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Specialisation and Spanish journals of communication

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Abstract

Introduction. The specialisation of journals derives from their classification in databases and the terms used by journals to describe themselves (title, scope and target audience). A journal's specialisation is manifested in the image it promotes, which is decisive for its selection and consideration by authors. In addition, the specialisation reflects the journal's degree of consolidation in a particular field of knowledge. **Method.** This study incorporates the perspective of strategic communication and is based on the content analysis of the Spanish journals of communication's websites and on their classification in the databases IN-RECS, Dialnet, Carhus Plus+, RESH, DICE, MIAR and ISOC. The sample of Spanish journals is composed of 63 publications. **Results and conclusions.** Most journals (80%) use general descriptors from the field of communication, while 57% mentions specific sub-disciplines and reflects a greater degree of specialisation. The terms used by the different databases to refer to the scientific field and area of knowledge are not uniform and do not reflect common criteria.

Keywords: Journals; specialisation; descriptors; scope; communication; databases

Contents: 1. Introduction. 1.1. Literature on Spanish journals of communication. 1.2. Journals' scope as specialisation factor. 1.3. The scientific field of Communication: key concepts. 1.4. Spanish databases. 2. Method. 2.1. Objectives. 2.2. Sample. 2.3. Procedure. 3. Results. 3.1. Presence of generic terms alluding to the scientific field. 3.2. Presence of terms alluding to areas of knowledge.

3.3. Scientific field/areas of knowledge vs sub-disciplines. 3.4. Equivalent presence of each area of knowledge. 3.5. Journals and thematic sub-disciplines. 3.6. Target audience. 3.7. Communication journals in the Spanish databases. 3.7.a. Scientific field. 3.7.b. Area of knowledge. 3.7.c. Presence of journals in databases. 4. Conclusions. 5. References. 6. Notes.

Translation by **CA Martínez Arcos**, Ph. D. (Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas)

1. Introduction

Academic publications have been considered a reliable indicator of the scientific specialisation of a field (Sancho, 2001: 10; Fernández, Morillo, Bordons and Gómez, 2002: 371). The quantity and quality of academic publications, in all their forms (thesis, books, reports, reviews, articles, etc.) reflect the weight of a scientific field and enable comparison.

Smith (1999) distinguishes two underlying and explicit roles played by scientific journals. Among the explicit roles of journals, Smith identifies the “editorial selection of materials depending on the scope of the journal and/or according to the possible interest of its readers” (Smith, 1999: 81-82). As underlying functions, Smith recognises that journals have contributed to: the definition of the areas of each discipline, through editorials and the selection and review of documents; the definition of the community of readers (a function that is more obvious in the case of new disciplines or emerging areas); and the documentary archive of the speciality, indirectly, through the documentary archive in libraries and resource centres.

A journal’s title and the description, if any, of its scope and target audience include useful concepts to determine its scope and its general or specialised nature. The coverage also provides information about the geographic scope (international, national, regional or local) of the published works. All of this information is part of the editorial content of the journal and serves to position the journal as a specialist in a scientific field.

In databases, the classification of a journal in a particular field implies the recognition of its specialisation based on external review, when the journal is not classified by its own editor.

For researchers, it is crucial to know which journals make up a scientific field and what their specialisation is. Giménez and Alcaín (2006) highlight authors’ concerns about choosing a journal to publish their work: “What used to be a decision determined by circumstances, by the research topic or by preferences towards certain journals, became a more premeditated matter, the result of planning, aimed at improving the curriculum vitae” (2006: 107).

The study of the terms included in the journals’ title, stated scope and target audience can lead to the acceptance of more successful manuscripts and allows establishing certain synergies between the research interest of authors and the interest of the journal to maintain a defined and differentiated editorial scope.

The aim of this article is to study two crucial variables in the specialisation of the Spanish journals of communication: their classification in databases and the terms used by the journals themselves in their title, stated scope and target audience.

