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Presentation

In our culture of image and omnipresent audiovisual narratives, it is inconceivable that school curricula should ignore learning skills and abilities in audiovisual communication. Girls and boys, children and teenagers, grow up immersed in iconographic and multimedia environments and do not have sufficient or efficient tools to interpret, understand and critically judge the audiovisual proposals insistently offered by the media.

The Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) has promoted various initiatives in this respect. Number 25 of the *Quaderns del CAC* (CAC Notebooks) contains some recent contributions of interest to make education in audiovisual communication a fundamental aspect of learning and formal schooling. "Thinking of audiovisual education" is the general proposal of this single-themed work, as noted in the introduction of the article by Victòria Camps, and as argued by Joan Ferrés ("Education in audiovisual communication in the digital era"), coordinator of the working group under the auspices of the CAC to define the concept of *competence in audiovisual communication*. Ferrés also presents results from a wide consultation among experts in this area ("Competence in audiovisual communication: proposal organised around dimensions and indicators"). In Catalonia, the Forum of entities of audiovisual users put forward some specific proposals at the end of 2004 ("Education in audiovisual communication: perspectives and proposals for action in Catalonia"), whereas Mercè Oliva presents a report on key international initiatives in this area ("An overview of education in audiovisual communication"). Finally, this collection includes a manifesto for audiovisual and multimedia education by a group of Spanish experts, as well as the conclusions of the *White Paper: education in the audiovisual environment* (2003).

In the "Observatory" section we have published three articles of applied research. Firstly, a summary of the findings of a study on how health is treated on the radio by Amparo Huertas and Maria Gutiérrez ("Health and radio: an analysis of journalistic practice"). There is also an appraisal of the new audiovisual and telecommunications regulations in Mexico by Rodrigo Gómez García and Gabriel Sosa Plata ("Reforming legislation on radio, television and telecommunications in Mexico"). And, finally, a study of how women were represented on International Women's Day 2005 ("Women, identities and television: how news programmes constructed the 8th of March") by Montserrat Ribas and Lydia Fernández.

Josep Gifreu
Director

Education and Audiovisual Communication, Shared Responsibilities

Victòria Camps

Literacy no longer means just reading and writing. In the new audiovisual and digital environment, the instruments of knowledge are becoming increasingly more diversified. The language of image complements and sometimes even replaces verbal language. It is a language that impacts more directly on the senses, that has more intense persuasive and seductive powers and, therefore, a great capacity to produce collective imaginaries and to influence people's behaviour. Audiovisual communication employs a new language that needs to be specifically learned just like a written language. We don't only need to know how a certain message is produced in technical terms in order to achieve the planned effect but also have to prepare the receiver of the messages so that he or she knows how to establish distinctions and become active and critical. Given that communicative action can always have a manipulative component and that it occurs in a totally business-based context, it is reasonable to think that education cannot remain apart or ignorant, given the possible perversions of audiovisual communication that may confuse the appropriate socialisation of children and young adults.

Although education is not one of the functions given to audiovisual councils, most of these organisms have approached education one way or the other, turning it into an important part of their study and analysis. We should remember that one of the key functions of audiovisual councils is to protect children and young people, in accordance with the regulations of the European directive

on television. According to this directive, protecting children means ensuring that television channels do not broadcast programmes that are harmful or detrimental to minors. Although harm and detriment may derive directly from the use of television content that is not appropriate for children, we should also bear in mind the fact that the preparation, knowledge, capacity to discern and critical skills of receivers go to make up an essential vaccine against possible injury.

Consequently, thinking about education does not mean ignoring what television channels may programme and transferring the responsibility that the audiovisual media in particular should shoulder to the schools. It is not a question of replacing supervision of operators with an education that immunises children from possible hazards and risks. It is rather a question of acting simultaneously on both fronts, given that it is not easy to determine accurately what might be detrimental, nor is it possible to predetermine the results of education. It is rather a question of not scrimping on any instrument within our reach in order to take full advantage of the huge potential audiovisuals undoubtedly have in socialising minors.

It is this belief that led the Catalonia Broadcasting Council to draw up, four years ago now, its *White Paper: Education in the audiovisual environment*. In this case the aim was to diagnose the issue and propose the most suitable treatment in order to correct any dysfunctions detected. One of the most distressing discoveries was low level and little recognition existing concerning the importance of education in audiovisual communication as a vital element in formal education in general. Although the European Commission constantly insists and makes recommendations in this respect, there are few European countries that can state with satisfaction and in no uncertain terms that their respective states have taken care of the problem. In general, the simplest step has been taken, namely the

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Member of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council

quantitative one. Schools have been filled with audiovisual equipment that, given the speed with which communication technologies are advancing, are becoming obsolete and must be replaced by other equipment. In the best of cases, education in audiovisual communication has been limited to the work of educating *with* communication media. Education *in* and *for* the media has been more difficult, that which is properly known as *communication literacy*. It is not enough to use the new media but these same media, and particularly their content, must also become a specific object of study.

This is the aim that, with the sponsorship of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council, the working group has proposed, led by Joan Ferrés, with the result that now it is being presented as a working document. Efforts have been made to reflect on and determine, as precisely and thoroughly as possible, the concept of *competence in audiovisual communication*. What must a person know in order to be declared “competent”, “literate”, in audiovisual communication? What must a person know to have what we might call an “audiovisual culture”?

The document now being published, whose key chapter is entitled “Competence in audiovisual communication”, has no precedents. This is a groundbreaking project and an essential instrument in assessing, among other things, whether education in audiovisual communication is being carried out well or not, if the results that should be achieved are actually being achieved. This is yet another attempt at promoting an idea that, in our country, is still in the embryonic stage. It is absolutely vital for those in charge of education policy to commit themselves to bringing education in audiovisual communication into the classroom. We may argue about how this should be done but we cannot deny the need to talk about it and to put it into practice. The consequences of ignoring this enterprise will not only be cultural but also political and social. For example, the need expressed in the last educational reform to introduce a subject to educate citizens as citizens cannot ignore what is being done by the audiovisual media and, specifically, by television, constantly bombarding the audience with images and models that are not always coherent with the values that should shape citizen behaviour.

No-one can deny that television is a fundamental means of socialisation. Empirical studies based on teenagers’

perception of television clearly reveal that, in addition to entertaining, television is also a source of information for the youngest among us. As stated by a former head of the Federal Communications Commission, the audiovisual council in the United States, “television is always instructive. The question we have to ask ourselves is: what is it teaching?”. All the articles published in this document help to ask this question and also to answer it by encouraging criticism and reflection. In short, they help to convert the inevitable consumption of television into consumption with the discernment to be able to choose intelligently.

Education in Audiovisual Communication in the Digital Era

Joan Ferrés Prats

- *The fact that audiovisual literacy does not form part of school curricula is a demonstration of the gulf separating the academic world from the everyday life of citizens.*

Paradoxically, the appearance of digital technologies and multimedia has widened this gulf even further, creating new conceptual and operational confusion. The opposite of what one normally supposes, digital or multimedia competence does not entail audiovisual competence. In fact, it often serves to hide its incompetence.

Keywords

Education, audiovisual communication, competence, multimedia, digital, school curriculum.

Groundbreaking initiatives

During the 2005-2006 school year, and within the framework of the Educational Innovation Projects, the Generalitat de Catalunya directed an initiative entitled Programme of Education in Audiovisual Communication (PECA in Catalan). It was a groundbreaking proposal in Spain, along the lines that had been promoted by the Ministry for Education and Science of the government of the Principality of Asturias, now six years ago, on introducing an optional subject in all schools in the autonomous community entitled *audiovisual communication and multimedia*.

However, it seems paradoxical that, in academia, we should consider initiatives as groundbreaking and innovative that consist of introducing a kind of communication into curricula, namely audiovisual, that has been in existence for over one hundred years and that, throughout this century, has impregnated and continues to impregnate the collective imaginary of many generations of children, young people and adults.

This is yet more proof of the traditional disassociation between the educational world and popular culture or, in other words, of the distance between the classroom and the everyday life of children and young people.

The paradox is that these initiatives are truly groundbreaking and innovative because they are exceptional. They are the only initiatives to introduce education in audiovisual communication into the curricula of formal education. And, curiously, with a well differentiated approach. In the Principality of Asturias they have resorted to an optional subject. This formula allows the content to be dealt with on a broad basis, but only reaches a circle of pupils who choose the subject. Catalonia has opted for a “transversal” or across-the-board approach, spreading the content throughout different subjects. This formula means that all

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pupils can be reached, fundamentally through the areas of society, language and plastic arts, but limits the amount of content covered.

In any case, the exceptional nature of these initiatives is worrying, as it demonstrates the extent of disassociation between school and society. In the social area, throughout the 20th century, audiovisual communication gradually gained ground not only with regard to leisure pursuits but also as a vehicle of culture, above strictly verbal, oral or written communication, becoming the framework of the information society in the form of hegemonic communication. On the other hand, in the academic world, audiovisual communication was first neglected and then forgotten in favour of the dominant verbal culture and, finally, with the advent of new technologies, the concept of audiovisual communication was diluted (and consequently also marginalised and forgotten) within the generic and confusing concept of *information and communication technologies* (TIC).

Audiovisuals in the digital era

The appearance of digital and multimedia technologies does not seem to have helped to put things in their place. On the contrary, it seems to have increased confusion and misunderstanding.

In fact, from comments made by some experts, we may deduce that audiovisual literacy has been replaced by digital literacy. These comments suggest a lack of knowledge of what this important technological advance entails.

The possibility to digitalise a whole range of texts has led to an extraordinary strengthening of their communicative capacities, increasing the possibilities not only to produce, store and handle information but also to ensure that the receiver interacts with it creatively.

But this happens both in audiovisual and in verbal language, which means that, both in one area and in the other, digital literacy does not preclude literacy in the respective codes of expression. Currently, a person cannot be considered literate, not verbally nor in audiovisual terms, without a certain digital literacy. But digital literacy alone does not confer any kind of competence in verbal or audiovisual communication.

Similar comments may be made with regard to the concept of *multimedia literacy*. Technological advances, such as the appearance of multimedia, substantially modify communication and strengthen its persuasive and seductive effects. In multimedia communication, as it increases the quantity of mechanisms and codes available, the transmitter can take advantage of the specific potential of each one of these mechanisms and codes.

But this does not mean that, if the receiver tries to confront these effects, he or she does not need to know their peculiarities, conventions and expressive mechanisms of each and every code and vehicle. In other words, competence in multimedia does not replace audiovisual competence, as it does not replace verbal competence. Quite the contrary; it actually requires them.

It is because of all this confusion, contradiction, divergence and discrepancy that we feel the need to promote initiatives aimed at introducing or strengthening education in audiovisual communication, not only in the school sector but in all educational areas, including universities and adult education.

The aim of publishing this special edition of *Quaderns del CAC* is to help to ensure that education in audiovisual communication is recognised as necessary and relevant curricular content within current social and cultural environments. In other words, we must ensure that competence in audiovisual communication is recognised as a deficiency that must be resolved in school and university study plans and in adult education.

The organisation of the volume

This single themed edition of *Quaderns del CAC*, dedicated to education in audiovisual communication, is fundamentally made up of a series of studies carried out over the last few years concerning initiatives related directly or indirectly to the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC in Catalan). Some articles have been added to complete the volume, providing a more global view of the issue:

Competence in audiovisual communication: proposal based on dimensions and indicators

The concept of *competence* is one of the axes on which the

most recent educational reforms have been based in all countries of the European Union and is the central axis of the educational reform being promoted in Spain.

One of the most evident proofs that education in audiovisual communication has been neglected by the academic world is the fact that, in Spain and among educational professionals concerned about this area, there has been no initiative aimed at defining and agreeing on the concept of *competence in audiovisual communication*.

The article on this issue offered here is the result of research carried out with the collaboration of a large number of experts in audiovisual communication, sponsored by the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) and promoted by the UNICA group from the Pompeu Fabra University.

A preliminary document was drawn up at this university on the concept of *audiovisual communication*, based on the professional experience of the members of the team behind the initiative and based on an analysis of similar studies carried out around the world.

This initial document was analysed and evaluated by around fifty renowned experts in audiovisual communication in the Iberian-American area. The contributions of these experts were incorporated into the initial document. This second document was analysed and debated by around fifteen experts from Spain, meeting in a seminar. The aim was to come to an agreement on a document that would explain the criteria and characteristics that would define competence in audiovisual communication. The article presented is the result of this collaborative work.

Education in audiovisual communication: perspectives and proposals for action in Catalonia

This document systematically analyses in detail the different aspects from which education in audiovisual communication should be tackled: based on a justification of its need and an outline of its history, a definition should be reached of the content that should be covered or a presentation of the most urgent steps that should be taken in the different areas, from school education to university and adult training, without forgetting the role of the mass media in this field.

One of the elements that makes this document so valuable is probably the fact that it has been drawn up and approved, within the framework of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council

(CAC), by the Forum of Entities of Audiovisual Users, which means it has been approved and agreed on by representatives from more than forty entities in Catalan civil society, interested in some way in the social consequences of audiovisual communication.

The CAC has sent this document to the academic authorities, both at a state level and for Catalonia, so that they may know the concerns, desires and demands of those Catalan institutions that are most worried about education in audiovisual communication.

Approach to education in audiovisual communication in the world

This article aims to place the problems of integrating audiovisual literacy in school curricula in a world context, from an academic and conceptual perspective.

The article, written by Mercè Oliva from the UNICA group of the Pompeu Fabra University, reviews the most significant experiences in education in audiovisual communication that have been carried out in the world, underlining the differences in approach, both in terms of theoretical concepts and also in how these are structured and located within the different curricular frameworks.

Fundamentally, those experiences are mentioned, carried out in countries that have stood out or still stand out for having given these problems preferential attention: from Canada and the United Kingdom to Australia and the countries in the north of Europe. At the end of the article, before the conclusions, a detailed analysis is carried out of the situation in education in audiovisual communication in Catalonia.

Manifesto for education in audiovisual communication

This *Manifesto for audiovisual and multimedia education* was drawn up by a group of experts in audiovisual communication meeting in Galicia in December 2005, at a seminar held within the framework of the International Meeting on Audiovisual Education.

The Manifesto was addressed to the academic, Spanish and local authorities at a historic time, because the educational reform was being drawn up. This was therefore considered to be an ideal opportunity to introduce content related to audiovisual communication into the new school curricula.

Conclusions of the White Paper: education in the audiovisual environment

In 2002, the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) publicised its *White Paper: education in the audiovisual environment*, with the aim of promoting one of the most important tasks among those assigned to the Council, namely that of attending to and protecting children and teenagers.

This single-themed edition reproduces the third block of the paper, dedicated to the conclusions and proposals structured around five broad lines: that of knowledge and research; that of information, training and education; that of production and dissemination; that of involvement and that of regulation and self-regulation.

The aim of reproducing these conclusions and proposals from the *White Paper* is to offer a local and pragmatic framework for the problems of education in audiovisual communication.

Competence in Audiovisual Communication: Proposal Organised Around Dimensions and Indicators

Joan Ferrés Prats

The concept of competence came about associated with the world of employment, in the business sphere. Then it gradually became integrated into the academic world, becoming the conceptual axis for educational reforms in most countries in the European Union, including Spain.

Competence is usually understood as a combination of knowledge, capacity and attitude believed necessary for a specific context. The neglect in which education in audiovisual communication (EAC) finds itself is therefore made clear in the fact that, in spite of our cultural context being markedly audiovisual, EAC is hardly present in the educational curricula.

It must be acknowledged that there are highly valuable experiences in education in audiovisual communication in our country. But looking at the whole of society, these experiences are one-off, anecdotal and not very representative. Furthermore, from the point of view of competences, very few attempts have been made, explicit or implicit, to define what a person competent in audiovisual communication would be like.

As a member of the UNICA group (Audiovisual Communication Research Unit) of the Pompeu Fabra University, in 2005 Joan Ferrés, in collaboration with Mercè Oliva and sponsored by the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC), carried out an initiative aimed at defining and coming to some agreement as to this concept. An initial document was drawn up based on the research team's experience and on an analysis of the most successful experiences carried out in the most outstanding countries in the subject.

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The document was sent to 54 experts in the Iberian-American area renowned for their contributions to this academic field. A second document was prepared with the observations and suggestions from the 46 experts who answered this request, which was sent to 14 experts in Spain for analysis and evaluation. Finally, these experts debated the proposals and observations in a seminar held in Barcelona and they came to an agreement on the final document¹.

The main value of the document **Competences in Audiovisual Communication** therefore lies in the fact that it has been agreed by the most renowned experts in Spain.

Of course, it is a document that must always be provisional, a document that must be revised continuously, as experiences in education in audiovisual communication continue to grow. But it is a document that can serve as a basis both for the criteria on which this education should be based as well as the dimensions that must be taken into account.

Competences in Audiovisual Communication

Introduction

Justification of the proposal

The situation of neglect in which education in audiovisual communication finds itself is made evident, among other things, by the lack of a precise and agreed definition of what it means to be competent in this area and, consequently, by the absence of evaluations of people's level of competence.

To a large extent, the effectiveness of teaching-learning processes depends on the effectiveness of the assessment

¹ An appendix at the end of the article contains the names of the experts who took part in the two phases of the initiative.

systems used. On the other hand, there cannot be effective assessment systems without a precise definition of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that must be achieved in order to be considered competent in an academic area.

The document was prepared within the context of the working programme of the European Union entitled "Education and Training 2010", within the working group on "Key competences for lifelong learning. A European reference framework". In March 2000, the European Council in Lisbon set a new strategic objective for the European Union: education and training systems must be adapted to the demands of the knowledge society; for this reason, member states must establish a European framework that defines the new basic skills that Europeans must master within the framework of lifelong learning. This framework must include information and communication technologies, technological culture, foreign languages, entrepreneurial spirit and social skills. With this aim, working groups were created for key competences.

Two years later, in February 2002, at the Barcelona Council, a need for action was emphasised in order to improve the mastery of basic skills. In particular, special attention was requested for digital literacy and foreign languages. The aim was to define the necessary competences for everyone in the knowledge society. Working group B, called "Key competences for lifelong learning" defined a framework made up of eight key competence domains for everyone in the knowledge society, among which is *digital competence*, ranking fourth.

So, deriving from this mandate, educational systems must define and promote the key competences that must be acquired by pupils during schooling, within the framework of their competences.

Key competence can be defined as a multi-functional and transferable number of skills, attitudes and knowledge that all people need to acquire in the process of compulsory education for their personal realisation and development, inclusion in society and access to employment. They must be transferable and therefore applicable in certain contexts and situations.

In the aforementioned working document on key competences, it is established that digital competence, which covers both information and communication technologies, "involves the confident and critical use of

Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication". These competences are related to logical and critical thought, with the skills for handling information at a high level and with the efficient development of communicative skills.

Efficient development of these communicative skills supposes in the individual vital *competence in audiovisual communication*, which we understand as an individual's capacity to interpret and analyse, based on critical reflection, audiovisual images and messages and to express oneself with minimum correction in the communicative sphere. This competence is related to knowledge of the media and to the basic use of multimedia technologies necessary to produce it.

When we talk of audiovisual communication we are referring to all those productions that are expressed by means of image and/or sound in any kind of medium and means, from traditional (photography, cinema, radio, television, video) and the most recent (video-games, multimedia, internet, etc.).

The Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) has made a pioneering contribution, as it has helped provide mechanisms both for consultation and for interaction between experts in order to define, with disciplinary thoroughness, the referential frameworks that delimit the concept of a *person competent in audiovisual communication* (AC).

Design of the proposal

With this aim in mind, two activities have been carried out in order to achieve an agreed definition of the aforementioned concept:

1. Production of a base document defining the concept of a *person competent in audiovisual communication* (AC). Based on the experience of the document's authors, compared with an analysis of documents produced in countries in which education in audiovisual communication (EAC) is being worked on, a base document was produced defining the dimensions that go to make up the notion of *non-professional competence* in the area of AC and the indicators were presented that were considered adequate in order to assess this. This document was evaluated, via email, by the key specialists in the subject in the Iberian-American area. They were invited to make all kinds of amendments, suggestions and criticisms in

writing that they felt would contribute to drawing up the final document.

2. Day of discussion. In the second phase, on the 11th of November a seminar was held attended by the key experts in the country to debate the document with the contributions in order to reach an agreement on a definition of what is understood by a person competent in audiovisual communication and to delineate the indicators that must be taken into account to enable assessment.

The proposal involves three kinds of implications:

- To reach this document it was necessary to take into account what people believe should be known, which involves a **normative** dimension.
- This document, in order to be effective, had to be able to serve as an instrument for measurement, i.e. be useful in a **descriptive** dimension.
- The final descriptive product had to serve, subsequently, to help draw up the objectives, processes and content in audiovisual communication that had to be developed and acquired by pupils in general at the end of compulsory secondary education and to serve as a basis for subsequent lifelong learning in this field; as well as the content of the university curriculum for the training of future teachers and future professionals of communication and information in general.

Areas of influence

Below is a description of two criteria which should govern the levels of competence described later. The first affects the personal aspect and the second the operative.

The personal aspect: interaction between emotiveness and rationality

The idea is that people should be capable of becoming aware of the emotions that lie at the base of the fascination exercised by images, and of turning them into a trigger for critical reflection. They should be capable of going from the simple pleasure of watching the image and interacting with it to thinking about it and, from here, to think by creating

images, converting the capacity of analysis, critical sense, aesthetic fruition and creative expression into new sources of satisfaction.

In other words, in order for a person to be considered competent in audiovisual communication, he or she should not be asked, as a spectator, to replace emotion with reflection, but rather they must be capable of converting emotion into reflection and reflection into emotion.

The operative aspect: interaction between critical interpretation and creative expression

A person who is competent in audiovisual communication must be capable both of interpreting audiovisual messages appropriately and at the same time expressing themselves with minimum correction in this communicative sphere.

In other words, they must be capable of carrying out a critical analysis of the audiovisual products they consume and, at the same time, of producing simple audiovisual messages that are understandable and communicatively effective.

Dimensions

Competence in audiovisual communication involves the mastering of concepts, procedures and attitudes related to what could be considered the six fundamental dimensions of audiovisual communication²:

1. Language

- Knowledge of the codes that make audiovisual language possible and the capacity to use them in order to communicate simply but effectively.
- Capacity to analyse audiovisual messages from the perspective of sense and meaning, of narrative structures and of categories and genres.

2. Technology

- Theoretical knowledge of how the tools work that make audiovisual communication possible, to be able to understand how messages are produced.
- Capacity to use the simplest tools to communicate effectively in the audiovisual area.

- 2 These dimensions cannot be conceived as sealed compartments at all. Each can only be understood in relation to the others.

3. The processes of production and programming

- Knowledge of the functions and tasks assigned to the main agents of products and the phases into which the processes of production and programming are broken down for the different kinds of audiovisual products.
- Capacity to produce audiovisual messages and knowledge of their importance and implications in the new communication environments.

4. Ideology and values

- Capacity for comprehensive critical interpretation of audiovisual messages in terms of how they represent reality and, consequently, as bearers of ideology and values.
- Capacity for the critical analysis of audiovisual messages, understood both as the expression of and support for the interests, contradictions and values of society.

5. Reception and audience

- Capacity to recognise oneself as an active audience, particularly based on the use of digital technologies that allow participation and interactivity.
- Capacity to critically value the emotional, rational and contextual elements that are involved in receiving and evaluating audiovisual messages.

6. The aesthetic dimension

- Capacity to analyse and value audiovisual messages from the point of view of formal and thematic innovation and education in the aesthetic sense.
- Capacity to relate audiovisual messages with other forms of media and artistic expression.

Indicators

1. Audiovisual language

1.1. Scope of the analysis

1.1.1. Codes

- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the use of image-related formal resources from an expressive and aesthetic point of view.

- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the use of casting (physical presence and acting by actors and presenters), scenery, make-up and costume.
- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the kinds of lighting used and the expressive and/or aesthetic functions involved.
- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the use of sound and the expressive and aesthetic function involved, in interaction with other expressive elements.
- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the use of editing as a resource to add sense, rhythm and meaning to images and sounds depending on how they interact.
- Basic knowledge of the evolution of audiovisual language throughout history and of the changes and innovations introduced in the different media.

1.1.2. Media, types and genres

- Capacity to identify the specific expressive characteristics of each medium.
- Capacity to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction, and to evaluate an audiovisual message according to the category and genre it belongs to.
- Capacity to identify the characteristics of narrative, news, advertising, game shows and magazines, reality shows, talk shows and debates.

1.1.2.1. Audiovisual narrative

- Capacity to analyse and evaluate the narrative structure of an audiovisual story and the mechanisms of narration.
- Capacity to analyse and value the characters in an audiovisual story and the narrative roles assumed.
- Capacity to analyse and value a story according to the target audience it is aimed at.
- Capacity to identify and evaluate what interactivity adds to the story.

1.1.2.2. News

- Capacity to evaluate audiovisual information as an exercise in selecting and rejecting, in which different criteria are involved, the most important of which is image.
- Capacity to evaluate information according to the order in which news items appear, the time dedicated to them, the narrative of what is explicitly said and the absence of what is omitted.

- Capacity to understand the underlying business of the media and to evaluate the consequences this may have in how news is treated.
- Capacity to understand that the exercise of giving news involves taking decisions with regard to content and presentation and that there is not such thing as an objective rule for this enterprise.
- Capacity to understand that this exercise of interpretation allows plurality and freedom of expression, that it can give rise to the accurate treatment or deceptive manipulation of news.
- Capacity to detect and evaluate the differences in treating the presentation of the same news item offered by the different media and to understand that different views of the world affect the social view of reality.

1.1.2.3. Advertising³

All the indicators listed in the section on audiovisual narrative apply also to advertising, especially with regard to stereotypes and values.

- Capacity to critically analyse advertisements from the point of view of the addressee's needs and desires: does it satisfy needs or create desires?
- Capacity to analyse and evaluate advertisements according to the product benefit presented, a functional advantage or added value, of a psychological or sociological nature.
- In an advertising message, capacity to discern whether rational mechanisms are used, related to argumentation, or primarily emotive mechanisms are used, related to seduction.
- Capacity to critically understand and evaluate forms of indirect advertising, such as product placement.

1.1.2.4. Game shows

- Capacity to analyse the aims of game shows.
- Capacity to analyse the strategies used by the contestants.

- Capacity to know the relation between explicit and implicit advertising in this kind of programme.
- Capacity to analyse the explicit and implicit values.

1.1.2.5. Magazines, reality shows, talk shows and debates

- Capacity to identify the aim how talk is managed.
- Capacity to analyse the kind of relationship built up with the audience.
- Capacity to identify the values and models constructed through the celebrities, the presenters and the narrative.

1.2. Scope of expression

- Capacity to produce static and moving images with a correct use of image-related formal resources.
- Capacity to relate images creatively, giving them a new sense based on how they interact.
- Capacity to associate images to verbal texts in an original way to achieve expressive syntheses with new communicative values.
- Capacity to integrate images and sound creatively to form new audiovisual products.

2. Technology

2.1. Scope of analysis

- Knowledge of the main physiological and physical principles that enable perception in audiovisual communication.
- Knowledge of the most important technological innovations that have been developed throughout the history of audiovisual communication.
- Capacity to detect how the most elementary effects have been produced.

2.2. Scope of expression

- Capacity to handle visual recording equipment (photographic and video cameras) and sound equipment (microphones and recorders) with the minimum level of

3 All the indicators listed in the section on audiovisual narrative apply also to advertising, especially with regard to stereotypes and values.

technical correction required.

- Elementary handling of electronic and digital editing systems for image and sound.
- Elementary handling of digital recording and modification systems for images.

3. Processes agents of production and programming

3.1. Scope of analysis

- Basic knowledge of the factors that turn audiovisual messages into products subject to the socio-economic conditioning factors of the whole industry.
- Knowledge of the differences between publicly and privately owned media.
- Knowledge of the fundamental differences between live and recorded broadcasting on different media.
- Basic knowledge of the phases that go to make up the production and distribution process of an audiovisual product and the professionals involved.
- Capacity to critically evaluate the opportunity that is sometimes offered by the media to invert the broadcaster-receiver roles.

3.2 Scope of expression

- Capacity to detect the different areas, themes and situations that are not covered, hardly covered or not covered enough by the media and others that are more highlighted.

4. Reception and audiences

4.1. Scope of analysis

- Capacity to explain why some images are liked or why they are successful: which needs and desires (cognitive, aesthetic, emotional, sensory, etc.) they satisfy.
- Capacity to discern and assimilate the disassociations sometimes produced in the spectator between emotiveness and rationality, between the more or less prime interest generated by images and the rational evaluations made of them.
- Capacity to detect the mechanisms to identify, project and immerse that are activated by means of characters, actions and situations in a narrative, videogame, internet, etc.

- Capacity to evaluate the cognitive effects of emotions: ideas and values related to characters, actions and situations that provoke positive or negative emotions.
- Knowledge of the importance of the personal and social context in receiving and evaluating images.
- Capacity to reflect on one's own media consumption habits.
- Capacity to select the messages consumed in accordance with conscious and reasonable criteria.
- Acquisition of habits for information search concerning the products available on the media.
- Basic knowledge of audience surveys: why they are used and their limitations.
- Basic knowledge of the technical principles of programming.
- Knowledge of the different groups and associations of viewers and users of audiovisual media.
- Knowledge of the legal framework that applies to and protects consumers when receiving audiovisual products.
- Capacity to produce learning, awareness of what is learned in front of a screen, capacity to transfer what has been learned to other life scenarios, etc.

4.1 Scope of expression

- Knowledge of the power involved in being informed by channels and the legal possibilities for complaint in the case of any breach of the applicable rules in the area of audiovisuals.

5. Values and ideology

5.1. Scope of analysis

- Capacity to detect and take sides in the case of ideology and values resulting from how characters, actions and situations are treated.
- Capacity to analyse and evaluate audiovisual messages as reinforcing the dominant values of society or as vehicles for alternative values.
- Capacity to detect the most generalised stereotypes, especially with regard to gender, race, social or sexual minorities, disabled, etc. and to analyse the causes and consequences of this.
- Capacity to distinguish between reality and its representation offered by the media.

- Capacity to recognise that one cannot be informed about reality if one only resorts to a single medium.
- Capacity to critically analyse the culturally standardising effect sometimes exercised by the media.

