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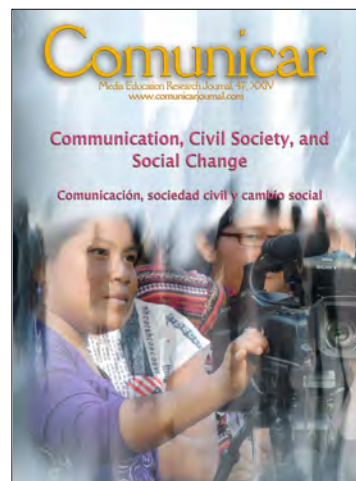
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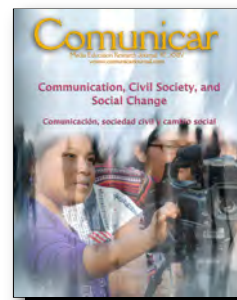
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Watching and Tweeting: Youngsters' Responses to Media Representations of Resistance

Ver y tuitear: reacciones de los jóvenes ante la representación mediática de la resistencia

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ABSTRACT

There has been considerable debate about the potential of social media to promote new democratic practices and active citizenship. However, the participation of young people in social networks seems to go in a more playful than ideological direction. This article discusses youngsters' activity in Twitter simultaneously with the television viewing of two films: «V for Vendetta» and «The Hunger Games». As both films address social and political issues, we intend to identify whether youngsters referred to ideological issues in tweets generated during their viewing, and whether these tweets lead to joint reflection on the current social situation. 1,400 tweets posted during the broadcasts of the films in Spanish TV in 2014 were collected for this purpose. The encoding of messages is carried out following a «coding and counting» approach, typical of the studies of Computer-mediated communication. Then messages are classified based on their content. The results obtained indicate that messages about the social and political content of the films are almost non-existent, since young people prefer to comment on other aspects of the films or their lives. The conclusions have a bearing on the importance of considering popular culture, for its social and political implications, as a motive for reflection, and the importance of boosting a critical media education.

RESUMEN

Mucho se ha hablado del potencial de las redes sociales para fomentar nuevas prácticas democráticas y de ciudadanía activa. Sin embargo, la participación de los jóvenes parece ir en una dirección más lúdica que ideológica. Se analizan sus intervenciones en Twitter como parte de la situación de visionados de dos películas en televisión: «a Vendetta» y «Los juegos del hambre». Como en ambas se abordan temas sociales y políticos, a través del análisis de los tuits generados durante su visionado se pretende identificar si en ellos se hace referencia a cuestiones ideológicas y si estas sirven de revulsivo para la reflexión conjunta sobre la situación social y política actual. Para ello, se recogen 1.400 tuits escritos durante las emisiones en cadenas españolas de las dos películas en 2014. Se procede a la codificación de los mensajes siguiendo el enfoque «coding y counting», propio de los estudios de comunicación mediada por ordenador, y se clasifican los mensajes según su contenido. Los resultados obtenidos indican que los mensajes sobre el contenido social y político de los filmes son casi inexistentes puesto que los jóvenes prefieren comentar otros aspectos de las películas o de sus vidas. Las conclusiones alcanzadas tras este análisis inciden en la importancia de considerar la cultura popular, por sus implicaciones sociales y políticas, como motivo de reflexión, y de potenciar una educación mediática capacitadora.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Social networks, civil society, young viewers, active reception, multiscreen viewing, interactive television, social interaction, collective intelligence.

Redes sociales, sociedad civil, jóvenes espectadores, recepción activa, sociedad multipantalla, televisión interactiva, interacción social, inteligencia colectiva.

1. Introduction

1.1. Social media and democratic practices

In *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, Henry Jenkins asks this question: «When will we be capable of participating within the democratic process with the same ease that we have come to participate in the imaginary realms constructed through popular culture?» (2008: 234). His question stems from the passion that popular culture raises in a large part of the population, feeding on amazing book or film stories to the point of appropriating them and making them part of their everyday lives (Sorrells & Sekimoto, 2015). Jenkins examines the effects that a similar response would have in the sphere of politics, leading beyond the detachment and alienation that come as people's most frequent responses to political processes.

This paper has a similar starting point: people are increasingly using the elements of popular culture to engage in conversation with fans of the same cultural products in media environments. Thus, they give rise to the emergence of affinity spaces (Gee, 2004) in which individuals who have not met are drawn together by strong shared interests. Websites and social media have contributed to the development of affinity spaces by making participation and message exchange easier. Twitter, for instance, offers users hashtags for the grouping of messages about a given topic and their differentiation from messages about other topics.

Although Gee analyses affinity spaces in connection with video gamers, the term has been applied to book or film fan communities, maker movement groups interested in photography, video or the digital arts (Tyner, Gutiérrez, & Torrego, 2015), or even the use of social media for social or political activism. For a few years now, social networking sites and messengers have been used to build social movements and engage in social or political activities, including consumer boycotts, protests and demonstrations (Langman, 2005; Wasserman, 2007; Martin, 2015). They are apt tools to promote collective identities and connect people involved in similar causes, restoring the voice of the silenced masses (Della-Porta & Mosca, 2005; Della-Porta, 2015). In Spain, social and digital media made possible for young people to mobilise and build the social movement known as 15M. As observed by Hernández, Robles y Martínez (2013), youngsters reappropriated these media to participate in public communication, creating new perspectives in civic education.

According to Sunstein (2007), virtual communities are organised around political or ideological themes,

rather than cultural ones. However, although social media have often been used for political purposes – contributing to trigger major political events like the Arab Spring, protests against the Iraq War or 15M, most people engage in communities to talk about their interests or hobbies (Jenkins, 2008). As analysed by Jenkins, participation in affinity spaces to discuss works of popular culture is easier, for it requires less commitment and responsibility than political choices and appears to be removed from the world of politics. In fact, Jenkins insists that the fantasy in the worlds created in popular culture can be a pretext or a starting point to deal with political issues, or even contribute to change one's stance or overcome ideological barriers.

Furthermore, participation in social media has changed democratic practices and altered state-society relations. In the past decade, there have been countless works on the democratising potential of social media (Hindman, 2008). This has stirred debate over the advantages of social media in encouraging social or political participation. Koku, Nazer, & Wellman (2001), Díez-Rodríguez (2003), or Castells (2004) emphasise the inconclusive nature of data in connection with the potential of technology to make citizen participation a richer experience. Atton (2002) described social media as double-edged, contributing to equality while reproducing the power asymmetries in the reality of society. Díez, Fernández & Anguita (2011) wonder whether the new forms of communication through social media are empowering youngsters, or rather, failing to encourage discussion and active citizenship. The authors think social media do have a large potential for communication and participation but may be also at the service of a specific form of democracy.

1.2. Two dystopias: «V for Vendetta» and «The Hunger Games»

The two films on which this paper focuses, «V for Vendetta» (McTeigue, 2006) and «The Hunger Games» (Ross, 2012), like the books they are based on (Moore & Lloyd, 2005; Collins, 2008), have a strong political component that could invite more serious reflection on political problems and current social issues. Both are set in dystopian universes where revolution is brewing against totalitarian regimes that use terror and control mechanisms to curtail people's freedom. Both societies, which at first appear to be accepted by citizens, are in fact the result of a dictator's manoeuvring and control of the media to deprive people of their civil rights. Both V and Katniss Everdeen have been ill-treated by the system, so they decide to stand up against it, becoming leaders of a revolution as

they are joined by other citizens. Both films bring dominant capitalism under attack, having the audience witness two (somewhat tamed) revolutions as they could look like in a postmodern world (Mateos-Aparicio, 2014). Both films have lent contemporary society icons used in riots and rebellions around the globe: the Vendetta mask, worn by the members of the Anonymous group and by demonstrators and protesters against oppression, and Katniss's three finger salute, which became a form of silent resistance to the military coup in Thailand.

Discussions of these two films in affinity spaces could move youngsters to ideological or political reflection, and to subsequent action against social injustice. In the transmedia analysed here, the potential of social media for activism and social change converges with the power of mass media (particularly film and television) to create states of opinion. As pointed out by Giroux (2003) and other authors, films do more than just entertain; they can stir desires and help build or internalise ideologies that constitute the historical realities of power. Moreover, they play an educational role, raising awareness and turning spectators into critical actors who can understand and analyse the aesthetic and political meaning of images.

In the past few years, many novels and graphic novels were published narrating dystopian stories for young adults. Green (2008) associates the boom of these kind of stories with the likelihood that the future is dystopian as a result of contemporary unsustainable lifestyles. Basu, Broad, & Hintz (2013) analyse young adult dystopias, drawing attention to the dynamics between didacticism and escapism, political radicalism and conservatism, and other main discussions. In their anthology, the authors offer insight into this burgeoning genre, understanding it as a phenomenon that is political, cultural, aesthetic and commercial.

Several authors have tackled the issue of the educational element versus the successful formula in young adult dystopias. Simmons (2012) argues that «The Hunger Games» can contribute to stimulate social action in community and encourage young audiences to stand up against injustice and savagery to build a fairer world. Other thinkers (Fisher, 2012; Duane, 2014) refer to the situations of oppression and

domination described in the novel, while Latham & Hollister (2014), Ringlestein (2013) and Muller (2012) criticise the manipulation of information, comparing it to the instruments used in today's world to control the population. Ott (2010) explains that when «V for Vendetta» was premiered in the US, a debate ensued over American policies, arguing that the film stirs audiences away from political apathy and into democratic resistance and rebellion against states that attempt to hush dissidence. Call (2008) sees in the

Participation in social media has changed democratic practices and altered state-society relations. In the past decade, there have been countless works on the democratising potential of social media (Hindman, 2008). This has stirred debate over the advantages of social media in encouraging social or political participation.

film's iconography an effective introduction to the symbolic language of postmodern anarchism.

Against the authors who emphasise the educational purpose of the films, others (Benson, 2013; Sloan, Sawyer, Warner & Jones, 2014) criticise the excessive use of violence in the films, which they consider to be the cause of insensitivity to oppression or abuse.

Based on the analyses found in specialised literature, this paper aims at answering the question whether the messages posted by youngsters watching the films have to do with ideological thinking that could lead to joint reflection on the current social and political situation. To do this, it examines the content of the tweets posted when the films were being aired. Twitter is both an apt tool for the development of affinity spaces and a fine example of transmedia pop culture that is combined with television in a multi-screen environment that is bound to alter the audience's creation of meaning.

2. Materials and methods

Our research approach focuses on computer-mediated communication, defined as verbal interaction in a digital environment (Herring, 2004). Empirical observations are made of a corpus of Twitter messa-

ges, framed within computer-mediated discourse analysis.

2.1. Corpus

Our corpus is made of the messages posted on Twitter when the films under study were being aired, taking the social audience into account – another key component in convergence culture (Jenkins, 2008). The combination of social media and second screens (tablets, smartphones, television) produces an audience that interacts in social media. This may lead to a

juegosdelhambre and 1,400 with #vdevendetta). Retweets were not included, as they are re-posts of messages posted earlier. Our time frame was the days on which the films were aired, until one hour after they ended.

Regarding the individuals posting the tweets in the corpus, Twitter users are not required to indicate their age in their profiles. 1,000 users tweeting about the films were chosen at random on the basis of their profile pictures, the contents of their messages (mentions of parents or siblings, of school or university, etc.) and the photos they post. These criteria helped us to select teenagers and young adults.

Cultural products are not mere entertainment or ideological vessels but rather complex artefacts embodying social and political discourse. As such, they should be analysed and understood within the social and political environment where they are produced, circulated and received. Being part of this environment and partly responsible for the people who should transform it, schools should take on media education among its priorities.

horizontal relationship between users who are physically apart watching the same television broadcast (Quintas & González, 2014). To make comments, users tend to use hashtags that single their messages out. In our corpus, the hashtags are #vdevendetta for «V for Vendetta» and #losjuegosdelhambre for «The Hunger Games».

The tweets in our corpus were posted when «V for Vendetta» was aired by Neox on 23 July 2014 (408,000 viewers; 2.8% shared tweets) and when «The Hunger Games» was premiered by Antena 3 (4,513,000 viewers, 24.3% share, 48,152 tweets) (source: Kantar Media, 2014). The tweets were collected with Tweet Archivist, a Twitter analytics tool to search, archive, analyse, visualise, save and export tweets based on a search term or hashtag. This software uses the API to create files with data containing a hashtag or word. Due to API constraints, not every tweet can be stored. The corpus, however, contains 2800 tweets (1,400 with the hashtag #los-

juegosdelhambre and 1,400 with #vdevendetta). Retweets were not included, as they are re-posts of messages posted earlier. Our time frame was the days on which the films were aired, until one hour after they ended.

2.2. Methods

The tweets were analysed through «coding and counting», a quantitative method used in computer-mediated communication consisting in encoding the data and then counting the occurrence of a coded item, together with content analysis. The occurrence of a topic in the corpus analysed can be used to make adequate statistical calculations for a deeper understanding of the relationship between variables in the phenomenon being analysed.

The coding and counting method requires key concepts to be operationalisable in empirically measurable terms (Herring, 2004). So we defined the concepts and developed specific codes that could be counted.

The categories used to classify the tweets were:

A) Categories related to the content of the films:

- A1) References to plot events or facts in the film.
- A2) References to film characters.
- A3) References to feelings or empathy with an aspect of the film.

B) Categories unrelated to the content of the films:

- B1) Information about the viewing environment.
- B2) Comments about television or Twitter.
- B3) Comments unrelated to the film.

C) Categories related to the social and political element in the films:

- C1) Social/political quotations from the film.
- C2) Connections between the film and the current social/political situation.
- C3) Other social/political reflections.

All these categories were gathered in an analysis file tested for data record accuracy with other films in order to make all the necessary coding changes before using the file for this research.

One of the disadvantages of using an original and innovative research method is the risk of reductionism vis-à-vis of the reality being studied. There are also the limitations in the analysis of the texts, as every discourse is underpinned by social factors we have no knowledge of. So, the empirical approach to text analysis, based on texts and texts alone forces the researchers to infer social and cognitive information that is far from self-evident.

3. Results

Based on the results obtained after data coding, it is striking that the categories with the smallest number of tweets are those related to the social and political element in the films (C1, C2, C3) (figure 1). Although in «V for Vendetta» they account for 27% of total messages, in «The Hunger Games», the percentage is really low (1%).

As shown in figure 2, the messages about «V for Vendetta» include 178 tweets quoting lines from the film with social or political content, e.g. «[F]airness, justice, and freedom are more than just words, they are perspectives», «An idea can still change the world» or «People should not be afraid of their governments. Government should be afraid of their people». In addition, there are 71 messages connecting the plot to elements of the current social/political situation, as in: «Watching #vdevendetta, I can't but think about

media control, misinformation and the #CanonAEDE [Spanish IP law]»; «We need a speech like that in all TV channels in this country, so that people understand #vdevendetta»; «Has V just said, #LeyMordaza [Spanish Law for Citizen Safety and Protection that is considered to curtail freedom of speech]? #vdevendetta». There are 124 messages referring to the political/social element in the film, expressing a variety of opinions. Some users praise the film for its power to invite reflection and change, and to make a deep ideological impact: «Everyone should have the principles shown in this film. #vdevendetta»; «#vdevendetta: What a film! It makes you think. We should be inspired by it in everyday life»; «What are we waiting for to make a change? If we start moving, they'll start falling. #vdevendetta». Others complain about inaction in the real world: «Sadly, the people are united only in films like #vdevendetta»; «Those who like #vdevendetta and think of themselves as revolutionaries, and then don't care about what's going on around them»; «Couch potatoes watching #vdevendetta. #BigFan». About 50% of the tweets in this category criticise the film and the ideas it conveys: «#vdevendetta is such a boring film, aimed at indoctrinating dupes into violence and communism. Be carefull!»; «C'mon, guys, we're gonna be anti-system anarchists without a clue. C'mon! #vdevendetta»; «#vdevendetta is an anti-system, anarchist 'candy' for teenagers».

As to «The Hunger Games», there are almost no tweets referring to the film's social/political content (only 21; cf. Figure 3). Likewise, social/political quotations (category C1.) are virtually non-existent (5), as

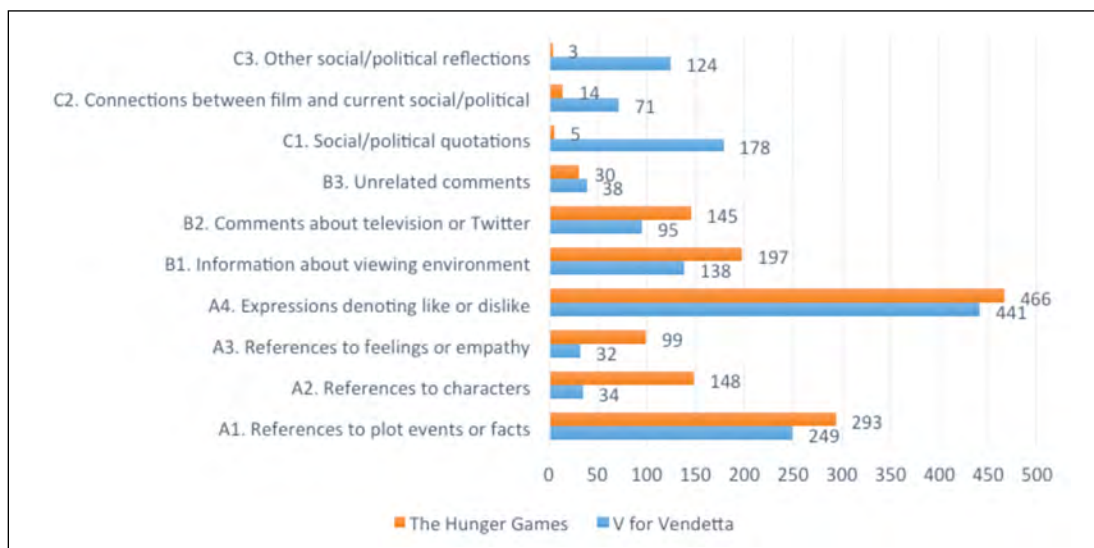


Figure 1: Number of tweets by category.

opposed to the «V for Vendetta» case; all of them are based on Katniss's line, «I'm more than just a piece in their Games». In the category of tweets comparing the film to the current situation (C2.), there are 14 messages: «In #losjuegosdelhambre, rulers change the rules whenever they want to. For «cashflow» and money. If we tighten the rope, we can make it. Together»; «Sorry for being dramatic, but the society in #losjuegosdelhambre is quite similar to Spain today: submissive and servile»; «Don't you feel that in Spain we're also playing #losjuegosdelhambre?». The messages focusing on social/political aspects of the film are rare too (3): «#losjuegosdelhambre, or how to subtly tell the people that the solution lies in rebellion»; «We're actually living in #losjuegosdelhambre. There'll come a time when we stand up against unfair rules against all Capitols»; «What's really scary about this film is that it might not be so far away from the reality around us. Just think about it... #losjuegosdelhambre».

More than half of the tweets refer to film content (categories A1, A2, A3, A4; 53% in «V for Vendetta» and 73% in «The Hunger Games»). The subcategory with the largest number (a third of tweets for both films) is the group of messages of like and dislike (A4). Tweets like the following are rather frequent: «Loving #losjuegosdelhambre!»; «#losjuegosdelhambre, what a great movie!»; «I've loved #vdevendetta: I'd heartily recommend it». Some of the tweets also express dislike, but they are a small portion. The rest of the tweets in this category are about film scenes or facts (A1), feelings triggered by the films (A3) or film characters (A2). Most of them contain trivial information or use the films to make superficial comments: «I'd rather go to #losjuegosdelhambre than to school tomorrow»; «That machine I'd use to make cute guys. Trees, panthers, stupid things? Get off! #losjue-

gosdelhambre»; «#losjuegosdelhambre is when you are hungry at midnight and open the cupboard and all you have it fattening food and you still give it a go».

Finally, 20% of the tweets about «V for Vendetta» and 27% of the posts about «The Hunger Games» are not related to the films themselves. Instead, the users make comments about their own lives or related topics (like Twitter itself, television, or other cultural products; categories B1, B2, B3) based on the films. For both films, the subcategory with the largest number of tweets is that of comments about the viewing environment or experiences associated with the films (B1): «Because of #losjuegosdelhambre, I've bitten the nail of my right little finger too short!»; «So here I am, watching #losjuegosdelhambre instead of getting ready for class early tomorrow». «There's no better way of calling the day off than by watching #vdevendetta».

Remarkably, these messages trigger virtually no interactions (less than 1%). Most of the tweets are not retweeted or favoured, and they seldom get replies. There is no communication between users. Senders post their messages without expecting a response from other users.

4. Discussion and conclusions

New consumers are always connected. They are highly visible and active. The reception and consumption of media contents is an active and collective process, as shown by the large number of tweets posted during the films. Message content analysis shows that

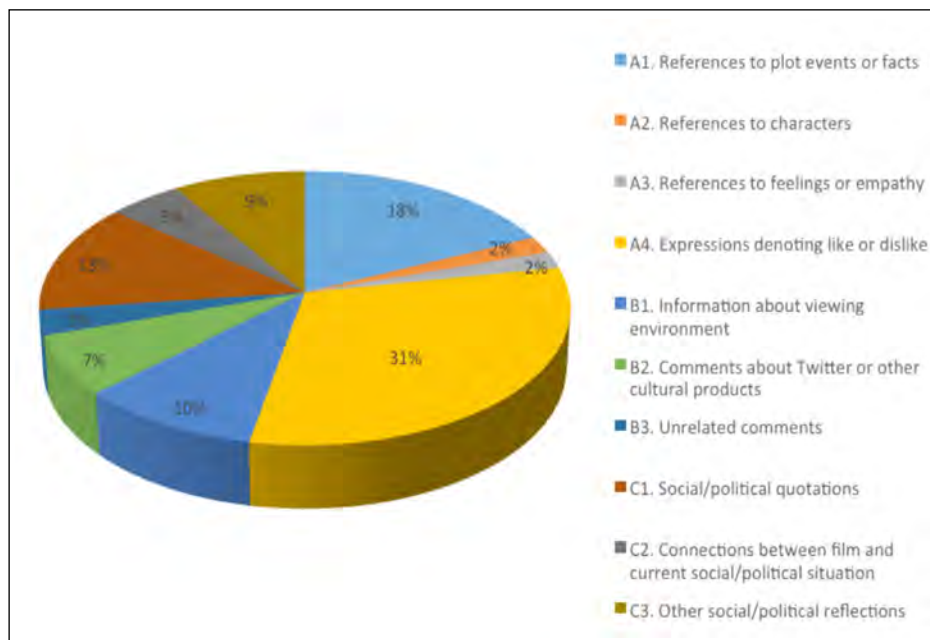


Figure 2: Percentage of messages by category for «V for Vendetta».

there is an urgent need among youngsters to identify themselves as fans of a cultural product and inform their followers of their likes and interests in cultural consumption. Moreover, they do not expect other users to reply or respond, even if they share those likes and interests. Thus, their texts can be framed within the participatory culture (Jenkins, 2008), without an emphasis on creation or mutual learning. Consequently, no affinity spaces are developed among users, given the unwillingness to share, discuss or become

attached to other users. Similarly, no knowledge communities emerge (Lévy, 1997) for the discussion and collective development of topic –or interest– sharing follower communities as an alternative to media power.

Although scholars have emphasised the ability of dystopian films or novels like «V for Vendetta» and «The Hunger Games» to encourage critical thinking and social action, tweet analysis shows that youngsters have other interests in relation with pop culture. In the case of these two films, they feel attracted to their charismatic characters and exciting plots (where adventure and intrigue are key ingredients), but that is all. They seldom go beyond the realm of entertainment.

Twitter appears, then, as a tool to express one's cultural preferences and interests, particularly regarding cultural products in vogue. Even though it has been used to build networks of people interested in social movements and collective intelligence on a variety of social and political issues, in the cases analysed, it is mainly used to keep users and their followers connected to share information on cultural patterns and preferences.

It seems rather obvious that social media can be a powerful communication tool for citizen engagement in situations of conflict, oppression and resistance.

However, the inclusion of these situations in the media or as products of pop culture does not lead to similar political or social thinking or even to social outrage vented through the Internet. Social media

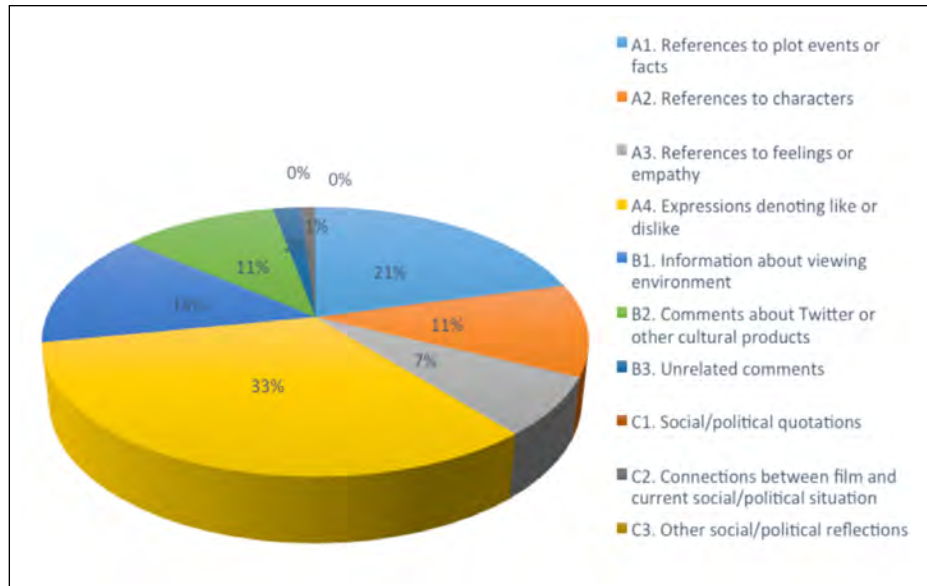


Figure 3: Percentage of messages by category for «The Hunger Games».

interventions by youngsters watching situations of injustice confine to the viewing environment itself or focus on shallow details. As a result, the social network becomes a tool for connection rather than reflection.

The tweets posted in those circumstances are spontaneous rather than being the result of brooding. This may be one of the reasons why references to the social/political element in the films are so scarce. Even when these references exist, they are superficial, only reproducing popular quotations. Some of the users note this, accusing fellow Twitter users of being «couch potatoes» daydreaming about the revolution, making frivolous complaints and being fully incapable of sponsoring change in the societies where they live.

Hindman (2008) asks a fundamental question: What kind of learning and citizenships are social media contributing to build? Are people really being empowered or is it just an illusion of power compounded by the trivialisation of public commitment? Based on the results of our study, we agree with Tilly (2004), Tarrow (2005) and Díez, Fernández & Anguita (2011) that even when social media messages can reach an amazing number of people and thus contribute to social mobilisation, in the end they tend to have a limited outcome. In the repercussions of the films studied in this paper, they include a large number of

unrelated, disconnected messages that cannot be processed and thus cannot lead to organisation and action.

Popular culture –films like «V for Vendetta» and «The Hunger Games»– affects socialisation and education processes. It should therefore be approached by media education to help consumers understand its meaning and role in society. According to Kellner (2011), cultural products are not mere entertainment or ideological vessels but rather complex artefacts embodying social and political discourse. As such, they should be analysed and understood within the social and political environment where they are produced, circulated and received.

Being part of this environment and partly responsible for the people who should transform it, schools should take on media education among its priorities.

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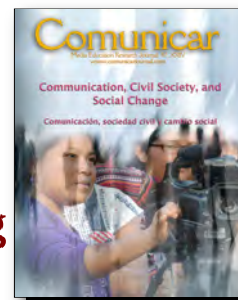
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Digital Civic Activism in Romania: Framing anti-Chevron Online Protest Community «Faces»

Activismo cívico digital en Rumanía: La comunidad de Facebook en las protestas on-line contra Chevron

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of a quantitative analysis of two Romanian Facebook communities' self-presentations during the online and offline anti-fracking protests in Romania. In 2013 Romanians started to protest against the gas exploration of the US giant Chevron in the village of Pungești. The online and offline Pungești Resistance Movement turned within one month from a rural to a national mobilization tool meant to help the Romanian peasants affected by the proposed shale gas exploration operations of Chevron. Since the online engagement desired to finally turn into an offline participation is highly dependent on the informing practice, we consider that a framing analysis of the Facebook posts will reflect whether they are culturally compatible and relevant for the protesters. Using the framing theory in social movements as our theoretical background, we provided a comparative content analysis of two Romanian Facebook communities' postings (October, 2013 - February, 2014). We focused on identifying the verbal and visual framing devices and the main collective action frames used for the shaping of the online communities' collective identity. The findings revealed a dominance of «land struggle» as a collective action frame followed by «conflict» and «solidarity» and a salience of photos and video files used as framing devices of cultural relevance for Romanian protesters and of evidence of offline anti-fracking activism in Romania.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta los resultados del análisis cuantitativo de las auto-representaciones de dos comunidades rumanas en Facebook durante las protestas on-line y off-line en contra del «fracking» en Rumanía. En 2013 los rumanos comenzaron a protestar contra las explotaciones de gas del gigante energético norteamericano Chevron en la aldea de Pungești. Este movimiento de resistencia pasó, en poco más de un mes, de ser una herramienta de movilización rural a una de alcance nacional cuyo objetivo era ayudar a los campesinos afectados por las explotaciones de gas planificadas por Chevron. Dado que el óptimo grado de implicación on-line para pasar a una participación off-line depende mucho de las prácticas informativas, consideramos que un análisis de textos publicados en Facebook reflejará si éstos son compatibles y relevantes para los manifestantes. Nuestra premisa teórica está basada en la teoría del encuadre en movimientos sociales e informa nuestro análisis de contenido comparativo de los textos de dos comunidades rumanas de Facebook desde octubre de 2013 hasta febrero de 2014. En el trabajo se identifican las estrategias de encuadre verbal y visual, y los marcos de acción colectiva utilizados para formar la identidad de estas comunidades on-line. Los resultados obtenidos muestran el predominio de «la lucha por la tierra» como principal marco de acción colectiva, seguido del «conflicto» y la «solidaridad», e indican la preeminencia de fotos y archivos de vídeo como recursos de encuadre de relevancia cultural y como pruebas del activismo fuera de Internet en contra del «fracking» en Rumanía.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Online protest, framing, collective action frames, framing devices, land struggle, conflict, solidarity.

Protestas on-line, teoría del encuadre, encuadres de la acción colectiva, dispositivos de encuadre, lucha por la tierra, conflicto, solidaridad.



1. Introduction

Cyber-protests as «extensions of a social movement into a new media space» (Zimbra & al., 2010: 49) are mainly linked to political protest movements or to social protests of minorities or marginalized groups. Lately digital activist groups have also protested against corporations either to claim a reduction in the influence of corporations on politics (Occupy Wall Street movement) or to stop oil companies from oil drilling (the Lego and Greenpeace «Save the Arctic» community or the oil subsidy removal protests in Nigeria). In 2013 the Romanian Government's decision to pursue Chevron's hydraulic fracturing in a Romanian village was the opportunity factor which triggered cyber-protests. The anti-fracking protests reveal that Romanian citizens have gradually started to build a protest culture. We will place the analysis of the online social movement against Chevron in Romania within the theoretical context of framing processes because the online protesters used Facebook posts as a means of shaping and generating «collective action frames» (Benford & Snow, 2000) through which they succeeded in informing and mobilizing other Romanian citizens.

This study of the Romanian anti-fracking online protests has a twofold objective: (a) to provide a comparative analysis of the framing devices and of the collective action frames used by two Romanian online communities in their presentation of the anti-fracking movement; (b) to determine the visual and verbal categories used by these communities for the most dominant collective action frames.

1.1. Insights into protests 2.0

The social media supporting protest movements provide the benefits of quickly and cheaply mobilizing a wide audience, overcoming geographical distance or of pluralism of information (Passini, 2012; Soengas, 2013). Cyber-activism turns common people into «netizens» (Franklin, 2010) who become important members of a civic engagement community with a minimal participation. The rise of social networks (Facebook) as sites of digital civic activism allows the shaping of a collective identity since the SNS users are united by a common bond, sharing the same grievances concerning a political, social, educational or cultural issue. Mercea (2012: 155) identifies «digital prefigurative participation» as «a specific genre of digital participation in activism». Formed of three distinct levels (mobilization, identity-building, organizational transformation), «digital prefigurative participation» is prior to offline social movement engagement and

involves the interaction of individuals through computer-mediated communication.

