs in which gay men are ridiculed.
- Associating lesbians with the 'butch' stereotype, that they display gruff and manly behaviour and desire other women.	- There were no references to the redefinition of lesbians.

Table 2. Imagery Regarding Interculturality.

and processes that provide them with possibilities for reflection and the tools required for their development as interactive audiences. The fact that these children made their opinions public through participating in a television program implies that they can meet the challenge of being coherent (at least among themselves, their peers, their parents, and their teachers) in regards to the relationship they establish with television in their everyday lives, in which their criticism is expressed through the television programs that they choose to watch. This equates to interactivity processes that affect the social fabric which go beyond how the individual interacts with technology.

The project had limitations related to its small sample size, which is why it is recommended that it be extended to other populations for comparative analyses. It is important to note that although a similar initiative was developed in the city of Monteria (Colombia), it was not possible to establish comparisons in all of the categories. Another limitation of the present study is that it is not possible to obtain a complete comparison of the responses of other population groups (television producers, parents, and adults, in general) to the opinions expressed by the children who participated in ««Observar TV» through their videos. As proposed by Ferber and others (2007), having a third party respond to messages publicly expressed by the interaction of two other parties guarantees interactivity. To improve the strategy of the present study, it is proposed that children can be engaged on a more profound level in the production of videos so that they can authentically integrate their own aesthetics and meanings. It is therefore proposed that this initiative be continued through the consolidation of commitments and alliances that place an emphasis on dialogue and debates between citizens that use children's opinions about television as a starting point.

Notes

[1] This observatory was not developed as a centralized organic structure; it was developed as a participatory research exercise designed to validate a methodology for the Children's Observatory of Television.

[2] The methodology of the present study precludes generalizations. References to «children» refer to common outcomes for the entire set of boys and girls participating in the project, regardless of gender, education, socioeconomic status, and type of educational institution.

[3] Telecaribe was the first regional television channel in Colombia and Telecaribe has experience in implementing educational programs. One of its children's productions called «El libro de Sofía» (Sofia's Book) won the India Catalina award for the best children's program in Colombia in 2007. As such, it became a priority to form an alliance with this channel for the «Observar TV» project.

[4] Access to the videos is available via http://www.youtube.com/-channel/UC-yypSIIO0unQdALOY8GAPw.

[5] Among others, «The Simpsons», «Power Rangers», and «Dragon Ball Z».

[6] Definitions of terms are as follows: ratones = thieves; gamines = street children; guerrillas and paramilitaries = two of the armed forces in the Colombian conflict.

[7] The expressions used refer to the following: cachacos = inhabitants of the interior of the country, especially those living in the capital city of Bogotá; costeños = inhabitants of the Caribbean coast; and corronchos = people whose behavior is extroverted and happy.

References

AGUADED, J.I. (1999). *Convivir con la televisión*. Barcelona: Paidós.

AGUADED, J.I. (2005). Enseñar a ver la televisión: una apuesta necesaria y posible. *Comunicar*, 25, 51-55.

AIKAT, D. (2005). *«Click here for fun, games, friends…» Analyses of Media Content Characteristics of Children's Web Sites*. International Communication Association, 2005 Annual Meeting.

ALFARO, R.M. & QUEZADA, A. (2006). *¡Ampay, tele!, niños y adolescentes opinan y juzgan a la televisión peruana*. Lima: Veeduría Ciudadana de la Comunicación Social y la Asociación de Comunicadores Sociales Calandria.

Before	Redefinition of imagery
- Associating good citizens with obedient characters who have high moral values and bad citizens with behaviours that are antagonistic to good citizens.	- Valuing good citizens based on qualities such as empowerment, criticism, intelligence, questioning, and the ability to argue. - Valuing the existence of 'real' characters, meaning people who make mistakes, reflect or are vulnerable, rather than characters who are either extremely 'good' or 'bad'.
- Believing that those responsible for resolving problems are the people in positions of authority and power (police, government officials, bosses, etc.).	- Believing that all citizens can participate in solving their own problems.
- Associating citizen participation with the electoral processes (voting) and attendance at protest marches organized through the mass media.	- Considering citizens as agents that can take action based on their own convictions.

Table 3. Imagery Regarding Democratic Participation and Responsibility.

BOURDIEU, P. (1984). *A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. USA: Harvard College and Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

BUCKINGHAM, D. (2005). *Educación en medios. Alfabetización, aprendizaje y cultura contemporánea*. Barcelona: Paidós.

CHANG, A., CHI, P.Y., MONTFORT, N., BREAZEAL, C. & LIEBERMAN, H. (2010). *Lessons Learned from Designing Children's Interactive Narratives*. The International Conference & Festival of the Electronic Literature Organization.

CHARLES M. & OROZCO, G. (1990). *Educar para la recepción: hacia una lectura crítica de los medios*. México: Trillas.

DEZUANNI, M. & MONROY-HERNÁNDEZ, A. (2012). Prosumidores interculturales: creación de medios digitales globales entre jóvenes. *Comunicar, 38*, 59-66.

FERBER, P., FOLTZ, F. & PUGLIESE, R. (2007). Cyberdemocracy and Online Politics: A New Model of Interactivity. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society, 27*, 391-400.

FERRÉS, J. (1994). Televisión y educación. Barcelona: Paidós.

KOOLSTRA, C. & BOS, M. (2009). The Development of an Instrument to Determine Different Levels of Interactivity. *The International Communication Gazette, 71(5)*, 373-391.

LIVINGSTONE, S., BOBER, M. & HELSPER, E. (2005). Active Participation or Just More Information? Young People's Take-up of Opportunities to Act and Interact on the Internet. *Information, Communication & Society, 8*, 287-314.

LÓPEZ-DE-LA-ROCHE, M., MARTÍN-BARBERO, J., RUEDA, A. & VALENCIA, S. (1998). *Los niños como audiencias*. Colombia: Ministerio de Comunicaciones / Universidad del Valle.

MASTERMAN, E. & ROGERS, Y. (2002). A Framework for Designing Interactive Multimedia to Scaffold Young Children's Understanding of Historical Chronology. *Instructional Science, 30*, 221-241.

MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN NACIONAL (Ed.) (2004). E*stándares básicos de competencias ciudadanas. Guía, 6. Formar para la ciudadanía… ¡sí es posible! Lo que necesitamos saber y saber hacer*. Colombia: MEN.

MOUFFE, C. (1999). *Por una política de identidad democrática*. *Seminario «Globlalización y diferenciación cultural»*; marzo. MACBA-CCCB, 1999. (www.macba.es/antagonismos/castellano/-09_04.html) (05-06-2012).

MUÑOZ, G. & MUÑOZ, D. (2008). La ciudadanía juvenil como ciudadanía cultural: una aproximación teórica desde los estudios culturales. *Revista Argentina de Sociología, 11*, 217-236.

OROZCO, G.; NAVARRO, E. & GARCÍA-MATILLA, A. (2012). Desafíos educativos en tiempos de auto-comunicación masiva: la interlocución de las audiencias. *Comunicar, 38*, 67-74.

PINEDA, N. (1999). *Tres conceptos de ciudadanía para el desarrollo de México*. (www.colson.edu.mx/Estudios%20Pol/Npineda/Estepai2.pdf) (05-06-2012).

PINTOS, J.L. (2000). *Construyendo realidad(es): los imaginarios sociales*. Santiago de Compostela. (http://idd00qmm.eresmas.net/-articulos/medios.htm) (05-06-2012).

POTTER, W. J. (1998). Media Literacy. London: Sage.

PRENSKY, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Inmigrants. On the Horizont, MCB University Press, 5. (www.marcprensky.com/writing/-prensky%20-%20digital%20natives,%20digital%20immigrants%20-%20part1.pdf) (05-03-2011).

RIAÑO, P. (2000). Memorias metodológicas. *Revista de Estudios Sociales, 7*. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 48-60.

RINCÓN, O. (2008). No más audiencias, todos devenimos productores. *Comunicar, 30*, 93-98.

RODRÍGUEZ, A. (2005). Los efectos de la televisión en niños y adolescentes. *Comunicar, 25*.

VEGA, J. & GARCÍA, L.H. (2008). ¿Qué tiene que ver Popeye con la ciudadanía? *Alterfacto, 5*, 21-28. Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia

VEGA, J. & CASTRO, V. (2006). Cuentos ciudadanos. Desarrollo de competencias ciudadanas y reconstrucción de imaginarios de ciudad y ciudadanía, a través del periodismo escolar. *Revista Investigación y Desarrollo, 14(2)*, 330-351.

VEGA, J. & MENDIVIL, C. (2012). jovenHABLAjoven: Lessons Learned about Interpellation, Peer Communication, and Second-generation Edutainment in Sexuality and Gender Projects among Young People. In S. WAISBORD, & R. OBREGÓN (Eds.), *The Handbook of Global Health Communication*. (pp. 444-468). USA: Wiley-Blackwell.

154

● Sue Aran and Miquel Rodrigo
Barcelona (Spain)

The Notion of Violence in Television Fiction: Children's Interpretation

La noción de violencia en la ficción televisiva: la interpretación infantil

ABSTRACT

In this paper we analyse child viewers' interpretation of television violence shown in television programmes specifically aimed at children. The justification for this work is based on the research that considers that more theoretical and empirical studies need to be carried out on the conceptualisation of violence, and about how much violence is legitimised and through what mechanisms such legitimacy is constructed. It is aimed at providing a notion of television violence as interpreted by child television viewers which takes these mechanisms into account. The methodology used is based on an analysis of the content and the dialogue of in-depth interviews conducted with sixteen children under the age of 12 years, after showing them two sequences of television programmes with types and various formalisation of fictional violence. The results, as well as providing a conceptual map of the responses, also show how children define and differentiate different types of violence. We can also verify how their reception process is framed by their cultural history and specific reading and consumption experiences, in which contextual narrative aspects play a very important role in children's interpretation of violence. Thus, the results of this study indicate how children give an unrestricted significance to violence.

RESUMEN

En el presente trabajo se analiza la interpretación de los espectadores infantiles ante la presencia de violencia en la programación televisiva dirigida a la infancia. Su justificación se enmarca en aquellas investigaciones que consideran necesario la realización de más estudios teóricos y empíricos sobre la conceptualización de la violencia, y sobre cuánta violencia se legitima y cuáles son los mecanismos con los que se construye dicha legitimación. El objetivo que se persigue es ofrecer una noción de violencia televisiva según la interpretación de los telespectadores infantiles que tenga en cuenta dichos mecanismos. La metodología utilizada se basa en el análisis de contenido y del discurso de las entrevistas en profundidad efectuadas a dieciséis niños y niñas menores de 12 años, después de mostrarles dos secuencias de la programación televisiva con tipos y formalización diversa de violencia de ficción. Los resultados, además de ofrecer un mapa conceptual sobre las respuestas, indican cómo niños y niñas definen y diferencian distintos tipos de violencia. También se puede constatar cómo su proceso de recepción está enmarcado por una historia cultural y por unas prácticas concretas de lectura y consumo, en las que los aspectos narrativos contextuales tienen un gran protagonismo en la interpretación infantil de la violencia. Así, los resultados de la investigación señalan cómo niños y niñas dan a la violencia una significación de carácter no restringido.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Representation, interpretation, children, fiction, television, violence, content analysis, interviews.
Representación, interpretación, infancia, ficción, televisión, violencia, análisis de contenido, entrevistas.

◆ Dr. Sue Aran-Ramspott is Research Professor of the Blanquerna Faculty of Communication and International Relations at the University of Ramon Llull in Barcelona (Spain) (suear@blanquerna.url.edu).
◆ Dr. Miquel Rodrigo-Alsina is Professor of the Faculty of Communication and Director of the Communication Department at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona (Spain) (miquel.rodrigo@upf.edu).

1. Introduction

Concern about violence is a discourse that runs through our society and that relates to collective sensitivity, to social pathos. The very notion of violence changes over time and according to the subject of enunciation. Like so many other constructs, it is the result of a social convention subject to negotiation by the various political and social forces. Although the research community is not unanimous, many scholars refer to aggression as a biological basis of human activity, whereas the notion of violence is formed by an attitude due to the intervention of cultural factors. From a psychological perspective, Bandura's social learning theory (1977) enables us to understand aggression as a learned behaviour which can be positively or negatively reinforced. From sociology, Elias (1977) provides us with the evocative image of the taming of impulses in parallel to the process of civilisation. Meanwhile, the historian Chesnais (1982) refers to the «secular process of moral transformation». In line with other writers, such as Fowles (1999), Chesnais relates the forms of violence to the great stages of the process of civilisation, which he specifies as three: primitive and archaic violence (traditional agrarian society), institutionalised violence (industrial society) and mediatised social violence (tertiary society).

On the other hand, it should be remembered that research on violence has a long and rich tradition in communication studies. From the classic theory of cultivation (Gerbner & Gross, 1976) to the more modern approaches of neuroscience (Carnagey, Bartholow & Anderson 2007), concern about the effects of media violence has been a constant feature. Furthermore, the emergence of new communication practices, for instance, the use of video games, in which violence is very frequently shown, has only increased the concern about its effects, such as desensitisation to real violence (Carnagey, Anderson & Bushman, 2007). It should also be noted that, inevitably, there is not always a consensus in the academic community regarding the influence of the media (Rodrigo, Busquet & al., 2008). However, the concern about its influence on children is apparent, as a result of which the specialist literature has particularly focused on child audiences. Some writers highlight that the amount of television violence viewed in childhood (Huesmann, Moise-Titus & al., 2003) and adolescence (Johnson, Cohen & al., 2002) favours aggressive behaviour in the future. On this theme, the conclusion is that the long-term effects of media violence have a greater influence on childhood (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). In another vein, as noted by Fernández-Villanueva, Revilla & Domínguez

(2011b: 11), other scholars focus their audience research not on what they consider to be «scientific reports on internal or visible physiological states» but on the emotions aroused by television violence in that «these are stories about emotions with cultural meanings, moral evaluations and relationships between emotions and social practices» (Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 2000). As noted, there have been multiple approaches to the phenomenon from different disciplines.

The overall aim of this paper is to understand, from a constructivist perspective, the role of the media in the debate on mediatised social violence, particularly in its representation in television fiction. Authors such as Ang (1996), Alasuutari (1999), Boyle (2005), Tulloch and Tulloch (1992), Schlesinger, Haynes & al. (1998) and Hill (2001) have noted how viewers take a stance and interpret television broadcasts in different ways and, as a result, establish the different ways they are influenced by them, according to their attitudes, identities or circumstances in life. Thus, television shows, designates and labels the presence of violence, but we are convinced that it only makes sense to define the types of representation of television violence if we also ask questions about the value of these categories within social discourse. Therefore, on this occasion, we aim to gain an understanding of the social dimensions involved in child viewers' experience of the violence viewed in children's television fiction.

But is there still anything to be discovered on a subject that has been studied by so many communication departments worldwide? Fernandez-Villanueva, Revilla & & al. (2008) point out precisely how, perhaps due to the difficulty in correctly assessing the total amount of violence –including variations in the definitions of the concepts of aggression and violence–, the results of the various studies conducted on this subject have not produced unanimous conclusions. Therefore, they consider that further theoretical and empirical work is called for on the phenomenon of violence on television and on how much violence is legitimated or justified and by what mechanisms such legitimisation is constructed (Fernández-Villanueva, Domínguez & al. 2004). That demand was explicitly re-stated more recently by the same research team (Fernández-Villanueva, Revilla & Domínguez, 2011b), who specifically stress the importance of gathering viewers' discourse for three reasons, which can be summarised as follows: a) the lack of qualitative, discursive research of this kind concerning violence on television; b) the possibility of linking the results obtained with those related to emotions and effects produced by television

violence; c) the viewers' discourse enables us to relate it to the value system of the cultural contexts in which it occurs. This paper forms part of this requirement for a broader perspective of the phenomenon itself summarised as media violence. The study presented here, in the context of a more extensive study dedicated to child viewers' interpretative processes of fictional violence, has the following aims:

•To understand how the interpretation of child viewers is influenced by a number of variables that determine the construction of the meaning of the notion of television violence.

• To provide a notion of television violence as interpreted by the child viewers.

2. Material and methods

With regard to the methodological approach, and according to the last two axioms of «Lineation Theory» (a more multivariate perspective is required that focuses on the effects of a probabilistic nature, and the importance of individual interpretations must be acknowledged), the research has been structured based on a multivariate analysis (Potter, 1999; Morrison, MacGregor & al., 1999). In particular, this paper is focused on the definers of violence based on the question: In what way do the children interviewed understand the notion of violence in the fictional images? The research was conducted as follows. Firstly, an overview was made of the conceptualisation of the notion of television violence, and the main qualitative research on content analysis of media violence and its reception were compiled and studied. A typological theory[1] was defined for the analysis of television violence (Aran, 2008: 303-312), structured on the basis of the categories of violence of Chesnais (1982), Barthes (1985), Galtung (1969, 1996 and reformulated by Reychler, 1997) and Morrison, MacGregor & al. (1999, reformulated by Millwood, 2003), as well as the procedures of significance in audiovisual narrative of Potter (1999), Tisseron (2000) and Buckingham (2005).

2.1. Material

Secondly, we then selected the unit of analysis (audiovisual text or «corpus» –two television programme sequences–) and designed the fieldwork. The two

sequences were selected from children's programmes, in line with the following criteria:

a) Aimed at children (sample broadcast on television and designated for children under 13 years).

b) Presence of violence in the narrative (ritualised and realistic –not real–).

c) Diversity of types of violence (physical and symbolic).

d) Different degrees of recognition of this violence (more and less explicit).

e) Diversity of forms (animation versus actors).

Television shows, designates and labels the presence of violence, but we are convinced that it only makes sense to define the types of representation of television violence if we also ask questions about the value of these categories within social discourse. Therefore, on this occasion, we aim to gain an understanding of the social dimensions involved in child viewers' experience of the violence viewed in children's television fiction.

f) Brevity of the messages and both examples of a similar length.

We evaluated and validated the analytical criteria for selecting the two sequences using two instruments. The first, the typological theory mentioned above (Aran, 2008), facilitated the identification of types of violence by their nature and features (content analysis), and pointed to qualitative aspects considered as contextual (policy influences, variables of the message, appraisal of the message, among others). The second of the instruments facilitated an external assessment of the two sequences chosen by the analysts from the Audiovisual Council of Catalonia, based on the analysis of the qualification (language, theme, conflict resolution, forms and use of violence, personal identity and conflict) and the degree of suitability of programmes for the viewers' age. This assessment proved to be an indispensible contrast in the selection criteria.

The resulting «corpus» was two sequences, each under 2 minutes long, from the cartoon series «Doraemon» (Japan), based on the comic by Fujiko F. Fujio, and the adventure film «Lost in Africa» (UK), by

the director Steward Rafill, broadcast by TV3 (April 2003) and TVE (May 2003), respectively. The examples were edited on a DVD in this order. In this phase, we made the final selection of two schools which did not excessively polarise such a quantitatively limited sample. Throughout the school year 2002-2003, a pilot test was carried out in each to observe the suitability of the selected sequences, the questions and the circumstances of observation. Based on the pilot test, adjustments were made to the evaluation instruments and the procedure was validated.

2.2. Participants

After initial contact with the teaching staff, the selection of pupils was agreed and the procedure was

From the analysis of the interpretative processes carried out on a sample of fictional television violence, the children participating in the study showed how the reception process is framed by a cultural background and specific reading and consumption practices, in which contextual narrative aspects have a major role, especially relating to the perception of proximity displayed by the subjects.

implemented with the study sample during the 2003-2004 school year. 16 questionnaires and in-depth interviews were conducted on pupils who were in the second (n=8) and sixth years (n=8) of two primary schools located in the city of Barcelona, one state school and one state-assisted private school. The criteria for the selection of participants were established according to proportionality, both with respect to the school (ownership and balanced sociocultural representation) and to the subjects (different gender and age groups but with sufficient verbal and expressive ability), in line with previous research that use these primary education levels as suitable to contrast the verbalisation of perceptions (Aran, Barata & al., 2001; Busquet, Aran & al., 2002; Buckingham, 2005).

2.3. Techniques of information collection

To obtain information on the subjects, two instruments were used: a questionnaire about the television viewing routines and preferences of the subjects and

their families, and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire contained 32 questions organised in two sections: the ethnography of media consumption and consideration of television consumption. The questionnaire was useful for introducing the subject in a relaxed manner and shifting the focus onto violence, and above all, providing a context for some of the later responses to the interview as cross-checks in order to discern exaggerations and distortions in the subjects' remarks, according to King, Keohane & Verba (1994)'s scheme of triangulation of qualitative data. The semi-structured interview, inspired by Tisseron's model (2000), is structured into 17 open or semi-directed questions designed to elicit their interpretations of the two viewings containing violence. The question specifically designed to observe the notion of violence is, «What is violence (for you)?», although this specific question was not posed until the subjects themselves made reference to the existence of violence in the examples, thus the answers emerged over the course of the interview.

The interviews lasted approximately 50 minutes and were carried out in the morning break. They were always conducted in the same classroom which had video equipment. The work was presented as a study carried out on boys' and girls' television tastes, aimed at finding out their preferences, and without having to follow a format of true or false questions and answers. They were told that the audio recording was made (after receiving parental approval and the consent of the subjects) in order to recall what they told us.

2.4. Analysis of the information

The verbatim transcription of the interviews was then carried out, and the data was analysed. We designed a method of discourse analysis by adapting the procedure proposed by Morrison, MacGregor & al. (1999), and we proceeded to implement it. As a reminder, the indicators of the reception analysis proposed by the researchers are:

1. Primary indicators. These are derived from the social environment or social expectations.

a) The act itself (understood here as the violent nature of the act).

b) The contextual factors (of the situation portrayed). They qualify the violent act.