5.2 Scope of expression

- Capacity to produce simple messages to transmit values or to criticise those presenting some media products.

6. Aesthetics

6.1. Scope of analysis

- Capacity to get pleasure from formal aspects, i.e. not only what is said but also how it is said.
- Capacity to relate audiovisual products with other manifestations of the media or art (mutual influences, etc.).
- Capacity to recognise an audiovisual product that does not come up to the minimum standard with regard to artistic quality.
- Capacity to identify basic aesthetic categories, such as formal and thematic innovation, originality, style, schools or trends.

6.2. Scope of expression

- Capacity to produce elementary audiovisual messages that are understandable and that provide a certain amount of creativity, originality and sensitivity.

Appendix

Below is a list of the names of the experts who took part in both phases of the initiative.

Iberian-American experts consulted⁴

- Aguaded, Ignacio.** Huelva University, Spain
Amador, Rocío. UNAM, Mexico
Aparici, Roberto. National Open University (UNED), Spain
Aranguren, Fernando. Francisco José de Caldas District University, Colombia
Arévalo, Javier. Public Education Secretary, Mexico
Ávila, Patricia. Latin American Institute of Educational Communication (ILCE), Mexico
Bartolomé, Antonio. University of Barcelona, Spain
Bernal, Héctor. Latin American Institute of Educational Communication (ILCE), Mexico
Blois, Marlene. CREAD, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Bustamante, Borys. Francisco José de Caldas District University, Colombia
Cabero, Julio. University of Seville, Spain
Candioti, Carmen. Ministry of Education, Spain
Crovi, Delia M. UNAM, Mexico
Del Río, Pablo. University of Salamanca, Spain
Dorrego, Elena. Central University of Venezuela
Esperón Porto, Tania. University of Pelotas, Brazil
Fabbro, Gabriela. National University of La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Fainholc, Beatriz. CEDIPROE, Argentina
Fontcuberta, Mar de. Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.
Fuenzalida, Valerio. Catholic University of Chile
Funes, Virginia. UMSA, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Gabelas, José Antonio. Spectus Group, Zaragoza, Spain
García Fernández, Nicanor. Government of the Principality of Asturias, Spain
García Matilla, Agustín. Carlos III University, Madrid, Spain
Gutiérrez Martín, Alfonso. E. U. of Teachers Segovia, Univ. Valladolid, Spain
Hermosilla, Elena. CONACE, Chile
Hernández, Gustavo. University of Caracas, Venezuela
Kaplún, Gabriel. University of the Republic of Montevideo, Uruguay
López, Emma. Latin American Institute of Educational Communication (ILCE), Mexico
Maquinay, Aurora. Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya, Spain
Merlo Flores, Tatiana. Catholic University, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Miralles, Rafael. University of Valencia, Spain
Morduchowicz, Roxana. Ministry of Education, Argentina
Obach, Xavier. Televisión Española, Spain
Ojeda, Gerardo. Iberian-American Association of Educational Television (ATEI), Spain
Orozco, Guillermo. University of Guadalajara, Mexico
Ottobre, Salvador. Southern University, Argentina
Pereira, Sara. University of Minho, Portugal
Pinto, Armanda. University of Coimbra, Portugal
Pujadas, Eva. Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain
Reia-Baptista, Vito. University of Algarve, Portugal
Quintão, Vânia. University of Brasília, Brazil
Quiroz, Teresa. University of Lima, Peru
Rincón, Omar. Javeriana University, Colombia
San Martín, Patricia. CONICET, Argentina
Vázquez, Miguel. Eduardo Pondal Institute, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

⁴ This list only contains the Iberian-American experts consulted who made contributions to the base document (46 out of a total of 54).

Experts at a state level⁵

Aguaded, Ignacio. University of Huelva.

Aparici, Roberto. National Open University (UNED).

Candioti, Carmen. Ministry of Education, Madrid.

Del Río, Pablo. University of Salamanca.

Ferrés Prats, Joan. Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona.

Gabelas, José Antonio. Spectus Group, Zaragoza, Spain.

García Fernández, Nicanor. Department of Education of the Principality of Asturias.

García Matilla, Agustín. Carlos III University, Madrid.

Gutiérrez Martín, Alfonso. E. U. of Teachers Segovia, University of Valladolid

Maquinay, Aurora. Department of Education of the Generalitat de Catalunya.

Obach, Xavier. Televisión Española, Madrid.

Ojeda, Gerardo. Iberian-American Association of Educational Television (ATEI).

Pujadas, Eva. Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona.

Vázquez, Miguel. Eduardo Pondal Institute, Santiago de Compostela.

⁵ This list contains the experts at a state level who were present at the seminar held on the 11th of November 2005, in which the document Competences in Audiovisual Communication was approved by consensus (14 out of 18).

Education in Audiovisual Communication: Perspectives and Proposals for Action in Catalonia

Fòrum d'entitats de persones usuàries de l'audiovisual

This article is a systemised approach to the problems regarding education in audiovisual communication (EAC). It starts with a definition of this concept, based on what was proposed by Unesco five years ago, and proposes the challenges for the concept that are involved in the boom of information and communication technologies (ICT).

A justification is then made of the need for education in audiovisual communication based on the demand for educational institutions to prepare citizens for the kinds of world they have to live in.

A brief description is given of the legislative framework of education in audiovisual communication focused fundamentally on its incidence in Catalonia.

Finally, some proposals for action are presented, structured around a series of areas of intervention: teacher training (initial and continued), inclusion in the curriculum of compulsory education, the figure of coordinator and school organisation, the production and dissemination of materials, the involvement of audiovisual communication media in EAC and, lastly, the continued education of citizens.

We should highlight one of the fundamental values of this document, namely the fact that it has been drawn up within the framework of the CAC (Catalonia Broadcasting Council) by the Forum of entities of audiovisual users, which means it has been approved by representatives of more than forty entities of Catalan civil society, entities interested in some way in audiovisual communication. Specifically, the document was approved by the full assembly of the Forum on the 10th of December 2004¹.

Education in audiovisual communication

Introduction

The concept of education in communication

According to the Unesco agreements in the seminar held in Seville in February 2002, education in communication (EC) should be approached from the following points of view:

- Education in communication means teaching and learning about communication media (as an object of study).
- Education in communication consists of critical analysis and creative production.
- Education in communication can and must take place within the area of formal education and non-formal education. Consequently, it must involve both children and adults.
- Education in communication must promote a spirit of community and social responsibility, as well as personal autonomy.

We talk of learning about communication media but with the knowledge that it is not merely a question of knowing the technologies but particularly the languages with which these are expressed, the communicative strategies and the content of its messages. It's a question of knowing audiovisuals as a differentiated means of expression and the implications of their social use.

Contemporary history cannot be understood without the communication media as a vehicle of social exchange and artistic expression, as a form of entertainment and as a transmitter of ideology and values. It is therefore essential

¹ In an appendix at the end of the article there is a list of the entities that form part of the Forum and that signed

for the education of citizens to include this area, both in terms of formal education and non-formal education.

This integration of education in communication must help to make all citizens media literate and help them to acquire skills and abilities that allow them to decode and produce texts in any kind of code and medium (a wide range known as ICT or information and communication technologies), particularly audiovisual technologies because these have most incidence on the population and, at the same time, are the least present in the educational system.

That's why the document approaches education in audiovisual communication from a dual perspective: audiovisuals as a subject of study (education in audiovisual communication) and as a resource for education (education with audiovisual communication). This document focuses basically on education in audiovisual communication, approached with the aim of providing people with instruments to understand the messages they consume both thoroughly and critically, and to provide them with the necessary resources to produce texts or discourses appropriate to different communication situations.

The structure of the document

The document is organised into three parts:

- a) Justification of the need for education in audiovisual communication.
- b) An outline of the legislative framework of education in audiovisual communication (EAC), focused mainly on its incidence in Catalonia.
- c) Proposals for action, structured around the following areas of intervention:
 - Teacher training (initial and continued).
 - Inclusion in the curriculum of compulsory education.
 - Figure of coordinator and school organisation.
 - Production and dissemination of materials.
 - Involvement of audiovisual communication media in EAC.
 - Continued education of citizens.

Justification of the need for EAC

It is paradoxical the contradiction between the importance in terms of socialising attributed by families and institutions to

television and the rest of the audiovisual mass media, and the presence these have on the school curriculum, i.e. very little, and in schools, almost zero, as well as with the agents and institutions of lifelong citizen education. It is equally paradoxical that, audiovisuals being a specific form of communication that is different from verbal, it has not warranted its own place in education.

Competence in critically interpreting audiovisual media is essential in order to understand the environment and to develop autonomy, personal creativity and social responsibility. Without training in this area, we cannot talk of citizens playing a full role in the societies of the 21st century.

This knowledge is essential for the following reasons:

- To explain how contemporary societies work, we also need to explain the expressive resources, economic and political mechanisms and communication strategies that belong to audiovisual media. This is basic knowledge that must be transmitted to avoid unconsidered consent, often favoured by the mass media, as well as to encourage the development of a capacity for individual interpretation and the training of a critical spirit, fundamental skills in order to be able to operate in the information society and to play a full part in the benefits of cultural heritage.
- The transmission of memory, another of the objectives of any educational project, is also impossible if citizens are not helped to:
 - be aware of the primordial role played by audiovisual media in the social transformations of the last few decades;
 - have access to the knowledge of work created by the audiovisual culture as from the end of the 19th century;
 - know how technology and audiovisual communication have developed in historical terms;
 - take into account that the discourses generated by audiovisual media have a significant documental value when analysing past and present societies.
- On the other hand, transmitting memory also means deciding which aesthetic experiences, related to the audiovisual culture, we want to pass on to new generations and to undertake the actions we must carry out in order to achieve this.

The legislative framework of EAC

Education in communication in Catalonia

The dizzying evolution in the world of communication over the last few decades and the economic, political and social changes deriving from this have not been, to date, suitably reflected in the educational system. Educational institutions have not responded to these changes. Curricula continue to be based, fundamentally, on the transmission of knowledge through the written language, completely forgetting that we live in a society where information, over-abundant and changing, is transmitted through multiple symbols and languages.

In Catalonia, the first educational experiences in cinema took place in the years of the Republic. Interest in audiovisual education as we know it dates back to the sixties outside schools and at universities, and it has a significant tradition. We have gone from the old demand to introduce cinematic language into schools in the sixties, seventies and eighties to the current debate on the inclusion of ICT.

However, the introduction of media and new technologies in formal and non-formal education has been slow and complicated. Successive educational laws and the latest educational reforms have not considered education in audiovisual communication as a priority issue in any case.

The General Education Act of 1970, which appeared at a time of clear expansion in the media, practically made no mention of audiovisual education or media education.

With the passing, in 1990, of the LOGSE (Act for the general organisation of the educational system), the priority goals established for the educational system were not only the acquisition of traditional content and knowledge but also education in democratic values, the acquisition of intellectual habits and the capacity to live an active life professionally, socially and culturally. With the inclusion of the *eixos transversals* or lines of action going across the curriculum (this including audiovisual education in Catalonia), the aim is to complement and update the traditional academic subjects and to connect schools with their environment. However, the LOGSE has been clearly insufficient in terms of specifying these measures and putting them into practice.

The passing of the Education Quality Act (LOCE) in 2002

made this situation worse. The decrees to apply the Act not only did not include audiovisual communication as an objective of basic education but its only references were as an accessory and, in the best of cases, audiovisual media were relegated to a secondary role as a didactic resource. Furthermore, it removed the little autonomy held by educational centres and reduced even further the room for manoeuvre for educators interested in these areas.

The new central government is currently planning a possible reform of the LOCE or even the formulation of a new educational act. With this aim, it has drawn up a document, submitted to public debate, outlining the main challenges facing education. Unfortunately, in this first document there is not a single reference to education in audiovisual communication, while it insists on the use of new technologies from a computer-based and purely instrumental point of view.

At the same time, the new Catalan administration is starting to propose the need to encourage education in audiovisual communication and, to this end, a specific programme has been created in the Department of Education.

Within this context, still quite deficient, the different initiatives that had appeared over the years related to the implementation of education in audiovisual communication, both from private organisations and public institutions and from particularly aware professionals in education and communication, have little room for manoeuvre. Given that they cannot be developed within the framework of formal education and with the necessary personal resources and materials, their proposals do not reach most of the school population.

But the fact that education in communication has not achieved the degree of implementation required in educational centres is not due only to the lack of a real space on the curricula, but also to deficiencies in teacher training. Only those teachers graduating from teacher training schools and faculties in the last decade have taken a specific course, *New technologies applied to education*, but often this subject is clearly biased towards computing. The same term, *information and communication technologies* (ICT) has helped to increase confusion between the technological dimension and the expressive or communicative dimension, almost always to the detriment of the latter two.

Proposals regarding teacher training

Introduction

Teacher training is one of the key elements of this document. Two aspects are important: on the one hand, knowledge of audiovisual language and of how mass media work (education in audiovisual communication), as well as the didactic capacity to educate students in this field. On the other hand, knowledge is also required in terms of technique, expression and didactic application of audiovisuals as a means or resource for teaching (education with audiovisual communication).

Short-term proposals

1. Ask universities to include a compulsory subject on audiovisual communication and education in the teacher training curriculum. This subject must emphasise the first of the two lines mentioned in the introduction but it must particularly work on the attitudes and awareness of teachers.
2. Add audiovisual communication and education as a subject of study in compulsory accreditation for secondary teachers, along the same lines as the previous recommendation.
3. Encourage education faculties to increase education with the media among the staff involved in teacher training courses, helping to increase sensitivity towards and awareness of this area.
4. Encourage universities, the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) and the Department of Education to continue creating audiovisual materials for primary and secondary teachers by means of established mechanisms, and to disseminate these materials as widely as possible.
5. Propose to universities, the Department of Education of the Generalitat de Catalunya, to movements demanding pedagogical renewal, the College of Doctors and Graduates and all those instances involved in the continued training of teachers to create proposals for training and to offer courses and seminars on audiovisual education.
6. Propose that the Department of Education promote projects of educational innovation to encourage the design and application of education in audiovisual

communication in primary and secondary centres.

7. Establish agreements between the Department of Education, the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) and the different public television operators to ensure that teachers have access to the documentary archive of images for educational use and at no additional cost.

In the long-term

The subject of audiovisual communication and education should not depend on the goodwill of universities but must form part of the core of the curriculum for the initial training of primary and secondary teachers.

Proposals with regard to the curriculum for compulsory education

Introduction

The inclusion of education in audiovisual communication must take very much into account the comprehension and analysis of the content of messages arriving via new technologies, as well as the expressive possibilities of these tools, and cannot be limited to encouraging a mastery of technology. Education in audiovisual communication must help to develop children and young people into becoming intelligent, critical and autonomous receivers. Its presence on the curriculum involves a global change in the approach to education and is of enormous help in educational innovation.

Proposals for action

1. The educational administration must incorporate EAC in compulsory curricula, in both its aspects: as a resource and as an object of study. It must do so by gathering together contributions from various collectives, organisations and people working in this area.
2. As a resource, audiovisual communication must take advantage of the expressive potential of images. It must have significant presence in learning activities as a form of differentiated communication and not as a simple illustration of words. It must lead to traditional methodologies being redesigned and must reinforce cooperative work, research, communication and critical spirit.
3. As an object of study, the content that must be worked

on in EAC, proposed in the international area (documents from Unesco, authors and collectives related to Media Literacy, etc.) and also contained in the basic ICT-EA competence document, drawn up by the Department of Education, is specified in the following dimensions:

- *Historical and social impact*: to see the impact produced by the media in current society, both in individual and collective terms, how they act on our emotions, how they condition and modify our habits and patterns of conduct and which values they transmit.
- *Agent of production*: to discover who produces these messages, what their interests and ideologies are, etc.
- *Literacy in the audiovisual language*: to discover the expressive resources used by audiovisual language and learn how to decode it.
- *Category of the media*: to observe the variety of audiovisual documents that exist and discover their characteristics.
- *Representation of the media*: to see how the media create a specific representation of reality.
- *Technological literacy*: to know the technology that makes audiovisual communication possible.

The appropriate aspects of this content must be included in the common part of the following areas: languages, visual and plastic aspects, social environment, technology and teaching.

4. EAC must not take an encyclopaedic approach, aimed at students accumulating information. It must be based on emotional impact involved in the experience of being a spectator, with the aim of gradually enriching this experience. It is necessary to know the cognitive dimension of emotions and to take advantage of the fun dimension of audiovisual media to help integrate pleasure and effort.
5. EAC must favour an interdisciplinary approach. In this respect, we believe that project work and workshops would be a good methodology for infant and primary education. For secondary education we propose that centres include a compulsory but variable credit for this area.
6. To strengthen and provide resources for centre projects aiming to work on EAC.

7. To promote, by zones, EAC integration projects, linked to the needs of the environment and to the proposals of the teachers working there.
8. To take advantage of initiatives arising from other entities (television channels, local radio stations, associations, specialised organisations) to establish collaborations, enrich and broaden projects.
9. The Department of Education and education science institutes must encourage the creation of specific working groups to reflect and make proposals on how EAC can be well integrated into the compulsory curriculum.
10. The Department of Education and universities must provide the public with the opportunity to experience EAC, with a selection of infant, primary and secondary centres ready to carry this out. Pedagogical resource centres could play an important part as promoters of these projects.

Proposals with regard to the figure of coordinator and school organisation

Proposals with regard to the figure of audiovisual coordinator

In order for the integration of education in audiovisual communication in compulsory education to be satisfactory, it is vital to create an audiovisual coordinator in all educational centres.

This figure must be understood as different from the IT coordinator, because they must be specialised in audiovisual communication and its teaching.

They must act in an advisory capacity in all departments. They must be responsible for promoting, planning, encouraging, experimenting, researching and evaluating the use made of audiovisuals by the educational centre, both in terms of education in audiovisual communication as well as in education with audiovisual communication.

The tasks that must be carried out by the audiovisual coordinator in the educational centre could be categorised as follows:

- Stimulate and advise teachers on the various areas or cycles to ensure that education in audiovisual communication is introduced into the educational centre

(teaching how to watch cinema, television, advertising, etc.): providing guidance on content, methodology, available materials, etc.

- Stimulate and advise teachers to ensure they use audiovisual communication resources in the schoolroom in order to optimise teaching-learning processes in all areas and cycles.
- Ensure the centre appropriately organises the equipment and materials so that they can be used easily and practically.
- Collaborate with those in charge of the centre's library and/or media library with regard to the acquisition of audiovisual documents, books and magazines on the area, and in the digital storing of audiovisual documents provided by teachers and students or found by the coordinator him or herself.
- Strengthen the use of audiovisual communication in both quantitative and qualitative terms. This can be done through a series of resources:
 - Programming courses to raise awareness or deepen knowledge.
 - Recommending courses or conferences on the area.
 - Advising on the usefulness of certain teaching materials.
 - Providing information on anything new on the market.
 - Recommending certain reading material (books, magazines, etc.).
 - Suggesting ways to use audiovisuals more creatively, etc.
- Evaluate the centre's use of audiovisuals, in different areas:
 - Investigate the effectiveness of these materials according to the various ways they can be used.
 - Compare performance in certain contexts.
 - Systemise certain types of use.
 - Analyse why audiovisual materials are used little in certain areas or levels.

It is evident that the audiovisual coordinator will require specific training, time and the consequent freeing up of his or her schedule and resources of all kinds in order to ensure he or she can carry out the work efficiently.

Proposals with regard to school organisation

Certain aspects of school organisation need to be reviewed to ensure that EAC contribute to innovation. If we want to encourage the creation of communicative environments we need educational spaces and timings that are different from the current set-ups.

We need school spaces that facilitate, on the one hand, the use of audiovisual communication tools for in-house production and, on the other hand, access to external productions, coming both from the professional field and from other centres. To this end rooms for audiovisual work are required, with video cameras and with the indispensable editing material and a well-equipped library and media library. Media must also be present in the schoolrooms in a continued and smooth manner.

Moreover, the organisation of the timetable must be flexible enough to be able to carry out learning activities across the curriculum, with the concurrence of teachers from different areas and with different groupings of pupils from those of the class group. Interdisciplinary projects must be able to be carried out in small groups different to the class group, and the timetables attributed to each area must not be so rigid as to become an obstacle to these projects having enough time to be carried out.

The people in charge of coordinating education in audiovisual communication, coordinating IT and the media library must form a team that ensures the educational goals are achieved, goals that should form a part of the centre's educational proposal.

Proposals with regard to the production and dissemination of materials

Introduction

There need to be materials available both for teachers and students at different levels to ensure education in audiovisual communication can be carried out, taking into account both formal and non-formal education contexts. It's important to be able to guarantee that these materials are suitable for contributing towards educational innovation. To this end, it is vital for the production of materials to be accompanied by experimentation and systematic evaluation.

The materials must provide for both aspects of EAC:

- Materials to work on the content of education in audiovisual communication, taking into account critical analysis and interpretation, as well as creation-production, on different media (written texts, multimedia material, etc.) and suitable for the areas and cycles where they are applied.

The production of materials to work on audiovisual media as an object of study should take the following dimensions into account:

- The social and historical impact of audiovisual media (consumption, reception, effects, etc.).
- The agents of production.
- The production process and technologies.
- Language.
- Categories: genres and formats of audiovisual media.
- How audiovisual media represent the social reality: how they select, mediate and show society (stereotypes, presences/absences, etc.).

Materials to make good use of audiovisuals resources, that provide methodological guidelines to be able to go beyond the typical function of image as a simple illustration of the word, guiding in terms of the possibilities of educational video, etc.

The materials produced must avoid encyclopaedic approaches and should therefore take the following aspects into account:

- They should be adapted to the age and needs of the pupils.
- They should encourage the observation and analysis of audiovisual messages and avoid theoretical discourses.
- They should encourage interdisciplinary aspects.
- They should strengthen pupils' creativity.
- They should be based on the interests of the pupils.
- They should motivate debate and encourage teamwork.

Proposals for action with regard to research and innovation

- Create specific lines of research at a university level aimed at experimentation related to the didactic aspects of audiovisual media.
- Encourage methodologies along the line of research-

action or research in practice to refine the instruments used in the education and didactic treatment of EAC.

- Through financial aid, to motivate creative proposals related to the production of materials.
- Promote studies or analyses of already existing materials to establish models with a view to producing new materials.

Proposals for action with regard to assessment

- Create control mechanisms to apply the relevant assessment techniques in the field of creating materials.
- Monitor the presence of EAC in centres and detect the obstacles hindering the achievement of the desired goals.

Proposals for action with regard to dissemination and network of resources

- Establish agreements with the media so that they can offer their resources as a way of complementing learning regarding the knowledge of culture and audiovisual production.
- Establish agreements with the media to provide a documentary archive of real media texts that are of use in education.
- Draw up and disseminate a list of basic works of audiovisual culture that should be available to all teaching centres, public libraries and media libraries.
- Prepare a database of materials produced by different institutions and groups to be placed at the disposal of media libraries in educational centres and pedagogical resource centres.
- Draw up guidelines and recommendations so that publishers or production houses can take on projects in this field.

Proposals regarding the involvement of audiovisual communication media in EAC

Introduction

The collaboration of the audiovisual media could be of significant help in putting into practice many of the initiatives proposed in this document. In order for this collaboration to be effective, we put forward the following proposals:

General proposals aimed at all audiovisual operators

- Encourage the necessary mechanisms so that their programming introduces education in audiovisual communication transversally (in all kinds of programmes) and helps TV viewers or radio listeners to receive the content critically.
- Create specific sections or programmes analysing the media from within and in which experts in audiovisual communication can take part, preferably related to the area of university education.
- Create an ombudsman for radio listeners and/or TV viewers at each media operator to channel the complaints and concerns of the audience. A person should be appointed who can take decisions independently, so as not to be subject to the operator's corporate line. This figure can be used to create programmes in which audience participation is encouraged and the ombudsman for radio listeners and/or TV viewers can answer and clarify any doubts regarding that medium's programming.
- Encourage visits by pupils and other social groups (parents of pupils, the elderly, citizen organisations, etc.) to the audiovisual operators' facilities with the aim of demystifying production and broadcasting processes. These visits should be complemented with didactic material.
- Reinforce and promote programmes aimed at connecting the academic world (school, university, etc.) with television.

Specific proposals aimed at local television and radio

- Through the different organisations made up of local radio and TV operators, promote collaboration agreements between these media and the educational centres in their area (municipality, county, etc.) in order to carry out activities of the following types:
 - Guided tours around facilities.
 - Radio and TV workshops aimed at pupils from different educational cycles. These workshops can also be aimed at people from other groups, such as the pupils' parents, homes for the elderly, householder associations, etc.
 - Regular radio and TV programmes made by pupils and broadcast by the same operator.

- Providing schools with audiovisual and sound material related to the immediate environment so that it can be used as a tool in the classroom.
- Establish mechanisms for using the TV and radio operators' audiovisual and sound archives on the part of the teachers and pupils at educational centres.

Proposals for the continued education of citizens

Introduction

The progressive but fast evolution of the forms of communication has not been experienced in the same way by the whole population. For the new generations, who have experienced this process since they were born, it is easy for them to adapt. But there is a whole sector of the population that has experienced this since adulthood and they often feel out of place and are not aware of the lack of training in this area, nor do they show any interest in it.

The need for continued training is also justified by the fact that technologies and forms of expression are continuously changing. And also because people's social roles are changing: as parents, as educators or as responsible adults, it is vital to know the power of the media as a source of education or *de-education*.

Proposals for action

1. Promote the need to incorporate EAC in the training activities of parent associations.
2. Encourage adult education organisations and those dedicated to children's leisure pursuits to include EAC content in the training they offer. To involve the different departments of the Generalitat in this training work.
3. Raise the awareness of a whole range of organisations and associations so that they include EAC content in their plans to train and inform their members and users.
4. Encourage the publication of articles to inform, raise awareness and train, in the periodical publications of the various organisations and associations that go to make up the Forum of entities.
5. Include, on the Forum of entities' website, an area aimed at EAC training for audiovisual users, highlighting relations with professionals, the knowledge of resources,

news, etc. This should become a place for exchanging information, suggestions, protests and recommendations to encourage knowledge and dialogue in the area.

6. Design objectives and methodologies for different training activities, from chats-colloquia to seminars or courses on a single subject, taking into account the different variables of age, cultural level, etc.

Appendix

List of entities, associations and organisations of the Fòrum d'entitats de persones usuàries de l'audiovisual

Catalan Consumer Affairs Agency (ACC)
 Association of Consumers of the Province of Barcelona (ACPB)
 Rosa Sensat Association of Teachers
 Promoting Association for Guidance on Consumption for the Elderly (PROGRAN)
 Association of Communication Users (AUC)
 Media Classroom. Education in Communication
 AIS Care and Research of Social Addictions
 College of Pedagogues of Catalonia
 Official College of Psychologists of Catalonia
 Confederation of the National Workers Committee of Catalonia (CCOO)
 Coordinator of Health Users (CUS)
 Department of Education. Educational Innovation Programmes Service
 Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising (UAB)
 Department of Journalism and Audiovisual Communication of the UPF
 Magical Dragon
 Higher School of Cinema and Audiovisuals of Catalonia (ESCAC)
 Blanquerna Faculty of Communication Science of the URL
 Faculty of Educational Science of the University of Lleida
 Faculty of Business and Communication of the University of Vic

Blanquerna Faculty of Psychology, Education Science and Sport of the URL
 Federation of Associations for the Elderly of Catalonia (FATEC)
 Federation of Associations of Parents of Pupils of Catalonia (FAPAC)
 Federation of Cooperatives of Consumers and Users of Catalonia (FCCUC)
 Federation of Movements for Pedagogical Renewal of Catalonia
 Group of Catalan Entities (GEC)
 Catalan Institute for Women (ICD)
 Institute of Science and Education of the University of Barcelona (ICE)
 MITJANS. Network of Educators and Communicators
 Observatory of Women in the Media
 European Observatory of Children's Television
 Observatory of the coverage of Conflicts in the media
 Organisation of Consumers and Users of Catalonia (OCUC)
 Journalist Trade Union of Catalonia (SPC)
 Teleeduca, educació i comunicació, S.C.P
 Associated Television Viewers of Catalonia (TAC)
 Local Television Channels of Catalonia
 Union of Consumers of Catalonia-UCC
 Workers Trade Union of Catalonia (USOC)
 General Union of Workers of Catalonia (UGT)
 USTEC-STEC

Overview of Education in Audiovisual Communication

Mercè Oliva Rota

- *Although for decades the need has been realised to introduce education in audiovisual communication (EAC) in formal education, there is no agreement as to the model to be followed. This article reviews the main debates being held on EAC: how it is defined and what name it should be given; on which approaches it should be constructed; what content it should include; and how to incorporate it into curricula. The text also examines how these debates take shape in the educational systems of different countries, paying particular attention to Catalonia, in order to highlight the limitations and opportunities of current proposals.*

Keywords

Education in audiovisual communication, media literacy, secondary education, Catalan Education Act.

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1. Introduction

Most articles, studies, declarations, etc. about media education usually start by citing a whole series of statistical data aimed at demonstrating the significant presence (and influence) of the media in the life of young people and children and on society in general, as well as the central role they play in many social processes. The defence of education in audiovisual communication is based on this idea, i.e. teaching how to understand and use the media.

Unesco's founding declaration of Grunwald in 1982 already pointed out that "political and educational systems need to recognise their obligations to promote in their citizens a critical understanding of the phenomena of communication", given the scarce presence of media education in educational systems (a great distance being established between education and the real world). But although the importance of this area has been pointed out insistently for decades, the presence of audiovisual education in educational institutions around the world is irregular and, in many cases, little and relatively recent.

The aim of this article is to review how media education is currently understood, focusing on its presence in formal education, particularly secondary. Evidently, media education cannot be limited to this area but must also include many other contexts, such as continued education, non-formal and adult education. But it is in formal primary and secondary education where the greatest effort must be made in this area, given that it plays the largest part in constructing and developing new generations.

In this article we will review some of the debates concerning media education around the world and we will study different approaches, content and options to introduce media education into formal education curricula. Finally, we will see what form these debates take in

Catalonia in order to point out a few of the limitations and opportunities of the present model.