Within the process of identity-building, the online communities favor the development of «the new social movements» (Diani, 2003), whose features are decentralization, dynamism, the lack of a formal hierarchy, and a group of participants identifying themselves with the movement's perspectives and objectives. Castells (2012) states that online communities construct themselves through a process of autonomous communication. Thus the cyber-protest communities create a new public space, labeled by Castells as «a space of autonomy», which is the networked space between the digital and the urban space. Within this new hybrid space of freedom, the online affordances allow a trajectory from outrage to hope and finally to action. This last behavioral component of protests 2.0 should not restrict itself to the offline mobilizing actions. The research (Schultz, 2008; Petray, 2011; Castells, 2012) shows that protests 2.0 become effective if they occupy an urban space, by creating an external site, where the online community members may meet when they want to become more involved in the movement. Although the publicly open structure of Facebook provides a high degree of self-presentation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), it is not designed to activism and it provides false consensus and conformism (Schultz, 2008; Passini, 2012). The opaqueness of dedication levels may be counterbalanced by linking online and offline tactics and by creating real-world actions (Schultz, 2008). Passini (2012) agrees that the social networks are the engines of the latest Facebook and Twitter revolutions, but he also emphasizes that the online protest movements should adopt offline civil resistance techniques in order to bring some social changes.

1.2. Digital civic activism in Romania

After the 1989 revolution, Romania has been going through a transition period from communism to democracy which has not led to a high level of post-communist civic engagement (Bădescu & al., 2004; Mercea, 2012). There are two main reasons for Romanians' lack of trust in civic associations (Bădescu & al., 2004): (1) the economic gain that many NGOs set up by entrepreneurs seem to pursue, and (2) the establishing of such NGOs by political parties as a screen to illegally raise campaign funds.

Although the Romanian NGOs claim that they are the citizens' voice and although the budget cuts and all sorts of austerity driven reforms may have been the triggers of social movements in Romania (Presadă,

2012), Romanians have not been very active protesters against the government by January 2012. «The protests in January were a lesson given by the unorganized civil society to the organized civil society» (Presadă 2012) since the citizens spontaneously gathered themselves without any support of the organized civil society. We consider that the protests in January 2012 were a turning point for Romanians' civic engagement. Protesting against the President Băsescu's proposal to reform the healthcare system and against the resignation of the Romanian Secretary of State for Health (Raed Arafat), Romanians used Facebook communities to organize themselves. The 2012 protests in the University Square in Bucharest were important for the development of digital civic activism in Romania for three main reasons: (1) they were the first social movements where Facebook was used as a tool to mobilize citizens; (2) the offline site (University Square) was used as the reference point of protesters' meeting for other uprisings, such as protests against the Anti Counterfeiting Trade Agreement and against fracking; (3) they constituted the social movements with immediate institutional changes, such as Raed Arafat's re-instatement, resignation of the Government and of the public TV station news director.

One year later, the January 2012 protest was followed by the social movement against the gas exploration of the US giant Chevron in the village of Pungești (Vaslui county, North-East Romania). These protests against fracking initiatives should be included in an international context of social movements against Chevron. In 2012 Polish villagers from Zurawlow succeeded in blocking the US company's intention to drill but one year later the company filed a civil lawsuit against the villagers claiming that they had violated its lawful right to access the site. Since 2013 Argentinians have been protesting against Chevron after the government allowed the company to drill more than 100 wells.

In 2010 the Romanian government and Chevron signed an agreement which stipulated that Chevron would own more than two million acres of land in Romania. On October 3 2013, Chevron obtained all the necessary authorizations to start the shale gas

explorations in the village of Pungești. Romania's decision to pursue the hydraulic fracturing, whereas some other European countries (France, Germany, Bulgaria) refused was the opportunity factor triggering the offline Romanian villagers' uprising and the Romanian citizens' cyber-protests.

On October 12, the first Facebook community, Pungești-TV was created. Two days later the Romanian newspapers presented the protests of 150 villagers who occupied the road leading to Chevron's

Within the process of identity-building, the online communities favor the development of «the new social movements» (Diani, 2003), whose features are decentralization, dynamism, the lack of a formal hierarchy, and a group of participants identifying themselves with the movement's perspectives and objectives.

construction site. Then almost 500 protesters gathered at the University Square in Bucharest, as a sign of solidarity with the Pungești villagers. They protested against the Romanian government, the public TV station and the Minister of Public Affairs, calling them thieves and trying to mobilize more protesters. On October 23, the second Facebook community (Pungești-Resistance) was created. As Merca (2012) and Garrett (2006) highlight, identity building in the online communities is essential for digital participation. The logo created by community members and posted as profile pictures constituted a means of uniting the online participants. The Pungești-Resistance community used the image of a bull destroying a well as a connotative representation of protesters. The bull with horns having the colours of the Romanian flag has a historical signification. The bull's head is represented on the flag and coat of arms of Moldavia (the region where the protests took place). The use of the bull as the logo of this online community is appropriate since it may provide a high level of cultural identification among members due to its historical connotation.

Throughout the following months, more citizens from Romanian cities joined the movement at the offline site (The Resistance Camp of Pungești). The two locations external to Facebook (University Square in

Bucharest and the Resistance Camp of Pungești) show that the anti-fracking protests 2.0 in Romania have become an integrated part of the overarching social movement, which Petray (2011) considers essential for any successful protest. An issue which may have seemed local (anti-fracking protests in the village of Pungești) has gradually been framed into a national one (Romanians against hydraulic fracturing), turning into an uprising against the Romanian govern-

Benford and Snow (2000) identify as «collective action frames». To resonate with social movement participants' common and shared values and beliefs, collective action frames should have three qualities (Benford & Snow, 2000; Noakes & Johnston, 2005): to be culturally compatible (the compatibility of frames and symbols with the «cultural tool kit» - cultural narratives, cultural heritage and symbols), to be consistent (the internal consistency and thoroughness of the beliefs, claims and actions promoted in the frames) and to be relevant (the capacity to make sense of the participants' experiences within the respective society).

In their reviewing study of social movement frames, Benford & Snow (2000) mention that collective action frames have an action-oriented function and that they involve interactive, discursive processes. The action-oriented function refers to three core framing tasks: diagnostic (problem identification and attributions of responsibility), prognostic (solutions, plans of attack) and motivational (socially-constructed vocabularies of motive). This action function is achieved through two discursive processes: framing articulation and framing amplification. In the frame articulation we will include different types of verbal

The extensive use of visual accounts (photos and video files), typical of Facebook, is consistent with Corrigan-Brown and Wilkes's findings which highlight the importance assigned to this framing device by conveying a greater emotional response than textual accounts of the social movement. Beyond this emotional impact, images of protests serve as motivational and evidence tools. The photos and video files depicting villagers, protesters and challengers (gendarmes, local authorities and Chevron representatives) provide visual accounts of two important steps in organizing an activism campaign on Facebook.

mental and presidential corruption (Coman & Cmeciu, 2014). The online events reflect the concept of «digital prefigurative participation» (Mercea, 2012) since they triggered the presence of protesters offline. The online and offline protests brought an immediate change: Chevron stopped its search for shale gas in the village of Pungesti.

1.3. Protests and collective action framing

The new values and goals produced through social movements trigger a change within the institutions of a society since these institutions should create «new forms to organize social life» (Castells, 2012: 9). Thus protesters turn into «social movement entrepreneurs» (Noakes & Johnston, 2005). By selectively punctuating and encoding events, experiences and sequences of actions, protesters become signifying agents of meaning construction (Snow & Benford, 1992). They generate, elaborate and diffuse what

benford and Snow (2000) identify as «collective action frames». To resonate with social movement participants' common and shared values and beliefs, collective action frames should have three qualities (Benford & Snow, 2000; Noakes & Johnston, 2005): to be culturally compatible (the compatibility of frames and symbols with the «cultural tool kit» - cultural narratives, cultural heritage and symbols), to be consistent (the internal consistency and thoroughness of the beliefs, claims and actions promoted in the frames) and to be relevant (the capacity to make sense of the participants' experiences within the respective society).

The frame amplification as part of the alignment process «involves the idealization, embellishing, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or beliefs» (Benford & Snow, 2000). The analysis of the socially constructed vocabularies of motives beyond every social movement may reveal a cultural insight into a society's narratives or folk wisdom.

Another aspect to be taken into account is the relation between the framing of collective action and digital spaces. Highlighting the sporadic, dynamic and fluid nature of online social movements, Sádaba (2012) considers that this blending between the new formations of collective action and new technologies

brings forth two important aspects: (a) specific tools which may be accessed and used for representation with a mediation function; (b) these tools of sociological information production provide more insightful accounts into the local collective actions than other common techniques, such as surveys, interviews, or focus groups. The two Romanian Facebook communities formed in order to represent the collective actions against Chevron are a clear example of the power that this social network service played in the framing of a local action which gradually turned into a national and international issue.

2. Material and methods

We employ a framing analysis of the Facebook posts of the two online communities during the four months (October 12, 2013 - February 22, 2014) following the beginning of the anti-fracking protests in Romania. Our sample included 409 posts (294 Pungești-Resistance and 115 Pungești-TV).

2.1. Visual and verbal framing

The study employs both a deductive and an inductive method. We used a deductive method by seeking to find the types of verbal and visual framing devices within the online communities' Facebook posts. Starting from the literature on visual and verbal framing (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Parry, 2010; Corrigan-Brown & Wilkes, 2012), we adapted each framing device to the discursive specificity of the anti-fracking Facebook communities' posts. A content analysis of a sample of online posts ($n=15$), randomly selected from each online community, was conducted to determine the framing devices. Another sample of posts ($N=61$), approximately 15% of the total number (409), was double-coded to determine inter-coder reliability (Kappa) and the agreement between the two coders was .91 on average.

We included the following categories in the coding scheme for the verbal framing devices:

1) Catchphrases: a single theme statement, tagline, title or slogan that is intended to suggest a general frame (Facebook post titles and slogans used to mobilize other citizens).

2) Depictions have a threefold aspect:

- General Description: information provided by the online community members about their reasons to protest or about the protest development.

- Statistics: reports about the damage that fracking may cause, about the injured people during the protests or the statistical evidence of the governmental mismanagement.

- Testimonies of a third party in the description (different categories of supporters: celebrities, elites, politicians, representatives of social movement organizations etc.).

3) Exemplars (real and hypothetical examples):

- Real examples of the past or present focusing on the villagers' stories about the consequences that Chevron fracking may have on their lives and the protesters' stories about their experiences during this social movement.

- Hypothetical examples: possible scenarios (statements relying on possible outcomes unless the hydraulic fracturing stops).

We included in the coding scheme for the visual framing devices the following categories:

- Logo of the online communities' and of other organizations' visual identification.

- Advertisements: images used to promote an online and offline event.

- Photographs: images depicting the participants (protesters, gendarmes, politicians etc.) during the protests.

- Caricatures.

- Charts.

- Maps showing geographical locations of protests, of the areas to be exploited by Chevron.

- Anthropomorphic images which become visual metaphors (objects performing human actions).

- Video files user-generated posted or shared by the community members.

2.2. Collective frames

The inductive method was used for an in-depth analysis of the verbal and visual framing devices in order to find the types of frame to which they were assigned by the two online communities. We identified five main frames: land struggle frame, conflict frame, solidarity frame, political opportunity frame and ecology frame. The land struggle frame refers to villagers' social welfare within the context of Chevron's hydraulic fracturing. It focuses on verbal and visual accounts of persons peacefully protesting in the Resistance Camp, of the disadvantages of shale gas exploration operations (destruction of local businesses, resettlements) and of the advantages of the anti-shale gas exploration operations (local traditions, daily life and social customs). The conflict frame includes verbal and visual accounts depicting either participants (protesters and gendarmes) engrossed in violent scenes (fighting, police repression), participants (protesters and opponents) engrossed in verbal attacks or accounts of TV stations' misinformation about the pro-

testers. The solidarity frame includes verbal and visual accounts of protesters' supporters (common people, elites, TV presenters, present at the offline sites). The political opportunity frame refers to verbal and visual accounts of politicians who used this social movement to their political benefit. The ecology frame refers to accounts of environmental welfare, posts depicting local areas affected by exploration operations (destruction) versus intact local areas (preservation).

2.3. Research questions

Based on the literature regarding verbal and visual framing, offline and online social movements, the following research questions were developed:

- RQ1: What is the salience of verbal and visual framing devices?
- RQ2: What collective action frames do the anti-fracking online communities use in their Facebook posts?
- RQ3: How do the online communities use the visual and verbal framing devices to represent the five frames?

3. Analysis and results

3.1. Frequency of verbal and visual framing devices

The number of framing devices used by the posts analyzed reveal a great discrepancy. The Pungești-Resistance used 1121 framing devices in 294 posts, whereas the Pungești-TV only used 361 framing devices in 115 posts. As shown in table 1, both online communities understood the importance of visual framing devices in the online representation of protesters' anti-fracking actions and more than half of the devices focused on a visual depiction.

The first research question sought to determine the salience of the two types of framing devices. Table 1 shows a dominance of photos in both online communi-

ties' posts, followed by general descriptions, videos, catchphrases and real examples. Although these five devices were the most commonly used in both online communities, a difference in their overall distribution may be noticed.

In the Pungești-TV community, fewer than half of devices (44%) were photos, whereas in the Pungești-Resistance community photos were more than half (65%). General descriptions were the second mostly frequent used device. Though less than one-quarter (18%; The Pungești-Resistance and 22%; The Pungești-TV) of the devices provided descriptions about the reasons of the anti-fracking social movement and the protests' development, the frequency ($n=201$ and $n=87$) is important highlighting the online community members' desire to explain their demands and to properly organize their protests. Videos constitute a significant visual element and they are the third framing device most commonly used by both online communities. Catchphrases are the fourth most frequently used device and they mainly focused on slogans to mobilize new protesters. Although real examples were not very commonly used, both online communities provided stories of the protesters who were abused by the police or of the villagers who had to suffer after Chevron's hydraulic fracturing activities.

3.2. Frequency of collective action frames

The second research question focused on the types of collective action frames used by the two online communities during the anti-fracking protests.

As observed in table 2, both communities used land struggle, conflict and solidarity as the first three

Table 1. Types of verbal and visual framing devices – Romanian Facebook communities against Chevron

Framing devices		Pungești-Resistance		Pungești-TV	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Verbal framing devices	Catchphrases	37	3	36	10
	General descriptions	201	18	87	24
	Statistics	0	0	0	0
	Testimonies	10	1	1	0.23
	Real examples	26	2	16	4
	Hypothetical examples	2	0.30	0	0
	Total	276	25	140	39
Visual framing devices	Logo	12	1	2	0.54
	Advertisements	5	0.55	13	3
	Photos	725	65	157	44
	Caricatures	2	0.30	0	0
	Maps	5	0.55	1	0.23
	Charts	0	0	0	0
	Video files	94	8	48	14
	Anthropomorphic images	2	0.30	0	0
	Total	845	75	221	61
Total		1,121	100%	361	100%

most salient collective action frames. The high frequency of the «land struggle» frame is hardly surprising given that the protests were started by the villagers of Pungești as a way of protecting their land from the Chevron's invasion. «Conflict» as the second mostly dominant frame may be explained through the offline violent confrontations between the protesters and the gendarmes. Although both online communities provide a similar framing of the anti-fracking protests, two differences may be noticed:

1) More than half of the devices used by the Pungești-Resistance community members frame the villagers' land struggle whereas only less than half of the devices used by the second community members frame this collective action.

2) Whereas the Pungești-TV community provided the same frequency for the «political opportunity» and «ecology» frames, the Pungești-Resistance community members used the «ecology» frame more than the «political opportunity» frame.

3.3. The verbal and visual accounts of the collective action frames

The third research question focused on the discrepancies in framing device use for the five collective action frames. To better understand the verbal and visual framing devices by collective action frames, mean values were calculated to determine how often they were used by the two Facebook communities.

As table 3 shows, photos, general descriptions and video files were the three most commonly used devices in three frames related to the anti-fracking protests in Romania, namely land struggle, conflict and solidarity. To frame «land struggle», both communities provided the same hierarchy in the framing device use: photos, general descriptions, and video files. As observed, photos outscored all other devices used to frame to the «land struggle» frame for both online communities. To frame «conflict», the Pungești-Resistance used photos ($m=5.78$) more than general descriptions ($m=3.92$), whereas the Pungești-TV provided more verbal descriptions of the conflicts with the gendarmes ($m=2.78$) than

visual accounts of these confrontations ($m=1.42$). The devices used to frame «solidarity» by the two online communities

were nearly the same: photos of the crowds depicting protesters supporting the villagers and general descriptions of the protest organization and development. The Pungești-Resistance community outscored the Pungești-TV community in the usage of devices to frame «political opportunity», the main focus being on verbal descriptions of politicians supporting the protesters ($m=0.21$). A discrepancy in the device use is at the level of the «ecology» frame. Whereas the Pungești-TV community members provided only general descriptions of the disadvantages of hydraulic fracturing ($m=0.21$), the Pungești-Resistance members used five framing devices. General descriptions ($m=1.71$), photos ($m=0.49$) and video files ($m=0.28$) had the highest level of revealing the dangers that fracking may cause unless it is stopped.

4. Discussion and conclusion

By analyzing the content of two Romanian anti-fracking online communities during a four-month online protest, this study found that the online communities preferred to use more visual framing devices (more than 60%) than verbal framing devices and that they mainly represented their actions as collective action frames of land struggle, conflict and solidarity. The extensive use of visual accounts (photos and video files), typical of Facebook, is consistent with Corrigan-Brown and Wilkes's findings which highlight the importance assigned to this framing device by conveying a greater emotional response than textual accounts of the social movement. Beyond this emotional impact, images of protests serve as motivational and evidence tools. The photos and video files depicting villagers, protesters and challengers (gendarmes, local authorities and Chevron representatives) provide visual accounts of two important steps in organizing an activism campaign on Facebook, as Schultz (2008) mentions in his study: the existence of an external site and the beginning of real-world actions. The visual depictions of villagers and protesters at the two external sites (the resistance camp in Pungești and the University Square in Bucharest) constitute significant

Table 2. Collective action frames - Romanian Facebook communities against Chevron

Collective action frames	Pungești-Resistance		Pungești-TV	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Land struggle	719	64	173	48
Conflict	188	16	106	29
Solidarity	168	15	76	21
Political opportunity	7	1	3	1
Ecology	39	4	3	1
Total	1,121	100%	361	100%

evidence that the two online communities were used to enhance the offline anti-fracking activism in Romania. Besides the evidence function that Facebook visual depictions have, they reveal, as Sádaba (2012) mentions, a more insightful

account into the local collective action. The visual depictions of the protesters' fighting for their land provide a clear representation of the villagers' power to mobilize themselves against a foreign enemy (Chevron).

During social movements the visual and verbal legitimacy of a group is important because it shows cohesion among protesters. But at the same time, legitimacy bestowed on individuals also plays a significant role because the dramatic displays of individuals' stories may trigger a higher mobilization of new protesters. Real examples and testimonies are two verbal framing devices used to associate a face with a name. Although these two devices did not have the highest frequency, they were used by the two online communities. The Pungești-Resistance and the Pungești-TV communities provided 26 and 16 real examples of villagers, of hunger strikers, or of individuals who suffered from police's violent action. As Dan Schultz (2008) pointed out, the generation of media support is important in online activism campaigns. This media support was represented through the verbal framing device of testimonies. Unlike the Pungești-TV community, the Pungești-Resistance community offered more testimonies of supporters (TV producers, national and international journalists or Romanian elites) who joined the protests or who tried to provide an objective media account of the social movement.

Catchphrases constitute another significant verbal framing device during online activism campaigns. Unlike the Pungești-TV group, the Pungești-Resistance community provided catchphrases to create two online events. Both online communities used the greatest

Table 3. Mean values for framing devices by collective action frames

Framing devices		Land struggle		Conflict		Solidarity		Political opportunity		Ecology	
		A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Verbal framing devices	Catchphrases	1.07	.85	.64	.92	.92	.71	.00	.07	.00	.00
	General descriptions	4.71	1.78	3.92	2.78	3.78	1.42	.21	.07	1.71	0.21
	Statistics	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Testimonies	.14	.00	.28	.00	.28	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Real examples	.49	.21	.92	.64	.42	.28	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Hypothetical examples	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.14	.00
Visual framing devices	Logo	.14	.07	.00	.00	.71	.07	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Ads	.21	.00	.64	.64	.14	.28	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Photos	41.56	7.92	5.78	1.42	3.85	1.85	.07	.00	.49	.00
	Caricatures	.00	.00	.07	.00	.00	.00	.07	.00	.00	.00
	Maps	.14	.07	.07	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.14	.00
	Charts	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Video files	2.78	1.42	1.49	1.14	1.85	.78	.14	.07	.28	.00
	Anthropomorphic images	.07	.00	.07	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

A = Pungești-Resistance, B = Pungești-TV.

number of catchphrases for photo albums or video files («Pungești is all over Romania! An example for the whole planet!» or «We shall not be intoxicated! No to shale gas!»).

The constant postings of the anti-fracking offline and online protests allowed us to observe the evolution of the collective action frames used by the two online communities throughout a four-month interval (October 2013 - February 2014). Initially depicted by both communities as a peaceful struggle about Pungești peasants' right to land, the anti-fracking social movement in Romania evolved into an overt double conflict. Both community members provided, on the one hand, vivid descriptions of the physical conflict between the villagers and gendarmes, and on the other hand, a conflict between protesters and the local, governmental and parliamentary representatives responsible for Chevron's fracking and hydraulic fracturing in Romania. Whereas the Pungești-TV community members provide a constant framing of conflict, the Pungești-Resistance community members put an emphasis on the violent confrontations between the protesters and the gendarmes at the beginning of December when the police arrested villagers, destroyed their private properties and closed down all access roads. Although Chevron resumed its search for shale gas after these violent conflicts, the two online communities continued to provide information about the protests. In January and February the Pungești-TV community members used conflict as the most dominant collective action frame, whereas the Pungești-Resistance community members focused on supporters' solidarity with villagers and through the ecology

frame they provided experts' opinions about the potential health and environmental risks of fracking in the region. The «political opportunity» frame was scarcely used by the community members because the majority of Romanian politicians were represented as corrupted social actors who simply obey the Prime Minister's orders. Two Romanian politicians and the eleven Green members of the European Parliament from five countries who sent an open letter to Martin Schultz about the abusive actions of the Romanian government and Chevron were framed as allies for the villagers' struggle.

Although the two communities did not decentralize the online control of posts and shares, their visual and verbal accounts of the anti-fracking protests in Romania had the force to mobilize citizens from all over Romania. Both communities used collective action frames which had the three qualities mentioned by Benford & Snow (2000) and Noakes & Johnston (2005): cultural compatibility, consistency and relevance. The successful online mobilization of the protesters was due to an appropriate choice of collective action frames relevant to the villagers (land struggle and conflict) and to other Romanian citizens (solidarity and conflict). The dominance of «land struggle» as a frame is consistent with the daily lived experiences of the peasants from the village of Pungești, ready to defend their land against the «enemy» (Chevron). The Romanian peasants were framed as social movement entrepreneurs since they were able to construct a representation of a social movement from the inside (group-level experience as villagers of Pungești) out by embedding symbols borrowed from the Romanian common cultural kit. The verbal and visual accounts of the frames used by both online communities were culturally compatible with Romanian symbols and narratives (e.g. logo as a bull with horns, see 1.2.; or mobilizing catchphrases which depict the local development of the protest. «To the Senate. Against the shale gas fracking»).

Though this study showed the efficiency of visual and verbal online devices in depicting the collective action frames of land struggle, conflict, and solidarity during the anti-fracking protests in Romania, it should be noted that only two online communities were examined during a four-month protest without taking into account the interaction between the Facebook community administrators and its members. These limitations do not undermine the importance of this research, but they give ideas for future research. Case studies should be conducted to help offer insights into various aspects: the interactive nature of the online

community by analyzing the members' comments, a comparative analysis between Romanian and foreign anti-fracking Facebook communities, or a visual framing analysis of how the visual legitimacy of different individuals and groups of actors is rendered in images of anti-fracking collective action.

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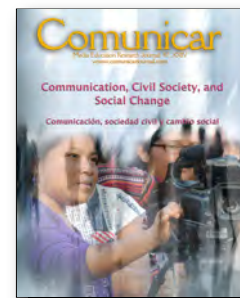
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The Transformative Image. The Power of a Photograph for Social Change: The Death of Aylan

La imagen transformadora. El poder de cambio social de una fotografía: la muerte de Aylan

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the role of the image as an agent for social transformation. The methodology adopted is a case study: the impact of the photograph of Aylan Kurdi, the three-year-old child drowned off Bodrum in an attempt to escape on a raft full of Syrian migrants. This is one of the most widely seen social photojournalism documents in recent times, and it had a huge impact on social media. The study applies an iconographic, iconological and ethical analysis to reveal the constituent parts of an image with the power for social change. In its main conclusions, this paper describes the potential for easy resignification of the digital graphic image as it symbolically transforms reality, and the power it has to generate processes of pronouncement and activism among citizens in digital environments. The results of the case study show that the value of an image for social change is achieved not only by the magnitude of the tragedy itself and the information that it registers, or by its formal aspects (iconographic), but mainly by being able to express a change of logic (iconological aspects) and to promote processes of reappropriation and denunciation. The ethical debate on dissemination shifts the problem from journalistic ethics to citizen responsibility.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo plantea el papel de la imagen como agente de transformación social. La metodología que se emplea es un estudio de caso sobre el impacto de la fotografía de Aylan Kurdi, el niño de tres años ahogado en el intento de huida en una balsa de migrantes sirios en Bodrum. Se trata de uno de los documentos recientes de fotoperiodismo social más difundidos transnacionalmente y con gran impacto en redes sociales. El estudio aborda diferentes niveles de análisis (iconográfico, iconológico y ético) para decañar los aspectos constitutivos de una imagen con poder de cambio social. Como principales conclusiones, esta investigación comprueba el poder de la imagen gráfica digital por su carácter de fácil reedición y re-significación en el paso de transformar simbólicamente la realidad y generar procesos de pronunciamiento y activismo en la ciudadanía a partir de entornos digitales. Los resultados del análisis del caso que se delimita muestran cómo el valor de una imagen en el cambio social no viene dado solo por la magnitud de la tragedia o el hecho que registra, ni por sus aspectos formales (iconográficos), sino por ser capaz de expresar un cambio de lógica (aspecto iconológico) y propiciar procesos de reappropriación y denuncia ciudadana. Por último, el debate ético sobre su difusión traslada el problema de la deontología periodística a la responsabilidad ciudadana.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Photojournalism, social change, digital image, iconographic analysis, social impact, communication, refugees. Fotoperiodismo, cambio social, imagen digital, análisis iconográfico, impacto social, comunicación, refugiados.

1. The image and social transformation

There are images that can totally condense and define a tragedy and remain fixed in the memory of a generation, shaking up people worldwide and arousing the inactive masses into action; images that put a place on the map, direct our attention towards a problem, provoke strong emotions of sadness, anger, indignation or rage. Photojournalism has played a particularly significant role in recording political conflicts, wars, tragedies and confrontations. The war photos by Robert Kappa, the image captured by Eddie Adams of the execution of a Vietcong guerrilla in Saigon in 1968, the photo of fleeing Vietnamese children taken by Huynh Cong Út in 1972, and so many others, mean that a particular tragedy is never forgotten. In the words of Valle, these photos act as tattoo-images: «some images can make an impact on the viewer's sensibility as if leaving an imprint on their memory, like an emotional tattoo that fades in and out (...) they make an impression on us and can remain with us for the rest of our lives» (1978: 47).

Photography is said to have a transformational quality in that it has a «technological power to transform the world into a representation» (Roberts & Webber, 1999: 2). It has been shown that certain actions undertaken by citizens in a specific situation were related to the images they had in mind of that particular event (Fueyo, 2002: 9). Valle (1978: 49) speaks of nucleus-images that can generate more information in a concentric way, and which «are able in themselves to influence states of opinion in a decisive way». Earlier studies concluded that social photography «offers subjects the chance to construct new alternative ways of understanding and making sense of events, reflecting on them and developing the means to confront them by building new meanings and discourses» (Echeverry & Herrera, 2005: 141). In terms of communication, this amounts to a network of emotions and beliefs, a moral response, which activates behaviours of social commitment (Pinazo & Nos-Aldás, 2013). Arroyo and Gómez (2015) have shown that the moral response is more coherent when the audiovisual content shows real people dealing with moral conflicts. The specific influence of social photojournalism on the imagination has been previously emphasized (Novaes, 2015: 3) along with the ethical and educational implications of the representation of suffering via the image (Boltanski, 2000; Sontag, 2003; 2008; Linde, 2005).

In the specific framework of reinterpretation and recreation that the digital image enables, it is important to consider the difference pointed out by Aparici & al.

(2009) between «represented reality» and «constructed reality» in cyberspace as a «non-place». Works by Murray (2008) and Chouliraki (2015) contribute to the debate on new media and citizenry, ethics and the impact of digital images in the processes of remediation, intermediation and transmediation. This study aims to insert the role of images in the setting of communication for social change (as defined by Barranquero, 2012; Chaparro, 2013; Tufte, 2015). Based on a descriptive study of a specific case, the aim of this paper is to arrive at an understanding and definition of the «transformative image» (following the «transformative pedagogy» by Subirana, 2015), one with the power to provoke social change. The value of the image is studied in terms of impact and social mobilization. The study applies an iconographic-iconological method to the image, and it draws out the ethical questions and subjects them to expert interpretation in order to generate a multifaceted reflection on the subject. The image analyzed here consists of a paradigmatic example of the relations between digital communication and the social transformation processes. It is the features of digital communication –cooperation, instantaneousness, feedback, horizontality, decentralization, flexibility, dynamism and interconnection (Sampedro & Sánchez-Duarte, 2011: 238)– which define the process followed by a «transformative» image like the one we shall describe.

2. A case study: the impact of the photograph of Aylan Kurdi

The methodology of case studies is typical of exploratory research and descriptive and explanatory studies (Martínez, 2006: 168). Initially, as Platt explains (1992), the case study was conceived as a sociological method for social work studies although it was later applied more broadly, in such areas as the analysis of media images and the relation between belief systems and decision taking. Studies have shown that decisions can be taken based on the «image» of the situation rather than on its «objective» (Holsti, 1962). Along these lines, this study analyses the case of the photograph of Aylan in order to reflect on the role of the image in provoking reactions of solidarity worldwide. We used Google Analytics to gather data on the impact of the image in digital media. The image was filtered and analysed on several levels: iconography (descriptive), iconology (interpretative) and ethics (implicative). This provided us with a framework for discussion on the power for social transformation of images that provoke a strong «e-motion», in the etymological sense of an «impulse that induces action».

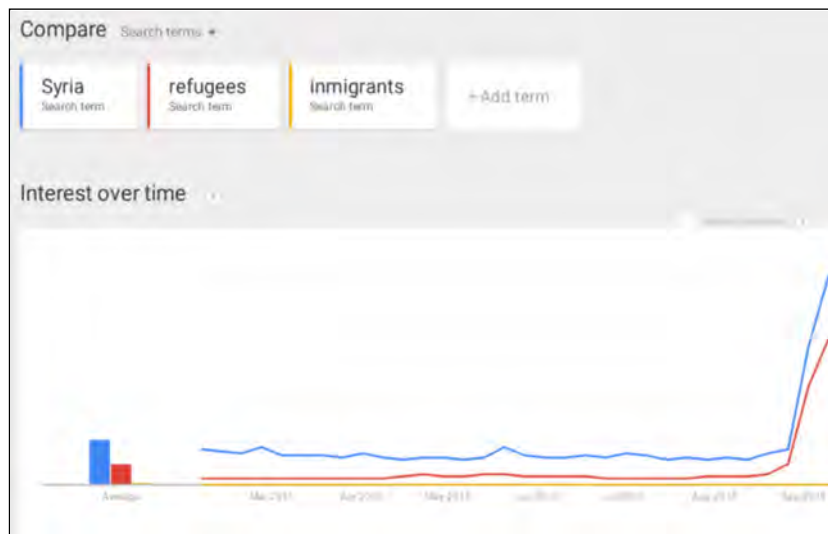
2.1. Analysis of the impact of the photograph

The photograph of Aylan Kurdi, the Syrian boy who was washed up drowned on a beach in Turkey, was taken by the Turkish photographer Nilüfer Demir, for the Dogan agency, and published by Reuters Ankara/DHA on 2 September 2015. The case of Aylan was one of thousands involving Syrians fleeing civil war in their native land. Aylan and his family came from Kobane. He was three years old when he died, in an attempt to reach the Greek island of Kos. According to Reuters, 23 people drowned as they sailed in two rickety boats that capsized after being hit by a strong wave. Five children and one woman died. The bodies were found on the Turkish beach of Bodrum, in the province of Mugla. But it was the photograph of Aylan that caused a media storm. Yet he was not even the youngest of the casualties: they were the Jafer twins aged 18 months. Two thousand people had already crossed the same seas in dinghies in the previous four months but the world would never forget the name of Aylan Kurdi¹.