2. Secondary indicators. The artistic and physical expression of the scene.

a) Production techniques. The resources for the staging and performance.

3. Tertiary indicators. The emotional response (of the social actors).

a) Elements intensifying the emotional response.

The aim of this work is focused on the notion of violence and its qualification as interpreted by child viewers, therefore our analysis is concentrated on the primary indicators, i.e. both on the violent nature of the act and the contextual parameters that are observed according to the type of television violence presented (Aran, 2008) and to previous research (Gunter & Harrison, 1998; Potter, 1999; Morrison, MacGregor & al., 1999; Buckingham, 1996, 2002; Busquet, Aran & al., 2002; Millwood, 2003). Taking these previous studies into account, the resulting general categories were:

1) Type of violence; 2) Intensity of violence; 3) Representation of violence; 4) Motivation for violence; 5) Definers of violence that appear in the story related to the perception of the participants.

During this phase of the research, we followed Taylor & Bogdan (1996)'s stages of data analysis relating to discovery, coding and discounting, including the cross-checking of the results. The reliability between the different external encoders (two researchers in the fields of psychology and social anthropology) was estimated according to the percentage of consistency, following Holsti's procedure (1969). The percentage of reliability between encoders obtained was an average of 86 and a range from 72.1 to 98.2. Almost all the variables were in the range of .80 to .85, which is generally considered good (Riffe & al., 1998). According to Cronbach's alpha procedures for calculating inter-rater reliability, the remaining 14% was resolved by discussion and consensus.

3. Findings

The descriptive results set out below regarding the children's discourse on the notion of violence in fictional images refer to the type of violence, the intensity of the violence present, its representation, the motivation for the violent acts represented and the definitions of violence that are proposed. The categories selected were combined with the characteristics of the participants, such as sex, age and type of school ownership, giving overall results and differences that were only significant in relation to age.

3.1. Type of violence

We present, using illustrative examples, those categories of the typology already described in which the research subjects provided significant information. On this basis, in the types of violence, all the subjects discriminated between types of violence in the images. The distinctions they made relate to the following dimensions of violence: physical violence (killing); verbal violence (insults); symbolic or cultural violence (differentiation between the good and bad people) and private and collective violence. The latter even includes types of institutional (wars) and structural violence, in line with Galtung's concept (1969, 1996).

In addition, the subjects make distinctions between forms of violence, essentially between real and represented. None of the subjects confused the two sequences viewed with reality or considered it to be the truth instead of a representation. But they also recognised formal violence, the codes of the audiovisual language (sound intensification, visual attention to detail...). Lastly, in relation to perception, the subjects of the research showed a negative perception of violence (when the act is perceived as bad), a neutral perception (when the appraisal of the violence is relativised in accordance with its form) and a positive perception (when it is interpreted that the action has a noble purpose). However, the resulting perception of violence of the subjects analysed was much more complex than this first typology. In the sections below (3.2 to 3.4), we observe in particular how the subjects establish other distinctions that relate to both contextual and socio-cultural aspects of the violence.

3.2. Intensity of violence

Under this variable, the subjects express considerations of severity according to a relationship between the recognition of actual damage and a subjective perception of the violence. Within this section, we can distinguish various criteria. With regard to severity, the subjects clearly identify physical violence (intentional assault and battery). With regard to regulation (understood as the institutional parameter) they recognise violence that is unlawful, punished by the state. As regards the means, they distinguish between violence with firearms, sharp instruments and blunt objects. Lastly, in relation to the perception of the intensity of the violence, they differentiate mild (argument), severe (insults) and extreme violence (shots).

3.3. Representation of violence

The subjects differentiate between plausible and implausible representations of violence. Plausibility

refers here, in Aristotelian terms, to the attributes of possibility, as opposed to veracity which refers to the attributes of truth (plausibility of the factual). Subjects ascribe what they saw to a format (cartoon, film) and an audiovisual genre (humour, adventure), which implies that they tacitly generate different expectations for them in relation to those production and narrative conventions. They distinguished between ritualised and realistic types of representation (they were all representations; they were not shown examples of real violence or violence in the news).

Fairly spontaneously, the subjects make comparisons between the types of fictional violence represented and real situations with violence. These situations relate, particularly, to events they have experienced or discussed at home and at school (family arguments, neighbourhood disputes) or seen in the news (child abuse, the war in Iraq).

3.4. Motivation for violence

The concept of motivation for violence includes the arguments relating to the aggressor's objectives, which the subjects attribute to them based on the use of the violence and on their need to make sense of that violence. It is shown here that they distinguish between the use of instrumental violence (violence as a means), when they consider that there are reasons for carrying out the violence, and an expressive use (violence as an end), when it is perceived that lasting damage to the victim is sought. Lastly, it was established that the subjects in the study look for a meaning to the violence. Along these lines, they recognise reactive violence when the violent actions are committed in self-defence, or for other characters, as a response to a previous attack.

3.5. Definitions of violence

Lastly, based on the results, we note –coinciding with contemporary research, such as that of Fernández-Villanueva, Revilla & al. (2008)–, the variability of what subjects understand as violence, depending on those viewers' values and the mechanisms of identification they trigger with the perpetrators and victims. As a graphical summary of the definitions of violence provided by our child viewers throughout the interviews, we have represented these in a Visone concept map (see Molina, 2006), based on the proximity of the words in their responses and the frequency with which they are mentioned. Here, the size of the concepts relates to the number of references by the children (figure 1). The thickness of each definition (the lines) represents the number of references by the subjects. The most strate-

gic nodes are those which form a bridge between different nodes. The squares relate to the types of violence. Given the importance that subjects gave to verbal and non-verbal (psychological) expressions, we have shown these two categories separately.

Some key aspects of the conceptual map are:

a) The children clearly recognise forms of direct violence, both physical and psychological (and verbal). They also express indirect violence by reference to the power of words of political leaders as instigators of wars (structural violence).

b) Physical violence has the largest variety of definitions, notably «kill», followed by «hit» and «abuse».

c) Structural violence encompasses various references to the concepts of «war», «Bush» and «theft».

d) The importance of the nodal intersections is highlighted, indicating the links between the children's definitions of violence as significant relationships in their discourse: «soldier» (physical and structural violence), «hurting by talking» (structural and verbal violence) and «arguing unreasonably», «taunting» and, especially, «parental arguments, parents fighting» (verbal and psychological violence).

e) The most unpleasant violence for children was arguments between parents in cartoons, divided between psychological and verbal violence (as attributive connections, the subjects highlight «son», «parents» and in other types of violence, «Bush» and «small children»).

To summarise, the views presented by the subjects underline how they establish motivations which justify, mitigate or increase the seriousness, even beyond an absolute value of violence or its restricted conceptualisation. As a result, all the subjects recognised mortal (as a consequence) violence in the examples as the most serious (feature film with actors), but the majority (10 subjects), were most upset by the parental argument, a form of symbolic violence which is represented in a ritualised (cartoons) and plausible way.

The children in our study indicate, as a majority definition of violence, the most restrictive meanings, those which are confined to the notion of physical and direct violence. We attribute this choice as being in line with criteria of visibility, economy and social use (we recall that restrictive definitions are the most frequent in common usage). However, the children also mentioned the broader definitions, by way of comments on inequality –age inequality, in weapons...–, disproportion and verbal or psychological humiliation.

We shall now seek to clarify the relevance of some of these contextual factors of the violent narrative in the framework of television fiction. According to

the research findings, the main primary indicators of violence are:

1) The act itself, understood as the violent nature of the act: a) If mechanisms of identification with the victim or situation are triggered (attribution of a violent significance to the act when the child identifies with the victim, for example the main character, Novita, or with the situation, for example, arguments within the family); b) If the attackers are «the good guys»; c) The probability of it being based on a true story.

2) The contextual aspects: a) The narrative genre (subjects effectively attribute the stories to a type of genre which in their conventions may imply an explicit presence of violence, often of a serious nature); b) Unfair or disproportionate violence in an unbalanced relationship between the characters (the perceived seriousness of the violence increases when it affects minors or victims who are considered by the subjects to be «vulnerable» or «innocent»); c) Gratuitous violence (for example, when there has been no previous provocation).

Other indicators appear to a lesser extent, also in the act itself, where the children are moved or disturbed by the representation of pain or injury (visual representation of the consequences of the violence).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The findings of our research show how children define violence with a not necessarily restricted significance. From the analysis of the interpretative processes carried out on a sample of fictional television violence, the children participating in the study showed how the reception process is framed by a cultural background and specific reading and consumption practices, in which contextual narrative aspects have a major role, especially relating to the perception of proximity displayed by the subjects. Logically, the size of the sample does not permit an extrapolation of the results, however, in addition to the emergence of dimensions considered important by other scholars, a typology of analysis of television violence was found and implemented, which enables the fundamental factors of its perception by child viewers to be organised and to study in-depth the narrative nature of the experience of viewing violence on television. This reinforces the direction of research in the past decade focused on indicators of media influence which, as noted by Jacquinot (2002) have been undertaken with the intention of raising the awareness of as many decision-makers and stakeholders as possible, but are difficult to transfer to the «daily activity of the media» (Jacquinot, 2002: 31).
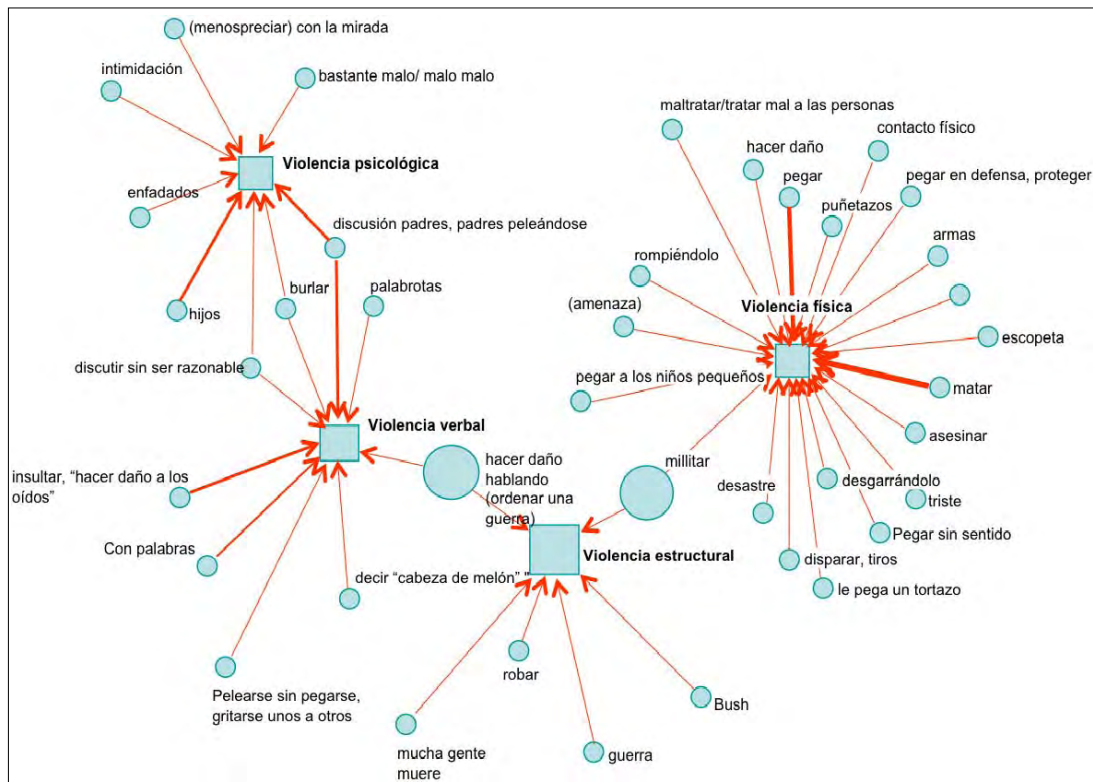

Figure 1: Definitions of violence.

To conclude, we will attempt to outline some of the aspects which, in our view, still need to be included in the analysis of television violence and viewers' interpretation of it. The analysis of television violence is, even today, still based on a restrictive conceptualisation of the notion of violence, understood as the physical expression (and in some cases verbal). Contributions are rarely made from content analysis that broaden the spectrum to the cultural and structural dimensions of violence. The definition of violence once proposed by Gerbner continues to be the standard framework of reference.

> The media act as amplifiers of the presence of violence in the real world, too often magnifying it. But they can also act virtuously in two directions: firstly, giving public prominence to the presence of silent violence, tacitly accepted by society, and secondly, the media allow the debate on violence to be opened up beyond scientific and political discourse and, despite the risks of co-operating with a certain alarmist reductionism, encourage the involvement of social agents.

work of reference. We recall that Gerbner (1972: 31) defined television violence as: «the overt expression of physical force against others or self, or the compelling of action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed. The expression of injurious or lethal force had to be credible or real in the symbolic terms of the drama. Humorous and even farcical violence can be credible and real, even if it has a presumable comic effect».

It is on this definition, which should be considered within the restrictive definitions (Aróstegui, 1994), that most of the descriptions and content analyses conducted to determine the characteristics of violence on television today are still based. It is specifically this restriction of the term to the physical expression that we consider to be out-of-date and inadequate for understanding the current complexity and diversity of violence and its media representations.

In contrast, the second part of Gerbner's definition seems to us to be very much up-to-date, since, in relation to the violence depicted, it is in the area of the «symbolic terms of the drama». In the context of these fictional representations of violence on television, we must therefore observe it according to the conventions of the genre which underpin the narrative rules of television discourse. The audiovisual genres define the interpretative margins for the viewers, and those margins in turn fluctuate according to the interpretative weighting that each viewer assigns them. Within the conventions of the television genre there is a series of contextual factors which qualify the act of violence. Each viewer, in turn, frames these variables within their knowledge and experience of television narrative (media skills) and in the context of its reception (relevance of the medium within the social interaction as a whole).

Lastly, movements which form public opinion and the expression of the transgression of limits through social alarm come into play. Here we must contemplate media practices in the broader sphere, the social and political context that governs the actions and perceptions of social order. It will be this discourse of order which will redefine what we understand by violence. Thus, to return to the beginning, the circle is complete. In this sense we have been able to see, on the basis of the questionnaires and in-depth interviews, how, in the interpretation of fictional violence, social norms coexist with family and community values, as well as individual sensitivities. As Fernández-Villanueva, Revilla & Domínguez (2011a) conclude in their research, viewers are neither passive nor isolated in generating emotions, especially as a result of the perception of that content (Pinto da Mota, 2005).

As a final reflection, we would like to underline that both the notion of violence and the discourses that are constructed on media violence are of an historical, changeable and often institutionally coercive nature (Foucault, 2002). At the outset our research aimed to examine the concept of violence in television fiction according to the interpretations of child viewers. However, we have moved from the analysis of a concern, from the analysis of a discourse that refers to the collective sensibility –to «social pathos»– as we stated at the beginning, to an analysis of production of the discourse, which refers to power and management of

that social space. Often, the media act as amplifiers of the presence of violence in the real world, too often magnifying it. But they can also act virtuously in two directions: firstly, giving public prominence to the presence of silent violence, tacitly accepted by society, and secondly, the media allow the debate on violence to be opened up beyond scientific and political discourse and, despite the risks of co-operating with a certain alarmist reductionism, encourage the involvement of social agents. As Cecilia Von Feilitzen (2002) affirms, the media are in many ways a prerequisite for public debate and for the functioning of today's society, and it is not always possible to differentiate between the media and society, because communication through the media also means participation in society. This participation makes the most sense if it is built on media literacy, particularly in the audiovisual field, which considers young viewers as active participants.

Notes

[1] The expression does not refer here to a certain typology but to «the group of mechanisms and operations that allow the discourse analysed to be classified in different ways, and the series of epistemological procedures that would lead to the selection of one typology or another» (Pérez-Tornero, 1982: 60-61).

References

ALASUUTARI, P. (Ed.) (1999). *Rethinking the Media Audience.* London: Sage.

ANG, I. (1996). *Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences for a Postmodern World*. London: Routledge.

ARAN, S. (2008). R*epresentació mediàtica i percepció social de la violència en la ficció. Estudi de cas: la interpretació dels infants de la violència en la ficció televisiva infantil*. Barcelona: Tesis doctoral, URL.

ARAN, S., BARATA, F. & AL. (2001). *La violència en la mirada. L'anàlisi de la violència a la televisió*. Barcelona: Trípodos.

ARÓSTEGUI, J. (1994). Violencia, sociedad y política: la definición de la violencia. *Ayer, 13*, 17-55.

BANDURA, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

BARTHES, R. (1985). *The Grain of the Voice*. New York: Hill & Wang.

BOYLE, K. (2005). *Media and Violence*. London: Sage.

BUCKINGHAM, D. (2005). *Educación en medios: alfabetización, aprendizaje y cultura contemporánea*. Barcelona: Paidós.

BUCKINGHAM, D. (2002). *Crecer en la era de los medios electrónicos: tras la muerte de la infancia*. Madrid: Morata.

BUCKINGHAM, D. (1996). *Moving Images: Understanding Children's Emotional Responses to Television*. Manchester (UK): Manchester University Press.

BUSHMAN, B.J. & HUESMANN, L.R. (2006). Short-term and Long-term Effects of Violent Media on Aggression in Children and Adults. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 160 (4)*, 348-352.

BUSQUET, J., ARAN, S. & AL. (2002). *Infància, violència i televisió. Usos televisius i percepció infantil de la violència a la televisió.*

Barcelona: CAC. (www.cac.cat/pfw_files/cma/recerca/estudis_recerca/violenciapercepcio.pdf) (08-01-2012).

CARNAGEY, N.L., ANDERSON, C.A. & BARTHOLOW B.D. (2007). Media Violence and Social Neuroscience New Questions and New Opportunities. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 16 (4)*, 178-182. (www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/2005-2009/07cab2.pdf) (28-09-2012).

CARNAGEY, N.L., ANDERSON, C.A. & BUSHMAN, B.J. (2007). The Effect of Video Game Violence on Physiological Desensitization to Real-life violence. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 43 (3)*, 489-496.

CHESNAIS, J.C. (1982). *Histoire de la violence*. Paris: Robert Laffont.

ELIAS, N. (1977). *La civilisation des moeurs*. Paris: Pluriel.

FERNÁNDEZ-VILLANUEVA, C., REVILLA, J.C. & DOMÍNGUEZ, R. (2011a). Las emociones que suscita la violencia en televisión. *Comunicar, 36*, 95-103. (DOI http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C36-2011-02-10).

FERNÁNDEZ-VILLANUEVA, C., REVILLA, J.C. & DOMÍNGUEZ, R. (2011b). Identificación y especularidad en los espectadores de violencia en televisión: una reconstrucción a partir del discurso. *Comunicación y Sociedad, XXIV, I*, 7-33.

FERNÁNDEZ-VILLANUEVA, C. & DOMÍNGUEZ, R. & AL. (2004). Formas de legitimación de la violencia en televisión. *Política y Sociedad, 41 (I)*, 183-199.

FERNÁNDEZ-VILLANUEVA, C., REVILLA, J.C. & AL. (2008). Los espectadores ante la violencia televisiva: funciones, efectos e interpretaciones situadas. *Comunicación y Sociedad, XXI, 2*, 85-113.

FOUCAULT, M. (2002). El orden del discurso. Barcelona: Tusquets.

FOWLES, J. (1999). *The Case for Television Violence*. Thousand Oaks (USA): Sage.

GALTUNG, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means. Peace and Conflict Development and Civilization*. London: Sage.

GALTUNG, J. (1969). Violence, Peace and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research, 3*, 167-192.

GERBNER, G. (1972). Violence in Television Drama: Trends in Symbolic Functions. In G.A. COMSTOCK & E.A. RUBINSTEIN (Eds.), *Television Social Behaviour, 1. Media Content and Control.* (pp. 28-187). Washington (USA): Government Printing Office.

GERBNER, G. & GROSS, L. (1976). Living with Television: The Violence Profile. *Journal of Communication, 26 (2)*, 173-199.

GUNTER, B. & HARRISON, J. (1998). *Violence on Television. An Analysis of Amount, Nature, Location and Origin of Violence in British Programmes*. London: Routledge.

HILL, A. (2001). «Looks Like it Hurts». Women's Responses to Shocking Entertainment. In M. BARKER & J. PETLEY (Eds.), *Ill Effects: The Media Violence Debate.* (pp. 135-149). London: University of Luton.

HOLSTI, O.R. (1969). *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities.* Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.

HUESMANN, L.R., MOISE-TITUS, J. & AL. (2003). Longitudinal Relations between Children's Exposure to TV Violence and their Aggressive and Violent Behavior in Young Adulthood: 1977-1992. *Developmental Psychology, 39 (2)*, 201-221.

JACQUINOT, G. (2002). La violencia de las imágenes televisivas y su impacto en las conciencias. *Comunicar, 18*, 27-33.

JOHNSON, J.G., COHEN, P. & AL. (2002). Television Viewing and Aggressive Behavior during Adolescence and Adulthood. *Science, 295 (5564)*, 2.468-2.471.

JOHNSON-LAIRD, P.N. & OATLEY, K. (2000). Cognitive and Social Construction of Emotions. In M. LEWIS & J.M. HAVILAND-JONES (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotions* (pp. 458-475). New York: Guilford Press.

KING, G., KEOHANE, R. & VERBA, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton (USA): Princeton University Press.

MILLWOOD, A. (2003). *How Children Interpret Screen Violence. Report of the Joint Research Programme Broadcasting Standards Commission and Independent Television Commission*. London: BBC.

MOLINA, J.L. (2006). (Ed.). *Talleres de autoformación con programas informáticos de análisis de redes sociales*. Barcelona: Servei de Publicacions UAB.