2. Education in audiovisual communication (EAC): terms and definitions

When we talk about media education we can find many similar concepts that refer more or less to the same idea: teaching how to understand, analyse and use the media. It is therefore not a question of educating through the media (“education *with* media”), using them as support material (e.g. seeing *October*, by Sergei Eisenstein, to illustrate a lesson on the Russian revolution), but rather of transforming audiovisual communication into an object of study per se.

As we have mentioned, various terms are used to refer to this field: media education, media literacy, education in audiovisual communication, audiovisual education, etc. One or other of these terms are preferred in different contexts. So, for example, “media literacy” is the concept normally used in the Anglo-Saxon sphere, while “educación para los medios” or “education for the media” is used in Latin America, and “education in audiovisual communication” (*educació audiovisual*) in Catalonia.

Obviously each term has nuances that differentiate it from the others. However, the exact definition of each term varies significantly depending on the author or institution consulted. In fact, it is significant that, in numerous studies and articles on this area, the first chapter often concerns different expert opinions on their definition of different terms related to this area.¹

In this article, given the space limitations, we will leave these debates to one side and use the concepts of *media education* (ME) and *education in audiovisual communication* (EAC) without differentiating between the two.

And similar to the lack of agreement as to the most suitable term to refer to education in the media, neither is there agreement as to what it is and what content it should have. Below we will review some of these debates.

3. From protectionism to empowerment

Historically, EAC dates back to a *defensive* focus: the aim was to protect children from the perils supposedly represented by the media, particularly television. These “perils” could be cultural, political or moral (Buckingham; Domaille: 2001a). In the first case, the media are seen as a kind of “low culture”, sub-products without quality, the watching of which undermines children’s sensitivity and interest in literature, art, etc. (in other words, in authentic culture, a source of personal enrichment). According to this point of view, the aim of EAC should be for children to learn how to appreciate high culture, rejecting the products of the media. In other words, they should read more and watch less television. This posture is also implicit in many approaches that are concerned about the shift from written culture towards an audiovisual culture, reminding us gloomily of the virtues of the former, which is gradually being lost (and only seeing the negative side of the latter).

In the second case, the media are seen as dangerous because they promote a series of negative beliefs and political ideologies, normally related to capitalism, the consumer society and cultural domination. So EAC would aim to expose these false values conveyed by the media so that young people reject them. This posture can be found particularly in countries in Latin America, with the aim of counteracting the strong presence of North American products.

Lastly, the moral dangers of the media would be related to inappropriate or dangerous values and behaviour concerning sex, violence and drugs. The aim of EAC in this case would be for children to adopt moral and healthy forms of behaviour, rejecting those conveyed via media messages. Examples of this posture can be found, as we will see, in some states of the United States.

Two issues attract our attention in these postures. Firstly, how the media are described (particularly television) as something essentially negative (sometimes even harmful) that stupefy, manipulate and dirty the minds of those who watch them. The potential benefits and pleasures that might

¹ See, for example, Fedorov (2003) or Ofcom (2004).

be provided by media messages are denied in favour of an exaggerated emphasis on the harm they can cause.

Secondly, it is also interesting to point out how people believe EAC should be carried out and what the ultimate objective should be. So, from this perspective, there is only "one" correct way to watch television, in the same way that there are only certain valid beliefs and values, and the job of educators is to teach this to their pupils. So there is no room for critical reflection or debate. EAC is seen as a kind of *inoculation*, a preventative measure against the media's supposed contamination or even a way of keeping children away. A paradigmatic example is the slogan "*kill your television*", which guides some of these approaches.

An example: the USA

The USA is one of the countries where media education is still related to a protectionist posture, related to morals. So all the initiatives by the federal government since the nineties (a time when people once again became interested in this issue, after the back-to-basics educational policy of the eighties)² have been along these lines, with the aim of "inoculate adolescents against unhealthy media messages about sexuality, violence, nutrition, body image and alcohol, tobacco and drug use"³.

This can also be seen in the secondary education of each state. Even though each state has a different situation⁴, in many cases we find the content of media education within subjects related to health (Health, nutrition and consumerism). Here the aim is to protect young people from the bad influence of the media in the same terms as we referred to earlier. An example of this posture is the document *Media Literacy: an exciting tool to promote public health and safety for Washington's communities and*

schools, published by the Washington State Department of Health, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and the Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction, which states that the media are a risk for young people that must be neutralised through education.

It is interesting to see how, from this point of view, media education is claimed as an alternative to censorship. We can find an example of this in the document *Media Literacy: An alternative to censorship* (Heins; Cho, 2003), from The Free Expression Policy Project, which states that "Popular culture can glamorize violence, irresponsible sex, junk food, drugs, and alcohol; it can reinforce stereotypes about race, gender, sexual orientation, and class; it can prescribe the lifestyle to which one should aspire, and the products one must buy to attain it". All this leads to "calls to censor the mass media in the interest of protecting youth", in other words, its content must be controlled.

Given that this kind of measure is seen as an attack on the part of administration against free speech, the self-protection of children and young people is presented as an alternative, i.e. they themselves can reject the content that harms them. How can this be achieved? Through media education, which must work on the viewers' analytical skills and critical thought. We see here, therefore, how critical thought and the liberal demands for minimum state intervention in media content are combined.

Compared to this defensive focus, we find other proposals more closely linked to the idea of *empowerment* (Buckingham; Domaille: 2001a), in which EAC is not seen as a form of protection but of *preparation*. So the aim is not for children to watch television in a certain way (or not watch it at all) but rather to make them able to take considered

- 2 For more information on the history of media education in the USA, see Heins; Cho (2003: 7-32).
- 3 For example, in 2000 the Department of Education subsidised 10 educational projects on media education, five focusing on violence in the media and the remaining five on other "dangers" (drugs, sex, etc.). Another example we find in the report published in 2002 by the United States government that supported media education from the perspective of educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. (Heins; Cho: 2003).
- 4 Nonetheless, there are cases in which EAC is incorporated within subjects such as language or social science and in which the approach is closer to critical thought and to attitudes we find in Canada or the United Kingdom.

decisions regarding the media. This approach could already be found in Unesco's initial proposals in this area⁵, as well as in most of the countries in the west (United Kingdom, Canada, European countries, Australia, etc.).

The aim is to develop skills of comprehension and analysis to encourage active and critical involvement on the part of students instead of submitting them to a specific posture. There is no single way to watch television but rather each person must have the capacity to watch it in his or her own way, producing meanings that are both personal and socially relevant.

So the need for EAC arises more from the central position held by the media in social, political and cultural life today rather than due to the risks involved, although this does not mean that this approach forgets the influence they may have on children and young people, as well as other "negative" aspects.

This central role of the media in current political and social processes would explain the fact that this definition of EAC from the empowerment approach is related to concepts such as critical thought, democratic involvement and citizenship, seeing EAC as a right that enables pupils to act as fully fledged citizens, capable of forming part of the public arena of social communication. For this reason, the capacity to access the media, the selection and use made of them are highly important elements in the issues of EAC⁶.

At the same time, attention is not only placed on television (the omnipresence of which, due to the protectionist approaches, concentrates all mistrust, fear and rejection) and all

the media are included in EAC: press, radio, television, cinema, internet, multimedia, comics, photography, etc.

It is also interesting to note how, in this perspective, the idea of *enjoyment* appears, a concept completely excluded from the previous approach. That is, television, cinema, etc. are seen as sources of pleasure, a pleasure that must be worked and reflected on but never minimised. So many of the EAC initiatives attempt to make pupils reflect on why they like certain kinds of programmes in order to convert this into conscious enjoyment. However, this last aspect is usually relegated to second place because, as Lewis and Jhally (1998) have commented, EAC usually focuses more on "helping people to become sophisticated citizens rather than sophisticated consumers".

An example: the United Kingdom

In order to illustrate this view of EAC and the relation established with the concept of citizenship, we will take a brief look at a statement from the government of the United Kingdom regarding this area. Consequently we do not intend to review EAC globally in the United Kingdom, a complex goal and outside the scope of this article, both due to this country's long tradition in media education and also due to the large number of institutions dedicated to this.

In 2001, the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) published Media literacy Statement 2001: a general Statement of Policy by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on Media Literacy and Critical Viewing Skills, a statement of what the DCMS understands as media literacy and a point of reference for future media literacy policy⁷.

- 5 Both in the founding declaration of Grunwald in 1982 (which we have referred to at the start of this article), as well as in subsequent documents on this area, such as the conferences that took place in 1990 in Toulouse ("New Directions in Media Education"), in 1999 in Vienna ("Educating for the media and the digital age") and in 2002 in Seville ("Youth Media Education") and the report Media Education: a global strategy for development drawn up in 2001 by D. Buckingham.
- 6 Although these proposals are not limited to these aspects but usually propose an extensive study of the media, in all their aspects: from audiovisual language to reception, including the processes and forms of production. We will return to these aspects later.
- 7 This statement arises from a seminar to examine the media education initiatives being carried out in the United Kingdom and organised by this same department in 1999. A seminar that, in turn, arose as a response to the recommendation that the government should lead the coordination of a national strategy for media education, contained in the report Violence and the Viewer, published by the BBC, the Independent Television Commission and the Broadcasting Standards Commission in 1998.

The document starts with a justification of why media education is necessary⁸: "the moving image, particularly but not exclusively television, is now as central to young people's cultural and intellectual development as traditional print (books and magazines)". Given that young people live in an environment full of media (media that are sometimes to be found in their bedroom: "media rich bedroom"), "to take their place in the twenty first century, children must be screen-wise as well as book-wise".

As we have already seen, what justifies EAC is not so much the supposed perils of the media for children and young people but rather the need to prepare them so they can develop in a context dominated by the media. At the same time, neither is it a question of limiting EAC to the study of television but rather extending this to all media.

For this reason, "children will need to appraise critically, and assess the relative value of information from different sources, and gain competencies in understanding the construction, forms, strengths and limitations of screen-based content". Even more so when technological convergence leads to "an expansion in non-linear access to material where the user decides his or her own schedule", something that increases the need for self-regulation on the part of viewers, who must know how to be critical in order to be able to choose between all the options available (increasingly more numerous).

We can therefore see that media literacy is defined in terms of critical interpretation⁹, focused on the aim of pupils establishing their own point of view regarding the media. However, this critical interpretation (understood as the skill of thinking critically about what is being watched) will include a whole range of specific skills, such as being able to distinguish fact from fiction; identifying and appreciating the different levels of realism; understanding the mechanisms of production and distribution; knowing how to judge quality; defending oneself from manipulation and propaganda; distinguishing between information and opinion; differen-

tiating between different levels of non-fiction; identifying commercial messages within programmes (product placement); approaching advertising critically; being aware of the economic reasons behind any television programme; and, finally, consciously justifying one's own preferences.

So those aspects are prioritised that are related to the active and critical use of the media, which must allow us to enjoy it and, at the same time, counteract the negative aspects (therefore in no way are the media seen as neutral or completely positive). At the same time, we can see how this stance disregards other aspects such as audiovisual language, aesthetics, etc.

Finally, all this would justify including EAC within the subject of citizenship, a subject included within secondary curricula as from 2002 with the aim of helping students to develop complete comprehension of their role and responsibility as citizens in today's democracy. And, given the central role of the media in the public arena, the fact that young people can critically select, synthesise and evaluate the information reaching them through the media will be key to understanding how democratic society works and thereby to taking a more active part in it.

4. Content

EAC can include a lot of different kinds of content, given the complexity and breadth of its object of study. In this respect, D. Buckingham and K. Domaille (2001a), based on a study of EAC in different countries around the world, distinguish four broad areas of content:

- a) *Language*: where aspects would be included related to media aesthetics, narrative, genres and their conventions, the staging of each medium per se.
- b) *Representation*: where media messages and values would be studied, stereotyping, point of view, the aspect of realism, how media don't reflect reality "as it is" but rather construct a specific representation.

⁸ We have already seen that, in different contexts, various terms are used to refer to EAC. In the United Kingdom, as in the rest of the Anglo-Saxon countries, the term media literacy is used instead of media education.

⁹ Perspective that is already made clear in the sub-heading of the statement.

- c) *Production*: which would include both the study of the production context (industries, organisations, institutions, etc.), as well as the economic aspects, professional practices, the concept of *authorship*, etc.
- d) *Audience*: considering personal response and involvement in media, studying the role of media in constructing identity, different kinds of audience's response to media, how the audience is constructed or the media's influence on social life and the political system.

However, in very few cases do we find all these content categories within a country's education programmes, as some are normally given priority above others. As we will see below, what is ultimately taught to the pupils will depend on how EAC is incorporated into the curriculum: if it is treated as an independent subject or its content is distributed throughout various subjects (as well as what these subjects are, which include this content).

On the other hand, here we also find the debate as to whether EAC should include the creation of audiovisual texts on the part of pupils. This posture arouses a lot of mistrust, as it involves the risk of transforming EAC into a "workshop" aimed at professional practices, or of emphasising only the technical aspect, leaving to one side its potential as a tool to reflect and question the media (which is precisely what is happening at present with the teaching of ICT). However, this hesitation is being overcome and the need to unite theory and practice is becoming increasingly evident, as shown by the educational curricula of Anglo-Saxon countries or the statements made by Unesco on media education over the last twenty years¹⁰.

5. A subject in itself or distributed throughout different subjects?

Although there is currently quite an agreement among western countries as to the general objectives to be pursued by EAC¹¹, when these need to be specified in educational

curricula we find notable differences and some unresolved debates.

So there is some uncertainty as to whether media education should be an independent subject or whether it should be integrated within other subjects. The first option would allow the media to be dealt with from different angles, giving certain weight to EAC within the course of study, providing it was compulsory and had the same importance as the rest of the "traditional" subjects. However, the problem is that it is often optional instead of compulsory, understood more as a complement than as a subject with its own weight (there are practically no countries where audiovisual content are exclusively within one subject).

The second option is the most habitual and consists of an "across-the-board approach" whose aim is for EAC to have a constant presence in the school. In many cases, however, this content is not properly planned so that we find it "everyone and nowhere". At the same time, in general the skills and competences are not specified that students need to achieve in this subject. In most cases, in assessment, "traditional" content takes priority and media education content has a symbolic presence that goes no further than good intentions. Only in those countries where EAC is more developed, such as England and Canada, are the goals specified that need to be achieved, as well as what must be assessed. The absence of defined assessment criteria obviously contributes to media education's lack of status and to the fact that it ends up depending on the private initiative of the teaching staff.

All this is affected by another problem: the lack of teacher training. The fact that the content of media education usually cuts across different subjects and is included in all the other subjects means that several teachers, who are not experts in the field, need to have the necessary knowledge about the media's characteristics. The constant demands for teacher training in almost all documents analysing the status of EAC in different countries indicate that there is still a long way to go in this area.

When EAC is dispersed throughout the curriculum,

¹⁰ See note 6.

¹¹ Following the perspective of empowerment, mentioned at the beginning of this article.

depending on the subjects where it is included, certain types of content take priority over others. We will carry out a brief review of the different subjects where we can find EAC content around the world and some of the implications.

In most countries, such as England, Canada and Scandinavian countries, we find this content in language subjects, in line with the use of the term media literacy. This option is a result of the broader conceptualisation of literacy that does not focus only on the written word, arising from the change undergone by society with the arrival of the media.

At the same time, an attempt is being made to legitimise EAC by making audiovisual communication as important as written language, conveying seriousness to content that, in many cases, runs the risk of being seen as “secondary”, accessory, a “bit of fun” for the students.

We can find an example of this in the language curricula of the *Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training* (CAMET) in Canada¹², where it is said that “the vast spread of technology and media has broadened our concept of literacy. To participate fully in today’s society and function competently in the workplace, students need to read and use a range of texts”. So the term “text” is used to refer to any oral, written or visual message (including films, television programmes, comics, advertisements, posters, etc.). In the curriculum, “viewing” and “representing” have the same weight as “reading”, “listening”, “writing” and “speaking”.

With regard to the specific content taught to students, when audiovisual communication is introduced into the subject attention is usually placed on audiovisual language. At the same time, given that, when we talk about literacy, it is understood we are talking about learning how to *read* and *write*, in many cases the subject includes the production of audiovisual texts by the students (from a perspective more focused on creative expression and the suitable use of audiovisual language than on mastering the technology), thereby helping to legitimise this dual nature of EAC.

However, in practice, including all kinds of texts in this subject means that the volume of content is usually excessive, so that the audiovisual content ends up being subordinated to written language¹³ and is diluted within the subject. The degree of subordination depends to a large extent on the will (and capacity) of the teacher, as well as the time and resources available.

In addition to language, we can also find EAC content in subjects such as:

- Social science, where content is dealt with related to representation (stereotyping, realism, etc.) and audience (the media’s influence on different social processes);
- Plastic arts, focusing more on students creating audiovisual productions;
- Citizenship, where aspects of the media are dealt with related to critical interpretation, the values and ideology transmitted, the use made of them by the media (particularly news programmes), etc.
- Technology, focusing on how the equipment works;
- Music, studying the use of music in different audiovisual productions;
- Art history, focusing on aesthetic aspects, studying the different cinematographic movements, the relation between the media and other artistic disciplines.

All this is complemented with specific EAC subjects, which, as we have seen, are usually optional. These specific subjects can have different approaches, ranging from professionally oriented workshops (where students are introduced to the technical skills related to the media: direction, production, scripting, etc.) to more general theoretical subjects that attempt to cover different areas and provide a general and complete view of audiovisual communication: audiovisual language, audience response, critical thought, creative production, etc.

In short, what is finally taught to students depends on

12 Where the states of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are included. For more information on media education in Canada, see the Media Awareness Network (<http://www.media-awareness.ca>).

13 For example, in General Outcome no. 2 of the curriculum for English and Language Arts (ELA) of CAMET, it is explicitly stated that “the study of literature is the main component of the ELA curriculum”, a statement that makes it clear that the study of the media is still secondary and subsidiary content to that of written language.

where the content is placed and how the subjects are combined. For example, in Norway this content is distributed among the subjects of language, plastic arts, music and social science, in addition to a specialised but optional course. In England, in addition to the previously mentioned subjects, this content is also found in the curricula of citizenship and technology¹⁴.

From all we have seen so far, we can detect, in general, a certain lack of interest in giving EAC a central position within educational curricula¹⁵. In contrast with the difficulties to introduce media education, we find the rapid spread of the teaching of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education around the world, due, to a certain extent, to the optimism we are experiencing concerning their possibilities¹⁶. In some cases they are even confused with media education and the former ends up replacing the latter, something which means leaving to one side everything that EAC can provide in terms of reflecting on the media, given that the teaching of ICT is always more focused on technical knowledge (knowing how to use the equipment) than on a critical and creative perspective.

6. EAC in Catalonia

To finish, we will take a brief look at how these debates

apply to the Catalan situation. The education framework in Catalonia is currently going through a period of change. In May 2006 the LOE or public general Education Act was passed and the Catalan Education Act will soon be drawn up. So, although Catalonia has a long tradition, dating back to the seventies, of initiatives focusing on the development of teaching in audiovisual communication, here we will focus on this new framework in order to see the challenges and problems EAC will have to face over the next few years.

To start, we should note that audiovisual communication does not appear in the LOE as a specific subject in any school year, not in compulsory primary or secondary education or in the baccalaureate or "batxillerat" in Catalan. This act specifies that this content will be "transversal" or across the board, i.e. it will have to be worked on throughout the different areas (following what is being done around Europe)¹⁷. This will obviously determine how EAC will be incorporated into Catalan formal education.

Recently (April 2006) in Catalonia, the definitive text was published for the curriculum debate initiated in January 2005 in order to achieve a National Agreement for Education, a prior stage to drawing up the Catalan Education Act¹⁸. This document is proposed as "a more global reflection of the approaches that must frame curriculum design, the purposes the educational system must guarantee for students throughout their time at school

¹⁴ The standards of the educational curricula in the United Kingdom can be consulted at: <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk> [Consulted: 7 July 2005].

¹⁵ Some of the reasons given for this lack of interest in media education are the conservatism of the educational system, which makes it difficult for non-conventional content to break in; the resistance to considering popular culture as a subject worthy of study; and the potential danger of the "critical thought" that accompanies media education.

¹⁶ Optimism related to the concept of the information society.

¹⁷ Specifically the following is said: "Notwithstanding its specific treatment in some of the subjects of this year, reading comprehension, oral and written expression, audiovisual comprehension, information and communication technologies and education in values will be worked on in all areas". This paragraph (which appears both in primary education and in compulsory secondary education and the "batxillerat") is the only time EAC is mentioned.

¹⁸ This document has been drawn up based on the proposal by five committees of teachers from different educational stages (each committee dedicated to a specific area: language and communication, social and cultural area, science, art and personal development) with contributions from education professionals during the period of open debate.

and the aspects that must be prioritised at a general level and at each educational stage" (2006: 7). In other words, it sets out the framework that must be followed by the new curricula for Catalan education.

The introduction to this document emphasises the need for education to adapt to the new society based on information and communication, leaving behind models based on an industrial society. However, this emphasis, which could seem to increase the importance of EAC in teaching, is not directly translated into the texts of the different areas, in which EAC is present but always as secondary content.

In this same introduction, and as specified by the LOE, audiovisual communication is presented as "transversal" content, which must be dealt with throughout the different areas of knowledge. In principle, it might seem that this constant presence on the part of EAC provides it with a central role in teaching. However, the fact that it is compared with other content such as raising the awareness of sustainability, the peaceful resolution of conflict and the development of healthy behaviour¹⁹ suggests that audiovisual communication does not have the same weight as the "traditional" subjects. EAC is closer to the general values that must be transmitted to pupils rather than to tangible content (i.e. legitimised as an area of study).

If we analyse the texts for each area, references appear to audiovisual communication in four out of the five: the area of language and communication, the social and cultural area, the artistic area and the area of personal development and citizenship. Only in the scientific area is there no mention of EAC.

However, unlike what is happening in other countries, the fact that EAC is located in different areas does not mean that it is dealt with from different perspectives. In fact, it is curious how, in all four cases, emphasis is placed almost exclusively on critical interpretation, leaving other aspects to one side. The fundamental aim of studying audiovisual

communication will be to train critical viewers: pupils must learn how to access, select, organise and particularly interpret critically the information they receive from the media. Once again EAC is positioned closer to general values than specific content.

This approach refers us directly to the concept of *empowerment*, linking EAC to the concept of *citizenship*²⁰. So the media are not seen as essentially dangerous but rather as central institutions in society that we must be familiar with and know how to use in order to fully form a part of it. So they must be incorporated into teaching not to defend children and young people from their dangers but to transform them into fully-fledged citizens. From this perspective, the media are more an opportunity than a danger.

But, as we have mentioned before, problems arise when critical interpretation eclipses any other perspective of study of audiovisual communication, a problem that we can detect in this document. In fact, there are practically no references to any other aspect of EAC: only in the areas of language and creativity is there a brief reference to learning audiovisual language. This second area also refers to the practical aspect, i.e. the creation of audiovisual messages by pupils, who must master both the technical and the language aspects.

However, we do not wish to be excessively pessimistic in our analysis. Although the approach taken by this document leads us to expect some problems (especially with EAC ending up "everywhere and nowhere"), we will have to wait until it takes definitive shape in a curriculum in order to see how it will be put into practice. Obviously an attempt should be made to ensure that the inclusion of EAC in the classes does not depend solely on the goodwill of the teachers, and that is why it is very important to establish specific competences which the pupils must achieve throughout their education. This document at least shows the

19 Specifically the following is said: "However, raising awareness of sustainability, the peaceful resolution of conflict, responsible use of the media, development of healthy behaviour, equal opportunities, prevention of sexist conduct, the formation of democratic and citizenship values must be present throughout the curriculum and in educational actions" (pg. 6).

20 However, curiously, where the media appear least is in the area of personal development and citizenship, where they are only highlighted as a source of models for young people

determination of almost all areas to include audiovisual communication and the media in formal education.

Within the need to specify the competences students must achieve in order to legitimise the abstract concept of EAC and provide it with content, we can find other initiatives that have been carried out to date by the Department of Education that show some interest in the area and should be taken into account with a view to future curriculum design. An interesting example is the proposal drawn up by Aurora Maquinay and Xavier Ripoll, *Basic competence in audiovisual education*²¹. Here competence in audiovisual communication is positioned as a part of a basic competence in information and communication technologies (ICT).

This is an attempt to move the content related to ICT, which has been incorporated so easily into educational centres, towards a less technical and more critical focus, a more global view that also includes audiovisual communication. "We believe a new definition of *audiovisual education* is required, adding to it all the elements that new technologies provide us and taking very much into account the fact that mastering multimedia language also involves, and particularly so, a knowledge of the codes of audiovisual language".

We should also point out the need to teach reading and writing, linking EAC with literacy and underlining the importance of knowing how to decipher audiovisual messages and create new ones. This emphasis on the idea of audiovisual literacy is very interesting, as it legitimises EAC as an object of study and places it beyond simple "values". Already in the guidelines for the deployment of the curriculum for primary education, drawn up by A. Maquinay in 1994 and preceding this document, it was noted that "learning how to read and write today cannot be limited to verbal language but we must learn how to read and write images and sounds". Unfortunately, this concept does not appear in the National Agreement for Education.

At the same time, it is also useful to attempt to deal with audiovisual communication in all its complexity. So these competences are divided into historical and social impact, audiovisual communication (including agents of product and the production process, categories of the different media, literacy in media language and media representation) and technological literacy. The aim is for pupils to know, in general and in depth, all the aspects that go to make up audiovisual communication. At the same time, the proposal also sequences content by age and school year, understanding that a serious approach to EAC can only be achieved after specifying the content and competences that must be achieved through study.

7. Conclusions

After briefly examining some of the debates around the introduction of media education in formal teaching, reviewing different approaches, content and options for incorporating it within curricula, and seeing how these debates take shape specifically in Catalonia, we will end this article by pointing out some aspects we feel are worthy of consideration (particularly now, when we are developing a new education act).

Firstly, we may say that, in Catalonia, firm interest has been detected in incorporating EAC into formal teaching from almost all areas. It therefore seems that there is agreement insofar as the central role of the media in cultural, political and social life must be translated into its presence in school.

However, specifically, this incorporation has various problems, without doubt because of the difficulty of the educational system in introducing new content as a fully-fledged subject. So it seems that Catalan (and Spanish) formal education resists considering audiovisual communication as yet another area of study, comparable to

21 This proposal has its precedents in the documents also drawn up by Aurora Maquinay in the nineties (in 1994 the guidelines were published for the deployment of the audiovisual education curriculum in infant and primary education and, in 1996, that corresponding to secondary education) within the framework of educational reform in 1990 (the LOGSE or Act for the General Organisation of the Education), a reform with which audiovisual education received a definitive boost and found its place in formal education. Here, audiovisual education already appears as "transversal" and necessarily treated from an interdisciplinary perspective across all the areas that go to make up the school curriculum.

social science or language, and always positions it within the “ethereal” area of values (in the sense that it appears both everywhere and nowhere).

This leads us to ask whether EAC is really “across the board”. So, although the aim of incorporating EAC throughout the curriculum is to make audiovisual communication present in the educational system, we believe that it is not given, at any time, the legitimacy it deserves as an object of study per se. To this we should add a second problem, which we have already mentioned: namely the teaching staff. The fact that EAC is present throughout the curriculum means that the responsibility for training pupils lies with the teachers, who are not experts in the subject. For these reasons, we believe that serious thought must be given to whether distributing EAC throughout the curriculum is the most suitable option when incorporating it into schools and institutes. The best option might be to turn it into a specific (and compulsory) subject.

Finally, in order to legitimise education in audiovisual communication, we must also insist on the need to provide specific content without being restricted to the area of values (which, as we have mentioned, are more intangible). Critical interpretation can be positioned as the main objective of EAC but it can only be constructed on a solid base of content that covers all the subject's complexity. At the same time, it is also important to specify the competences pupils must achieve at each level and ensure that the introduction of EAC in the different subjects does not depend exclusively on the goodwill of the teachers.

Therefore, after so many years of debate, there is still a long way to go before EAC finds the place it deserves within the educational system.

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Manifesto for Audiovisual and Multimedia Education

In order to enhance this single themed edition of the *Quaderns del CAC*, the **Manifesto for audiovisual and multimedia education** has been chosen, which was drawn up and approved in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, towards the end of 2005.

Within the framework of the *1st International Meeting on Audiovisual Education*, which took place between the 5th and 7th of December 2005, the Galician government assembled a group of experts in audiovisual communication to debate the current status of audiovisual communication in the state of Spain and to present alternatives to this situation¹.

This Manifesto must not be seen as a representation of how the signatories consider audiovisual communication should be integrated within the curriculum. In other words, it avoids utopia. In the academic and cultural world, utopian approaches are essential to describe the horizon one wishes to reach. But in certain circumstances reality prevails.

This was the case when this manifesto was drawn up. Given that it was aimed primarily at the education authorities, both at the level of state and autonomous community, and that it was drawn up at a time when educational reform was already underway (and very advanced in its design), the fundamental criterion for producing the manifesto was one of what was possible. Only those proposals considered viable were included, what was believed to be feasible, assuming all kinds of conditioning factors within the context of the Spanish educational system.

In spite of this intended modesty and self-limitation, we believe that, almost one year after it was produced, the Manifesto continues to be valid as a means of asserting the importance of this area. That is why it has been included in this edition. We hope that, by publishing it, we will help to raise awareness of the need for content related to audiovisual communication to be significantly present in the curricula of formal education.

Manifesto for audiovisual and multimedia education

The importance of education in audiovisual communication and multimedia is explained by the growing presence of screens in everyday life: practically one hundred percent of homes have a television, with an average of more than two television sets per household in Spain; there is a progressive increase in the number of computers, increasingly more internet connections and the presence of mobile phones is more intense, as well as the use of video games, particularly among the young.

Over the last few years, the teaching of information and communication technologies (ICT) has focused, often as a priority, on learning how computers and their programs work. The fact that this teaching must be closely linked to the practices of interpreting the messages broadcast via the various screens and to encouraging communicative production as a means of developing creativity and critical autonomy has not been taken sufficiently into account.

¹ The details of the experts who signed the Manifesto are given in an appendix at the end of the article.

