

Studies in communication/education for social change in Spanish universities. Paths towards an interdisciplinary dialogue

La formación en comunicación/educación para el cambio social en la universidad española. Rutas para un diálogo interdisciplinar

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an assessment of the adoption of communication for social change and of communication/education in Spanish public and private universities. The methodology is grounded on a bibliographic review of the theoretical foundations of both fields, which served as basis for the design and execution of two protocols aimed at analyzing the basic features of these perspectives in the Graduate and Postgraduate Courses in Communication, in the context of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). We finally stand for an interdisciplinary dialogue and the progressive adoption of these subjects in the syllabuses, considering the importance of educommunication processes developed by and for the people.

Keywords: Communication/education, communication for social change, communication for development, citizen communication, development, media education, educomunicación, higher education.

RESUMEN

El presente estudio evalúa el grado de implantación de la comunicación para el cambio social y de la comunicación/educación en las universidades públicas y privadas españolas. La metodología parte de una revisión bibliográfica de los fundamentos teóricos de ambas disciplinas, como base para el diseño y aplicación de dos protocolos orientados a analizar la fisonomía de dicha formación en los estudios de grado y posgrado en Comunicación, desde su incorporación al Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES). En último término, se reivindica el diálogo interdisciplinar y una mayor implantación de las asignaturas del área en los planes de estudio, habida cuenta de la importancia que en los últimos años están adquiriendo los procesos educomunicativos implementados por la ciudadanía y/o para ella.

Palabras clave: Comunicación/educación, comunicación para el cambio social, comunicación para el desarrollo, comunicación ciudadana, desarrollo, educación en medios, educomunicación, educación superior.

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INTRODUCTION

The following article intends to analyze the studies in communication for social change and in communication/education taught at public and private universities in Spain, taking as object of analysis the curriculum plans of graduate and postgraduate syllabuses that delve into these areas, within the framework of the new studies that derived from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), better known as the Bologna Process¹.

The theoretical framework aims to explore the concept and the historical trajectory of both the areas of *communication for development and social change*, from now on CDSC, and *communication/education (CE) or educommunication*². In this context, it is attempted to glimpse what lines of convergence exist between both fields, patterns that are drawn from the work of a group of pioneer thinkers who helped build bridges between the notions of communication, education, development and social change. On the other hand, the status of research and teaching of both areas in the Spanish context are evaluated, which led to find new points of contact between the disciplines. The investigation consisted of analyzing the studies in the under and postgraduate programs by measuring contents, objectives, methodologies and competencies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Communication for development and social change is one of the most veteran disciplines in the field of communication. Already since 1950 some of the pioneers of the American research asked themselves about the role of the media in the well being of the populations (Lerner, 1958; Rogers, 1962; Schramm, 1964). These studies would mark the birth of the so-called “modernization paradigm”, which placed the causes of underdevelopment in the cultures of third world countries themselves, qualified as “pre-modern” or “backward” and as “obstacles” which should be overcome in order to introduce innovations (Lerner, 1958). In this scheme, the media were conceived as a propaganda tool to change mindsets and activate a process of “imitation” of the “more developed” values of the Northern. Within the modernization paradigm, the media were thought as “magical multipliers” of development (ibid.), “indicators” of the degree of progress of a country (Schramm, 1964), and instruments for the “diffusion of innovations” (Rogers,

1962), in a linear and sequenced process in stages geared towards economic growth (Rostow, 1960).

Modernization theories began to show serious shortcomings and limitations, since they paradoxically contributed to emphasize the situation of underdevelopment in many countries (Tortosa, 2009). Arose in the very own regions subject to the cooperation policies from the Northern countries, especially in Latin America, since during the second half of the 20th century it was taking part of a long cycle of mobilizations against US imperialism and the domination of local oligarchies. Within this context, the “theories of dependency” marked a transformation in what until then was understood as underdevelopment, which began to be interpreted as a status derived from historical relations of dependence between the poorest countries (periphery) in regards to the richest and most industrialized states (center) (Beigel, 2006).

Latin America did not limit itself to just suggesting the current notion of development. Proposals for a communicational reform abounded, as did the (national) policies of communication and Latin American contributions to the New World Information and Communication Order or NWICO (Marques de Melo, 2007). On the other hand, the alternative to the “modernization paradigm” was not constructed so much in theory as it derived from actual practice of a wide variety of experiences of popular education and communication, scattered through the continent (Beltrán, 1993). Among these initiatives, it is noteworthy to point out the following: the Bolivian Mining Union Radios; the distance education programs with media support, such as Radio Sutatenza in Colombia; the communicative experiences of the Brazilian grass-roots ecclesial communities; the community radios and televisions and their networks (AMARC, ALER, etc.) and the educational projects with entertainment (*edutainment*) as the ones by Miguel Sabido in Mexico or the Uruguayan Mario Kaplún in different countries of the subcontinent (Barranquero, 2009b).