MORRISON, D., MACGREGOR, B. & AL. (1999). *Defining Violence. The Search of Understanding*. Luton (UK): University of Luton Press.

PÉREZ-TORNERO, J.M. (1982). Esbozo de un modelo de análisis del discurso. *Cuadernos de Traducción e Interpretación*, *1*, 57-73.

PINTO DA MOTA, A. (2005). Televisão e violência: (para) novas formas de olhar. *Comunicar*, *25*. (www.comunicarjournal.com/index.php?contenido=detalles&numero=25&articulo=25-2005-075&mostrar=comocitar) (10-02-2012).

POTTER, W.J. (1999). *On Media Violence*. Thousand Oaks (USA): Sage.

REYCHLER, L. (1997). Les crises et leurs fondements. *GRIP, 215-217,* 39-59.

RIFFE, D., LACY, S. & AL. (1998). *Analyzing Media Messages*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

RODRIGO-ALSINA, M., BUSQUET, J. & AL. (2008). Las teorías sobre los efectos sociales de la violencia en televisión. Estado de la cuestión. *Verso e Reverso*, *22 (49)*. (www.unisinos.br/_diversos/revistas/versoereverso/index.php?e=13&s=9&a=111) (28-09-12).

SCHLESINGER, P., HAYNES, R. & AL. (1998). *Men Viewing Violence*. London: Broadcasting Standars Comission.

TAYLOR, S.J. & BOGDAN, R. (1996). *Introducción a los métodos cualitativos de investigación. La búsqueda de significados*. Barcelona: Paidós.

TISSERON, S. (2000). *Enfants sous influence. Les écrans redent-ils les jeunes violents?* Paris: Armand Colin.

TULLOCH, J. & TULLOCH, M. (1992). Discourses about Violence: Critical Theory and the TV Violence' Debate. *Text, 12,* 183-231.

VON FEILITZEN, C. (2002). Aprender haciendo: reflexiones sobre la educación y los medios de comunicación. *Comunicar, 18,* 21-26.

● Ainara Zubillaga and Carmen Alba
Madrid (Spain)

Disability in the Perception of Technology among University Students

La discapacidad en la percepción de la tecnología entre estudiantes universitarios

ABSTRACT

There is a widespread discourse across academic and scientific literature extolling the benefits of technology as an element of the educational process for people with disabilities that is based on many assumptions and implicit claims related to the «education, disability and technology» triangle. Although these assumptions and claims have a rationale, too often they have been considered valid, and therefore guide educational practice, without having previously undergone any process of scientific research that supports and justifies them. In this context, and in order to analyse one of these theoretical premises, this study aims to establish, firstly, whether the disability is involved in the process of giving meaning to technology and, secondly, to what extent the impact of disability is a differentiating factor in the perception and use of technology as an educational element. After gathering data from questionnaires completed by university students (28 with disabilities and 109 without), the results allowed us to establish two main conclusions. The first one shows that the most valuable dimension of technology as a teaching tool is its use as a tool for curriculum access and participation. As for the second, related to the perception of accessibility issues, it paradoxically revealed that students with disabilities find the use of technology easier than their peers without disabilities.

RESUMEN

Existe un discurso generalizado en la literatura científica sobre las bondades de las tecnologías como elemento del proceso educativo de personas con discapacidad. Dicho discurso está basado en muchas premisas y afirmaciones implícitas vinculadas al triángulo educación, discapacidad y tecnología que, si bien tienen base lógica, se han dado en muchas ocasiones por válidas y orientan la práctica educativa sin haber sido sometidas a ningún proceso de investigación científica que las avale. En este contexto y con el objeto de contrastar una de dichas premisas teóricas, este estudio tiene como objetivo establecer si la discapacidad interviene en el proceso de atribuciones subjetivas de las tecnologías y en qué medida constituye un factor de diferenciación en la percepción y aprovechamiento de las mismas como elemento didáctico. Los resultados del trabajo, a partir de la información recogida en cuestionarios a estudiantes universitarios (28 con discapacidad y 109 sin discapacidad), permiten establecer dos líneas principales de conclusiones. La primera de ellas evidencia que la dimensión más valorada de la tecnología como herramienta didáctica es su uso como instrumento de acceso y participación en el currículo. Y la segunda, relacionada con la percepción de los problemas de accesibilidad, paradójicamente, pone de manifiesto que los estudiantes con discapacidad manifiestan tener menos obstáculos en el uso de las tecnologías que sus compañeros sin discapacidad.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Disability, accessibiity, technology, university, educational research, students.
Discapacidad, accesibilidad, tecnología, universidad, investigación educativa, estudiantes.

◆ Dr. Ainara Zubillaga-del-Río is the Vice-Chancellor for Innovation at the Camilo José Cela University and Member of the REDUNI+D (University Network for Educational Research and Innovation) in Madrid (Spain) (azubillaga@ucjc.edu).

◆ Dr. Carmen Alba-Pastor is a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Dean of Research at the School of Education at the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) (carmenal@edu.ucm.es).

1. Introduction

The dominant discourse on technology and disability posits that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) constitute, in principle, a tremendously valuable tool for encouraging the development, inclusion and participation of collectives traditionally excluded from several areas of social and cultural life.

1.1. Technology as a tool for inclusion in educational discourse

A large part of the educational discourse on technology and disability is founded on the premise that ICTs are tools for improving autonomy and encouraging inclusion processes in the various social and cultural settings (Pavia, 2010; Cabero, Córdoba & Fernández, 2007). In totally virtual scenarios and in types of face-to-face teaching supported by technology, ICTs open up a wide range of possibilities for overcoming the shortfalls in traditional teaching systems and provide «learning environments with greater educational potential» (Marqués, 2001: 94). Technology changes the educational settings and their possibilities, thereby enabling a training process to be offered that responds to students' needs and demands rather than to imperatives mapped out by organizational structures and by teachers at educational centres. In the case of university classrooms, at least, they are closely tied to a University model as a centre of knowledge, the printed word and face-to-face teaching. Contrary to these static models, where teaching is situated at the hub, the introduction of ICTs has allowed the learning process to become more flexible (Collins & Moonen, 2011; Hinojo, Aznar & Cáceres, 2009). Consequently, this change of focus has enabled university studies to encompass groups in society that, for a number of different reasons, cannot access classrooms (Area, 2000).

These principles ratify the accepted theoretical framework defending the notion that technology allows students with disability to participate more actively in the general curriculum as well as to achieve academic success (Mehlinger & Powers, 2002; Rose, Meyer & Hitchcock, 2005). However, for this to be possible, the role of ICTs as a curricular instrument must be twofold; on the one hand, offering a diversity of means in order to guarantee such access and participation in the curriculum and, on the other, the potential of the media,, to adapt to the needs of all students (Cabero, 2004).

This role of technology as an inclusive curricular element is based on flexibility, a characteristic inherent to how digital contents are stored and transmitted (Hall, Meyer & Rose, 2012; Rose & Meyer, 2002).

Instead of being inserted into a physical medium of a static nature, digital contents become dynamic and transformable: versatile for their presentation and viewed in multiple formats, with the possibility of «marking» and labelling their various structural components; and they are easy to interconnect by linking one part of the contents to another.

However, the data point to a reality in which the presence of students with disability is significantly lower in educational or employment settings, especially in Higher Education, with only 5.26% of the disabled population completing a university degree (INE, 2008). These figures reflect, among other things, serious shortcomings in the current educational system based on the traditional teaching models, incapable of accommodating and integrating students with special educational needs (Castellana & Sala, 2006; Aguado & al., 2006; Sigh, 2005; Vasek, 2005). Therefore, in such a framework, it must be inferred from the previous discourse that the educational model underlying new technologies is revealed as an opportunity for people with disability to access academic courses leading to a professional qualification, and to participate in a variety of knowledge-based contexts and virtual cultural socialization settings (Alba, Zubillaga & Ruiz, 2003).

1.2. Comparative analysis as a research framework

Another interesting approach taken in the scientific literature, closely related to that of the present paper, involves comparative studies of students with and without disability, mostly with results showing no significant differences between the two groups. Thus, Jelfs & Richardson (2010) conclude that the impact of disability on the perception of the academic quality of their courses, as well as how they approach the process of studying and learning, seems very slight. Some more evident differences are highlighted by Eden and Seiman (2011) in a comparative analysis of technology's contribution via communication processes to social and emotional relationships, offering certain empirical evidence of its usefulness in social and support activities.

Stewart, Coretta & Jaehwa (2010) studied the difference in academic results between students with and without disability depending on whether their training was delivered traditionally or online concluding that, although the general outcomes showed a similar level of performance, the data suggested that students with disability performed better with online courses, given the availability of contents in «multimodal» formats.

As background to the present study, the data published in Zubillaga and Alba (2011) show that disability does not seem to constitute an element of differentiation in access to and use of technology as a teaching element.

The comparative analysis of students with and without disability revealed that the differences between them were not only insignificant, but also presented very similar patterns in the use of ICTs: these were instrumental and communicative uses, with a dominant presence of basic applications and e-mail for completing their assignments and communication, but with very limited use of technologies related to active and autonomous searching on the Internet. Only technologies of a social nature, such as social media or chats, reflected a significantly higher use among students without disability.

2. Methodology and research design

The present study arose out of the need to verify the degree of certainty of many of the implicit premises and statements related to the education, disability and technology triangle. While the above-mentioned studies on ICTs uses reflected similar results for both groups, the main question is whether the motivations that encourage their use are the same, or if disability influences users' perception of these resources as a support tool or as a barrier in the educational process. In short, it is pertinent to probe further into technology-related aspects and attitudes in order to offer insights into why the theoretical discourse and practice do not end up converging. To this end, the following goals were set:

• To analyse the differences between students with and without disability in terms of their perception of technology as a supporting element in the learning process.

• To analyse the contributions made by technology to traditional scenarios and resources and to determine the real improvements offered by ICTs in the educational process of individuals with disability.

• In short, to establish whether disability is involved in the process of subjective attributions of technology and to what extent disability constitutes a differentiating factor in the perception and uses of technology as a learning element.

The research, carried out between February and December 2009, used a questionnaire as the basic data-collection tool which consisted mostly of closed questions (only one item allowed for an open-ended response). Likert scales from 0 to 5 were used to reflect the degree of agreement/disagreement on the part of the interviewee with the items proposed. It was structured following a preliminary review of the literature and in line with the goals proposed in the study, focusing on four thematic areas: ICTs as an element supporting the educational process, access to and use of the university's website and the Virtual Campus. It also included the comparison between digital and traditional teaching materials, in view of the extensive

> In such a framework, it must be inferred from the previous discourse that the educational model underlying new technologies is revealed as an opportunity for people with disability to access academic courses leading to a professional qualification, and to participate in a variety of knowledge-based contexts and virtual cultural socialization settings.

coverage given to this specific subject in the scientific literature on disability and technology. The questionnaire was validated by means of the Expert Opinion technique using a panel of 10 professionals from academia and the field of disability, who assessed each of the items by applying criteria of relevance and clarity, as well as proposing specific suggestions that were incorporated into the tool. The data collection procedure, through face-to-face interviews, allowed supplementary qualitative information to be obtained and also made it easier for students to complete the questionnaire when, due to their disability, they were unable to manage its format easily.

With respect to the study population, according to the Complutense University of Madrid's official figures for the academic year in which the survey was held, out of the total of 86,159 students, 360 had registered at the Office for the Integration of People with Disability. A non-representative random incidental sample of 28 students with disability and 109 without disability was extracted. Data collected were analysed using SPSS 17.0 software.

3. Results
3.1. Sample description

With respect to the description of the sample of students with disability, there was a marked tendency to study degree courses in Social Sciences and Law (42.9%), followed by Humanities (21.4%), Health Sciences (17.9%) and Technical Sciences (10.7%). The fewest number of students studied Experimental Sciences (7.1%). As for the students without disability, 57.8% studied Social Sciences and Law, followed by 25.5% who opted for Technical studies, 13.8% for Experimental Sciences and 0.9% Humanities. Almost three quarters of the sample with disability (71.4%) were in their third or a higher year. Only 7.1% had recently arrived at the university. We highlight the fact that 10.7% of the sample was engaged in postgraduate studies (Doctorate). Unlike this group, the vast majority of students in the group without disability (63.3%) were in their first year (42.2%) or second year (21.1%). Fourth-year students represented 18.3%, and 8.3% were each in their third and fifth year, while the percentage of students taking doctorate courses was also lower (0.9%). In terms of gender split, both groups had a majority of women (a little over 67%).

The breakdown by age throws up some significant findings. A total of 59.3% of the students with disability surveyed were over 23 years of age, while almost half the non-disability group was between 18 and 20 (49.5%), and another 33.9% between 21 and 23. Students with disability were above-average age compared to the general university population. There is a remarkable trend in this group, which seems to need longer than the normal time established to complete their degrees, which is confirmed by the fact that 25% of the sample was even older than 30 years of age, unlike any of the students without disability surveyed.

As for the type of disability, reduced mobility accounted for half of the sample (50%), followed by hearing impairment (21.4%) and visual impairment (17.9). The degree of disability was ranked as quite high, with 65% of disability confirmed by 44.4% of the students, and none was below the threshold of 51%.

3.2. Research findings

The first of the aspects to be studied was their beliefs about the role played by technology in the educational process, stressing certain statements directly related to its role in the learning process of students with disability. Data reveal a dual perception of technology among students with disability in the sample. For these students, technology opens up a multitude of opportunities in their personal learning process, signifi-

	Degree								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	NSC	$\bar{x}$	s
Technology helps me overcome the difficulties I face at university (architectural barriers, mobility problems, following lectures, compatibility with employment).	17.9	10.7	7.1	10.7	21.4	32.1		3.04	1.93
	2.8	12.8	24.8	20.2	26.6	12.8		2.94	1.34
Technology makes it easier for me to adapt timetables and the pace of learning to my needs.	17.9	14.3	14.3	14.3	7.1	32.1		2.75	1.93
	8.3	11.9	23.9	26.6	19.3	10.1		2.67	1.40
Technology helps me overcome social obstacles to the teaching / learning process (difficulties in taking part out of shyness, choosing to make a disability visible or not, etc.).	42.9	10.7		14.3	14.3	17.9		2	2.07
	11.1	10.2	25	22.2	22.2	8.3	0.9	2.63	1.47
Technology helps me access educational materials.	3.6	10.7		3.6	21.4	57.1	3.6	4.25	1.32
			2.8	13.8	39.4	43.1	0.9	4.26	0.81
Educational material in electronic format enables me to choose the presentation format according to my needs (voice, Braille, text, etc.).	17.9	14.3	7.1	3.6	25	21.4	10.7	3.11	2.11
	10.4	8.5	15.1	21.7	22.6	21.7		3.03	1.59
The Virtual Campus tools enable me to communicate more easily with my peers than face to face.	39.3	7.1	14.3	3.6	10.7	10.7	14.3	2.29	2.33
	18.3	22	21.1	18.3	10.1	10.1		2.10	1.56
The Virtual Campus tools enable me to communicate more easily with lecturers than through face-to-face tutorials.	25	10.7	7.1	10.7	17.9	17.9	10.7	2.82	2.17
	11	8.3	18.3	26.6	20.2	15.6		2.83	1.52
Technology gives me the chance to carry out practical activities that would be complex in a face-to-face setting (due to the impossibility of attending, limitations associated with a disability, etc.).	21.4	7.1	14.3	21.4	14.3	17.9	3.6	2.68	1.88
	10.1	11.9	11	24.8	29.4	12.8		2.90	1.52
I believe that technology-supported learning presents fewer barriers for me than traditional classes.	10.7		10.7	25	17.9	35.7		3.46	1.59
	8.3	11.9	12.8	26.6	21.1	19.3		2.98	1.53
The ability to interact with colleagues and students face to face is fundamental for my learning process.	7.1		10.7	14.3	3.6	64.3		4	1.53
	0.9		2.8	11.9	27.5	56.9		4.36	0.98

Table 1. Perception of ICTs as a supporting element in the educational process
(«Students with disability» / Students without disability).

cantly improving their access to materials (78.5%) and, in short, offering them a learning experience with fewer barriers than traditional lectures (53.6%).

Ease of access to teaching materials is the belief most strongly supported by students with disability (78.5%) and by the other group of students (82.5% acknowledge this). However, this is surpassed by the need for face-to-face socialization rather than remote electronic relationships: 84.4% of students without and 67.9% of students with disability considered it essential to have real contact with their peers. This idea is also perceived to a significant degree among the group of disabled students, as ratified by the low scores given by this group to statements linked to the social aspects of ICTs: 53.6% do not believe technology helps them overcome social obstacles in their educational process, nor does it facilitate communication with lecturers (in 35.7% of cases) and even less so with colleagues (46.4%).

More than half the sample of students with disability, 53.6%, believes that learning supported by ICTs presents fewer barriers than face-to-face classes. However, this percentage barely reached forty per cent (40.4%) in the case of disability-free students. With respect to the perception of flexibility as an inherent characteristic of technology, 46.5% of students stated they agreed «Little» or «Not at all» with the notion that ICTs make their learning more flexible versus 39.2% that did perceive this potential for adaptation. The analysis of the data shown in Table 1 illustrates that, although the values obtained for the average scores () in each of the questions are very similar for both groups, dispersion is greater in the responses from the group of students with disability, as reflected in the values for standard deviation (S), versus greater

homogeneity in the responses of students without disability.

Tables 2 and 3 present the answers from both groups with respect to the perception of the university's website and the Virtual Campus and problems of access and use. The purpose of collecting this information did not respond to the need to know to what extent they interact with and use these resources, but rather how both samples perceive the problems of accessing and using the two resources. Data show that the barriers are perceived in both groups as practically non-existent, and more than half the sample claim to find «No problem» with all the items proposed.

Nonetheless, and although very low scores were obtained at the highest ends of the scale, students without disability stated they had greater problems accessing and using both these digital resources than their peers with disability. There are very few items classified under the heading «No problem» for at least half the sample: none on the website and six out of the ten items proposed on the Virtual Campus. Although it is true that, in general, the vast majority of the disability-free sample scored the problems encountered at between 0 and 2 on the scale (i.e. between «None» and «Few»), the group of students with disability shows a much more marked concentration around the lowest score on the scale (0).

A more qualitative approach to reality offers a potential explanation. When asked «If you have had problems, how did you resolve them and who did you seek help from?», half of the students with disability interviewed acknowledged that they had had difficulty using the Virtual Campus: 51.7% said they had found problems using the platform, of which 60% stated that they had solved the problem by themselves. When

	Degree							$\overline{x}$	s
	0	1	2	3	4	5	NSC		
Website access and download	67.9	21.4	3.6	3.6	3.6			0.54	0.99
	31.2	19.3	19.3	14.7	12.8	2.8		1.67	1.50
Equivalent alternatives to visual contents (images, graphical items, etc.)	64.3	7.1	14.3	7.1	3.6		3.6	0.93	1.53
	29	28	15.9	17.8	7.5	0.9	0.9	1.69	2.46
Equivalent alternatives to auditory contents	67.9	7.1	7.1		3.6	7.1	7.1	1.14	2.31
	30.8	21.5	19.6	15.9	8.4	3.7		1.61	1.46
Links (descriptive text, linkage to description, etc.)	57.1	14.3	7.1	21.4				0.93	1.24
	31.5	26.9	16.7	13	6.5	4.6	0.9	1.54	1.51
Website lay out (font, background, colour scheme, possibility of changing the presentation)	67.9	3.6	7.1	14.3	7.1			0.89	1.42
	41.3	19.3	11	19.3	5.5	3.7		1.39	1.49
Ease of navigation (menu organization, how easy it is to find what they are looking for)	50	10.7	10.7	7.1	14.3	3.6	3.6	1.50	1.87
	25.2	20.6	15.9	15.9	14	8.4		1.98	1.64
Keyboard navigation of the website	57.1	3.6	7.1	7.1	3.6		21.4	1.82	2.48
	30.8	16.8	18.7	15.9	8.4	9.3		1.82	1.65
Website's compatibility with other technologies (different browsers, technical aids)	53.6	21.4	7.1		3.6		14.3	1.36	2.12
	38.7	17	19.8	15.1	4.7	4.7		1.44	1.48

Table 2. Problems relating to University Website Access and Use.
(«Students with disability» / Students without disability).

faced with the same question, 60.5% of the students without disability stated they had on some occasions run into a problem using the Virtual Campus; they had solved these problems themselves 48.3% of the time, and had received assistance from the teacher another 36.7%.

With respect to the perception of the support and benefits that the Virtual Campus entails for their learning process, both groups identify «access to educational materials» as the most important, according to 60.5% of students without disability and 70.8% of their colleagues with disability. For many students with disability it is a valuable aid to following explanations and 41.7% believe it presents «Some support» in this sense. For students without disability, an even higher percentage, 46.8%, think that the platform offers them between no support and little support in this area.

The speed and availability provided by technology with respect to printed material and the flexibility and ease of transformation, mentioned above for the choice of presentation format, are the two items reflecting the most divergent results between the two groups.

Of the students without disability, 89% ranked first the ease with which they could quickly make use of the materials, versus 92.9% of students with disability, whose top ranking went to the possibility provided by digital material for them to choose a presentation format that adapts to their needs. This latter aspect, on the other hand, is the least valued by their non-disability colleagues (it has the lowest average for all the items). As shown in Table 4, the scores for digital material ver-

sus traditional material are higher on average, than for previous headings, with lower levels of dispersion in the responses, very similar for both groups.