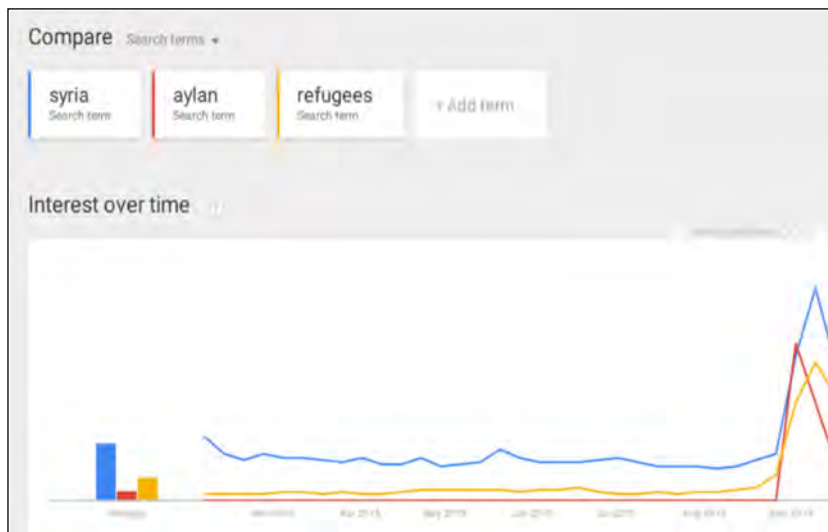
The photograph of the young boy acted as a triggering image. It appeared in the majority of international media outlets in a torrent of front pages and leading news stories (Graph 1), and Syria fast began trending on Google searches (Graph 2). These graphs reveal the power of reaction that an image can arouse by causing a mass search for information on the subject. Before reaching the press, this news story had previously appeared and multiplied on social media. This was communication by image. Reuters reported on the sheer viral power of the photo in a headline

«Troubling image of drowned boy captivates, horrifies» (Reuters, 2015). The image and its impact was a chronicle in itself for its potential to leave a strong impression on the viewer (to horrify).

Graph 1 shows the power that a single document can wield in order to situate a place on the map, or turn a humanitarian problem into a concern that affects people worldwide. Graph 2 demonstrates how an image quickly came to define Syria and the refugee drama. In fact, the name of Aylan that describes the image places him beyond the concept of refugee. The media treatment of the image raised this person above the category to which he was assigned. The human



Graph 1. Evolution of the number of headlines (Google Trends) with terms such as «Syria», «refugees» and «immigrants» in 2015 (09-12-2015) (<http://goo.gl/HLPUE4>).



Graph 2. Evolution of the number of headlines (Google Trends) with images labelled «Syria», «Aylan» and «Refugees» in 2015 (09-21-2015) (<http://goo.gl/kzz921>).

focus of that image with a name dragged the Syrian exodus out of anonymity.

On 3 September, a deluge of manifestos was posted on Twitter via the hashtag #KiyiyaVuranInsanlik (the humanity that drowns)². Writers such as Nobel Prize winner Mario Vargas Llosa and ordinary citizens posted opinions on social media. The event was interpreted and its meaning recast in various forms of creative expression. Citizen actions manifested themselves in representations of the occurrence in the form of protest. Charlie Hebdo dedicated a front-page to satirizing the events surrounding the image that caused a great deal of controversy on Twitter, especially in the Arab world.

The photograph was a determining factor in the taking of immediate decisions. On 3 September, Facebook Spain saw the appearance of «Refugees Welcome» to promote policies of shelter and hospitality (Martínez-Guzmán, 2003) for displaced Syrians, and in less than a month it had acquired almost 10,000 followers. It was just one of many spontaneous initiatives that emerged on or around that date to call for and organize humanitarian aid and recruit volunteers to welcome refugees. On 4 September, the Avaaz platform used Aylan's image in a campaign to gather signatures in support of a plan to take in refugees. The Egyptian magnate Naguib Sawiris stated that he would buy an island to shelter between 100,000 and 200,000 Syrian refugees and name it Aylan Kurdi: «it was the photo of Aylan that really opened my eyes» (CNN in Spanish, 2015). There were also institutional responses. Angela Merkel announced a programme to take in more than 800,000 refugees. In Canada the event caused a political crisis. Canada's «The National Post» reported that Aylan Kurdi's family's request for asylum had been rejected by the Canadian government in June. The request had been presented by an aunt of Aylan who lives in British Columbia, and the Social Democrat deputy Fin Donnelly had personally handed in the request to the Minister of Immigration at the time, the Conservative Chris Alexander. This occurred in the midst of an election campaign, and the government was heavily criticized for its immigration policy because on 2 September, Alexander had defended government policy on refugees from Syria on state television and attacked the media for largely ignoring the humanitarian crisis (EFE, 2015). A website, www.refugeeswelcome.ca, was created to promote an increase in the number of Syrian refugees that Canada would accept. The Nobody is Illegal organization mobilized its supporters. The image of Aylan exposed the incumbent Prime Minister of

Canada during the elections, which his party subsequently lost.

2.2. An iconographic analysis

Here we analyse the most important elements of this image of Aylan to show why it has had such repercussions, and why it has become an icon that has mobilized our consciences. Television news reports provided the complete sequence, with general shots of the victim from a distance, and allowed us to see additional elements of the context within which the body was found, such as images of the police officer who gathered up the corpse on seashore, and other witnesses. However, these images did not reproduce the full emotional impact of the still photograph.

In the foreground, we see the image of the boy's body, dead and alone, which is what causes the initial impact on us. It is the cadaver of a white boy whose clothes are soaked: his red T-shirt, his short blue trousers and the soles of his shoes still in good condition; he is lying face down in the wet sand on the shore, the sea is calm and the waves barely lap against his face. Although he is face down, we can just about see one side of his face. The boy's clothes are intact, the warm red of the T-shirt, the new shoes do not conform to the stereotype of a «poor» non-Caucasian boy whose clothes are ripped and torn, with sunken cheeks, the typical image of refugees in newspapers or on TV news. The casual observer might think it is just a little boy sleeping too close to the waves who you could pick up and remove from danger of drowning. The paradox of the image of life despite being one of death. The mind could whitewash reality and perceive it as a doll due to his paleness, like wax, reflected by the fragment of the face shown to the observer.

The photo is a low angle shot that softens the dichotomy from top to bottom and is thus hierarchical. The low angle provides emphasis and subjectivity, but the proximity is not just focal but also angled. The depth of the shot is sufficiently squeezed to allow us to be very close to the victim, an expressive device that heightens our sense of impotence, but the shot is sufficiently broad to incorporate the view of the sea. The photograph confers its look upon us so that the viewer is situated within the image, from above, and drawing us into it. Who are we? Someone on land, residing in that yearned-for destination of Europe. It is a Eurocentric vision that differs from that which a group of refugees would have on reaching European shores. This also creates an inside/outside situation. Such divisions emerge as dichotomy markers, meaning otherness, from a sense of heightened and upright subjecti-

vity of reception. The image was framed using the rhetorical device of suppression, exposing in full detail the shot of the boy but cutting out the police agents at work around him. This focuses and personalizes the tragedy of the Syrian refugees.

2.3. An iconological analysis

A verifiable hypothesis is that social inequality is linked to inequality in iconographic representation and the production and consumption of images. Likewise, a process of transformation and social change requires change in the social discourse. This process involves a semiotization of the ideology (hypothesis posed by Cros, 2009) or the cultural production of socio-ideological signs. Today's universe of images is a dialectical field where «ideologemas» and «ideosemas» are debated, in the sense attributed to them by Cros (2009), as textual and extra-textual phenomena. The image of Aylan is an ideologema in terms of a concept referring to a representation of an experience as well as a social sentiment. And the idea of sentiment is key in the social image that aims to create solidarity. The ideologema^f is one of the main regulators of content in the social conscience, and enables this content to circulate and become transformational communication. The ideosem is the factor that induces evaluation or criticism (Malcuzyński, 1991: 24).

The image of Aylan is endowed with considerable polysemy in terms of meaning. The icon harbours the concept of immigration, the refugee, immigration policies, tragedy, vulnerability and infancy, and contains those three treatments that an image can provide: document, art and sentiment (Aparici et. al, 2009: 214). It presents a view that is different within the universe of the tragedy of the children of immigrants and refugees crossing the Aegean or Mediterranean. We could say that it is a feminine view, not only because the photo was taken by a woman (the masculine and feminine circulate through the two genders) but by someone who has been brought up to care for others



Image 1. Photograph of Aylan Kurdi. Photographer: Nilüfer Demir/ Dogan Agency (Reuters, 2015).

rather than explore the world.

We observe how the image shifted the focus of the discourse on the problem. It is the word refugee and not the word immigrant that users type when searching on Google (Graph 1). As the fundeu.es website indicates, it is not appropriate to call refugees migrants or immigrants. Aylan was fleeing with his family but had not yet become «refugeed» (using the past participle of the verb). Yet his image defined the entire tragedy of the Syrian refugees. Immigrant was not the word that people associated to his case, and they did not use it when searching for information online (Bernardo, 2015). The same tragedy occurs incessantly with other migrants but they do not have an image as powerful as Aylan's, nor a term of salvation like refugee. This distance between the concept of immigrant and refugee not only differentiates meaning but also assumes a political shift in the treatment and understanding of the problem of displaced people because the idea of refugee implies an active institutional approach to sheltering such people. We observe a socio-political and informational shift in favour of the word shelter (which defines an attitude and/or a programme of assistance) as opposed to the word asylum (which defines a right) in the treatment of the subject in the news. The image of Aylan was a turning point for a semantic approach that is vital for a process of social change. Social change involves a transformation in the form of representing, understanding, analysing, thinking about and reacting to problems. This shift towards positive concepts from negative images defi-

nes one of the new designs in communication that aims to generate a feeling of solidarity. We could say that it is a way of seeing something negative yet thinking positively about the same issue: seeing the tragedy and at the same time contemplating the solutions.

2.4. An ethical analysis

The ethical debate surrounding an image like the one of Aylan draws on the motives for its publication, and ownership of the image; the instrumentalization of the document for profit (sale of newspapers, attracting more readers, etc.) or the possible morbid curiosity of consuming such a dramatic image as well as the treatment of the image of children (Espinosa & al., 2007). It could also examine the dilemma of widespread dissemination and copyright, but what is the real focal point of the ethical dilemma? Here are the opinions of four experts on the debate on the image of Aylan:

The unanimous opinion of these professionals in the field, with years of experience and a clear ethical commitment, such as the 2009 National Photography Prize winner Gervasio Sánchez, was that this image had to be published, and that its impact achieved the required mobilizing effect³. The photograph has become one of the icons of the refugee drama of the second decade of the XXI century; it is a transformative image.

We are not used to seeing images of dead children, drowned children, in our newspapers or on television news. As Sánchez says, what stands out is that «the body is whole» when normally war and natural catastrophe bring us images of mutilated, amputated or shattered bodies. The bodies of the drowned that are normally washed up are severely

deteriorated but not in this image. It is a boy who can be clearly identified by anybody in the West as «one of us» (which questions the hypocrisy of a society that needs «mobilizing» images of this nature to provoke a reaction). The reflection by cartoonist El Roto (2015) that «an image is worth more than a thousand drowned people» underlines how we set about confronting the multiple causes of war, and pushes us to look for meaning and to make sense of this situation beyond the image itself. The conclusion is that a fixed image can have a far more mobilizing effect than moving images on TV or hundreds of articles on the subject; but it should make us reflect on the underlying causes of a tragedy that centres on one single «exemplifying» case of the cruel destiny of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

The dilemma highlighted divisions in Europe. Many dailies preferred to ignore the unfolding drama. No national newspaper in Germany or France published the photo (except «Le Monde»). However, the main dailies in the UK («The Guardian», «The Independent», «Daily Mail», «The Sun») all published the image on their front pages. The Italian media was divided («La Repubblica» did not publish it). In Portugal, an editorial in «Público» felt obliged to explain why it had published the photo, and in Spain, «El Mundo» provided a link to a video of a debate among its editors about its publication. In contrast to this

What reflection would you make on the ethical dilemma caused by the publication of this image, its meaning and its symbolic and evocative power to bring far-reaching problems that European governments have ignored to the foreground of the social debate?			
José-Carlos Díaz (16-9-15, 00:12.)	Gervasio Sánchez (14-9-15, 10:00.)	Manuel Chaparro (13-9-15, 21:26.)	Pedro Soler (13-9-15, 23:58.)
«We are at our most sensitive when tragedies affect defenceless children. We feel responsible because the child died trying to get to a member state of the European Union, and we (and our representatives) have been unable to help him, to provide resources so that he didn't have to risk his life on this journey».	«I don't know of any mother or father who would object to the publication of such a photo». «There is a vicious circle of cynicism and hypocrisy. Debates on whether to show or not to show the faces of living or dead children. We have seen the hypocrisy of newspapers that publish front-page articles that are biased and manipulated yet they pose moral disquisitions for their readers on a theme like this. Then the debate on whether to publish the photo or not from a certain angle. Publish the photos and be damned! When it concerns an image of this nature it must be disseminated, and many more such photos should have been published too».	«The same as when Javier Bauluz published a photo of a dead immigrant washed up on Tarifa beach while bathers continued bathing as if nothing had happened. This is the world we live in, one with an economic model based on individualism not solidarity. Even so, citizens are more capable of action than the governments we have. The photos have served to force the governing class to react when citizens had already started to do so».	«The impression is that the viewer needs to simplify things and identify, and there is no greater sense of identification than that of the loss of a son or daughter of that age and in these circumstances. The problem in this case is not the media, it is how human beings react to these exceptional wake-up calls and remain passive in the face of a tidal wave of news that is so heart-rending. It's amazing. We have become immune to people dying in their thousands in dinghies, but a tragedy still needs its symbol».

Table 1. Opinions gathered from telephone interviews with four experts.

«revealing media blurring», the image was disseminated widely and quickly across the social networks, and the deontological debate was rendered irrelevant by the deluge of online diffusion.

The publication of the photograph coincided with the world's most important photojournalism festival, «Visa Pour l'Image», held in Perpignan (France), where debate initially centered on its authenticity. The image of Aylan routed all scepticism as it was clearly genuine but the manipulation came later when individual citizens began posting it online. This is where an ethical analysis of citizen responsibility concerning these images and their processes of resignification, appropriation and strategic management is most necessary. It should be asked whether it is ethical to manipulate an image or alter its meaning. The image began to undergo digital alteration, and artists were the first to denounce the refugee drama and promote the creative restitution of reality. Their works robbed the image of its iconic power and undermined the dramatic influence of its lyrical tone. They were published under the hashtags mentioned previously. One such illustrated image, by Steve Dennis (Álvarez, 2015), became very popular. It showed the boy in a cot, and this counter-image is interpreted as the art of satisfaction, recreating a world that coincides with our desires. The image was transformed into sand sculptures, graffiti and other protest art manifestations, as a way of symbolically overcoming the trauma caused by such a news event, and which also brought pressure to bear on the political treatment of the issue and helped mobilize citizens.

The ethics of the image appropriated by citizens shifts the ethical debate from the news publisher to the news receiver as cyber-publisher, to people who are active in media usage, «mediactive», and who access their resources, «recursive» (Kelty, 2008; Gillmor, 2010; Sampedro, 2015); this is a process that has to be analyzed in terms of political participation and the assumption of ideological power that the citizen desires and is willing to assume in terms of the issues of government that concern them.

3. Discussion and conclusions: «Is an image worth more than a thousand drowned people?»

This study enables us to define a «transformative image» as one that acquires a political dimension, passing from its initial news dimension to one in which it becomes the image on a flag at a demonstration that is both personal and collective. The reading of the image is always historical (Aparici & al., 2009: 210), depending on the previous knowledge of the reader. In this

case, the image came to us after years of civil war in Syria, a conflict that has been defined by the European Parliament as the greatest humanitarian tragedy since the Second World War. Here we see how an image with such transformative power becomes a symbol of a serious social problem.

We believe that an image is transformative because it contains a new discourse. An image that quickly arouses solidarity on an issue that is not new; it possesses this power because it can break a rigid stereotype. The case of the image of Aylan breaks the stereotype of war refugees packed into fields where the mass of the population obliterates the individual story of each human being. The new image gives them back their names, tells a story of a life cut short and generates projection and identification.

If an image can push decisions to be taken in the name of social justice, it is because it cancels out the sceptical view and destroys arguments that justify oppression of that social justice. We can say that an image for solidarity is an image that can be appropriated by citizens to enable them to express themselves, to denounce and to recreate. The online digital image is not sessile. It is not defined as static but dynamic due to its potential for alteration and manipulation in many different ways. The image of Aylan initiated a chain of symbolic value and resignification. It is a nodal image in a citizen reaction, like a mental thought that acts on the ethical and political debate, in dialogue with other studies such as those by Chouliarakis and Baagard (2013). They are not images that fit in with the journalistic objective of an ephemeral news chronicle but respond to a logic of processes (Kaplún, 1998) and are evaluated in the dynamic of communication to transform and transformation to communicate (Marí, 2011). Far from the paradigm of news transmission, transformative images bring to the fore a model of solidarity via communication for the persuasion of behaviours that involves strategic thinking. They belong to a model of communication that is «like a network that starts off as a weaving from closeness and proximity and extends to involving others in dynamic actions of solidarity» (Marí, 2014: 155).

It is not only the represented fact that makes an image transformative but its power to symbolize, its explanation of the process; the links and networks in which it is able to move, the critical distillation and formulation of the problem that can condense into easy but diverse decoding, and its capacity to be displaced in order to achieve mass dissemination.

This case study shows the current importance of the processes of image manipulation that can be analy-

sed as exercises in symbolic resolution and citizen participation that generate opinion flows which can exercise political pressure on an issue and as a call to solidarity. The new processes that enable digital media to recreate and republish images means that the power of the image today can be appropriated by citizens as an instrument for communication that transcends the ethical debate on image manipulation. In contrast, this brings up the question of the power for social change achieved by the capacity for dialogue and for achieving an open, reflective, creative, political and responsible intervention on the image.

Notes

¹ The Google search of «Aylan Kurdi» yielded 7,730,000 results (2015-09-27). A Wikipedia page was created almost immediately.

² Google search of the hashtag found 92,100 results in many languages (2015-09-27).

³ Other professionals agree: DevReporter Network (2015). Reflections by photojournalists on the image of Aylan Kurdi. (<http://goo.gl/SYaD8T>) (2015-12-01).

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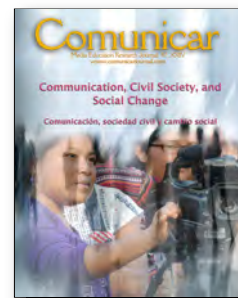
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Professional Information Skills and Open Data. Challenges for Citizen Empowerment and Social Change

Competencias informativas profesionales y datos abiertos. Retos para el empoderamiento ciudadano y el cambio social

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ABSTRACT

The current process of social transformation is driven by the growth of the culture of transparency and accountability, the socio-technological development of the web and the opening of public data. This situation forces the media to rethink their models of social intermediation, converting the growing open data access and user participation into new instruments that facilitate citizen empowerment. Open data can only generate citizen empowerment, facilitate decision-making and democratic action if it can provide value-added information to the citizens. Therefore, the aim of the research is to analyse the competencies necessary to develop information products created with open data. The study used a qualitative methodology based on two instruments: a survey of data journalism experts (university professors of journalism, journalism professional data, and experts in transparency), and an analysis of selected cases of information products created with open data. The results allow the identification of a series of conceptual, procedural and attitudinal skills needed to perform the tasks of collection, processing, analysis and presentation of data, which are necessary for the development of this type of information product, and which should be integrated into the training of future journalists.

RESUMEN

Los actuales procesos de transformación social estimulados por el crecimiento de la cultura de transparencia y rendición de cuentas, el desarrollo socio-tecnológico de la web y la apertura de datos públicos, obliga a los medios de comunicación en el entorno digital a reorientar sus modelos de intermediación social, convirtiendo el creciente y complejo acceso a datos abiertos y los flujos de participación en nuevos instrumentos que faciliten el empoderamiento ciudadano. La investigación evalúa cuáles son las competencias profesionales necesarias para el desarrollo de productos informativos multimedia interactivos basados en datos abiertos, considerando que la apertura de datos solo generará empoderamiento ciudadano, facilitará la toma de decisiones y la acción democrática, si estos pueden proporcionar información de valor añadido para la ciudadanía. Para ello, se sigue una metodología cualitativa basada en dos instrumentos: una encuesta a expertos en periodismo de datos, relacionados con la formación superior en Periodismo, la legislación en materia de acceso a la información y los medios de comunicación, y el análisis de una muestra de productos informativos multimedia basados en datos abiertos. Los resultados permiten identificar una serie de competencias conceptuales, procedimentales y actitudinales necesarias para llevar a cabo las tareas de acopio, tratamiento, análisis y presentación de los datos, que son necesarias para el desarrollo de este tipo de productos informativos, y que deberían integrarse en la formación de los futuros comunicadores.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Professional skills, social change, open data, skills, citizen empowerment, data journalism, digital communication, multimedia, civil society.

Competencias profesionales, cambio social, datos abiertos, empoderamiento ciudadano, periodismo de datos, comunicación digital, multimedia, sociedad civil.



1. Introduction and state of the question

1.1. Changes in the media ecosystem

In today's media ecosystem, the phenomenon of media convergence has encouraged a change in the role people play with regard to media. It has transformed them from a passive mass to an audience, and from an audience to active individuals or users in search of information (Canavilhas, 2011; Jenkins, 2008), and from mere consumer users to producers of information. This has given rise to new concepts that foster a mass collaboration among users to create products (Tapscott & Williams, 2011), in a framework which Rifkin (2014) labelled «Collaborative Commons». Such an ecosystem has led to a professional convergence (Canavilhas, 2013) as a result of workforce reductions and the emergence of new profiles to cater for new needs.

This convergence comes at a time of not only a financial crisis, but also an ethical (Álvarez, 2014) and a functional one (Dader, 2010). It has brought about a profession that is politicised and polarised in the eyes of the professionals of the future and little appreciated by civil society (CIS, 2013).

This means redefining the journalistic profession, both in terms of its situation within the media ecosystem and of its purpose, which for Kovach and Rosenstiel (2012: 18) is to «provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing», the essence of which lies in the principle of verification, where transparency is not just a fundamental element but proof of a commitment to civil society.

1.2. New qualifications required for journalism professionals

Ten years after the Spanish Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) drafted its white paper (in 2005), Spain's university qualifications in journalism are still struggling to adapt the country's curricula to the needs of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in what seems like a constant effort to make the skills system fit into Spain's university context and rise to the needs of the profession, an issue that remains unresolved both for professionals (APM, 2014) and for students taking a degree in journalism (Humanes & Roses, 2014).

Ever-present is the debate regarding the balance that university education must find between theory and practice, general knowledge and discipline specialisation, Humanities and Social Sciences, and the need to broaden the range to bring in skills from fields such as maths, cognitive sciences, ICT and so on.

This profession requires multi-disciplinary abilities

combined with general and specific skills in order to take full advantage of the potential that the Big Data society has granted to research journalism and precision journalism. Data have now taken on a leading role based on what they can convey and signify in financial, democratic and social terms. But more data does not necessarily mean more knowledge, democracy or development, nor does it generate empowerment or social change in itself.

According to the pyramidal and hierarchical knowledge management model defined by Ackoff (1989) as DIKW (Data, Information, Knowledge and Wisdom), each element in the system provides added value and results in another element higher up in the pyramid, with data at the base and wisdom at the top. This model may make for a clear understanding of the four core elements, which prove complex and abstract to define (Ahsan & Shah, 2006; Hey, 2004), but nonetheless limits its interpretation as a continuum in which all elements in the system are enriched thanks to human involvement (Choon, 1998; 2006, cit. García-Marco, 2011: 12).

In a context of informative overabundance (Aguaaded, 2014; Cornella, 2000), the role of the media mentioned by Walter Lippmann in 1922 (2003) as the forgers of a reality that is capable of being appropriated by citizens becomes, if possible, all the more essential. They must act as a driving agent for citizen empowerment, revealing data to civil society, and encouraging what Bounegru called «data literacy» (Gray, Chambers, & Bounegru, 2012), yet another facet of information literacy in the terms suggested by the UNESCO (s. f.). To achieve this, journalism professionals must possess the necessary competencies to carry out the tasks required at each stage in the process of developing this type of information product (Bradshaw, 2011; Crucianelli, 2013a, 2013b; Zanchelli & Crucianelli, 2013), and they must certainly boast an advanced command of digital skills.

This renewed intermediary –not hegemonic– role must inevitably learn to coexist with the new phenomena brought about by the Internet and 2.0 tools, such as citizen journalism (Espiritusanto & Gonzalo-Rodríguez, 2011; García de Madariaga, 2006), a concept which refers to active, non-professional citizen involvement in the world of journalism (Gillmor, 2004; Meso-Ayerdi, 2005; Sampedro, 2009) and means rethinking their mediation models (Baack, 2015), but which still raises questions as to their dependence on the media, their lack of periodicity and the scarcity of reliable sources (Rich, 2008; Varela, 2005).

1.3. Open data and participation as tools for citizen empowerment

The 2.0 network and the social-technical worldview behind it (García-García & Gértrudix-Barrio, 2012) have encouraged the emergence of new citizen participation models such as crowdsourcing (Howe, 2006). In the journalistic world, this means professional journalists gathering information from a large number of citizens (Méndez-Majuelos, Pérez-Curiel, & Rojas-Torrijos, 2012), such that their contributions have become a source for the journalist's work (Gillmor, 2004).

A digitally interconnected society demands that institutions open up democratically. The Open Data phenomenon is linked to that of Open Government and Free Culture, providing opportunities that will help public sector information and its re-use to become an asset for citizen empowerment and allowing it to be acknowledged as a basic resource in the evolution of businesses that use that information and provide it with added value.

Data journalism is rising as a new way of doing journalism, considering it not merely as a methodology that is confined to research and precision journalism (Chaparro-Domínguez, 2014; Crucianelli, 2013a; Flores-Vivar, 2012; Gray & al., 2012), but essentially as an opportunity to respond to the demand for information by creating information products using data.

These new needs require a reformulation of university qualifications so that they are capable not only of rising to current informative needs, but of adapting to those of the future.

2. Materials and methods

This study intends to assess the professional competencies needed to develop interactive multimedia information products based on open data, bearing in mind that only if data can provide added value information for citizens will such openness lead to citizen empowerment, easier decision-making, enhanced democratic action and greater social change.

The methodology, which is qualitative in nature, involves gathering information by conducting a survey of subjects who are experts in data journalism or are linked to higher education in the field, concerning

regulations on access to information and the media, followed by an analysis of a sample of multimedia information products based on open data.

Considering the initial hypothesis that producing interactive multimedia information products based on open data requires a set of specific conceptual, procedural and attitudinal competencies for gathering, processing, analysing and presenting information, the aim is for the experts to reveal the needs of the profession. Regarding our product analysis, the goal is to draw a direct link between their development requirements and the skills needed for that development, as revealed by the experts.

Data have now taken on a leading role based on what they can convey and signify in financial, democratic and social terms. But more data does not necessarily mean more knowledge, democracy or development, nor does it generate empowerment or social change in itself.

In the analysis, use has been made of the procedures of the Grounded Theory in order to define a series of categories thanks to the expert statements and the product analysis, with which we will identify and characterise the conceptual, procedural and attitudinal skills linked to developing multimedia information products based on open data (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

2.1. Expert survey

A convenience sample was chosen based on prior documentary research. To select the subjects, we analysed the most relevant benchmarks relating to data journalism in Spain (qualifications, research and dissemination) up until February 2013 with a view to detecting who was in charge of such initiatives and who else took part or collaborated. The goal was to define a population of expert subjects in the field of study: Coalición Pro Acceso (2006), Asociación Pro Bono Público (2009), Irekia. Open Government (2009), Spanish translation of Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (2009), Conference: Data journalism (MediaLab Prado, 2011), Working Group on Data journalism (MediaLab Prado, 2011), Fundación Cívica (2012), Estándares de Gobierno Abierto

(2012), Basque Government Budget (2012), Course of Data Journalism (Irekia, 2012), Máster of Periodismo de Investigación, Datos y Visualización-Escuela Unidad Editorial-URJC (2012), 1st Meeting: Vivir en un mar de datos (Fundación-Telefónica 2012), 3rd Meeting of Comunicación Digital: Nuevos modelos creativos en la Red (Ciberimaginario-URJC 2012) y Open Data Citizen (2013).

In order to avoid any kind of professional bias, other subjects were included who were linked to higher education in journalism, regulations on access to information and the media.

This requires a new form of free-code journalism (Sampedro, 2014) to pick up the baton handed to it by a society that needs its services as a mediator in the face of a complex reality, and as a guarantor of control of power. In short, this service is needed to empower civil society and drive social change.

The sample comprised 19 subjects who are expert professionals¹ in the fields of data journalism, research journalism, information display, access to public information, and/or university professionals lecturing in journalism degrees at public and private universities in the Community of Madrid.

To gather the information, the survey used was an on-line, self-administered and standardised questionnaire of our own making that combined multiple-choice with open questions. The survey was taken by the experts in March 2013.

2.2. Analysing multimedia information products based on open data

The methodology used to analyse multimedia information products based on open data starts with the finished product and works backwards over the tasks needed to develop them (Freixa, Soler-Adillon, Sora, & Ribas, 2014). Therefore, the analysis focuses on identifying the preliminary tasks involved in gathering, processing and analysing the data. To do so, account was taken of the functional and non-functional aspects involved, but especially of the information content presented.

In view of the complexity and constant evolution of

the concept, we used a convenience sample comprised of sixteen significant products² owing to their relevance in developing the phenomenon, their originality and their social and media impact at a national and international level. These sixteen products were published between the year 2010 and 2015; seven of them were produced by Spanish media, while the remaining nine were taken from media based outside Spain.

To gather the information, a worksheet of our own design was created that would allow us to: a) identify the product (URL, date of publication, temporary coverage, media/author, country and language);

b) classify the product (field, topic or type of media responsible), according to Crucianelli's classification (2013a); c) specify the type of data used (source, nature of the data, whether or not they are open, depending on their availability and ease of access, re-use and dissemination, and their universal participation) (Dietrich & al., s. f.); and d) describe the tasks of gathering, processing, analysing and presenting information, as required when

developing an information product of this kind.

3. Analysis and results

3.1. Needs and shortcomings in professional competencies

In line with the analysis method set out in the Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2002), we refrained from establishing categories initially; instead, the categories arose while analysing and coding the primary documents.

Fifty-seven codes were identified, which gave rise to seven core categories, three of which were linked to the type of competency –knowledge, ability and skill, or attitudes and values– and four were associated with the tasks of gathering, processing, analysing and presenting data.

After a qualitative analysis of the content and having drawn links between categories and core categories, we went on to study the co-occurrence rates between codes.

Lastly, the diagramming technique devised by Strauss and Corbin (2002) was used. The aim of this technique is not so much to show all of the concepts that have arisen from the coding phase, but rather to represent how they are positioned with regard to the

core categories. The rest of the categories are represented according to their proximity to the core category depending on the degree of grounding, i.e. the number of references linked to that category (Gertrudis, Gértrudix & Álvarez, 2015a; 2015b; 2015c).

With regard to the open questions in the survey, the process of coding and drawing out core categories has enabled us to identify the most relevant competencies for developing interactive information products based on open data, according to their proximity to the core category.

In the professional task of developing products based on the use of open data for information purposes, it is essential to command statistical and methodological abilities, as well as the knowledge and skills to process and analyse data, and to display and verify them. A change of attitude towards working with data is also necessary, so as to go from rejection to professional demand, and towards industry and public powers, for which it is necessary to be able and willing to adapt to professional changes. The key to this transformation lies in ensuring transparency, to boost the credibility of the journalist's work, which is hard to achieve without high levels of independence.

The results shape a map of the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities, values and attitudes, and highlight the major shortcomings that qualified journalists currently have in this regard, which, in the eyes of these experts, are extremely important.