The originality of this study lies in its approach. Most studies rely on bibliometric indicators which are typical of library and information sciences. In contrast, this study offers a complementary

approach inspired by Communication Sciences and based on Brand Positioning Theory and database taxonomies.

This approach incorporates the perspective of Strategic Communication and is based on the internally or externally determined differentiating elements included in a journal. This approach allows the identification of the different types of information that are stated by journals' editors and that can serve to differentiate journals from one another as well as the consideration made by the databases about the journals' specialisation, by grouping them in certain fields. Both types of information reflect the specialisation and, since they are publicly accessible, they are decisive for authors to select the journal to which they will send their work.

This article is a continuation of a communication paper presented at the 2nd National Congress on Communication Research Methodology organised by the Spanish Association of Communication Researchers, held in Segovia on 2 and 3 May, 2013. This article incorporates information about the journals' target audience and the databases' classification of the journals. The sample of journals in this article includes 15 additional journals.

1.1. Literature on Spanish journals of communication

The historical evolution of the scientific field of Communication in Spain is parallel to the development of Communication as a university study programme. It started in the 1970s with the emergence of the first university schools and its consolidation began in 1980 with the launch of *Anàlisi: quaderns de comunicació i cultura*, the first Spanish journal of the field. To study communication journals is to study the progressive formation of Communication as a scientific discipline.

Studies on communication journals are numerous and different in terms of the aspects they examine. There are studies on authorship, productivity, citation and impact published, among others, by Giménez and Alcaín (2006), Delgado López-Cózar (2009), Fernández-Quijada (2010), Castillo-Esparcia and Carretón (2010), Santonja (2011), Castillo-Esparcia and Ruiz-Mora (2011), Fernández-Quijada (2011a), De Pablos (2011), Herrero-Gutiérrez *et al.* (2012), Castillo-Esparcia *et al.* (2012), Roca-Correa and Pueyo-Ayhan (2012) Delgado-López-Cózar and Repiso-Caballero (2012), and Piedra (2012). The social networks of the journals have been treated by Herrero-Gutiérrez, López-Ornelas and Álvarez-Nobell (2011), Segarra, Plaza and Oller (2011) and López-Ornelas, Álvarez-Nobell and Herrero-Gutiérrez (2012).

We identified a prospective approach in De Pablos, Mateo-Martín and Ardèvol-Abreu (2012), and Baladrón-Pazos and Correyero-Ruiz (2012). The scope and structure of articles motivated the research of Colle (2009), De Haro and Martínez (2011), Martínez-Nicolás (2009), Martínez-Nicolás and Saperas (2012) and Saperas (2012). The editor's perspective is examined in Tur-Viñes (2011). International visibility is approached by Canella and Tsuji (2006), Abadal and Rius-Alcaraz (2008), Fonseca-Mora (2011), Fernández-Quijada, (2011b), Castillo-Esparcia, Rubio-Moraga and Almansa-Martínez (2012); the ethics of the publications are explored in Baiget (2010), Tur-Viñes, Fonseca-Mora and Gutiérrez-San-Miguel (2012) and Baiget and Torres-Salinas (2013); and author's rights and license types are analysed in Baena (2011).

The way in which journals create their own image, by selecting the terms that are included in their title or used to describe its stated scope, has not received much attention. The taxonomy proposed by Martínez-Nicolás and Saperas (2011:113), based on professional and media areas, could be useful for our study but it is based on the content analysis of articles and, although possible, it would not be rigorous enough to establish a comparative analysis.

1.2. Journals' scope as specialisation factor

The factors involved in the specialisation of a journal can be:

1. The thesaurus configured from the keywords included in the published articles.
2. The opinion of experts and even readers.
3. The classification in quality databases based, among others, on the Universal Decimal Classification system of Dewey (UDC) or Unesco's system.
4. The historical trajectory.
5. The editors who design the editorial project and make it public in the print or online platforms of the journal, and choose the terms that are part of the title, scope, target audience and type of texts.