3.3. Discussion of results

In line with most of the comparative studies previously published, the results do not show significant differences between the two groups, but rather certain discrepancies on some specific aspects. With respect to the new possibilities provided by technology in educational settings, particularly as a supporting element for students with special educational needs, some disability-related comments are observed. There is unanimity on specific aspects such as the improvement in access to teaching material and the need for socialization with peers, but the general perception of the improvements that technology brings to the educational process is somewhat higher for students with disability.

The greatest barriers to the educational process are perceived in accessing information. Thus, the Virtual Campus is shown as the most useful tool for students with disability, acting as a support for them to follow classroom explanations.

The analysis of the perception regarding accessibility problems offers interesting results, a little different on some points from the theoretical discourses found in the specialized literature. Although the data reflect that accessibility problems are perceived as practically non-existent in both groups, a greater tendency is seen among students with disability to minimize, or even eliminate, the existence of such problems. The results

	Degree							$\bar{x}$	S
	0	1	2	3	4	5	NSC		
Website access and download	54.2	16.7	4.2	8.3	16.7			1.17	1.57
	26.6	30.3	22.9	11	6.4	2,8		1.49	1.31
Agenda / calendar management	79.2	8.3	4.2	8.3				0.42	0.92
	49.5	29.4	9.2	8.3	1.8	1,8		0.89	1.17
Chat rooms usage	66.7	12.5	4.2	4.2	4.2		8,3	1	1.86
	58.7	18.3	11	7.3	3.7	0,9		0.82	1.20
e-mail usage	66.7	8.3	12.5	4.2	8.3			0.79	1.31
	67	15.6	5.5	9.2	1.8	0,9		0.66	1.14
Workgroups usage	62.5	12.5	4.2	4.2	8.3		8,3	1.17	1.94
	61.3	14.2	15.1	4.7	2.8	1,9		0.79	1.21
On-line self-assessment and tests	58.3	16.7	4.2		8.3	4,2	8,3	1.29	2.05
	59.4	18.9	11.3	4.7	2.8	2,8		0.81	1.25
Task completion	66.7	12.5	12.5	4.2			4,2	0.75	1.42
	54.2	20.6	13.1	10.3	0.9	0,9		0.86	1.14
Accessing learning materials (presentations, texts, bibliography, lecture notes, outlines, graphical items, etc.)	58.3	8.3	8.3	16.7	8.3			1.08	1.47
	38	28.7	18.5	9.3	4.6	0,9		1.17	1.21
Accessing online resources	66.7	8.3	8.3	12.5			4,2	0.88	1.54
	42.6	24.1	15.7	12	3.7	0,9	0,9	1.17	1.32
Accessing marks	66.7	12.5	8.3	4.2	4.2		4,2	0.83	1.55
	63.9	19.4	9.3	3.7	3.7			0.64	1.04

Table 3. Problems relating to Virtual Campus Access and Use.
(«Students with disability» / Students without disability).

regarding teaching materials are certainly those most closely reflecting the theoretical discourse, and both speed and flexibility are very highly regarded by both groups.

4. Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the data in connection with the goals proposed reveal interesting aspects in personal perceptions, and offer some keys with regard to determining whether disability is involved in the process of subjective attributions to technologies.

As indicated in the discussion of the results, there are no significant differences between the two groups in their perception of ICTs as support elements, with access to digital educational materials (whether for their speed and availability or for their flexibility of presentation) as the most highly-valued aspect.

With respect to technology's contribution as a learning tool for responding to diversity and the real improvements brought to the students' educational process, the role most esteemed by students is that of technology as a tool for accessing and participating in the curriculum, particularly for those elements focusing on the digitalization of resources and subjects. In short, to provide digital access to the classic «lecture notes», books, manuals and the texts and slides of presentations. This enables them to be used speedily and flexibly, with each student choosing the presentation format that best suits their needs. The solutions and possibilities offered by technology as a means of access to contents and expressing what they have learnt are much more highly valued and in demand than the new participative and communicative settings.

It is precisely this communicative aspect that is perceived with some misgivings by the students, who fear that virtual communication might replace face-to-face interaction in their contact with lecturers and fellow students. The social dimension associated with academic life is very prominent among all students: the University is not only a means to acquire better training or a way to access employment, but a place in which to make personal relations, communicate with colleagues, lecturers, in short a context of social integration.

Finally, there are clear signs of a certain influence of disability in the process of subjective attribution of ICTs but, paradoxically, in the opposite sense than might be expected according to theoretical discourses. The perception students with disability have of the problems in using technological services is lower than that of their disability-free peers. By and large, disabled students reaching university have confronted, on a daily and regular basis, numerous obstacles throughout their educational history, so they may end up perceiving these as inherent elements in the performance of their academic activities. They are used to confronting barriers by themselves, generating strategies that enable them to overcome or bypass such obstacles. And it is this self-learnt ability to troubleshoot their problems that further emphasizes their perception that such problems do not exist, because for them they constitute an element as mundane as their solution. Students without disability, however, who have not needed to develop this ability to adapt constantly, have a lower tolerance of difficulties, so their perception of the problems is triggered at lower levels.

This introduces several elements for discussion with regard to educational inclusion: to what extent does this capacity for self-learning and personal autonomy render invisible the barriers that exist in university contexts? What is the role and degree of responsibility of the different members and levels of the university community in denouncing such barriers? These questions are impelling, even more strongly if that were possible, the precise and objective identification of the visible and invisible barriers interfering with the academic and social life of students with disability at university, as well as the work undertaken in various spheres and among all members of the university community to ensure the development of a truly and effectively inclusive university.

	Degree							$\bar{x}$	s
	0	1	2	3	4	5	NSC		
It lets me access materials I could not have accessed in the traditional way	7.1		10.7	3.6	14.3	64.3		4.11	1.52
	2.8	2.8	3.7	25.7	22	43.1		3.91	1.23
I can choose the presentation format that best suits my needs	3.6			17.9	25	50	3.6	4.25	1.17
	2.8	5.5	8.3	21.1	30.3	32.1		3.67	1.30
I can use the material more quickly than with traditional printed material		3.6	3.6	7.1	25	57.1	3.6	4.39	1.06
	0.9	10.1	10.1	31.2	47.7			4.15	1.06
The formats used are normally compatible with the hardware and software I use (technical aids, browsers, operating systems, etc.)	7.1		3.6	14.3	32.1	39.3	3.6	3.96	1.42
	0.9	1.9	6.5	16.7	46.3	27.8		3.89	1
It lets me be more independent because I don't need other people to obtain / adapt the material	3.6		7.1	7.1	25	57.1		4.25	1.11
	0.9	3.7	13	14.8	33.3	34.3		3.79	1.20

Table 4. Comparison of digital versus traditional teaching materials («Students with disability» / Students without disability).

References

AGUADO, A., ALCEDO, M.A., GONZÁLEZ, M. & AL. (2006). La Universidad de Oviedo y los estudiantes con discapacidad. *Intervención Psicosocial*, *15(1)*, 49-63.

ALBA, C., ZUBILLAGA, A. & RUIZ, N. (2003). Educación superior y discapacidad: Accesibilidad de las páginas web de las universidades estatales. *Comunicación y Pedagogía*, *188*, 25-30.

AREA, M. (2000). ¿Qué aporta Internet al cambio pedagógico en la Educación Superior? In R. PÉREZ (Coord.), *Redes multimedia y diseños virtuales. III Congreso Internacional de Comunicación, Tecnología y Educación*. (pp.128-135). Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo.

CABERO, J., CÓRDOBA, M. & FERNÁNDEZ-BATANERO, J.M. (2007). *Las TIC para la igualdad*. Sevilla: MAD.

CABERO, J. (2004). Reflexiones sobre la brecha digital y la educación. In F.J. SOTO & J. RODRIGUEZ (Coords.), *Las nuevas tecnologías en la respuesta educativa a la diversidad*. (pp.23-42). Murcia: Consejería de Educación y Cultura.

CASTELLANA, M. & SALA, I. (2006). La inclusión de los estudiantes con discapacidad en la universidad: un reto para la universidad española en el nuevo espacio europeo de la educación superior. *Revista de Psicología, Ciencias de la Educación y Deporte*, *18*, 209-228.

COLLINS, B. & MOONEN, J. (2011). Flexibilidad en la educación superior. *Comunicar*, *37*, 15-25. http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C37-2011-02-01.

EDEN, S. & HEIMAN, T. (2011). Computer Mediated Communication: Social Support for Students with and without Learning Disabilities. *Educational Technology & Society*, *14 (2)*, 89-97.

HALL, T.E., MEYER, A. & ROSE, D.H. (2008). *Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom. Practical Applications*. New York: The Guilford Press.

HINOJO, F.J., AZNAR, I. & CÁCERES, M.P. (2009). Percepciones del alumnado sobre el blended learning en la universidad. *Comunicar*, *33*, 165-174. (DOI:10.3916/c33-2009-03-008).

INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTADÍSTICA (Ed.) (2008). *Encuesta sobre discapacidad, autonomía personal y situaciones de dependencia*. Madrid: Autor.

JELFS, A. & RICHARDSON, J.T. (2010). Perceptions of Academic Quality and Approaches to Stydying among Disabled and Non disabled Students in Distance Education. *Studies in Higher Education*, *35 (5)*, 593-607. (DOI: 10.1080/03075070903222666).

MARQUÉS, P. (2001). Algunas notas sobre el impacto de las TIC en la Universidad. *Educar*, *28*, 83-98.

MEHLINGER, H.D. & POWERS, S.M. (2002). *Technology and Teacher Education: A Guide for Educators and Policymakers*. Boston (USA): Houghton Mifflin.

PAVIA, R. (2010). Web 2.0 y la crisis educativa en la revolución digital. *Comunicación y Pedagogía*, *241*, 14-17.

ROSE, D., MEYER, A. & HITCHCOCK, C. (2005). *The Universally Designed Classroom: Accessible Curriculum and Digital Technologies*. Cambridge, MA (USA): Harvard Education Press.

ROSE, D. & MEYER, A. (2002). *Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning*. Alexandria, VA (USA): ASCD.

SINGH, D. (2005). Students with Disabilities and Higher Education. *Journal of American College Health*, *53(5)*.

STEWART, J.F., JAEHWA C. & CORETTA, M. (2010). A Multilevel Analysis of Distance Learning Achievement: Are College Students with Disabilities Making the Grade? *Journal of Rehabilitation*, *76*, 27-39.

VASEK, D. (2005). Assessing the Knowledge Base of Faculty at a Private. *Four-Year Institution College Student Journal*, *4*, 25-32.

ZUBILLAGA, A. & ALBA, C. (2011). La discapacidad como elemento de diferenciación en el acceso de las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación en el proceso educativo de estudiantes universitarios. La formación e investigación en el campo de la Tecnología Educativa. In *Actas XIX Jornadas Universitarias de Tecnología Educativa*. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla / Red Universitaria de Tecnología Educativa.

● M. Esther Del-Moral and Lourdes Villalustre
Oviedo (Spain)

Media literacy, participation and accountability for the media of generation of silence

Alfabetización mediática, participación y responsabilidad frente a los medios de la generación del silencio

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to study the level of media literacy in a sample of elderly women, the so-called «silent generation», belonging to the Asturian Housewives Association, by means of a questionnaire to collect data on critical awareness in women. The questionnaire seeks information on the persuasive effects of advertising; the women's evaluation of the information conveyed by the media, and their training, commitment and participation as media consumers. The survey also tries to identify the women's demands and concerns, regarding the media they usually use, by conducting focus group discussions. Findings show that the women surveyed believe that advertising lacks credibility and claim that some TV stations offer information and content which is biased or has been manipulated to the extent that it goes against the law. Although such women know the channels for citizen participation, they do not know how to exercise their rights in the face of illegal content. In addition, certain training needs have been detected. This research points to the need to design a training plan for media literacy which will empower them with critical skills and foster participation as active and responsible consumers. It is also intended that such women will acquire specific knowledge about the media, as well as the psychological strategies, technical resources and audiovisual language the media use.

RESUMEN

La presente investigación, por un lado, pulsa el nivel de alfabetización mediática que posee una muestra de mujeres de la tercera edad o generación del silencio –integradas en la Agrupación de Amas de Casa del Principado de Asturias–, mediante un cuestionario que recaba información sobre su conciencia crítica a partir de: el efecto de persuasión que creen tiene la publicidad; su valoración sobre la información transmitida por los medios de comunicación; y su formación, compromiso y participación como consumidoras de los mismos. Y, por otro, recoge sus demandas y preocupaciones más acuciantes en torno a los medios que normalmente utilizan, obtenidas a partir de los debates generados en los grupos de discusión que participaron. Entre los resultados más destacados cabe mencionarse que las encuestadas consideran que la publicidad no merece credibilidad e indican que existen cadenas de TV que ofrecen información manipulada o sesgada y contenidos denunciables que vulneran la legislación vigente. Aunque conocen los cauces para la participación ciudadana, no saben reclamar sus derechos ante la exhibición de contenidos denunciables. Además, se detectan determinadas lagunas formativas. De la investigación se deriva la necesidad de diseñar un plan formativo de alfabetización mediática que potencie sus habilidades críticas y fomente su participación como consumidoras activas y responsables, al tiempo que les dote de conocimientos específicos sobre los medios, sus estrategias psicológicas, los recursos técnicos y el lenguaje audiovisual que emplean.

◆ Dr. M. Esther Del-Moral is Professor of ICTs for Education in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at the University of Oviedo (Spain) (emoral@uniovi.es).
◆ Dr. Lourdes Villalustre is Lecturer of ICTs for Education in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at the University of Oviedo (Spain) (villalustrelourdes@uniovi.es).

1. Introduction and overview

Pérez-Tornero and Varis (2010) define our civilization as a hypertechnologised era under progressive change in which culture is constructed from the convergence of the different media and the use made of these by citizens, who should consequently be versed in these languages, that is, become media literate. Hence, awareness of new media and promotion of critical consumption in citizens is one of the greatest challenges facing today's society, as evidenced by the UN's clear commitment to fostering the development of global policies aimed at citizen education (Aguaded, 2012). A new global paradigm of education has therefore appeared known as «media literacy» which aims at promoting responsible media use and the acquisition of the necessary competences to select, understand and discriminate information accessed through different channels (television, Internet, videogames, etc.) (Potter, 2011). Media literacy seeks to awaken citizens' critical awareness so that they demand a sustainable communication based on veracity of messages and accurate information.

The call for media literacy, and thus for the development of media literacy competences, is not new, there being several experiences and research projects which focus on training different sectors of society. In Spain, some of these have aimed at adult education (Correa, 1998; Bautista, Delgado & Zehag, 1999) as has the work of Iriarte (1999) in a Latin American context. Others, such as Núñez and Loscertales (2000), worked with women whilst Estebanell, Ferrés and Guiu (2004) focused on the child audience, etc. In the English-speaking context, research has also taken place into media literacy from different perspectives: its repercussions on higher education (Hobbs, 2007); its influence on child consumers (Eintraub, Kristine and Johnson, 1997); its capacity for empowering critical thinking (Feuerstein, 1999), etc.

Likewise, the need to provide basic audiovisual competences to a disadvantaged group such as senior citizen housewives fostered the development in Asturias of initiatives aimed at achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2010) in order to minimize the gap between a generation brought up viewing a single screen and the «multiscreen generation» of their grandchildren.

The older women taking part in the current study belong to a generation termed by sociologists as «the silent generation» (born 1925-1945). Rosen (2010) points out that these women spent their childhood without television, since television did not in fact become part of Spanish households until the mid-1950s. As

adults, they watched black and white TV with only one channel, and only later were able to view color TV and new channels. At the end of their working life, many have been overwhelmed by the increasing impact of technology (mobile phone, Internet, iPod, iPad and so on) as a result of which a new form of exclusion is appearing, especially for senior citizen housewives.

We therefore consider research into the knowledge and attitudes of this social group as regards the media to be relevant in identifying their level of media literacy.

2. Material and methods

Livingstone (2011) maintains that media literacy should be concerned with critical understanding, the creation of media resources and closely analyzing the media in order to guarantee objective observation of the world as well as creative self expression.

The term «critical media awareness» refers to the ability of consumers to analyze, question and evaluate information accessed through the media. Such higher order cognitive activity requires the abilities and skills necessary to adopt proactive attitudes achieved through actions, behavior and critical, committed and creative responses to the media in general and television in particular (Del Moral, 2010a). Therefore, the level of critical awareness is closely related to citizen participation through appropriate channels designated by society, claiming respect for their rights, acting coherently and assuming responsibility as citizens to ensure and demand enforcement of the General Law regulating Audiovisual Contents (LGCA, 2010).

2.1. Objectives of the study

The aim of this study was to identify the level of media literacy –through critical awareness, participation and responsibility– shown by a representative sample of the social sphere of women in Asturias, such as the Asturias Regional Housewives' Association (AACP).

2.2. Methodology

The methodology used in this study involved active, dynamic and communicative participation, in which the women taking part could intervene, discuss and communicate with their peers as regards their most pressing demands and concerns relating to the media they usually made use of (television and radio) whilst at the same time measuring their level of critical awareness. The following procedures were implemented:

• Initial diagnostic testing of the sample (n=64), via a questionnaire and posterior statistical analysis, before dividing into groups and starting the workshops.

• Setting-up of 5 work groups of 12 participants each to work on the topics presented: 1) the General Law regulating Audiovisual Contents (LGCA,) and viewers' rights; 2) Child Protection; 3) Formulas for citizen participation; 4) Critical analysis of advertising.

• Collection and processing of group contributions, using qualitative methodology supported with tools such as logbooks and observation guides characteristic of ethnographic research. The starting script was organized around the psycho-sociological, technical and aesthetic analysis of various audiovisual documents shown in order to record the comments made after viewing, identifying their interpretations, limitations, training needs, demands and concerns.

• Construction of general conclusions arising from data analysis of the questionnaire and inferences made by the discussion groups.

2.3. Data collection tool

The questionnaire had two parts, one of which gathered information on the descriptive parameters of the research subjects: age, gender, etc. The other, with 12 items, was designed to verify participant level of critical awareness through analysis of specific aspects regarding:

a) The persuasive effects of advertising: Degree of perceived influence on consumers. Degree of agreement that they had ever bought a product on seeing an advertisement; Degree of agreement in identifying key factors that might induce them to buy an advertised product.

b) Evaluation of the information transmitted by media. Level of awareness of the emotional and rational components in television messages; Degree of reliability acquired by news items when accompanied by an image; Level of perception of bias and manipulation in news items broadcast on certain television stations; Degree of agreement in identifying the criteria used to choose TV and radio stations for acquiring news.

c) Active participation. Awareness of the audience ratings system used by different programmes; Degree

of reflection on whether TV programming content gives reason for complaint; Awareness of the existence of institutions to protect viewers' rights; Degree of identification of these in order to assert their rights as viewers and demand accountability; Verification of direct action taken to show dissatisfaction.

2.4. Sampling method

A sample was made up of 64 women, all of whom were regional delegates for the different Housewives' Associations of the Principality of Asturias (AACPA), distributed as follows: aged 66-75 years old (41%), 56-65 years old (40%), over 75 years old (10%) and finally

> He need to provide basic audiovisual competences to a disadvantaged group such as senior citizen housewives fostered the development in Asturias of initiatives aimed at achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2010) in order to minimize the gap between a generation brought up viewing a single screen and the «multiscreen generation» of their grandchildren.

the minority group aged between 46 and 55 years old (9%). Almost all respondents have children –generally two (42%)– and also spend a large amount of time taking care of grandchildren. More than half of the respondents have completed Primary School education (59%) whilst 32% have Vocational Training or Baccalaureate qualifications. 6% of women have University Degrees and the remaining 3% have had no formal education.

3. Research findings and analysis
3.1. Persuasive effects of advertising

The role played by advertising as a catalyst and stimulus of consumption is beyond question. The media are aware of this and swamp programming with advertising aimed at drawing viewers' attention, attempting and persuading them to buy specific products or services, making them easy prey for attractive messages which are accepted unreservedly and uncritically.

a) Influence of advertising on consumers. Respondents were asked whether they believed that advertising has a real influence on consumers. Some convergence of opinion was observed as 86% agreed to a greater or lesser extent on this statement, as is shown in figure 1, whereas a marginal 14.5% of respondents were doubtful of such an influence, with 6.4% finding very little or little influence and 8% none whatsoever.
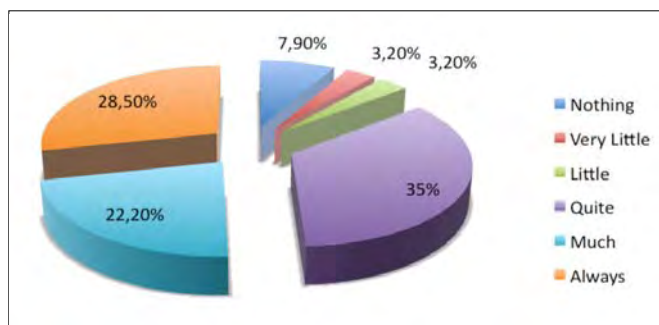

Figure 1. Respondents' beliefs as regards whether consumers are influenced by advertising.

b) Purchases are conditioned by advertising. Another item specifically highlighted the perceived persuasive effect of advertising on themselves as consumers and, surprisingly, 43% claimed never to have made a decision to try out a product based on advertising, 33% hardly ever and 8% rarely. Only 16% admit being persuaded to do so by advertising, of whom 13% claim to be quite frequently or frequently influenced and 3% state that they are always influenced.

These findings are insightful in that it would appear that the respondents do not consider themselves to be among the 86% of the population that is vulnerable to advertising's persuasive messages, as indicated previously. Two interpretations may, therefore, be possible: either that the cost of the product as well as these housewives' real needs are unquestionably more decisive factors than the attraction of the advertising message itself, which would point to the sample of respondents possessing a high degree of independence when making decisions, or, on the other hand, it could

indicate that they are not aware of being influenced and do actually buy advertised products under a greater level of pre-conditioning than they reveal.

c) Factors that might induce them to buy an advertised product. Nevertheless, although the respondents sampled claim not to be influenced by advertising –never (43%) or very occasionally (41%)– when asked to identify the key factor that might induce them to try a product advertised, they produced some interesting data, as shown in table 1.