Based on these considerations, and within the current context of change in educational legislation, we believe it is vital for administrations to include and develop the following:

- Content specifically related to education in audiovisual communication and multimedia in **infant education** and in the following areas and subjects in **primary education**:
 - Knowledge of the natural, social and cultural environment.
 - Artistic education.
 - Catalan language.
 - Education for citizenship.
- Content specifically related education in audiovisual communication and multimedia in the following subjects in **secondary education**:
 - Catalan language.
 - Social science.
 - Plastic and visual education.
 - Education for citizenship
 - Technologies.
- An optional subject, which must be offered at all stages of secondary education, focusing on content related to audiovisual and multimedia education.
- Common training on education in audiovisual communication and multimedia, with a suitable allocation of credits, in the basic training for infant school teachers and primary school teachers. At the same time, across-the-board dimensions of education in audiovisual communication and multimedia should be included in the common training content for both degrees in order to ensure these are suitably incorporated into the different areas and subjects of the infant and primary teaching curriculum.
- Common training content on education in audiovisual communication and multimedia in the general directives governing the future postgraduate teacher training course for secondary school teachers (currently CAP).
- Training content on education in audiovisual communication and multimedia in the continued training programmes for teachers.

Appendix

List of the experts who signed the Manifesto

Agustín García Matilla, Carlos III University in Madrid
Joan Ferrés Prats, Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona
Alfonso Gutiérrez, E. U. Segovia Teacher Training Unit, University of Valladolid
Pablo del Río, University of Salamanca
José Antonio Gabelas, Spectus Group, in Zaragoza
Enrique Martínez-Salanova, University of Huelva
Miguel Vázquez Freire, Eduardo Pondal Institute, Santiago de Compostela
Manolo González, PuntoGal Association, Galicia
Manuel Dios Diz, Galician Institute of Education for Peace
Ángel Luis Hueso Montón, University of Santiago de Compostela
Aquilina Fueyo, University of Oviedo
Roberto Aparici, National Open University (UNED), in Madrid
Sara Pereira, University of Minho, Portugal

Conclusions of the White Paper: Education in the Audiovisual Environment

At the end of 2002, the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC) presented the *White Paper: Education in the audiovisual environment*. A public act announced that the objective of the work was to promote one of the primordial tasks assigned to the Council, namely attending to and protecting children and adolescents.

The Council itself indicated this clearly in its introduction to the work: “This *White Paper* arises from the belief that, in order to achieve an audiovisual environment in line with the ethical and educational values of a democratically advanced society, action must be taken on three complementary levels:

- Protecting children and young people
- Audiovisual policy with regard to children and young people
- Educational policy.”

The *White Paper*’s desire for integration is highlighted in the very process of producing the work. Work began on drawing up the paper only after having listened to the concerns, questions and preoccupations of the people, groups and institutions that, in one way or another, are related to education, audiovisual media and children and young people: from parent groups to media experts, including educational professionals and legal specialists.

Based on these premises, the *White Paper* is divided into three parts or blocks:

- A conceptual approach, in which the media environment is analysed regarding children and young people, fundamentally focusing on favourable and potentially harmful content for this kind of target.
- A presentation of the problems involved in the relationship between the media and children and young people, problems linked to media consumption by children and young people, the home and family, to the

media industry and the range of programmes on offer and the relationship between educators and the media.

- A number of conclusions and proposals.

Below we reproduced the third block of the *White Paper*, dedicated to its conclusions and proposals. There are twenty conclusions resulting from the analysis carried out previously. The proposals, on their part, are structured around five broad areas: that of knowledge and research; that of information, training and education; that of production and dissemination; that of involvement; and that of regulation and self-regulation.

A justification and goals are provided for each area, presenting the key fields, proposed lines of action and some specific initiatives.

The conclusions of the *White Paper: Education in the audiovisual environment* are reproduced here because, based on the legal and moral authority of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC), the *White Paper* is the local pragmatic framework for problems related to education in audiovisual communication.

Conclusions and proposals of the *White Paper: education on the audiovisual environment*

1. Audiovisual media construct a kind of constant *environment* in the lives of children and young people. They are an undeniable factor in children’s socialisation and also education or training.
2. The audiovisual environment is not a natural fact but a product of human and social practices, institutions and customs. It can therefore be transformed and offers the chance to create communication policies with the aim of adapting it to social needs and values.

3. It must be possible to ensure that the values of the audiovisual industry and market do not contradict the values of good citizenship and democratic society. Particularly public television, which must not shirk its statutory duty to protect, support and finance content related to these values.
4. The work must start with shared responsibility, resulting from a dialogue between the interested parties: industrial and operators, the administration and political institutions, educators, families and children and young people.
5. Some audiovisual content can be characterised as *hazardous* content because it contains potential risks that may or may not have direct or indirect consequences on the training of television audiences.
6. The growing and abusive consumption of the media, together with people's lack of training, mean that the impact of *hazardous* content can damage children, especially the most vulnerable among them in social and cultural terms.
7. Not all children or young people live in contexts that guarantee suitable compensation for the power of the media, i.e. an attentive family context or a critical family attitude.
8. Children's consumption of television is extensive and intensive, generally without family control. They consume not only programmes aimed at children but also generalist adult programmes.
9. Although it is believed that families have a great responsibility with regard to their children's consumption of television, it is evident that they cannot assume this responsibility if they lack information, and particularly if the media system does not assume its responsibility, in turn, to protect children.
10. Helping families, or shared responsibility, entails continual efforts to provide information on television content and supervision with regard to the content broadcast during children's viewing times. Good use should be made of those social associations and movements involved in the audiovisual environment.
11. Children are particularly tempting consumers for the audiovisual industry as they are easy to manipulate, which is highlighted in the media and advertising campaigns that accompany television programming in general.
12. Similarly, and paradoxically, there is little specific programming for children and what there is has tended to be replaced by programmes for adults. Catalan television is an exception among the television channels in Spain, as it has a channel dedicated exclusively to children and young people. But this initiative needs more recognition and financial support.
13. Tradition in children's programming in Catalonia should regain the vitality it used to have and must be promoted politically and financially.
14. The production of cartoons in Catalonia does not receive enough support in spite of having achieved highly significant renown abroad. Only 6% of the cartoons broadcast on Spanish television have been made in the country (of which 75% are Catalan). The little attention paid to domestic production in general and that aimed at children in particular does not correspond with the desire to maintain a specific cultural identity.
15. Educational audiovisual and multimedia production per se is almost non-existent. Private or public investment is very poor and a lot remains to be done in order to adapt this sector to teaching as a whole (curricular content and teachers) and to the use of new technologies. Investment in educational content on the internet is also very low. The absence of research on education and the new audiovisual environment is also alarming.
16. There is currently no public channel that is educational per se. Only some television time slots on some public channels in Spain and the autonomous communities offer programmes that support schools. This ratio is highly deficient when compared with most western countries.
17. A split has been observed between television and school that can be summarised in the following points:
 - The values that should be conveyed by education are not those that appear on and are promoted through television.
 - The inertia of traditional pedagogy does not provide appropriate methods for the new audiovisual environment.
 - The unlimited consumption of television will inevitably leave little time for study or sleep.
18. A good education in audiovisual communication must be taken into account in order to overcome this split;

audiovisual education is understood as comprising two inseparable objectives:

- To teach children to understand and express themselves in audiovisual language.
- To train them so that they know how to maintain a critical dialogue with the audiovisual reality and how to consume it in rational doses.

19. The effort and greater involvement of the administration is urgent to ensure that education in audiovisual communication reaches schools in a less voluntary way, both from a purely technological view as well as in terms of training how to interpret the media. The introduction of a new official curriculum should be promoted regarding education in communication.

20. It is vital that research into education and the media is promoted and coordinated. We are very far from having empirical indicators that assure a good knowledge of the field of study.

Area 1. Knowledge and research

Justification and goals

- **Justification:** Our community's knowledge of the audiovisual environment and education and of the effects of the media on children and young people is poor and also fragmented. No evidence has been detected of a change in trend in this situation. This means that the fears and hopes, the alarms and demands for calm in these affairs are based, above all, on international references or on voluntary contributions of all kinds rather than on specific studies and on a systematic knowledge of the subject.
- **Goals:** If we wish to raise awareness of the situation and, consequently, promote feasible action strategies, then observation must be encouraged, as well as systematic study and research into the area. This work must be carried out in collaboration with educational and governmental institutions and civil society. It is a question of stimulating systematic, relevant and up-to-date knowledge of the problems, risks and opportunities presented by the media and new technologies regarding education. And particularly to change the current trend ruled by ignorance and insignificance.

Key fields

- Educational uses of the media.
- Internet, new media and education.
- Hazardous content for children: violent, pornographic and consumerist.
- Effective strategies to protect children and young people.
- Video games, children and young people.
- Audiovisual production for formal and informal education.

Lines of action

- To promote the creation of permanent observatories in the different fields affected by this issue by means of collaboration right across different institutions and groups.
- To promote research and experiments applied to the area in question.
- To encourage operators to be responsible for this area and to act accordingly.

Specific initiatives

- Production on the part of the CAC of a periodic report on the area, including specific recommendations.
- Promotion, on the part of the CAC of a permanent seminar that helps to amalgamate the concerns of researchers, teachers, the industry and operators.
- To encourage studies on children and audiovisuals, as well as on audiovisual education based on strategic research plans.
- To ask public and private television channels for an annual report on their compliance with the mandate deriving from the protection of children.
- To assess the application of the Directive on labelling, drawn up by CAC.
- To create an observatory to study the consumption habits and preferences of children and young people of new screens, together with the Department of Youth and the Children's Institute and Urban World.

Area 2. Information, training and education

Justification and goals

- **Justification:** Information is almost non-existent on the effect of the media and on the virtual nature of children's, educational and young people's programmes. Parents, tutors and users in general know almost nothing of this area. In general, teachers and trainers feel uncomfortable regarding this aspect but professional training is very scarce. In broad terms, education in communication, generally, does not receive the consideration it deserves, which aggravates the current situation of ignorance and insignificance.
- **Goals:** To promote information, to stimulate training and establish a suitable education strategy. The aim is to provide an opportunity for creating and consolidating new sources of information and consultation on the area and to offer suitable training to media and education professionals and, ultimately, to promote a correct strategy of education in communication in all areas of the educational system.

Key fields

- Education in communication.
- Public information.
- Teacher training.
- Training communication professionals.

Lines of action

- Regulate information of the media on the area in question.
- Stimulate the creation of a sufficient information flow aimed at institutions, tutors, parents and users.
- Stimulate the creation of strategies for media education in compulsory education.
- Creation of resource centres for media education.
- Dissemination of programmes on media education and image analysis.

Specific initiatives

- Stimulate the creation of specialist training programmes in the audiovisual environment and education for media professionals.
- Ask educational institutions for a compulsory and up-to-date programme on the media and its corresponding teacher training plan.
- Regulate the responsibilities of the public media in the area of media education.
- Launch informative campaigns for parents and users and adult training programmes.
- Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of media education materials.

Area 3. Production and dissemination

Justification and goals

- **Justification:** The crisis in public television and the lack of commercial incentives have led to a reduction in the production of programmes for children and young people and of educational programmes in general. Current broadcasts in this area have therefore become containers disseminating international productions that almost exclusively aim to increase their audience share. Moreover, children's and educational programming is located in marginal broadcasting slots, often incompatible with the habits of their target audiences. This harms both society in general and the industry in particular.
- **Goals:** To stimulate the production of programmes for children and young people and educational programmes, and to ensure a real, effective alternative to these children's programmes in significant time slots for broadcasting. On the other hand, to motivate the multimedia industry aimed at children, young people and education.

Key fields

- Educational programmes and multimedia aimed especially at children and young people.
- New technological possibilities in developing new productions.
- Hazardous content and broadcast times.

Lines of action

- Production and dissemination of educational programmes and multimedia aimed especially at children and young people.
- Taking advantage of new technological possibilities in developing new productions.
- Supporting the industry dedicated to this field, particularly cartoons and multimedia.

Specific initiatives

- Establishing time slots on public and private television channels for children's and educational programming at suitable times.
- Creation of new children's and educational channels.
- Promote the combination of entertainment and education (e.g. by broadcasting cartoons in their original language).
- Setting criteria that allow hazardous content to be excluded at times when children will probably access broadcasts.
- Set criteria for the investment obligations of public media.
- Create specialised committees to communicate with the channels.
- Increase the proportion of subtitled programmes for the deaf and people with hearing difficulties in the protected time slots.

Area 4. Involvement

Justification and goals

- **Justification:** Ignorance of rights in the area of minors and the media, the lack of systematic education and the omissions of public and private media with regard to educational programmes for children and young people create a climate of minimal understanding and scarce involvement. Also, no regulatory measure and no initiative to stimulate, motivate or promote will take root if society is not actively involved in these issues.
- **Goals:** The aim is therefore to promote an awareness of the need to involve and to create the appropriate lines so that citizens can take part by debating, giving their opinion and cooperating in the areas that affect them. In order to achieve this, it is vital that the audiovisual debate be included on the political agenda and become an issue of public consideration.

Key fields

- Public opinion and citizen and media groups.
- Political and educational institutions.
- Educators and trainers.
- Local television stations.

Lines of action

- Cooperation between the different media, educational and cultural institutions.
- Creation of citizen participation forums.
- Creation of platforms to related educators and the media.
- Cooperation initiatives to produce and carry out joint projects.
- Improvement in the conditions for children, young people and educators to access the media.

Specific initiatives

- Creation of educational councils in the public media.
- Drawing up a citizen charter of rights related to the media.
- Promoting the Audience Ombudsman (CAC) at schools.
- Studying the possible link between local television stations and the educational system.

Area 5. regulation and self-regulation

Justification and goals

- **Justification:** The media system for adults cannot meet the tutoring and protective requirements of children. In this respect, general regulations cannot meet the specific requirements resulting from children's particular sensitivity.
- **Goals:** For this reason, it is necessary to establish specific regulations that define, in an agreed and participative manner, the duties of the media and educators regarding minors and the educational universe in general.

Key fields

- Analyse the suitability of the “watershed” or protected time slot to the realities of family life.
- Broadcasts of violent and pornographic material.
- Regulate of advertising and propaganda before the watershed.
- Regulate the production objectives of public media.
- Establish special procedures to supervise and act in the area of harmful content for minors.
- Establish production standards.
- Regulate the presence of children in the media.

Lines of action

- Agreement with television stations to establish their commitments regarding young audiences.
- Citizen consensus on harmful and valuable content.
- Regulation of broadcast times regarding hazardous content for children and young people.

Specific initiatives

- Encouraging television stations to extend the “watershed” or protected time slot.
- Periodic review of regulations on labelling and evaluation of the effects.
- Drawing up a self-regulatory code for hazardous content or a quality charter for children's programming.
- Regulation of the investment made in this area by public media.
- Study more restrictive regulations for advertising aimed at minors.

Health and Radio: an Analysis of Journalistic Practice

Amparo Huertas and Maria Gutiérrez

- *The generalist radios, public and private, broadcast informative news and spreading products that approach the topic of the health. The article summarize the main results of a research on the treatment and diffusion of these contents in the radio.*

The information about topics of health have a direct influence in the daily life of the citizenship. That's the reason why the radio broadcasters must design responsible policies in order to promote habits and healthy guidelines of behaviour.

Keywords

Health, Radio, Programming, Catalonia, Spain, Journalism

This article is a summary of the research entitled “Presence and treatment of health content in generalist radio programming” financed by the Catalonia Broadcasting Council. The analysis has been carried out on the programming for the 2004/2005 season of all generalist broadcasters with coverage in Catalonia, Spanish (COPE, Onda Cero, Onda Rambla Punto Radio, RNE-Radio 1 and SER) and Catalan channels (Catalunya Ràdio, COMRàdio, RAC 1 and Ràdio 4, as well as the old Ona Catalana)¹

The study has focused on radio productions that identify their main theme as *medical and/or health*, and it distinguishes between specialised programmes and sections of programmes (news and advertising). In the first case, a subdivision has been established that differentiates between three types of broadcast: those specialising in health in general (conventional and alternative/ complementary medicine), those that have a para-scientific approach and, lastly, those radio productions that develop specific health areas (defined using specific medical specialties and/or aimed at specific groups of the population).

1. Introduction. Health and communication

According to the WHO (World Health Organisation), health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. Health is therefore something more than medical postulates and goes beyond the individual, as social behaviour also influences personal well-being. From this global perspective, it is obvious that the media must play a significant role in disseminating medical and health information.

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¹ The full study can be consulted at www.cac.cat

What is true is that health has always formed part of the usual content of the media. There have even been key moments in the history of mass communication related to this area. For example, the outbreak of AIDS as leading media content in the eighties of the last century as a result of the public confession made by the North American actor, Rock Hudson, a victim of this disease. At first, the media believed this alteration of the organism to be a stigma related to certain social sectors, specifically homosexuals, and afterwards they gradually turned it into an essential concern for everyone (Sánchez Noriega, 1997).

This presence is now increasingly more notable. There is a calendar of commemorations dedicated to specific illnesses, something which regularly turns them into subjects of journalistic interest and may even be used as a reason to organise big televised events, such as the so-called *telethons*. Advances in the study of bioscience, and the consequent ethical debate, have also led to an increase and evidence of their treatment on the part of the media. Moreover, we should also note the appearance of communication offices within companies in the sector, especially in health centres and pharmaceutical industries, something which has facilitated access for journalists to this kind of information.

But apart from this presence for motives strictly related to contemporary issues, the disseminating function carried out by the media would be incomplete without the inclusion of health in the themes they cover. And this also continues to be one of the duties of the media: to provide citizens with basic health knowledge in order to facilitate the management of their own well-being and of their environment.

In this context, the role of radio, which has extensive experience in handling this kind of content, has been quite significant. In the collective memory of Catalonia are titles such as *Consultorio Sentimental Elena Francis*, created in 1948 at Ràdio Barcelona and sponsored by the Instituto de Belleza Francis (Balsebre, 2002). This programme, aimed basically at a female audience, covered among other issues those related to aesthetics and hygiene. And if we look at current programming, we can find programmes that have been broadcast for more than 10 years. This is the case of *Salut i Qualitat de Vida* and *La Rebotica*, currently broadcast by Onda Rambla Punto Radio and COPE, respectively.

2. General description of the methodological process applied to the research

There have been three main aims of “Presence and treatment of health content in generalist radio programming”: to determine the incidence on programming as a whole of radio content that is specialised in health, to investigate how this content is treated by applying indicators to evaluate its quality and, lastly, to present proposals of good practice or recommendations.

In order to cover these general aspects, a methodology has been designed that includes both the gathering of quantitative data as well as the qualitative evaluation of the material under study. The application of an analytical file and the subsequent exploitation of the data with computer support (Microsoft Excel) have allowed us to investigate the following aspects more thoroughly:

- **Programming strategies.** Although it was important to detect the relative weight of specialised broadcasts in the whole content offered on radio, it was also important to determine the possible cases of direct competition arising when more than one broadcaster coincides in terms of day and time for the broadcast of specialist content, as both aspects determine audience consumption patterns. Moreover, the products have been conveniently identified according to type of broadcaster (public or private) and the area of coverage (Catalan or Spanish), which has allowed us to compare the differences, similarities and even the existence of common patterns of behaviour.
- **Types of programmes and sections: programme genres and format.** Firstly, the programmes have been classified according to genre. From the whole range of generic categories, only three were necessary to apply: news, news-entertainment and participation. The format used has also been studied (magazine, interview programmes, etc.). In the case of sections, this issue has been resolved by paying particular attention to the presence or absence of a head collaborator. If this was the case, their basic details were gathered (gender and profession).
- **Characteristics of the units of analysis: journalistic genres.** This point has allowed us to delve more deeply into how content is treated formally and the conclusion

has been very evident: the interview is the most frequently used journalistic genre in programmes, news sections and advertising sections. Especially people invited by each broadcaster to talk about health, whose basic details have also been gathered (gender and professional sector represented).

- **Targets and audience.** When specifying the targets for each programme and section (informative and commercial), we have taken into account those defined by the broadcaster itself and those deduced from the recordings. Although most products are aimed at a general public, a logical fact given the generalist nature of the broadcasters analysed, it was also necessary to check the appearance of broadcasts aimed at specific sectors of the population. On the other hand, this observation has helped us to analyse the degree of adaptation of specialist language to the potential listeners.
- **The presenter, production team and figure of collaborator.** The main aim of this point has been to investigate the degree of specific knowledge of journalism and health on the part of those people responsible for the broadcasts, in addition to the specific preparation for each broadcast.
- **Structure.** This point has allowed us to verify whether programmes have a set or variable structure. An analysis of the findings has shown that the organisational stability of content, in addition to helping selective reception, is directly linked to journalistic work of a serious nature. However, a variable structure is often a reflection of the excessive influence of advertising interests when selecting themes. With regard to sections, this has helped us observe whether the structure facilitates differentiation between informative and commercial sections.
- **Thematic and especially media content.** Based on this research, we have been able to determine the media specialities and themes that are more and less present in all radio content. We have distinguished between *conventional medicine*, *alternative/complementary medicine* and *para-scientific perspective*. A study has also been included of themes related to psychology, although this speciality is not recognised by doctors' colleges.
- **Weight and characteristics of commercial content.** In addition to studying advertising sections included within

programmes, we have also investigated the existence or absence of advertising references (hidden advertising) in informative sections. On the other hand, and using all the content, we have also recorded the industrial and business sectors involved as advertisers. In this way we have looked more closely at advertising as a conditioning factor of health-related content related in the media.

- **Participation.** Based on the premise that one must be very careful when answering health-related questions on air, this point has served to see how different programmes handle listener participation. The contributions of listeners have been studied (gender, information provided and consultation type), the channels of participation activated (telephone, email, etc.) and the answers given by the radio channels (type of recommendations, medical speciality dealt with, appearance of names of drugs, etc.).
- **Internet resources.** All broadcasters in the sample have a portal that provides information on programming and is a means to communicate with those in charge of programmes and sections, among other services. In this point, we have analysed how the resources have been used that are placed on the internet and made available to radio listeners specifically in the area of health.

One of the first difficulties in this analysis was specifically delimiting the universe to be studied, particularly bearing in mind that our objective was to cover everything. Unlike television, access to information on radio programming is not easy and, in the case of locally broadcast programmes provided by national stations and news sections, there might not be any source of documentation available. And the only way to identify advertising sections included in programmes is by listening. Finally, through listening to different programmes and consulting the channels' websites, we were able to define a standard week for all the general content offered by radio corresponding to the 2004/2005 season and subsequently define the sample, which was suitably and totally recorded.

- **Selecting the sample of informative programmes and sections.**

With regard to programmes, 13 spaces were detected on health, of which 7 tackled the theme generally, 2 treated it from a para-scientific perspective and 4 were

Table 1. Breakdown of the sample of specialised health programmes (2004/2005)

Broadcaster	Programme	Thematic content	Editions analysed	No. units of analysis
Catalan broadcasters				
COPE	<i>Tribuna mèdica (D)</i>	General	4	8
	<i>La rebotica</i>	General	4	41
Onda Cero	<i>La salud en Onda Cero</i>	General	3	21
	<i>Un mundo sin barreras</i>	Disabled	4	6*
Onda Rambla Punto Radio	<i>Salut i qualitat de vida (D)</i>	General	5	31
	<i>Salud y calidad de vida</i>	General	3	20
	<i>Sense fronteres (D)</i>	Para-scientific	3	15
	<i>Luces en la oscuridad</i>	Para-scientific	2	12
SER	<i>Vivir en salud</i>	General	4	4
	<i>La salud en la SER</i>	General	2	11
RNE- Radio1	<i>El club de la vida</i>	Elderly	10	9*
Spanish broadcasters				
COMRàdio	<i>Sense recepta</i>	Psychology	3	6*
Ràdio 4	<i>Punt G de les matinades</i>	Sex	4	2*
TOTAL	13 programmes		51	186

D: broadcast specifically for the local area.

*Only the units related to health have been analysed in depth.

Source: Authors' own work

Table 2. Breakdown of the sample of fixed informative sections on health of Catalan broadcasters (2004/2005)

Broadcaster	Programme	Section/Duration	Theme	No. editions analysed
Catalunya Ràdio	<i>La solució (MG)</i>	In corpore sano/50'	Physiotherapy (sport)	1 (b)
		Centre mèdic/45'	Hospital medicine	1 (a)
		Naturalesa humana/50'	Psychiatry	1 (a)
		(No title)/45'	Psychiatry/psychology	1 (a)
		Fem dissabte/45'	General medicine	1 (b)
	<i>Els matins de Catalunya Ràdio (MG Matí)</i>	El desig/15'	Sexuality	2 (a)
COMRàdio	<i>Catalunya Plural (MG Tarda)</i>	Les claus de l'èxit/30'	Psychology	3 (a)
		L'autòpsia/30'	News	3 (a)
		Còctel de passions/40'	Psychology/sexuality	3 (a)
	<i>Dies de ràdio (MG cap de setmana)</i>	Millor és possible/20'	Varied (mainly nutrition)	1 (a)
	<i>Tots per tots (MG especialitzat)</i>	Un ronyó per herència/15'	Urology (nephritic illnesses)	4 (b)
Ona Catalana	<i>Accents (MG Matí)</i>	Salut i farmàcia/15'	Pharmacy	2 (a)
	<i>Un altre món (MG Tarda)</i>	(No title)/15'	Psychology/sexuality	4 (c)
RAC 1	<i>El món a Rac 1 (MG matí)</i>	La persona/25'	Psychiatry	3 (b)
			Nutrition and diet	3 (a)
	<i>Tot és possible (MG)</i>	(No title)/25'	Nutrition and diet	2 (a)
Ràdio 4	<i>Amb molt de gust (MG Tarda)</i>	(No title)/20'	Sexuality/News	1 (c)
TOTAL	17 programmes			36

Source: Authors' own work

specialised in a specific area. The latter, although their content was not 100% dedicated to health-related issues, were included in the study when it was clear that the broadcaster was giving priority to this area. With regard to informative sections, a total of 32 were detected, of which 17 were broadcast by Catalan stations and 15 by Spanish stations (only one being broadcast locally by a national channel). Once this universe had been established, a representative sample was selected. The size of the sample was determined based on the frequency each of the broadcasts (the greater the number of broadcasts of the same programme during one week, the more editions of this programme were included in the sample for analysis). 119 products were studied in total (51 different editions of all the programmes, entailing the study of 186 units of analysis and 68 examples of all the sections).

• Selecting the sample of advertising sections

After detecting which programmes appear more often, the final sample size was determined by the frequency of the spaces affected. Given that there is no stable programming policy, unlike informative programmes and sections, it has not been possible to cover the whole universe and, therefore, this sample cannot be considered as representative of all the advertising sections of the 2004/2005 season. However, the period of time recorded, greater than two months, has allowed us to analyse 29 different advertising sections from 26 different advertisers.

3. Programming strategies

Health content is associated primarily with two programme

Table 3. Breakdown of the sample of fixed informative sections on health of Spanish broadcasters (2004/2005)

Broadcaster	Programme	Section/Duration	Theme	No. editions analysed
COPE	<i>La mañana</i> (MG Matí)	<i>¿Qué me pasa doctor?/25'</i>	General medicine	2 (a)
		<i>¿Qué me pasa doctor?/25'</i>	Paediatrics	2 (a)
		<i>¿Qué me pasa doctor?/25'</i>	Geriatrics	2 (a)
		<i>¿Qué me pasa doctor?/25'</i>	Cosmetic and reparative surgery	2 (a)
	<i>Las tardes con Cristina</i> (MG Tarda)	<i>Amor y sexualidad/25'</i>	Sexuality	3 (a)
	<i>Los Decanos</i> (Informatiu amb entrevistes)	(No title)/20'	General medicine	1(a)
ONDA CERO	<i>Gomaespuma</i> (MG Tarda)	(No title / Fundación Gomaespuma)/15'	Varied	2 (d)
Onda Rambla Punto Radio	<i>Campoy en su punto</i> (MG Tarda)	Tren del placer/20'	Varied	1(a)
	<i>Punto en boca</i> (MG cap de setmana)	Tren del placer/20'	Psychology/ Sexuality	2 (a)
RNE Radio 1	<i>Punto en boca</i> (MG cap de setmana)	Puesta a punto/15'	Family psychotherapy	3 (a)
	<i>De la noche al día</i> (MG Matinada)	(No title)/50'	Psychology	2 (a)
SER	<i>No es un día cualquiera</i> (MG cap de setmana)	(No title)/10'	History and health	1(c)
	<i>Hoy por hoy</i> (MG Matí)	(No title)/10'	History and health	3 (a)
	<i>La ventana</i> (MG Tarda)	Sexo a media tarde/15'	Sexuality	3 (a)
SER FM (local)	<i>El buscaraons</i> (MG)	(No title)/30'	Psychology	3 (a)
TOTAL	15 programmes			32

Source: Authors' own work

Table 4. Breakdown of the sample of health sections for exclusively promotional purposes * (2004/05)

Broadcaster	Programme	Product	Sector	No. editions analysed
COPE	<i>La mañana</i> (MG Matí)	Obergrass	Nutrition	1
	<i>Las tardes con Cristina</i> (MG Tarda)	Keren 2	Hair health	1
	<i>La luna en COPE</i> (MG Matinada)	Bio 10/Artifor	Alternative therapies	1
		Sindon/Tersa	Alternative therapies	1
	<i>Al sur de la semana</i> (MG cap de setmana)	Cofilac	Nutrition	1
	<i>Los Decanos</i> (Informatiu amb entrevistes)	Sistema integral Antidex	Prevention in the home	1
COPE FM (local)	<i>La gran Barcelona</i> (MG)	Clínica Teknon	Health centre	1
	<i>Odette i tu</i> (MG)	Suplements Oikos	Alternative therapies	1
		Clínica Cruz Blanca	Health centre	1
	<i>El gabinete</i> (MG)	Centro Oftalmología Bonafonte	Health centre	1
		Centro Estética Dental Avanzada	Health centre	1
		Imagine	Health centre	1
ONDA CERO	<i>Herrera en la Onda</i> (MG Matí)	Almagra Forte	Nutrition	1
		Veneo	Nutrition	1
	<i>Gomaespuma</i> (MG Tarda)	Biofrutas Pascual	Food	1
		Zumo Sol Pascual	Food	1
ONDA CERO (local)	<i>Això no és tot</i> (MG)	Centre on aprendre a respirar	Health centre	1
Onda Rambla Punto Radio	<i>Protagonistas</i> (MG Matí)	Natur House	Nutrition	1
		Vive Soy Soja (Pascual)	Food	1
	<i>Punto en boca</i> (MG cap de setmana)	Minut Made	Food	1
		Instituto de Terapias Integrales y Enseñanzas Energéticas	Alternative therapies	1
Onda Rambla Punto Radio (local)	<i>La ciutat de tots</i> (MG)	Policlínica Barcelona	Health centre	2
		Life Salut	Leisure and health	1
		Centre Estar Bene	Health centre	3
SER	<i>La ventana</i> (MG Tarda)	Butterfly Master Plus	Rehabilitation	1
SER FM (local)	<i>El buscacons</i> (MG)	Institut d'oftalmologia Tres Torres	Health centre	1
TOTAL	26 programmes			29

Source: Authors' own work

*It's not a probabilistic sample, since not all the items of the universe have the same possibilities of being chosen for the sample.

genres: information and infotainment. The first covers all programmes that deal with health in general, while the second contains the rest of the sample analysed.