A thesaurus is a catalogue of terms configured from the keywords or the words that make up the title and/or the abstract of an article and provided by the author. Some scientific fields have their own thesaurus (e.g. the *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms* or the MESH of Medline). Certain journals ask authors to choose keywords from their own catalogue which is built based on all the material published.

New journal management software facilitates the creation of thesauri. Electronic journals managed with the OJS software can use a plugin that generates a thesaurus based on the keywords drawn from the metadata of the journal. However, “the Spanish journals of communication did not make it compulsory for authors to include keywords until the year 2000” (De Haro and Martínez, 2011: 237). Fortunately, today most journals require authors to provide keywords or descriptors in Spanish and English in the presentation of their articles.

Configuring a thesaurus for the scientific field of Communication could help us to determine the different specialties.

The opinion of experts is taken into account by RESH and IN-RECS in the assessment of the quality of journals from a given scientific field. This assumes the ratification of the journal's scope and the affiliation to a particular scientific field. Authors also contribute to the recognition of the scope of a journal through citation. Baladrón-Pazos and Correyero-Ruiz (2012) used the Delphi method in their study, in this case for prospective purposes.

The classification of journals in databases implicitly relies on the judgment of documentation experts, which makes it impossible for them to be specialists in all the scientific fields in which they are classified.

Databases and indexing systems need to group journals together in scientific fields to facilitate the classification and identification of information. Most of them are based on internationally accepted classification systems such as Dewey's [1] Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) system (adopted by *Ulrich's*, among others) or the UNESCO system [2]. However, in some cases, the classification system is original and is based on other criteria, which is not always explicit. There are also some single-field classification systems such as the *JEL* classification system [3].

One of the first steps that a journal has to take at the start of its trajectory is to obtain the ISSN, which is managed in Spain by the *Biblioteca Nacional* (National Library). Any serial publication (whether professional or academic) may request it. One of the requirements is to provide a description of the publication but not to describe the thematic field. If this information was requested to editors, we would have the first classification based on editors' criteria, which could be useful to configure a complete taxonomy.

The decisions of the editorial team about the journal's title, stated scope and definition of the target audience serve as the letter of introduction for the journal. They express the editorial perspective and scope. The specialised scope of a journal is inextricably linked to its image and its difference from the rest of the journals from the same scientific field.

The title is the main identifier of a journal. According to Ruiz-Pérez, Delgado and Jiménez-Contreras (2006), the primary function of the title is to identify the journal in order to distinguish it from the rest, while the second is to inform about its scope. A good title should be explanatory, significant, clear and brief, and should avoid acronyms, abbreviations, imprecise expressions and superfluous words such as "Journal", "Yearbook" or "Newsletter" (2006:408).

The research group EC3 of the University of Granada gives very precise recommendations about the suitability of the title (Delgado López-Cózar, Ruiz-Pérez and Jiménez-Contreras, 2006: 110-111):

"The title must define as accurately as possible the field and scientific activity of the journal. Otherwise (when it includes acronyms or figurative expressions, etc.) the publication's scope must be specified through a subtitle (...), avoiding empty words as much as possible (...). The journal's title and typographical presentation should contribute to the definition of its field and scientific activity more exactly (...). The use of abbreviations and acronyms in the title should be rejected as far as possible. The title with shall in no case start with an acronym or abbreviation (...). It is recommended to exclude abbreviations, acronyms, symbols or formulae from the title" (Delgado López-Cózar *et al.*, 2006: 110-111).

The stated scope is a basic indicator of the quality of the editorial process for the EC3 research group of the University of Granada, which promotes the IN-RECS database (Delgado López-Cózar *et al.*, 2006: 76). The stated scope is also a feature of editorial quality for Redalyc [4] (criterion 15: *Módulo 2. Módulo B. Criterios generales de calidad editorial.*), the Latindex database [5] –for both for online and printed journals– (criterion 19: features of editorial management and policy), and is part of the objectives of the journal for *Scopus*. According to Delgado López-Cózar *et al.* (2006), the scope is considered an indicator of quality in *ISI* (criterion 2: *Editorial Content-*) and CINDOC (criterion 5).