Around 43% of respondents indicate that the factors that have the most influence on whether or not they buy a product are quite often, often and always the qualities and benefits of the product shown in advertising. Although there are also some conflicting opinions, since the remaining 57% that they were rarely, hardly ever or never convinced by the deceptive appearance of advertising. Whilst 70% of respondents find that advertising messages lack credibility, around 25% indicate that such messages are persuasive and condition their purchases. On the contrary to what might be thought by advertising agencies, who opt for famous people or models as the star of the spot, 81% of respondents consider that they are rarely, hardly ever or never induced to buy a product because of the protagonist. Around 64% affirm that the originality of the spot is never, hardly ever or rarely a decisive factor towards consuming advertised products in contrast to the other 36% who state the opposite.

To sum up, after gathering the conclusions of the discussion groups focusing on critical analysis of advertising, it can be seen that in general the respondents mistrust advertising. Nevertheless, they recognize the fact that it may convince large sectors of the audience. Thus they feel that there is a need for the development of specific training to aid consumers to analyze each of the aspects that make advertising such a tremendous vehicle for generating consumption, to separate the packaging from the reality of the product, to perceive to what extent the products or services advertised are

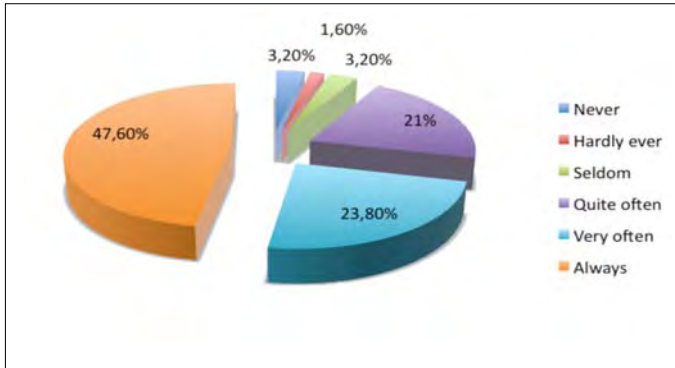| Table 1. Degree of agreement with the factor that might personally induce them to try an advertised product						
	Never	Hardly ever	Seldom	Quite often	Very often	Always
The protagonist in the spot	52,4%	16%	12,6%	9,5%	4,8%	4,8%
The message conveyed	39,7%	12,7%	17,5%	20,6%	4,8%	4,8%
Originality of the spot	30,2%	16%	17,5%	19%	5%	12,3%
Benefits of the product shown	17,5%	9,5%	30,2%	16%	12,6%	14,2%

Figure 2. Respondents' evaluation of whether they identify the rational end emotive components pervading television messages.

3.2. Evaluation of the information transmitted by media

It is a well-known fact that the transmission of information is not impartial since it includes, on the one hand, objective elements linked to a description of fact, a statement of contents and concepts –within the framework of what is purely rational– and, on the other hand, elements which are open to interpretation and associated to ideological and ethical evaluation together with a strong emotional and affective component. The extent to which television messages are emotionally charged may condition viewers' freedom and decision-making. If rationality and objectivity are lost, the viewer may be moved to act through compassion, suffering, pain, hate, revenge, love, happiness, hope, etc. (Del Moral, 2010b).

Although expressive aspects and technical resources, such as the graphic illustration of news with images, can contribute to a greater degree of reliability for viewers, it is also essential to make the viewer aware that such aspects may also add ideological connotations or increase their interpretive or manipulatory value. Therefore, a viewer with a high level of critical awareness may be expected to have at least a minimum awareness of the psychological strategies used by the media to construct the messages which reach an audience, as well as being able to differentiate the rational and emotive aspects pervading these.

a) Level of awareness of the emotional and rational components in television messages. The housewives making up the current sample were therefore asked if they

were aware of and could distinguish between the rational and emotive components that usually pervade television message and the following responses were obtained: almost half the respondents (approximately 48%) claim that they always perceive this whilst another significant 44.5% often or quite often do so, whereas only 8% responded that they rarely, hardly ever or never perceive it (figure 2).

To verify their responses, the work groups were then shown a selection of news from various TV television stations, as well as dialogues from both foreign and Spanish TV series. They were asked to separate the objective aspects of the information –or of the stories– from the emotive resources which might bias interpretation and induce certain attitudes. This demonstrated that it was not easy for them to separate these facets in spite of their claims to the contrary, thus highlighting that the plan to train media consumers in media competences should integrate activities which would develop the skill to distinguish between the rational and the emotive components of television discourse.

b) Degree of reliability acquired by news items when accompanied by an image. Similarly, when they were asked whether a news item accompanied by an image had a greater degree of reliability, the responses shown in Figure 3 were received. Around 43% appear to be quite sure that news items which are graphically illustrated have more credibility than those which are not, whilst 38% agree that they are often or quite often more reliable. A more skeptical 9% believe that they are rarely or hardly ever reliable whilst around 9.5% believe that they are never reliable, may be manipulated or not show the whole truth.

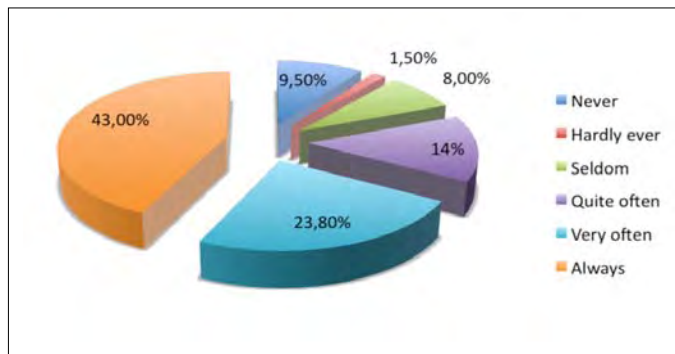At later sessions, the work groups discussed how

Figure 3. Respondents' beliefs regarding the reliability of news items when accompanied by images.

descriptions of specific news accompanied by dramatic images can charge them with such emotion that they become true dramas, thereby conditioning the audience's attitudes and behavior, with a serious risk of ideological manipulation of discourse, and occasionally modeling their thinking towards a specific fact or event. This led them to conclude that they needed to learn: 1) to identify the added value conferred on the news by images illustrating credibility, contextualization, ideological positioning, clarification, synthesis, complaint, prestige/discredit, legitimization/delegitimization, etc.; 2) to determine the feelings and emotions aroused by such images and the reactions they are capable of eliciting from the audience.

c) Detection of biased or manipulated information on some television stations. Very often everyday social facts and events have deep political and economic implications and the media undoubtedly report and interpret these from the ideological viewpoint to which they adhere. For this reason, some viewers complain that information is not objective, and that some TV or radio stations take a stance in line with the politico-ideological affiliations backing them, by highlighting certain aspects over others, by hiding the truth or only revealing half-truths, in short, by biasing information and confusing the audience.

Hence, the housewives were asked to state whether they thought that «some TV and/or radio stations offer biased or manipulated information», which generated critical data, as for 44.5% of respondents, some television stations always offer this kind of information and for 41.2%, this was often or quite often the case. Only 6.3% of more «reflective» respondents think that this is rare and only 8% consider that it hardly ever occurs, although no respondents maintain that this never happens (figure 4).

The discussion groups' conclusions in this regard are thus unanimous in demanding greater stringency and objectivity from the media when transmitting information. Equally, they, themselves, should be aware that they need to take on more responsibility for training if they are not to continue «listening only to certain voices» and should contrast the information given by different media in order to gain a viewpoint which is closer to the truth and thereby make their own judgments.

d) Criteria used to select media for acquiring information. As a result, it was thought that it could be of interest to have respondents reflect on the criteria they use, whether consciously or unconsciously, to choose which TV and/or radio stations to get information from. So they were asked to indicate the factors that were most decisive when making their choice. 36.5% highlighted that the key factor, above all others, when choosing a TV or radio station for information concerned the professionals working in them. This was closely followed by the political independence of the broadcasting station, chosen by 30% of respondents.

46% of respondents consider that the political party or ideology supported by a TV or radio station never or hardly ever influences their choice, together with 21% who state that this is rarely their reason for choosing it. On the other hand, 19% point to this as the key factor in their choice as do 14% whose election is often or quite often dependent on this aspect.

Therefore, the political independence of the chosen television station would appear to be the fundamental factor taken into consideration when selecting a television station for information for more than half of the respondents (54%). It is surprising to find that 25.5% of these women prefer to be informed from a specific ideological point of view, which one supposes is in agreement with their own personal political affiliation.

Approximately 37% also indicate that quite often or often the presentation or the format –how innovatory it is– of each television station's news programmes is another factor determining choice.

The respondents undoubtedly carried out an interesting exercise of reflection to enable them to be more aware of their decisions and to identify the real factors determining their choice of TV and/or radio stations when seeking information. Later, after the work group debates, we pinpointed a need to compare the information given by various media, in order to contrast these, judge divergent points of view, understand the ideological positioning underpinning them and high-
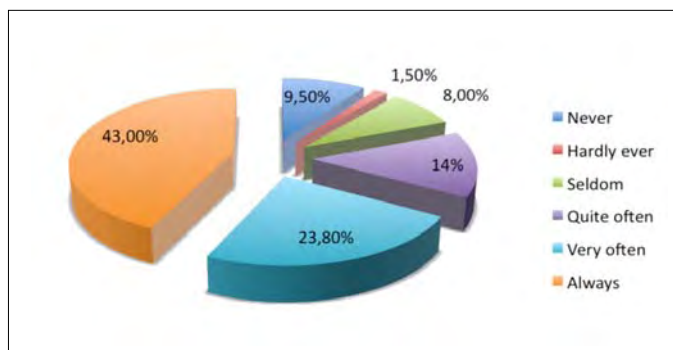

Figure 4. Respondents' opinions on whether some television stations manipulate or bias their information

Table 2. Degree of agreement that the choice of TV and/or radio stations for information is based:						
	Never	Hardly ever	Rarely	Quite often	Often	Always
Political party or ideology	41,3%	4,8%	20,7%	3,2%	11%	19%
Political independence	25,5%	8%	12,5%	8%	16%	30%
Professionals working for the broadcasting station	12,7%	9,5%	16%	14,3%	11%	36,5%
Presentation or format of the programme	22,2%	6,3%	11%	22,3%	14,3%	23,8%

light significant differences when describing facts and events.

An additional conclusion was that for people to be properly informed and not manipulated, they should be aware of the different approaches to the interpretation of reality taken by the media, which is the only way to achieve a free, unbiased viewpoint.

3.3. Active participation

It is frequently the case that when citizens show a high degree of critical awareness towards the media – or to any of the programmes broadcast by the media– it might be directly related, on the one hand, to consistent active participation in forums or specialised sites where they are able to voice their opinion, agreement or disagreement with what is broadcast, or, on the other hand, to boycotting these and reducing their audience, thereby contributing to their disappearance from programming networks as being unprofitable amongst other reasons.

The media are concerned to substantiate to what extent they actually penetrate society and invest a large part of their budget on verifying audience ratings in comparison with their direct competitors since this has a direct influence on third party investment (advertising) and survival in the telecommunications market. As a result, we should be aware that audiences are truly empowered when they are aware of this and act accordingly, asserting their rights and ensuring that the laws regulating media consumption are complied with.

a) Awareness of audience rating systems. It should be pointed out that 67% of respondents have no knowledge of the system used by different programmes to rate audience fidelity. However, 25% of the women sampled show a good knowledge of these systems, with some having a device for this purpose on their own TV set and a subscription to the ratings program contracted.

b) Opinion on whether TV programming content gives reason for complaint. In addition, when asked specifically about whether TV programming

content gives reason for complaint, 43% hold that this is always so, followed by 27% who believe that there are often or quite often reasons for complaint, which together make up a significant 70% of respondents showing general dissatisfaction. In contrast, 16% of respondents appear to be satisfied with televised content since they feel that these never give any reason for complaint, whilst another 14% are also less critical, reporting that they rarely or hardly ever find cause for complaint (figure 5).

We thought it would be useful in the discussion groups to contrast any programming elements that they subjectively considered might be susceptible to complaints with those that are specifically covered in the General Law on Audiovisual Content (2010). This drew attention to their lack of knowledge of their rights as viewers, which broadly explains the degree of conformity and tolerance regarding broadcasting, evidenced especially by 30% of respondents, as mentioned previously.

This is evidently another key point to be included in the training program, i.e. explaining and making an in-depth analysis of the GLAC (General Law on Audiovisual Content) to make it accessible to the participants so that they are aware of their rights and are therefore able to assert them.

c) Awareness of the existence of institutions to protect viewers' rights. It was then decided to verify whether they were aware of the institutions or agencies they could turn to should they wish to make a complaint if they were dissatisfied with television content and it was found that nearly 60% do not know
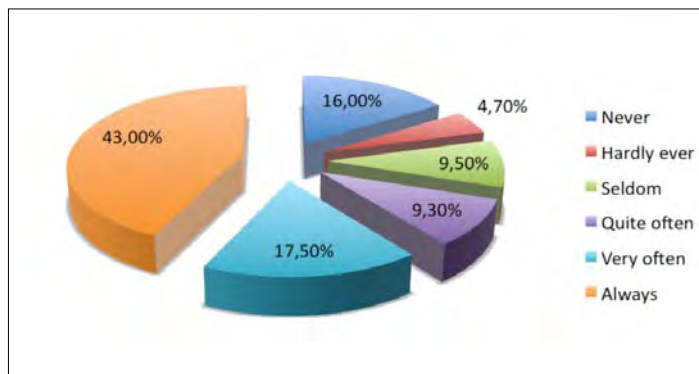

Figure 5. Respondents' opinions on whether TV programming content gives reason for complaint.

these. Only 40% said that they knew who to contact, pointing to the Viewers' Association as the main institution (59.5%), followed by Consumer Associations (36%) and lastly the Law Courts (3%) and the actual TV broadcasting station itself (1.5%).

Obviously, these data give cause for concern since they point to to the fact that the dissatisfaction with certain television programme content expressed by a large number of respondents (70%) never materializes as a complaint, basically because of their lack of knowledge of the appropriate channels used by society to this effect.

It is evident that the key role now played by the different consumer and media user associations –also termed as viewers' or listeners' associations– after the passing of the General Law on Audiovisual Content (2010) goes beyond simply guaranteeing enforcement. Fuente (2010) highlights that these associations can actually function as agents of media literacy.

d) Filing complaints. Indeed, when respondents were asked whether they had ever personally contacted the institutions that they had named to express dissatisfaction or to file a complaint regarding their opinions on unsuitable content or messages broadcast on TV, findings showed that 94% had never done so whilst only 6% had ever contacted a Consumer Association to make a formal complaint about misleading publicity advertising certain services.

Nevertheless, although 40% of respondents do know where to refer complaints or voice disapproval about what they feel to be a breach of their rights, we perceive a lack of decision to break through the inertia of a laissez-faire attitude.

In line with the relationship of interdependence between citizen participation and quality television established by Bustamante and Aranguren (2005), the discussion groups underlined the need to show more commitment to active participation in forums or sites where citizens' opinions can be made public. In addition, socially recognized mechanisms should be urgently implemented to defend viewers' rights and citizens should be more aggressive in demands leading to greater quality of media in general and of television in particular, as noted by Boza (2005).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The sample taking part in the current study was made up of women, a majority of whom are grandmothers in charge of their grandchildren. These women's media competences and skills play a crucial role from the home environment in developing responsible and critical media consumption, hence our interest in focusing on this particular group. The current research has produced some extremely interesting findings leading to the design of a training plan.

Firstly, the women surveyed affirm that they are not influenced by the persuasive messages of advertising. They feel that their consumer habits are mainly swayed by family and economic necessity and that they are not attracted by advertising messages. It can be inferred from their opinions that a high percentage of the women are able to identify the strategies used in spots to induce excessive consumption.

Secondly, they express their concerns that some media offer the viewer biased and manipulated information, and they criticize their lack of rigor and objectivity when transmitting information. It is not surprising, therefore, in the light of such distrust, that their choice of TV and/or radio broadcasting station to acquire information is based on two fundamental criteria: on the one hand, confidence in the professionals working for the broadcasting station and on the other, its political independence. Their responses allow us to infer that they do have sufficient ability to distinguish the ideological values present in news media.

Finally, although many of the women surveyed detect broadcasting which infringes the regulations of the General Law on Audiovisual Content (2010), such as showing gratuitous violence (Fernández, Revilla and Domínguez, 2011), or making an attack on personal integrity, etc., they have neither expressed dissatisfaction nor made a complaint to the agencies and institutions set up to this effect. Therefore, one of the lines of action to be incorporated in the media literacy training plan should aim at developing not only the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills for responsible media consumption but also at fostering active participation in reporting abuse and demanding responsibility from the media to comply with legislation, especially as regards child protection.

References

AGUADED, J.I. (2012). Apuesta de la ONU por una educación y alfabetización mediáticas. *Comunicar, 38,* 7-8. (DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C38-2012-01-01).

BAUTISTA, A.; DELGADO, S. & ZEHAG, M. (1999). Estudio sobre el valor de la alfabetización audiovisual en adultos. *Pixel-Bit, 13.* (www.sav.us.es/pixelbit/pixelbit/articulos/n13/n13art/art136.htm) (05-07-2011).

BOLETÍN OFICIAL DEL ESTADO (Ed.) (2010). *Ley General de Contenidos audiovisuales.* BOE, 79. (www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/04/01-/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-5292.pdf) (05-09-2011).

BOZA, J. (2005). Las asociaciones de telespectadores en la construcción de una televisión de calidad. *Comunicar, 25,* 109-115.

BUSTAMANTE, B. & ARANGUREN, F. (2005). Televisión de calidad y participación ciudadana. *Comunicar, 25, (2).*

CORREA, J.M. (1998). La enseñanza de la televisión: una experiencia de investigación-acción cooperativa en educación de adultos. *Profesorado*, *2 (1)*, 59-70. (http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/pdf/567/567-11854005.pdf) (05-09-2011).

DEL MORAL, M.E. (2010a). Consumidores competentes en el marco de la nueva Ley General del Audiovisual. In *Meeting EURALVA Internacional Conference: Los retos de la televisión pública en el nuevo escenario audiovisual*. Barcelona, October 15th, 2010.

DEL MORAL, M.E. (2010b). Fines de los medios de comunicación y niveles de intervención. La audiencia infantil. In M.E. DEL MORAl (Coord.), *Televisión: desarrollo de la creatividad e infancia*. (pp. 21-30). Barcelona: Octaedro.

ESTEBANELL, M.; FERRÉS, J. & GUIU, E. (2004). Análisis del proceso de adquisición del código audiovisual y de la intervención de los agentes que forman a los ciudadanos en el conocimiento de los medios. *Relatec*, *3 (1)*. (http://campusvirtual.unex.es/cala/editio/index.php?journal=relatec&page=article&op=viewFile&path[]=143&path[]=133) (05-09-2011).

EINTRAUB, E. KRISTINE, A. & JOHNSON, K. (1997). Effects of General and Alcohol-Specific Media Literacy Training On Children's Decision Making About Alcohol. *Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives*, *2 (1)*, 17-42.

FERNÁNDEZ, C. REVILLA, J.C. & DOMÍNGUEZ, R. (2011). Identificación y especularidad en los espectadores de violencia en televisión: una reconstrucción a partir del discurso. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, *24 (1)*, 7-34.

FEUERSTEIN, M. (1999). Media Literacy in Support of Critical Thinking. *Journal of Educational Media*, *24 (1)*, 43-54.

FUENTE, C. (2010). El papel del asociacionismo audiovisual tras la LGCA. Las asociaciones de usuarios de los medios como agentes de la alfabetización mediática. *Icono 14*, *8 (2)*, 102-117. (www.icono-14.net/revista/8-vol2/30_icono16_carmenfuente.pdf) (05-09-2011).

HOBBS, R. (2007). *Reading the Media: Media Literacy in High School English*. New York: Teachers College Press.

IRIARTE, G. (1999). Conciencia crítica y Televisión. *Comunicar*, *12*, 166-169.

LIVINGSTONE, S. (2011). Concepciones convergentes sobre alfabetización mediática. *Infoamerica*, *5*, 25-37.

NACIONES UNIDAS (2010). *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio. Informe 2010*. (www.un.org/es/comun/docs/?path=/spanish/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_Report_2010_SP.pdf) (05-09-2011).

NÚÑEZ, T. & LOSCERTALES, F. (2000). Mujeres, profesoras y TV: una mirada crítica. *Píxel Bit*, *15*. (www.sav.us.es/pixelbit/pixelbit/articulos/n15/n15art/art157.htm) (05-09-2011).

PÉREZ-TORNERO, J.M. & VARIS, T. (2010). *Media Literacy and New Humanism*. Moscow: UNESCO, Institute for Information Technologies in Education.

POTTER, W.J. (2011). *Media Literacy*. California: SAGE.