With regard to knowledge (Gertrudis & al., 2015a), the most significant areas include statistical and methodological knowledge, knowledge of data processing and information display, which are also the areas where qualified journalists currently fall short. Other more technical aspects can also be added, such as knowledge of programming and databases, as well as general knowledge.

The most well-grounded abilities and skills are those linked to data processing and analysing, as well as displaying information and practical training. However, besides these distinctly technical assets, it is important to highlight others that involve applying knowledge linked to more theoretical training and what is considered disciplinary knowledge, as well as qualities linked to other fields of knowledge such as linguistic expression and the ability to contextualise information (Gertrudis & al., 2015b).

In terms of attitudes and values (Gertrudis & al., 2015c), journalistic work using open data requires autonomy and, above all, critical thinking, which must first be applied to the data itself and then to the sources and to the information arising therefrom.

3.2. Information products based on open data: Gathering, processing, analysing and presenting information

3.2.1. Characteristics of information products based on open data

Several of the products analysed relate to politics and social issues, and most of them (10) were presented in accordance with the Crucianelli classification (2013a) as independent interactive displays. The remaining products include one or several short articles that illustrate the phenomenon. Cartographic representations have proven to be the preferred method of graphic rendering, either because the use of «mashups» based on geolocation systems such as Google Maps is very popular or because this technique is able to combine the abstract component of data rendering with a more familiar element, namely representing them geographically on a map using proportional symbols in different sizes and colours, usually circles or bubbles. Other forms of graphic representation have also been used, such as bars, areas, lines and columns depending on the data shown.

In terms of developers, nine of the products were developed by teams that are part of the digital editorial departments of the so-called traditional media.

In all cases, the data came from secondary sources, mostly of a public nature, where they were generated as part of their usual business. Regarding private sources («Tell all phone»), the data are of a private nature, and in the case of «The top 100 papers», the database is held by Thomson Reuters. With the exception of any data obtained from leaks, most are generally available, though access to some is restricted.

Considering their availability, accessibility, re-use, dissemination and universal participation (Dietrich & al., s. f.), just 25% of the products analysed can be said to have been developed using open data.

3.2.2. Professional competencies linked to product development

The worksheets used to gather information on the products were added to the corresponding hermeneutics unit in the ATLAS.ti program for the purpose of analysing them according to the categories established by the experts. Before this, in order to link the competencies analysed to each of the stages of the development process (Bradshaw, 2011; Crucianelli, 2013a), four core categories were created: gathering, processing, analysing and presenting, and it was found that most of the competencies are not linked to just one stage or specific task, but rather they are essential requirements in the development of the entire process.

Aside from the particularities of each case, the analysis revealed a very well-defined methodology and certain needs, both in terms of competencies and technology, that were identified as the basic requirements for its development: the capacity to detect a news-worthy event; the ability and capacity to access sources; the ability and capacity to search for and retrieve information; knowledge of specialised sources; knowledge of current regulations; knowledge of how public administration works; the ability to access information; knowledge of databases; data processing; data conversion; format conversion for re-use; data analysis; the ability and capacity to filter out relevant information; interpreting information; statistical knowledge; the capacity to make data understandable; the ability and capacity to contextualise information; generating new informative content; the capacity to present information on different media and in different formats; the ability and tools to display information; the capacity to generate added value and to verify information (Gertrudis-Casado, Gértrudix, & Álvarez, 2015d).

3.3. Main results

Faced with these challenges, according to the experts, qualified journalists still show a certain reluctance to base their work on open data, firstly because they are members of a society that lacks the deep-rooted cultural custom of doing so, and secondly because it is not common practice to verify information and adapt to change, especially when it comes to using technology.

There is reason to believe that the cause of these shortcomings is a discrepancy between the curricula followed at university and the real needs of the profession on the whole and of data journalism in particular. The main reasons for this discrepancy are outdated teaching content and insufficient practical training.

Regarding the specific tasks needed to develop information products based on open data, it has been found that most are not based on open data, but rather they require specific processing in order to re-use data for informative purposes. With this, we are able to discern a series of tasks that recur with varying degrees of complexity in all of the products analysed, as well as allowing us to define a consistent methodology that reveals the need for specific professional competencies with which to carry out such tasks.

By contrasting the categories defined as a result of the product analysis, we see that the competencies pointed out by the experts as the skills needed to develop the tasks of gathering, processing, analysing and presenting information based on data are not exclusive

to a given stage in the process, but rather they are extremely relevant throughout. It is essential to have a knowledge of specialised sources and, when dealing with public data, it is vital to be aware of current regulations and of how public administration works. Accessing sources of information requires skills that are not only linked to searching and selecting, but also detecting a news-worthy event.

Given that information is often not available in re-usable formats, it is important to have some knowledge of computer programming and data conversion, and in order to manage data it will be necessary to know about databases and have some data management skills.

The entire process will require the ability to filter through and select relevant information in each of the data gathering, processing, analysing and presenting stages. The processing stage will often involve skills such as a command of spreadsheet software to clean up, filter and sort data. During the analysis stage, knowing how to select important information is key in order to tell a story based on data that is capable of reaching civil society.

Regarding the tasks involved in presenting information, they must be geared towards making the data understandable, which requires the ability to contextualise information and present it to civil society as a value added product. This is generally achieved by means of interactive displays and short articles that are supported by the principle of verification, which comes not only from making data available to citizens in re usable formats, but also from observing transparency by clearly and unreservedly explaining the method used.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The unfathomable reality that Lippmann referred to in 1922 (2003) still represents today a context of superabundance of public and private data. These are data which, in the best possible scenario and where the legal context allows, may be open to civil society. However, the fact of being openly accessible, despite being a desirable requirement, does not in itself generate knowledge or empower citizens, which means that transformed journalistic mediation has become even more important now than ever before, as pointed out by Baack (2015).

The main power wielded by the media is, therefore, the ability to construct these information products, to the extent that in doing so they shine the spotlight on part of reality (McCombs, 2006). The rest of that reality is occasionally cast into oblivion (Noelle-

Neumann, 1995), sometimes because the immediacy of news ostracises any other part of reality that requires a process of research which can take months or even years and which relies on the support of techniques from other disciplines. Such is the case of research journalism in general and of precision or data journalism in particular.

Experts in data journalism have long been demanding more specific training for journalistic professionals. This training must be capable of rising to the needs of a methodology that is well-defined (Bradshaw, 2011) and multi-disciplinary (Cairo, 2012; Crucianelli, 2013a; Flores-Vivar, 2012; Zanchelli & Crucianelli, 2013). However, they also demand a new vision of journalism qualifications that is open to methodologies from other sciences, such as statistics, interaction design or computing. This was already pointed out by prior studies such as those conducted by De-Maeyer & al. (2015) and Nguyen and Lugo-Ocando (2015).

Transparency in terms of data and methodology is a requirement under the principle of verification upheld by Kovach and Rosenstiel (2012). However, it is also the element that establishes the openness and re-usability of data and information in favour of a «Knowledge Society», where beyond mere verification, the consequence is providing users and citizens with the means to replicate, check, discuss or generate new knowledge, in a global society where the data culture is emerging (Álvarez-García, Gértudix-Barrio, & Rajas-Fernández, 2014), driven by an increasingly active civil society.

We must not lose sight of the fact that technology also alters information representation models, and that the way in which information is generated proves equally important as the way it is represented (Bradshaw, 2011), which leads to new reading mechanisms. In the case of information based on open data, it is common practice to represent it in interactive multimedia displays (Crucianelli, 2013a), which are designed so as to dynamically and actively transmit to citizens the information they need, thus favouring open paths for reading and analysis that will drive empowerment in decision making. Images and interaction with information are a powerful means for encouraging the

appropriation of information based on an abstraction of the complex reality of data (Cairo, 2008), making the elements needed to verify and replicate information even more crucial.

In this context, having validated the initial hypothesis, it proves necessary to ensure that the information journalists obtain is kept up-to-date in order to improve their professional performance and reconnect the role of journalism with a society that has traced new paths and has established alternative ways of involving citizens by means of creative technical-political models for collective action (Burgos-Pino, 2015; Toret,

In the case of information based on open data, it is common practice to represent it in interactive multimedia displays (Crucianelli, 2013a), which are designed so as to dynamically and actively transmit to citizens the information they need, thus favouring open paths for reading and analysis that will drive empowerment in decision making.

2013). This requires a new form of free-code journalism (Sampedro, 2014) to pick up the baton handed to it by a society that needs its services as a mediator in the face of a complex reality, and as a guarantor of control of power. In short, this service is needed to empower civil society and drive social change.

Notes

¹ The sample of experts is comprised of: David Cabo Calderón, Alberto Cairo, Sonia Castro, José Cervera García, Javier Davara Torrego, Roberto de Miguel Pascual, Nagore de los Ríos, Roberto Gamonal Arroyo, José María García de Madariaga, Marcos García Rey, Guzmán Garmendia Pérez, Max Römer, Gloria Rosique, Antonio Rubio Campaña, Ricardo Ruiz de la Serna, José Antonio Ruiz San Román, Juan Carlos Sánchez, Manuel Sánchez de Diego and Milena Trenta.

² The products analysed are: ¿A dónde va el dinero contra la pobreza? (Where does money against poverty go?), Afghanistan war logs: IED attacks on civilians, coalition and Afghan troops, ¿Dónde van mis impuestos? (Where do my taxes go?), CIPPEC data, Elecciones: los de 18 a 25 años, ¿estáis ahí? (Elections: 18 to 25 year-olds, are you there?), España en llamas (Spain in flames), Gay rights in the US, state by state, La mujer en el mundo (Women in the world), Out of Sight, Out of Mind: A visualization of drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004, Patrimonio de los diputados (The estate of MPs), Tell-all telephone, Todos los papeles de Bárcenas (All of Bárcenas' books), The top 100 papers, El tormentoso ejercicio del periodismo en

Colombia (The troublesome practice of journalism in Colombia), and Transparency for the E.U., U.S. Gun Deaths in 2013.

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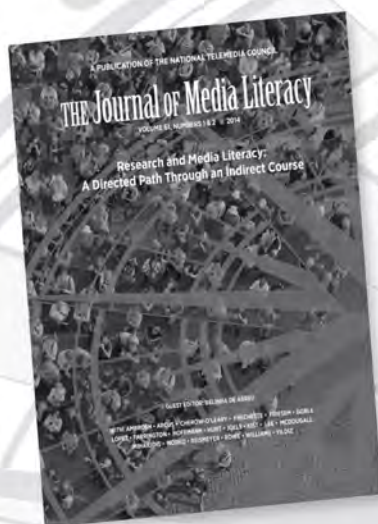
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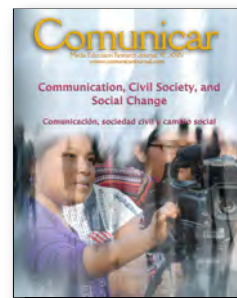
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Community Media as an Exercise of Communicative Citizenship: Experiences from Argentina and Ecuador

Medios comunitarios como ejercicio de ciudadanía comunicativa: experiencias desde Argentina y Ecuador

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ABSTRACT

Recent Latin American reforms in the field of communication reshape and strengthen the role and challenges of the popular, alternative and community media. This paper analyzes different experiences arising from the results of two pieces of research, one in Argentina and another one in Ecuador, both carried out through a qualitative methodology, namely in-depth interviews. The theoretical framework mainly draws upon the grounded tradition of Latin American studies on popular and alternative communication for social change, and it also includes recent contributions from European studies. The objective of both research projects was to account for the communities-media relationship, by unveiling the existence of mutual bonds between social organization and content generation. Analysis of results shows that communities' direct participation in the foundation, management and sustainability of such media reverberates in the production of organic content related to their own interests and needs –usually neglected both by public and commercial media– and also in a greater media pluralism and media supply diversity. Moreover, results allow considering popular, alternative and community media as key environments both for democratizing communication and shaping communicative citizenship. Both studies highlight a common challenge, that is, the need to consolidate trans-local and trans-national networks in order to establish a common action at the level of the media global order, thus enabling to measure their influence on the public agenda.

RESUMEN

Las recientes reformas latinoamericanas en el ámbito de la comunicación reconfiguran el rol y los desafíos de los medios populares, alternativos y comunitarios. El presente trabajo, basado en dos investigaciones de tipo cualitativo, una en Argentina y otra en Ecuador, analiza algunas experiencias concretas en este campo. El marco teórico de referencia se inscribe en la larga tradición de estudios latinoamericanos en torno a la comunicación popular para el cambio social, integrado también con aportes recientes de estudios europeos. El objetivo de las indagaciones era dar cuenta de la articulación comunidades-medios, intentando mostrar la existencia de vínculos recíprocos entre organización social y generación de contenidos. El análisis de los resultados evidencia que la participación directa en la fundación, gestión y sostenibilidad de estos medios por parte de la comunidad repercute en la generación de contenidos orgánicos a sus intereses y necesidades –normalmente desatendidos por los medios públicos y comerciales– y también en una mayor pluralidad y diversidad de la oferta mediática. Además, los resultados permiten avizorar que los medios populares, alternativos y comunitarios son espacios fundamentales para la democratización de la comunicación y para la construcción de una ciudadanía comunicativa. Un desafío que se desprende de las investigaciones es la necesidad de consolidar redes transnacionales para una acción concertada en el plano del orden global de la comunicación mediática, pudiendo medir su potencial incidencia en la agenda pública.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Alternative communication, communicative processes, global/local, communicative citizenship, community radio, democratization, participatory communication.

Comunicación alternativa, procesos comunicativos, global/local, ciudadanía comunicativa, radio comunitaria, democratización, comunicación participativa.



1. Introduction and the state of the art

The model of the political system and the role of the state are essential conditioning factors for examining the set-up of a media system. (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In Latin America, the void generated by the state by failing to establish clear rules in the democratic management of the radio spectrum has been filled by social actors that have set up initiatives in popular, alternative and community media (MPAC). Such media, which are free from free-market logic, have taken on functions ranging from socio-educational purposes to the creation of content which is both informative and entertaining. These initiatives have been made possible because they have prioritised the building up of the commonwealth – i.e. collectives that are organised in common by producing knowledge relationally (Hardt & Negri, 2009) – as opposed to the primacy of the individual as well as to the privatisation or nationalisation of media communication.

The first radio stations, set up in the 40s, play a key role in this scenario, in particular, Radio Sutatenza in Colombia. They were created thanks to the drive of some Liberation Theology priests who considered literacy as a fundamental resource for the emancipation of oppressed peoples. Such a line of thought reflects the Freire model of communication which conceives media not as a persuasive and domesticating extension but rather as an educational tool which facilitates the collective production of content. According to Tufte (2015: 107), this is a distinction between «depositing information –the banking pedagogy– and the empowering process of learning [...] in a dialectic process of action-reflection-action –the liberating pedagogy». Along the same lines, Bolivian radio stations, linked to the nationalisation of mines, appeared in the 50s, followed by the Ecuadorian Popular Radio Schools (ERPE) in the 60s. These experiences paved the way for other organisations to become media communication actors in the 80s and 90s, during and in favour of the struggles of peasants, workers, students, miners, women and indigenous peoples (Beltrán & Reyes, 1993) who began founding their own media stations in order to promote solidarity between social grassroots groups as well as their organisation and subjectivization (Kaplún & García, 1987; Martín-Barbero, 1991).

In the last decade and coinciding with the rise to power of new-ilk governments in different countries all over the continent, the state would appear to have assumed the task of paying back the historic debt accrued with the social sectors as a result of adjudicating most – and in some cases all – of the radio spec-

trum frequencies to businessmen from the private sector. Effectively, as Chaparro-Escudero (2009: 147) argues, «a civil society which is not guaranteed the Right to Communication is a society whose opinion has been kidnapped and usurped by those who proclaimed themselves as citizens' representatives and spokespersons».

In Argentina, Law 26.522 on Audio-visual Communication Services (LSCA), approved in 2009, recognises the right of access to one third of the radio spectrum to private non-profit entities, including community stations: these are recognised for having «a social purpose, [...] for being managed by non-profit social organisations», for counting on the «community's participation in terms of ownership» and in all aspects of their functioning, and for being «independent and non-governmental» (art. 4). Similarly, In Ecuador, the Organic Law of Communication (LOC) passed in 2013 recognises the right of access to one third of frequencies to community media, defined as «those which are owned, managed and steered by non-profit social collectives or organisations, communes, communities, peoples and nationalities» (art. 85).

The MPAC are a crucial tool for exerting social pressure on the traditional media powers and for empowering citizens and ensuring their active involvement in the public arena. As Vinelli says (2014: 40), these are experiences which define an «area of cultural production marked by the interaction of communication and political struggle». As they are managed by communities of people sharing the same territory as well as economic, socio-cultural and/or organisational interests (RNMA, 2013), the MPAC have been creating a bond with their social and territorial environment (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001); a bond which is embodied in an opening up to participation in their activities and which cements a strategic, symbiotic and non-instrumental relationship with local actors in the same way as Bolivian mining radio stations (Herrera-Miller, 2006). This attitude ensures a participative management and a horizontal communication process (Rodríguez, 2009) leading to the production of content which is rooted in the context where the medium and its participants act. These media, therefore, serve their communities and are embedded in them, thus generating a content which promotes social and political engagement (Carpentier & Scifo, 2010). They are collectives which are self-determined and self-managed, thus creating an independent communication project which reflects the differences undergoing society (McQuail & Van-Cuilenburg, 1983). For that reason, despite their formal-legal ownership, they

have a common belonging – i.e., they are based on the part-whole relationship which «de facto» pre-exists the «de jure» ownership and which connects actors to their social and territorial environment (Maddalena, 2012).

The MPAC are distinct from public and private media due to their non-hierarchical organisational structure, to the issues they deal with and to their point of view and, furthermore, they have an anti-hegemonic outlook because they are rooted in the masses which had always been silenced (Martín-Barbero, 1981). They are media which aim at «challenging the power of those who [...] establish the rules of the game of speech» (Mata, 2011: 3). As they are spaces for meeting and participation in everyday life, such media have been set up as tools for political intervention and social transformation (Vinelli, 2014). On one hand, because they allow citizens to be «subjects that demand and propose in multiple real-life arenas, [as] the production of such demands and proposals is unthinkable without the independent exercise of the right to communicate, i.e., to make something common» (Mata, 2006: 14). On the other hand, because they facilitate the cultural task of social movements of proposing new frameworks for interpreting reality and new ways of relating and interacting, thus transforming their activity into «symbolic challenges to the predominant codes» (Marí-Sáez, 2014: 69).

2. Material and methodology

In accordance with Yin (2003), we considered Argentina and Ecuador as two revelatory case studies. On one hand, because they allowed us to forecast the same results accordingly to our hypothesis. On the other hand, because each of them allowed us to analyse the phenomenon of the MPAC in a hitherto unknown scenario which changed recently by means of the legal reforms.

We adopted a qualitative approach because of the analytical purposes of the research and the need to facilitate a flexible and interactive design (Miles & Huberman, 1994), in order to account for the link between communities and media and to focus on the mutual linkages between social organisation, content production and communities of reference. We carried out semi-structured interviews –15 in Argentina and 14 in Ecuador– by adopting a purposive sampling plan and by selecting interviewees by means of a snowball procedure. We proceeded with the consent of the interviewees, until reaching data saturation and information redundancy (Maxwell, 2005).

In both cases, we explored the origin and the aims

of the communication projects; the activities and programming, by paying particular attention to the issues of common interest for the community; the internal organisation and external relations, by focusing on the interaction with audiences and the social environment; the sustainability strategies; the position adopted in the light of the reforms; the respondents' personal definition of what «community media» means. In the case of Ecuador, we worked all over the country with radio stations only, because radio is the most widespread medium having the greatest coverage. In particular, we included some of the radio stations making up the «Coordinator of Community, Popular and Educational Media of Ecuador» (CORAPE), as it is the most representative organism of the Ecuadorian MPAC, by interviewing directors, editors, reporters and producers of different programmes. In the case of Argentina, we interviewed the representatives of those associations, collectives, NGOs and schools which carry out media activities just in the province of Misiones, as it is an area which is particularly representative of how difficult it is to apply the LSCA (Marino & al., 2015). In this case, we considered only those actors who work with the television and radio format, including those who exclusively or complementarily produce online content, due to the convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006) and to the advantages of mass self-communication (Castells, 2009).

3. Results

The most interesting data refer to those elements which define the MPAC as spaces facilitating communicative citizenship (Mata, 2006) and as experiences of diversification –and, consequently, democratisation– of the media supply (McQuail & Van-Cuilenburg, 1983). We refer specifically, on one hand, to the ability of the MPAC to build and maintain an effective link with their social and territorial environment and, on the other, to the processes of agenda setting and content production.

3.1. Community media in the link with the social and territorial environment

Many of the considered communication projects are based on a «buddy climate» (male, 40 years old, worker, self-taught in radio-physics, A4 Producciones Socio-culturales, Argentina) between the collectives and their own communities; a link which –as the interviewees say– has been built up in the territories from the outset.

«Friends from university [came here], [...] and after it's like the word started to spread about what we

were doing and more and more people started coming [...]. Relatives, friends, local social organisations shook our hands. [...] It was an exchange» (male, 30, communication student, La Rastrojera Audiovisual Production Cooperative, Argentina).

«When soldiers came to take away our equipment [...] we warned the community about what was happening: in five minutes at the radio station we had people blocking the way so they couldn't get past. The soldiers had to leave without confiscating anything» (indigenous female, 50, peasant and political activist, Radio Ilumán, Ecuador).

So much that, in the case of some school radio stations, the neighbours and parents of the children even took part in decorating the station.

«The egg cartons design looked fantastic: [...] the little boxes where they put the eggs! [...] [We said] to all the neighbours who had [egg cartons] or the shops who were going to throw them away: «no, no, bring them here!». And the schoolchildren painted them with crayons and [stuck the egg cartons] on the wall [which was then] sound-proofed» (male, 40, worker, self-taught in radio-phonics, Radio A4 Voces, Argentina).

«The tower [...] was lying in the schoolyard for several months and with the help of the parents we decided to lift it» (male, 40, rural Primary School teacher, Radio Flor de Primavera, Argentina).

In the majority of the experiences recorded, community collaboration took the form of taking part in imaginative and even craft-based initiatives that media set up in order to raise funds and/or obtain equipment; funds and equipment which otherwise they would not have obtained due to their difficult conditions of sustainability which result from their being non-profit organisations made up of members working voluntarily.

«This year we began with donations and in previous years we used the sale of collaboration bonus, such as raffles of craftwork. [...] People supporting the NGO donate products, services, money for fuel» (male, 30, degree in communication, ONG Nativos, Argentina).

«We told people that, due to a lack of funding, we were going to have our electricity cut off and we would be taken off air. As soon as we published the advert, people started to arrive with money donations, from 5 cents upwards. In less than 15 minutes we had raised enough money for the electricity bill, so we paid for it and we're still working» (female, 55, housewife, leads a women's association, Radio Sucumbios, Ecuador).

A regular interaction with the communities is developed in the digital media, when the MPAC have websites or are active in social media. In these places audiences can express their support or encourage debate, which, in turn, serves to generate loyalty to the medium and identification processes among listeners or viewers.

«[When they try] to boycott us, the readers are always there. Yes they are, by supporting us [...] with emails [...]. Sometimes they make comments on Facebook. We have a direct contact with lots and lots of readers» (male, 30, journalist and political activist, Revista Superficie, Argentina).

«When the migration began [...], it became important to learn how to use internet, social networks and to be a link between those who stayed in the country and those who left. We were a sort of postal service, because when there were no greetings or messages on air, people came to ask if anyone had left a message for them» (male, 45, peasant, Radio So-noonda, Ecuador).

Over time, such a bond became stronger and grew with other activities which took place outside the radio station, such as workshops, festivals and study groups.

«For children's day or for some charity event, [...] [we went to] a bakery, [and we said]: «look, we're organising an event and we need you to donate, say, two dozen buns for children's day». And, well, the bakers gave generously [because] we were locals, from the same neighbourhood» (A4 Producciones Socio-culturales, Argentina).

«We saw the need to create meeting places with the community, not only on the radio but also opening our meeting room. In that way, we started organising journalism courses for children and teenagers. This has become something the people expect and when we don't open them the people ask why!» (Radio Sucumbios, Ecuador).

The convergence between all these types of media and non-media spaces makes it possible to keep in touch with the communities permanently, thus helping to provide them with useful and concrete tools for the development of their economic, social and cultural life.

«The challenge [is] to try to provide the community, that is, all the children, teenagers and neighbours, with a set of tools helping them in the development of the community itself» (Radio Flor de Primavera, Argentina).

«We were teaching classes on the radio and making programmes about organic agriculture, explaining how to prepare the land and sow seed. Until one

day the people said: «yes, what you're telling us is all very nice but we want you to come and sow with us!». That's what we did and so began the organic quinoa project and the farm» (Indigenous female, 40, self-taught in radio-phonics, Radio ERPE, Ecuador).

3.2. Community media in agenda setting and content production

The link with the social and territorial environment extends to defining an agenda which is firmly rooted in the territorial issues, that is, local cultural, political and social ones. In many cases, the communication projects sprang up to accompany and highlight the struggles of local social organisations and, therefore, to provide «an alternative and different look at a large number of issues and [...] topics which nobody was talking about or dealing with» (Revista Superficie, Argentina) in the commercial and public media and, which, by contrast, «where a source of concern for the community [and] ranged from local issues to national ones» (male, 50, degree in communication, Radio Latacunga, Ecuador). For that reason, the programming pays particular attention to certain topics and conflicts of local interest within the framework of a national and global scenario which (im)poses priorities and emergencies. In this sense, therefore, the agenda criteria reflect the need to consider social demands of citizens as subjects with rights.

«There are the issues of social organisations, the issue of the aboriginal peoples, the matter of deforestation, the topic of reservoirs, the area of human rights [...] because they are, let's say, the ones that build citizenship» (La Rastrojera, Argentina).

«Our agenda is marked by social struggles. When we were making claims about the land, the water, the rights of the indigenous population, the language, it was all very clear, and these [are] our issues. Nowadays more emphasis is given to rights, justice and access to healthcare. We are involved in people's day-to-day lives» (Radio ERPE, Ecuador).

Whatever the topic may be, it always covers a perspective which is close to the collectives and the communities in which they operate, even by using their own language or dialect.

«We were told about the first of May [...] because on that day the worker's day was celebrated through-

out the world [...]. We started to bring it in as well [...] to reflect upon the work of fathers or even boys who were working too. [...] For example, it was said: «my daddy works in such and such a job and sometimes he comes home tired or upset, [...] because he doesn't get paid much, he gets paid very little and they make him work very hard»» (male, 30, degree in teaching and teacher at a rural school, Radio Voz Juvenil, Argentina).

«It was the only radio station which spoke to us in our own language. That's where our mothers and fathers could find out what was happening in our province and our country. It was as if we mattered to

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them and they spoke to us in a language we understood» (indigenous woman, 40, self-taught, peasant, Radio Guamote, Ecuador).

Overall, it turns out that for the respondents it is particularly important to generate an agenda which was capable of bringing out issues and points of view which were not in the public arena, in an attempt to give them a role and, as such, to accompany the people involved in local conflicts and to «broaden the mind» of the most vulnerable sectors of the population «a little» (Mirada de la Gurisada, Argentina), through information and entertainment activities which are sensitive and different from normal ones, so that audiences would see the MPAC as open spaces where they can express themselves and as an empowerment tool. And, even though not always, the goal was achieved and the community project is connoted in terms of media counter-power that, consequently, democratises communication.

«Why would I want another radio station if the Sucumbíos is always open to broadcast what I ask for? I don't need another medium: they take my calls and I can speak my mind» (Radio Sucumbíos, Ecuador).

In the same conception of the community media this aspect is detected.

«The media are power and whoever controls

communication has power. To have a community medium is a way to counter that» (male, 25, degree in communication and member of a rural youth organisation, Mirada de la Gurisada, Argentina).

«It seems to me that democracy is an ideal and that we have to build it by ourselves and we must learn to live with our differences –that's what it's all about. And, well, that's where we have to build a community medium» (male, 30, degree in communication, Productora de la Tierra, Argentina).

In coherence with such community bonds and socio-political challenges, the actors organise the internal activities and take decisions in a completely participative and horizontal way: each of the members may propose an objective to be considered and, collectively, it is decided whether and how it should be tackled. There is no hierarchy among members, except when somebody liable for certain formal issues is needed.

«We get together round this table and we propose ideas. We work on those ideas and one person says: «I think we could deal with this or that issue». Somebody else might say: «no, because that issue is like this or that» (Audiovisual Production Cooperative La Rastrojera, Argentina).

«Our news, production and rural teams meet every week. There we decide the issues to be considered and the organisation of the radio station» (Radio Latacunga, Ecuador).

Such a participative and osmotic communication process, makes the space's appropriation both by the medium's members and the communities they belong to possible, as some experiences demonstrate.

«They asked us to give them permission to train other schools which had been opened recently. [The children] got behind it and said: «Let's do it! Let's do it!». It's as if they feel that the radio station is theirs» (Radio Voz Juvenil, Argentina).

«What began as a programme about organic farming and today is a quinoa-exporting project [...] went through a process of organisation and making it their own. Today, the families of the peasants are the organisation, they take decisions and meet together on the radio» (Radio ERPE, Ecuador).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The results which we have analysed show at least four common elements which must be considered in the conclusion. Firstly, the differences between community media and commercial and public media both in terms of how they are conceived and organised in order to comply with their function; secondly, the nature of the broadcaster providing the service; thirdly,

the nature of the link between such an actor and the medium appropriation; and, finally, the political potential which the MPAC may have in facing the activity of the dominant communication media.

One of the defining features of the MPAC is a mutual dependence between the medium appropriation and the community nature of the subjects who make it theirs. Thus, the reference to the «community» concept must be thought as the construction of an alternative entity which unfolds and permeates the appropriation and consolidation of the medium from the outset. This should be understood as a form of support in the subjectivisation of the underlying social organization which determines itself as such precisely from this experience (Vinelli, 2014).

Therefore, what can be concluded from the research is that the community medium is not like other commercial or public media because it does not carry out the function of mediating between reality and the representation thereof by means of several salaried workers as if it was a common Ford-style Company – i.e., a company whose production depends on each factory worker doing his job in a stipulated way as a functional and tidy part of a whole. In the case of a community medium, the depiction of the real life follows a different process as it is not based on the role of experts selling their knowledge of reality to listeners who are, effectively, mere consumers.

The vision of the actors involved in the MPAC is to produce content which is the fruit of subjective experiences in the time and space of the local real-life situations which are nearby and shared. It is not considered as a raw material to be made suitable and marketable for the media. In the case of community media, the local reality is not thought of as something outside, because the media gesture arises from and for it as a requirement for a non-instrumental social and cultural praxis.

Furthermore, the notions of newsworthiness and agenda –which have turned journalism into a commercial activity– have been seriously undermined by the work of the MPACs: rather than the extraordinary and sensationalist nature of an event, it is the everyday nature of the reality that is expressed by the community narrator. In the case of community agenda setting, it is not a question of particular –economic or political– interests which underlie the creation of the commercial and public media agenda, but rather the conviction that any content may be mediatized because it is the product of a real-life experience and is, as such, of collective interest.

Research results demonstrate the nature of the

subject as a service-provider for community media communication. This is characterised by the collectivisation processes which serve to drive it forward and the relationships which are forged with and among the communities –in addition to the cultural educational and social purposes which exclude any profit. The ways and spaces of interaction generate a strong bond which, in turn, creates a sense of social identity and mutual belonging (Wellman, Boase, & Chen, 2002) around the medium which is an intrinsic part of the space, rather than separate from it. The people who are linked to the medium agglutinate around the aim of producing media content based on a common interest and all work together towards that goal with a horizontal organisational structure. It is in such relationships among all participants that a process of edifying and acknowledging of what is held in common, shared because of its social function, is triggered. Such a process qualifies the final product. In this way, the MPAC are shaped as spaces and processes and, at the same time, as media products which are created by and within the – either conflicting or cooperative – interaction of a molecular community which builds an alternative and bottom-up media power to challenge the status quo (Cerbino & Belotti, 2016).

The direct involvement of the co-creators and co-consumers in the management and working of the MPAC has repercussions not only in the production of content, which is more organic to their interests and needs, but also in the generation of a greater plurality and, especially, diversity in the national and global media arena (McQuail & Van-Cuilenburg, 1983): not only more voices are hosted, but also different ones. Diversity is, in some ways, what gives meaning to community practice: it involves a wide variety and number of actors, each one with their own outlook, under the logic of communication as a social service and the medium as a house which is open to anyone who feels the need to publish messages and call meetings or to make public their complaints and claims. In effect, such a domestic dimension accounts for how well the communication practices have adapted to the times and rhythms of the community (Millán, 2003). It places the MPAC among and beyond the public and private sectors as they are units which «take part in public economics by means of productive activities» and, at the same time, are per se complex economic units «in their own right» (Silvertone, 1994: 88).