These initiatives contributed to articulate a new “participatory paradigm” in CDSC, which placed the needs of local contexts and the uniqueness of cultures as the axis for change, under the conviction that “affected communities understand better their own reality than outside ‘experts’” (Gumucio Dagron & Tufte, 2008, p. 23). Thus, the “modernizing” idea of communication as mere persuasive transmission of data and information

was banished. Instead, they explored the notion of “dialogue” or symbolic exchange that helps empower people and explore alternatives for change, in the line of authors such as Antonio Pasquali (1963/1996): “Communication is, therefore, a proprietary term of dialogical relations between humans or between ethically autonomous individuals, and precisely signals the fundamental ethical link with an ‘other’ with whom I ‘need to communicate’”(p. 50).

These contributions provide the basis of the Communicology for Liberation (Beltrán, 1979) or the Latin American Critical Communication School (Marques de Melo, 2009), which put together a new research program tailored to the needs of the subcontinent, and critical of cultural dependency. The School also stresses the ethical and political nature of the investigation and the urgency of moving from the mere observation of phenomena into a communication science committed to social change (Marques de Melo, 2009; León Duarte, 2007). Over time, the region became the main advocate of the new notion of “communication for social change” embraced in the late nineties within meetings convened by the Communication for Social Change Consortium, which ended up banishing the notion of development due to its economic and ethnocentric colonial imprint. Thus, communication for social change is defined by Gray-Felder and Deane (1999) as a “process of public and private dialogue from which the people decide who they are, what their aspirations are, what they need and how they can be collectively organized to achieve their goals and improve their lives” (p. 8).

The importance of participation and dialogue is highlighted in the first anthologies published about CDSC (Downing, 2010; Gumucio Dagron, 2001; Gumucio Dagron & Tufte, 2006; Wilkins, Tufte & Obregón, 2014), which emphasize, on the other hand, the intense relationship that exists between communication and social movements. In fact, since the late 1990s, this relationship is reinforced in milestones such as the anti-globalization movement or the new round of protests that started in 2011, with the *Arab spring*, *Occupy Wall Street* (OWS), the movement *YoSoy132* (*Iam132*) in Mexico, and demonstrations in different points such as in Turkey, Brazil, Chile, and Hong Kong. All of them show an intense and creative use of participative technologies, like the Internet, blogs, social networks, mobile phones, etc., conceived

as tools for empowerment and to generate dialogic alternatives towards social change.

ABOUT THE LINK BETWEEN THE CDSC AND COMMUNICATION/EDUCATION

Currently, the CDSC is a field of transdisciplinary studies, aimed at investigating and promoting the relationship between communication and social transformations, with emphasis on participation and dialogue within the communities. That is why the CDSC is close to the field of communication and education (CE) or educommunication, which, in versions like the one by Jorge Huergo (2010), encompasses the critical inputs that derive from a set of traditions: media literacy, communication pedagogy, educational communication, or reception education. Along this line, it is considered that the CE relates to the CDSC because both share an ethical and political approach to communication; an emphasis on the process (rather than the products); a theory that emerged from concrete practices around the connection between theory and practice; and the invitation to encourage and implement dialogical relations with the population in order to build awareness and empowerment. This is reflected in a definition of the CE that has affinity with the fundamentals and values of the CDSC:

a space that refers to the intention of regaining processes (even at the expense of losing some delimitation of the disciplinary or interdisciplinary objects); in recognition of the historical, socio-cultural and political contexts (...) and constructing some preliminary bases to prompt a trans-disciplinary theoretical space, moved by a common problematic area with strained relations, rather than split disciplinary views (Huergo, 2010, p. 66)

Latin American theorists stand out because they understood in a pioneering way the inseparable links between communication, education and social change. This was one of the obsessions of Juan Díaz Bordenave (2012), who reported in numerous writings that communication and education had remained erroneously and artificially separated at the beginnings of the theoretical reflection. This distance began to be diminished with the publication of texts as *Extension or communication?: The awareness in rural areas* (Freire, 1969/1988). In the only work that Paulo Freire dedicated specifically to communication, he criticized the first modernizing or “extension” models in Latin America,

which were unsuccessful in enabling a genuine communication process with rural communities, in particular because of the obsession to impose foreign contents in these realities. Modernization programs were based on the same communicative scheme which characterized the “traditional pedagogy” or the “banking model”, which proposed a unilinear and hierarchical information flow from those “gifted” with knowledge (teachers, development stakeholders, the media, etc.) towards those considered deprived of knowledge and judgment (students, the “oppressed”, audiences, etc.).

For Freire, communication and education were two sides of the same coin. The link between both derived precisely from its political character, as it was enunciated in expressions such as “politicization of education” (Freire, 1993). In other words, based on the conception of power subjacent in both concepts, communication and education lead to either perpetuating the structures of oppression, or to changing them. Consequently, it is necessary that both the communicator and the educator become aware of the domesticating or emancipatory nature of his/her own practice. If this task is not thought over and agreed with the main actors of the communicational process -students, audiences, collectives subject to development policies, etcetera-, communication and education will work at the service of the elite and a dominant value system. Otherwise, they will help promote an authentic learning and provide the basis of a future social change (Barranquero, 2007).