ROSEN, L.D. (2010). *Rewired. Understanding the iGeneration and he Way they Learn*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

● Margarita Ledo and Enrique Castelló
Santiago de Compostela (Spain)

Cultural Diversity across the Networks: The Case of National Cinema

La diversidad cultural a través de la Red: el caso del cine identitario

ABSTRACT

The research «Cinema, Diversity and Networks» tries to isolate the principal stimuli or reticences in the consumption of products generated by small cinematographies, analyzing the particular case of the diffusion through the digital interactive networks of cinematographic contents produced in Galicia. It is a multicentral investigation with the collaboration of the universities of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay – the countries with a significant migratory Galician presence–, with special focus on the university groups of reception for their special predisposition to the media intercultural consumption. Our work addresses a statistical determination of the social-demographic and axiologic profile as well as the habits of consumption of the participant groups as an introduction to the confrontation with some representative films produced in Galicia between 2003 and 2008 in order to establish the influence of certain thematic, formal and linguistic variables in the acceptance or objection to certain messages. The study can be identified with the models of basic and applied investigation: basic, for its analysis of the cultural determinant indicators of the cinematographic consumption in communities, which although geographically dispersed preserve their identity elements such as the language; and applied, as our investigation provides a transfer of knowledge to their technological partners in addition to the opening of unexplored niches of transnational consumption through the potential that the digital networks offer nowadays.

RESUMEN

La investigación «Cine, Diversidad y Redes» pretende aislar los principales estímulos o reticencias en el consumo de productos generados por pequeñas cinematografías, analizando el caso concreto de la circulación a través de las redes digitales interactivas de contenidos cinematográficos producidos en Galicia. Se trata de una investigación multicéntrica en la que participan universidades radicadas en Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay –países con una significativa presencia migratoria gallega–, a través de grupos de recepción principalmente universitarios, por su especial predisposición al consumo mediático intercultural. Nuestro trabajo aborda una determinación estadística del perfil sociodemográfico, axiológico y de hábitos de consumo de los grupos participantes, como proemio a su encuentro con una muestra representativa, integrada por obras cinematográficas producidas en Galicia entre 2003 y 2008, a los efectos de precisar la influencia de determinadas variables temáticas, formales y lingüísticas en la aceptación o recusación de determinados mensajes. La investigación responde, en suma, a los modelos de investigación básica y aplicada: básica, por su análisis de indicadores culturales determinantes del consumo cinematográfico en comunidades que, aunque geográficamente dispersas, preservan elementos identitarios como la lengua; y aplicada, en la medida en que la investigación contempla una transferencia de conocimiento a sus socios tecnológicos, coadyuvante de la apertura de nichos inexplorados de consumo transnacional, a través del potencial que actualmente brindan las redes digitales.

KEYWORDS / PALABRAS CLAVE

Cine, contexto universitario, exclusión digital, globalización, identidad cultural, migración, redes digitales.
Cinema, university context, digital exclusion, globalization, cultural identity, migration, digital networks.

◆ Dr. Margarita Ledo-Andión is PhD. Professor at the Department of Communication Sciences of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) (margarita.ledo@usc.es).
◆ Dr. Enrique Castelló-Mayo is PhD. Full Professor at the Department of Communication Sciences of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) (enrique.castello@usc.es).

1. Introduction and state of the art review

UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights, adopted in Barcelona in June 1996, warned about the enduring communicative exclusion suffered by those geo-linguistic communities traditionally obliterated by global cultural flows.

Just over a decade later, this exclusion had worsened due to the exponential increases in migratory flows –with their inexorable cultural crossbreeding– and the unstoppable irradiation of those developed cultural industries which, taking advantage of the digital divide, amplified and diversified their dissemination and consumption models. As an attempt to reverse this trend, UNESCO proclaimed 2008 as the International Year of Languages and organised a variety of international events to celebrate cultural diversity, which was supported by such initiatives as the Plural+ Youth Video Festival organised by the UNAOC (Aguaded, 2011: 7).

For its part, the European Union (EU) has developed joint actions with other cinematographies since 2000 (Montero & Moreno, 2007), whose policy implementation culminated in December 2007 with the creation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). In addition, the EU has intensified its support for national cinemas through its MEDIA programme.

In this regard, we agree with the definition of «national cinema» given by Vitali and Willemen (2006), who describe it as an industry and as a set of cultural strategies that do not exclude the recognition of national cultures as plural, heterogeneous and diverse. This view is shared by Hjort and Petrie (2007) in relation to the cinematography produced by small nations –of which Denmark, Wales and Scotland, in Europe, and Taiwan and Hong Kong, in Asia, constitute paradigmatic examples–, which consider the overseas promotion of their film productions as a cultural priority. However, making this type of idiosyncratic content globally available requires both the neutralisation of the factors that condition its circulation as well as an intensive exploitation of the global networks.

And precisely, this reflection, applied to the dissemination of Galician cinema in different Latin American countries, constitutes the central theme of the research presented here: «Cinema, Diversity and Networks». This study of the circulation potential of national cinema involves research traditions that cover the studies of the British Film Institute (Crofts, 2006) to the Canadian/Québécois studies (Lizarraga, 2007) that address the particularities that make certain types

of cinema an unequivocal manifestation of cultural identity. These particularities include: the use of a particular language; the depiction of certain common spaces and the reiteration of certain themes as a reflection of the national history; the presence of cultural, ethnic or religious traditions; the depiction of the producing nation's social organisation; and the uniqueness of the conflicts faced by the society in question.

This refined definition would be related to the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of «Habitus» (2005), which indicates that society formulates its definitions about reality from a media perspective; the consequences that, according to Marzal (2003), the «digital migration» would have for the Hollywood film industry and independent film industry; and the fears of Gozálvez (2011) about the effects that the possible reductive perception of citizens as digital consumers would have on the proper functioning of the democratic order. Similarly, with regards to the impact of the increasing communicative globalisation on those communities that have lower demographic, linguistic or political weight, it is necessary to mention the main contributions of Tristan Mattelart (2009), Sinclair and Cunningham (2000), Armand Mattelart (2006) and García Canclini (2004).

Thus, this new research study conducted by the Audiovisual Studies Group (GEA according to its initials in Galician language) of the University of Santiago de Compostela, accepts the challenge, previously promoted by UNESCO and the EU, through the study of one of the most interesting manifestations of cultural diversity: the production and dissemination of minority cinematographies. To be precise, our study focuses on the analysis of the Galicia film production and its dissemination among the Galician diaspora in Latin America –and particularly its university community–, which are subject matters that have never before been analysed from the perspectives proposed in this study.

The study of reception in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil is justified because these countries host Galician migrant communities which, due to their demographic weight or their preservation of active identitary features, constitute referential universes of great interest for our study.

Moreover, the selection of university students to form the reception groups is based on their active intercultural consumption. Meanwhile, the choice of Galicia and its Latin American projection as objects of study is justified by the identitary uniqueness of this autonomous community which is part of two very diverse geo-linguistic areas: the Lusophone sphere and the Hispanosphere. In this sense, we cannot ignore

the implications of Anderson's concept of «imagined communities» (1983: 7) with regards to its conceptualisation of the origin of the collective identity in the acceptance of certain messages and symbolic rituals by its members.

In summary, the complexity of the object of study demands a series of objectives that concern diverse areas such as anthropology, economics, culture, and technology, and that could be summarised in the following points:

1) To analyse the reception and consumption of Galician film productions, and in particular to identify the sociocultural barriers that, in a manifest or latent way, affect their circulation through interactive digital networks, based on criteria such as linguistic understanding and the identification of a series of sociocultural elements, in order to formulate a series of recommendations to increase the circulation of Galician audiovisual productions.

2) As evidence of the interest generated by cultural diversity, another objective of the study «Cinema, Diversity and Networks» is to better understand language preferences in film consumption, i.e. to determine which percentages of viewers prefer to watch the original, dubbed, or subtitled versions of a film.

3) This research also aims to combine the polysemy of the concept of «network» in a double sense: on the one hand, as a community that works at the distance through differentiated nuclei and, on the other, as technological network that organises geographically distant groups, among which the dissemination of certain content would contribute to the creation or strengthening of certain identity values.

4) To contribute to future research works that are based on comparative reception studies between different countries, by determining the technological, social, and cultural relevance of the communication networks existing in the migrant diasporas, and by identifying those identity markers preserved by the geographically dispersed communities, in the sense proposed by León (2009).

5) To explore new niche markets for Galicia digital cinema, and by extension for the Spanish cinema, in Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries. Moved by the university mission of transferring knowledge to society, our objective is to offer our research results, which are useful for the development of future projects of cinematographic co-production and intercultural communication, to those public and private bodies that are engaged in the dissemination of Galician culture and, particularly, to the technological partners of this research project[1].

2. Material and methods

As the following flow chart shows, our main challenge with regards to the methods to undertake our research was the synergistic combination of up to four types of data extraction and management: data from the universe of reference (divided in turn into sociodemographic profile and consumption habits), data from the reception of the audiovisual samples by the surveyed population, and data from the online discussion forums with our universe of reference.

The main methodological contribution of our study lies precisely to its original online instrument, designed ad hoc, based on a Web Content Management System called CMS Orchestra, developed by Imaxin Software. This program supports the online platform for the survey, the discussion forums, and the samples of analysis, as well as the extraction of the resulting data and the interactivity between the participating groups and the matrix group: hence the bi-directional vectors included in the previous figure.

As shown in the previous flow chart, the
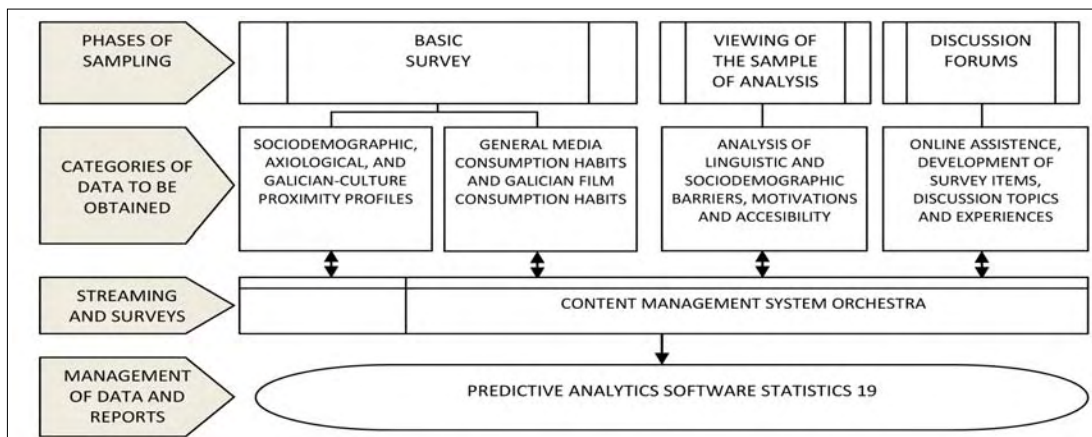
Orchestra software was complemented with the PASW (Predictive Analytics SoftWare) Statistics 19, for its proven capacity to support multiple collaborations in a single platform. As it can be easily inferred, the complexity of the involved sampling elements demanded enormous predictive potential in data management and systematic analysis, as well as some ability to produce reports and prevent errors or missing values.

In any case, our priority in the design of this online tool aimed to make its management almost intuitive to respond to the diversity of ICTs competences of our reception groups. In this sense, the testing of beta versions of this tool on a representative sample of respondents contributed to its conceptual, ergonomic or procedural optimisation. Moreover, the coordinators of each reception group were trained face-to-face by members of the GEA research group who visited them in their respective cities.

For a better understanding of our methodological design, the following three sections describe the different phases of the multistage sampling –survey, film-watching sessions, and discussion forums–, while the fourth section describes the profile of the surveyed population.

2.1. The survey

The access to the online survey was restricted to users provided with password-protected accounts. After identification in the login page (shown in the following figure), users had to respond to a group of 16 questions –of which 13 were closed questions, 1 open question, and 2 were mixed questions– that investigated their user profile. The second block of questions investigated consumer habits and consisted of 27 questions, of which 19 were closed and 8 mixed[2].

2.2. Viewing of the sample of films

This type of analysis was chosen to avoid typical risks such as the obsession with empirical information and context and the return of biographism, which have been rightly pointed out by Zunzunegui (2007: 51-58). Thus, the type of study proposed to participating groups is part of the content analysis tradition, which has been reviewed by Krippendorf (2004), who elaborated on the impact of audiovisual narratives in intercultural relations in educational contexts (Bautista, 2009) and anticipated identity prejudices present in literature or cinema (Rodríguez, 2011).

With regards to the cinematographic body of analysis, we selected eight Galician films produced from 2003 to 2008, with the aim of establishing the influence of certain thematic, formal and linguistic variables in the assimilation and acceptance of certain contents. In order to streamline the screening and analysis by our reception universe, we limited the length of the film samples to a maximum of fifteen minutes, and selected those that had the largest number of representative items for our research.

2.3. Discussion forums

From its initial online conception, «Cinema, Diversity and Networks» aimed to create a space for virtual dialogue between the participating groups and the matrix group. From this perspective, the successive discussion forums that we enabled served two needs: the information of conceptual, ergonomic or procedural incidents by users and the exchange of opinions about the key questions raised in this research.

Title	Author	Format/genre	Full / fragment
«A escola das areas»	Tomás Conde	Animation short film	Full
«Cienfuegos 1913»	Margarita Ledo	Documentary short film	Full
«León e Olvido»	Xavier Bermúdez	Fiction feature film	Fragment
«Mamasunción»	Chano Piñeiro	Fiction short film	Full
«Os 15.000 de Newark»	Anxo Fernández	Feature length documentary	Fragment
«Os luns ao sol»	Fernando León	Fiction feature film	Fragment
«Pradolongo»	Ignacio Vilar	Fiction feature film	Fragment
«Trece badaladas»	Xavier Villaverde	Fiction feature film	Fragment

transnational and trans-continental cultural and human environment, despite these diffi-culties were anticipated since the conception of the study.

Although most of the consultations initially had procedural purposes, like the confirmation of entry data and filling of forms, they gradually led to the emergence of some discussions that exceeded the initial previsions of the GEA research group. For example, with regards to cultural identity, one of the main aspects of the study, there was an intense debate around the sociodemographic and cultural elements which, despite of being absent from the proposed body of analysis, could also be considered defining features of the Galician community[3].

Finally, the analysis of the participation in discussion forums, according to the origin of the group, revealed that those users belonging to the migrant communities favoured the use of forums because they allowed greater freedom to express feelings and emotions, while the users belonging to university centres were more inclined to the quantitative methodology of the questionnaires.

2.4. The surveyed population

From the outset, our study was articulated around two different universes of reception: groups composed of members of the various communities of Galician migrants belonging to different generations and groups with no contact with the Galician culture. In both cases, the research was carried out telematically, thus fulfilling one of the main requirements of the research programme.

For its part, the definition of the population of analysis was complicated by the data extraction model proposed by the GEA research group, by the technological training needed to use this ICTs tool, and by the apparent heterogeneity of the

As noted above, this study, «Cinema, Diversity and Networks», was articulated through a network of reception groups residing in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. The reception groups were selected with the rigour needed to transform a convenience sample into a strategic sample. That is why we investigated participants' education, age, gender, sociodemographic features and degree of proximity to the Galician culture. In addition, the reception groups, which were constituted with a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 20, were articulated based on two interest groups (A and B) and one contrast group (C).

The dominant profile in our general reception sample –integrated by 79 valid respondents from a population sample that initially exceeded 100 people[4]– was female (65.8%), aged between 25-34 years (29.1%), located in urban centres –whose population ranged from 0.5 to 2 million inhabitants (31.6%) and from 2 to 5 million inhabitants (31.6%)–, university educated (78.48%) –40.51% had undergraduate studies, 37.97% postgraduate studies, and 21.52% were high school students–, and self-identified themselves as middle-middle class (65.8%) and low-middle class (24.1%).

3. Analysis and results

Before showing the reception groups the film samples, we deemed necessary to establish the initial pro-

Group	Description	Institution / Association
A	Formed by university male and female students, coursing the first, second and third cycles, aged between 18 and 35 years, without direct contact with the Galician culture. Group with high media and intercultural consumption, with a high prescriptive potential in terms of consumption trends.	- Instituto Universitario Nacional del Arte (Nacional University Institute of the Arts) (Buenos Aires, Argentina) - National University of Quilmes (Quilmes County, Argentina) - University of the Republic (Montevideo, Uruguay) - Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre, Brazil)
B	University professors and coordinators. Through questionnaires and personal interviews, they contributed to the formulation of a qualified definition of the media context of their country, and recommended enriching documentary sources. They are also involved in the interpretation of results of A and C groups and the testing of data extraction tools.	
C	Contrast group composed of migrants who have a close relationship with Galicia and, because of their age, educational and cultural diversity, constitute an invaluable mechanism to contrast the data emanating from the groups exclusively composed of university-bound participants.	- Galician Federation of Associations in Argentina (Buenos Aires) -Patronage of Galician culture in Montevideo

file –axiological, of cultural proximity, and consumption habits– to achieve a better understanding of the potential barriers and motivations.

3.1. Axiological features and proximity to the Galician culture

In order to establish the appropriate recommendations about the implementation or obliteration of certain axiological values in those contents suitable for transnational circulation, we investigated which were the most important social values for respondents. In this regard, the most important values were: «Justice», «Human rights», «Peace», «Identity», «Collective rights», «Individual rights, «Tolerance», «Democracy», «Solidarity», «Respect for the environment», and «Religion». On the other hand, the most pressing issues for respondents were, in order of importance: the «Educational System», «Health Care», «Violence», «Environmental Degradation», «Economic Crisis», «Unemployment», «Energy Depletion», «Crime», «Immigration», and «Terrorism».

The next block of questions in our questionnaire investigated the family, tourist and cultural proximity of respondents to Galicia. In this regard, more than half of the respondents (54.8%) did not have relatives in Galicia; while 9.6% had first-degree relatives; 24.7% had second-degree relatives; and 8.2% had third-degree relatives. In addition, when asked whether they had visited Galicia, 65% of respondents stated they had never done so; 22.8% stated they had done so between 1 and 5 times; 2.5% stated they had done so between 6 and 10 times; and 8.9% stated they had done so periodically. When respondents were asked whether they were members of any association of Galician emigrants, only 25.3% responded affirmatively.

Finally, despite the fact that the information provided by respondents up to this point indicated that the majority of them were disconnected from Galicia, the resulting data on the degree of contact with the Galician language was surprising as 49.4% of the sample had had «contact» with this language.

3.2. Consumption habits

The first fact about consumption habits is that the Internet is the most consumed medium (50.6%), followed by Books (16.9%), Cinema (13%), Press (10.4%), Television (9.1%), Radio (9.1%) and Video/DVD (7.8%). This list reinforces the focus of our study in audiovisual media.

As mentioned above, one of the main objectives of this study was to quantify respondents' attitude towards the dubbed or subtitled versions of the films.

In this regard, 92.2% preferred the original version, with or without subtitles.

Concerning film preferences, respondents were asked to list four recent films of their interest and to specify the media or platforms used to watch these films. The results provided a list of 305 titles with a remarkable plurality of themes, formats and national origins. The list of films included[5]: «Black Swan», «The King's Speech», «El secreto de sus ojos», «Un cuento chino», «El hombre de al lado», «Invictus», «You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger», «Copie conforme» and «Pan's Labyrinth». The unquestionable preferred medium for consumption was the movie theatre (52.8%), followed by DVD (19.4%), computer (downloaded video) (11.1%), computer (streaming video) (8.3%), and television (4.2%).

Respondents identified a total of 79 Galician films, including «A Lingua das bolboretas», «O lapis do carpinteiro», «Mar adentro», «O bosque animado», «Trece badaladas», «Pradolongo», «A rosa de pedra», «Castelão e os irmáns da liberdade», and «Os luns ao sol». Once again, the movie theatre was the preferred medium for consumption, followed by DVD devices and computers (downloaded and streaming video).

With regards to participants' knowledge about the leading international film professionals, they mentioned a total of 214 professionals, including: Woody Allen, Juan José Campanella, Ricardo Darín, Javier Bardem, Pedro Almodóvar, Quentin Tarantino, Tim Burton, Natalie Portman, and Álex de la Iglesia. This list is mostly composed by directors (62.8%) and actors (30.7%).

Respondents showed a similar preference towards actors and directors when mentioning Galician film professionals. A total of 57 Galician professionals were mentioned, of which the majority were Actors (54.2%) and Directors (34.7%): Luis Tosar –with a high degree of notoriety (24.6%)–, Antón Reixa, Margarita Ledo, Carlos Piñeiro, Juan Pinzás, Manuel Rivas, Andrés Pazos, Antonio Durán «Morris», Carlos Núñez and Chano Piñeiro.

When questioned whether they perceived a numerical dominance of males or females in the group of protagonists of the audiovisual media culture, 47.4% of respondents believed males were more predominant than females, while only 1.3% believed that the opposite was the case. Respondents were also asked which age group they consider to be more predominant in the group of protagonists of the audiovisual media culture. In this regard, 36.8% believed that this group was dominated by 31 to 40 year-olds, followed, in decreasing order, by older age groups.

In terms of television consumption, more than half of our respondents (52%) indicated that their average daily consumption ranged from 2 to 3 hours[6]. Meanwhile, the most common daily average radio consumption (48.1%) ranged from 0 to 1 hour. The average daily time dedicated to reading by respondents ranged from 2 to 4 hours, while their preferred platforms for reading were paper (for 72.9%), computer-screens (with online text) (25.4%) and e-books (1.1%).

98.7% of respondents revealed themselves as experienced Internet users, since they indicated that their house was their preferred space to get connected to the Internet (83.1%) and showed a preferential commitment to the use of email, online searches, social networks, instant messaging, and the consumption of downloaded and streaming audiovisual content, the creation of online professional profiles, the consumption of online radio, and the participation in forums.