The target audience is also a quality criterion in CINDOC (criterion 5: same for title), Redalyc (criterion 42: Module C. editorial management.) and the criteria proposed by IN-RECS for the evaluation of journals (criterion 217. *Audiencia*) (Delgado López-Cózar *et al.*, 2006).

The EC³ group from Granada, Spain, questions the suitability of these elements as indicators of quality: "...all of these factors are quite unrelated to the intrinsic quality of the publication." Therefore, the use of this parameter as a quality indicator should be done with caution" (Delgado López-Cózar *et al.*, 2006: 69). There appears to be no debate when these elements are considered as specialisation factors.

The adscription to a scientific field is already a degree of specialisation in itself but some journals delimit their scope further, by ascribing themselves to an area of knowledge within the scientific field or to a very specific sub-discipline. This indicates that there is some gradation within the

specialisation. A highly specialised journal would be one that is focused on one or more areas of a wider scientific field.

1.3. The scientific field of Communication: key concepts

Field, scientific field, area of knowledge, subject area and discipline are closely related terms in this study. Some of them do not have a clear delimitation and are even interchangeably used in the literature as synonyms, giving rise to errors and confusions. It is important to analyse these concepts because they are key to understand the terminology used by journals in their content descriptors, their main source of specialisation.

It is not the objective of this article to open up the epistemological debate on the principles and methods of scientific knowledge or the ontological debate on the identity of the scientific field of Communication, which have been aptly described by León Duarte (2007), Martino (2008), Peres Neto (2010), among others. However, most authors agree that the transversal and interdisciplinary nature of Communication should be recognised without renouncing to its own scientific identity.

Each scientific field is formed of various areas of knowledge. It is a construct at the service of the organisation of university teachers proposed by the University Coordination Council [6].

In Spain, each scientific field is formed of various areas of knowledge: “fields of knowledge characterised by the homogeneity of their object of knowledge, a common historical tradition and the existence of national or international communities of researchers” (R.D. 1988/84). The scientific field of Communication, in Spain, is composed of two areas of knowledge, another concept inescapably bound to the scientific field: the area of journalism (code: 675) and the area of Audiovisual communication and advertising (code 105).

Both concepts, scientific field and area of knowledge, are essential to understand journals because they are used by editors in the description of the scope of the journals and the designation of their titles in order to properly identify them.

We are witnessing the constant hybridisation of Communication with other scientific disciplines. As a result, it is important to differentiate multidisciplinary from interdisciplinarity, which are terms that are not always used with the same meaning. A multidisciplinary research study is a cumulative association in which several disciplines are combined but not mixed, so each maintains its approach and methodologies, and they share a common research goal. On the other hand, in interdisciplinary research there is a greater degree of synergy, there is a combination of approaches and methodologies, and the relationship between disciplines is interactive and there is a reciprocal feedback.

Moreover, multidisciplinary is often confused with pluridisciplinarity, which combines two or more close disciplines, often within a field of knowledge, seeking for complementarity (Jantsch, 1979). This would be the case of journals that are associated to several disciplines of an area of knowledge or several areas of knowledge within a field.

The Social Science Citation Index [7] defines the thematic scope in the following way:

“Communication covers resources in the study of the verbal and non-verbal exchange of ideas and information. Included here are communication theory, practice and policy, media

studies (journalism, broadcasting, advertising, etc.), mass communication, public opinion, speech, business and technical writing as well as public relations”.

The difficulty to delimit the field is evident, for example, in disciplines such as image, photography, social networks and creativity, which are not protagonists in the previous definition. It is not even clear whether Interpersonal communication, in the closest practice to social psychology or linguistics, is included or excluded. The difficulty to define the object of study is extreme.