In this way, it is not only a question of the sum of a variety of content, but rather the relationship which is established among the participants in communication, which generates a social bond between actors

who were historically ignored or alienated (Martín-Barbero, 1981). This approach to the production of content depicted in different types of organisational processes allows the MPAC to draw up their own agenda of issues which counteracts the ones which are published by conventional media and relates to topics which are of personal interest to everyday citizens. This makes it possible to produce arguments and schools of thought which are not subservient to financial capital or the dominant positions. That, in turn, leads to a production of public opinion with greater levels of autonomy and criticism. MPAC are spaces which trigger a sort of virtuous cycle through which the citizens themselves, who view their demands through the MPAC, feed critical and active thought of other citizens who, in turn, will feel enabled to speak their mind. For that reason, we consider the MPAC a civic empowerment tool for carrying out communicative citizenship: they portray the ability of citizens to be subjects of rights in the field of public communication (Mata, 2006).

Consequently, these experiences are an antidote to globalisation and to the dominant national-state arguments, as they facilitate the creation of arguments and realities starting at a local level and with a gesture which challenges the status quo. This is the reason why it is good for them to assume the role of building networks which connect different local experiences by raising them to the global level. From there, common fronts can be drawn up more efficiently in order to resist the battering of globalisation. This also implies the ability to overcome difficulties which they face. In addition to the obstacles dealing with the MPAC's functioning and history, there are new ones: the launch of local, national and regional platforms to fight for the effective application of the laws in order to demand for an increase in the range of opportunities for the community sector; the professionalization of an activity which, to date, had been carried out on a voluntary basis and with limitations caused by scarce resources which, very often, had brought on unsurmountable problems of economic sustainability and management.

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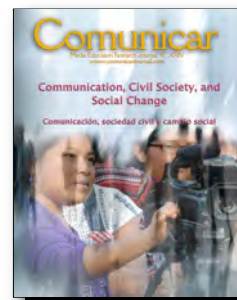
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The Representation of Workingwomen in Spanish Television Fiction

La representación de las mujeres trabajadoras en la ficción televisiva española

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ABSTRACT

During the sixties and seventies the limited presence of women in the public sphere was reflected in the restricted repertoire of roles played by female characters in television fiction (mainly those of mothers and wives). The strengthening of the feminist movement in the following decades increased and diversified the portrayals of women in the workplace, and further encouraged academic research on the social construction of working women. Despite the relevance of female professionals in current TV shows, the importance of romantic relationships and sexuality has led to a decreasing number of studies on the subject. This article summarizes the results of a study on working women in Spanish TV fiction, part of a larger project on the construction of female identities. The research uses an original methodology that combines quantitative techniques and qualitative methods (socio-semiotics) to analyse the sample of 709 female characters. The results show a coexistence of the traditional stereotypes of working women in customer service and care-giving positions with those of highly skilled female professionals. However, the empowerment of women in positions of responsibility is often associated with a negative portrayal of the character, while the problems of reconciling family and work are systematically avoided.

RESUMEN

La reducida presencia de la mujer en la esfera pública durante los años sesenta y setenta se reflejaba en el limitado repertorio de roles (madre y esposa principalmente) que le atribuía la ficción televisiva. El impulso feminista de las décadas sucesivas estimuló las representaciones de los personajes femeninos en el ámbito laboral y la reflexión académica sobre la construcción social de la mujer trabajadora. Pero, a pesar de la relevancia del rol profesional en las protagonistas de la ficción actual, la relevancia de las relaciones sentimentales y de la sexualidad ha revertido en el reducido número de estudios sobre el tema. Este artículo sintetiza los resultados de un análisis de la mujer trabajadora en la ficción televisiva española, integrado en un proyecto sobre construcción de identidades femeninas. La investigación propone una metodología original, que combina métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos (socio-semiótica) para afrontar el estudio de 709 personajes femeninos. La investigación revela la convivencia de estereotipos ligados a las representaciones tradicionales de los empleos de las mujeres (trabajos relacionados con la atención al público y el cuidado de las personas) con otras profesiones altamente cualificadas. Sin embargo, el empoderamiento de las mujeres con cargos de responsabilidad se asocia frecuentemente con una caracterización negativa del personaje, al tiempo que los problemas de conciliación de los roles familiares y profesionales se eluden sistemáticamente.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Television, fiction, woman, gender, feminism, work, analysis, socio-semiotics.

Televisión, ficción, mujer, género, feminismo, esfera laboral, contenidos audiovisuales, socio-semiótica.

1. Introduction and current state of affairs

The active audience theory (Ang, 1985; Hobson, 1982; Morley, 1980) converged in the 1990s with the advent of the Second Golden Age of Television (Thompson, 1996) whose commitment to the aesthetics and narrative complexity of programmes (Mitell, 2006) earned it the title of «Quality TV» (Akass & McCabe, 2007). Prompted by the image of women that emerged from representations of female characters, a group of young academic women adopted the term «Third-Wave Feminism» to distance themselves from the historical presumptions about women (submissive-woman/domineering-man), adding a notable spin to certain aspects of research into gender and television fiction. In parallel, a line of post-feminism research, which celebrated women's agency and the empowerment of new female characters, gained strength¹.

Lotz (2006: 117) states that female characters in series such as «Ally McBeal» and «Sex and the City» represent a new generation that is redefining the socially constructed image of women. Stillion-Southard (2008: 164) considers «Sex and the City» to be a postfeminist text as it examines, from an original perspective, opposites such as feminism/femininity, individualism/collectivism and audacity/vulnerability. Baumgardner and Richards (2000) celebrate the advent of «young feminism», which questions historical clichés of femininity, such as weakness and subordination to men.

In contrast to postfeminist optimism, critics of feminism decry the strengthening of the neoliberal female icon: attractive, consumerist and willing to exert her sexuality at all times (Gill, 2007). For Gallagher (2014), discussions on new femininities are conservative and mainly revolve around notions such as women's individual choice, empowerment and personal freedom. Whelehan (2000) denounces the retro-sexism that is hidden behind postfeminist female characters, constructed, according to Attwood (2006), from iconographic models of pornography. McRobbie (2009) highlights the «double entanglement» of the attempt to juggle the values of traditional femininity with the desire to always be available for men. Tyler laments that society's generalised «pornographication» (McNair, 1996) represents «an increasingly acknowledged trend in both the mass media and the academy» (Tyler, 2010).

In contrast to male characters, the overrepresentation of female sexuality finds its corollary in the secondary role of female characters in the fictional professional world. At the same time, researchers' interest in the

representation of sexuality results in a lack of studies on the role of the work environment in the construction of female identity.

This study forms part of a project on the construction of female identities in Spanish television fiction and on the Internet. The investigation presents an original methodology that combines quantitative (SPSS) and qualitative (socio-semiotic) methods to analyse the narrative construction of the working woman. The sample is comprised of 709 female characters that appear, in various degrees of importance², in the 84 domestic fiction programmes first shown on public Spanish channels (national and regional) between 2012 and 2013 (series, serials, mini-series, made-for-TV films and comedies). The underlying hypotheses of this study are:

- H1: The greater narrative possibilities of working women result in their overrepresentation compared to unemployed, retired and student women.
 - H.1.1: The workplace is usually fertile ground in terms of relationships (friendship, love and sexuality).
 - H.1.2: Working women's problems balancing work and family life are practically absent from the analysis sample.
- H2: Despite the large number of qualified female professionals, most female characters carry out tasks traditionally related to women, such as customer services and caring for people.
- H3: Women's empowerment through holding positions of greater responsibility is associated with them being attributed characteristics traditionally associated with masculinity.
 - H.3.1: Professional success appears frequently associated with negative characters.

1.1. The working woman in television fiction

In a pioneering 1964 study, DeFleur demonstrated that «the world of work on television is a man's world» (DeFleur, 1964: 65). Along the same lines, research carried out in the 1970s confirmed the predominance of wife and mother roles in television fiction compared to the importance of the workplace in the construction of female characters (Seggar & Wheeler, 1973; Downing, 1974; Manes & Melnyk, 1974; Tedesco, 1974; Turow, 1974; Beck, 1978). Furthermore, while professionally better qualified women were usually secretaries, teachers and nurses, men were usually portrayed as professionals, directors or police officers (McNeil, 1975), although in the same decade a few female characters played central roles in adventure dramas (Lotz, 2006).

Against the persistent stereotypes of the 1970s and 1980s (Davis, 1990), the academic output at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s «began to depict a transition, evident in the appearance of characters who occupied highly professionalized careers» (Lotz, 2006: 95). However, research carried out during this period confirmed the scarcity of female characters who worked outside of the home, and those that did were mainly portrayed as nurses or teachers (Kalisch & Kalisch, 1984; Van-de-Berg & Streckfuss, 1992), while men continued to monopolise power in the workplace (Gerbner & Signorielli, 1982; Signorielli, 1983; Davis, 1990). Although the number of female characters in highly qualified positions continued to grow (Atkin, 1991), most of these professional women integrated their work into their own personal development (Butsch, 1992).

Successive studies showed that the fictional workplace was still a male-dominated environment (Greenberg & Collette, 1997; Elasmr, Hasegawa & Brain, 1999), that a significant percentage of female characters could not be defined on the basis of their occupation (Signorielli & Bacue, 1999) and that a large number female characters were portrayed as either housewives or unqualified female workers (Greenberg & Collette, 1997). Moreover, female characters continued to be portrayed in professions associated with women, resulting in the persistence of gender stereotypes (Glascok, 2001 and 2003; Signorielli, 2009; Emons, Wester, & Scheepers, 2010). Nevertheless, although the percentage of male workers was still greater (Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001) and continued to monopolise better-qualified dominant positions (Signorielli & Bacue, 1999; Glascok, 2001; Signorielli, 2009; Emons, Wester, & Scheepers, 2010), the numbers of female workers continued to increase (Signorielli 1989; Signorielli & Bacue, 1999; Signorielli & Kahlenberg 2001). A few studies have underlined the greater variety of professions represented by women (Atkin, Moorman, & Lin, 1991; Emons, Wester, & Scheepers, 2010; Glascok, 2001; Signorielli & Bacue, 1999), along with an increase in the number of female executives and a decline in the number of traditional female occupations such as secretaries (Atkin, 1991).

In general, it can be said that the representation of femininity in television seems to be conditioned by

interpersonal roles (Lauzen, Dozier, & Horan, 2008). The link between occupation and being single is fairly frequent (Signorielli, 1982; Elasmr, Hasegawa, & Brain, 1999; Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001; Glascok, 2003). In fact, the 21st century postfeminist woman continues to depend emotionally on men, despite the elevated socio-economic status of many female characters (McCabe & Akass, 2006). Moreover, the propensity to represent white-collar professions marginalises the working class (Ruido, 2007), an image in keeping with the tendency to omit representations of

In fact, television fiction rarely opts for the novel representation of a dominant, independent woman but rather opts for copying characteristics associated with masculinity, namely aggressiveness, individualism, competitiveness and decision-making.

women who do not fit current moulds (Gill 2007: 69), a recurring theme in representations in television fiction (Greenberg & Collette, 1997).

In Spain, various studies have shown that female characters usually have greater prominence in the private domain (CAC, 2013; Galán, 2007; García, Fedele, & Gómez, 2012). Similarly, a marked tendency to portray women in professions related to the attention and care of people was also observed (Tous, Meso, & Simelio, 2013). Nevertheless, the 2007 report by the Women's Institute highlights that, although female characters continue to assume domestic work, gender is not always a determining factor in the portrayal of women professionals. Similar conclusions were reached by Lacalle in an analysis of young women (Lacalle, 2013).

2. Materials and methods

Data coding was carried out in two simultaneous phases. In the first, the socio-semiotic template used allowed us to create an SPSS codebook and to apply the coding. In the second, the template allowed us to «interrogate» the analysed texts about those aspects important in the discursive construction of the fictional female worker and to complete the descriptive database. The 40 variables identified comprised three independent (age, profession and temporal location) and

37 dependent variables, five of which link data relative to the identification of the programme (character name, programme title, channel, fiction genre and format). Age was divided into eight groups to reduce spread: 4-9 years old; 10-14; 15-17; 18-23; 24-29; 30-45; 46-65 and over 65. The work variable was divided, in turn, into two sub-variables: occupation (female student, female worker, housewife, unemployed woman, retired woman, prostitute, other, not applicable, not known) and activity, which included work carried out by groups of «working» women and «other activities» (graduate, unqualified, waitress/shop assistant, trade, other, public worker, administrative worker, not known). Finally, the temporal location of the programme was divided into the present, past and future. Certain options allowed us to choose from a specific number of possibilities, while others were more discriminatory (yes/no).

The variables used to code the characters were divided into five headings: importance of character, scenes, main themes (family, friendship, work, health and sexuality), roles (thematic, semiotic and narrative) and temporal setting. The results presented in the next section summarise the relationship between the female characters and the workplace within the framework of the different interactions that make up the construction of the working woman in Spanish television fiction.

3. Analysis and results

63.2% (N=387) of working age female characters have a defined occupation, which in 58.4% (N=358) of cases is relevant to their configuration. 93.2% (N=361) are represented in the workplace. 9.1% (N=65) of the women analysed are students; 5.7% (N=41) are housewives; 2.9% (N=21) are unemployed; 2.9% (N=21) are retired and 1.4% (N=10) are prostitutes. Similarly, in the analysis sample, 8% (N=57) are included under the heading «other activities», 8% (N=57) are of unknown occupation and 7% (N=50) neither work nor study. The female workers are mainly single³ (40.8%; N=158). 63.9% (N=126) of these por-

tray a central character and are more affected by work problems (62%; N=240).

No significant differences were observed in the percentage of housewives portrayed in fictions set in the past (53.7%; N=22) or in the present (46.3%; N=19). Nevertheless, the temporal setting was important in terms of age, as nearly all the housewives under the age of 45 appear in stories set in the past.

The majority of unemployed female characters appeared in comedies (57.1%; N=12), which are traditionally characterised by the inclusion of a wide range of social problems that nevertheless barely affect narrative development. Foremost among the unemployed female fiction characters are married women (52.3%; N=11), followed by unqualified women (23.8%; N=5) and those whose education level is unknown (23.8%; N=5), while only three have university degrees (14.3%). Few retired women play a leading role (23.8%; N=5), but the large number of problems involving confrontations and competitiveness (57.1%; N=12) in their relationships results in a negative representation of older women.

All the female characters who play the part of prostitutes appear in fictions set in the past, the majority being between 18 and 23 years old and single (60%; N=6, in both cases). This group also has the greatest number of problems related to their work activity (80%; N=8).

The female characters in the group headed «other activities» portray a range of personalities, including female prisoners, nuns and criminals but mostly members of royalty or the aristocracy. The women who do not carry out any form of labour activity appear far more frequently in period dramas (84%; N=42) and most are married (56%; N=28).

3.1. The workplace

Working women who appear in Spanish television fiction carry out a limited range of work activities, foremost of which are those requiring a university degree (22.2%; N=86), followed by unqualified wor-

Table 1. Work situation of female characters in Spanish television fiction broken down by age

Age	Unemployed	Work	Study	Housewife	Retired	Prostit.	Others	Not known	N/A	Total
4-9	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.3%	0.0%	2.7%
10-4	0.0%	0.0%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	1.6%
15-17	0.0%	1.3%	29.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	6.0%	4.1%
18-23	19.0%	11.1%	32.3%	2.4%	0.0%	60.0%	14.0%	19.3%	20.0%	14.7%
24-29	19.0%	20.4%	3.1%	7.3%	0.0%	20.0%	15.8%	10.5%	20.0%	16.2%
30-45	38.1%	44.7%	0.0%	31.7%	4.8%	20.0%	47.4%	29.8%	32.0%	36.2%
46-65	19.0%	19.4%	0.0%	53.7%	14.3%	0.0%	19.3%	21.1%	18.0%	19.2%
+65	4.8%	3.1%	0.0%	4.9%	81.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.3%	4.0%	5.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

kers (16.5%; N=64). In third place are waitresses and shop assistants (14.7%; N=57), female workers such as dressmakers, hairdressers, bakers and cooks, etc. (14.4%; N=56), women who carry out other activities (11.8%; N=46), public workers (8.5%; N=33) and administrative staff (6.7%; N=26). The remaining 4.9% (N=19) play such minor roles that no mention was made of their occupation.

The majority of female characters holding degrees or diplomas are between 30 and 45 years old (51%; N=48) and 43.6% (N=41) are single. Moreover, they make up the group with the greatest number of central characters (48.9%; N=46) and include the highest percentage of characters whose fictional profession is a determining factor for their characterisation (81.9%; N=77). By contrast, unqualified women (mainly servants and cleaners) are between 46 and 65 years old (19.2%; N=20), are married (36.5%; N=38) and play secondary roles.

Fictional female characters under 30 years of age work as waitresses or shop assistants (21.3%; N=26), jobs that are carried out by only 11.2% (N=28) of over-30s. However, while the former tend to be employees, the latter have some connection with the ownership of the business, generally running a family enterprise together with a male character. In contrast to the other low-qualified female workers, the fictional profession plays an important part in these women's characterisations (85.9%; N=55), which are mainly constructed in the workplace.

Waitresses and shop assistants are usually the most popular female characters in their settings (39.1%; N=25), although they make up the second group, after female public workers (generally police-women), with the greatest number of work-related problems (65.6%; N=42). Female public workers are mainly between the ages of 30 and 45 (72.7%; N=24) and generally members of the police force or

Civil Guard. As such, this group is faced with the greatest number of work-related problems (66.7%; N=22) and are frequently shown in the work place (97%; N=32). Moreover, the fictional professional role plays a decisive part in the character construction of this group of women, which is the second largest group (39.4%; N=13).

Similarly, it is possible that female police officers stand out due to limited contextualisation of their private lives, to the point that their friendships and their position within their circle of friends fail to appear in the characterisation of 42.4% (N=14) of these fictional characters, as do their social status or the romantic relationships they have outside the workplace (39.3%; N=13). The low number of problems associated with relationships (45.5%; N=15) can be explained mainly a result of their portrayal as women dedicated to their work.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the majority of female administrative workers are between 24 and 29 years old (34.6%; 9 characters) and 30 and 45 (38.5%; 10 characters) and are mainly secretaries and receptionists. They tend to be young, generally attractive, obliging, efficient and have few relationship problems (30.8% and 8 characters), which perpetuates the stereotype of the secretary loyal to her boss and reaffirms the subordination of the female figure to the male (76.9%; N=20). However, despite appearing to have few relationship problems in the workplace, they have a large number of other problems (65.4%; N=17), mainly resulting from their boss's authoritarianism, which usually spills over into sexual abuse.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The analysis carried out here shows that the percentage of women workers in Spanish television fiction is nearly 10 points higher than data presented in the latest report from the Ministry of Work and Social

Table 2. Female roles characterised by profession

Professional role	Higher qualif.	Admin.	Trade	Unqualified	Waitress/shop assistant	Other	Not known	N/A	Public worker	Total
No	18.1%	26.9%	22.6%	45.2%	14.1%	33.3%	79.4%	95.6%	0.0%	47.4%
Yes	81.9%	73.1%	77.4%	54.8%	85.9%	66.7%	20.6%	4.4%	100.0%	52.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3. Female characters represented in the workplace

Work place	Higher qualif.	Admin.	Trade	Unqualified	Waitress/shop assistant	Other	Not known	N/A	Public worker	Total
No	10.6%	3.8%	12.9%	26.0%	3.1%	29.8%	76.6%	96.3%	3.0%	40.3%
Yes	89.4%	96.2%	87.1%	74.0%	96.9%	70.2%	23.4%	3.7%	97.0%	59.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Security (NSI, 2015) and contrasts with the underrepresentation of unemployed and retired women. The low number of female characters older than 65 years old—who make up 81% (N=17) of the total number of retired women—is another persistent feature in the representation of older women (Gordillo, Guarinos, & Ramírez, 2009), who are generally characterised one-dimensionally, with their roles often ill-defined and minor (Bazzini, 1997; Signorielli & Bacue, 1999; Vernon, Williams, Phillips, & Wilson, 1990).

Similarly, our study reveals an overrepresentation of qualified women, a pattern observed in television fiction in the USA since the 1970s (Downing, 1974). In fact, women with university degrees constitute the group with the widest range of characters included in the analysis sample. 85.1% (N=80) of these practice their profession, establishing a direct relationship between higher education and professional practice that is deeply rooted in the social imaginary. Most of the women with degrees or diplomas studied in social sciences and humanities and have professions traditionally associated with women, such as lawyers, teachers, journalists, psychologists etc., which is another tendency inherited from US television (Signorielli, 1983; 1993; Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001). In contrast to Vande-Berg and Streckfuss (1992), no female character was observed working in the technical-scientific or technology fields, a fact probably determined by the greater narrative and dramatic possibilities of the professions described here rather than by any educational or statistical factors (Signorielli, 2009; Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001).

A large number of female characters with professions requiring qualifications have jobs involving caring for others, such as primary or secondary school teachers, nurses, carers and physiotherapists (Tous, Meso, & Simelio, 2013). However, despite the link between these jobs and the female world, the women who do these jobs are not usually questioned by their bosses or other male characters (Galán, 2007).

The medical profession is one of the most «subversive» professional groups and is characterised by decision-making and exercising authority (Philips, 2000: 53). In this regard, the gradual increase in the number of female doctors, determined in part by the

longevity of the series «Hospital Central» (Tele5, 2000-12), has meant that the traditional model that confers the role of «saviour» (the doctor) to men, and that of «companion» (the nurse) to women, has been superseded (Kalisch & Kalisch, 1984; Women's Institute, 2007). The overrepresentation of certain professions also explains the prominence of female police officers among public workers, the group with the best-defined professionals but with often the least developed personal lives. Although gender is not always decisive in the characterisation of professions (Lacalle, 2013), these women are usually observed adopting male characteristics in an attempt to allow themselves to be guided by their most rational side, eliminating «any trace of sensitivity» or hiding it «under a mask of coldness» (Galán, 2007: 231).

Leadership/empowerment of businesswomen and women directors also entails the attribution of traditionally masculine traits. In fact, television fiction rarely opts for the novel representation of a dominant, independent woman but rather opts for copying characteristics associated with masculinity, namely aggressiveness, individualism, competitiveness and decision-making (Van-de-Berg & Streckfuss, 1992), as well as authority and organisational skills (Greenberg, 1980; Signorielli, 1989). Nevertheless, the representation of these power-defined women brings with it a stigma that calls into question their work success. For the most part, they are negative female characters: ambitious, unscrupulous, resentful, vengeful, despotic, strong and implacable. Their professional success is frequently belittled by associating their position of power with other male characters (husband, father, etc.) (Van-de-Berg & Streckfuss, 1992)⁴. On other occasions, the reasons behind the success of these women is not questioned, but is, rather, presented as compensation for an unsatisfying personal, family or love life, and successful female characters are portrayed as women who have been unable to «satisfy their «instincts» as a mother or wife» (Ruido, 2007: 12).

From an androcentric point of view, the negative characterisation of the powerful woman represents a form of punishment for pursuing profession goals at the expense of her partner and/or family (Tous, Meso, & Simelio, 2013). The desire to abandon traditional

Table 4. Female characters with work-related problems

Work problems	Higher qualif.	Admin.	Trade	Unqualified	Waitress/shop assistant	Other	Not known	N/A	Public worker	Total
No	41.5%	34.6%	50.0%	46.2%	34.4%	46.4%	77.6%	97.8%	33.3%	58.4%
Yes	58.5%	65.4%	50.0%	53.8%	65.6%	53.6%	22.4%	2.2%	66.7%	41.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

stereotypes such as the housewife, mother and wife has been frowned upon (Women's Institute, 2007), while secretaries, on the other hand, continue reaffirming «the [male] corporate hierarchy and power, often including among their normal services favours of a sexual or affectionate nature (Ruido, 2007: 12).

Unlike sexual abuse or relationship problems experienced by those female characters who, for reasons of narrative economy, spend most of their time in the workplace (Galán, 2007), other issues, such as juggling work with family life, are practically non-existent (Ortega & Simelio, 2012). This is reflected in the greater percentage of working single women (45.7%; N=177) compared to married women (27.3%; N=106), a feature also observed in the US (Glascock, 2003; Signorielli, 1982; Signorielli & Kahlenberg, 2001). The percentage of single, qualified women (52.1%; N=49) is also much higher than the number of married qualified women (28.7%; N=27) (Atkin, 1991), although the difference has gradually decreased since the 1980s (Elasmar, Hasegawa, & Brain, 1999).

The analysis presented here confirms the different hypotheses and sub-hypotheses underlying this investigation and highlights not only the debate between the achievements made since the first representations of women workers in television fiction but also the persistence of certain stereotypes «strongly rooted in normative patriarchal designs» (Menéndez & Zurian, 2014: 70). It thus justifies the need to combine a quantitative diachronic perspective with a qualitative analysis of the roles and stereotypes of the female worker in order to adequately contextualise the effects of the representations of the woman on viewers. In this regard, our choice of a method that brings together a quantitative (SPSS) and a qualitative (socio-semiotic) analysis represents a novel contribution to studies on gender and television in Spain.

Notes

¹ The term post-feminism, first coined by Rebecca Walker in 1992 to define «third-wave feminism», is a culturally complex concept. Brunsdon illustrates it in television fiction through characters appearing in series such as «Sex and the City» and «Desperate Housewives» (Brunsdon, 2013: 378). Lotz believes that third-wave feminism represents the overcoming of certain limitations of «second-wave activism» (Lotz, 2006: 8).

² Only those secondary characters that appeared in less than three episodes in the same season were excluded.

³ Every country's television system reflects the historical, political, social, economic, and cultural contexts within which it has developed (Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck & Signorielli, 1978: 178). In line with the situation in Spain, women are considered «married» if they cohabit with their partner and, as such, we prefer the term so-

cial status to marital status.

⁴ Waitresses and shop assistants who own the business are also similarly discredited, since they are portrayed as running it with a male member of the family.

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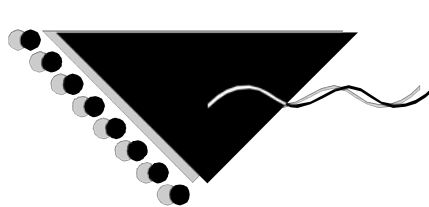
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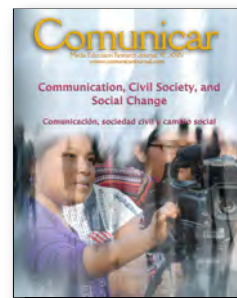
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Values and Emotions in Children's Audiovisual Fictional Narratives

Valores y emociones en narraciones audiovisuales de ficción infantil

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify which values and emotions are transmitted in the favorite fictional TV programs of children aged between 8 and 12, according to their particular type of structure. Based on the analysis of media consumption reported by participants and their parents, as well as on the ratings of children's fictional programs, two fictional programs were selected for this age group (Doraemon and Code Lyoko, with a narrative and non-narrative structure, respectively), and a content analysis of 86 episodes was conducted and validated by inter-rater agreement. The results show that a wide range of ethical and competence-based values are conveyed by both programs, although greater emphasis is placed on life-skill values, with aesthetic and transcendental values hardly being represented at all. While more complex emotions and some basic emotions (surprise, anger, happiness and fear) were found to be present in Code Lyoko, sadness was present to a greater extent in Doraemon. The results reveal that the level of empathy represented by the characters in both series is low, although it is slightly higher in Code Lyoko. The relevance of the study lies in the fact that it provides a useful method for measuring the appropriateness of media content in relation to the psychological characteristics of children, and contributes to establishing a solid basis for media literacy programs from early childhood.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este trabajo fue identificar los valores y emociones que se transmiten en los programas televisivos preferidos de niños y niñas de 8 a 12 años, de acuerdo al tipo de estructura. Sobre la base del análisis del consumo mediático referido por los participantes y sus progenitores, así como los índices de audiencia de los programas de ficción infantil, se seleccionaron dos series de ficción televisiva para este grupo de edad («Doraemon» y «Código Lyoko», de estructura narrativa y no-narrativa respectivamente), y se llevó a cabo un análisis de contenido de 86 episodios que fue validado por acuerdo inter-jueces. Los resultados muestran que en ambos programas se exhibe una amplia gama de valores éticos y competenciales, sobre todo valores vitales, mientras que los valores estéticos y trascendentales apenas son representados. Por otra parte, en «Código Lyoko» tienen mayor presencia las emociones complejas y algunas emociones básicas (asombro, ira, alegría y miedo), sin embargo la tristeza aparece en mayor medida en «Doraemon». Destaca que el nivel de empatía representada en los personajes es bajo en ambas series, aunque ligeramente más elevado en «Código Lyoko». La relevancia del estudio radica en el hecho de proveer un procedimiento útil para medir la idoneidad de los contenidos mediáticos respecto a las características psicológicas de la infancia, y contribuir a fundamentar con base sólida los programas de competencia mediática desde las primeras edades.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Childhood, media, audience, education, values, emotions, fictional narratives, cartoons.
Infancia, medios, audiencia, educación, valores, emociones, narraciones de ficción, dibujos animados.

1. Introduction and current context

The period between the ages of 8 and 12 is defined by a series of specific characteristics in relation to children's cognitive, affective and social-moral development. It is a period during which youngsters open up (both cognitively and socially) to the world around them. As they develop their ability to think, so too do they become increasingly capable of perceiving values. Empirical studies on emotions in general, and on the empathic response in particular, have found that from age 8 onwards, children are capable of distinguishing almost all the emotions that an adult is able to discern (Boone & Cunningham, 1998).

Fictional television shows, particularly cartoons, constitute one of many teaching-learning opportunities in which, through their favorite characters, children gain greater knowledge of concepts, procedures, attitudes, rules, values and emotions, although the regulating influence of teachers and parents is vital in this sense (Rajadell, Pujol, & Violant, 2005).

In general, studies on children's media diet indicate that the shows watched by the youngest members of the population are almost exclusively fictional programmes (cartoons, series and films), with cartoons being the most popular (Fuenzalida, 2005; Tur & Grande, 2009). On average, during the week children watch between 1 and 2 hours of television a day, with this time increasing to between 3 and 4 hours at the weekend. They watch content on different open-access thematic channels (for example, Clan TVE, Disney Channel), although they also view programs targeted specifically at young people and adults (Cánovas & Sahuquillo, 2010). The websites of these channels offer no code systems to help parents decide whether or not certain cartoon series are suitable to their children's development level (Bermejo, 2011; Torrecillas-Lacave, 2013).

In relation to the Internet, much like with television, use at weekends is almost as much as it is during the week (Sánchez & Muñoz, 2009). When using computers, girls are more active than boys and also tend to connect to the Internet more (AIMC, 2014). The aim of computer use is also different (Bringué & Sádaba, 2011). There can be no doubt that today, the Internet is the single most popular medium among children and adolescents for information access, leisure and communication. Nevertheless, it is difficult to calculate exactly how much time children spend on the web, since increasingly they tend to access it from a wide range of different devices, many of which are both small and portable (Garmendia, Garitaonandia, Martínez, & Casado, 2011).

Indeed, the current trend is towards multi-screen media usage, characterized by a change from the television set to the computer in order to view TV content over the Internet. Moreover, a number of different series are broadcast and viewed on tablets or mobile telephones. There is also a growing trend among children and adolescents to access video games on line, in order to play with their friends and/or with strangers. This has both its advantages and its risks (Chicharro, 2014), and is a trend that is spreading fast, particularly among boys who access these games using their mobile telephones (CIDE, 2004). Consequently, children today form part of the «mobile» generation, with mobile phones overtaking all other devices to become the «screen of screens» (Bond, 2013; Bringué & Sádaba, 2011).

Children's current media diet, which is increasingly beyond parental control (Gabelas & Lazo, 2008) and whose level of information saturation may make it hard for children to understand the meaning of the messages conveyed, has prompted a number of studies into the emotions and values represented in fictional series targeted at children. This in turn has contributed to fostering the selection, production and dissemination of high-quality media products for younger viewers (Elzo, 2009).