A clearly different behaviour appears with Catalunya Ràdio. This broadcaster, which only has news sections, includes almost all of them in the doyen of information programmes on public Catalan radio, namely *La solució*. The assiduity and duration of these sections means that some of their editions may be considered as specialised. In this way, Catalunya Ràdio shows a clear orientation towards a more information-based treatment.

As with the rest of the themed specialisations, such as the economy or culture, health does not achieve a very high percentage presence within the context of the overall programmes on offer. If we calculate the approximate percentage occupation of the most stable specialised content, i.e. including news programmes and sections, we can see that the average occupation rate for health never exceeds 4% of the weekly content offered in any case, with the exception of Onda Rambla Punto Ràdio. This station's weekly health-related content may exceed 5%, mainly because it broadcasts a local programme every day

throughout the week (*Salut i qualitat de vida*), which is broadcast throughout Spain on Saturdays (*Salud y calidad de vida*), as well as having the only two titles that deal with health from a para-scientific perspective, *Sense fronteres* (local) and *Luces en la oscuridad*.

As with the rest of specialised programmes, most of the broadcasts dedicated entirely to health are also concentrated at the weekend and the most common strategy is a single weekly broadcast placed on Saturday afternoon, before the sports programme. The result is direct and intense confrontation. In other words, the audience receives limited specialised content that largely coincides in terms of scheduling, a situation that makes it difficult to consume based on prior selection, also taking into the fact that only *La salud en Onda Cero* can be heard at any time from the channel's website. On this point, we should also mention particularly the case of Onda Rambla Punto Radio. The scheduling of its para-scientific programme, *Sense fronteres*, at 14.30 on Saturdays partly coincides with the rest of the specialised content offered and is just before *Salud y calidad de vida*, leading to ill-advised horizontal and vertical interrelations. The reason is that its time of broadcast favours direct competition between two highly differentiated approaches, para-scientific and scientific, both within the broadcaster as well as with the rest of the content offered, a fact that could lead to doubt and confusion among the audience.

Concerning the location on the grid of specialised news sections, the dominant strategy consists of scheduling them within the macro-spaces of infotainment with highly consolidated audience levels. For example, *La mañana* (COPE) includes four sections on different days of 25 minutes' duration, and *Catalunya Plural* (COMRàdio) offers three sections on different days of over 30 minutes' duration.

Lastly, the advertising sections, which are logically on private stations. In the 2004-2005 season this kind of section was detected within programmes by COPE, Onda Cero, Onda Rambla Punto Radio and SER, all private Spanish broadcasters. It should be noted that, unlike the news sections, they have a highly significant presence within local magazine programmes, a very attractive space for advertisers interested in the Catalan market. Based on data obtained in this study, it can be shown that the programmes with most commercial sections related to health were *La ciutat*

de tots (Onda Rambla Punto Radio) and *Odette y tú* (COPE-OM). COPE even presents specially designed formulas to include advertising. *El gabinete* is a clear example of this, being structured entirely around this kind of content.

4. The differentiated role of public radio

Public radio, both Spanish and Catalan, has common characteristics that, in general, differentiate it from private radio.

- Public radio avoids commercial interests in dealing with health within its programmes. Although it is true that the Spanish station RNE (Radio 1 and Ràdio 4) is forbidden any advertising income, those that can make use of this source of financing, Catalunya Ràdio and COMRàdio, always opt for traditional radio ads, which are clearly differentiated from the actual programmes (and which have not formed part of this research). Only one exception has been detected. This is the section *Centre mèdic*, within the programme *La solució* (Catalunya Ràdio), which had the presence of different professionals from the Centre Mèdic Teknon, a company that sponsors the space according to the announcements made by the specific radio ads.
- Public radio contains the greatest number of spaces aimed at specific groups of the population. Although this kind of content is very small, we must not forget that the broadcasters analysed are generalist, and public radio makes its differentiated role very clear by introducing spaces aimed at specific targets. So RNE-Radio 1 broadcasts the only programme for the elderly, *El club de la vida*, where not only health issues are dealt with. The most notable exception appears on the private station, Onda Cero, with *Un mundo sin barreras*. Sponsored by the ONCE Foundation, its aim is to integrate people with disabilities into society.

5. The peculiarities of private Catalan radio

Within all the content offered by private radio, we must distinguish between the Spanish and Catalan stations. While the Spanish stations cover the three kinds of radio

products analysed in this study (specialised programmes and informative and commercial sections), private Catalan stations only have informative sections within non-specialised programmes.

Compared with all the content offered by private Spanish stations, the number of products from private Catalan radio may be considered low and its relationship with commercial purposes is practically inexistent. This last peculiarity is even more significant when we observe that, as has been mentioned before, many of the spaces produced by Spanish stations for local audiences include a significant number of advertising interviews, mostly of health centres located in Barcelona. In other words, an interest is detected on the part of the Catalan health sector towards radio advertising, but it seems as if it only receives a response from the Spanish stations within their local programming.

6. Main objectives: dissemination and prevention

Dissemination and prevention appear as the main explicit aims in all the kinds of products analysed. Even in broadcasts with a commercial basis and in para-scientific spaces at least one of these interests can be observed.

Looking more closely at the obligation to provide the audience with a means to look after their health, these broadcasters promote patterns and habits of behaviour aimed at preventing possible illnesses. The point of departure is based on the idea that the individual is responsible for his or her own well-being. Perhaps this is why all the programmes analysed have coincided in giving the following advice or recommendations insistently:

- **Visit the doctor if you notice anything different.** Sick people are encouraged to following the treatments recommended by their doctor and to consult a specialist if they have any doubts.
- **Keep a positive attitude at all times.** In this respect, the most typical arguments refer to pre- and post-surgical situations.
- **Follow a correct diet.** The Mediterranean diet has been the most highlighted. Normally, programmes follow a coherent discourse, although divergent messages have also been found within the same space as a result of broadcasting advertising from the food sector. One of

the aspects that most catches the attention is that industrial products enriched with certain properties may be recommended and, at the same time, listeners are not given advice on products that already contain these ingredients naturally.

- **Do physical exercise.** This advice is quite recurrent. Two ideas have flourished in most discourses. On the one hand, the fact that, in order to do exercise, you do not necessarily have to go to a gym and, on the other, the recommendation to walk every day for more than 20 minutes.
- **Avoid self-medication.** In general, this is focused on the problems that can result from administering drugs without a prescription.
- **Explicit defence of the Spanish health system.** The public health system has been treated excellently by all the broadcasters, apart from para-scientific programmes where, even explicitly, private health cover may be recommended. This clear defence of the public health system has been reflected fundamentally in the open recommendation to attend public centres and also by the percentage of representatives from this sector who have taken part in the broadcasts analysed. Out of the total guests that have taken part in the spaces representing a health centre, 60% come from the public health system. *La Rebotica* (COPE) warrants a special mention, where the people in charge often broadcast from different provincial capitals, which they take advantage of to invite the people in charge of health for the autonomous community in question, be they ministers or directors of hospital centres. However, in spite of all this contradictory actions have been detected, such as *La Salud en Onda Cero* where, although its discourse is in favour of the public health system, more guests are invited from the private sector.

7. Dominance of simple language

The interest in disseminating has also been evident in the use of mostly simple language, where the broadcaster makes an effort to explain the concepts and technical points that may hinder comprehension of the message. However, examples have also been found where pseudo-scientific

language has been used. Although these are a few particular cases, most of which come from advertisements for unrecognised therapies, it should be noted that this practice harms the image of alternative medicine accepted by professional colleges. Specifically, there are two types:

- Use of vocabulary not recognised by the scientific sector, the use of which is often justified, curiously, by stating the need to use jargon. An example: people talk about “psycho-biological therapies” instead of “therapies of regression to the past”, to try to give them a more scientific image.
- Use of vocabulary recognised by the scientific sector but distorting the meaning. In this way, although the terms exist, they cannot be explained, as this would reveal their inappropriate use. For example, the ITIEE centre is presented as specialised in “applied psychology” but at no point is the real meaning of the initials explained on air (“Instituto de Terapias Integrales y Enseñanzas Energéticas” or institute or integral therapies and energy education).

8. Production of content

Given the repercussion this content can have on the audience, it seems evident that the people in charge of producing it should have some specific knowledge of journalism and health. In the case of programmes, the most typical situation is that the person present and the person directing are one and the same, with a career dedicated almost entirely to this area. In fact, there are editors with more than 10 years’ experience in the area of audiovisual communication and health, the voices of whom are automatically related with medical issues: Dr. Bartolomé Beltrán (Onda Cero), Mr. Ricardo Aparicio (Onda Rambla Punto Radio) and Mr. Enrique Beotas (COPE). As can be seen, only Dr. Beltrán meets the profile of doctor-communicator. The rest are specialised journalists.

However, an analysis has shown that the fact that the director/presenter is a professional with extensive experience is not sufficient guarantee of the quality of the final product. Documentation and preparation prior to each broadcast is also essential. In some units of analysis, a certain abuse has been noted of improvisation such as an

absence of references to information sources, the provision of imprecise data or a disordered development of the interviews.

Having a production team is therefore fundamental to select, organise and document the issues that must be dealt with in each broadcast. *La Rebotica* (COPE) and *La Salud* (SER) are particularly good examples of this. There are two producers behind these two programmes. Jurcam Producciones is the production house specialising in radio in charge of the COPE space and Contenidos e Información de Salud, SL, a company that publishes the *Gaceta Médica* and the e-zine *El Global*, supports *La Salud*.

Another way of providing quality content is by means of a stable expert collaborator; this is the strategy employed by *La Salud en Onda Cero* and *Vivir en Salud* (SER), and also a large number of the informative sections. These collaborators are fundamentally doctors or specialised journalists.

In general, the profile of collaborator, and also of the one-off expert guest, corresponds mostly to doctor/male. It seems obvious that, if the illness is the main theme, the medical collaborators will play a fundamental role as a source of information. However, a reason has not been found to justify the high presence of male professionals. The small number of women present coincides, however, with the fact that women dominate certain products, specifically as a collaborator responsible for informative sections focusing on psychology, sexology and nutrition/diet. Although the most worrying figure is that practically all collaborators on para-scientific programmes are women, a kind of content whose main target is also female.

9. Presence of different medical specialties

Health problems are the *leitmotiv* of most of the radio products analysed, irrespective of whether the content is merely informative or with a commercial agenda. Most of the units analysed have dealt with a specific illness, providing information on its characteristics and symptoms, with the aim of encouraging prevention. This information is clearly aimed at the ill person, with little attention paid to carers and family. This implies that information on the more immediate news (congresses, scientific discoveries, employment problems in the health sector, etc.) is in the hands, almost

exclusively, of strictly news programmes (main news services and hourly bulletins).

But not all specialties occupy the same time on air. Moreover, this study has established a direct relationship between the theme in question and the kind of radio product:

- Conventional medicine, with endocrinology/nutrition standing out significantly from the rest of the specialties, has been the main content of programmes dealing with health from a general perspective. All basically deal with physical well-being.
- Psychology, a specialty not recognised by the Official College of Doctors of Barcelona, has been the main theme dealt with by the rest of the content offered. This specialty has focused on mental and social well-being,

with psychologists being the undeniable protagonists of this area of programming.

- The presence of alternative or complementary medicine is minimal and, unfortunately, radio practice has tended to place it within para-scientific programmes, mixing specialties that are already recognised by the WHO with other practices such as esotericism. This harms the consideration deserved by alternative medicine and at the same time is a symptom of the manipulation affecting the sector.

In parallel with the minority presence of alternative medicine, the study also notes a very limited presence of rare illnesses. The WHO has described more than 5,000

Table 5. Medical specialties dealt with on specialised programmes and in informative sections on health (2004/2005) (Number of units of analysis-programmes and of editions-sections)

Specialties	Programmes	Informative sections	Total
Conventional medicine*			
Allergies	6	1	7
Angiology	1	-	1
Cardiology	5	-	5
Surgery	4	3	7
Dermatology	7	-	7
Endocrinology/Nutrition	25	8	33
Stomatology/ Orthodontics	4	-	4
Pharmacology	7	2	9
Geriatrics	3	2	5
Gynaecology	3	5	8
Family medicine	2	1	3
Preventative medicine	1	-	1
Neurology	4	-	4
Ophthalmology	4	-	4
Oncology	9	-	9
Ear, Nose and Throat	2	-	2
Paediatrics	2	3	5
Pneumology	3	-	3
Psychology**	1	26	27
Psychiatry	1	6	7
Rheumatology	3	-	3
Traumatology and orthopaedics	1	-	1
Urology	2	3	5
TOTAL	100	60	160
Alternative medicine			
Phytotherapy	3	-	3
Homeopathy	1	-	1
Sintergetica	1	-	1
Sophrology	1	-	1
TOTAL	6	-	6

Source: Authors' own work (only informative units have been included that explicitly deal with one or more specialties).

* Medical specialties according to the Official College of Doctors of Barcelona.

** Psychology is not recognised as a medical specialty.

illnesses of this type, 80% of which are congenital. This world organisation believes that greater specific training is required of medical personnel in order to encourage correct information for these patients, who often suffer marked social isolation. It is evident that the media, in this case radio, could also increase their influence in this respect.

10. Influence of the advertising sector

An analysis of the commercial sections included in programmes has allowed us to detect clear examples of hidden advertising. On many occasions only by listening attentively and critically can one distinguish them from the rest of the messages, as formally they have no remarkable differences. The structure of advertising sections is always defined by the characteristics of the programme it's in, and forms are used that are fully integrated in aesthetic terms. They can even be preceded by an announcement in a strictly informative style. The only exception is to be found when the section is broadcast just before the advertising block and without any separating element: the presenter gives way to a narrator, who develops the section and, then, the typical radio ads are heard.

On the other hand, the dominance of interviews in all kinds of products also makes it difficult to identify this parcel of products and, even more significantly, confers clear journalistic connotations:

- Many advertising interviews start with a comment on the news item (e.g. recent technological innovations, new surgical treatments or the announcement of activities, as if it were an agenda) and then the presence of the guests is justified by the need to delve more deeply into the theme.
- Some sections appeal to the requests of anonymous listeners. A comment may be made about the arrival of an email or a telephone call asking for the theme in question to be dealt with.
- Some commercial units state that their sole interest is to spread knowledge.

It is therefore only possible to clearly identify advertising sections when the content is based exclusively and repeatedly on the object or service being advertised, and

this is not always the case.

In general terms, the sector with most advertising presence is that of food, specifically the area of foodstuffs classified as functional, nutritional complements and methods for losing weight. Secondly come private medical centres (for conventional medicine, cosmetic medicine and alternative therapies). It should be noted that the Spanish broadcasters dominate the former while the Catalan programming dominates the latter.

The influence of advertising was also analysed on informative programmes and sections. In the case of programmes, only two broadcasters incorporate high amounts of advertising interviews, *Salut i Qualitat de Vida* and its Spain-wide broadcast (Onda Rambla Punto Radio). Out of the 136 units analysed from the programmes, 37% have an evident commercial purpose and a large proportion of this number (80%) correspond to these two products. Commercial presence in sections presented as news is minimal.

11. Radio consultation

Participation is not a characteristic element of this kind of content. However, when it is used, it plays an essential role:

- *La Salud en Onda Cero* is the only programme that dedicates a significant amount of time to medical consultation, combining it with the information. However, in some broadcasts undesirable practices have been detected. For example, when the listeners explain on air the treatment their doctor has recommended without sparing any details, including the names of the drugs. This kind of participation could lead to undesirable behaviour among those listeners who identify with what is being broadcast.
- The two spaces of a para-scientific nature, both on Onda Rambla Punto Radio, also incorporate participative sections. In fact, it is an advertising format, as all the dialogues end up with a suggestion that they need to talk personally with the person responsible for answering their questions.
- Lastly, 40.5% of the informative sections include participation, of note being Catalunya Ràdio and RAC 1. The structure of the content offered by these two stations always includes consultation (by telephone or

email). Moreover, we have detected efforts to stop the participation from becoming a private medical consultation. This strategy has been made clear by listeners to specific questions being asked not to name pharmacological treatments and with the presenter taking on the role of intermediary between the listener and the doctor.

12. Internet resources

This is an aspect that was still in the early stages during the 2004/2005 season. The use of email was almost not exploited at all and only occasionally was it used as a means of consultation. Programme information on websites is limited to the minimum. With regard to online broadcasts and *a la carte* radio service, Spanish broadcasters have a clear advantage over the Catalan stations.

13. Key recommendations

Irrespective of their owners, generalist broadcasters have the social responsibility to offer products of an informative and instructive nature that deal with health. Given the peculiarities of this kind of content, a result of its direct incidence on everyday life, broadcasters must design responsible policies of action that promote healthy habits and patterns of behaviour.

These policies should guarantee, at least, the following aspects:

- Offering information on conventional medicine and alternative medicine, in addition to including rare illnesses on the media agenda.
- Attending to the whole population in the area of health.
- Consulting qualified and reliable sources of information.
- If they include commercial elements, formulas should be encouraged that allow listeners to clearly differentiate these from the strictly informative units.
- The inclusion of commercial units must not impair the quality of the final radio product.
- In no case should radio replace medical consultation.

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Reforms to Media Legislation in Mexico

Rodrigo Gómez García and Gabriel Sosa Plata

- *The principal aim of this article is to provide information on the reforms approved to the Federal Law on Radio and Television and the Federal Law on Telecommunications in Mexico. Before addressing the analysis of the most notable aspects of the reforms, we present the historical background about the development of broadcasting and telecommunications policies in the country. We also describe the actions of the different political actors who took part in the debates and the approval process developed in the legislative chambers.*

Keywords

Legislation, Mexico, radio, television, politics, public service, telecommunications

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Introduction

On 12 April 2006, the President of Mexico, Vicente Fox Quezada, published in the Official Journal of the Mexican Federation the reforms to the Federal Law on Radio and Television and the Federal Law on Telecommunications. This act marked the culmination of a period of intense national debate about the current and future situation of the country's media, the argumentative wealth of which was not reflected in the modifications finally included in the legislation.

The evaluation and approval of the reforms were carried out under an electoral process whereby the party in power, the conservative National Action Party (PAN), the leftist Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) and the centrist Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) battled for the Office of the President of Mexico. After more than four months' discussion, the interests of the party leaders, legislators, federal government civil servants and television owners held sway over the arguments presented by diverse actors of society, in particular from the academic field and the public media.

Diverse issues were raised in the debate, including the democratisation and promotion of competition in the media, the social function versus the economic profitability of the electronic media, public media and their funding, technological convergence and the digitalisation of radio and television and the autonomy of the regulatory body. However, not a single comma was changed from the original proposal unexpectedly presented by an MP from the PRI.

The media reforms are considered to be amongst the most controversial in Mexican legal history because, in line with the opinions aired during these months, they violated a number of precepts of the Constitution, favoured the

dominant radio and TV companies, made it hard for new operators to enter the market and closed the door to indigenous people being able to access the airwaves. The protests were reflected not only through demonstrations, brochures in newspapers and the creation of web sites, but also in the legal sphere: an action of unconstitutionality was presented before the Supreme Court of Justice by 47 senators and around 200 appeals were launched by commercial and community radio stations and indigenous municipalities, among other legal actions.

Background

It is important to firstly establish that the structure of the TV industry in Mexico, since its beginnings, grew under a clear type of protectionism that sheltered one private business group (Televisa) and made it into one of the biggest emporiums in Latin America. In exchange, the PRI governments enjoyed the benefit of having the media group with the highest penetration in Mexico under its control and at its service, facilitating a situation of television aligned with different governments and aimed at entertainment (Toussaint, 1998; Orozco, 2002).

This situation was largely due to the anti-democratic logic of the Mexican political system, characterised by the omnipresence of the Executive Power over the other two powers in the Union (González Casanova, P: 1976:133). This was a result of the fact that a single party had been in power for seven decades (the PRI, which dominated the legislative chambers with an absolute majority between 1934 and 1988, and the Office of the President through to 2000).

With regards communication policies in relation to the television sector, we can say that the participation of the various Mexican governments from 1950 through to the 1980s oscillated between vigilance, regulation and direct

participation with the operation of televisions stations (Gómez, 2002).

Over time, negotiations and discussions about laws, regulations and decrees in relation with the communications industries were held practically only between the Executive Power and business organisations, principally the Chamber of Industry of Radio and Television (CIRT), an organisation made up of the owners of Mexico's media conglomerates¹.

This situation produced important gaps and ambiguities in the different laws and regulations, as there was no vigilant opposition nor the democratic mechanisms needed to present counterweights to the initiatives of the Executive and the businessmen (Cremoux, 1982; Fernández, 1982; Bohann, 1988; Orozco, 2002).

We should also mention a clear lack of general continuity in the promotion of TV-related communication policies on the part of the different administrations from 1950 through to 1988. We could even say that the policies that were implemented concerned ad-hoc situations and/or ones of mutual benefit to the relationship woven between Televisa and the government of the day (Gómez, 2002).

On the other hand, since 1988 there has been a clear continuity in the lines of action that the most recent administrations have followed in terms of communication policies.

This situation should be located within the promotion of neoliberal policies that have been steadily incorporated since 1982 and which sped up with the negotiation and entry into force of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 (Crovi, 1997; Sánchez Ruiz, 2000), as different laws relating to the communications industries have been modified with the clear aim of thinking of them from the logic of a free market economy, i.e., to favour free competition; domestic and international investments flows; the opening up of tariff barriers and privatisation.

With regards these reforms, we agree with the researcher Delia Crovi when she says that the modifications to the laws

¹ This chamber was founded in 1941 with the name of the National Chamber of the Radio Industry (CIR); its first president was Emilio Azcárraga Vidaurreta. The name was changed to the current one in 1971. Since then it has been an extremely important lobbyist before the political power.

in relation to the audiovisual and telecommunications industries² should be understood “within the framework of a general reform of the State. This reform has been slowly removing State interference in communication issues, whether by reducing its intervention or putting it only in an arbitral position with respect to the transformations the media is experiencing” (Crovi, 2001:140).

Furthermore, as a result of these structural reforms led by neoliberal policies, Mexican governments have taken an openly liberal position on the negotiation of audiovisuals goods and services, putting them at the level of other goods and sidestepping their cultural specificity.

For example, with NAFTA, Mexico does not side with Canada to support the ‘cultural exception’³, which means that between Mexico and the US audiovisual goods are considered like any other good. Also, in the economic cooperation agreement that Mexico has held with the European Union since 2001, audiovisual and cultural products in general are not included in the trade agreement, because the European negotiators also defend the figure of the cultural exception.

In the negotiation rounds about audiovisual goods and services within the World Trade Organization (WTO), the posture of the Mexican governments has been to align themselves with the US’s position aimed at the liberation of tariffs and the elimination of protectionist measures in the audiovisual sphere.

However, within UNESCO, in the Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Mexican position is contrary to the US one and is even very active in supporting these cultural policies.

This situation is contradictory as the resolutions, declarations and conventions that Mexico has signed in

UNESCO are not reflected in the regulations on audiovisual industries, and so their importance to the promotion and dissemination of cultural diversity and culture itself is thus avoided or omitted.

As we know, the promotion of communication policies from a neoliberal position began to be actively developed in the international arena first in the telecommunications sector, given that it involved fewer pitfalls as there were no debates about the socio/cultural and political roles the services might play. The policies focused mainly on a) infrastructures, b) market conditions, c) regulation against monopolies and d) the transnationalisation of Western enterprises (Schiller, D, 1989).

Given this situation, we should say with regard to technological convergence that the communication policies agenda has followed two logics or traditions – on the one hand, a liberal line and, on the other, a regulatory line that seeks to meet very detailed socio/cultural functions aimed at the construction of citizenry, the promotion of cultural diversity and the economic growth of the domestic industry (Culemburg/ McQuail, 2003).

Television and Telecommunications Policies in Mexico 1988-2006

The main features that characterise the current model of communication policies were first outlined during the six-year mandate of Carlos Salinas (1988-1994), turning a nationalist tradition of protectionism and State control⁴ (Lozano, 2002) towards neo-regulation and/or re-regulation aimed at liberalisation, privatisation and, in some sub-sectors, transnationalism or denationalisation.

The Salinas de Gortari administration in 1992 used a

2 Following the Catalan researcher Carmina Crusafon, we understand the audiovisual industry to be that which “produces goods and services that are the result of a set of activities that intervene in the production, distribution and exhibition of images on different supports. It involves an industry with three principal sectors: film, television and video...Also it is characterised by having a dual economic and cultural nature...”(Crusafon, 1999:105).

3 concept allows the Canadian government to fund, subsidize and protect matters in relation to its cultural industries.

4 We can establish that, until then, Mexican governments had promoted policies within the regulatory field in terms of communication.

public auction to sell off the assets of the Mexican Television Institute (Imevisión)⁵, which had until then been the national television operator owned by the State. This was how the company TV Azteca⁶ joined the Mexican broadcasting system.

The goals of the privatisation of Imevisión, according to the Salinas administration, were to: a) create a quality alternative to Televisa; b) promote competition in the field of free-to-air TV; c) offer more profitable markets for the dissemination of goods through advertising and; d) open up spaces for the increased plurality and diversity of television content.

It is important to point out that with this decision, public television was left without a national operator, as the Canal 11 signal (Canal 11 is the doyenne of cultural television in Mexico) only reaches 27% of the Mexican territory. This left the monopoly of the majority of Mexican audiences up to private initiative, along with the social responsibility "of contributing to the shoring up of national integration and improvement in the forms of human coexistence" (Article 5 of the 1960 Federal Law on Radio and Television).

Also in 1992 the government re-regulated the Law on the Film Industry. This had been a pressing matter, as it had not been changed since 1950. However, it focused on only three aspects: a) the retraction of the majority of the obligations awarded to the State with the industry; b) the elimination of audience share from 50% to 10%; and c) the liberalisation of ticket prices⁷ (Galperin, 1999; Ugalde, 1998). It also opened up the possibility of the unrestricted

participation of foreign capital in the three branches of production, distribution and exhibition. However, it ignored important issues such as the incorporation of tax incentives for private investment in production and a guiding plan for the funding of domestic productions.

This Law led to a new position of the State's role with regards the film industry, as until then Mexican governments had actively participated in the three branches of the industry (Gómez, 2005)⁸.

The consequences of these reforms to the Law on the Film Industry, in combination with other circumstances of an economic nature (the economic crisis of 1995) resulted in the worst crisis in Mexican cinema (Gómez, 2005; Sánchez Ruiz, 2001).

In the face of this situation, the affected industry sectors promoted a reform of the Law through the Chamber of Deputies, which was able to correct a number of articles and chapters by approving another reform in 1998. However, the re-regulation did not go far enough and could not guarantee the support of public funds for film production or mechanisms to promote private production.

It is important to note that Mexican governments have not sought to understand the audiovisual industries as a whole, but rather see film, video and television separately, a situation which contrasts with the European vision.

For its part, the government of Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000) consolidated the policies begun by President Salinas by reforming laws and regulations related with the sector of the communications industries.

5 The package of measures included: the national TV networks of channels 7 and 13 with their respective licences; the América film studios and the theatre operating company, COTSA.

6 For this bid, the Mexican government received a sum of \$US645 million.

7 Until then the price of a cinema ticket was controlled by the government, as it was considered to be a product in the basic shopping basket. Cinema owners asked for it to be removed, arguing that the low price prevented the industry from growing.

8 The Argentinean researcher Octavio Getino characterised it as follows. "The Mexican State's policy of vertical integration led it to exercise leadership in the internal and international commercialisation of its films, also facilitating production activities of the private and trade-union sectors that had never been equalled in a capitalist country" (Getino, 1998:125).

To start with, it reformed Article 28 of the Constitution of the United Mexican States⁹ in two aspects that concern us: the first was to specify the ban on monopolies and monopolistic practices in commercial and industrial activities alike, and the second was to remove satellite communications from paragraph 4 which characterised it within the strategic operations of the State (1995)¹⁰. This opened the door to privatisation and the participation of foreign capital in this branch of telecommunications.

The reasons the government gave for promoting the modifications to Article 28 with respect to satellite communications were basically a) the lack of resources for the State to modernise the infrastructure at the pace demanded by the new technologies used in telecommunications (under the light of what is known as the Information Society) (Gómez Mont, 1995:263) and b) pressure by the US to enter this market in Mexico via direct investment (Saxe-Fernández, 2002:443)¹¹.

With regards the Federal Law on Telecommunication decreed in 1995, we would characterise it as a clear example of the neo-regulation that was promoted from the neo-liberal logic, determined by its technical nature and without a social commitment of public service. The new Law was based on creating a legal framework appropriate to the operating reality established by technological convergence between telecommunications, IT and the broadcasting sphere (mainly pay-TV with its different platforms including cable, super high frequency and satellite) and, particularly,

promoting domestic and foreign private investment in the sub-sector.

With respect to pay-TV in its variants of cable, satellite and super high frequency, the Federal Law on Telecommunications permitted foreign investment up to 49% (Article 12). The same logic was used to re-regulate the 1993 Law on Foreign Investment.