1.4. Spanish databases

Institutional databases have been used to respond to different contexts, particularly for the analysis of complete data on scientific publications (Filippo, Sanz-Casado, Urbano, Ardanuy, Gómez-Caridad, 2011), so that the assessment of scientific journals has become the instrument par excellence to measure the dissemination and visibility, relevance and importance and, at another level, the quality of the research activity (IN-RECS, 2004).

The databases used in this research are MIAR, RESH, IN-RECS, ISOC, Carhus Plus, DICE and Dialnet, whose peculiarities are briefly described below.

The Information Matrix for the Evaluation of Journals (MIAR, *Matriz de Información para la Evaluación de Revistas* [8]), has established itself as a research project derived from the visionary efforts of three researchers from the Department of Library and Documentation Sciences of the University of Barcelona. MIAR provides a model and a method to develop selective listings of journals from the social sciences and the humanities. To this end MIAR calculates the Compound Index of Secondary Dissemination (ICDS, *Índice Compuesto de Difusión Secundaria*) which privileges journals' international dissemination in specialised databases and the ISI citation indexes. When journals have no international presence, MIAR takes into account Latin American databases such as the Latindex catalogue. The Composed Index of Secondary Dissemination also takes into account continuity data in the case of journals included in Ulrich's periodicals directory. It is considered as an instrument that provides data about the identity and dissemination of Spanish journals in the area. In 2013, MIAR analysed 28,928 publications in the field of social sciences in 50 specialised and multidisciplinary directories. Its classification uses 116 thematic fields and 89 academic fields.

The database of the Spanish Journals of Social Sciences and Humanities (RESH, *Revistas Españolas de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades* [9]), is the result of the project titled “Integrated assessment of Spanish journals of Social Sciences and Humanities through the application of multiple indicators”, developed by the Research Group for the Assessment of Scientific Publications (Epuc, *Grupo de Investigación de Evaluación de Publicaciones Científicas*) of the Centre for the Social Sciences and Humanities (CCHS, *Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales*)/ Advanced Council for Scientific Research and the Evaluation of Science and Scientific Communication research group (EC³, *Grupo Evaluación de la Ciencia y de la Comunicación Científica*) of the University of Granada. The evaluation of the editorial quality criteria is based on the editorial practices reported by the journals themselves. The database is an independent source of information that takes as reference the key assessment procedures of CNEAI, Aneca and Latindex. It aims to guide reviewers, authors and researchers about the quality of Spanish journals of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Impact Factor of the Spanish Journals of Social Sciences (IN-RECS, *El Índice de impacto de las Revistas Españolas de Ciencias Sociales*) is also a research project developed by the Evaluation of Science and Scientific Communication research group (EC³) of the University of Granada. It is a

selective bibliometric index that provides statistical information based on the number of citations made in Spanish journals in order to measure the impact and relevance of the journals, their articles, authors and institutions. The data analysed are obtained from the systematic indexing of the bibliographic references cited in articles published in the Spanish journals classified in the 11 disciplines of the social sciences. IN-RECS publishes its results every last quarter of the year. In the update published on its website in 2010, IN-RECS had 159 journals and 83,263 citations registered.

The database ISOC-Biblioteconomy and Documentation [10] is developed by the Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities (CCHS, *Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales*) of Spain's National Research Council (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*). ISOC archives mostly journal articles and some conference proceedings, series, compilations, reports, and monographs. ISOC contains the scientific production published in Spain since the 1970s. It covers 15 subject areas and aims to provide specialised bibliographic information to the academic community, to disseminate the Spanish scientific production in the human and social sciences to improve the visibility and impact of quality publications, to generate quantitative data on their production, and to improve the editorial quality of these publications in order to contribute to their selection processes.