The famous distinction of Freire between “banking education” and “transforming education” raised an intense debate among many Latin American researchers who have moved between the fields of communication and education (Crovi, 2001, Díaz Bordenave, 2012; Gerace, 1973; Huergo, 2000, 2001, 2010; Kaplún, 1985, 1998; Martín Barbero, 2002; Pérez, 1999; Prieto, 2000; Prieto & Gutiérrez Quiroz, 2003). On the other hand, this Brazilian pedagogue laid the foundations of the so-called “critical” or “radical pedagogy” (Giroux, Lankshear, McLaren & Peters, 1997; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2008), which emphasizes a focused education to reveal the historical relations of oppression and the mechanisms operated by power and ideology, as well as is based on the rescuing of knowledge and experiences that have been silenced or repressed throughout modern history. Together with the work of other international precursors (Cloutier, 1973; Freinet, 1975; Vallet, 1968), their thinking is one of the

fundamental roots of the so-called educommunication (Masterman, 1993), which aims to “provide the entire person with expressive skills essential for their normal communicative development and for the improvement of their creativity”, and provides tools to assess power and “appreciate messages with enough critical detachment, minimizing the risks of manipulation” (García Matilla, 2010, pp. 151-152).

The commitment to a “problem-posing” or “liberating” education, which emphasizes on the processes and confides in the intrinsic ability of individuals to reach awareness from a dialogic process (Freire, 1970/2002)³, is also the basis of a CDSC that stresses dialogue and participation as the cardinal axes of any development program (Gumucio Dagron & Tufté, 2008; Richards, Thomas & Nain, 2001). From this perspective, the communicators for social change pursue a similar mission to the one of the educommunicators: “The recognition of the strategic value of the fight for freedom of speech, as a utopia that focuses on effective actions in the different educational areas” (Oliveira Soares, 2000, p. 130).

THE STATUS OF RESEARCH IN CDSC AND CE IN SPAIN

Analyzing the key trends in the scientific research is a sign of maturity for any discipline (López Rabadán & Vicente Mariño, 2011). Since the year 2000, substantial advances have been made in the construction of general cartographies about the communication sciences in Spain (Castillo & Carretón, 2010; Castillo, Rubio & Almansa, 2012; López Rabadán & Vicente-Mariño, 2011; Martínez Nicolás, 2008; Martínez Nicolás & Saperas, 2011) as well as specific maps about the research on CDSC (Barranquero, 2009a; Barranquero & Sáez Baeza, 2011, 2012; Fernández Viso, 2012; Marí Sáez, 2013) and on CE (García Matilla, 2003; López & Aguaded, 2014; Tucho, 2006).

Since the transition to democracy, the evolution in the field of CDSC has been linked to a range of factors, which can include the birth of the cooperation and development system (Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation, autonomic and local agencies, etc.); the raising of with the support of media from NGOs and NGOD (non-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations for development); a greater presence of community and alternative media; and the extensive tradition

in educational communication. Derived from this, research has delved into topics such as alternative communication (e.g. De Fontcuberta & Gómez Mompert, 1983; Sáez Baeza, 2009; Vidal Beneyto, 1978); communication for social change (e.g. Chaparro, 2002; Chaves, 2012; Marí Sáez, 2011; Martínez, Mayurgo & Tamarit, 2012); local and proximity media (e.g. Chaparro, 1998; Guimerà, 2012; Moragas, 1988); associative, community and “third sector” media (e.g., Bergès, 2012; García García, 2013; Meda, 2012; Reguero, 2011); social marketing and social advertising by NGOs (e.g. Burgui & Erro, 2010; Erro, 2002, 2003; Nos Aldás, 2007); fights for transparency and citizen strategies for the assessment of the media system (e.g. Cabo & Magallón, 2013; Rosique, 2008), and in recent times, cyber activism through Internet, mobile phones and social networks (e.g. Candón Mena, 2013; Castells, 2012; Sádaba & Gordo, 2008; Sampedro, 2005, 2014; Tascón & Quintana, 2012; Toret, 2013).

With precedents such as the mobilizations against the war in Iraq or against the terrorist attacks in 2004 (Sampedro, 2005), the socio-economic crisis of 2008 has led to a new window of opportunities for the processes of CDSC, which today materialize in an emergence of new media and information platforms, which largely use ICT and social media, and which are present in the fights of movements such as the 15M and other collectives, among them the Platform for People Affected by Evictions (*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca-PAH*) and Citizen Tides (*Mareas*) by thematic and professional interests: health, education, etc. Additionally, there are numerous joint projects in the framework of digital activism and the demands for information transparency, network neutrality, the commons and the revision of old copyright models (copyleft, peer-to-peer, etc.) (Toret et al., 2013). In this context, the CDSC has taken important steps for its institutionalization and consolidation as a field of study (Fernández Viso, 2012; Marí Sáez, 2013), as evidenced by the publication of numerous works about the matter, the holding of major conferences and meetings⁴, and the gradual upsurge of three magazines specialized in CDSC⁵.