Likewise, respondents identified themselves as active users of download networks –of which the most mentioned were: Ares (29.9%) and Skype (27.3%)– and social networks –of which the most popular were Facebook (58.6%), Twitter (17.2%), LinkedIn (7.1%) and Last.fm (5.1%). The main motivation to use the social networks was friendship development, for 55.7% of the sample, followed by the knowledge of other cultures (for 7.2% of respondents). In this sense, there is another illustrative figure about the strong intercultural appetite of our respondents: 83.1% of them visit websites of other countries in their original language, without the support of online translators, being cinema the most demanded intercultural content.

The last item about consumption habits asked respondents to assess (as indispensable, useful, unhelpful or non-essential) the role of the production and distribution of audiovisual content on the identity configuration of a given culture. The results are: 63.2% considered the role to be indispensable, 36.8% useful, and nobody considered it to be unhelpful or non-essential.

3.3. Viewing of audiovisual samples

For the viewing of the film samples respondents chose the following language versions: Galician with

Spanish subtitles (58.2%), Galician with Galician subtitles (14.1%), Galician without subtitles (12.9%), Spanish without subtitles (6.4%), Spanish with Galician subtitles (4.1%), and Spanish with Spanish subtitles (3.9%). Meanwhile, the degree of linguistic understanding stood between 80% and 90% among those participants who chose to watch the Galician versions without subtitles.

The number of central themes detected in the film samples exceeded 1,600 entries in the open question,

> The methodological achievements of our research include the consolidation of an operational extranet for academic multi-centre cooperation, which can be easily transferable to any study leading to the elimination of barriers in the transnational circulation of culture and, and once registered, will be made available to the international research community.

which demanded an intense semantic and orthographic homogenisation: «Migration», «Family», «Love», «Identity», «Education», «Nostalgia», «Work», «Strike», «Schizophrenia», «Solidarity», «Memory», «Disease», «Roots», etc.

Respondents placed their degree of familiarity with the cultural context reflected in the film samples close to 100%, and also identified numerous themes that define the Galician culture: «Traditions», «History», «Social conflicts», «Migration», «Art and architecture», «Language», «Music», «Religion», «Rural environment», etc.

For the purposes of assessing the influence of the formal variables in the assimilation and acceptance of the film samples, respondents were asked to rank (with a 0-5 scale) the quality of the different aspects involved in the production of the sampled films. Taking 4 and 5 scores as excellent evaluations, the best-ranked production aspect was the «Script» (by 75% of respondents), followed, in decreasing order, by «Photography», «Production», «Art Director», «Editing and Postproduction», and «Sound and Music».

4. Discussion and conclusions

The dissemination of the cinematographic works

produced by minority cultural industries requires the establishment of alternative exchange flows capable of enabling, through an intensive exploitation of interactive digital networks, a constant contact with those communities that are connected by certain identity features and other cultural industries which, with a markedly different perspective, act outside the media markets with unifying objectives.

In this sense, we must stress that the main barriers identified in our research were not linguistic, thematic or axiological, but technological and accessibility-related, which resulted from the insurmountable bandwidths imbalances –which forced us to hire local providers– involved in the ICTs training of users and the access to identity cinema circuits.

As a result, our main recommendation for public institutions is to minimise the digital divide through the provision of technological infrastructures and the promotion of digital literacy. It is paradoxical that Latin America is experiencing the greatest increases in Internet users, social networks and online content consumption, despite of being one of the regions with the lowest level of implementation of broadband networks per population density (ComScore, 2011).

The recognition of the original versions as differential element, the depiction of those places that identify a territory, and the use of the themes that define each community, their history and conflicts, are included among our basic recommendations to achieve a better acceptance of national identity cinema. These recommendations are applicable not only to those communities that share common codes, but to any foreign community.

We identified as a clear sign of the appetite for diversity the fact that all of the participants requested to watch the complete cinematographic work in those cases in which only a fragment had been offered for viewing

We should also warn about the age and gender inequality that persists among the most relevant media protagonists, decades after the Annenberg School of Communications (Gerbner, 1980) warned about the growing media protagonism of middle and upper class young white males with liberal positions of social success, proportionally accompanied by the media victimisation of women, children and ethnic minorities: a biased representation that does not reflect the current sociodemographic reality.

The research also confirmed the benefits provided by the identitary cultural repertoires, as assets for the configuration of globalisation, through the advancing of the knowledge of the film industry as a driving force behind cultural diversity and digital literacy. In this regard, the answers to the question about the role of audiovisual works on identity configuration confirmed our hypothesis since the items «Non-essential» and «Unhelpful» were never used to assess this role, while most respondents assess the role of audiovisual works as «Indispensable» and «Useful».

The methodological achievements of our research include the consolidation of an operational extranet for academic multi-centre cooperation, which can be easily transferable to any study leading to the elimination of barriers in the transnational circulation of culture and, and once registered, will be made available to the international research community.

The best evidence of the transfer of strategic knowledge to our technology partners is the creation of the «Mar Maior» project: a new firm oriented to the editing and marketing of, primarily audiovisual, cultural products and will begin its operation in Argentina in 2013, with the participation of the Galician Centre of Buenos Aires and the Galaxia Editorial Group.

We are also aware that the main limitation of our study to be able to universalise its results lies in its number of respondents and participating countries. In fact, the logistics and financing problems inherent to transnational studies, in addition to the exhaustivity of the data to be obtained, limited the geographic scope of our study and its focus into a specific target.

However, these limitations do not prevent us from considering our research as a pioneer in its field, and to long for successive studies that advance and expand what we see as an operating model of reference for the analysis of the relations between small cinematographies, diversity policies and new modes of cultural consumption. This model is part of the chain of previous and upcoming efforts made by an international research community committed to the circulation of identitary cultural productions that become assets for the construction of diversity and the culture of peace.

Notes
[1] Bren Entertainment (Filmax Animation Group), Cinemar Films,

Compañía de Radiotelevisión de Galicia (Public Broadcasting Company of Galicia), Imaxin|Software and Merlin Communications (Galaxia Editorial Group).

[2] In order to avoid redundancies, see section 3 for a breakdown of the survey through its results.

[3] Without a doubt this debate generated the strongest interests and emotions, especially among second and third generation emigrants, as shown by the following comment: «For me this sample is very representative of the Galician culture, although I cannot speak much about this matter because my family tried to forget it, in order to blend, or to avoid suffering, I don't know; now I am trying to experience this culture, which is also mine».

[4] The category of «valid respondent» was given only to those participants who answered the whole survey and watched the whole sample of films, in addition to actively and regularly participating in discussion forums.

[5] Given the large number and variety of quotes provided by users, on this occasion and thereafter we will only refer to a concise selection of them, ranked according to their frequency of mention.

[6] In light of Gerbner's postulates (1982), which equate the intensity of the «cultivation effect» with exposure to television, it is important to mention that people who watch television an average of two hours per day are identified as «light viewers», while those who watch between 2 and 4 hours per day are identified as «heavy viewers».

References

AGUADED, J.I. (2011). La educación mediática, un movimiento internacional imparable. *Comunicar, 37*, 7-8. (http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C37-2011-01-01).

ANDERSON, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

BAUTISTA, A. (2009). Relaciones interculturales en educación mediadas por narraciones audiovisuales. *Comunicar, 33*, 149-156. (http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/c33-2009-03-006).

BOURDIEU, P. (2005). *Capital cultural, escuela y espacio social*. México: Siglo XXI.

COMSCORE (2011). *The 2010 Digital Year in Review Latin America*. (www.comscore.com//2011/2010_Digital_Year_in_Review_Latin_America) (28-05-12).

CROFTS, S. (2006). Reconceptualising Nacional Cinema/s. In V. VITALI, & P. WILLEMEN (Eds.), *Theorising National Cinema*. (pp. 44-58). Londres: BFI/Palgrave McMillan.

GARCÍA-CANCLINI, N. (2004). *Diferentes, desiguales o desconectados. CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals, 66/67*, 113-133.

GERBNER, G. & AL. (1980). Television Violence, Victimization and Power. *American Behavioral Scientist, 5*, 705-716.

GOZÁLVEZ, V. (2011). Educación para la ciudadanía democrática en la cultura digital. *Comunicar, 36*, 131-138. (http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C36-2011-03-04).

HJORT, M. & PETRIE, D. (Eds.) (2007). *The Cinema of Small Nations*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

KRIPPENDORF, K. (2004). *Content Analysis: An Introducing to its Methodology*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

LEÓN, G. (2009). Comunicación y ciudadanía cultural: la migración como práctica de comunicación, *Razón y Palabra, 66* (www.redalyc.org/src/inicio/ArtPdfRed.jsp?iCve=199520908007) (28-06-12).

LIZÁRRAGA, A.M. (2007). Cine quebequense. Industria cultural e identidad. *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Canadienses, 13*, 99-123.

MARZAL, J.J. (2003). Atrapar la emoción: Hollywood y el Grupo Dogma 95 ante el cine digital. *Arbor, 686*; 373-389. (http://dx.doi.org/10.3989/arbor.2003.i686.646).

MATTELART, A. (2006). *Diversidad cultural y mundialización*. Barcelona: Paidós.

MATTELART, T. (2009). Les diasporas à l'heure des technologies de l'information et de la communication: petit état des savoirs. *Tic&Société, 1-2*. (http://ticetsociete.revues.org/600) (26-05-2012).

MONTERO, D. & MORENO, J.M. (2007). La industria audiovisual. Retos y propuestas para la construcción de un espacio euro-latinoamericano. *Telos, 72* (www.campusred.net/telos/articuloperspectiva.asp?idarticulo=2&rev=72#n2) (06-06-12).

RODRÍGUEZ, M.P. (2011). Imágenes del otro. Identidad e inmigración en la literatura y el cine. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies, 3*, 375-377. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2011.669256).

SINCLAIR, J. & CUNNINGHAM, S. (2000). Go with the Flow: Diasporas and the Media. *Television & New Media, 1*,11-31. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/15274764000010010).

UNESCO (1996). Declaración universal de derechos lingüísticos preliminares. *Conferencia Mundial de Derechos Lingüísticos*. (www.unesco.org/cpp/sp/declaraciones/linguisticos.htm) (16-04-12).

VITALI, V. & WILLEMEN, P. (Eds.) (2006). *Theorising National Cinema*. London: British Film Institute.

ZUNZUNEGUI, S. (2007). Acerca del análisis fílmico: el estado de las

cosas. *Comunicar, 29*, 51-58.

«Aularia», El país de las aulas

Nueva publicación del Grupo Comunicar

Revista divulgativa de educomunicación

● Aurora Calderón y Enar Ruiz
Alicante (Spain)

The Participation and Web Visibility of University Digital Repositories in the European Context

Participación y visibilidad web de los repositorios digitales universitarios en el contexto europeo

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on academic institutional repositories as tools that allow us open access to scientific and academic production. Specifically, we analyze the Top 50 European University repositories differentiating, firstly, those repositories linked to Spanish universities compared to those belonging to universities throughout Europe and, secondly, repositories that only include research content as opposed to those that also include teaching content. Specifically, this work complements previous studies on the consolidation of the repositories, focusing on the analysis of the competitive environment by considering their participation and relative visibility shares. The analysis, using competitive maps and comparative advantage method, allows us to identify European university repositories that lead their segments, in terms of their levels of participation and web visibility in the market. In general, without distinguishing by segments, results show that the leadership at European level in terms of participation is held by the University College of London (UK) and the repository of the University of Umea (Sweden) is the leader in visibility.

RESUMEN

El presente estudio se centra en los repositorios institucionales universitarios como instrumentos que posibilitan el acceso en abierto a la producción científica y académica. Se analizan los Top50 repositorios universitarios europeos diferenciando, en primer lugar, aquellos repositorios vinculados a universidades españolas frente a los pertenecientes a universidades del resto de Europa y, en segundo lugar, los repositorios que incluyen en sus contenidos exclusivamente resultados de investigación frente a aquéllos que también albergan recursos docentes. En concreto, este trabajo complementa estudios previos sobre la consolidación de los repositorios, profundizando en el análisis del entorno competitivo a partir de sus cuotas relativas de participación y de visibilidad web. El análisis efectuado, a través del diseño de mapas competitivos y la aplicación del método de la ventaja relativa, permite identificar los repositorios universitarios europeos líderes en sus segmentos respecto a sus niveles de participación y visibilidad web en el mercado. A nivel general, sin establecer diferencias por segmentos, los resultados muestran que el liderazgo a nivel europeo, en términos de participación, lo ostenta el University College of London (Reino Unido), mientras que el repositorio de la Universidad de Umea (Suecia) es líder en visibilidad.

◆ Dr. Aurora Calderón-Martínez is Lecturer in the Department of Marketing of the Faculty of Economic and Business Science at the University of Alicante (Spain) (aurora.calderon@ua.es).

◆ Dr. Enar Ruiz-Conde is Lecturer in the Department of Marketing of the Faculty of Economic and Business Science at the University of Alicante (Spain) (eruiz@ua.es).

1. Introduction

The study of digital repositories is currently very important because since The Budapest Declaration (BOAI, 2002), which established the first formal definition of the open access movement (ratified and expanded in The Bethesda and Berlín Declarations of 2003), the implantation and development of repositories of electronic documents have increased substantially. According to the Ranking Web of World Repositories, there are more than 1,500 digital repositories in 2012. The importance of repositories in the communication of scientific knowledge and their role in strengthening the cooperative spirit in scientific research have led to the need to analyze them.

Coinciding with the rise of the World Wide Web in the 90s, projects linked with the open access movement began to appear. This entailed free Internet access, with no economic or copyright restrictions, to the scientific literature (Suber, 2005). The arXiv repository of pre-publications, founded in 1991 in the field of Physics, is considered to be the pioneer in the development of digital repositories.

If we focus on the strategies that characterize the implantation and development of the open access movement, it is self-archiving or the green route that began and nurtured the digital repositories (Harnad & al., 2004; Sánchez & Melero, 2006). Apart from publication in journals, this strategy means the placing of a copy of a study in a stable repository that allows free on-line access. In this context, the term «repository» entails an expansion of the preservation and conservation characteristics of an archive since, apart from storing information, a repository has other functions such as the supply, management, recovery, visualization and reutilization of digital documents (Pinfield, 2009). In this sense, open access to a repository adds easy availability of content that may come from various sources to the advantages of no cost or unlimited access to information. Independently of their role of provider of data and/or services (Hernández, Rodríguez & Bueno, 2007), repositories can be implemented by institutions, thematic communities, research centers or other groups. This study focuses on the study of institutional repositories which, according to The Budapest Declaration (BOAI, 2002), arose in response to the need for academic institutions to conserve and preserve their intellectual property and make it available to the education and research community.

There is much debate around the content of repositories; some authors (Crow, 2002; Johnson, 2002) defend education-learning as one of the key functions of university, believing that teaching materials should be included along with research results. Taking this point further, repositories specializing in teaching design could be a tool for educational staff to learn different teaching strategies such as a detailed explanation of the steps to be taken in its implementation (Marcelo, Yot & Mayor, 2011). Other authors oppose this position, supporting the premise that the purpose of an institutional repository is the diffusion of research results and hold that the key factor is free access to these results (Harnad, 2005; Sánchez & Melero, 2006).

Notwithstanding this open debate, Lynch (2003) defines the institutional repository in the area of universities as a collection of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and diffusion of digital materials created by the institution and its members. Hence, it is an organizational obligation to manage digital material that includes its long-term preservation, its organization and its access or distribution (Lynch & Lippincott, 2005). In line with Crow (2002), institutional repositories comply with 2 of the strategic factors of universities. First, these repositories constitute a critical component of the academic communication system by expanding access to research, increasing competition and reducing the monopolistic power of the journals. Second, they can be quantitative indicators of the quality of a university and they can demonstrate the scientific, social and economic importance of academic activity; thus increasing the visibility, status and public value of the institution. In a broad sense, university repositories collect part of the intellectual production of universities, in that they are where the organization, preservation and diffusion of digital documents derived from academic work take place.

The study of repositories is a current hot topic (Barrueco & García, 2009; Ezema, 2011; Galina, 2011). And within this field there are various lines of research, such as those focused on the analysis of the technical factors around the implementation of repositories (Koopman & Kipnis, 2009; Subirats & al., 2008), on attitudes to self-archiving (Carr & Brody, 2007; Chuk & McDonald, 2007; Xia & Sun, 2007), on free access and the impact of citations (Davis, 2010; Gaulé & Maystre, 2011; Giglia, 2010) and on the evolution of repositories (Keefer, 2007; Krishnamurthy & Kemparaju, 2011; Peset & Ferrer, 2008; Wray, Mathieu & Teets, 2009). This study belongs in the last of these lines and aims to analyze the competitive environment of university repositories through the volume of digital content, participation of a repository in the supply of digital content and the web visibility of a repository.

The study also uses a double segmentation to consider the geographical context of the universities that host the repositories and the type of digital content stored in them.

After these initial considerations, the following section describes the methodology and identifies the sources of information and variables used. Next we present the results differentiated by geographical area and by the content type of the repositories and we finish with the conclusions derived from the study.

2. Material and methods
2.1. Methodology

After describing the current situation of university repositories in Europe, we use information visualization (Chen, 2003) to analyze their competitive environment through a comparative map. More precisely, we use a variant of the dispersion diagram that positions Spanish university repositories against those of the rest of Europe in terms of 2 dimensions: their participation and visibility shares compared to the other competitors in their segment; each repository is represented by a circle which is indicative of the volume of digital documents derived from the academic production of the host universities. The analysis by geographical area considers an additional segmentation around the content of the repositories, differentiating those with content derived exclusively from research from those that also include teaching resources (mixed repositories).

The final position occupied by a repository in the diagram described above allows us to identify the leaders in the analyzed dimensions (repositories with relative shares above 1) If there is no single repository that leads in both dimensions, the leader is identified through the relative advantage method. This method implies initially obtaining the advantages, in terms of participation and of visibility, for the 2 repositories that are leaders in each dimension. Next we compare the above advantages, with the dimension that has the greater relative advantage being the identification criteria for the leader repository.

2.2. Data and variables

The university repositories to be analyzed are identified using the Ranking Web of World Repo-

sitories (RWWR) of the Spanish National Research Council (Aguillo & al., 2010). Using the latest available edition (April 2012), we select the 50 main repositories linked to European universities, discarding those with incomplete information on the number of entries in the analysis period (see Table 1). This ranking also provides the degree of visibility of the selected repositories. We use the Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) to find the size of the repositories through the accumulated number of entries from the

> This study belongs in the last of these lines and aims to analyze the competitive environment of university repositories through the volume of digital content, participation of a repository in the supply of digital content and the web visibility of a repository. The study also uses a double segmentation to consider the geographical context of the universities that host the repositories and the type of digital content stored in them.

foundation date until 31st December 2011. The evolution of entries during 2011 gives us the participation share for this period for each repository. Finally, the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) allows us to identify universities and their geographical distribution.

Using the above information, we construct the following variables that allow us to analyze the competitive environment of the Top50 European university repositories.

1) Relative participation share (CPR_{ijk}) of university repository i ($i=1…I_j$) in geographical area j ($j=1$ (Spain), 2(Rest de Europe)) and of type k ($k=1$ (mixed), 2(research)), so that:

$$CPR_{ijk} = \frac{CP_{ijk}}{CP_{C1jk}}(i \neq C1) \qquad , (1)$$

with $CPR_{ijk} = \frac{CP_{ijk}}{CP_{C1jk}}(i \neq C1)$ y $CP_{ijk} = \frac{RT_{ijk}}{RT_{jk}}$, where:

• CP_{ijk}: Participation share of repository i in geographical area j and of type k.

Repository					
Pos.	University	Country	Pos.	University	Country
1	Utrecht	Netherlands	26	Oulu	Finland
2	Autónoma of Barcelona	Spain	27	Erasmus Univ.	Netherlands
3	Polytechnic Cataluña	Spain	28	Munich	Germany
4	Groningen	Netherlands	29	Complutense of Madrid	Spain
5	Saint Gallen	Switzerland	30	Duisburg	Germany
6	Southampton	U. Kingdom	31	Marburg	Germany
7	Humboldt	Germany	32	Glasgow	United Kingdom
8	Minho	Portugal	33	Helsinki	Finland
9	Ludwig Maximilians	Germany	34	Polytechnic of Madrid	Spain
10	Twente	Netherlands	35	Cambridge	United Kingdom
11	Éc. Pol. Federale Lausanne	Switzerland	36	Edinburgh	United Kingdom
12	Leiden	Netherlands	37	Justus Liebig Giessen	Germany
13	Liège	Belgium	38	College London	United Kingdom
14	Stuttgart	Germany	39	Bergen	Norway
15	Georg August	Germany	40	Frankfurt am Main	Germany
16	Heidelberg	Germany	41	Malmo University	Sweden
17	Goteborg	Sweden	42	Konstanz	Germany
18	Open Research Online	U. Kingdom	43	Porto	Portugal
19	Alicante	Spain	44	Carlos III of Madrid	Spain
20	Southampton	U. Kingdom	45	Tweente Fac. EEMCS	Netherlands
21	Umea	Sweden	46	Tartu	Estonia
22	London School Econ.Polit.Sc.	U. Kingdom	47	Studi di Milano	Italy
23	Wien	Austria	48	Linköping	Sweden
24	Freiburg	Germany	49	Pisa	Italy
25	Amsterdam	Netherlands	50	Regensburg	Germany

Table 1. Universities and countries of the Top50 repositories analyzed.

• $CPC1_{jk}$: Highest participation share of the repositories in geographical area j of type k.
• $CPRC1_{jk}$: Relative participation share of the repository with the highest participation share in geographical area j of type k.
• $CPC2_{jk}$: Participation share of the 2nd best competitor in geographical area j of type k.
• RT_{ijk}: Total entries in repository i in geographical area j of type k in the year 2011.
RT_{jk}: total entries of the repositories in geographical area j of type k in the year 2011.