Some authors such as Rajadell, Pujol & Violant (2005) have analyzed the educational and cultural values conveyed by cartoon series, finding that certain positive values (such as goodness, responsibility and solidarity) and their respective counter-values, which have in the past been clearly manifest in children's series, are no longer represented. Researchers have also analyzed the question of the identity and the values represented in children's films. Ros (2007), for example, analyzed the film «Shrek», whose plot is based on a narrative structure similar to that of a classic fairytale, but which constantly includes twists designed to question the importance of appearances and certain «traditional» values represented by the characters. Other authors have drawn attention to the high level of violence present in children's media content (Mong-Shan-Yang, 2006; Tur & Grande, 2009), which, alongside antisocial values (such as selfishness or dishonesty), is often represented by the antagonist, while prosocial values (such as respect for others or cooperation) are generally embodied by the protagonist.

One study conducted within the field of values during childhood, which was based on the theory postulated by Milton Rokeach (1973), is that by Donoso (1993) which, despite not using audiovisual material, nevertheless explored nine value categories elicited

from children aged between 8 and 12 as a result of their participation in value clarification activities carried out for that specific purpose. The author compared the experience-based values and value beliefs manifested by children in this age group, and then compared these values with those expounded by the children's families and schools. The results revealed that children scored high in life, affective and ethical values, while the lowest scores were recorded for aesthetic and transcendental values, as well as values «of being». We have used this same nine value category system in our research.

In addition to values, another aspect to explore in relation to media content is the emotions represented, since emotions play a key role in determining children's media usage (Soto & Vorderer, 2011). It is also generally accepted that emotions are valued more highly in the context of media usage than in daily life (Bartsch, Vorderer, Mangold, & Viehoff, 2008).

According to Sedeño (2005), television language has a strong emotional charge, something which both poses risks (e.g. becoming emotionally desensitized to violence between peers) and offers benefits (e.g. identifying with characters that embody prosocial values). Whatever the case, television fiction «is a highly influential genre with a strong socializing capacity, since it conveys messages that often go unnoticed and which precede the conscious control of the audience, affecting emotions, mobilizing viewers' most intimate feelings and fostering their emotional involvement with the stories being told» (Ferrés, 1996, p.104). Along these same lines, Conde (1999) studied subjects' responses to frightening audiovisual sequences and concluded that children aged between 5 and 8 are more frightened by scenes highlighting visual or perceptive aspects, regardless of the possibility (real or fictional) of the events depicted actually taking place; adolescents, on the other hand, respond more intensely to realistic sequences, with which they identify to a greater degree.

In this study, we analyzed the internal structure of the audiovisual children's story being told, in relation to the way in which events are distributed throughout the

narration. This approach enabled us to distinguish two types of narrative (Bermejo, 2005): one characterized by a vertical structure and a chronological time frame (setting, conflict and denouement), and another characterized by a horizontal structure and a discontinuous temporal order.

Several key studies in this field (Bermejo, 2005, Del-Río, Álvarez, & Del-Río, 2004; Del-Río & Del-Río, 2008) have attempted to show how some fictional children's television series contribute to the construction of vertical thinking with causal, motivational, spatial and temporal narrative structures (e.g. The World

It is worth underscoring the fact that, beyond merely considering the presence or absence of harmful contents (e.g. violence or pornography), when assessing the age appropriateness of fictional programs it is necessary to analyze their potential content in the realm of values and emotions, as well as their structure (narrative or non-narrative), since this impacts the development of different ways of thinking among children.

of David the Gnome), while others (e.g. Dragon Ball) do the opposite, encouraging horizontal thinking, which is inappropriate for school and is related to a type of sensory, denarrativized thinking involving associations based on mere proximity. Furthermore, in these shows the normativity level (i.e. the degree to which activities and habits common to normal human life are portrayed) is low, as is the presence of empathy and emotions (Del-Río & Del-Río, 2008). In the field of children's advertising, Bringué (2012) analyzes content in order to explore different methods of conveying the audiovisual message (formats). This author also uses reception analysis to explore the way commercial messages are interpreted by children, showing the different narrative options upon which said messages are based.

Bearing in mind that outlined above, the general aim of this study was to analyze the media diet and favorite fictional television programs of children in 3rd and 6th grades of primary school, with the aim of determining which values and emotions are conveyed,

and whether or not they are related to the type of structure upon which said programs are based. The specific aims were as follows:

1) To explore the media diet (television, computer, Internet, video games, tablet and mobile telephone) of the children aged between 8 and 12 who participated in this study: time spent on the various devices and preferred fictional content (cartoons, series, films).

2) To identify which values are most commonly represented in 8-10-year-old children's favorite cartoon series, in accordance with their structure.

3) To determine which emotions are most commonly represented in 8-10-year-old children's favorite cartoon series, in accordance with their structure.

The results presented here form part of a broader, quasi-experimental research project that aims to explore the relationships established between media diet, attention levels and social-personal development during childhood.

2. Method

2.1. Sample Group

Participants were children aged between 8 and 12 ($M=10.04$) in 3rd and 6th grades of different primary schools located in the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country (Spain). Of the children in the sample group, 92 were boys (49.5%) and 94 were girls (50.5%).

The sample was therefore evenly distributed in relation to sex. 39.2% ($N=73$) of the children in the sample group were in 3rd grade, while 60.8% ($N=113$) were in 6th grade. The sample group was drawn from two public schools (44.08%, $N=82$) and two semi-private schools (i.e. private schools with some state funding) (55.92%, $N=104$). 153 parents also participated in the study. Of these, we know that 31 were fathers and 121 were mothers, although in the remaining case, no information was provided regarding which parent completed the questionnaire. Of the total number of questionnaires sent out ($N=186$), no response was received for 33. The corpus on which the content analysis was based comprised 86 episodes of two children's cartoon series, «Doraemon» and «Code Lyoko».

The sampling method used was intentional, both as regards episodes and viewing habits. In the first case, the overall corpus was divided into seasons, and then episodes were selected at random from different seasons. Children and their parents were also selected through intentional sampling, bearing in mind the type of school (public/semi-private), grade and sex.

2.2. Measurement instruments

An observation template was created ad hoc to analyze the content of episodes from the two cartoon series selected and the resulting values were classified into nine categories in accordance with Donoso's (1992) adapted version of Rokeach's value system (1973): 1) Life; 2) Production; 3) Ethical; 4) Social; 5) Affective; 6) Non-ethical or intellectual; 7) Aesthetic; 8) Transcendental; and 9) «of Being». For their part, emotions are grouped in accordance with Aritzeta, Pizarro, & Soroa (2008) into: Basic emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness) and Complex emotions (e.g. boredom, confusion), with this latter group including Moral emotions (e.g. empathy, indignation) also.

The details of children's media diet were recorded using the «Children's Media Diet Questionnaire» (CMI) (Aierbe & Oregi 2014), which was completed by parents in an estimated time of 30 minutes. The questionnaire comprises 26 items related to different indicators, such as: children's media viewing habits, the physical and social context in which screens are used and parental mediation. The following items were taken into account for the purposes of this study: time spent using screens on weekdays and at weekends (items 1 and 2); most-viewed type of fictional program (item 9); child's favorite fictional program (item 11).

Furthermore, children's preferences regarding fictional programs were recorded in a semi-structured individual interview lasting between 20 and 30 minutes. The interview comprised 24 questions aimed at exploring the values and emotions perceived by children in the characters of the episode viewed (during the experimental phase of the broader study) and eliciting information about their favorite shows.

2.3. Procedure

Firstly, audience shares from January to November 2013 were requested from the agency Kantar Media. Secondly, we contacted the schools and parents were informed and asked to complete the CMI questionnaire. After obtaining parents' informed consent, individual interviews were held with students.

The selection criteria for the two cartoon series included, in addition to high audience shares and preference levels, the fact that they had different structures (narrative and non-narrative). As a result, the final selection consisted of Doraemon (broadcast by Boing and the regional television channel ETB3) and Code Lyoko (broadcast by Clan and ETB3). The first series is about a cosmic robot cat who travels back in time to our era from the 22nd century to help his friend

Nobita sort out all his everyday problems with his parents and friends. He generally does this by taking various gadgets out of his magic pocket. The second is a French cartoon series that recounts the adventures of a group of friends who discover a virtual world called «Lyoko» (<https://goo.gl/3z-KM88>) and become embroiled in a struggle against a computer virus called X.A.N.A. which is plotting to destroy the world in which they live.

In order to determine whether the audiovisual story is based on a narrative or non-narrative framework, a structural analysis was carried out of each series, using the work of Del-Río, Álvarez and Del-Río (2004) and Bermejo (2005) as references. Next, the content of the different episodes from each series was analyzed, using an observation template created ad hoc. The values and emotions represented in each episode were categorized by researchers by means of inter-rater agreement. 43 episodes were viewed and categorized for each series, making the total number of episodes analyzed 86. The inter-rater agreement level obtained had a Kappa index of .80. The data were first grouped into the categories established a priori for qualitative analysis, and were subsequently analyzed using the SPSS Statistics program (22.0).

The structural analysis of each series was conducted in accordance with the works of Del Río, Álvarez & del Río (2004) and Bermejo (2005). It revealed that «Doraemon» has a narrative structure that conforms to the classi-

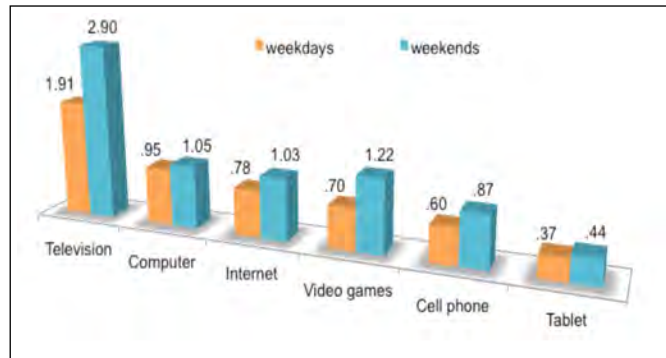


Figure 1. Media diet during the week and weekend.

cal narrative structure found in children's stories (setting, conflict, denouement), while «Code Lyoko» has a non-narrative structure in which both the temporal and spatial orders are disrupted (virtual/real environment). Finally, the content of the different episodes from each series was analyzed, using an observation template created independently by the two researchers.

The qualitative analysis was based on the a priori categories, and the emotions and values observed in the programs were categorized through inter-rater agreement (Kappa index). The quantitative analysis

Table 1. Series and cartoons most frequently mentioned during the interviews, by school year and sex					
		25% - 17%	16% - 10%	9% - 6%	5% - 3%
Year	3rd grade of Primary	Doraemon, Code Lyoko, Jessie, Good Luck Charlie, Pac-Man	iCarly, Big Time Rush, Pokemon, SpongeBob	Violetta, Shake it up, Dog with a Blog, Phineas & Ferb, Adventure Time	Liv & Maddie, Austin & Ally, Territorio Champions, The Amazing World of Gumball, Famboy & Chum, Riders of Berk, Monster High, Rabbits Invasion, Plankton Invasion, Kung Fu Panda, Batman, Mickey Mouse, Spartacus, Terrax
	6th grade of Primary	The Simpsons, Shin Chan	La que se avecina, Jessie, Shake it up, Doraemon, Phineas & Ferb	Aida, Good Luck Charlie, iCarly, Family Guy, Pokemon, Inazuma Eleven, Adventure Time, Cinderella	Inazuma Eleven, Shin Chan, Plankton Invasion, Jessie, Aida
Sex	Boys	Doraemon, Code Lyoko, Pokemon	The Simpsons, Pac-Man, Big Time Rush, Adventure Time, iCarly, La que se avecina	Inazuma Eleven, Shin Chan, Invasion plankton, Jessie, Aida	Family Guy, Territorio Champions, Phineas & Ferb, Good Luck Charlie, The Amazing World of Gumball, Riders of Berk, Rabbits Invasion, Mickey Mouse, Kung Fu Panda, Terrax, Spartacus
	Girls	Jessie; Shake it up, Good Luck Charlie	Phineas & Ferb, Shin Chan, SpongeBob, Doraemon, The Simpsons	Violetta, Liv & Maddie, Dog with a Blog, iCarly, Cinderella	La que se avecina, Aquí no hay quien viva, Austin & Ally, Family Guy, Regular Show, Adventure Time, Courage the Cowardly Dog, Famboy & Chum Chum, Monster High, Peppa Pig, Mickey Mouse, Minnie, Ariel, Batman

was conducted through univariate (frequencies, mean and standard deviation) and bivariate analyses, such as means comparisons (Student t and Mann-Whitney tests). The statistical processing of the data was carried out using the SPSS 22 Statistics program.

3. Results

3.1. Media diet

According to the children's parents, as shown in Figure 1, during the week the participants in our study spend most of their screen time watching television followed by computers. At the weekend, screen time increases by about an hour each day and, although television remains the device in front of which most time is spent, participants spend more time playing video games than on the computer. Tablets are the least-used devices, both during the week and at weekends. As regards age differences, during the week, children aged 11 and 12 spend more time on the Internet ($Z=-2.176$; $p<.05$; mean 1.05 vs .40) and on their phones ($Z=-2.037$; $p<.05$; mean .75 vs .38) than those aged 8 and 9. Differences were also found in relation to sex, with boys spending more time than girls playing video games, both on weekdays ($Z=-2.596$; $p<.01$; mean 1.10 vs .24) and at weekends ($Z=-2.787$; $p<.01$; mean 1.85 vs .47).

In relation to favorite fictional contents, the data provided by the children (see Table 1) coincide with both those reported by parents and audience shares. According to parents, the fictional programs their children watch most are cartoons ($M=3.71$; $SD=.995$) and series ($M=3.63$; $SD=.829$), with films ($M=2.80$; $SD=.853$) and other types of program ($M=2.68$; $SD=1.071$) being less popular. Favorite shows include «Jessie» (18.9%), «La que se avecina» (9.4%), «The Simpsons» (7.5%), «Pokemon» (7.5%), «Good Luck Charlie» (5.7%), «Violetta» (5.7%), «Doraemon» (3.8%), «iCarly» (3.8%), «Phineas & Ferb» (3.8%), «Adventure Time» (3.8%), and/or «Shake it up» (3.8%). The results show that, in addition to cartoons, participants also watch shows aimed at adults, such as «La que se avecina», «The Simpsons» and, to a lesser extent, «Aída». Girls have a greater preference for series ($Z=-2.117$; $p<.05$; mean 3.90 vs 3.35) than boys do, and

Table 2. Categories of values represented

	Doraemon M (S.D.)	Code Lyoko M (S.D.)	t / z	Sig.
Values	28.91 (9.875)	84.33 (24.482)	-13.766	.001***
Life Values	12.14 (6.304)	36.53 (12.572)	-11.374	.001***
Social Values	3.40 (2.638)	15.58 (5.716)	-12.693	.001***
Ethical Values	6.19 (2.889)	13.16 (5.376)	-6.487	.001***
Production Values	2.49 (3.418)	6.63 (5.732)	-4.737	.001***
Non-Ethical Values	2.60 (3.629)	6.12 (3.947)	-5.099	.001***
Values of Being	1.05 (1.479)	3.72 (3.705)	-3.945	.001***
Affective Values	.74 (1.513)	2.19 (2.970)	-3.023	.01**

although they did not spontaneously mention «Code Lyoko» as one of their favorites, most admitted to being familiar with it or having watched it in the past.

3.2. Content analysis in relation to values and emotions

The presence of values and emotions was explored in both series in order to identify similarities and differences in accordance with structure. To this end, the two researchers independently coded each episode. The level of convergence between the scores awarded in the separate assessments was very high (Cohen's kappa index = .70). An overall reading of the results obtained reveals a greater presence of values in all categories in Code Lyoko (LY) than in Doraemon (DO) (table 2), with the exception of aesthetic and transcendental values.

Also, the subcategories of represented values were identified more frequently in LY than in DO. Table 3 shows the ones with the greatest presence.

The content analysis regarding emotions revealed that all types of general emotions, both basic and complex, are more frequently represented in LY (see table 4 en <https://goo.gl/33JBES>).

In relation to the emotion subcategories, as shown

Table 3. Subcategories of values represented

		Doraemon M (S.D.)	Code Lyoko M (S.D.)	t / z	Sig.
Life Values	Wishful thinking	9.33 (5.895)	31.63 (11.701)	-7.593	.001***
	Success	.47 (1.182)	2.58 (4.851)	-4.680	.001***
Production Values	Investigation	.00 (.000)	.28 (.854)	-2.289	.05*
	Work	.00 (.000)	1.07 (1.564)	-4.542	.001***
	Honesty	4.14 (1.846)	11.02 (4.437)	-6.899	.001***
Social Values	Helping others	1.65 (1.689)	5.65 (2.497)	-8.703	.001***
	Being supportive	.98 (1.205)	6.28 (3.312)	-7.025	.001***
	Responsability	.72 (1.297)	2.19 (2.260)	-3.329	.001***
	Respect	.00 (.000)	.33 (.993)	-2.523	.05*
	Safety	.00 (.000)	.19 (.500)	-2.523	.05*
Non-Ethical Values	Curiosity	1.86 (1.505)	5.56 (3.480)	-5.561	.001***
Values of Being	Self-esteem	.40 (.849)	2.09 (2.524)	-3.651	.001***
	Competence	.56 (1.119)	1.28 (1.469)	-2.714	.01**

Table 5. Subcategories of emotions represented

		Doraemon M (S.D.)	Code Lyoko M (S.D.)	t / z	Sig.
Basic Emotions	Astonishment	5.30 (2.940)	15.84 (8.269)	-7.871	.001***
	Anger	4.72 (2.667)	11.79 (4.911)	-8.295	.001***
	Happiness	4.63 (2.105)	7.28 (3.404)	-4.344	.001***
	Fear	2.84 (2.544)	6.30 (5.050)	-4.067	.001***
	Sadness	2.49 (2.208)	1.58 (1.749)	-2.142	.05*
Complex Emotions	Concern	1.91 (1.601)	9.67 (5.858)	-7.214	.001***
	Confusion	.84 (1.214)	5.16 (3.716)	-6.221	.001***
	Enjoyment	1.09 (1.342)	3.30 (3.106)	-3.458	.001
	Pain	.42 (.698)	1.79 (1.846)	-3.939	.001***
	Empathy	.02 (.152)	.51 (2.016)	-2.473	.05*
	Disappointment	.07 (.338)	.51 (1.203)	-2.079	.05*
	Indignation	.07 (.258)	.42 (.794)	-2.612	.01**

in table 5, with the exception of sadness, all basic and complex emotions are represented more frequently in LY. Moreover, within the set of complex emotions, the moral emotions Empathy and Indignation are particularly well represented.

Given that LY episodes last approximately twice as long as DO ones (22 min vs 12 min, on average), the scores were weighted to compensate for the time bias. Thus, the values and emotions represented were calculated per minute for each series, and the results revealed that all the initial differences in favor of LY remained unchanged, with the exception of ethical values, whose scores for both programs were evened out as a result of the weighting.

4. Discussion and conclusions

In general, as regards the primary aim of this study, it was found that children tend to spend more time in front of screens at the weekend than during the week, and TV viewing time, in particular, increases twofold. There is an increased tendency to use the Internet to view television programs (either re-watching episodes or catching up on those that were missed), especially among girls, which suggests that, although Internet use is on the rise and is accessed through a wide range of different screens, television still remains the most popular media format among children (Cánovas & Sahuquillo, 2010). The results reveal that children are starting to use mobile phones at an increasingly early age, and use is also increasing among 6th graders (Bond, 2013; Garmendia & al., 2011), while video games were found to be more popular with the boys in our study than with the girls (Bringué & Sádaba, 2011; Chicharro, 2014).

Furthermore, participants' favorite programs are cartoons and series, findings which confirm the results

reported by some previous studies (Fuenzalida, 2005; Tur & Grande, 2009), although they differ from those obtained by Bringué & Sádaba (2011), who found films to be more popular than series and cartoons. However, we did observe a growing trend, especially among girls, towards watching series that deal with issues and themes more appropriate for teenagers (amorous relations, etc.) at an increasingly early age (8-9 years old). Hence, one of the most popular TV channels was

Disney Channel. Boys prefer cartoons, especially those which focus on fighting/action or sport. These programs are mainly broadcast on Boing. For their part, participants aged 11-12 also tend to watch both animated and non-animated series targeted at adults (Cánovas & Sahuquillo, 2010). To conclude, not only are age ranges becoming increasingly blurred as regards the use of different screen devices and preferred contents, gender differences are also observed in both media use and favorite fictional programs (Bringué, 2012; Garmendia & al., 2011). Both these findings merit further research.

As regards our second aim, the analysis of values in relation to the structure of fictional contents revealed interesting results. We found that a wide range of ethical and competence-related values (particularly life values) were represented in both series, while aesthetic and transcendental values were hardly represented at all. It was, however, in Code Lyoko (LY, non-narrative structure) that competence-related values were identified most frequently, more so than in Doraemon (DO, narrative structure), although ethical values were found to be present to a similar extent in both series. These results contradict those found by Rajadell et al. (2005), but coincide with those obtained by Tur & Grande (2009) and Donoso (1993), which seems to indicate that, regardless of the time elapsed and the recourses used, the values represented correspond to the developmental stage we are focusing on here.

In relation to the third aim of this study, the identification of emotions in accordance with structure, basic emotions were found to be present in both series to a similar extent, although complex emotions were more frequently identified in LY. The level of empathy represented was low in both series, although it was slightly higher in LY.

The lesser degree to which values and complex emotions are represented in DO may be due to the fact that each episode focuses on just a few values and emotions in comparison with LY. This enables the series to work with formal resources that make it easier for younger children (aged between 8 and 9) to perceive them. For example, the contrast between happiness and sadness that can be found in DO is greater than in LY, since fewer emotions are represented.

However, the structural characteristics (non narrative) and content (greater number and variety of values represented, as well as complex emotions) of LY may prevent younger children from fully understanding the messages conveyed and discerning the consequences and motivations underlying the characters' thoughts, emotions and actions. If we combine this with other characteristics, such as the scarce representation of empathy and the low level of normativity regarding the real-life activities and habits depicted, we can infer that LY is not ideal viewing content for this age range (Bermejo, 2005, 2011; Del-Río & Del-Río, 2008). Curiously enough, this series is more popular among 3rd grade students than among 6th graders, mainly boys in both cases, since students aged between 11 and 12 mainly report no longer viewing LY and DO.

It is worth underscoring the fact that, beyond merely considering the presence or absence of harmful contents (e.g. violence or pornography), when assessing the age appropriateness of fictional programs it is necessary to analyze their potential content in the realm of values and emotions, as well as their structure (narrative or non-narrative), since this impacts the development of different ways of thinking among children (Bermejo, 2005; Del-Río & Del-Río, 2008; Prens-ky, 2001).

One thing to bear in mind is that, although the weighting of the results and the high level of inter-rater agreement attest to the good reliability of the data obtained, future research should seek to corroborate them in a broader sample, with different cartoon series.

This analysis of content and structure is currently being complemented by the study of how the values and emotions perceived by children when watching these programs are received. The aim is to actively foster the development and selection of media content that is appropriate to the psychological needs of younger viewers, as well as to contribute to laying a solid foundation for media literacy programs from a very early age.

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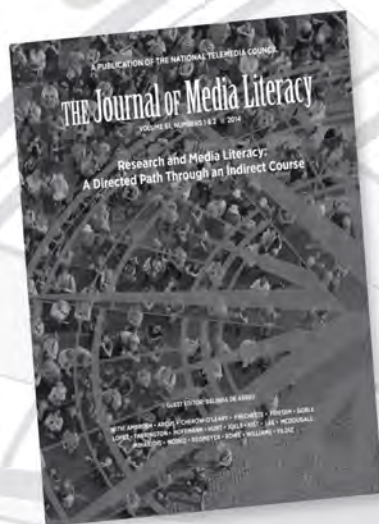
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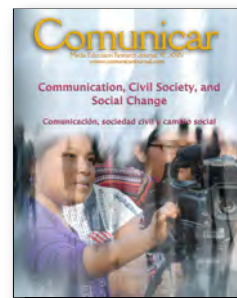
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Models of educational integration of ICTs in the classroom

Modelos de integración didáctica de las TIC en el aula

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ABSTRACT

We present in this paper the results of a study analyzing the scope and use that teachers make of ICT in classrooms and schools with abundant availability of information and communication technologies: one computer per student, interactive whiteboards, multimedia projectors and internet access. The main goal of this study is to detect models or patterns of educational use of ICT resources available in classrooms related to some personal and professional characteristics of the teachers that took part in the study, such as gender, years of experience, educational stage, digital competence and degree of use of ICT in their daily lives. A descriptive correlational design based on a survey study answered by over 3160 teachers from all over Spain who participated in the School Program 2.0 was used. The results show two clear different patterns of ICT use according to frequency and type of tasks assigned to the students: a weak integration-teaching model against a strong educational integration of ICTs. We come to the conclusion that teachers who develop a model of intensive educational use of ICTs are teachers with many years of professional experience, that make regular use of ICTs and, moreover, perceive themselves as sufficiently trained and with a highly developed digital competence.

RESUMEN

En este artículo se presentan los resultados de un estudio que analizó el grado y tipo de utilización que el profesorado hace de las TIC en aulas con abundante disponibilidad de tecnologías de la información y comunicación: un ordenador por alumno, Pizarra Digital Interactiva, proyectores multimedia y acceso a Internet. El objetivo del estudio fue detectar modelos o patrones de uso didáctico de las tecnologías y relacionarlo con algunas características personales y profesionales del profesorado, tales como el género, los años de experiencia, la etapa educativa, la competencia digital y el grado de uso de las TIC en su vida cotidiana. Se empleó un diseño de tipo descriptivo correlacional basado en un estudio de encuesta donde respondieron más de 3.160 profesores de toda España que participaban en el Programa Escuela 2.0. Los resultados obtenidos muestran que existen dos tipologías nítidas de modelos de uso de las TIC en función de la frecuencia y el tipo de tarea demandada al alumnado: un modelo de integración didáctica débil frente a un modelo de integración didáctica intensa de las TIC. Asimismo, se concluye que el perfil del profesorado que desarrolla un modelo de uso didáctico intensivo de las TIC es un docente con bastantes años de experiencia profesional, ciudadano usuario habitual de las TIC y que, además, se percibe suficientemente formado y con competencia digital.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

ICT, teachers, teaching practice, teaching resources, educational technology, school 2.0, survey, educational integration models. TIC, profesorado, práctica docente, recursos didácticos, tecnología educativa, escuela 2.0, encuesta, modelos de integración didáctica.

1. Introduction and state of the art

In Spain, starting almost three decades ago, different programs –promoted by the central government or the autonomous regions– are being implemented in order to facilitate the educational use of ICT in schools. The last project of this kind was School 2.0 (2010-2012), which equipped classrooms with an important amount of digital technology (netbooks, interactive whiteboards and Internet access), particularly in Year 5 and 6 of Primary Education and Year 1 and 2 of Secondary Education.

This paper comes out of a research project called «The Politics of «One Computer per Student» in Spain. Teachers' Views and Practice on School 2.0 Program. A Comparative Analysis among Autonomous Regions» (ICT in School System, TICSE 2.0) and funded by the R+D National Plan 2010 from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (EDU-2010-17037). Eleven research groups from different Spanish universities collaborated on this project. Different types of studies were conducted such as surveys, case studies, interviews and classroom observations. All of them had the aim of exploring teachers' opinions about ICTs and the impact of the School 2.0 Program in classroom practice and school organization. An analysis of the ICT educational policy in the participating autonomous regions (15 in total) was also carried out.

This article presents some of the research findings, particularly, those related to the analysis of the teachers' use of ICT in their teaching in relation to these questions:

- In classrooms with abundant digital technology, to what extent do teachers make an educational use of technologies while configuring differentiated models or patterns of teaching practice?
- Are there any relationships between those integration models and educational use of ICTs and the teachers' personal or professional characteristics?

1.1. Teachers' use and practice of ICTs in the classroom

One of the main areas within educational research in recent years is the study of the processes of integrating ICTs in schools – one of the main aims of educational policy in most western countries (Area, 2006). Since more than a decade ago, different studies have focused on assessing the impact of these policies in many countries (Pelgrum, 2001; Richardson, 2000), in European schools (Balanskat, Blamire, & Kefala, 2006; Becta, 2007; Condie & Munro, 2007; Euridyce, 2004, 2011; European Commission, 2006, 2013) and in the Spanish

school system (Marcolla, 2006; Meneses, Fàbregues, Jacovkis, Rodríguez-Gómez, 2014; Montero, 2009; Sigalés, Josep, Mominó, Meneses, & Badia 2008).

However, in spite of the abundance of empirical research about the processes of integrating ICT in schools, «the research results, although not contradictory, have few convincing and inconsistent inferences which limit the generalization of conclusions and significantly reduce their impact» (Mama & Hennessey, 2013: 380).

A decade ago, Balanskat, Blamire and Kefala (2006) in a study conducted for the European Schoolnet concluded that teachers use ICTs to support the existing pedagogies and do not show a significant change of teaching principles and methods. A few years later, the European Schoolnet (European Commission, 2013: 102) actualized the study and, comparing the results from 2006 and 2013, argued that «in general, the use of ICTs has not incremented as much as it was expected from 2006, but it seems to have remained stable from then. There is still a long way to go before ICTs are completely integrated in schools and teaching (...). On the other hand, there is no relationship between the high levels of ICT equipment and teachers' and students' confidence, use and behavior towards them. Curiously, survey shows that there is no relationship between the number of computers in schools and the students' frequency of use, neither at European nor at national level».

The OECD's report (2015a) –elaborated from the data obtained in the survey TALIS 2013 (Teaching and Learning International Survey)– shows that less than 40% of teachers from the studied countries use ICTs as part of their teaching process. School headmasters point out that the main obstacles for its use are the lack of computers, the limited Internet connection and shortage of appropriate software. Teachers consider that ICT training is the second or third priority.

Likewise, the OECD (2015b) has just published a report conducting an international comparative analysis of the digital abilities of students and their learning atmospheres. The report shows that there is no direct and causal relationship between availability and accessibility to technologies and its educational use in the classroom. In fact, it shows important variations in its use according to teacher's personal characteristics, contextual factors related to the implemented educational policies and other organizational and institutional factors.

1.2. Patterns or models of use of ICT resources

Changes and innovations in school culture are always controversial – they suggest the idea of crisis, ins-

tability and uncertainty. In this context (well known and described in the innovation and educational change literature), the school institutions (the systems) and the individuals within them react in different ways and adopt different strategies that Marcinkiewicz (1993) relates to the teachers' innovative trend and that define or suggest patterns or profiles of use.

Different authors have tried to identify the typology of ICTs used by teachers (Hsu, 2011). The work of Barron and others (2003) is here of particular significance. They identified four types of ICTs use in classroom teaching: the computer as a research instrument for students, as a tool for problem solving and decision-making, as a production instrument (for the making of reports and papers), and lastly, as a communication resource.

Likewise, Russell & al. (2003) identified six categories of ICTs use by teachers: use of ICTs for lesson preparation, material production, students guiding, special education, e-mail use, and also for recordings and registers.

Braak, Tondeur and Valcke (2004) identified two types of strategies or patterns of use of ICTs in schools: a mere support of teaching processes, and an effective use of those resources in teaching development. The latter was mediated by the teachers' age, gender, digital competence, attitude towards ICTs, and disposition towards change and innovation.

Other studies have investigated possible barriers or obstacles that contribute to the lack of an effective integration of ICTs in the teaching processes, such as the difficulties to access resources, inappropriate equipment, the lack of technical and maintenance support, or internal organization issues (Inan & Lowther, 2010; Unal & Ozturk, 2012).

All of these results invite us to consider the following questions: to what extent is the teacher in the classroom confident in the use of new digital media and makes an educational use of it in school time? Are ICTs combined with traditional media such as textbooks or do they substitute them? For what activities are these technologies used in the classroom? Is it possible to identify models or patterns of educational use of ICTs according to its frequency and type of tasks that are carried out with them? Is there any relationship

between the teaching models of educational use of ICTs and the teachers' personal characteristics?

2. Methods and materials

The research design used belongs to the field of non-experimental methods («ex post facto»). Specifically, this paper focuses on a descriptive correlational design, based on a survey study. The aims were:

- Aim 1: To identify models or patterns of educa-

It is necessary that future research explores whether both models of use found are still being used in the new classroom contexts, where technology increases even more with the arriving of mobile devices (brought by students in many cases) and to what extent teachers readapt these patterns according to the increase of their experience in the educational use of ICTs.

tional use of ICTs according to its frequency and type of tasks that are carried out with them.

- Aim 2: To find out if there is any relationship between the teaching models of educational use of ICTs identified and the teachers' personal and professional profile.