With respect to cable TV, we should point out that since the modifications made in the 1993 Regulation on Cable Television (during the Salinas administration), the figure of the cable licence-holder had been changed to that of the operator of public telecommunications networks¹² (a situation which makes it possible to expand telephone, telesales and Internet services, etc.). This figure was also established in the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the new Restricted Television and Audio Regulation (2000), expanding it for super high frequency and satellite communications.

In correlation with the previous administrations, the administration of Vicente Fox, in August 2001, through the Secretariat of Communications and Transports (SCT), awarded licenses to operate foreign satellites in Mexico to the companies Controladora Satelital de México, made up of the companies Panamsat (US) and Pegaso (Mexico); Sistemas Satelitales de México de GE Americom; Telesistema Mexicano, of Televisa, and Enlaces Satelitales de Satmex (*La Jornada*, 14 August 2001). The administration thus materialised on the one hand the opening up to

9 76 reforms were made to the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States during the Zedillo administration. The record was during the six-year Presidential term following the promulgation of the 1917 Constitution.

10 This precision was not made prior to this reform. Also, functions carried out by the State in strategic areas like radiotelegraphy and satellite communications were not considered monopolies.

11 The internationalist researcher John Saxe-Fernández says this modification was carried out following a commitment formalised in an Agreement of Understanding between the Zedillo and Clinton administrations as part of the 1995 rescue package, when the US government lent \$40 billion to alleviate Mexico's economic crisis that had begun in late 1994 (Saxe-Fernández, 2002:443).

12 The Federal Law on Telecommunications understands a public telecommunications network to be "the telecommunications network by which telecommunications services are commercially operated. The network does not include the telecommunications terminal equipment of users or the telecommunications networks beyond the terminal connection point" (Article 3, part X).

private capital of satellite communications and on the other hand the possibility of operating satellite orbits corresponding to Mexico by foreign satellites.

In the framework of the discussion about the budgetary reform and the presentation of the income and expenditures bill of the Federation for 2004 (in November 2003), the Federal Executive presented before the Chamber of Deputies the proposal to sell, dispose of, merge or dissolve the film-industry-related State-owned institutions of the Mexican Film Institute (IMCINE), the Centre for Film Training (CCC) and Churubusco Studios. The Chamber of Deputies rejected the proposal.

Before these initiatives, the Fox administration clearly showed its lack of interest in the development of the national film industry and confirmed its liberal position of ridding itself of the cultural institutions that belonged to the State.

Finally, we should point out that in the laws related to the audiovisual and telecommunications industries, there is a clear omission with regards concerns about cultural diversity and even a lack of harmonization about its sociocultural roles and importance in Mexican society. This demonstrates an even greater contradiction when compared to the multicultural characteristics of the Mexican Republic¹³.

The Approval of the Reforms

The reforms were unanimously approved by 327 MPs from all the parties in an unusual procedure that lasted only seven minutes and with no discussion in the Chamber of Deputies, on 1 December 2005. The initiative had been presented 10 days earlier by the PRI MP Miguel Lucero Palma, a politician with no professional or academic background in matters relating to broadcasting or telecommunications. Months later it turned out that many MPs had not even read the document and approved it without knowing anything about it because they were ordered to by the coordinators of their parliamentary groups.

The proposal, which later became law, took the different

politicians who had been working for years on the preparation of a draft bill to reform the Federal Law on Radio and Television in the other Chamber, i.e., the Senate, by surprise. This draft bill was presented by the NGOs that had taken part in a Dialogue Table on the Comprehensive Reform of the Media, called by the Home Ministry in 2001. This table, however, was undone by the also unscheduled issue of two agreements taken by President Vicente Fox on 11 October 2002 and which favoured, as would happen again later, radio and television owners. One of them brought down, after more than 33 years in place, a decree that made it compulsory to award the State 12.5% of the transmissions of each radio and television station, as payment in kind of a fiscal tax¹⁴. The second reform was done to the Regulation on the Federal Law on Radio and Television to facilitate the transmission of advertising, in particular infomercials, on the electronic media. As would happen later, there were at the time letters, demonstrations, articles and declarations against the reforms, but they were not enough to get the measure changed (Sosa, G, 2003).

Because of these presidential agreements, the NGOs presented a proposal for a Federal Law on Radio and Television to the State Reform Commissions in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. A group of senators presented it, now as a draft bill on 12 December 2002. The discussion about the draft was intense in the following years, but the people who later defended the "Televisa Law" (as it was known) were almost the same that had made the senators' proposal fail. However, the document was extensively analysed and discussed, but never put to the vote in the commissions set up in the Senate to make a decision (*La Jornada*, 10 November 2005).

Public Audiences

When the issue of the draft bill was still up in the air, the approval of the initiative presented by Miguel Lucero Palma went through. That same day saw the emergence of the first

¹³ In the Mexican Republic there are six million people who speak one or more of the 60 different indigenous languages.

¹⁴ The tax time of 12.5% (equivalent to 180 minutes per day) that had been decreed in 1968 was replaced by a much lower percentage of 1.25% (18 minutes per day on TV and 35 minutes per day on radio), although in better transmission times.

questions about the document, which forced the Senate to organise a series of audiences to seek the opinions of institutions and specialists in order to correct (in a promise that was never kept) the omissions that had already been detected in the reforms.

The Senate carried out four public audiences (on 8, 15, 22 and 28 February 2006), which included the participation of 46 people such as academics, private consultants, businesspeople and representatives of institutions, unions and civil organisations. Most of them said the reforms did not go far enough and that instead of promoting competition they strengthened the dominant position of the commercial TV stations. Of the total number of opinions, 74% rejected the then 'draft', while 26% said they were in favour¹⁵.

Under the tense climate of the political campaigns, the lobbying by representatives of Televisa and the leaders of the PAN and the PRI heated up. For Televisa in particular it was essential to get the reforms on its terms, while for the political parties it was necessary for the Televisa group to give their candidates (Felipe Calderón for the PAN and Roberto Madrazo for the PRI) favourable treatment, even more so when faced with polls that favoured the Left's candidate (Andrés Manuel López Obrador from the PRD)¹⁶. The details of these meetings and the agreements reached were published by the press¹⁷. The leaders of the PAN and the PRI met to convince the senators of their parliamentary factions to not make any change to the reforms, as it would

benefit their candidates. Even still, various legislators kept up their position against the draft throughout the whole of the process (Villamil, J, 2006:30-31)¹⁸.

The reforms were approved, in principle, in "united commissions" of Communications and Transports and Legislative Studies on 28 March (*La Jornada*, 29 March 2006). Two days later, on 30 March, the reforms were approved in a plenary session following an intense debate televised by the Congress's channel, Canal Congreso. The session, including the discussion of each of the contested articles, lasted more than 13 hours. The senators who opposed the reforms took the stand on 54 occasions; those who supported it only made three speeches during the discussion of the first article. They then abandoned the debate. After all, the voting was already decided upon - 81 in favour versus 40 against - with the agreement taken in the parliamentary factions of the PRI and the PAN. Raúl Trejo Delarbre wrote the following about it:

"Lacking in arguments, the defenders of the 'Televisa Law' in the Senate of the Republic left the forum up to the people who for six hours offered alternatives to each of the questioned articles...The votes won, of course. But in the field of diagnosis and proposal, the balance was in favour of the senators who opposed the counter-reform – and with them the institutions, social organisations and specialists who supplied them with arguments" (Trejo, R, 2006:48-52)."

15 The people who spoke out against it were 7 academics, 6 academic organisations, 2 unions, 2 journalists, 11 radio licence holders and 4 representatives of public broadcasters, including the president of the Cultural and Educational TV and Radio Broadcasters' Network of Mexico. In favour were 4 representatives of the National Chamber of Industry for Radio and Television, 6 consultants contracted by Televisa to draw up the proposal and 2 former commissioners of the Federal Telecommunications Commission (Cfr. Solís, Beatriz, 2006: 29)

16 The candidates to the Presidency of Mexico made few statements with regards the media reforms. One of them, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, from the Democratic Revolution Party, called for a brake on the approval. "It shouldn't go through if it raises suspicions" he said, in an article entitled "Preocupa 'ley Televisa' a ONU; López Obrador pide frenarla" ("Televisa Law' Concerns the UN: López Obrador Calls for Brake") (El Universal, 30 March 2006, front page)

17 Cortés, Nayeli, "Candidatos pactaron ley de radio y tv; Bartlett" ('Candidates Agree on Radio and TV Law: Bartlett'), El Universal, 11 January 2006, front page, and "PRI y AN van juntos para aprobar ley de radio y tv" ('PRI and AN Join Together to Approve Radio and TV Law'), El Universal, 24 March 2006, front page.

18 With regards what happened in the PAN parliamentary group, we recommend the article by Javier Corral Jurado entitled 'Neurosis de la escaramuza' ('Neurosis of the Skirmish'), El Universal, 24 March 2006, p. A11.

Televisa Law

From the start the reforms were called the 'Televisa Law' as the content responded to the ideas expressed by the station's representatives in the different forums, particularly with regards technological convergence and the provision of additional telecommunications services on the same band frequencies assigned to broadcasters as a way of developing new business niches. It was also given this name because it conserved the duopoly position of Televisa and Televisión Azteca on the Mexican TV market, making the entry of new operators more difficult.

Counting modifications and additions, reforms only appeared in five articles of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and in 14 articles of the Federal Law on Radio and Television¹⁹. They were not many articles, but the changes to the legal framework of radio and TV, and to a lesser extent telecommunications, were of enormous social, economic and political importance. The most important changes can be summarised as follows:

- **Technological Convergence.** Article 28 of the Federal Law on Radio and Television mentions the possibility of commercial radio and TV broadcasters being provided with additional telecommunications services on the same frequency bands they are awarded, simply by advising the Federal Telecommunications Commission

(Cofetel). To that end, Cofetel 'can' receive the payment of compensation and a favourable verdict is not required from the Federal Competition Commission (Cofeco).

Using the argument of promoting technological convergence, the stations can develop new businesses in the 'mirror channels' aimed at the transmission of their digital signals²⁰. For this to happen, licence holders should replace their licence for broadcasting services with one for public telecommunications-network services. There are a huge number of questions in this regard that were not taken up by the senators. In one of the technical reports prepared by the federal government itself, through the Secretariat of Communications and Transports and about which we will speak further on because it is a document that only came to light thanks to the Federal Institute of Access to Information, it was said that "although it is desirable that telecommunication services be provided, they should always provide the digital television service"²¹. It specifies: "As established, there are even two extreme ways of seeing it: 1. On the one hand there is the possibility that the spectrum (referring to the analogue television channel that should be returned once the transition period to digitalisation has concluded) is never returned to the State, as the party could argue that the Federal Law on Telecommunications applies to him and

19 Draft Decree that reforms, adds to and revokes various provisions of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television, approved by the Chamber of Deputies on 1 December 2005.

20 The DTTV model in Mexico is similar to the one developed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the US: the assignation to the operator of each analogue TV station of a second 6-Mhz channel for digital transmission. The assignments of these channels are done with the aim of replicating the current coverage of the existing analogue stations. During the transition period that began on 3 April 1996 in the US and which will end on 17 February 2009 (13 years), analogue and digital broadcasters will operate at the same time, while consumers carry out the acquisition of digital TV receivers or digital system decoders to be used in today's analogue receivers. In Mexico, the 'Agreement Adopting the Digital Terrestrial Television Technological Standard and Establishing the Policy for the Transition to DTTV in Mexico', published in the Official Journal of the Federation on 2 July 2004, establishes something similar, although it is more flexible with regard to time: it began in 2004 and will culminate in 2021, in coverage periods with three-yearly goals. However, this date could be extended if the economic conditions or those of accessing the technology so require.

21 The 'Agreement Adopting the Digital Terrestrial Television Technological Standard and Establishing the Policy for the Transition to DTTV in Mexico' stipulates that DTTV transmissions should be of high definition (HDTV) or extended definition (EDTV) quality.

that no additional channel therefore should be removed²² and 2. That the spectrum not awarded as yet cannot be awarded in the terms established in the policy (i.e., the assignation of an additional TV station to each licence holder which it can use for digital transmissions) or in the licences or permits, as the form established in these documents runs counter to the Federal Law on Telecommunications and should therefore be bid for and not assigned²³.

The article was also questioned because the public broadcasters (non-profit cultural and educational stations) were excluded from the possibility of providing additional telecommunications services, which also runs counter to the matters contained in the 'Agreement Adopting the Digital Terrestrial Television Technological Standard and Establishing the Policy for the Transition to DTTV in Mexico'.

To make these new additional telecommunications services coherent, the reforms incorporated a new definition of 'radio and television industry' as something which 'comprises making the most of electromagnetic

waves via the installation, functioning and operation of broadcasters by the systems of modulation, amplitude or frequency, television, facsimile or any other technical procedure possible, within the frequency bands of the radio spectrum attributed to the service'. In the opinion of the Secretariat of Communications and Transports (SCT), this article allows, without any type of bidding, radio and television licence holders to provide all types of services technically possible. 'It goes against every international practice in this field, as for additional services in other countries it is possible to make additional use for the State'.²⁴

- **Bidding for Licences.** Article 16 establishes that radio and TV licences will be valid for 20 years (before, it was 30 years) and, unlike under the previous legislation, will be awarded via a public bid²⁵. In other words, the bid that offers the most money wins. In this way, the questioned discretionary nature that existed in the issue of licences under the former legislation gives way to bidding. Even still, it fails to fully guarantee that the bid winner will receive his licence, because the Secretary of

22 One of the issues that was most insistently brought up in the analyses and discussions about the reforms concerned the possibility of television operators keeping the analogue stations at the end of the transition towards digital television. This idea was supported by the matters established in the reform made to the Federal Law on Radio and Television, particularly article 28 which says that once Cofetel authorises the television operator to provide additional telecommunications services "it will award a licence to use, make use of or operate a frequency band in the national territory, and to install, operate or run public telecommunications networks". This licence will replace the licence it previously had for the provision of broadcasting services. In this way, once analogue transmissions have concluded, the stations would be able to expand their telecommunications services on both channels and argue that the analogue ones cannot be returned to the State because they already form part of a telecommunications network. The defenders of the reforms argued that this would not be possible as the abovementioned Agreement on Digital Policy clearly sets out that analogue channels will be returned to the State in the times stipulated therein. However, in Mexico's legal hierarchy, the law takes precedence over agreements issued by the Executive Power.

23 SCT Technical Report. Initiative that reforms, adds to and revokes various provisions of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television, 4 April 2006.

24 SCT Technical Report. Initiative that reforms, adds to and revokes various provisions of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television, 4 April 2006

25 It is important to stress that thanks to the 'Agreement Adopting the Digital Terrestrial Television Technological Standard and Establishing the Policy for the Transition to DTTV in Mexico', commercial television operators extended their licences through to the year 2021, the date originally anticipated for the analogue switch-off. In the US there was no modification to the duration of the licences assigned to television operators as a consequence of the implementation of the DTTV standard.

Communications and Transports has the final decision. The technical report prepared by this Secretariat also warns of this: “It is still up to the Secretary of Communications and Transports to sign the licences presented by Cofetel, making the latter the executor of signatures or in its default the person who vetoes proposals without any greater foundation or motivation”²⁶.

To bid for frequencies, it is necessary to meet diverse requirements: general data, business plan, production and programming project, guarantee ensuring the continuity of the procedures through to when the licence is awarded or denied, and ‘favourable application presented to the Federal Competition Commission’. This latter requisite was insistently questioned because an ‘application’ is not the same as a ‘favourable authorisation’ from the organisation that promotes competition.

The new legislation anticipates that among bidders, the SCT will consider “the radio and television purposes anticipated by article 5 of the present law” in relation to moral, cultural and civic principles that the State demands from licence holders. “Article 17A,” writes Trejo Delarbre, “is drawn up in such a deliberately sly manner that it consigns only the authority’s obligation to take these purposes into account but not the applicants’ duty to include them in their programming proposals” (Trejo, R, 2006:50).

With the establishment of bidding for radio and television frequencies, a filter is created that hinders the entry of new operators onto the market. Not only that, but the parties that do manage it will be above all businessmen with strong financial resources. That is why the reforms favour the leading television operators that dominate the sector: Televisa, with 225 frequencies, and Televisión Azteca, with 169 channels, control 86% of the licences awarded in the country (Sánchez Ruiz, 2003).

Another aspect related with concentration and the

favourable treatment meted out to the current commercial broadcasters is that the licences will be given again ‘to the same licence holder’ who ‘will have preference over third parties’. The repeating of licences will not be subject to the abovementioned bidding procedure in line with the reforms. In the opinion of the SCT, this legal modification “will generate a system of exception within the market itself, as any other person who wants to obtain a licence should bid and pay for it while existing licence holders may continue to operate their frequencies at no additional cost”²⁷. The same certainty in terms of repeating licences does not apply to public operators.

- **More Requirements for Public Service Broadcasters.**

In the case of public service radio and TV, and unlike the legal situation prior to the modifications, the new provisions include more requisites for institutions that wish to obtain frequencies. Licence applicants must meet the same requirements as commercial operators (with the sole exception of the business plan) and must also present “the station’s development and service programme’ and be subjected to a more scrupulous review with regards the reasons why they want a licence. Article 20 says:

“If considered necessary, the Secretariat may hold interviews with the interested parties that have met, where applicable, the required requisites, so they may contribute additional information in relation to their application. The above is without prejudice to other information the Secretariat considers necessary to request from other authorities and agencies for a complete knowledge of the characteristics of each application and applicant and their suitability for receiving the permit involved”.

“Of course the government has the obligation to know who it is giving a licence to,” explains Trejo Delarbre.

26 SCT Technical Report. Initiative that reforms, adds to and revokes various provisions of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television, 4 April 2006.

27 SCT Technical Report. Initiative that reforms, adds to and revokes various provisions of the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television, 4 April 2006.

“But the punctilious procedure described above is discriminatory because these types of procedures are not required from trading companies. It bears too many hallmarks with the police inquiries the SCT has requested on various occasions to oppose the legalisation of a number of community broadcasters” (Trejo, R, 2006:50).

The reforms specify that only federal dependencies, para-State organisations, state and municipal governments and institutes of higher education can access the permits. This excludes citizens and social organisations that aspire to radio and television frequencies, which means there will be no more community radio stations in Mexico. In turn, private universities will be subject to bids. But even for the abovementioned government entities and institutes of higher education the situation is not simple. One of the sections of article 21A establishes that to obtain a permit, a dependency must have established “within its faculties or purpose” the ability to “install and operate radio and television stations”, which would force it to modify its legislation.

Of course the reforms do not provide for the possibility of non-commercial broadcasters obtaining resources through sponsored messages or the sale of services, as they have repeatedly requested for decades.

- **Increased Advertising Time.** Article 72A of the new legislation authorises a 5% rise in advertising time on radio and TV, so long as commercial operators earmark 20% of their spaces to domestic production. This means that advertising can represent 23% of total transmission time of each television station and 43% of radio time. During the debate carried out in the Senate, Senator Javier Corral explained this change as follows: “They want us to fall for the trick of independent production, which is nothing other than an additional business. If a report does not define what independent production is, if a report does not state the parameter with which it is measured, the only thing that is

guaranteed is another business in addition to the television stations. Of course they are delighted with an extra 5% commercial programming time – they programme 20% of independent production through their subsidiaries, i.e., they meet the requirement through their affiliates”²⁸.

- **Modification of the Regulatory Body.** The Federal Telecommunications Commission (Cofetel) was created with 1995 issue of the Federal Law on Telecommunications, as a decentralised body of the Secretariat of Communications and Transports (SCT). Unlike other regulators across the world, Cofetel is, in practice, subordinate to the Executive Power.

With the reform of the Federal Law on Telecommunications, Cofetel acquired a new composition and was awarded more attributions. The five Cofetel commissioners (previously four) are appointed by the President of the Republic and can be objected to and assessed by the Senate. The duration of their positions is eight years, renewable by an additional period. However, the technical report from the SCT and the action of unconstitutionality presented by the senators establishes that the ‘right to object’ which was awarded to the Senate is unconstitutional. They also consider it unconstitutional that the previous acting Commissioners could not be ratified in their positions²⁹.

The Federal Law on Telecommunications awarded Cofetel powers in the regulation, use and operation of the broadcast spectrum, with telecommunications networks and satellite communication systems. With the reforms, it was also given attributions in broadcasting, specifically in matters relating to the awarding, extension and termination of licences and permits, and everything relating with technical operation. These responsibilities were previously the direct responsibility of the SCT through the Directorate General of Radio and Television Systems, whose staff and resources were moved to Cofetel.

²⁸ "Meeting of United Commissions - Communications and Transports and Legislative Studies", in Etcétera, 28 March 2006; available at: <http://www.etcetera.com.mx/pagsintesisne65.asp>

²⁹ The second transitory article of the reform to the Federal Law on Telecommunications says the following: "The people who occupy the positions of commissioners or President of the Commission when the present decree enters into force will.

According to the defenders of the reform, the changes put an end to the discretionary nature of the Federal Executive in the awarding of licences and permits. They also say they shore up Cofetel's autonomy by attributing it greater regulatory powers. However, various institutions say the opposite. The plenary session of Cofetel – whose commissioners were turfed out with the approval of the reforms (as we will look at in more depth further on), said in an extensive document that with regards the regulatory body, the law “a) does not award it independence of decision, nor integral control of the procedures made in terms of licences, permits, assignments and sanctions, in the field of telecommunications and broadcasting, by keeping the regulator as an administrative unit subordinated to the Secretariat; b) it removes powers in the area of telecommunications from the regulatory body; c) it fails to update its faculties in the area of sanctions and awards it essential faculties to administer technological convergence, and d) it leads to confusion between the powers of the Secretariat and Cofetel in areas of telecommunications and broadcasting”³⁰.

It also warned that the law, “far from representing an improvement in the current situation of the regulator and the parties concerned, instead weakens the regulator and creates legal uncertainty for the parties with respect to acts of authority of the sector dependencies”³¹.

- **Information on Electoral Expenses.** Article 79A establishes that “radio and television licence holders should inform the Federal Electoral Institute about propaganda contracted by political parties and candidates to any elected position, as well as income derived from said contracting”. It also says, “the Federal Electoral Institute, during federal electoral processes,

will be the authority responsible for paying the electoral advertising of the political parties with charge to their prerogatives, and will dictate the means needed for this”. These reforms, a transitory article says, will enter into force on 1 January 2007.

This article, questioned by the Federal Electoral Institute itself, was unnecessary and counterproductive if the aim was to reveal the money spent on political campaigns in the electronic media, as the electoral law already establishes a political party's duty to report media expenses. The problem is that the reforms open the door to candidates rather than just political parties directly contracting advertising on radio and TV, contravening the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures which limits this attribution to parties. It also limits the attributions of the Federal Electoral Institute in terms of contracting this advertising and awards it simply the role of guarantor for the payments that political parties make to commercial operators.

- **Positions Against and Coverage.** There were numerous demonstrations against the reforms. Through brochures published in the press, radio ads, public forums, round tables, interviews, working documents and even marches and sit-ins at different sites across Mexico City, diverse institutions repeated the need to modify the reforms because of their shortfalls³². As well as the Secretariat of Communications and Transports, Cofetel and the Federal Competition Commission, which have already been mentioned, other organisations to demonstrate included the National Committee for the Development of Indigenous People (dependent on the federal government), the Network of Cultural and Educational Radio and Television Stations of Mexico, made up of around 50 radio and television systems, the

³⁰ "Cofetel's Opinion on the Draft Decree that Reforms and Adds to the Federal Law on Telecommunications and the Federal Law on Radio and Television", approved by the Plenary at the 111th Cofetel Extraordinary Session of 15 March 2006, via agreement P/EXT/150306J9.

³¹ Ibid

³² One public protest was held on 30 March outside the Senate. A summary of the event was written by Liliana Alcántara, "Protesta pacífica acabó en jaloneos" ("Pacific Protest Ended in Tussles"), *El Universal*, 31 March 2006, p. A10.

World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the UN, the InterAmerican Press Society (SIP), over 200 commercial broadcasters belonging to Radio Independiente, the Federal Electoral Institute, the Mexican Association of Communication Researchers (AMIC), and an important number of civil and union organisations (*El Universal*, 23 March 2006). The reforms were also rejected by writers, poets, journalists, filmmakers, broadcasters, academics, researchers, analysis, industrialists and politicians.

A study by the Mexican Association of the Right to Information, through its Media Observatory Committee, revealed that during the period from the approval of the reforms in the Chamber of Deputies through to publication in the Official Journal of the Federation, the issue of the 'Televisa Law' appeared on the national public agenda thanks to extensive press coverage. Also, some commercial radio broadcasters, Canal Congreso and public broadcasters joined the debate and analysis "making sure the changes to these federal laws did not go unnoticed as the people who had tried to surreptitiously get them through wanted" (Solis, B, 2006a:26-28). Televisa organised two debates on the issue, shortly after the reforms were approved in the Chamber of Deputies, but in general the issue was not given much coverage by the commercial media.

According to the abovementioned study, from 1 December 2005 to 19 May 2006, 1,625 press releases, articles and editorials were published on the subject. Of these, 59% were against the reforms, 34% were neutral and only 7% were in favour. 90% of the documents appeared in nine newspapers published in the capital: *El*

Universal, *Reforma*, *La Jornada*, *Milenio*, *El Financiero*, *El Sol de México*, *Excélsior*, *La Crónica* and *El Economista* (in Solis, B, 2006a:26-28)..

With regards the radio, there was a particularly notable protest by the Mexican Radio Institute, an organisation that depends on the National Council for Culture and the Arts. The day before the reforms were to be voted on in the Senate, the 17 broadcasters in the group transmitted only one song interspersed with ads with the following message: "A country without media plurality would be like listening to the same song all day long. Today, Wednesday 29 March, we will only air one song. The modifications to the Federal Law on Radio and Television reduce the possibility of creating options. The Mexican Radio Institute is against it. What do you think?" That same day, Radio Educación, a broadcaster that depends on the Secretariat of Public Education, through the National Council for Culture and the Arts, broadcast round tables in which the reforms were questioned. Canal 11 from the National Polytechnic Institute also gave extensive coverage to positions that criticised the reforms.

- **Contradictions and Pressures.** The records of the Mexican Association of the Right to Information also show brochures in favour of the reforms. A number of significant facts occurred around them. After the reforms were approved in the Chamber of Deputies, the National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry (CIRT), the National Chamber of Industry, Electronics, Telecommunications and IT (CANIETI) and other broadcasters which had initially demonstrated against the reform, later changed their position due to pressure from Televisa.³³

33 The magazine *Proceso* detailed some of the pressure mechanisms: "Televisa threatened the Rádiorama chain (the most important group in the country in terms of number of broadcasters between inhouse stations and affiliates), owned by Javier Pérez de Anda, with removing the daisy chaining with the W Radio signal in nearly 50 of its 189 broadcasters across the country. To Multivisión, belonging to Joaquín Vargas, it suggested that if he kept up his opposition, Televisa would remove Canal 52 from the Sky satellite system". Vargas had said through a press release distributed on 8 December 2005 that the reforms did not consider "background issues". However, five days later, he supported the reforms: "We understand that the situation makes it necessary to consider the appropriateness of the matters already approved in the Chamber of Deputies, and it is in this context that we support the position of our Chamber" (referring to the National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry). Villamil, Jenaro, "Consenso a fuerza" ("Forced Consensus"), in *Proceso* No. 1528, 12 February 2006, p. 25.

CIRT's change of position also generated an internal division between the licence holders that were members of the organisation³⁴. One of the country's best-known radio entrepreneurs, the owner of Organización Radio Fórmula and uncle of the current president of Televisa, Emilio Azcárraga Jean, asked the Senate to defer the reforms because "they contain provisions which seriously affect the majority of licence holders in the country's radio industry" (*El Universal*, 9 December 2005). Joining him in this position were broadcasters belonging to Radio Independiente, whose president, Roque Chávez, on different occasions spoke out against the reforms in terms of the bidding for frequencies, the shoring up of oligopolies and the failure to guarantee the transition of AM commercial and public broadcasters to the FM band.

The case of the National Chamber of Industry, Electronics, Telecommunications and IT (CANIETI) was striking. In a brochure published in various national newspapers in January, it said the reforms were 'hot air' that responded 'to individual interests that run counter to the public interest'. CANIETI lawyers even worked directly on the alternative proposal the senators

opposing the reforms were preparing³⁵. As the days went by, the organisation changed position. On 1 February it sent a letter to the president of the Senate, Enrique Jackson, calling the draft "an advance in the strengthening of the regulatory body and the search for convergence"³⁶. *El Universal* reported on 1 March diverse phone recordings revealing how the Televisa legal advisor coerced CANIETI into modifying its posture in relation to the reforms. The conversations also revealed that various letters supporting the reforms were written, supervised or approved by Televisa (*El Universal*, 1 March 2006).

An equally contradictory position was that of the Executive Power. Shortly after President Fox published the reforms in the Official Journal of the Federation, a document turned up (the 'technical report' mentioned earlier) prepared by the Secretariat of Communications and Transports, in which it warned of the inconsistencies and constitutional breaches of the reforms. The document was obtained thanks to a request from Senator Javier Corral via the Federal Institute of Access to Information. The report was addressed to President Fox, but his spokesperson Rubén Aguilar said it did not

- 34** The brochure that modified CIRT's position was published in *Reforma* on 13 December 2005, page 6, and said among other things: "Despite the absence of a consultation with this trade-union association to enrich the content of the initiative at the time, along with the analyses and discussions carried out within the technical and legal committees, we conclude that the proposed reform represents a significant advance for the full integration of the Mexican broadcasting industry in the 'information society'". It later published a new brochure in which it called on President Fox to approve the reforms because "the new legislation is the first step towards a better regulated, more transparent broadcasting industry with incentives suitable for technological modernisation", *El Norte*, "Urge CIRT a Fox a promulgar ley" ("CIRT Urges Fox to Promulgate Law"), 3 April 2006, p. 5.
- 35** CANIETI brochure addressed to the Congress of the Union and Public Opinion, under the title "Lo que no debiera ocurrir con los legisladores en un país de transparencia y democracia" ("What Should Not Happen with Legislators in a Country of Transparency and Democracy") published in *El Universal*, 12 December 2005, p. A25.
- 36** Javier Lozano, ex-president of Cofetel, wrote the following about CANIETI: "The contradiction is so obvious, the time that has passed so short and the silence that followed the delivery of this latest letter so ominous that one can only think something bad. CANIETI president María Teresa Carrillo has the duty to explain her erratic behaviour before her members and public opinion, while the senators who are reviewing the draft reforms also have the duty to question her astonishing and official mutation. In doing so, the legislators may reveal the truth behind such a 'spontaneous' show of support. If they do not, they will be putting their personal stamp on a story which, from what it seems, will be written with sorrowful letters", *El Universal*, 13 February 2006, p. A11.

reach him because the President's legal consultant would regularly not send on these types of documents³⁷. Beatriz Solís wrote the following about this issue:

"The revelation of the warning the Secretariat of Communications and Transports, the organisation responsible for the sector, gave President Fox to turn around the reforms adds nothing new to the debate that had been going on in the previous months; its only added value is the opinion of the group responsible for the sector which, although previously maintaining a passive position, could not, at the end, help but assume its responsibility by warning of the legal irregularities and constitutional breaches of a such an unexpectedly approved reform" (Solís, B, 2006:29).