Carhus Plus [11] is a project developed by Catalonia's Agency for University and Research Administration (*Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca de Catalunya*). It is a system of evaluation for local, national and international journals from the Social Sciences and Humanities. Carhus Plus publishes a report on a biennial basis and its last update occurred in 2010. It includes 4,953 journals and is examining 820 journals as candidates to be incorporated in its database. Each journal is classified in a scientific field which can, in turn, be divided in four groups, A, B, C and D. The A group is for journals that comply with the highest number of quality criteria. This database is linked to the Compound Index of Secondary Dissemination of MIAR (the Information Matrix for the Assessment of Journals).

The Dissemination of Alerts in the Internet (Dialnet, *Difusión de Alertas en la Red*) [12] is a bibliographic website created in 2001 by a group of researchers from the University of La Rioja (Spain). Considered one of the most important databases repositories of Latin America, Dialnet disseminates the scientific production carried out in the social sciences and humanities, contains the indexes of the scientific and humanistic journals from Spain, Portugal and Latin America, as well as books (monographs), doctoral thesis and other types of documents. It is an interdisciplinary database that offers access to full-text documents. The success achieved by this database has turned it into a cooperation project that integrates various documentary resources and services. This project has the participation of various Spanish and Latin American universities that provide contents of journals and academic documents in general.

The Dissemination and Editorial Quality Index of the Spanish Journals from the Humanities and the Social and Legal Sciences (DICE, *Índice de Difusión y Calidad Editorial de las Revistas Españolas de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales y Jurídicas*) [13] is a database jointly created by Spain's National Research Council (CSIC) and the National Quality Assessment and Accreditation Agency (ANECA), which is responsible for its funding. DICE aims to provide knowledge and access to some of the editorial features and indirect quality indicators of the Spanish journals of Humanities and Social Sciences. This database reports on the compliance with editorial quality criteria made by the publications examined by the Research Group for the Assessment of Scientific Publications (EPUC). According to its website, by July 2013 DICE had 2270 journals on its records, classified in 12 scientific fields. DICE presents journals alphabetically and points out the databases in which these journals are listed per subject areas.

2. Method

2.1. Objectives

The first goal is to examine the presence of the terms Communication / Social communication / Information (scientific field) and Audiovisual communication and advertising and journalism (areas of knowledge) in the title and stated scope of the Spanish journals of Communication. Based on this objective, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H1: All journals include at least one of the generic terms that refer to the scientific field (Communication and/or Information and/or Social Communication), in the stated scope and/or title.

H2: All journals include at least one of the terms that refer to the areas of knowledge (Journalism, Audiovisual communication and advertising) in the stated scope and/or title.

The second objective is to determine the level of thematic specialisation and the areas that integrate it. Based on this objective, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3: The general specialisation of journals (scientific field, area of knowledge) is more frequent than the specialisation by thematic sub-disciplines.

H4: The number of journals that mentions each area of knowledge is similar.

H5: There are sub-disciplines of Communication that are more widely shared than others.

H6: The target audience, which is also an indicator of specialisation, is not defined in all journals.

The third objective is to analyse the classification of Communication journals in the Spanish databases MIAR, RESH, IN-RECS, ISOC, Carhus Plus, DICE and Dialnet. The hypotheses in relation to this objective are:

H7: Databases use the same categories.

H8: All journals in the sample are listed in the studied databases.

H9: Journals receive the same classification in the different databases.

2.2. Sample

The sample is composed of the 63 journals listed in the directory of the Observatory of Scientific Journals [14] on 15 April, 2013. Of these journals 59 are active and four seem to be defunct. Tables 1.1-1.9 show the sample of journals along with their acronyms and stated scope (excerpts taken from the textual description offered by the journal) and stated target audience.