2.1. Participants and sample

The study conducted with the survey of the research Project TICSE 2.0 gathered data from a sample of 5,161 teachers in 15 Spanish autonomous regions. Most of them were participants in the School 2.0 Program in 2011. In the present study we have worked with a sample extracted from the total of survey teachers, according to the availability of ICT resources in their classroom. We selected those teachers who had the following resources in their classroom: a computer or tablet for the teacher; a computer in the classroom for students (without considering the number of computers available); an interactive whiteboard and Internet access. Taking into account these selection criteria, the analyses have been conducted with a sub-sample of 3,164 teachers from 15 Spanish autonomous regions, of which 46% were men and 53% were women, from state schools (93%) and pri-

vate schools (6%). According to educational stages, the sample is distributed as follows: 67% were teachers of Primary Education and 32% teachers of Secondary Education. According to age distribution, 50% of survey respondents were 45 years old or more.

2.2. Instruments and data collection

The data collection instrument was a 32-question multiple-choice questionnaire organized in 6 parts (Area & Sanabria, 2014; De-Pablos, 2015). For the purposes of this paper, we have analyzed the answers pertaining to questions 11 and 12. In the final stage of this study, we included the personal and professional characteristics of participating teachers.

2.3. Data analysis

Based on the data obtained from the 3,164 surveys that constitute the sample, we decided to carry out a two-stage cluster analysis, adding the information obtained from the selected items (frequency and type of ICT practice in the classroom). We tried to verify whether survey respondents could be grouped in categories regarding frequency and types of use of ICT resources. Subsequently, we carried out a differential analysis of the resulting distributions for questions defining personal and professional characteristics of teachers between the two obtained clusters, based on chi-squared test. All the analyses have been made using the statistical analysis software SPSS (see 19).

3. Results

- Aim 1: To identify models or patterns of teaching practice according to the frequency and type of ICT use in the classroom. First of all, we present the percentages of frequency of ICT use in the classroom in relation to seven types of resources or educational media: textbooks, blackboards, other books and bibliographic resources, traditional audiovisual resources,

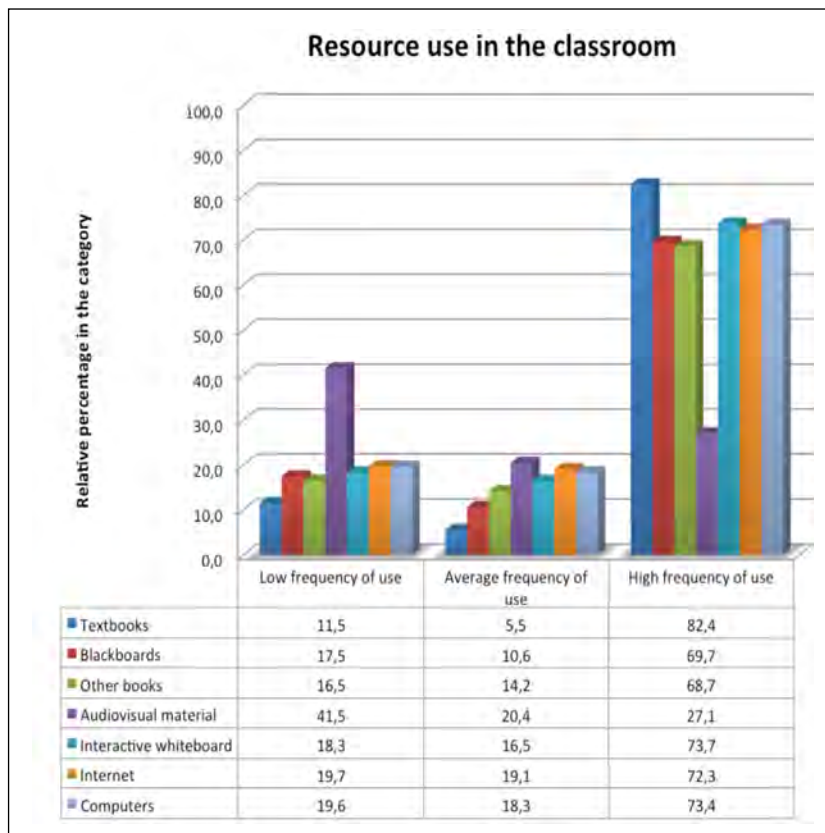


Figure 1. Percentage of teachers in the different levels of frequency of use for every educational resource.

classroom computers, interactive whiteboard, and Internet (see figure 1). In order to simplify the interpretation of results, we decided to reduce the analysis variables from the initial five levels to three levels, according to the following criterion in the table.

The obtained results show that textbooks, interactive whiteboards, computers and Internet are used more than «a few days a week», followed by the educational support of other books and blackboards. The only resource that has a lower use is traditional audiovisual media.

In order to analyze whether there are patterns of joint use of these resources, we decided to carry out a two-stage cluster analysis.

The cluster analysis has been conducted considering the variables derived from the codification of

Initial levels	New levels
1. Never	1. Low frequency of use
2. A few times in the academic year	
3. A few days a month	2. Average frequency of use
4. A few days a week	
5. Every day	3. High frequency of use

question 11. Survey respondents were here asked about the frequency of use of educational resources in the classroom (ICTs and traditional resources). To these variables, we have added those derived from the codification of question 12, which measures the particular uses of ICT resources. We wanted to improve the cluster identification that may arise, adding to the declared frequency of use of ICT or non-ICT resources the information about the type of use of ICT resources.

As a result of this analysis, two teachers' clusters or groups emerge. These groups are 48% of cases (1361 subjects) and 52% of cases (1,476 subjects) respectively. 327 subjects are lost values, since they could not be placed in any cluster.

As we can see in figure 2, the questions that to a greater extent determine the belonging to one group or the other are, as we expected, those related to question 11.7 (frequency of internet use in the classroom), question 11.6 (frequency of interactive whiteboard use) and question 11.5 (frequency of computer use in the classroom). To these three variables we added, with a measured predictive capacity, identifying variables of the types of use that are given to these ICT resources, all related to the different questions of question 12 of the questionnaire. The variables related to the frequency of use of traditional educational resources do not have discriminant power at all. The variable associated to question 11.4 (use of traditional audiovisual media) was discarded in the analysis because of its irrelevance.

The description of every cluster, according to the characteristics of the sample obtained through the 20 variables included in the analysis, is explained in tables 1 and 2. From the analysis made we can highlight the following characteristics:

a) Cluster or group 1, called in this study «occasional ICT user teacher, with a traditional reproductive educational approach and knowledge transfer», is des-

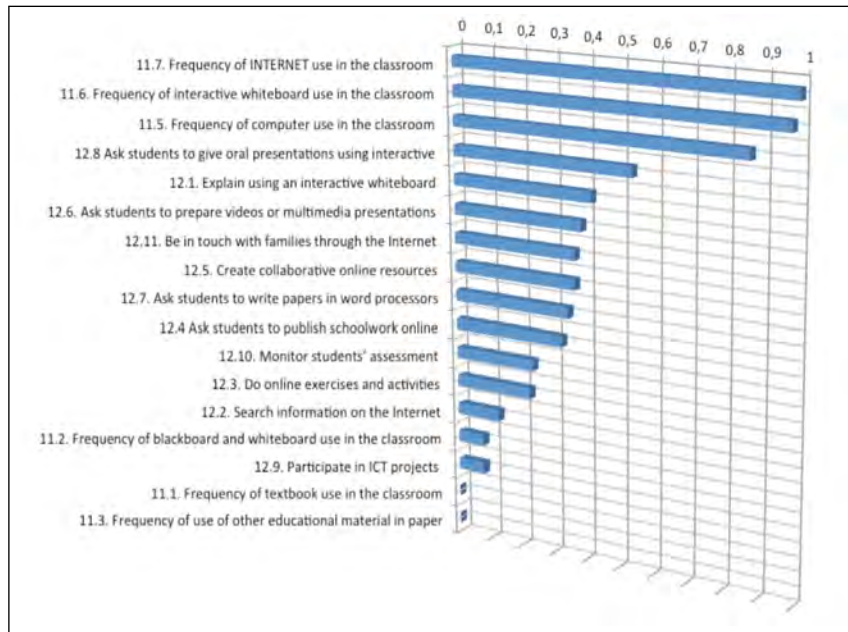


Figure 2. Relative significance of every predictor in clusters' configuration.

cribed by a less frequent and less diverse pattern of ICT use than the one observed in the other cluster. These teachers make a moderate and occasional use of ICT resources and they limit their application in the classroom to learning activities such as explanation of interactive contents, students' online information search, online activities and exercises, or the use of word processors for schoolwork.

b) Cluster or group 2, called in this study «regular ICT user teacher, with a more diverse and richer educational approach», is characterised by a more frequent and strong (more diverse and wider) pattern of use of the ICT resources available in the classroom. These teachers use computers, the interactive whiteboard and Internet access very often to carry out many tasks and educational applications: all those described for teachers in cluster 1 (and with a higher frequency index) and also activities such as presenting works using the interactive whiteboard, monitoring students' assessment or being in touch with families through the Internet. We have called this teaching model or pattern «strong educational integration of ICT» in classroom practice.

• Aim 2: Is there any relationship between the teaching models of educational use of ICT identified and the teachers' personal and professional profile?

a) Differential analysis of some personal and professional characteristics. There are no significant differences between both clusters regarding «gender».

Table 1. Distribution of frequencies of question 11 variables

	Cluster 1 48% subjects (N=1361)	Cluster 2 52% subjects (N=1476)	100% subjects (N=2837)
11.1 Textbooks			
Low frequency of use	10,4%	12,4%	11,4%
Average frequency of use	5,1%	5,4%	5,3%
High frequency of use	84,5%	82,2%	83,3%
11.2 Blackboard			
Low frequency of use	12,4%	25,1%	19,0%
Average frequency of use	12,6%	9,4%	10,9%
High frequency of use	75,0%	65,5%	70,1%
11.3 Books, notebooks, encyclopedias and other paper documents			
Low frequency of use	14,8%	16,3%	15,6%
Average frequency of use	14,0%	14,9%	14,5%
High frequency of use	71,3%	68,8%	70,0%
11.5 Computers (computers, laptops or tablets)			
Low frequency of use	12,7%	0,2%	6,2%
Average frequency of use	37,0%	2,4%	19,0%
High frequency of use	50,3%	97,4%	74,8%
11.6 Interactive whiteboard			
Low frequency of use	17,3%	0,7%	8,7%
Average frequency of use	34,8%	1,0%	17,2%
High frequency of use	47,8%	98,3%	74,1%
11.7 Internet			
Low frequency of use	13,7%	0,0%	6,6%
Average frequency of use	39,1%	1,7%	19,6%
High frequency of use	47,2%	98,3%	73,8%

However, statistically, there are significant differences in the following variables: «teacher's age», «years of teaching experience» and «educational stage where they teach».

In the cluster of teachers with a lower ICT integration we found younger teachers, with less teaching experience and who usually teach in Secondary Education.

The teachers with an intensive ICT integration are older teachers (between 45 and 55 years old) with a longer teaching experience. Results show that teachers with longer professional experience are the ones who more frequently use ICT in the classroom and in a wider variety of learning situations.

Regarding the educational stage, we found that teachers with a stronger ICT integration are usually from Primary Education, while teachers with lower ICT integration slightly predominate in Secondary Education.

b) Differential analysis regarding the level of ICT presence in teachers' daily life, their familiarity and ICT use competence. When comparing the distributions offered by teachers in every cluster, we observe that teachers with a stronger ICT integration usually make frequent use of ICT in their daily life, this means that they are more familiar with them: they frequently use computers, access the Internet or use tablets or other electronic devices.

There are no significant differences between both

clusters in the distribution of frequencies regarding mobile phones or videogames use.

Once the differential frequency with which every subject of every cluster uses different Internet services was analyzed, we observed that teachers with a stronger ICT integration more frequently surf the net, use e-mail, participate in forums or chats, use or manage blogs, use social networks, usually work with virtual learning environments, use multimedia webpages, download resources and materials, do online shopping, access online readings, make online transactions, use educational websites, etc.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The obtained results allow us to deduce that the introduction of ICT resources (and teaching methods and strategies related to them) does not mean the replacement of traditional resources, but the appearance of mixed or hybrid models, where both types of resources are useful. In classrooms with abundant digital technology, teachers usually make use of it in their practice –in different levels and versions– while also making use of traditional educational material, such as textbooks or blackboards. These results are similar to those found in previous studies such as Balanskat, Blamire and Kefala (2006) and European Commission (2006; 2013).

It is verified that in classrooms with abundant digital technology, textbooks are still the most frequently used resource by a large number of teachers, as found by Area and Sanabria (2014). This means that ICTs do not replace traditional materials, but they complement each other, as reflected by the OECD study (2015a). However, it can also be affirmed that new digital media, such as interactive whiteboards are replacing traditional or analog audiovisual media (such as slides, overhead projectors or hi-fi music systems).

This suggests that policies aimed at the general introduction of ICT equipment in schools such as the School 2.0 Program, play an active and dynamic role in fostering the use of ICT which results, at least in the first instance, in teachers needing to readjust and reconsider the use of traditional resources. When

there is abundant digital technology, teachers do not refuse to use it, but they incorporate it to their classroom practice to different degrees, with models or different patterns. However, this neither means that the mere presence of technology automatically generates educational innovation as many works have confirmed (Area, 2011; Condie & Munro, 2007; European Commission, 2013; Mama & Hennessey, 2013; Montero, 2009) nor an improvement of students' performance (OECD, 2015b). It means that the presence of ICT makes teachers reconsider how to use them and, consequently, be innovative with them.

On the other hand, there are variations in the educational use of digital technology by teachers. These patterns of ICT use emerge from the frequency of use (the amount of times they use it) and by the nature of the activity (the type of tasks and the grouping used when working with ICTs in the classroom). In the present study we have found two models or patterns of educational ICT use in the classroom:

- A weak model of educational integration of ICT in the classroom. In this model, ICTs are rarely used (rarely or a few times a week) and they are basically used for expository teaching tasks and mere knowledge transfer, using individual or whole group classroom distribution. Traditional materials are more frequently used and students are usually asked to do computer-based activities, similar to those in the textbooks, such as exercises or online activities (puzzles, completing with words, matching, etc.)
- An intensive model of educational integration of ICT. In this model, ICTs are frequently used (every day or many times a week) and they are used for a variety of tasks and educational demands that involve individual and group work, teacher and student presentations, information searches and the elaboration of digital contents by students, such as creating and communicating contents online (writing blogs or creating

wikis).

As we can deduce from these aspects, a weak integration model means that teachers use traditional educational materials (textbooks) and sporadically use technology. When they do it, they follow an expository transfer of knowledge. On the contrary, the intensive integration model means a stronger mix or combination between the traditional materials and the ICTs, being the latter used in a more active learning perspective. This allow us to suggest that teachers usually incorporate ICTs in the methodological approaches and strategies that they already have, without breaking down with their previous teaching practice. These findings have already been corroborated in previous studies in this field.

We have also found a relationship or direct correlation between the pattern of ICT use in the classroom and the level of use that teachers make in their daily lives. Those teachers who are users of a variety of

Table 2. Distribution of frequencies of question 12 variables

	Cluster 1 48% subjects (N=1361)	Cluster 2 52% subjects (N=1476)	100% subjects (N=2837)
12.1. Explain contents or lessons using the interactive whiteboard in the classroom			
No	28,9%	2,3%	15,1%
Yes	71,1%	97,7%	84,9%
12.2. Ask students to search information on the Internet			
No	18,7%	5,6%	11,9%
Yes	81,3%	94,4%	88,1%
12.3. Ask students to do exercises or activities online (classifications, puzzles, complete sentences...)			
No	36,5%	13,1%	24,3%
Yes	63,5%	86,9%	75,7%
12.4. Ask students to publish works online (blogs, wikis or webpages)			
No	87,9%	58,6%	72,6%
Yes	12,1%	41,4%	27,4%
12.5. Prepare or use webquests, wikis and other online resources for collaborative work among students.			
No	88,5%	57,0%	72,1%
Yes	11,5%	43,0%	27,9%
12.6. Ask students to prepare videos or multimedia presentations			
No	85,6%	52,0%	68,1%
Yes	14,4%	48,0%	31,9%
12.7. Ask students to write papers in word processors.			
No	34,7%	7,1%	20,3%
Yes	65,3%	92,9%	79,7%
12.8. Ask students to give oral presentations using the interactive whiteboard.			
No	78,3%	36,2%	56,4%
Yes	21,7%	63,8%	43,6%
12.9. Participate in ICT projects with other schools through the Internet			
No	97,6%	90,2%	93,8%
Yes	2,4%	9,8%	6,2%
12.10. Monitor students' assessment			
No	72,3%	44,4%	57,8%
Yes	27,7%	55,6%	42,2%
12.11. Be in touch with students and families through the Internet			
No	80,5%	46,5%	62,8%
Yes	19,5%	53,5%	37,2%

technologies (computers, Internet, mobile phones) and who use them for different purposes such as surfing the net, communicating via e-mail or participate in social networks make a more intensive and frequent use of ICT in the classroom and ask students to use the web 2.0 resources.

There is, or at least appears to, a direct relationship between a teacher's competence as a digital citizen and his or her professional behavior with ICT in the classroom. The higher the level of competence and digital citizen participation the teacher has, the higher the educational use of technologies in the classroom is.

This study shows that teachers' age is a variable that is related with the model or pattern of ICT use in the classroom. However, unlike what happens in other fields where younger subjects make a more frequent use of technologies, in the school context younger teachers (less than 40 years old) do not make an intensive use of ICT in the classroom. Instead, middle age teachers (between 45 and 55 years old) with more professional experience are the ones who use technologies more intensively. This allows us to suggest that educational competence and professional experience are a necessary or, at least, relevant variable in technology-related teaching innovation. Teachers' age is considered a less relevant variable. This questions the famous thesis of users: «emigrant VS digital natives», stated by Prensky (2001). On the other hand, as opposed to Roig, Mengual and Quinto (2015) we have not found significant differences regarding gender.

The current study confirms many findings available in previous research, but it also offers new suggestions and hints that describe, and somehow explain, the different uses that teachers make of ICs in their teaching. This paper has revealed very intriguing results about profiles and teaching patterns with technologies and opens some further research questions that will be developed in future studies. Consequently, it is necessary that future research explores whether both models of use found are still being used in the new classroom contexts, where technology increases even more with the arriving of mobile devices (brought by students in many cases) and to what extent teachers readapt these patterns according to the increase of their experience in the educational use of ICT.

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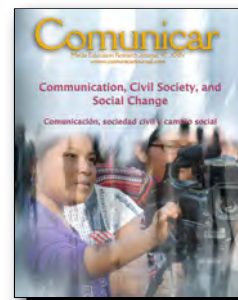
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Powerful Communication Style on Twitter: Effects on Credibility and Civic Participation

Estilo comunicativo súbito en Twitter: efectos sobre la credibilidad y la participación cívica

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to examine the effect of two linguistic styles used in Twitter messages on engaging users in civic participation activities, understood as participation by citizens in community improvement actions. Using a socio-linguistic approach, an experimental intervention was carried out in which 324 university students evaluated the messages posted by the head of an environmental NGO on Twitter. The gender of the NGO head (male vs. female) and the linguistic style used for the posts were manipulated in terms of a «powerful» (e.g., assertive, direct) or «powerless» style (e.g., indirect, ambiguous). The gender of the evaluators was also manipulated in order to analyze potential differences among the overall impressions and evaluations between men and women. The results showed that «male» and «female» versions of the NGO head were perceived as more credible when they used a powerful as opposed to a powerless linguistic style. This effect was observed irrespective of the evaluator's gender. Moreover, the test for indirect effects suggested that credibility mediated the relationship between a powerful style and the likelihood of engaging users to participate in the NGO's agenda. The results are discussed in terms of the relevance of this type of communication for promoting civic participation in social media.

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo tuvo como propósito examinar el efecto de dos estilos lingüísticos en mensajes de Twitter sobre su capacidad de atraer e involucrar a usuarios en actividades de participación cívica, entendida esta como la participación de ciudadanos en acciones de mejora comunitaria. A partir de una aproximación sociolingüística, se realizó un estudio experimental en el que 324 estudiantes universitarios evaluaron los mensajes publicados por el líder de una ONG medioambiental en su página de Twitter. Se manipuló el género del líder de la ONG (hombre o mujer) y el estilo lingüístico empleado en la redacción de los mensajes en términos de un estilo «súbito» (ejemplo: asertivo, directo) o un estilo «dócil» (ejemplo: indirecto, ambiguo). El género de los evaluadores también fue manipulado con el fin de analizar diferencias potenciales en las impresiones y evaluaciones de hombres y mujeres. Los resultados mostraron que cuando los líderes «hombre» y «mujer» emplearon un estilo lingüístico súbito en sus mensajes fueron percibidos como más creíbles sin importar el género de los evaluadores. Además, el análisis de efectos indirectos registró que la credibilidad percibida hacia el líder medió la relación entre el estilo súbito y la probabilidad de que los seguidores se involucren en las iniciativas de la ONG. Los resultados son discutidos en términos de la relevancia de este tipo de comunicación para la participación cívica en las redes sociales.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Social media, civic participation, linguistic style, gender, credibility, Twitter, NGO, environmental protection.
Redes sociales, participación cívica, estilo lingüístico, género, credibilidad, Twitter, ONG, protección del medio ambiente.

1. Introduction

In view of their popularity and relevance, social network platforms such as Facebook or Twitter have become representative of what are known as «social media», which are used not only for creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships but also for staying on top of public issues. Twitter's speed and reach have made it a communication tool used widely by public figures to attract the attention of users, creating emotional bonds with their followers and, ultimately, mobilizing people to undertake a concrete action (for example: attending a film premiere, making donations for charitable causes, voting on election day). However, knowledge of which type of communication is more effective for engaging users to perform those actions is scant.

Theoretical approaches which adopt the impression formation perspective on Internet suggest that people form impressions about their communication partners from attributions associated with their communication styles (Walther, 1992). Accordingly, it is possible to form a more or less accurate impression of the communication partner in terms of personality, education background or socioeconomic status from the linguistic choices he or she makes, as well as if the user is perceived to be credible or not (Walther, 1996). For its part, credibility is a basic condition for persuading users of marketing web pages or information sources in social media (Shi, Messaris, & Capella, 2014).

The influence of Twitter on users has been investigated largely in terms of social mobilization (Bacallao, 2014; Rodríguez-Polo, 2013) or political participation (Baek, 2015; Kruikemeier, 2014). Alternatively, other scholars have focused on the participation of citizens in humanitarian or charitable activities (Boulianne, 2009; Gil-de-Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). However, little is known about what determines the persuasive impact of the messages exchanged on Twitter and on other social network platforms. If users are likely to form impressions from variations in their interlocutors' communication style, then it would be relevant to investigate which styles have greater influence than others in terms of persuasion. The relatively small number of studies in this area (for example: Lee & Oh, 2012) have examined Twitter's persuasive potential in terms of traditional political participation (voting intention, for instance) but its effects on other types of participation or in times other than election periods have not been studied.

The purpose of the present work is to analyze the manner in which users form impressions about their

counterparts from their communication style on Twitter and the potential of these impressions to work at a persuasive level. Specifically, the study has two objectives: firstly, to verify the effect of message style on the user's impressions from a socio-linguistic approach. In other words, if the source is perceived as more or less credible based on the communication style used in the messages. Secondly, to propose an explanatory mechanism for how messages work in persuading users, that is to say, the way in which messages may persuade users to engage in civic participation activities.

1.1. Linguistic style and source credibility

Scholars of the socio-linguistic approach to communication have demonstrated that people tend to use different communication styles that rely on the social context in which they communicate. These stylistic differences relate, for instance, to education background (Xiao & Tao, 2007), ethnic and cultural group (Sudweeks & al., 1990), or the interlocutors' gender (Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001). Moreover, linguistic style has a direct impact on the impressions and overall evaluations of the communication partner in terms of social attributions of power (Bradac & Street, 1989; Newcombe & Arnkoff, 1979). These impressions are quickly and automatically generated from social categories used for interpreting a group position on the social scale (Burgoon & Miller, 1987; Gallois & Callan, 1991). Erickson, Lind, Johnson, and O'Barr (1978) noted that people who used a linguistic style labeled «powerful» (direct, succinct, accurate) were assessed by participants as being more credible and attractive than people who used a «powerless» language (indirect, tentative, ambiguous).

Lakoff (1973) suggested that these linguistic differences can be observed in masculine and feminine speech. She reported that women usually use powerless language in the form of rhetorical particularities such as hedges (for example: It is «kind of» boring), intensifiers (for example: It was «really» shocking), tag questions (example: The weather is nice, «isn't it?»), and certain other linguistic features more than men (Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001). Conversely, other scholars posit that these differences are not as clear as has been argued (Adrianson, 2001; Mizokami, 2001).

The persuasive capability of powerful language presents some inconsistencies in the results obtained from empirical testing (Sparks, Areni, & Cox, 1998) although the association between this style and increased perceptions of credibility is recurrent (Burrell & Koper, 1998). Credibility, at the same time, is crucial for the persuasive capability of messages. The el-

boration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) suggests that persuasion occurs in the receiver through a central route and a peripheral route in a continuum of cognitive effort (elaboration). While the central route requires more concentration and self-implication, the peripheral route utilizes cues that do not demand much cognitive effort. Among the cues used most are source credibility and attraction: if the source is credible or attractive, it will be simpler to accept the argument included in the message (Booth & Welbourne, 2002; Shi, Messaris & Capella, 2014). From this model a powerful style on Twitter can be expected to produce the impression that the source is credible and this perception will boost a favorable attitude towards the content of the message and the intention to perform a requested action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

1.2. Linguistic style and impression formation in online communication

Impression formation in computer-mediated communication has been a pivotal point in explaining communicative dynamics in electronic media. Based on the «cues-filtered-out» model (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976), the social information processing theory posits that users build their impressions holistically from brief information excerpts in the textual codes exchanged, in such a way that they can infer or deduce their interlocutors' communication goals (Walther, 1992). It is also possible to deduce personality traits or even the gender of the communication partner from his/her communication style (Thomson & Murachver, 2001). Adkins and Brashers (1995), for example, confirmed that using a powerful style in virtual communications produces impressions similar to face-to-face conversations. These researchers found that virtual groups in which powerful language was used were rated higher in scores of credibility, attraction, and persuasion than groups in which confederates used powerless language. Meanwhile, Zhou, & al. (2004) interpreted the use of powerless language as a strategy to increase social distance among users withholding certain information from others.

Conversely, impression formation in social media

is an as yet emerging line of research. Mou, Miller and Fu (2015) suggested that increases in the speaker's credibility and attraction depend on the extent to which the topics published in messages and the expected type of communication for the social category to which the source belongs (for example: the expected speech for a Tenure) are consistent. On the other hand, Westerman, Spence and Van-der-Heide (2013) proposed that the credibility of the source is associated with the immediacy of the messages published: in

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other words, a constant updating of messages would produce greater perceptions of credibility.

In a similar perspective, Hughes and colleagues (2014) manipulated a series of messages published by fake users who either attacked or supported the credibility and expertise of a fictional character leading a civil association. The objective was to test the impact of the messages on the manner in which the character was assessed. The results suggested that the association leader was perceived as more credible and attractive when the messages supporting her outnumbered the messages attacking her. Moreover, the likelihood of users engaging in the association's activities depended on the credibility attributed to the leader.

1.3. Civic participation on Twitter

Civic participation is a key indicator of the quality of democracy (Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1995) and is also a major asset in exercising full citizenship and strengthening the social fabric (Norris, 2000; Putnam,

2000). Participation on the Internet, with special representation in the social media, has increased markedly in a relatively short period of time. In this sense, there is evidence of the positive relationship between civic participation and social media use in both online and offline settings (García-Galera, del-Hoyo-Hurtado, & Fernández-Muñoz, 2014; Kim, Hsu, & Gil-de-Zúñiga, 2013). Several studies have analyzed the communication between politicians and citizens under the civic participation umbrella (Bekafigo &

tivity between candidates and their followers. On the contrary, there is a research gap in the civic participation of Twitter users. In their correlational study, Gil-de-Zúñiga & al. (2012) confirmed that consuming news on social media is related to increases in civic participation (volunteer work in non-political associations, raising money for charity, attending neighbors' meetings, and others), whereas Valenzuela & al. (2009) found that the intensity of Facebook use positively predicts civic participation in offline settings. None of

these studies has examined which type of communication would be more effective in stimulating these activities and engaging users to participate actively.

With the aim of verifying the effect of two communication styles on persuading Twitter users to engage in civic participation activities, an experimental intervention was carried out in which the gender identity of an NGO leader (male or female) and his/her linguistic style (powerful or powerless language) were manipulated. According to the

The model of indirect effects introduced in the study has confirmed the persuasive effect of this type of communication on Twitter. The mechanism by which users of this platform may engage in civic participation activities, in this case promoted by an NGO, relies on the extent to which its head is perceived as credible when sharing information or making appeals to the community.

McBride, 2013; Harlow & Guo, 2014; Houston & al., 2013; Park, 2013), even if other researchers have opted to separate political action from social action. Accordingly, Valenzuela, Park and Kee (2009) distinguish between political participation (the behavior aimed at influencing government actions) and civic participation (individual or collective behavior aimed at solving community problems). Whereas the former includes traditional activities such as voting, supporting political campaigns or using stickers with ostensible political messages (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), the latter consists of volunteer work, donations to non-governmental organizations and/or supporting environmental causes.

There is evidence confirming this link between political messages and political engagement by users. For instance, Lee and Oh (2012) observed that the personalized messages of a political candidate on Twitter (including self-references or anecdotal content), in contrast to depersonalized messages (without any self-reference, such as in newspaper articles), increased the positive evaluations of the candidate as well as intentions to vote for him. Kruike-meier (2014) found similar results from heightened levels of interac-

literature reviewed, if each linguistic style is associated to masculine or feminine speech respectively, then men are likely to be expected to use a powerful style more than women. In this regard, there is more evidence confirming the relationship between powerful language, credibility, and attraction. Therefore, the first hypothesis predicts:

- H1. A powerful communication style in Twitter messages will affect user impressions regarding the source, in such a way that the person will be perceived as being more a) credible and b) attractive than the source using a powerless style, with impressions about the male leader using powerful style being the most intense.

In accordance with the likelihood elaboration model, which takes source credibility as a peripheral cue for persuasion effects, it can be expected that, if the source is perceived as credible, users might be more prone to persuasion. As there is a limit of 140 characters for messages on Twitter, the information contained in each message is relatively short and may work more as a peripheral cue rather than as an extensive document that fosters deep reflection. If the persuasive effect is expected in terms of civic participation, the next hypothesis postulates that:

- H2. The engagement of users in the NGO's activities will depend on the extent to which the leader is perceived as credible. In other words, the more credible he/she is perceived, the higher the users' intentions of participating in the NGO's activities.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Participants

324 undergraduate students (69.8% female) enrolled in one of the biggest universities in northeastern Mexico participated in the study. Their mean age was 18.33 years ($SD=1.66$). All students received extra course credits for their participation.

2.2. Design

An experiment was carried out based on a 2 (linguistic style: powerful/powerless) \times 2 (leader's gender identity: male/female) \times 2 (evaluator's gender: male/female) between-subjects design. All participants were randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions.

2.3. Procedure

Upon arrival, participants were instructed to access a fictional NGO webpage that presented several proposals for reducing pollution levels in the city (for example: signing a referendum, attending a protest rally, taking action on recycling). Participants were then asked to visit the NGO profile on Twitter, which ostensibly showed a photo of its leader as a profile picture, and to read each of the messages published on the page. The software used in the study randomly presented the picture of a man or a woman as the NGO leader, along with a group of messages published with either a powerful or a powerless style. Afterwards, the participants completed an online questionnaire and were allowed to leave.

The published messages (12 in total) asked followers to join the organization and its activities, and shared information regarding the city's pollution levels. The messages with a powerless style included hedges, intensifiers and tag questions (example: The subway service is «kind of» inefficient; There are «very» few lines; It's time to increase penalties for companies that pollute most «isn't it?»). In contrast, the messages with a powerful style were more succinct and included direct requests to followers (example: There are few lines; Enter the site and support our initiative; It's time to increase penalties for companies that pollute most).

In order to check if the messages differed significantly in linguistic style, both groups of messages were subjected to a pre-test study (11 men, 14 women).

Participants assessed the messages as awful-nice, informative-uninformative, personal-impersonal, and masculine-feminine (7-point scale). Significant differences were observed between both styles ($t[24]=-6.53$, $p<.001$): the messages with a powerless style were evaluated as more feminine ($M=5.08$, $SD=1.52$) than the messages with a powerful style ($M=2.12$, $SD=1.13$). Similar to Lakoff (1973), both styles were associated with male and female speech. No differences were observed in any other measurement.