It should also be highlighted the presence of research nuclei of CDSC in different parts of Spain, which, halfway between theory and practice, are among the main advocates of educational and investigative offer in the field, around different subjects of research: communication and social movements, digital

activism, social marketing and other mobilizing strategies by NGOs, alternative media, and so on. Among these, we can mention: the Institute of Development and International Cooperation Studies-Hegoa, of the University of the Basque country (www.hegoa.ehu.es); the Interuniversity Institute of Social Development and Peace, of the Jaume I University of Castellón (IUDESP) (www.e-comunicambiosocial.org); the Cibersomosaguas Group of the Complutense University of Madrid (www.ciberdemocracia.es); the Interdisciplinary Group of Studies in Communication, Politics and Social Change COMPOLITICAS, at the University of Seville (www.compolicas.org/web/index.php); the Communication and Digital Citizenship Research Group of the University of Cádiz (<http://sej061.uca.es>); the Laboratory of Communication and Culture COMandalucía (<http://com-andalucia.org>) and the Research Group on Communication and Power in the University of Málaga; the Citizenship and Communication Research Group of the University of Santiago; the Research Group on Audiovisual Communication and Hypermedia (GICAVH) at the University of Valladolid; the Research Group on Networks, Movements and Techno-politics of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) (<http://civilsc.net>); the Cyber-Democracy Research Group of the King Juan Carlos University of Madrid; and the work groups on cultural commons, transparency or data journalism of the Medialab-Prado (<http://cccd.es/wp>).

In the field of CE, the first programs of educommunication in Spain date back to private initiatives (e.g. the Orientation Service for School Pupil Activities – *Servicio de Orientación de Actividades Paraescolares*) or film forums such as the ones from the Cooperative Drac Magic, still active (Aparici, 2010)⁶. In the academic field, the education programs in media of the National University of Distance Education (UNED) are pioneers, as was the course Reading of Image and Audiovisual Media (1987-2010). These efforts were accompanied by a critical investigation that became increasingly more extensive on the relationship between communication, education and social change, tackling environments as varied as primary or university education, and formal, informal or non-formal learning. As years went by, Spain became one of the most substantial and active research centers on a worldwide level of CE and educommunication, with significant contributions from several universities (Aguaded, 1999; Aparici, 2003, 2010; Aparici & García

Matilla, 1987; Aparici & Sáez, 2003; Ferrés, 2000, 2008; García Matilla, 2003; Pérez Tornero, 2008; Sierra, 2000, 2002) and emphasis, in recent times, in concepts such as “communicative/audiovisual competence” (Aguaded, 2012; Ferrés, 2007; Ferrés & Piscitelli, 2012; Ferrés, García Matilla & Aguaded, 2011; Marta-Laso & Grandío, 2013).

Much of the investigations on CE is concentrated around research groups with greater historical tradition (created around the 1990s) than the ones in the area of communication and social change (2000s). Part of the university training that is described in the following sections is developed around such groups, among which we can outline a few consolidated ones, such as Comunicar at the University of Huelva (www.revistacomunicar.com) and the Department of Communication and Education at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (www.gabinete comunicacion y educacion.com). There are also associations that combine studies with audiovisual production, such as Aire Comunicación (www.airecomun.com), Aideka (www.aideka.tv) and Teleduca, in Catalonia [7].

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESSES OF TEACHING ABOUT CDSC AND CE

The protagonists of communication research and teaching have historically been the mainstream media of the public-governmental and private-commercial binomial (Sáez Baeza, 2009). In recent years, there is an unprecedented emergence of media and communication initiatives in charge of citizens or closely linked to their needs. This is related to larger processes such as the reorganization of the civil society (e.g. 15M); the financial and legitimacy crisis that affects conventional media (Madrid Press Association [APM], 2013; Díaz Nosty, 2011); or important mutations in the traditional process of production and distribution of information, in which audiences regain prominence on the road to a more horizontal communication (Andrés & Casero, 2013; Bowman & Willis, 2003; Sampedro, 2014).