Table 1.1: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

	TITLE		STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
1	REVISTA LATINA DE COMUNICACIÓN SOCIAL	RLCS	Social communication	Researchers in collaboration with projects funded via public competitive tender (...) the whole population.
2	COMUNICACIÓN Y SOCIEDAD	CS		
3	ZER. REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN	ZER	Area of communication	
4	EMP. ESTUDIOS SOBRE EL MENSAJE PERIODÍSTICO	EMP	Communicative aspects, forms of expression and the political and social functions of journalism	
5	CUADERNOS DE INFORMACIÓN Y COMUNICACIÓN CIC	CIC	Communication and information	Communication and information professionals and researchers
6	AMBITOS. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE COMUNICACIÓN	AMB	Communication as an interdisciplinary social science	
7	REVISTA DOXA. REVISTA INTERDISCIPLINAR DE ESTUDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN Y CIENCIAS SOCIALES	DOXA	Social Sciences (...) journalism, public opinion, right to information, advertising and the media	Scholars of the so-called Communication Sciences
8	SPHERA PÚBLICA. REVISTA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y DE LA COMUNICACIÓN.	SPH	Social Sciences (...) communication and information	
9	TRÍPODOS	TRI	Communication, humanities	Students, professors, researchers, professionals of communication and analysis. Society
10	COMUNICAR. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA IBEROAMERICANA DE COMUNICACIÓN Y EDUCACIÓN	COM	Convergence of education and communication	The scientific community (universities, higher education centres), as well as media and education professionals from around the world, but especially from the Ibero-American community

Table 1.2: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

	TITLE		STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
11	REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE RELACIONES PÚBLICAS	IRP	Public relations	Researchers, professionals, teachers, the media and society in general
12	COMUNICACIÓN. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE COMUNICACIÓN AUDIOVISUAL, PUBLICIDAD Y ESTUDIOS CULTURALES	ICAPEC	Audiovisual Communication, Advertising, Cultural Studies	
13	ANÁLISI. QUADERNS DE COMUNICACIÓ I CULTURA	ANALISI	Communication and culture in general, especially phenomena related to mass media. The journal tries to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, and critical analysis and debate of the issues studied here: semiotic analysis of communication, repetition and seriality in film and television, media and democracy, and the media and cultural policy	People whose work, research or interests are linked directly or indirectly to its object of study
14	ÁREA ABIERTA	AA	Audiovisual Communication and Advertising	Researchers from other areas and countries
15	ICONO 14. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA DE COMUNICACIÓN Y TECNOLOGÍAS EMERGENTES.	I14	Communication and its areas and especially the involvement and impact of information and communication technology in the various areas of communicative action	
16	COMUNICACIÓN Y HOMBRE. REVISTA INTERDISCIPLINAR DE CIENCIAS DE LA COMUNICACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES.	CyH	Interdisciplinary scope. Communication sciences, taking as a reference the principles of humanism	Doctors

Table 1.3: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

	TITLE		STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
17	QUESTIONES PUBLICITARIAS. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE COMUNICACIÓN Y PUBLICIDAD	QP	Its thematic scope is limited to issues related to the area of knowledge of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising	Professors and researchers from this area
18	HISTORIA Y COMUNICACIÓN SOCIAL (HYCS)	HyCS	Research on communication and contemporary history, especially on their mutual interactions	
19 (*)	CONEXIEMENT I SOCIETAT. REVISTA D'UNIVERSITATS. RECERCA I SOCIETAT DE LA INFORMACIÓ	RCiS	... governance, management, promotion and social work related to universities, research and innovation	
20	I/C. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA DE INFORMACIÓN Y COMUNICACIÓN	I/C	analysis, reflection, debate and the theoretical criticism of those for which communication is not restricted to a set of technical and professional knowledge	Ibero-American researchers and thinkers of social communication; philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, philologists, historians, economists
21	MEDIACIONES SOCIALES	MS	Social mediation	international community of university professors and researchers and professionals of renowned prestige working in the field of social mediation, in order to bring together the results of their research and discuss the methodological challenges and the innovation in the professional practices
22	PENSAR LA PUBLICIDAD. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE INVESTIGACIONES PUBLICITARIAS	PLP	Advertising and other activities and processes intimately related to it	Scholars from Spain, Latin-America and other countries
23	REVISTA DE COMUNICACIÓN DE LA SEECI	SEECI	The humanities, specifically in the field of Communication, Sociology, information technology and audiovisual media (cinema, television, radio)	Researchers and academics with research results in the social sciences and the areas of Communication, Sociology, Information Technology, and audiovisual media (cinema, television, radio)