2.4. Measurements

Credibility was measured with the McCroskey and Teven (1999) scale. Respondents indicated (7 points) the extent to which they perceived the NGO leader as intelligent-unintelligent, informed-uninformed or expert-inexpert ($\alpha=.82$).

Five items adapted from the Cialdini and De-Nicholas (1989) attraction scale were used to evaluate the social attractiveness of the source. Respondents evaluated (1=Not at all, 7=Very much) the extent to which the NGO's leader was perceived as friendly, pleasant or likeable ($\alpha=.88$).

Civic participation was measured in terms of the participants' likelihood of engaging in the NGO's activities. Using an adapted version of the Hughes & al. (2014) scale, the participants responded to six items such as: «I would sign a referendum supporting the NGO's initiative», «I would attend a meeting to learn more about the initiative», and «I would post comments on online news articles or other electronic boards regarding my favorable opinion about the NGO's initiative» (1=Not at all likely, 7=Extremely likely) ($\alpha=.92$).

3. Analysis and results

As female participants outnumbered male participants, a preliminary test was performed to check for potential intra-group differences in gender distribution. It was expected that the random assignment of participants to the experimental conditions would keep the ratio of men to women constant, thus reducing asymmetry (Igartua, 2006). No significant differences were observed in terms of gender distribution or in any other variable ($\chi^2[3]=1.71$, $p=.634$). The randomization process was effective therefore.

In order to test the hypotheses, simple one-way ANOVA tests were used to verify the effect of linguistic style \times leader gender \times evaluator gender on the dependent variables, namely, credibility and attraction. A significant effect of the interaction between linguistic

style and leader gender on credibility was observed ($F_{\text{style} \times \text{gender}[3, 316]} = 2.99, p = .03, \eta^2 = 0.02$). The male leader using a powerful style was perceived as more credible than the male leader using a powerless language, as was the female leader using powerful style compared to the female leader with a powerless style. However, the attraction variable was not affected by any of the independent variables ($F = \text{n.s.}$). Hence, the first hypothesis was partially confirmed. Neither were any direct or interaction effects observed due to evaluator gender, that is, male and female participants evaluated the source in a similar fashion (see scores in table 1).

A post-hoc analysis (Bonferroni correction) on the credibility variable showed that the differences found were significant only between the male leader with powerful style and the female leader with a powerless style ($p = .02$). Based on the means presented in Table 1, credibility scores are higher when the leader was presented as male rather than female, with the male-powerful style condition producing the highest score and the female-powerless style the lowest.

The second hypothesis posited that participation depended on the credibility perceived from the linguistic style used. A test of simple mediation effects was performed using Hayes' (2013) Process Macro (model 4). The model tested the indirect effect of the male leader's powerful style on the likelihood of action mediated by credibility. Data analysis using 5,000 bootstrapped bias-corrected resamples revealed a significant indirect effect of the male-powerful style on participants' likelihood of engaging in the NGO's activities via credibility (table 2). In other words, a powerful style used by a male leader may persuade users to engage in community activities as long as he is perceived as credible. Hypothesis 2 was therefore confirmed. This likelihood was not affected by any other combination of leader identity and communication style.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The present study analyzed the way in which users form impressions from communication styles on Twitter, and how these impressions work in terms of persuasion. The results indicate that the impressions formed in this inter-

vention were strongly associated with the leader's gender. On the one hand, the impressions produced by the powerful style in this setting were partially consistent with findings in other virtual-communication studies in terms of source credibility and persuasion (Adkins & Brashers, 1995), but differed from predictions on the attraction perceived towards the source (Erikson & al., 1978). In fact, as in Mou & al. (2015), source credibility apparently depended on the extent to which the source and the expected speech for his/her category were congruent: the NGO leader was perceived to be more credible when presented as a man rather than a woman. Moreover, the male character using a powerful style was perceived as the most credible character. Future interventions might conceal information or cues to gender (example: photo, name) in order to verify the effect of communication style separated from the source's gender.

On the other hand, a probable reason why the male character with powerful style was not perceived as attractive by participants is that the attraction measure was understood more as physical attraction rather than social attraction. Male and female characters were depicted as people in their mid-40s whereas raters were in their early 20s, and so they would not expect the leader of an NGO to be physically or socially attractive. Because reducing pollution levels in the city is a priority issue, participants probably expected someone to explain facts in a convincing manner rather than a charismatic or pleasant leader. Although Twitter is often labeled as an «interpersonal» medium (Lee, 2013), the content of the messages used in this study comprised health and environmental issues concerning the general population and such an emphasis may have blurred any difference in the evaluations made on the characters' attractiveness. Furthermore, although non-significant, the scores showed a tendency to assess the female leader with powerless language as the most attractive, which suggests that the respondents probably expected more flexible –or less rigid– language in a woman than in a man.

The previous explanation supports the idea that

Table 1. Mean scores of the dependent variables in each experimental condition

	Credibility		Attraction	
	M	SD	M	SD
Leader gender x linguistic style on Twitter				
Male-powerful language	5.38*	1.21	3.95	1.29
Male-powerless language	5.17*	1.23	4.00	1.37
Female-powerful language	4.99+	1.28	3.29	1.31
Female-powerless language	4.85+	1.14	4.20	1.35

Note: Means with similar symbols represent significant differences between both conditions. Bold numbers represent significant differences observed in the post-hoc test.

cultural context influences the expectations of men and women's roles on social media (Walther & al., 2008).

Irrespective of the evaluator's gender, men are expected to be more credible whereas women are expected to be more «pleasant». This argument should be corroborated, however, in future studies by comparing the effect of the communication style used by men and women in platforms unrelated to environmental issues. Other topics to be tested in terms of participation might be humanitarian work, security, disadvantaged minorities, and others.

The model of indirect effects introduced in the study has confirmed the persuasive effect of this type of communication on Twitter. The mechanism by which users of this platform may engage in civic participation activities, in this case promoted by an NGO, relies on the extent to which its head is perceived as credible when sharing information or making appeals to the community. However, more information is needed to verify whether credibility increased as a result of the combination of the male character and powerful style or by the match between the NGO's topic, the size of textual information, and the style used for dissemination. It is possible that participants felt attracted to engage in the organization's activities because of its agenda rather than its leader or his/her communication style. As mentioned above, future work in this area might compare different topics relating to civic participation or even verify if it is necessary to disclose the gender of an organization's leaders for credibility effects.

It is important to emphasize that this was an experimental study: the sample of participants recruited did not aim to be representative of the general population. The findings of the study are not generalizable. In fact, the study was intended to test the relationships among variables. Subsequent work, such as meta-analyses will confirm or refute these findings.

By way of summary, the results of the study lead to the conclusion that gender-linked linguistic styles on a social platform such as Twitter increased credibility impressions regarding the source in a similar fashion to previous offline research. The effect of communication styles as used in this work should, however, be weighted in terms of the specific features of the website: Twitter allows only 140 characters for messages compared to the relatively longer documents analyzed

Table 2. Model of indirect effects of the male leader character with a powerful style on participants' likelihood of action through credibility					
Dependent variable	Messages to credibility (path a)	Credibility to the DV (path b)	Messages to the DV (direct path: c')	Messages to the DV (indirect path: ab)	CI 95%
Likelihood of action	.28	.09	-.04	.13	[.01, .26]

Note: DV = Dependent variable, CI = Confidence intervals. Bold numbers represent statistically significant coefficients.

in other studies. Future research might include longer messages than those allowed by Twitter and examine how communication styles work on other social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Such a comparison will lead researchers to understand which types of self-presentation and communication features help people to be perceived as more credible on social media, particularly in a context of mobilizing users to participate in issues of concern to the general public.

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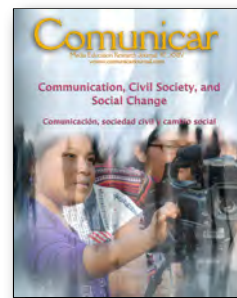


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Teaching Ethics in the University through Multicultural Online Dialogue

Educación ética en la Universidad a través del diálogo multicultural online

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of an international collaboration on ethics teaching for personal and professional values within the area of formal higher education using new communication technologies. The course design was based on the dialogic technique and was aimed at clarifying the students' own values, defining their own positions related to ethical dilemmas, developing argumentative strategies and an ethical commitment to their profession and contribution to society. The online dialogue between heterogeneous groups of students based on their cultural background –the main innovation of this training– was possible thanks to the technological and administrative support of the participating universities. To analyze the effect of this innovative training we employed a quasi-experimental design using a control group, i.e., without the option of online dialogue with students from another culture. University students from Spain (University of Cantabria) and Chile (Universidad Autónoma de Chile) participated in this study. The positive results, which included better scores and positive assessments of both debate involvement and intercultural contact by students who participated in the new teaching program, support the main conclusion that the opening of international dialogue on moral dilemmas through new communication technologies contributes significantly to improve ethics training in higher education.

RESUMEN

En este trabajo se presentan los resultados de una colaboración internacional para la formación ética centrada en valores personales y profesionales dentro de la educación formal superior empleando las nuevas tecnologías de la comunicación. La formación diseñada basada en la técnica dialógica pretende que el estudiante clarifique sus valores, se posicione ante dilemas éticos y desarrolle estrategias argumentativas, así como un compromiso ético con su profesión y contribución a la sociedad. La principal innovación de esta formación es la incorporación del diálogo online entre grupos de estudiantes heterogéneos por su origen cultural, esto fue posible gracias a la colaboración de dos universidades y al apoyo tecnológico y administrativo aportado por las mismas. Para analizar el efecto de esta formación innovadora se ha empleado un diseño cuasi-experimental con grupo control, en el que se formaba en valores pero no existía la posibilidad de un diálogo online con estudiantes de otra cultura. En este estudio participaron estudiantes de la Universidad Autónoma de Chile y de la Universidad de Cantabria (España). Entre los resultados obtenidos destacamos las mejores calificaciones y positiva valoración de la participación en los debates y del contacto intercultural por parte de los estudiantes que siguieron la formación más innovadora. Estos resultados permiten concluir que la apertura internacional del diálogo gracias al uso de las tecnologías de la comunicación contribuye de forma significativa a la formación ética en la educación superior.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Online dialogue, ethics, high education, teaching values, educational innovation, cultural interaction, critical thinking. Diálogo online, ética, educación superior, formación en valores, innovación educativa, interacción cultural, pensamiento crítico.

1. Introduction

The contribution of higher education institutions for the training of professionals with strong ethical convictions is a subject of special interest. It is fundamental that higher education institutions, besides focusing on professional preparation, should also consider the development of personal skills such as critical thinking (Nussbaum 2005). In this sense, the Global Declaration on Higher Education (UNESCO, 2009: 2) has recognized that present society lives in a deep crisis of values, and therefore, «higher education must not only give solid skills for the present and future world but must also contribute to the education of ethical citizens committed to the construction of peace, the defence of human rights and the values of democracy». Ultimately, ethical education becomes a necessity, and the University has been identified as one of the entities responsible for this education, in European as well as American contexts (Escámez, García-López, & Jover, 2008; Esteban & Buxarrais, 2004; Jover, López, & Quiroga, 2011; Muhr, 2010; Petrova, 2010).

This teaching of ethics in university classrooms is especially necessary in the case of future professionals in the fields of Psychology and Education, as their professional work is, to a great extent, a pillar on which the development of the rest of the members of society rests. However, this training, as shown by Bolívar (2005), becomes a «null curriculum» of the university degrees, in the sense that it is part of the curriculum by omission when the necessary dimensions are not explicitly included for its future application in professional practice. Guerrero and Gómez (2013) have confirmed the absence of teaching of ethics and morality to the students in the Latin American region. Especially in the degrees of Psychology and Education, the great importance that the students and professional schools have given to professional ethics in their education has been noted, at the same time that they have mentioned the scarce or non-attention given to this in their university training (Bolívar, 2005; Río, 2009).

The results regarding the Teaching degree students were especially interesting (Bolívar, 2005), as it evidenced the generalized absence of the moral character of the teacher's education and the professional teacher's ethics, as the focus is more centred on providing the teachers with contents and technical skills than with a critical social conscience. As for Psychology, and specifically in the Chilean environment, research by Alvear, Pasmanik, Winkler and Olivares (2008), shows that these professionals have a preference for using their own personal judgement before taking into consideration deontological ethics when

making decisions that are ethical in character. With this in mind, Pasmanik and Winkler (2009) argue that this tendency is probably due to the ethical training received during the university years, characterized by being scarce, theoretical and decontextualized, neglecting reflection and debate.

It is also relevant to point out that the didactic developments that truly specify how to deal with the teaching of values in the classroom are scarce (Molina, Silva, & Cabezas, 2005; Rodríguez, 2012). Most of the literature available is focused on reflections about the need to teach values in higher education, or analyzes the perspectives of different agents that are involved in it (Buxarrais, Esteban, & Mellen, 2015; Escámez & al., 2008; García, Sales, Moliner, & Ferrández, 2009; Jiménez, 1997). Even fewer in number are the publications that discuss the joint participation of universities from different countries, using the possibilities that new communication technologies have opened for this, although these have been exploited for the learning of other content, with positive results (Zhu, 2012) and have therefore confirmed that discussions online can be a powerful tool for the development of critical thinking (Guiller, Durndell, & Ross, 2008).

By taking into account what was discussed above, we developed a proposal for the teaching of ethics in higher formal education through the development of a dialogic methodology and the use of new communication technologies that allow for contact between students from different cultures and degree programmes. The final aim of this training was to teach the university students to rationally and autonomously construct their values so that they may develop their own well-reasoned ethical principles. This will not only allow them to position themselves with arguments in face of society's demands, but will optimize their professional performance. The quasi-experimental, international and applied character of this contribution, which centres on the teaching of ethics at university, is a key piece that can push forward the purpose of higher education.

1.1. Innovating in ethics education

The training designed for this research creates an active methodology that is based on dialogic techniques that intend for the students to clarify their values and use them to take a stand on a subject, avoiding indoctrination in the resolution of moral conflicts. The basis of this dialogic methodology lies in the cognitive theory of moral development by Kohlberg (1981) and other theoretical developments that bring together feelings and cognition (Benhabib, 2011), and that defend

a moral education that helps individuals to «confront the other viewpoint without losing the possibility to accessing or appealing to universal horizons of values» (Gozálvez & Jover, 2016: 311). Therefore, the need to facilitate a framework and a procedure so that values can be experienced, constructed and lived, is raised. The dialogic technique is an appropriate active methodology, as values are inserted into the dialogue (as it requires judgement by the other) and at the same time, through listening, reflection and reasoning, these same values are approached. Also, the students, through reflection and the clash of opinions on conflictive situations that are of personal and professional interest, re-structure their reasoning, thereby enhancing their moral development (López, Carpintero, Del-Campo, Lázaro, & Soriano, 2010; Meza, 2008).

The training designed herein also tries to bolster reasoning strategies, as the psychological processes of argumentation are especially linked to ethics, and the mastery of the reasoning process has great importance for family, social, political and academic life. Yepes, Rodríguez y Montoya (2006) have described reasoning as the use of words to produce discourses in which a position is taken in a reasoned-with manner when confronting a topic or a problem. They have also argued that it is part of the thought process that involves the laws of reasoning (logic), the rules of approval and refusal (dialectics), and the use of verbal resources with the aim of persuading with reference to feelings, emotions and suggestions (rhetoric). The characteristics of the argument are linked to learning about values, as the argument implies the opposite of accepting obtuse, fanatical positions that cling to a single point of view.

On the other hand, the procedure designed highlights the special care that is given to the preparation of the debate, its management, and the creation of collaborative groups. Good dialogue requires that the participants freely express what they think, feel and believe, and many can show resistance when facing this risk (Barckley, Cross, & Howell, 2007). The participa-

tion of the students in a rewarding dialogue implies a challenge in contexts that are characterized by the fomenting of a passive attitude, which is characteristic of old models of higher education. Therefore, it is important to make efforts to achieve an adequate management of the classroom that guarantees an environment of trust that can stimulate the participation of all the students in the debate. The procedure selected to reach this objective was the progressive panel debate technique. As Villafañá (2008) has pointed, it allows for the delving into the study of a topic, following through and optimizing ideas or conclusions; it weighs

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the contributions of all the participants, and brings together the members of a group around a common topic.

At this point it is also convenient to point out that the role of the teacher in the managing of the dialogic technique in the classroom and online is essential. Therefore, taking into account the studies by Cantillo and others (2005), Meza (2008), and Bender (2012), we stress the inclusion of specific processes and resources at each stage. It is essential that the instructions make clear that the objective of the activity is to individually and jointly think and reason about possible moral solutions. For this, the dialogue and proposed questions and objections will be employed. In the debate, it is important that the teacher puts questions

that guide the discussion, starting with exploratory questions that confirm that the dilemma has been understood. It is also important that the students define their stand on a topic, make clear their thinking structure and have the opportunity to recognize that behind the same opinion, there could be very different reasons. Progress is made in the debate by increasing its complexity and stimulating a higher level of moral reasoning by, for example, bringing in new information, with questions about events that happened in its con-

critical thinking (Loes, Pascarella, & Umbach, 2012). Shared learning about ethics, then, sought to optimize the dialogic tool (through the debate on ethical dilemmas), guaranteeing diversity in the online group debate of the students thanks to the internationalization and support of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The Spanish students were enrolled in the course named Teaching values and personal competencies for teachers, which was part of the coursework found

in the Teacher Training for Early Childhood Education and Primary Education degrees. The general objectives of this course included the development of strategies for their socio-emotional and ethical development, promoting the teachers' well-being and coexistence in the educational community, as well as reflection on their or others' way of being.

The Chilean participants were enrolled in the Personal Development IV course of the Psychology degree, whose main objectives were the development of the psychologist's role and his/her commitment

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text, and according to universal consequences. Also, in the online dialogues, it is important to explicitly clarify what is expected from the discussion (i.e. as related to the frequency and quality of the participation) and explain the style of the interventions online, as the debate is not typical of formal work (Bender, 2012).

1.2. International collaboration for the teaching of ethics in international higher education

The teaching of the ethics procedure presented in this research work was applied at the Autonomous University of Chile and the University of Cantabria (Spain). The participating students were enrolled in class subjects that coincided with the teaching of skills such as socio-moral reflection, critical comprehension of reality, dialogue and argumentation, perspective-taking and an attitude of respect and tolerance towards other opinions, as well as the meta-knowledge of their own self and existence. The coincidence in the curriculum allowed for the joint creation of this teaching program, which would be further enhanced by the strength that cultural diversity provides in bolstering

to professional ethics. In this course, the students applied the personal and interpersonal skills knowledge acquired to group contexts in the educational environment. As this was their first professional practice of the degree, it was fundamental that they were conscious of the need for ethical preparation for the exercising of their profession.

2. Methods

2.1. Research design and participants

In this study, 226 university students participated in two groups. In the training group, 147 students participated, 69 from the Autonomous University of Chile (UA) and 78 from the University of Cantabria (UC). In the control group (they received ethics training without the option of online dialogue), 79 students from the UC participated.

The data on the academic results were analysed from the entire sample. The analysis of the evaluation of the training, on the other hand, was performed only on the 46 students who gave their opinion (13 from the training group in the UC and 24 from the UA, and

9 from the control group) as this was anonymous and voluntary.

2.2. Procedure

The following key stages in this innovative training in values were considered:

a) The creation of «twinning groups» –culturally heterogeneous- and the ICT. A collaboration agreement was established between the two universities to guarantee the protection of data and the confidentiality of the students, as well as to achieve the opening of the Moodle platform and the ICT, created by the Spanish university for this purpose, to the Chilean students.

In the classrooms of each participating university, groups of four or five members were created, and these were twinned to a similarly-sized group from the other university. In the virtual platform Moodle, a wiki per twinned group was created, so that they could confidentially share, create and edit diverse types of content related to their approaches, as well as to talk and dialogue among themselves.

b) Design of the materials shared: bibliography, lectures, exercises, dilemma, and evaluation rubric. All the students had the same materials and bibliography available, and the professors employed the same presentations for their lectures. Also, a formative and summative evaluation was designed that contributed to the training of the students.

c) Implementation of the sessions and activities: The training was developed over a period of four weeks. The sequence of the sessions were carried out simultaneously in both universities and planned as shown below:

The first session (2 hours) started with a lecture on values and their importance for personal development and coexistence. It continued with training in consistent value clarification exercises to first identify the student's own values. Then, the identification of values and counter-values was performed using interactive processes found in ethical dilemmas. For the teaching of argumentative skills, identification activities of different types were performed, and the dialogic argumentative structure was practiced on controversial subjects of the student's own choosing (adapted from Yepes & al., 2006). This session culminated with the presentation of the ethical dilemma, which consisted on the trailer for the film «Into the wild», accompanied by a script in which the students are urged, through questioning, to identify and reason the values and counter-values present, and to reflect on their positions on it. This situation was chosen as a type of moral dilemma,

with the object of involving the students not only rationally, but also emotionally. These types of situations, which are close to the personal (private) environment, are considered to be the most accurate to work with when dealing with dilemmas (Meza, 2008).

In the second week (1 hour) the application of the progressive panel debate technique started. The students worked in small groups in the classroom, so that they expressed their thoughts individually; then, they debated and created a report that contained the viewpoints heard in the group. It was only in the training group where the students were urged to share this report with the twinned group through the Moodle wiki; in addition they were asked to dialogue online outside of the classroom for a week.

In the third session (1 hour) a great assembly took place in the classroom. The students developed their individual viewpoints post-debate, outside the classroom.

In the last week, the professors gathered the student's individual viewpoint reports that were created pre- and post-debate, to evaluate them according to the evaluation rubric.

Additionally, through an online poll, the training was evaluated using the students' perception of the training they received.

2.3. Instruments of evaluation

2.3.1. Evaluation rubric of the academic results

The evaluation rubric was composed of the following criteria, which were grouped into three sections that had a relative weight on the final mark (shown between parentheses).

a) In the individual pre-debate approaches, the degree in which the values and counter-values were identified was evaluated, as well as the quality of the argument used on their initial stance (25% in the training group and 50% in the control).

b) Regarding the participation in the online debate, the fact that the students published the report created in the small groups on the debate in the Moodle wiki, the quality of said reports and the comments from the twinned group in the wiki were taken into account (35% in the training group).

c) In the post-debate viewpoints, we took into account the addition of values and counter-values by students. We also looked at the extent to which the final viewpoints were developed, drawing from new arguments and/or delving into those that had been already present, starting with or identifying the stances that were shown in the debates (40% in the training group and 50% in the control).

2.3.2. Assessment of their own participation

The students evaluated their participation in the debates using two items: one on their participation in the class debates, and another about their online participation. This last was not applicable to the control group, as it did not include online debates. The scale of the response oscillated between 1 (nothing) and 10 (much). The items were: «How much did you participate in the debate created in the classroom? How much have you participated in the debate developed in the wiki?»

Also, the perceived quality of the participation was measured using seven items ($\alpha=.77$, $N=46$) taken from Cantillo & al. (2005: 69). The students answered by using a frequency scale where 1 indicated «never»; 2, «sometimes» and 3, «always». Some examples of these items are: «When I want to participate, I ask to have the word» and «I do not attack personally».

2.3.3. Evaluation of the training

Lastly, four open-ended questions were also asked, so that the students reflected on and gave information about the meta-knowledge they had acquired (i.e. what did you learn?), their preferences (i.e. what did you like best? And the least?), and also provided some suggestions to improve the methodology and the procedures in the future versions (i.e. what suggestions could you give to improve and innovate this training?).

3. Results

3.1. Academic results

As we observe in figure 1, the students in the training group obtained better results as compared to those in the control group.

The Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric analysis applied due to the lack of homogeneity of variances (Levene test: $F(2,223)=3.65$, $p<.05$) confirmed that the differences in the marks obtained were significant ($\chi^2(2)=22.76$, $p<.001$). Pair-wise comparison of the

training and control groups with the Mann-Whitney U test resulted in differences only when comparing the control group with the other two training groups. Therefore, the Chilean students ($U=1657.5$, $p<.001$) and the Spanish students in the training group ($U=1927$, $p<.001$) had better marks than the students in the control group.

3.2. Participation on the debates

First, the differences on the assessment of the participation on the debates performed in the classroom are presented. Non-parametric tests were performed, given that the assumptions of normality of the scores were not met, either for the participation in the classroom (Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S)=0.154, $p<.01$) or the participation online (K-S=0.167, $p<.01$).

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed significant differences ($\chi^2(2)=11.78$, $p<.01$) for the variable «participation in the classroom debates». Also, the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed that the differences between the three groups were significant when comparing the control group with the training groups composed by Chilean students ($U=11$, $p<.01$) and Spanish students ($U=48.50$, $p<.05$). Therefore, it was shown that students in the training group more positively valued their participation in the classroom as compared to the control group (figure 2).

For each of the conditions, the one sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test was applied, with the test value equal to the average from the answer scale (5.5). This test confirmed that the students in the control group had scores that were significantly lower than this value ($T=5$, $p<.05$), while the scores of the students in the training groups, the Chilean students ($T=88.5$, $p<.05$) as well as the Spanish students, had scores that were closer to this value ($T=184$, $p=.33$).

In respect to the online participation in the debates, the Mann-Whitney U test did not show significant differences between the two training groups ($U=152.5$, $p=.78$), as their scores were similar (Figure 3).

The one sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used with the test value set equal to the average from the answer scale (5.5). This allowed us to confirm that the scores from the Spanish students ($T=238$, $p<.05$) were significantly higher than this test value, and that the Chilean students' scores did not significantly differ from it ($T=60.50$, $p=.09$).

As the score's assumptions of normality were not met (K-S=0.169, $p<.01$), non-parametric analyses were performed.

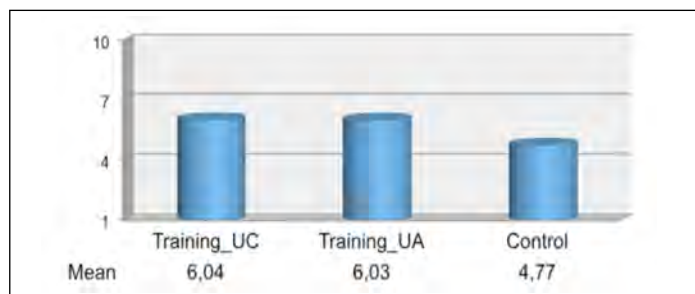


Figure 1. Average of the marks obtained in each of the groups (maximum score = 10).

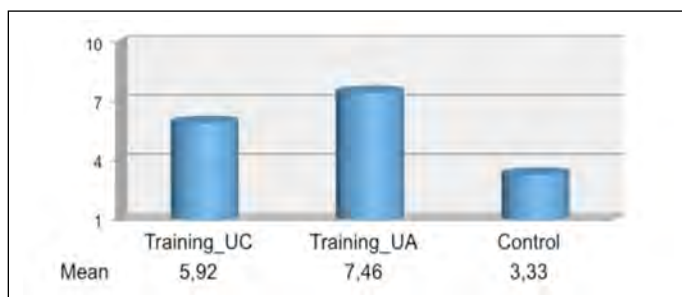


Figure 2. Average of the scores from the assessment of their own participation in the classroom debates (maximum score=10).

med on the results of the study on the perception of the quality of participation. The Kruskal-Wallis test showed significant differences $\chi^2(2) = 7.90$, $p < .05$) between groups. The Mann-Whitney U test was significant when comparing the control group with the Chilean training group ($T = 19.50$, $p < .01$), as well as when comparing the two training groups ($T = 222.50$, $p < .05$). The one sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test with the test value set equal to the average from the answer scale (2), confirmed that the Chilean students' scores significantly differed from it ($T = 85$, $p < .01$), and therefore, they were the ones that had the best perception on the quality of their participation on the debates (figure 4).

3.3. Evaluation of the innovative teaching of ethics

The students' evaluation on the different elements of this innovative training program through content analysis of the answers to four open-ended questions is presented below.

In respect of the first question, which referred to the aspects of the training that they most appreciated, the answer of sharing ideas with different students was noted for its frequency (i.e. due to the diversity in cultures and opinions). Variations of this answer were present in 50% of the Chilean students' comments and 57% of the Spanish students'. On the second question, which asked what they liked the least, 67% of the Chilean students and 100% of the Spanish students expressed their displeasure at the low amount of participation and interaction between them, as they would have liked to have had more expression of opinions and debate by all the students in the twinned groups.

The third question asked about what they had learned thanks to this training, and we found that the UA students, as well as the UC students, pointed to the opportunity to get to know and identify their own and others' values, debating

by reasoning their own stance, and the students specified: «to listen to the people better and try to understand them», «to not judge people due to their decisions, outlandish as they may seem», «having different points of view about the same topic».

Lastly, the fourth open-ended question allowed us to gather their suggestions for the improvement of the future application of this training program. The UC students pointed to the optimization of the coordination to foment participation and interaction (100%), and the UA students mentioned the inclusion of debate topics that were more related to the course, and the improvement of the coordination and time (100%).

4. Discussion

The pedagogic proposal in ethics education described here reflects on the need to plan and develop initiatives from this type of university environment, due to the positive reception by all the participants –professors and students– and as reflected by the results obtained. We believe that the proposal brings to light, in the university classrooms, the difficult task of training upright professionals that together with their scientific and technical training, allows them to build and generalize their social commitment and their humanistic training (Hodelín & Fuentes, 2014).

The active and dialogic methodology designed for this study allowed us to confirm that the possibility to debate in a structured and guided form about a moral dilemma with students from other cultures through the use of communication technology, had favourable effects on the identification of values and stances, on the quality of argument produced and additionally on the participants' self-evaluation of their own contributions to the debates. The students who were part of this training also expressed a great appreciation for the



Figure 3. Average of the scores from the assessment of their own participation in the online debates (maximum score=10).



Figure 4. Average of the scores from the assessment of the quality of their participation in the debates (maximum score=3).

knowledge gained and debating with different people who had different ideas, and the exercise of comprehension, reasoning and reflection that this activity entailed. These results were very significant as regards the number of intervention sessions, which led us to hypothesize that a more prolonged intervention would bring with it more positive results, and most probably, would be longer lasting as well. As for its application, it would be advisable to plan the online debate following the indications by Bender (2012) on the creation of questions that motivate the participation of the students, without forgetting the adequate management of the cultural differences found in online collaborative behaviour (Kim & Bonk, 2002). It is also important to attend to aspects of the experimental studies to guarantee their external and internal validity (Meza, 2008), for example by adjusting the timetable among all the participants. Furthermore, we believe that the results as a whole point to the need of greater openness and contact between the universities in the different parts of the world. In this sense, we believe that university teaching should offer training in the necessary skills for students' professional performance away from their own countries. The new communication technologies facilitate this type of training by allowing online interaction with people from all over the world (Merryfield, 2003).

On the other hand, the pedagogic design described herein implies the real application of the truly needed ethics education, which is currently difficult to work with in the university classroom. Thanks to the methodology applied, we overcame one of the limitations mentioned by the teachers when dealing with ethics-related work with the students, which is the possibility of indoctrinating certain values and specific practices (García & al., 2009). From the innovative training described, we uphold the deontological codes of the profession, as well as the universal declarations of human rights and values, so that from this point on,

the students are the ones who, through dialogue with diverse types of people, critical thinking and argumentation, solidly construct their personal and professional ethics (Gozálvez & Jover, 2016; Martínez, 2011).

Lastly, it is important to highlight that the internationalization of educational practices require a great effort by all the agents involved, as well as a complex bureaucracy due to the requirement of protecting the students' data at the universities. However, «if a higher education institution wants to have a teaching system that integrates technologies, it is crucial to have the right institutional technological support. Higher education institutions should provide lecturers and students with technological systems to enable an educational model that integrates technologies to be developed» (Duart, 2011: 11). Taking care of these aspects guarantees an adequate coordination, which is essential so that the educational practices described here become a reality. In this way, we hope that the pedagogic proposal described here serves as a guide, the results reached become the starting point for the reflection on ethics education in the university classrooms, and the difficulties mentioned become another incentive for the passion of training future professionals at the university, as the development of personal and professional ethics will be their best business card.

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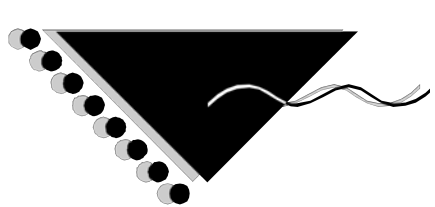
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