This revival of citizen communication has not been reflected yet in teaching, since the traditions of the CDSC are still precarious and even invisible in most university curricula, to the point that many Spanish academics claim to ignore its foundations or allege lack of time to introduce them into their subjects (Barranquero & Sáez Baeza, 2012). In this context, the diagnosis by Gumucio Dagron achieves full force:

Although there are few international cooperation organizations that have fully understood the role that communication can play in development, it is even more amazing to see that the academic world, until very recent years, showed absolute contempt and even ignorance on the subject, to the point that the so-called “social communication” studies are mostly unrelated to the development needs of many populations and continue to produce annually thousands of journalists and publicists, but very few communicators for social change. (Gumucio Dagron, 2010, p. 4)

At an international level, undergraduate and postgraduate education on CDSC seems to make advances, even though it is still insufficient in a global context in which inequalities are increasing gradually (Barranquero & Herrera, 2012). Moreover, there are no unified criteria of education in this area, although in recent times, it has been attempted to account the abilities and skills needed for future communicators for social change (Etiennette, Tarnapol, Faulkner & Coe, 2002; Gumucio Dagron, 2002, 2010; Herrera & Torres, 2011; Muñoz Navarro & Del Valle, 2011; Rocha, 2010).

Teaching CE seems somewhat more developed and structured. Recent studies take notice of its growing importance within the Spanish universities (López & Aguaded, 2014; Marta-Laso, Grandío & Gabelas, 2014; Osuna, Marta & Aparici, 2013; Pérez Tornero, 2008; Tucho, 2006), but works such as the ones by Ferrés, García-Matilla & Aguaded (2011) highlight that the population still maintains on media literacy, confirming the hypothesis that “media education hardly reaches the curricula, remaining at the periphery of the syllabuses” (Oliveira Soares, 2010, p. 133)⁷.

In terms of teaching, there is some continuity perceived between the CDSC and the CE, as both traditions are characterized for questioning the communication model taught in universities that also predominates in the media, development agencies, or educational policies. This model emphasizes an unilinear, the professionalization of the emission, and the passivity of the receiver (Barranquero & Sáez Baeza, 2011), against those which put the focus on the active participation of the “emireceivers” (*emirec*) (Cloutier, 1979), or in the coexistence of a traditional professional journalism and a citizen one, which tries to generate discussions and counter-hegemonic spaces aside from mass media.

Education in both disciplines tends to be directed to the criticism of journalistic practices prejudicial in respect to human dignity or the environment. But it also tries to provide skills and abilities so that the citizens themselves generate a communication in accordance with human rights, peace, democracy or the fight against inequality in all aspects (gender, ethnicity, social class, and so on). CDSC and CE also share a wide cultural view on the communicative phenomena, attending to, and even combining, the research and action in different media (press, radio, television, online media, etc.); forms of communication (mass, but also interpersonal and group ones), and other routes of communication and cultural expression (arts, video games, music, theater, comic, and so on).

STUDY OF THE EDUCATIONAL OFFER ON CDSC AND CE IN SPAIN

Analysis of the educational offer on CDSC and CE considered the three branches from which communication is taught in Spain, both at levels of undergraduate (journalism, audiovisual communication, advertising and public relations) and postgraduate (masters and doctorates in social communication). It was sought to know if the faculty have an academic offer that is proportional and of quality, as well as to evaluate their key features (content, teaching and learning methodologies and evaluation systems). The project started off with the list of public and private universities with communication studies registered in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

The second phase entailed the selection of subjects, courses and postgraduate programs that incorporated in their objectives and bibliography the debates and issues related to both disciplines, according to the definition of "academic field" by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1983). On the other hand, subjects that make references to a set of keywords related to the investigation and the practice of the CDSC and the CE were surveyed, which included:

a) Generic denominations of both fields: communication for development, communication for social change, and others related areas (popular, alternative, citizen or communal communication), as well as communication/education, educommunication, and other variants (media literacy, educational communication, media and digital pedagogy, etc.).

b) Media practices of the usual actors in CDSC and CE (cooperation agencies, social movements and non-profit associations such as NGOs, NGODs).

c) Strategies and methodologies inherent to CDSC: social marketing, social advertising, participatory action research, media activism, cyber activism, etc.

d) Works that appeal to the roles of communication and journalism in promoting values such as democracy, peace, justice and solidarity.

Once the analysis units were determined, a protocol for evaluating the subjects of the undergrad degree in Communication dedicated to CDSC and CE was designed. Identification categories are: name of the degree (Journalism, Audiovisual Communication, etc.); academic status and importance (core, basic and mandatory versus optional); and number of credits. Qualitative parameters related to the process of teaching and learning (key content, skills, teaching methodology and evaluation system) are then considered. Like wise for the postgraduate assessment protocol.

RESULTS

A total of 52 public and private institutions offer degrees in communication, including their traditional variants (Journalism, Audiovisual Communication, Advertising and Public Relations) and others of recent creation (e.g. Social Communication). Twenty-one courses in CDSC and CE were detected in ten universities (see Table 1).

The implementation of the CDSC and the CE in undergraduate studies can be considered precarious, especially in a University context which, from Bologna, concentrates its energies on the professional insertion of students into the business world, to the detriment of the third sector or non-profit organizations. On the other hand, the labels of the courses show a large disparity in terms of content and emphasis, among which stand out: the history and foundations of CDSC; communication strategies by NGOs and social movements; citizen participation in Internet and social media; methodologies such as social marketing; and media/digital literacy.