- **Parallel Reforms.** To try to revert the omission in the reforms, some of the senators who supported the 'Televisa Law' prepared an initiative with the aim of emending the shortfalls of the modifications included in the Federal Law on Radio and Television. The initiative was called the 'parallel reform' and was approved on 20 April by 62 senators; 24 voted against. However, the draft was still in the Chamber of Deputies without being analysed or voted on³⁸. The document included the participation of the Federal Competition Commission in the preparation of the bases for the radio and television frequency biddings. There is also an indication for the Federal Executive to issue a new Public Media Regulation and circulate lineaments "to promote the development of public operators, whether cultural or educational, which attend to specific communities, radio

schools or any other type". It also included a modification to the article on the contracting of propaganda, removing this possibility from the candidates of political parties in order to not breach, as now happens, the electoral laws. The 'parallel reform' finally included a transitory article establishing that Cofetel would temporarily assign additional frequencies to broadcasters to carry out the 'introduction of new technologies'. This article was made to guarantee the awarding of additional stations to commercial and public radio broadcasters if required by the digital standard Mexico was adopting, without subjecting them to the frequency bid procedure defined in the reforms.

In any case, the 'parallel reform' was not approved in the Chamber of Deputies because PRI leaders felt at the time that the electronic media had not treated its candidate for the presidency well following the first televised debate.

- **The New Commissioners.** After the entry into force of the reforms, the next step for its promoters consisted of lobbying President Fox to propose the commissioners who most closely met their interests. A preliminary shortlist was made up of Rafael del Villar, Gonzalo Martínez Pous, Julio Di Bella, José Luis Peralta Higuera and Fernando Lerdo de Tejada (*El Universal*, 23 May 2006, p. A8). Of them, only José Luis Peralta, a public servant at Cofetel, was ratified, another turned the position down (Fernando Lerdo) and two were protected (Rafael del Villar and Gonzalo Martínez) because the Senate did not have the power to object to them³⁹.

³⁷ The legal consultant to the Office of the President of the Republic, Juan de Dios Castro, sent a letter to *El Universal* setting out his position on the technical report from the SCT: "The SCT at no time informed this Legal Consultancy that it had reached a favourable agreement with the President of the Republic, or presented to this dependency the formal document that contained the observations that should be presented to the Congress of the Union (the veto project). The Legal Consultancy therefore never proceeded to analyse the comments sent by the SCT", *El Universal*, 22 June 2006, p. A8.

³⁸ Draft Decree which adds a final paragraph to article 17D; a second paragraph to article 17G; a final paragraph to article 28 and a fourth part of article 28A, and which reforms article 79A of the Federal Law on Radio and Television. Also see Torres, Alejandro, "Senada avala 'iniciativa paralela' de ley de medios" ("Senate Approves 'Parallel Initiative' to Media Law"), *El Universal*, 21 April 2006, p. 1.

³⁹ Rafael del Villar and Gonzalo Martínez were protected, but the Judicial Power awarded a provisional suspension of their resources.

Later on, President Fox sent a new shortlist to the Senate, which, thanks to a new negotiation between the PAN and the PRI, was approved by both parties and rejected by the PRD. The appointees were: Senators Ernesto Gil Elorduy (PRI) and Héctor Osuna Jaime (PAN), who supported the approval of the reforms, the latter as the president of the Senate Communications and Transports Committee; the lawyer Eduardo Ruíz Vega, an academic and consultant contracted by Televisa to work to promote the reforms, and the engineer Francisco González Abarca, who had worked as an executive in different telecommunications companies (*El Universal*, 27 June 2006). This meant the positions were adequately filled as anticipated by the reforms' promoters.

- **Action of Unconstitutionality.** 47 senators who disagreed with the 'Televisa Law' presented an action of unconstitutionality before the Supreme Court of Justice to contest the reform. The legal resource documented 21 breaches in 27 articles of the Constitution. Two of the main allegations were based on the breach of articles 28 and 134. Article 28 bans monopolies, while article 134 establishes that the licences the State awards private parties should be bid for, something which does not happen with the use of the space left over from digitalisation. There was also the breach of article 41 of the Constitution and article 48 of the Electoral Law by allowing candidates and not political parties to directly contract advertising with TV stations.

Final Considerations

It is clear that the promoted reforms and the negotiation process in which they were developed were tailor-made to meet the interests of the major media conglomerates of Mexico, as they came out the winners of the different possibilities that technological convergence offers to boost their added services and develop new businesses.

Unlike the benefits awarded particularly to TV stations, we should warn that radio and public and community TV are

downgraded, both by omission and in the matters included in the new provisions, a situation which runs counter to democratic plurality and cultural diversity.

As can be appreciated, there is no conceptualisation on the part of the government with regards broadcasting as part of the country's cultural apparatus and much less as a fundamental ingredient in the construction of the State. We consider there is an idea of seeing broadcasting as entertainment and even as an instrument for political negotiation at particular times - and that this is why there is only an orientation on technical, operative and control aspects in the reforms.

Mexico still has to continue to make headway in building sufficient democratic mechanisms so that the economic power of the media and telecommunications barons, in line with the political power, are not the only actors guiding the fate of broadcasting and telecommunications in the country. In this respect, we should not forget that the system of ownership of these companies is based on the awarding of licences for the temporary and regulated use of frequency bands. The broadcast spectrum, where the electromagnetic waves travel, is a finite good administered by the State in benefit of society and not just so that particular parties can exploit it for perpetuity without it translating into benefits for society as a whole.

Finally, we can characterise these reforms as ultraliberal, as there is a clear continuity of the policies that Mexican governments have been promoting since the start of the 1990s, through boosting the free market and private investment. The vision of the State has disappeared over the years. That is why private initiative can continue to flaunt privileges to maintain its concentrating and oligopolistic position without there being any real counterweight to date (in either the Executive, Legislative or Legal powers) to limit its expansion.

39 Rafael del Villar i Gonzalo Martínez van ser emparats, però el Poder Judicial va atorgar una suspensió provisional dels seus recursos.

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Summary of the action of unconstitutionality that led 47 senators to oppose the Decree on the Federal Law on Radio and Television and the Federal Lay on Telecommunications

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Agreement Adopting the Digital Terrestrial Television Technological Standard and establishing the Policy for the Transition to DTTV in Mexico

<http://normatividad.sct.gob.mx/index.php?id=441>

Women, Identities and Television: How News Programmes Constructed the 8th of March¹

Montserrat Ribas and Lydia Fernández

■ *Throughout the last two decades there have been opened lines of critical thought that argue about the basic notions related to the construction of the modernity. One of the most controversial notions has been the subject. The subject articulated from the binary thought us turns out to be insufficient to explain the complexity and the dynamism of the social categories, and makes necessary to introduce new forms of conceptualization. One of the operative ways to rethink the notion of subject seems to be the analysis of the discursive productions that constitute the base for the intersubjective actions.*

Television is one of the discursive productions that have a more influence in the dynamic construction of social identities. In this article are summarized the conclusions and the analysis that we carry out on the construction of the identity of woman who arose from the informative statements that elaborated the Spanish television news programmes at a state level and Televisió de Catalunya to commemorate the March 8 (International Day of the Women) of 2005.

Keywords

Woman, Identity, Television, Discourses, Subjectivity, News Programmes, 8th March

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What do we mean when we say “I’m a woman” or “she’s a woman”? Trying to answer a question like this is to open up questions in areas of knowledge as diverse as sociology, social psychology, philosophy, cultural studies, linguistics and communication sciences. It means traversing discourses by means of which patriarchal thought has been gradually institutionalised and maintained. In other words, it means helping to reflect on the processes involved in constructing and reproducing the forms of subjectivity that arise as an action of and reaction to the dominant social order.

The aim of this article is to provide data and speculative proposals that help to encourage collective reflection on the identity of gender. Specifically, we aim to a) introduce theoretical postulates that may be of use in analysing what we call the *construction of identities*, and most particularly the identities of *gender*, and b) to analyse how the identity of *woman* is constructed through the stories written by the Spanish television news programmes at a state level and also Televisió de Catalunya on the 8th of March (International Women’s Day) in 2005.

1. Women, identities and television

Of late, the topic of *identities* has aroused more interest in the area of social sciences, either because globalisation has encouraged the appearance of particular local identifications or because, as Laclau (1995: 93) observes, the *Subject* (in capitals), understood as a universalism around which the thought of modernity has been structured,

¹ This article forms part of a study that has been possible thanks to the recordings provided by the CAC.

seems to us inconsistent and therefore questionable. And it is precisely this calling into doubt of the notion of subject, through which we have been offered the chance to think ourselves, which may be considered a pre-condition that would explain the proliferation of studies arising around the different expressions of *subjectivity* (in lower case). However, our position is not to question the theoretical bases that have helped to stabilise discriminations of modern thought but to observe how, in the performance of the everyday, the relations of individual and collective subordination are woven that end up establishing inertias to serve as a basis for identity-based regulations.

The best way to understand identity, says Barker (2003 [1999]: 28), is by describing it as a framework of patterns of discourse that form a network without a centre, and not as a series of attributes that possess a unified nuclear “I”. This idea of identity is based on an “anti-representational” conception of language, which we already find in the last Wittgenstein, 1953, according to which words do not reflect an independent object of the world but are a resource to *shape it*. In other words, enunciation does not have the sole function of reflecting objects and states of things that exist beyond the enunciated but interactively constructs these objects and states of things. Therefore language does not directly *represent* a pre-existing “I” but *constructs* it through processes through which it is assigned *meaning*. The *self* is no more than a series of actions and discourses that enable it and, consequently, an analysis of identity needs to shift towards an analysis of the narratives that construct its meaning and structure its experiences. So what were once considered individual characteristics now become the effects of social interaction (Cabruja 1998: 55).

Television as a producer of identities

If we consider that identity is constructed by taking part in the dialogue practices with the discursive environment around us, television undoubtedly plays the most important

role. We must not forget that there are many people who do not read a newspaper at all and whose opinion of what is happening in the world therefore depends on what reaches them through the format of television. In dialogue terms, these people take on the messages and meanings carried by television and routinely incorporate them into their lives. Television constructs expressions of “reality”²

The bodies, emotions, desires, feelings, hopes, actions, etc. that structure our identifications as social subjects are, to a large extent, the result of interacting with television texts. The media in general, and particularly television, are, as Thompson (1995:43) states, deeply involved in “identity projects”: they have the chance to intervene in the behaviour of individuals and lead to new ways of life being adopted, while offering models that make one’s own personality intelligible. In other words, they form part of the discursive devices that structure social identity, while also regulating behaviour and producing knowledge and vocabulary (Cabruja 1998: 56).

And precisely because television programming is not independent of audience ratings, some studies, basically North American, insist on presenting television as one of the utmost expressions of democracy. Notwithstanding this, we believe that this approach simplifies the issue somewhat and that, beyond the importance audience involvement may have in the production of programmes, we understand that it is necessary to analyse to what extent something that could have been a direct instrument of democracy has become an instrument of symbolic oppression (Bourdieu 1996: 00208)³

In any case, we need to be clear that talking about *television* means talking about very different communicative interactions. On the one hand are programmes that try to connect with what is called “popular culture”, and on the other are informative programmes. While popular culture programmes are questioned in certain circles, the information that appears on television, whatever its type and often without knowing the source, is rarely questioned. We

2 We may take reality to mean what the members of a society learn and accept as something given (Gunter 1995:1).

3 Below, when we talk about gender, we will deal with the notion of Bourdieu's symbolic violence.

might say that it occupies a place of authority comparable to that which the church might have occupied in the middle ages. The information provided by television is unquestionable truth for most citizens.

And, if we closely observe the most recurrent structures of news discourse, we easily notice that, in general, they not only legitimise dominant representations but establish them as new. We must remember that television is one of the most productive forms of social control.

The discursive structuring of gender

In one of her best-known books, *Gender Trouble*, J. Butler (1990) proposes that gender is not an attribute of the subject that existed before it entered society but is the *performative* effect; i.e. the effect of repeating socially regulated behaviour and, therefore, *normative*. *Masculine* and *feminine* are not inherent features in an individual's biology but are the result of social construction that imposes forms and conducts on human beings that turn them into socially intelligible individuals.

Later, this same author states that the discourse and material nature of bodies cannot be disassociated (Butler, 1993); given that discourse is not the means by which we understand what material bodies are, but are the means by which these things are structured and have meaning. In short, both the dichotomy of gender and that of sex are nothing more than regulative formulas, material effects of the discursive "subjections" through which the dominant social order is inscribed within us (Foucault 1981).

Another notion that is not too far removed from these approaches, and which we feel is useful to introduce, is that of Bourdieu's *symbolic violence* (2000), which we have mentioned previously. Symbolic violence is brought about when the schema implemented by a dominated person to perceive and appreciate his or herself, or to perceive and appreciate the mechanisms of domination, are a product of his or her becoming inscribed in the culture as a social

being. In other words, it is violence exercised from within, from the schema that allow us to perceive and construct our own subjectivity.

The effects and conditions of the effectiveness of symbolic violence (be it of race, gender, culture or language) are firmly inscribed in the most intimate of our bodies. That is why Bourdieu (2000) insists on placing symbolic strength next to passion, emotions, feelings, affection; in other words, in the most indomitable areas of subjectivity. Given this situation, the dominated and dominating do not seem to be able to stop themselves from submitting to the symbolic order of the division of gender (Gordo 2001: 5)

Notwithstanding this, and returning to Butler's (1990) hypothesis on *gender as performative* effect, we observe that, beyond being an effect of domination, it can also become a strategy for subversion; i.e. in the same way that performative effect condemns the subject to be formulated, it also opens the door to reformulating it. Along these lines, Joan Scott (1999: 107), in an article on experience, language and historical explanation, comments that "experience is a subject's history" and argues that experience cannot be separated from language. She writes that "subjects are constituted discursively and experience is a linguistic event — it doesn't happen outside established meanings — but, thanks to the relational capacity of language, neither is it confined to a fixed order of meaning". In other words, if experience is not enclosed within a fixed symbolic order, experience can be reformulated.

2. How news programmes constructed the 8th of March

As we have mentioned previously, a study on the construction of gender identities cannot ignore the expressions of subjectivity put into circulation by television⁴. In order to observe the regulations that a large part of the hegemonic discourse imposes on gender difference in

4 Television is one of the most powerful media in terms of standardising global culture. It is difficult to find a home, whatever the country in the world we study, that escapes this influence. It is true that it is also a medium that can be used in favour of maintaining local cultures, but we do not think it is appropriate to observe the discursive production of this media differentiating the global from the local. We believe that global culture always appears "localised", i.e. resignified based on the specific experiences of each community. For this reason we do not refer to this kind of distinction.

general, and the expression of the feminine in particular, we have analysed the discourses put into circulation by news programmes from the main public and private television stations at a national level and also Televisió de Catalunya concerning the situation and social condition of women. Specifically, we have analysed the stories constructed by the midday and evening television news programmes on TVE-1, La 2, Tele-5, Antena 3 TV, TV3 and 33 concerning the 8th of March (International Women's Day) in 2005⁵.

In order to carry out this analysis, we have focused on:

- The presence of IWD in all the television news coverage.
- The topics around which the news story was organised.
- The construction of the man/woman difference.

The presence of IWD in all the television news coverage

One statistic that must be taken into account when observing the role played by certain groups in collective social construction is their presence in the media and the roles (agent, passive, state) assigned to them. In this case, as the issue was the 8th of March, the presence of women, as a group, was guaranteed. However, we thought it was pertinent to analyse in detail the time invested by each station in informing about the IWD and how this time was distributed.

Table 1 shows the time invested by each channel in news

Table 1. Time invested in news coverage of IWD (TV news 8th March 2005)

			Duration of news programme	Duration of IWD news	Duration of connected news ⁶	Total IWD duration
Public TV channels	TVE-1	Midday	48:45	4:08		4:08
		Evening	50:04	4:39		4:39
	La 2	Evening	15:58	4:20	1:02	5:22
	TVE in Catalonia	Midday	20:32	1:09		1:09
	TV3	Midday	53:52	6:35	2:41	8:76
		Evening	48:55	2:35		2:35
Private TV channels	33	Evening	62:04	3:43		3:43
	Tele-5	Midday	44:53	4:79		4:79
		Evening	38:30	2:05	0:34	2:39
	Antena 3 TV	Midday	48:30	4:22		4:22
		Evening	47:12	2:92		2:92

Source: Authors' own work

⁵ In this study we have not included subscriber channels because we felt that, although some news programmes are open to all viewers, the audience is quite small. Neither have we taken into account the references made to IWD in news programmes before the 8th of March, as happens with the coverage by TV3 of the institutional breakfast held on the 6th of March at the Palau de Pedralbes, attended by Pasqual Maragall. Our aim was to limit ourselves strictly to the coverage given by each news channel on the day, because we felt it was easier to observe any contrasts.

⁶ News that, although it forms no direct part of the news on IWD, is thematically related, such as demonstrations by women in different countries or anecdotes which the editing team have related due to some circumstance.

concerning IWD during the news programmes at midday and in the evening⁷. The total time invested, which appears in the last column, is the sum of the duration of the news per se and connected news, when there is such a news item. Notwithstanding this, this total time cannot be interpreted in absolute terms but must be related to the duration of each TV news programme, which appears in the first column.

So, based on this time-based ratio, we notice that the TV news programme that invested most time to the news item on the International Women's Day was La 2 (Evening), followed by TV3 (Midday), Tele-5 (Midday), Antena 3 TV (Midday) and TVE-1 (Evening and Midday, correlatively). These data must cause us to reflect: why is Televisión Española's second channel the one that provides the news story with most visibility; i.e. an absolutely minority channel? Why did the channels with the highest audience ratings, except for TVE-1, invest much more time in this news story at midday than in the evening? Is it perhaps because this news item was aimed fundamentally at women?

Topics the news items are organised around

When the news programmes talked about International Women's Day, what did they talk about? What are the topics selected when a story is constructed about the social situation of women? The selection of topics was, to a certain extent, the selection of the cognitive scenarios where social actors are made to act with varying degrees of importance. Selecting a topic therefore means focusing on one mental area in detriment of another. Consequently, what are the scenarios where narratives occur, broadcast by the TV news programmes, on the social fact of being a woman?

Firstly, table 2 shows whether the IWD news item appeared in the summary. Secondly, the topic by which the news item was introduced and, finally, the topic around which the report or reports were organised, depending on whether one or two were presented. With regard to the topics that start the news programme, we observe that TVE-1, Tele-5 and partly TV3 opted to talk about *equality*; Antena 3 TV, to talk about the *equal opportunity act* and *discrimination at work*; La 2 also coincided with this last

topic and, finally TV3 chose to talk about *violence against women* in the midday news programme and to show the *reading of the manifesto* and the *demonstration* in Barcelona in its evening news programme. The most repeated topic to introduce the news was therefore *equality*, either in general or as a parliamentary bill.

Introducing a news item with a specific topic means situating the story "in terms of setting" and activating cognitive domains that guide how the information is processed and interpreted. The fact that the majority of the news items located the topic of *equality* in prime place in their news item meant that the reports containing this, although perhaps not explicitly disconnected, were interpreted from this perspective. But when people talk about *equality*, what are they talking about? The reports that went to make up the TVE-1 news were particularly illustrative and we will deal with them in detail in the next section.

Other introductory topics, such as the one selected by TV3, violence against women, or the one selected by La 2 and Antena 3 TV, discrimination at work, are current media topics and therefore of concern to society (the order is pertinent). In the case of TV3, moreover, the topic was introduced by means of impacting images of awareness raising campaigns that different European governments were carrying out, through television, against the mistreatment of women. Starting the news story with these images is denouncing a crude reality but it also situates the story in a European space, in which new identity-related identifications are encouraged: *us* is no longer only the state of Spain but the European community.

With regard to the topics of the news stories, they revolved primarily around the everyday lives of various types of women. The main aim was to show the difficulties women still have to balance work and family life or to emphasise that, at present, there are women who do jobs that are considered to be men's work. Curiously, the men's jobs shown were: electrician, stonemason, quantity surveyor, bus driver, etc. Why offer these examples as an example of *equality*, of liberation, and not the fact that women have achieved certain positions of power? In fact, the key

7 TVE's news programme in Catalonia is only broadcast at midday.

Table 2. Distribution of the TV news topics (8th March 2005)

			Summary	Topics (Start)	Topics (Report 1)	Topics (Report 2)	Topics (Connected news)
Public TV channels	TVE-1	Midday	No	Equality	Discrimination at work between salaried staff and freelancers	Woman who does a man's job	
		Evening	Yes	Equality	Women who do men's jobs		
	La 2	Evening	No	Discrimination at work	Interviews with different kinds of women	Everyday life of a housewife with a degree in political science	Demonstration in Istanbul
	TVE in Catalonia	Midday	No	Equality	Events related to IWD		
	TV3	Midday	Yes	Violence against women / Equality	Discrimination at work: Women working in construction	Situation of women in Pakistan	Events related to IWD / Inauguration of Ràdio Poca
		Evening	Yes	Manifesto and demonstration of IWD in Barcelona	Discrimination at work: Women working in construction	Woman bus driver/ Salary discrimination	
	33	Evening	Yes	The situation of women in India	Interview with Anna Ferrer		
Private TV channels	Tele-5	Midday	No	Equality	Work-life balance	Consequences of a hypothetical general strike by women	
		Evening	No	Equality	Consequences of a hypothetical general strike by women		Prince Charles of England calls a protest where women show their breasts "embarrassing"
	Antena 3 TV	Midday	No	Equal Opportunity act / Discrimination at work	Analysis of sexist adverts in newspapers	Violence against women / Therapy centre for men accused of violence against women (Israel)	
		Evening	No	Equal Opportunity act / Discrimination at work	Women who work as bus drivers		

Source: Authors' own work

question is: what meanings do we associate with gender and what does *equality* mean?

Most of the reports, formulating and asking misleading questions, reproduced the usual clichés and stereotypes. However, we have found two exceptions we would like to mention. We are referring to the report broadcast by Tele-5 on a hypothetical general strike by women and another, broadcast by Antena 3 TV, on the sexist nature of job advertisements. The report by Tele-5 is particularly interesting because it used an epistemic resource that allowed new conceptualisations to be introduced concerning the economic importance of the work usually carried out by women. Specifically, it abandoned the usual "inductive"

approach of showing what there is and opted for a "deductive" approach, imagining what might be. It attempted to imagine a possible general strike by all women and asked different experts to evaluate the consequences. The opinions of everyone were categorical: the country would be submerged into authentic disaster. With regard to the report by Antena 3 TV, this is interesting because it denounced dominant sexist and androcentric behaviour by simply reading job advertisements aloud.

With regard to the connected news items, in general they were related to events that had occurred in different places around the world with some connection, direct or indirect, with IWD. But TV3 is an exception. Specifically, it used the

last part of the news programme, its report, to continue providing information on the events occurring in Barcelona for the 8th of March (e.g. the inauguration of *Ràdio Paca*). In these cases the topics were anecdotal.

Constructing the man/woman difference

As we mentioned earlier, gender may be understood as the effect of discursive “subjections” by means of which the dominant social order is inscribed in us. In other words, gender does not depend on features possessed by human beings but the socio-cultural meanings assigned to them. The man/woman difference should therefore be in a

constant process of resignification. In the previous section we have seen that *equality* was the most recurrent topic in the introduction to the IWD news item, but we believe that the way in which this concept has been put forward in some stories warrants combined consideration.

In effect, this is a news item that starts with the topic of *equality*, supposedly between men and women, and the *equal opportunities act* which the socialist government hopes to promote. Moreover, Zapatero’s words give an institutional feel in order to make it effective. However, how should we understand *equality* here? The two reports that go to make up the news item insist on the topic but, instead of giving us elements to understand the sense in which the

TVE-1 news item (midday) on International Women's Day

Introduction to the news item: *Today, the 8th of March, International Women's Day, in forums and conferences around the world people are talking about the difficulties women still have in being considered equal to men. The president of the government attended one of these forums in Madrid, accompanied by almost all his female ministers. Only the Minister for Agriculture was missing. José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero has said that his government is the first equal government in the history of Spain but he has acknowledged that there is still a lot to be done. The president reminded the forum of the measures in favour of women passed since he arrived at the Moncloa (the president's official home) and he announced a new law for equality (images and words of the president's speech). The IWD reminds us of the inequalities that still exist between men and women, for example in the area of employment. In Spain, the percentage of unemployed women doubles that of men. Increasingly more women work and many have decided to become self-employed, given the difficulty of finding a job. They are female freelancers, who have their own problems.*

Report 1: *Carolina is a translator and works for herself (images and words of C). Her main problem is that, a short time ago, she had her second child and it is difficult to combine her work with looking after her children (images and comments of C with her children). It's difficult to work and have a family for all women, but women freelancers say that it's worse for them (images and comments of C and of a female shop owner). But, out of the 7 million women registered with the Social Security, one in every 7 is self-employed. In the last year, the number of people registered as freelancers with the Social Security rose by 53% thanks particularly to women, that's why they are demanding equal rights for employees and freelancers. (images of women freelancers, and images and comments from a representative of the Freelance Workers' Federation) Most women freelancers work in the service sector (images) and many in rural tourism.*

Report 2: *Villarrubia de los Ojos is one of the earliest rising villages in Spain. Here people get up at 5 to go to work on the buildings sites in Madrid. 150 km every day to get there, and 150 km more to come home (images and comments). Around 1,200 workers make this trip every day. It's tough work, only for men. This van catches our eye because, in it, is the only woman from Villarrubia who works on the site. She's just 20 years old and, for the last 3 years, has been working in building (images and comments). They are renovating the premises to set up a lighting shop in the centre of Madrid (images and comments). Sole is used to being in a man's world and, if someone goes too far, she quickly puts him in his place (images and comments). Sole works as hard as anyone else on the site, she's a woman in her private life and a gypsy 24 hours a day.*

term has been used, they create even more confusion.

The first report talks to us about women who work as freelancers (translators, shopkeepers, beauty consultants, etc.) and the problems they have to balance work and family life. And precisely instead of situating these difficulties in the androcentric organisation of society, the problem is shifted towards the *inequalities* that exist between salaried women and freelancers. The audience infers from this news item that salaried women have achieved equality with their male colleagues, which women freelancers have not. An obviously misleading inference. So, when we talk about equality, who are we talking about?

The second report is even more alarming. A supposed equality between men and women is proposed based on the story of the professional work of Sole, a gypsy girl living near Madrid who works as an electrician. In this case, *equality* must mean being able to do “tough” work. Through the words of the text, however, we observe that it is not only a question of equality but we end up not knowing what gender Sole belongs to. Is she a woman or a man? They say: *It's tough work, only for men*, but she does it. So? Later on they say that she is the only woman who *works on the site* and, afterwards, that *for the last 3 years, has been working in building* and, to finish, that *Sole works as hard as anyone else on the site, she's a woman in her private life and a gypsy 24 hours a day*. It is remarkable how this story forces us to re-categorise gender. What does it mean, when they say that Sole's job is *only for men*? And what when they say that *she's a woman in her private life*? If ethnic identification is permanent, why isn't that of gender? Can we be men one moment and women the next? Perhaps the impossibility, as shown by this story, of thinking of a social reality beyond the worn-out stereotypes that sustain the dominant androcentrism open the doors to our transgression. Gender difference must therefore be resignified.

In conclusion

The aim of this article has been to introduce elements in order to reflect on the representations constructed by television news programmes of the identity of “woman”. In order to approach this more easily, we have introduced a small theoretical framework we believe is adequate and

indicative. From the conclusions we may reach, the following are particularly of note:

- Television intervenes directly in producing and transforming social identities and the perceptions we have of them.
- Television audiences interact with television depending on the kind of programme. A person's attitude towards a TV series is not the same as their attitude towards a news programme. An analysis of the effects of television interaction must therefore be positioned.
- News programmes usually give their information from a point of view that seems agreed and accepted by everyone and people receive the news as an expression of the “truth”. Almost no-one is aware that the perspective from which the news is constructed contains an ideological bias.
- The stories created by the different TV channels to commemorate the 8th of March (International Women's Day) in 2005 show that, in many cases (TVE-1, for example), the androcentric and patriarchal schema continue to be reproduced that go to make up the dominant symbolic and which it is supposed should have been avoided in this case.
- The time dedicated by the different channels to the 8th of March, with the exception of TVE-1, was quite a lot higher at midday than in the evening news programmes. This means that people continue to think that this kind of news item is only of interest to women, who usually watch television during this time slot more than men.
- The treatment given by the different channels to the same topics is the most interesting point of this study. While TVE-1 chose to present the equality between men and women based on stereotypical, contradictory, absurd and caricature-type models, Tele-5 did quite the opposite and opted for a discursive strategy that clearly showed the social importance of the work carried out by women and how little recognition it receives. In broad terms we may say that the private television channels took quite a bit more care in constructing the identities of “woman” which they put into circulation through their news reports than the public television channels. TV3 was the only channel that chose to start its main story within a European context and then go on to cover the local situations.