2) Relative visibility share (CVR_{ijk}) of repository i ($i=1,\dots$ Ij) in geographical area j ($j=1$(Spain), 2(Rest of Europe)) of type k ($k=1$(mixed), 2(research)), so that:

$$CVR_{ijk} = \frac{CV_{ijk}}{CV_{C1jk}} (i \neq C1), (2)$$

with $\quad CVR_{C1jk} = \frac{CV_{C1jk}}{CV_{C2jk}} \quad$ y $\quad CV_{ijk} = \frac{V_{ijk}}{V_{jk}} \quad$, where:

• CV_{ijk}: Visibility share of repository i in geographical area j of type k.
• $CVC1_{jk}$: Highest visibility share of repositories in geographical area j of type k.
• $CVRC1_{jk}$: Relative visibility share of the repository with the highest visibility share in geographical area j of type k.
• $CVC2_{jk}$: Visibility share of the 2nd highest competitor in geographical area j of type k.
• V_{ijk}: Visibility of repository i in geographical area j of type k.
• V_{jk}: Visibility of the repositories in geographical area j of type k.

Bearing in mind that the degree of visibility (V) of repository i ($i=1\dots$, 50) is:

$$V_i = \frac{1}{Elink_i} \qquad (3)$$

where Elinki represents the position in visibility terms provided by the RWWR, obtained by the number of external links received by repository i (Aguillo et al., 2010).

3) Size (TR) of repository i ($i=1\dots 50$) until day T (31 December 2011):

$$TR_i = \sum_{t=F_i}^{T} DD_{it} \qquad (4)$$

where:
• DD_{it}: Number of digital documents of repository i on day t.
• F_i: Foundation date of repository i.

Hence, using Equation (1) we quantify the relative participation shares of the repositories –as a measure of the degree of participation of each repository in the supply of digital content stored in all the repositories considered–, differentiating Spanish repositories from those of the rest of Europe and repositories with only research content from mixed repositories. For the generic case of a given repository in a concrete segment, the relative participation share is the quotient between its participation share and the highest share

of its segment; for the repository with the highest participation share, we divide its share by the 2nd highest share. For the calculation of participation shares we consider the number of entries received by the repository in 2011 compared with the number of entries of all the repositories in the segment in the same period. With a similar method, equation (2) finds the relative visibility shares of repositories by segments –as a measure of the level of market penetration-, considering visibility as the inverse of the position in terms of this variable given by the RWWM. Finally, in equation (4) referring to the size of the repository –as a measure of digital academic production- we consider the number of digital documents accumulated in the repository from the foundation date until the 31st December 2011.

3. Analysis and results

The Top50 European repositories analyzed are distributed so that 12% belong to Spanish universities and the remaining 88% to universities from the rest of Europe. In terms of content, 56% only store research results and 44% are mixed repositories. The repositories considered have an average of 33,630 digital documents, ranging from the 234,760 entries of the University College of London (United Kingdom) and the 1,502 of the University of Oulu (Finland).

Looking at the analysis of the competitive environment of European repositories without differentiating by segments, the repository of the University of Umea (Sweden) is leader in visibility and the University College of London (United Kingdom) is leader in participation. In terms of the segmentations by geographical area (Spain versus the rest of Europe) and by content type (research versus mixed), Figure 1 shows only the leading repositories in the 3 dimensions analyzed. Each repository is represented in terms of its relative participation and visibility shares, and its size.

The comparative analysis using the double segmentation, and initially focusing on the Spanish repository market, shows that the repositories of the Autónoma University of Barcelona

and the Polytechnic of Madrid have relative participation shares above 1. Therefore, the repositories of these universities are leaders in the supply of digital content, with the Polytechnic of Madrid being leader in the research only segment and the Autónoma University of Barcelona leader in the mixed segment. Turning to visibility, the leading Spanish repositories are the Polytechnic of Cataluña and the Autónoma University of Barcelona for research only and mixed repositories respectively. Given that visibility is related to the number of links received by each repository, these 2 universities are leaders in terms of market penetration.

Moving on to the rest of Europe, we find that the University of Liège (Belgium) and the University College of London (United Kingdom) are leaders in participation in the research only and mixed segments respectively. The leaders in terms of penetration are the University of Umea (Sweden) for research repositories and the University of Utrecht (Netherlands) in the mixed segment.

The size of the bubbles in Figure 1, which shows the supply of digital content, gives us the highest volume repositories for the segments considered. The University Carlos III of Madrid has the largest research repository and the Autónoma University of Barcelona has the largest mixed repository. In the rest of Europe, the repositories of the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands) and the University College of London (United Kingdom) are the largest in the research and mixed segments, respectively.

Apart from the Autónoma University of Barcelona, which is the leader in participation and penetration in Spanish mixed repositories, there are no repositories that lead in both dimensions; some lead in participa-
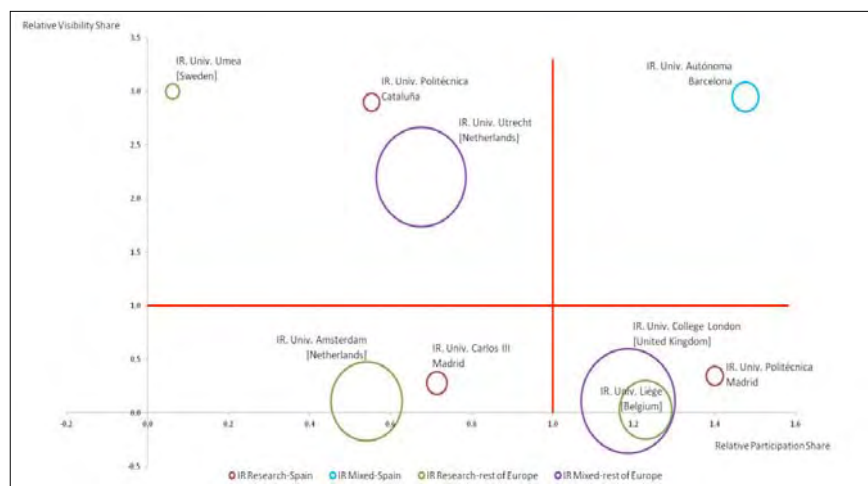

Figure 1. Leading university repositories in supply of content, participation and web visibility.

tion and others in penetration. Hence, in these cases and for the other segments, we find the leading repository in the 2 segments by applying the relative advantage method described in the previous section. The application of this method shows that the leader in the Spanish research repositories segment is the Polytechnic of Cataluña; the University of Umea (Swe-

Figure 2. Non-leading university repositories with notable positions in supply of content, participation and web visibility.

den) is the leader in research repositories in the rest of Europe; and, finally, the leader of the rest of Europe mixed repositories segment is the University of Utrecht (Netherlands).

To go further into the characterization of repositories that do not lead in any of the dimensions considered, figure 2 identifies repositories with content supply and relative participation and visibility shares that are above average for the non-leaders group. We obtain these average values through the maximum and minimum values in each dimension.

Looking at figure 2 and focusing on the Spanish repositories, we find three repositories that stand out for their above average values for relative participation and visibility shares. While the research only repository of the University Carlos III of Madrid and the mixed repository of the University of Alicante stand out in terms of participation, the repositories of the universities of Complutense of Madrid, Alicante and Carlos III of Madrid stand out in terms of market penetration. With regard to repositories from the rest of Europe, the research repositories of the universities of Milan (Italy), Amsterdam (Netherlands) and Glasgow (United Kingdom), and the mixed repositories of the Federal Polytechnic School of Lausanne (Switzerland) and the University of Southampton (United Kingdom) stand out in participation. In terms of penetration, notable repositories are the research repository of the University of Humboldt (Germany) and the mixed repositories of the universities of Oulu (Finland), Stuttgart (Germany), Saint Gallen (Switzerland) and Southampton (United Kingdom).

To synthesize the information in Figures 1 and 2, Table 2 shows the leading repositories and those that
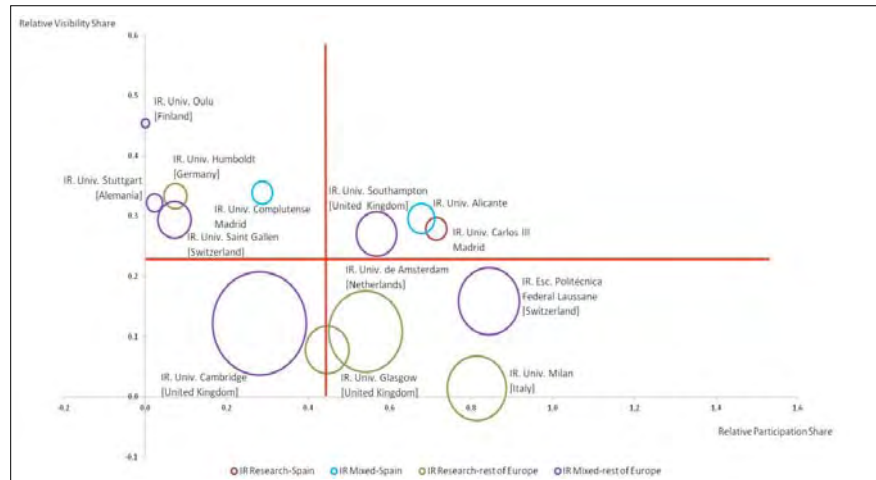
are above average in the dimensions of participation, visibility and size for the segments considered. This table shows the absolute leader repositories in their segments after applying the relative advantage method; in other words, those that lead in both participation and penetration.

4. Discussion and conclusions

In response to the cementing of the position of free access as a model of scientific communication in the scientific-academic world and the growing number of institutional repositories, we propose the need to evaluate this type of application. This study analyzes the market of the Top50 European university repositories, differentiating within the same competitive environment repositories linked to Spanish universities from those pertaining to universities from the rest of Europe and further differentiating repositories that only store research results from those that also include teaching resources. Concretely, this study complements previous studies on the consolidation of repositories that focus on the volume of digital content derived from the production of universities. As a new contribution, we go deeper into the analysis of the competitive environment of the repositories through their relative participation and web visibility shares, which identify the leading repositories in a double segmentation by geography and content type.

Looking at the Spanish repositories, there are currently 6 Spanish university repositories in the Top 50 European institutional repositories: the universities of Autónoma of Barcelona, Polytechnic of Cataluña, Alicante, Complutense of Madrid, Polytechnic of Madrid and Carlos III of Madrid. Looking further into

the national context, the first positions in the dimensions analyzed are held by the research repository of Carlos III University of Madrid and the mixed repository of the Autónoma University of Barcelona. However, the Polytechnic of Madrid holds first place in participation in research repositories and the Autónoma University of Barcelona leads the mixed repositories segment. In terms of market penetration, the Polytechnic of Cataluña and the Autónoma University of Barcelona have the leading research and mixed repositories, respectively.

Turning to the rest of Europe, we find that the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands) and the University College of London (United Kingdom) have the largest repositories, the former in the research segment and the latter in the mixed segment. The universities of Liège (Belgium) and the University College of London (United Kingdom) are leaders in participation in the research and mixed segments, respectively. The leaders in terms of penetration are the research repository of the University of Umea (Sweden) and the mixed repository of the University of Utrecht (Netherlands).

Accordingly, the leading universities in relative participation share give more importance to the basic functions of storage and preservation that characterize institutional repositories. These universities develop their repositories as a complement to the traditionally used options for presenting academic production. In this sense, they are using their repositories to make themselves better known by offering open access to a wide variety of the teaching and/or research output of their academic staff. In the terms of penetration, leading positions in web visibility of academic output strengthen the function of diffusion of own knowledge of the repository as a means of communication. Therefore, leading positions in both participation and penetration allow a university to not only make itself better known than others, with regard to its academic

output, but to also increase possible access to this academic output. In this sense, the leading repositories in the dimensions considered gain importance as means of communication of teaching and research knowledge, with emphasis on the functions of storage, preservation and diffusion of knowledge.

Although this study characterizes the main university repositories in terms of volume of digital content, participation in the supply of this content and web visibility, there is scope to continue this line of research with a causal analysis to identify the determining factors of the leading positions in the different dimensions. Among other aspects, factors such as the language of the repository, the diversity of the content, the size of the institution or its funding could be analyzed to see whether they influence the leading positions. Similarly, and taking the premise that a large presence in the market through high content volume is not the only important factor, researchers could also investigate the quality of the content stored in repositories as an additional key factor in the evolution of these instruments that give open access to scientific output; this could be another future research line.

References

AGUILLO, I.F., ORTEGA, J.L., FERNÁNDEZ, M. & UTRILLA, A.M. (2010). Indicators for a Webometric *Ranking of Open Access Repositories*. *Scientometrics*, *82 (3)*, 477-486. (DOI: 10.1007/s111-92-010-0183-y).

ARWU (2011). *Academic Ranking of World Universities*. (www.-arwu.org).

BARRUECO, J.M. & GARCÍA, C. (2009). *Repositorios institucionales universitarios: evolución y perspectivas*. Zaragoza: Fesabid, XI Jornadas Españolas de Documentación.

Repositorios institucionales universitarios				
Posición	**Españoles**		**Resto de Europa**	
	Investigación	Míxtos	Investigación	Míxtos
Dimensión: Participación				
1	Universidad Politécnica de Madrid	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	Universidad de Liège (Bélgica)	Universidad College London (Reino Unido)
2	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	Universidad de Alicante	Universidad de Milán (Italia)	Esc. Politécnica Federal de Lausanne (Suiza)
3			Universidad de Amsterdam (Holanda)	Universidad de Southampton (Reino Unido)
4			Universidad Glasgow (Reino Unido)	
Dimensión: Visibilidad web				
1	Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	Universidad de Umea (Suecia)	Universidad de Utrecht (Holanda)
2	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Universidad Humboldt (Alemania)	Universidad de Oulu (Finlandia)
3		Universidad de Alicante		Universidad de Stuttgart (Alemania)
4				Universidad de Saint Gallen (Suiza)
5				Universidad de Southampton (Reino Unido)
Dimensión: Tamaño				
1	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	Universoidad de Amsterdam (Holanda)	Universidad College London (Reino Unido)
2		Universidad de Alicante	Universidad Milán (Italia)	Universidad de Cambridge (Reino Unido)
3			Universidad de Liège (Bélgica)	Universidad de Utrecht (Holanda)

Table 2. Principal institutional university repositories.

BOAI (2002). *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. (www.soros.org/-openacces).

CARR, L. & BRODY, T. (2007). Size Isn't Everything: Sustainable Repositories as Evidenced by Sustainable Deposit Profiles. *D-Lib Magazine, 13 (7/8)*. (www.dlib.org/dlib/july07/carr/07carr.html).

CHEN, C. (2003). *Mapping Scientific Frontiers: The Quest for Knowledge Visualization*. London: Springer-Verlag.

CHUK, T. & MCDONALD, R.H. (2007). Measuring and Comparing Participation Patterns in Digital Repositories. *D-Lib Magazine, 13 (9/10)*. (http://openaccess.be/media/docs/09mcdonald.pdf).

CROW, R. (2002). *The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper*. Technical Report 223. (www.arl.org/sparc/IR/ir.html).

DAVIS, P.M. (2010). Does Open Access Lead to Increased Readership and Citations? A Randomized Controlled Trial of Articles Published. *APS Journals. Physiologist, 53 (6)*, 197-200.

EZEMA, I.J. (2011). Building Open Access Institutional Repositories for Global Visibility of Nigerian Scholarly publication. *Library Review, 60 (6)*, 473-485. (DOI: 10.1108/00242531111147198).

GALINA, I. (2011). La visibilidad de los recursos académicos: una revisión crítica del papel de los repositorios institucionales y el acceso abierto. *Investigación Bibliotecológica, 25 (53)*, 159-183.

GAULÉ, P.A. & MAYSTRE, N.B. (2011). Getting Cited: Does Open Access Help? *Research Policy, 40 (10)*, 1332-1338. (DOI: 10.1016/j.respol.2011.05.025).

GIGLIA, E. (2010). *The Impact Factor of Open Access Journals: Data and Trends*. Helsinki (Finland): ELPUB 2010 International Conference on Electronic Publishing. (http://dhanken.shh.fi/dspace/bitstream/10227/599/72/2giglia.pdf).

HARNAD, S. (2005). Fast-forward on the Green Road to Open Access: The Case against Mixing up Green and Gold. *Ariadne, 4 (42)*. (www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue42/harnad).

HARNAD, S., BRODY, T., VALLIÈRES, F. & AL. (2004). The Access/-impact Problem and the Green and Gold Roads to Open Access. *Serial Review, 30 (4)*, 310-314. (DOI: 10.1016/j.serrev.2004.09.013).

HERNÁNDEZ, T., RODRÍGUEZ, D. & BUENO, G. (2007). Open Access: el papel de las bibliotecas en los repositorios institucionales de acceso abierto. *Anales de Documentación, 10*, 185-204.

JOHNSON, R.K. (2002). Institutional Repositories: Partnering with Faculty to Enhance Scholarly Communication. *D-Lib Magazine, 8 (11)*. (www.dlib.org/dlib/november02/johnson/11johnson.html).

KEEFER, A. (2007). Los repositorios digitales universitarios y los autores. *Anales de Documentación, 10*, 205-214. (DOI:10.6018/analesdoc.10.0.1151).

KOOPMAN, A. & KIPNIS, D. (2009). Feeding the Fledgling Reposi-tory: Starting an Institutional Repository at an Academic Health Sciences Library. *Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 28 (2)*, 111-122. (DOI:10.1080/02763860902816628).

KRISHNAMURTHY, M. & KEMPARAJU, T.D. (2011). Institutional Re-positories in Indian Universities and Research Institutes: A Study. Program. *Electronic Library and Information Systems, 45 (2)*, 185-198. (DOI: 10.1108/00330331111129723).

LYNCH, C.A. (2003). Institutional Repositories: Essential Infrastruc-ture for Scholarship in the Digital Age. *ARL Bimonthly Report, 226*, 1-7. (www.arl.org/newsltr/226/ir.htm).

LYNCH, C.A. & LIPPINCOTT, J.K. (2005). Institutional Repository Deployment in the United States as of Early 2005. *D-Lib Magazine, 11 (9)*. (www.dlib.org/dlib/september05/lynch/09lynch.html).

MARCELO, C., YOT, C. & MAYOR, C. (2011). «Alacena»: repositorio de diseños de aprendizaje para la enseñanza universitaria. *Comuni-car, 37 (XIX)*, 37-44. (DOI: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x).

PESET, F. & FERRER, A. (2008). Implementation of the Open Archives Initiative in Spain. *Information Research, 13 (4)*. (http://-informationr.net/ir/13-4/paper385.html).

PINFIELD, S. (2009). Journals and Repositories: An Evolving Rela-tionship? *Learned Publishing, 22 (3)*, 165-175. (DOI:10.1087/2009302).

ROAR (2011). *Registry of Open Access Repositories*. (http://roar.e-prints.org).

RWRM (2012). *Ranking Web de Repositorios del Mundo*. (http://-repositories.webometrics.info).

SÁNCHEZ, S. & MELERO, R. (2006). *La denominación y el conteni-do de los repositorios institucionales en acceso abierto: base teórica para la ruta verde*. (http://eprints.rclis.org/6368).

SUBER, P. (2005). *Open Access Overview: Focusing on Open Access to Peer-reviewed Research Articles and their Preprints*. (www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm).

SUBIRATS, I., ONYANCHA, I., SALOKHE, G., KALOYANOVA, S., ANIBALDI, S. & KEIZER, J. (2008). Towards an Achitecture for Open Archive Networks in Agricultural Sciences and Technology. *Online Information Review, 32 (4)*, 478-487. (DOI: 10.1108/14684520-810897359).

WRAY, B.A., MATHIEU, R.G. & TEETS, J.M., (2009). Identifying How Determinants Impact Security-based Open Source Software Project Success Using Rule Induction. *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing, 2 (4)*, 352-362. (DOI: 10.1504/IJEMR.2009.025249).

XIA, J. & SUN, L. (2007). Assessment of Self-archiving in Institu-tional Repositories: Depositorship and Full-text Availability. *Serials Review, 22 (1)*, 14-21.

Revista de Educomunicación

Comunicar

Revista internacional indexada (Scientific Journal indexed):
• Journal Citation Reports (JCR) • Scopus • Social Sciences Citation Index
• ERIH • Social Scisearch (Thomson Reuters) • RECYT • IN–RECS • RESH
• CIRC • Ulrich's Periodicals (CSA) • Sociological Abstracts • Communication
& Mass Media Complete • ERA • IBZ • IBR • MIAR • Communication Abstracts
• Social Services Abstracts • MLA • Dialnet • REDALYC • Fuente Académica
Premier (EBSCO) • IRESIE • ISOC (CINDOC) • Academic OneFile
• Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) • Informe Académico • Psicodoc
• Educator's Reference Complete • Expanded Academic ASAP • DICE • ERCE
• ANPED (Brasil) • CARHUS Plus • Latindex • Worldcat • Rebiun/CRUE •
Sumaris (CBUC) • New–Jour • Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek • The
Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries • Intute • Electronics Resources HKU
Libraries • Francis • Instituto Latinoamericano de Comunicación Educativa •
OEI • DOCE • REDINED • CEDAL • Screensite • Portal Iberoamericano de
Comunicación • Portal de la Comunicación de UAB • Quaderns Digitals
• Universia • Power Search Plus • DOAJ • Scientific Commons • OAISTER
• The Library of Congress • Google Académico • Google Books • Scirus
• Red Iberoamericana de Revistas Comunicación y Cultura • RERCE (Red de
Revistas Científicas de Educación)

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

uni Twin

UNESCO Chair in Communication
and Educational Values
Donostia – San Sebastián. Spain

Universidad
del País Vasco

Euskal Herriko
Unibertsitatea