The courses appear limited too, mostly, the undergraduate program of Journalism (9), but that number is not far from the ones in Advertising and

Table 1. Spanish universities that offer courses of CDSC and CE in undergraduate studies

University	Public	Private	Course	Undergraduate Program	Core/BF /Mandatory	Optional	Year *	ECTS *
The Charles III University of Madrid (UC3M)	X	-	-Communication and citizen participation in the network	Journalism	X	-	1st	6
			-Communication and education	Audiovisual Communication	-	X	3rd	3
IE University	-	X	-Digital literacy	Communication	X	-	1st	3
Autonomous University of Barcelona	X	-	-Communication, education and media literacy	Journalism	-	X	-	6
			-Communication, cooperation and development	Journalism	-	X	4th	6
University of Malaga (UMA)	X	-	-Media literacy	Journalism	-	X	3rd and 4th	6
			-Citizen Journalism and social networks	Journalism	-	X	3rd and 4th	6
			-Communication in NGOs and social movements	Advertising and PR	X	-	4th	6
			-Communication, human rights and equality	Advertising and PR	X	-	2nd	6
			-Alternative communication campaigns	Advertising and PR	-	-	3rd and 4th	6
			-Audiovisual communication and social change	Audiovisual Communication	X	X	2nd	6
University of Seville (US)	X	-	-Audiovisual literacy	Audiovisual Communication	-	X	4th	6
			-Communication for social development	Journalism	-	X	4th	6
University of Navarra (UNAV)	-	X	-Communication for development	Journalism, Audiovisual Communication, Advertising and PR	-	X	3rd and 4th	3
University of Vigo	X	-	-Public relations and solidarity-based communication	Advertising and PR	-	X	4th	6

University	Public	Private	Course	Undergraduate Program	Core/BF /Mandatory	Optional	Year *	ECTS *
University of Castilla La Mancha (UCLM)	X		-Media literacy	Journalism	X		1st	6
University of Valladolid (UVA) (Segovia Campus)	X		-Communication, education and society in the digital context	Advertising and PR	X		1st	6
			-Advertising and equality			X	4th	3
Complutense University of Madrid (UCM)	X		-Audiovisual media and education	Journalism		X	3rd	6
			- Social and political Marketing	Audiovisual Communication		X	4th	6
			- Social and political Marketing	Advertising and PR		X	3rd	6

* Year: Equivalent to the year in which the subject is studied. * ECTS: European credit.

Acronyms: BF: basic training. PR: Public relations

Source: Own elaboration based on the information obtained on the website of the universities

Public Relations (7) and compared to the amount in Audiovisual Communication (5). The evaluated subjects are mostly electives (7 core against 14 optional), which embody the scant importance attributed to them in the curricula of the EHEA. The centers are distributed unevenly throughout Spain and their teaching can be linked to the existence of consolidated research teams in these matters. This would explain the fact that six of the universities offer more than one course dedicated to these subjects.

Most of the educational offer comes from public universities (8 out of 10), a factor that invites us to reflect on the importance of public universities in promoting an education not only addressed at future work possibilities, but rather aimed at strengthening a critical perspective in respect to the media system or to the rich communicational practices of nonprofit organizations and social movements. In the analyzed curricula, theory and practice tends to be combined, according to the guidelines given by the EHEA. Its methodology often consists of lectures and practical credits, such as exercises, exhibitions of works or resolution of cases.

The evaluation systems are traditional, since they involve a final theoretical exam, which is averaged with the continuous assessment from the activities carried out within or outside the classroom.

In the field of the CDSC-related courses, objectives tend to focus on: introducing the study of communication from the perspective of fundamental rights and social change; arousing a critical attitude to the informative treatment and representations of minorities or vulnerable communities (around notions such as gender or cultural diversity); questioning the concept of development and its political and epistemological implications; and build skills and competencies for the production of journalistic or fictional content around these variables.

In relation to the contents of the courses of CDSC, there is a great disparity. They tend to concentrate on exploring in depth only one of the following: a) the new participatory strategies with the support of ICT (the Charles III University of Madrid and the University de Málaga); (b) the communicational management of non-profit organizations (NGOs and NGODs) to bring awareness around a set of social values (Universities of

Navarra, Valladolid, Seville, Málaga and Autonomous University of Barcelona); (c) the social and political marketing (Complutense University of Madrid). As far as competences in CDSC, it is highlighted the ascription to one or two of the following groups: i) the comprehension and critical analysis of the relationship between communication and power in mass communication processes; (ii) the analysis of new forms of citizen participation in audiovisual or digital media; (iii) the acquisition of skills for social marketing and construction of advocacy campaigns.

Among the objectives of the CE-related courses, some continuity can be observed. Most of them accentuate on introducing the educational potential of the media and the Internet; others focus on promoting strategies for critical consumption of media and messages; whereas some courses enable critical-reflecting capacities in regards to new technological devices; and, in some cases, promoting skills to create educommunicative media products.