- The topics, in other words the social scenarios in which the stories on the 8th of March were situated were those which usually and historically form part of the claims of a large part of feminism: equality, lack of discrimination in employment, the struggle against abuse, etc. In 2005, the most recurrent topic was that of *equality*, given that it was related to the *Equal Opportunities Act* promoted by the socialist government.
- Some channels also provided information, albeit brief, on women's demonstrations in Muslim countries. TV3 covered a women's demonstration in Pakistan and interviewed Anna Ferrer, and La 2 covered the demonstration in Istanbul. Although these were only small anecdotes, these news items served to modify clichés about Muslim women that many media insist on reproducing.

Finally, we believe that it would be interesting to raise awareness of the need to open up social debate on the socio-cultural meanings we attribute to gender and the expediency, or lack thereof, of continuing to think and represent it in the same way.

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Critical Books Review

Foundations for the theory of propaganda

Pineda Cachero, Antonio

Elementos para una teoría comunicacional de la propaganda. Seville: Ediciones Alfar, 2006.

By Miquel Rodrigo Alsina, professor of communication theory at the Pompeu Fabra University.

One of the symptoms of a discipline's coming of age is the existence of an epistemic critical mass that serves as a basis and helps its development. This book by Antonio Pineda is one of the basic fundamentals of communication theory. For this reason, perhaps, in the title he could have spoken of *Foundations* instead of *Elements*.

This is a dense and ambitious work that, in the words of the author, attempts to "formulate the conceptual and terminological basis of a communicational theory of propaganda that may be proven experimentally *a posteriori*" (page 22). Due to the exhaustive nature of the work, this book might seem to be the closing paragraph to this area but, as the author himself states, it puts a full stop but continues the paragraph.

Elementos para una teoría comunicacional de la propaganda is not a meta-theoretical book but one of theory. Contributions by other authors are obviously reviewed but, above all, a far-reaching theoretical proposal is made that warrants future development. For this reason, I am convinced that, over the next few years, the impact of this work will be plain to see. Spanish and Latin American authors who deal with the area of propaganda will be forced to collate the contributions made by Antonio Pineda.

In the research programme proposed, we may say that the work is based on a central core. Following Lakatos, we remember that the central core, that which defines a programme, takes the form of very general theoretical

hypotheses that go to make up the basis on which a programme is developed. Moreover, a programme's central core becomes resistant to falsification because of the researcher's methodological decision. Here, the research in question is based, in my opinion, on a non-falsifiable hypothesis, although the author uses various sources of renowned authority as his foundation. This hypothesis consists of the belief that propaganda is a universal and trans-historical phenomenon. Based on this hypothesis, it is demonstrated that propaganda can be studied formally. This is the basic objective of the research in question and something which the author manages brilliantly to achieve.

The author carries out thorough, extensive and well-grounded research using a deductive hypothetical method. The whole text is based on a militant rationalism, so necessary at a time when, under the flag of "anything goes", more intolerant and irrational positions are proliferating.

Excellent foundations are laid in each of the two parts that go to make up the work. The first part deals with the concept and definition of *propaganda*. All research must define and measure its object of study. In this work, propaganda is not seen as a series of techniques and resources for persuasion but "as a communicative phenomenon: a kind of discourse that is generated and seems to be based on a specific kind of Transmitter, aimed at a Receiver and characterised by certain essential properties in the Message generated, which does not correspond to a "technique" or resource" (page 64). As explained later, "This communicational nature is understood as a specific *relationship* between the Transmitter and the Receiver of the communication, mediated by the Message, which becomes a semiotic synthesis of (a) the Transmitter's intention or the propagated element, (b) the potential presence of the Receiver via the conditions of reception attributed to him or her, (c) the minimum units of meaning - propagandemes -

used to represent the intention of the propagated element and (in this case) used to associate this intention with the particularities of the conditions of reception, and (d) the aesthetic and expressive elements that empirically shape the message". (page 318)

When tackling the concept of *propaganda*, a panoptic examination is provided that gives the reader a highly complete view of how the concept has been defined based on different criteria. It therefore starts with an etymological approach, followed by a critical review of different definitions of propaganda. These definitions are grouped into those based on the content of the propaganda, those focusing on the target of the propaganda, and, lastly, value-based definitions. Later, the author proposes his own definition of propaganda, based on two fundamental conceptual elements: power and ideology.

In this first part, the themes of power and ideology are dealt with from the point of view of political science, sociology, history, semiotics, anthropology, philosophy and, evidently, from communication theory. The author's review is exhaustive, although more so in some disciplines than in others, as it must be. One of the virtues of this work is that it maintains a dialogue between the various authors and manages to weave a perfectly argued discourse. The author then proposes his definition. "Propaganda is a communicative phenomenon of ideological content and purpose through which a Transmitter (individual or collective) transmits, interestedly and deliberately, a Message in order to achieve, maintain or reinforce a position of power over the thought or conduct of a Receiver (individual or collective), whose interests do not necessarily coincide with those of the Transmitter" (page 228).

A highly notable element of this work is the capacity for self-reflection shown by the author, palpable throughout the book and which can be exemplified in the appendix to the first part, where the upper limits (panpropagandism) and lower limits (depropagandisation) of propaganda are proposed.

The second part of the book tackles the communicational structure of the propaganda message. We must remember that, as stated by the author, "the propaganda message is conceived in this research as a potential semiotic synthesis of the Transmitter-Receiver relationship and as a nexus and empirical manifestation of this relationship; that is why, and

given the relational-intentional focus that governs our work, we believe it is relevant to investigate the structure of propaganda messages" (page 18).

The author gives his proposed model a tree-like shape to identify this structure, at the top of which he places power. He then interrelates the different elements of the model: the propagating or propagated element, the propagandeme, the conditions of reception of a cultural and universal nature and the aesthetic and expressive elements.

"In general, the propagated element is what receives the benefits of the thought control of the Receiver executed by the propaganda. The propagated element might be a person, an institution, an idea, a law, a group, etc. It might be the interested transmitter or an idea or action of the latter, that wish to be propagated, the propagated element is the Transmitter and/or what surrounds him/her" (page 242).

The propagandeme is the representation adopted by the propaganda message and, therefore, of the propagated element. But the relations between the propagated element and the propagandeme are quite complex, as can be seen in the book.

Another fundamental element of the model are the conditions of reception, which are the attitudes and elements of content attributed to the receivers on the part of the transmitter, based on which a propagandeme element will be formulated. These conditions of reception "may be of two types: universal or cultural. The former are necessary and biologically determined, e.g. by the need for food. The latter are contingent and are determined by a particular kind of society, e.g. the attitude towards polygamy or monogamy, which varies from one culture to another"(page 299).

The last fundamental element of the proposed structure are the aesthetic and expressive elements, which are language, image, sound, music, etc. through which the propaganda phenomenon per se takes shape.

To end, I would like to reproduce what may be considered as the author's standpoint on what his research is and what it isn't.

a) It does not belong to the trends in studying propaganda that focus on the ideological critique of a specific power system and its propaganda, nor to the theoretical approaches focusing on the critique of a specific

ideology.

- b) It does not belong to propaganda research trends focusing on the ideological research of benefits (material and/or symbolic) for specific instances of power. Research that tends to optimise the effectiveness of propaganda entails placing scientific knowledge at the service of an organised power.
- c) It rejects all partisanship in researching propaganda and aspires to ensure that the analyst's personal ideology does not interfere with the scientific work itself.
- d) It adopts a basically formal conception of the phenomenon under study (page 20).

These last words of the book are a true stance for scientific rigour, removed from the dogmatism that can also threaten science. "We also believe that science is a collective undertaking. For this reason, we conclude that this research is open to rational dialogue and empirical verification so that its contribution may be evaluated" (page 357). He has thrown down the gauntlet.

Theory, technique and ethics: radio and television information in the multimedia environment

ZABALETA URKIOLA, I.

Teoría, técnica y lenguaje de la información en radio y televisión

1st ed. Barcelona: Bosch, 2005

(Comunicación collection; 29)

ISBN 84-9790-105-3

By Carme Ferré Pavia, full-time lecturer at the Department of Journalism and Communication Science at the Autonomous University of Barcelona

With the subtitle “Digital and analogue systems”, Iñaki Zabaleta Urkiola, professor at the Department of Journalism of the University of the Basque Country and director of television documentaries and news programmes, presents here his second *magnum opus* published by Bosch, the result of the compilation of various years of work and dedication to the world of communication from a very global perspective.

Although *Tecnología de la información audiovisual* (Bosch, 2003) revised audiovisual technologies from a comparative approach, without resorting to technologist infatuations and concerned with the systemic conception of communication, in this volume there is even more consideration of the social implications of communicative processes. The constant in his previous work, within the same collection and to which it is clearly complementary, is his desire to explain, systematically and thoroughly, a conglomeration that includes theory, techniques, technologies, industry, a look at the internet, etc. From an educational point of view, these works complete the content included in the theory and structure of various subjects.

Always a guide

Looking at the structure of the book, and evidently because of its size (736 pages), it also begins with a series of guides to lead us along this extensive path. First we find a conceptual plan (page 17) and also a map to find our way through the work (page 23), steering us from the more global and basic, the theoretical foundations of journalistic

information, to the more specific and procedural, such as news items on radio and television.

The theory, structure, programming and genres of radio and television news are explained in the four parts of the book. In other words, the approach, containers, products and format of what is offered on these media are arranged into chapters on these four steps: the theory of journalistic news, television techniques, radio techniques and the theory of audiovisual language. In the way it evaluates journalistic genres as well as its concept of news, the book both constantly informs and also provides innovative contributions (pages 163 and 202).

It is this across-the-board approach that makes the work particularly suitable for the bridging courses that students must take to access communication degrees from other areas of study.

Change of order

The author's concern for these social implications leads to a new approach that breaks with the classic triad of concepts of “theory, technique and structure” and replaces it with “theory, technique and ethics”, appearing as a constant throughout the book. We find (page 25) an initial and clarifying fragment of this desire to include media's social responsibility as one of the pillars that define them. We quote:

“The nature of a journalistic work is that of an asset in the public sphere that serves society; produced as a journalistic work thanks to a suitable theory, technique and ethic, which fulfils the characteristics of a public asset; which is treated as a journalistic product insofar as it requires a business production process to be made and produced and forms part of the content of news programming”.

Even the digital transition of radio and television does not vary the theory of information. Perhaps the roles of professionals have been affected by this technical shift but not the function of generating plural and objective information of high quality. For example, in the case of integrated productions (pages 40-41), we see how the media themselves already feed websites, portals, blogs, television channels and written publications. This is an absolute reality. So the professionals of the groups of Godó,

Zeta or Barcelona Televisió must be multidisciplinary (not always individually but certainly globally and increasingly so), with written versions, electronic versions, with information uploaded onto their websites, with means of entertainment and information on radio and television and even news items passed on to other news channels, such as the screens in the Barcelona underground system.

Right in the first part of the book, on information theory, the author tackles the different kinds of journalism and the constant of the responsibilities of editors, businessmen and professionals (page 33). The comments he makes regarding the objectivity of an ethical attitude, both from the point of view of how this is theorised as well as from the historical, technical and analytical perspectives applied (pages 169-198), may turn out to be very useful for preliminary education in journalistic practice. The inclusion of civic journalism is along the same lines, as one of the types cited (page 37). Perhaps more closely related to the North American (and by extension Latin American) denomination, civic journalism has been so prominent among us as citizen or involvement initiatives. Although it does not mean the same conceptually, citizen representation has come more from social groups in our setting.

Systemic news

With another of the outstanding features of this work, the balance between its aim as a compendium and its innovative contributions in the conceptual area, we find that it establishes a division in the nature of information according to its relationship with the socio-political system.

Note that *system* appears as a term with many meanings in Zabaleta's work, referring both to the theory that helped to order the previous book internally, as well as to the political, economic and social network generated by the administration and groups of stakeholders. *Intrasystemic* news would be the news that is inserted within this network and is non-conflictive in nature. *Systemic* news, on the other hand, would be news that supposedly endangers the socio-political system or that is presented as such.

Zabaleta compares this to war journalism and attributes the pseudo-political appointment of editors as the inclination of information towards simple propaganda. He bravely

mentions (page 93) the concealment of acts in Madrid supporting the peace process in the Basque Country. He tries to characterise clearly which information is of quality on radio and television (page 94) and neither does he abandon the historical perspective, explaining how news styles have evolved (page 100) and providing new data on the origins of applying an inverted pyramid structure (page 234).

The series of agreements in information and communicative terms is interesting, involved in the practice of journalism (page 133). In fact, Zabaleta proposes the use of a hidden camera as an absence of agreement and proposes a matrix to analyse this kind of "journalism" (pages 118-120).

More technical matters

His review of the technical aspects of radio and television and of the theory of audiovisual language is similarly extensive and painstaking, although, due to its nature, it does not lead to theoretical concepts that dialogue with society. However, the book's continuous ethical reflection does not escape this, as in the point on technical and human resources, in which he looks at the reliability of sources (pages 370-380).

Here we find a description of the system of Televisió Espanyola and of television channels from the autonomous communities (page 245) and, in the same part, the controversial issue of measuring television audiences in minority languages. In this respect, and by way of example, a more appropriate arrangement with regard to local television channels and those in Catalan has had to be negotiated with Sofres, one which takes linguistic aspects into account. All the theoretical and technological aspects that affect radio and television are here: from the resources already mentioned to the theory of language, without forgetting, and in great detail, those involving the management of lighting, colour, volume, time or sound.

In short, a compendium that completes Zabaleta's previous work which, in spite of his aim to give a global explanation, still provides personal contributions of use to professionals, students and academics, who will find in it an extensive world in delicate order.

Books Review

FRANCE TELECOM SPAIN FOUNDATION. *Informe Anual sobre el desarrollo de la Sociedad de la Información en España*. Madrid: France Telecom Spain Foundation, 2006. ISBN: 978-84-9601009-0

The report by the France Telecom Spain Foundation has become an essential tool for knowing the status of the information society in Spain. The methodology used includes fieldwork, surveys and qualitative analyses with an extensive battery of indicators that help to present a picture of Spain's technological geography. The eEspaña index indicates the position of Spain with relation to the rest of the countries in the European Union with regard to the penetration and evolution of ICT and internet use by citizens, companies and the government.

Among other aspects the report examines the situation and trends regarding the regulatory framework for telecommunications; connectivity and access and the uses of ICTs and the internet in Spanish homes and the professional sector; research networks, cyber-security, digital journalism, mobile communications, *eConcepts* such as eSanitation, eAdministration, eSociety, eTraining, eHealth and eInnovation and a wide range of other elements that help to evaluate precisely the progression of the information society in Spain.

MICÓ, J. L. *Teleperiodismo digital*. Barcelona: Trípodos (Blanquerna Foundation), Study Papers Collection. 2006. 200 pages. ISBN: 8493335177

The author, a lecturer in communication, reflects in this book on the reconversion of production routines for televised news after the introduction of digital technology. Its pages analyse the impact of new technologies on the structure of items and the appearance of new figures such as *telejournalists*, who edit and narrate news items from their computers.

In the six chapters into which the book is divided, Micó defines the non-linear editing systems and their application in reports, documentaries and news items. With regard to the profile of workers, the author also points out the importance of recycling and the training of professionals in the area of new technologies as a factor to ensure quality news items. *Teleperiodismo digital* is a book that illustrates and outlines the global changes undergone by television news items.

MONTERO RIVERO, Y. *Televisión, valores y adolescencia*. Barcelona: Editorial Gedisa, 2006. ISBN: 84-9784-133-6

In this work, Yolanda Montero Rivero analyses the role of television as a socialising agent and transmitter of values to teenagers. In an attempt to answer the many questions this issue generates, the author has carried out an empirical study of the adolescent reception of television serials. Firstly, the book presents a theoretical approach as to how and what values are transmitted by television and on the psychological dimension of adolescence. Before entering into the empirical analysis, the author then reviews the key studies on serials, adolescents and identity. Finally, she presents the study, whose sample is made up of more than five hundred participants who watch and give opinions on the series *Al salir de clase*. Among the conclusions extracted, she states that teenagers make use of the series to socialise themselves, to protect their identity and the coherence of their value system. However, she concludes that there is no uniformity of adolescent values but rather that how these values are incorporated depends largely on the personal background, experiences and needs of this segment of the population.

MURO BENAYAS, I. *Globalización de la información y agencias de noticias. Entre el negocio y el interés general*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2006. ISBN: 84-493-1902-1

With the aim of filling the gap in bibliographical references on this theme, the author proposes an analysis of the value of new agencies in the twenty-first century. The globalisation of information has redefined the role of new agencies as intermediaries, suppliers and disseminators of content. In the six chapters into which the book is divided, Muro describes the context and challenges of the market which must be faced by agencies in order to adapt to the proliferation of media, particularly digital, with which they must both compete and collaborate.

The author, who has worked as a director at the Efe agency, greatly emphasises the concepts of credibility, added value and integration with new technology as vital steps for an agency to enter the new reality for news. The last chapter presents a summary of the directions to be taken in order to integrate key publishers with competent and coherent business management. The book is aimed at students and teachers of information science, as well as journalists and media professionals.

ROBINS, K. *The challenge of transcultural diversities. Cultural policy and cultural diversity*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2006. ISBN: 92-871-5968-8

This book contains the conclusions from a cross-national project by the Council of Europe on public policies and cultural diversity carried out by the lecturer and researcher of the City University of London, Kevin Robins. The study aims to provide critical mechanisms to develop democratic cultural policy on European diversity and citizens. Migratory flows have transformed the cultural panorama and the everyday experiences of Europeans and have conditioned competent political agendas at a national, European and global level. One of the main conclusions of the report is a commitment to a cross-national approach in drawing up policies to handle cultural diversity in Europe, which the author calls *transcultural diversity*. The project is complemented by eight studies on cultural diversity and immigration in Europe which are included, in the form of research articles, in the second part of the book. They analyse, among others, cross-national media and new public cultures, the move from “negative” diversity to “positive” diversity, and specific cases in central Europe and the east, as well as the dynamics of the Chinese community in Hungary.

ELIAS ROMÃO, J. E; DE FREITAS CHAGAS, C.M; LEAL, S. (ET AL). *Classificação indicativa no Brasil: desafios e perspectiva*. Brasília: National Secretary of Justice Ministry of Justice, 2006. ISBN: 85-60269-00-6

Which criteria are most suitable when labelling cultural products? In order to promote debate on the classification of shows and audiovisual work, the Ministry of Justice of Brazil has published this book presenting a number of interdisciplinary contributions that argue, from different perspectives, for a democratic classification model. The criteria used to categorise cultural content must ensure both pluralism and freedom of expression, as well as protecting the rights of minors and teenagers.

This work is divided into five parts, focusing on the historical legislative framework of labelling in Brazil; television programming; the ethical content of entertainment and information; monitoring the media; and mechanisms for citizen involvement. Together with the book, the Brazilian Ministry of Justice has also published a manual and DVD explaining what the labelling is and what it is for, as well as describing the new classification model.

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Pamplona: University of Navarre
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ISSN: 0214-0039

The latest edition of the journal from the Communication Faculty of the University of Navarre includes a number of articles on various themes and a series of reviews of newly published books in the Faculty's academic area. Among the articles published, of note is the one by Carlos Macià Barber, putting forward an ombudsman for users of the media who is a journalist of accredited personal merit and with extensive professional experience, but who is independent of any news firm against which he or she may have to take action. Another of the noteworthy articles in this edition of the journal is the one by Carlos Múñiz, Juan José Igartua and José Antonio Otero, explaining the findings of an analysis of content concerning the visual representation of immigration through photographs published in leading Spanish newspapers with a national circulation. This study forms part of a broader research project on how the news media treat immigration. In the large section of reviews included in this edition, we should highlight that by Carmen Cortés Beltrán on the monograph *Audiencia infantil e información sobre terrorismo. Los medios ante el 11-M*, coordinated by Carmen García Galera.

Comunicazione Politica

Milan: University of Milan
Vol. VII, no. 1, first half of 2006
ISSN: 1594-6061

The *leitmotiv* of this edition of the Italian journal from the University of Milan is electronic democracy. It is therefore a monographic edition dedicated to this area. To start with, it includes an article by Mauro Calise that attempts to define what e-democracy is and is not. Then Philippe C. Schmitter proposes a series of ideas for implementing the perspectives of this kind of democracy, based on the use of ICTs in the European Union. In turn, in his article Francesco Amoretti defends the importance, within the political agenda of the European Union itself, of the existence of policies of cohesion and the creation of communication networks between institutions and citizens, thanks to the introduction and dissemination of ICTs, in order to achieve a veritable European public sphere. On the other hand, the article by Fortunato Musella warns of the dangers of e-democracy becoming a new border for transparency and citizen involvement in governmental activities. He therefore warns of the risks of the digital gap and highlights the new forms of dependency hidden behind the dream of digital *polis*. Other articles, comments and reviews related to the single theme go to make up this edition of the journal.

European Journal of Communication

London: SAGE Publications
Vol. 21, no. 3, September 2006
ISSN: 0267-3231

This is a special edition of the *European Journal of Communication* on the new media. In the introduction, Denis McQuail already warns of the fact that *new media* can mean many things: new technologies, forms and channels of distribution of public communication; technological resources to produce and share private communication or to receive public communication; the world wide web of the internet, etc. For this reason, this edition includes a number of articles on issues as diverse as the concept of citizenship in the age of the internet (by Joke Hermes), the relationship between policies and ICTs (by Sara Bentivegna) and social change associated with information technologies (by Helena Sousa), among others. From a more theoretical point of view, of note is the article by Lars Qvortrup, suggesting the application of complexity theory to media studies. Another article that might be highlighted in this review is the one by Cees J. Hamelink, who examines the application of new technologies to the human condition. So, for example, he revises the advances of digitalisation applied to human healthcare. This edition ends with a number of reviews of recently published books.

Media, Culture & Society

London: SAGE Publications

Vol. 28, no. 5, September 2006

ISSN: 0163-4437

Seven articles go to make up the core of the latest edition of the journal *Media, Culture & Society*, among which we can highlight three. Firstly, the article by Slavko Splichal, who postulates that the creation of a European public sphere is the result of the lack of citizen satisfaction caused by the dominance of the economy over essential policies for democracy. The article by Xialoing Zhang is also of note, which examines the news coverage of the SARS phenomenon (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in *Focus*, a news programme on contemporary issues in China. The author aims to demonstrate that, although news programmes on contemporary issues in China have been used to shape public discourse and create a favourable social and psychological climate for political stability, in times of crisis (such as now, with the appearance of SARS), they have less freedom to contradict the norms established by the State. And, to end, we should point out the article by Margaret Scammell and Ana I. Langer on political advertising. This article attempts to answer why, while commercial advertising attracts the interest of the receiver by using pleasure and popular discourse, political advertising remains in the area of content.

Telos. Cuadernos de comunicación, tecnología y sociedad

Madrid: Telefónica Foundation

No. 69, October-December 2006

ISSN: 0213-084X

The main section of this edition of the journal is dedicated to the digital content industry. A wide and varied range of companies are grouped under this denomination: publishers, the media and related companies, and internet service companies, among others. The aim of this section is therefore to highlight, from an economic or business management focus, the peculiarities of this industry and how it might evolve in the future. With this aim in mind, four background articles are presented that review the sector from different perspectives: a general view of the economy of information (Josep Ma Surís), a forecast of the main trends in the sector (Pablo Rodríguez Canfranc), a contribution on the role of telecommunications operators (GAPTEL) and a summary of the sector's key features in Spain, by describing the innovative experience of Prisacom (Carlos Guallarte and José R. Granger). These articles are complemented by four platforms where directors involved in developing the digital content market, from companies with highly diverse characteristics, share their experiences of how the sector has evolved and the positioning of the firms that lead it, thereby providing also the key factors for its future.

Zer. Revista de estudios de comunicación

Bilbao: Faculty of Social Sciences and Communication Vol. 11. No. 20, May 2006

ISSN: 1137-1102

This is a highly prolific edition containing around twenty articles. It is difficult to pick out some rather than others but, due to their thematic affinity with the idiosyncrasy of the *Quaderns del CAC*, perhaps we could mention four of them. The first refers to the ethical limits of persuasive messages in political communication. It is by Rafael Yanes and its relevance is based on a proposal for a set of principles for the good political communicator. We might also mention the article by José Ramón Pérez Ornia and Luis Núñez Ladevéze on children's consumption of television. This article contains comments on the data obtained from research projects led by the authors in which an analysis was made of the content of children's programming broadcast during the period 2001-2005. For his part, Guillermo López García analyses how the public sphere has mutated since the new digital communication systems appeared. And, to finish, also of note is the article by Marcial Murciano on the challenges of communication policies given pluralism, cultural diversity, economic and technological development and social welfare. The author proposes communication policies in order to make these challenges compatible.

Webs Review

Aulamèdia

<http://www.aulamedia.org/>

Aulamèdia was created as an e-zine in 2001 with the aim of offering essential reference articles and resources for teachers interested in education in communication. From its website you can access all the editions of the magazine either chronologically or by theme. Apart from a section where you can consult activities related to education in communication and another containing a series of links to practical experiences in education in communication carried out in real classrooms, also of note is a training section with information on all the events, courses, seminars, etc. of interest for training in this field. Among the projects carried out by Aulamèdia, such as Cinescola and Educom, of particular interest is the Xarxa d'Educació en Comunicació (Education in Communication Network) (<http://www.laxarxa.info>) where people who are interested in or already work in education in communication can meet up.

Aire Comunicació.

Association of educommunicators

<http://www.airecomun.com/>

Aire is an association of communication professionals and teachers at various educational levels working for more than ten years in media literacy. Some of its members are leaders in the field, although over the years the association has also been joined by many young edu-communicators working actively to apply classic theories to the world of the internet, multimedia creation, the media and digital systems. Aire's main lines of work are the production of audiovisual and multimedia materials, training and research. From the association's website you can access a list of the audiovisual material produced, as well as information on the training activities organised by the association. There is also a section of resources to access various articles written by some of Aire's members, a bibliography and a list of recommended links.

Grupo Comunicar. Andalusian group of education and communication

<http://www2.uhu.es/comunicar/>

The group presents itself as a plural forum for education in the media which, as a professional association of journalists and teachers, aims to promote and encourage the didactic, critical, creative and plural use of the media in the classroom by means of training, publishing and research. The organisation publishes the *Revista científica iberoamericana de educación y comunicación Comunicar*, a leading publication in the area, recognised nationally and internationally, that is committed to integrating media into education and the curriculum by exchanging ideas and experiences, promoting reflection among journalists and educators and particularly guiding and supporting teachers through practical proposals. At its website you can consult both the indices of the different editions of the magazine as well as other important publications by the group, such as *Educación y Medios* and *Aula Media*.

Euromedia Literacy. The European Charter for Media Literacy

<http://www.euromedialiteracy.eu/>

The European Charter for Media Literacy is another initiative that has arisen from civil society to defend the right to education in communication, as it supports the establishment of media literacy around Europe. By signing the Charter, organisations and individuals endorse a specific definition of media literacy and commit to actions that will contribute to its development. In order to encourage this consensus and networking, its website has a database of the Charter signatories. After registering with the site free of charge, you can sign the Charter online, participate in discussions and explore the site's resources which comprise links, archive and research listings.

MediaEd. The UK media education website

<http://www.mediaed.org.uk/>

MediaEd is a media education portal from the United Kingdom, where the area of media education is highly developed. It is aimed at teachers, students and anyone else who's interested in this area of study. The portal was founded by BFI Education (<http://www.bfi.org.uk>), a private organisation set up in 1933 in order to promote knowledge of, to enjoy and access cinematographic and television culture. The MediaEd website has different sections, of note being an informative section on media education that includes information on the current and historical panorama of media education in the United Kingdom, as well as links to situations around the world. Another interesting section is that of resources, offering free of charge a number of activities by age group for use by teachers in the classroom. Finally, we should also mention the section dedicated directly to students, including information on specific media education courses, as well as a highly interesting repertory of online articles of a more theoretical nature. We should also note that, on the portal's home page, there is extremely up-to-date information on news items related to media education, particularly in the United Kingdom.

Centre de Liaison de l'Enseignement et des Médias d'Information

<http://www.cleml.org/>

The CLEMI (the Centre for Liaison between Teaching and the Information Media) is an organisation associated with the French National Pedagogical Documentation Centre, which forms part of the French Ministry of Education. This organisation's main mission is one of promoting, especially by means of training activities, the multiple use of news media in teaching, with the aim of encouraging a better understanding of the world by pupils while simultaneously developing critical understanding. The CLEMI is therefore a meeting place between those in charge of the media, researchers and those involved in the educational system in order to share opinions, experiences and projects. In this respect, educators find a place where they can compare and enrich their own pedagogical practices with the media, as well as being among information professionals. We should also note that this website sometimes provides information on all events related to the area of media education and also has a wide range of resources which teachers and lecturers can apply in the classroom.

Center for Media Literacy

<http://www.medialit.org/>

The Center for Media Literacy (CML) is a North American non-profit educational organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting media literacy education as a framework for accessing, analysing, evaluating and creating media content. This association works to help citizens, especially the young, develop critical thinking and the media production skills needed to live fully in the 21st century media culture. The CML website has a large number of relevant articles, as well as a handful of practical ideas for teachers, by area, book recommendations, videos and resources for educators. Among all this material, of particular note is access to the MediaLit Kit, an electronic publication that aims to show the status of the area and a guide to the core elements of media education, as well as proposals for practical application and an analysis of the real implementation of these proposals in the classroom. The website also provides access to the different editions of the magazine *Media&Values*, published by the CML for 15 years (from 1977 to 1993). It is therefore a highly extensive portal of information on the status of media literacy in the United States, one of the countries where this area has seen most work.

Media Awareness Network

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/>

The Media Awareness Network (Mnet) has been working since 1996 in the development of media literacy programmes by producing online programmes and resources, working in partnership with Canadian and international organisations. The main aim of this organisation is to equip adults (parents and teachers) with information and tools to help young people to understand how the media work and their effects. Mnet therefore offers reference materials for use by adults and young people in examining media issues from a variety of perspectives. As a result, the section on this website dedicated to parents has a number of recommendations for them to talk to their children about the media and to guide them on how to use the media at home. The website section focusing on educators has didactic units and support materials for the various stages in the Canadian educational system. The section 'Media Issues' reviews issues related to the media of interest to the area of media education, such as stereotypes, violence, privacy, diversity in the media, etc.

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