Concerning the contents of the programs, prominence is given to courses focused both in the critical analysis of texts and speeches and the exploration of educommunication in audiovisual and digital media. Other topics, such as allusions to the legal framework and policies for promoting CE or content related to the history and foundations of the CDSC, are less frequent. Finally, competencies are aimed to provide fundamental knowledge to understand the relationship between communication and education; to encourage the development of critical and reflective skills to analyze media; and, in some cases, to promote communication competencies to develop processes and educommunicative products.

At the postgraduate level, a dozen master's programs were detected in the subjects of CDSC and CE, as reflected in the following table. It also highlights the lack of doctoral programs in these areas:

In the field of the postgraduate programs, the presence of CDSC and CE is, once again, little in comparison with the extensive current offer of masters in corporate and institutional communication, development of ICT and social media, or political marketing. Out of the 52 Spanish universities that offer studies in the field of communication, only seven public schools offer master's degrees in the fields of CDSC and CE. Their profile varies, ranging from postgraduate studies focused on CDSC and management of communication

in the third sector or as a techno-political device, up to three master's degrees which are more consolidated, and emphasize on CE and media/digital literacy issues.

Once again, the centers that embrace these degrees are distributed unevenly throughout Spain. Madrid and Barcelona are the only cities that offer two possibilities respectively. There are also certain coincidences between the presence of masters and degree courses specialized in subjects related to the communication/education for social change field, which sustains the hypothesis that education is often implemented when there is a strong academic community and research groups consolidated on CDSC and CE.

There are nine specialized postgraduate programs, in its majority official titles that give access to doctoral programs, which explains its eminently critical-theoretical nature, linked to research rather than to professional skills. Face-to-face masteries prevail⁸. It should be noted once more than almost all the universities that offer these programs are public institutions, opposite to the professionalizing programs with a technical-practical approach predominant in private universities.

In regards to content, postgraduate programs on CDSC, such as the Master in Social Communication, of the University of Valladolid (UVA), offer a curriculum with clear orientation to research in communication with objectives on social solidarity, including courses of introduction to the theories and experiences of the CDSC, relationship between movements and social networks, and social marketing. In a similar vein, the European Master in Inter-Mediterranean Mediation, Interuniversity title in charge of the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) (in collaboration with the Università degli Studi of Venice and the Université of Montpellier III), focuses on projects and cooperation programs in the Mediterranean area, with career opportunities aimed at NGOs and international development assistance agencies, with a special attention to the migrant and refugee population.

For its part, the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) also offers a master's degree, which includes two routes related to the area of the CDSC: Communication, Social Change and Development; and Applicable Communicology, with less presence of the perspective, but with courses aimed at the design and evaluation of social projects. The UCM shares some guidance in relation to the Master in

Communication for Development, Culture of Peace, Equality and Human Rights, of the University of La Laguna (ULL), which incorporates a module on CDSC with multiple courses, specialized in NGOs and social movements. Likewise, the King Juan Carlos University

(URJC) offers a postgraduate degree unique in its kind, in partnership with MediaLab Prado: the Master in Communication, Culture and Digital Citizenship. Its contents address the new potentialities network offers for citizen participation and social movement,

Table 2. Spanish universities that offer master's degrees of CDSC and CE

University	Public	Private	Course	Duration	*ECTS Credits	**Mode
King Juan Carlos University (URJC)	X		- Master in communication, culture and digital citizenship	1 course	60	P
University of Valladolid (UVA) Segovia Camps	X		- Master in social communication. Strategies and campaigns	1 course	60	P
Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)	X		-Master in communication and education	1 course	90	P y OL
			-European master in Inter-Mediterranean mediation: economic investment and Intercultural integration	1 course	100	P
Complutense University of Madrid (UCM)			-Master's degree in Social communication	2 courses	120	P
University of La Laguna (ULL)	X		-Master in communication for development, culture of peace, equality and human rights	1 course	60	OL
National University of Distant Education (UNED)	X		-Master in communication and education on networks	2-3 courses	65	OL
			-Master's degree in an integrated and knowledge-based society technologies ***	2-5 courses	90	OL
University of Huelva (UHU) and International University of Andalusia (UNIA) International University of Andalusia (UNIA) and Pablo de Olavide University (UPO)	X	X	-Master in communication and Audiovisual education	1 course	60	P and SP
			****Master's degree in communication and development	1 course	60	SP

* ECTS: European credit.

** Mode: 'P': Present on campus, 'SP': Semi Present, "OL": Online.

***This master has been removed after more than a decade of formation.

****This master was approved but not launched.

Source: Own elaboration based on information obtained from the websites of the universities

promoting innovative research on digital activism, data journalism and cultural intervention with transforming purposes. Finally, there are postgraduate programs that are not included in Table No. 2, since they are not masters in the field of communication. However, they include subjects related to the CDSC. Such are the cases of the International Master in Peace Studies, Conflict and Development, and its doctorate program of the Jaume I University of Castellón, and the Master in Communication and Socio-Cultural Problems, again at the King Juan Carlos University.

In the field of CE, the National University of Distant Education is a pioneer in their proposal of specialization programs, in accordance with the described research landscape. Heir to the now unavailable Master in Integrated Technologies and Knowledge Society, the Master in Communication and Education on the Network focuses on the relationship between communication and education, with targeted content in e-learning, media literacy, convergence and multimedia languages, and issues such as citizen accessibility to free software and networks. This broad range of postgraduate programs is completed with the Master's Degree in Communication and Audiovisual Education, of the University of Huelva and the UNIA, which promotes research in audio-visual skills with transforming aims (with strong emphasis on ICT and digital content); and the most consolidated Master in Education and Communication, of the University of Barcelona (UAB), oriented to research and the implementation of educommunicational projects.

CONCLUSIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

The analysis reveals the centrality that the citizen media and communication processes oriented at social transformation have acquired in recent times. Many of them are supported by low-cost technological platforms to stimulate participation and solidarity networks. The digitalization comes with an approach and progressive appropriation of the media by the civil society, particularly since the long cycle of protests that started in 2011 with the movement of the indignant/15M. This same digitalization means, for many individuals and organizations, the possibility of

generating communicative alternatives to deal with the devastating crisis the country is currently facing, and in which media and cultural industries are just a part of a much bigger systemic crisis which is at the same time institutional, economic, cultural and environmental.

This effervescence is accompanied by a multiplication of studies that point to the emergence of a new informative and educommunicative paradigm, in which civil society reinforces its role, exchanging functions as issuer, source, filter or receiver of the communicative expressions.

The above-described revitalization of citizen communication has not been reflected in an academic offer, which remains weak both at under and postgraduate level. A marked absence of basic and mandatory competences for these types of studies was detected. Also, on rare occasions are the skills really coordinated or related, although the courses and masters seem to be enriched when researchers nuclei with higher (in the case of the CE) or lower (CDSC) traditions are near.

This scenario of precariousness is explained largely by the structural characteristics of both perspectives, and in particular by their critical questioning of the media system, its social service orientation, and the challenges posed by both perspectives to models, which, in the midst of a crisis of institutional legitimacy, still dominate in communicative, educational or cooperation and development aspects. In fact, none of the fields has been well welcomed by university institutions, which still remain too rigid "as to renew its structure and include new disciplines, especially those that are not profitable" (Gumucio Dagron, 2006, p. 23).

In any case, it is expected that educational and supportive communication will keep winning a place in investigations and in education in the coming years. As of now, it needs further conceptual thickness to face certain epistemic dispersion, which is clearly marked in the case of CDSC (Marí Sáez, 2013). The challenge also involves having an interdisciplinary dialogue between the fields, developing criteria and indicators for research and teaching, as well as articulating new synergies between investigators and the civil society towards the right to communicate of the majority.

FOOTNOTES

1. The study is ascribed to the working lines of R & D funding, "Competition in audiovisual communication in the digital environment" (EDU2010-21395-C03-02).
2. The generic denomination CDSC is used, since the label "development communication" was dominant until the late twentieth century, when the term "communication for social change" began to be used. In the case of CE and educommunication, we ascribe to thesis such as the one by Jorge Huergo (2010), which included under both labels critical approaches around the relationship between communication, education and social change.
3. Faced with an education which emphasizes either on content (pedagogy of transmission) or results (behaviorist pedagogy), as proposed by Díaz Bordenave (2012) and Kaplún (1985, 1998), based on Freire's works.
4. Like the II Congress of the Spanish Association of Communication Research (AE-IC) in Málaga, entitled "Communication and Development in the Digital Age" (www.ae-ic.org/malaga2010) or the upcoming celebration of the International Congress on Xommunication, Citizenship and Social Change in May 2015 in Castellón (www.comunicambio2015.uji.es), organized in an innovative way through the online participation of different professional profiles within communication: NGOs and development stakeholders, social movements, researchers, academics, and so on.
5. We refer to: *Commons. Journal of Communication and Digital Citizenship* from the University of Cádiz (UCA) since 2012 (<http://reuredc.uca.es/index.php/cayp>); the *Journal of Communication and Development* of the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC) since 2014 (www.usc.es/revistas/index.php/ricd) and the oldest (2001) *Redes.com. Journal of Studies for Social Development of Communication* from the University of Sevilla (<http://revista-redes.com>).
6. It would be also interesting to track down seminal experiences such as the Pedagogic Missions during the Second Republic, inspired by the Free Institution of Education.
7. In Spain there have been partial accounts on the degree of implementation of perspectives such as communication for equality (Gámez & Nos, 2012), or communication for solidarity (Monedero & Olmedo, 2014).
8. Regarding the credit burden in masters, it fluctuates between 60 and 120 ECTS, a fact with very little significance.

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