Table 1.4: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
24 VIVAT ACADEMIA. REVISTA DE COMUNICACIÓN. VA	The area of the humanities, specifically the field of Communication, Sociology, Information Technology and Audiovisual media (cinema, television, radio)	Researchers and academics
25 MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ COMMUNICATION JOURNAL MHCJ	Social Communication	
26 REVISTA MEDITERRÁNEA DE COMUNICACIÓN - THE MEDITERRANEAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION RMC	Interdisciplinary research in Social Communication. Commercial and persuasive, journalistic, and audiovisual communication	Researchers academics, consolidated or in training
27 FONSECA JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION FJC	Communication, in its multiple manifestations: film, radio, TV, digital media	
28 PANGA. REVISTA DE LA RED ACADÉMICA IBEROAMERICANA DE COMUNICACIÓN PANG	Social Communication	Communication professionals, academics and specialists
29 FOTOCINEMA. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA DE CINE Y FOTOGRAFÍA FOTO	Cinema and photography, and interdisciplinary flows that the current university hosts with remarkable attention.	
30 TECCOM STUDIES. ESTUDIOS DE TECNOLOGÍA, ALFABETIZACIÓN DIGITAL Y COMUNICACIÓN TEC	Studies on technology, literacy and communication	
31 COMMUNICATION PAPERS. MEDIA LITERACY & GENDER STUDIES CP	Field of journalism, audiovisual communication and advertising, with special emphasis on the treatment of gender and media literacy	
32 INDEX COMUNICACIÓN IDX	Applied communication	

Table 1.5: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED PUBLIC
33 ADRESEARCH. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE INVESTIGACIÓN EN COMUNICACIÓN ADR	Communication planning (development of communication strategies, research methods in communication, corporate communication, brand communication, etc.), advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sponsorship and patronage, promotions and all kinds of new trends in communication	
34 COMUNICACIÓ. REVISTA DE RECERCA I D'ANÀLISI CRRA	Communication as a social science	
35 CONEXIONES. REVISTA IBEROAMERICANA DE COMUNICACIÓN CRIC	Culture and the media. The emerging reality of the communicative and cultural practices, the situation and the transformation of new and old media, the contribution of communication to human development, the study of texts, discourses and cultural forms, structures and communication policies, among other contemporary phenomena, constitute its scientific object	
36 DERECOM. REVISTA ONLINE ESPECIALIZADA EN DERECHO DE LA COMUNICACIÓN DERC	Right to communication (printed, audiovisual and telecommunications, Internet)	
37 LOGO. REVISTA DE RETÓRICA Y TEORÍA DE LA COMUNICACIÓN (*) LOGO	Edited at the University of Salamanca by the Spanish Association of Studies of Language, Thought and Classical Culture	
38 PERIODÍSTICA. REVISTA ACADÉMICA PRA	Newspapers. The press. Journalism. Information Sciences	
39 REVISTA DE COMUNICACIÓN Y SALUD RCS	Communication and health in Latin America.	Researchers and academics

Table 1.6: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
40 TEXTUAL & VISUAL MEDIA TVM	Communication and journalism	
41 CATALAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION & CULTURAL STUDIES CJC	Media studies, popular culture and cinema, public relations and advertising studies, social communication, new media, language uses in the media, communication and cultural policies, social and national identities, gender studies, sports and leisure, tourism and heritage	
42 CREATIVIDAD Y SOCIEDAD. REVISTA DE LA ASOCIACIÓN PARA LA CREATIVIDAD (ASOCREA) ASOCREA	Creativity and society	
43 QUADERNS DEL CAC CAC	It seeks to reflect and debate from Catalonia the large themes of communication and audiovisual culture	Directed to the audiovisual sector and edited by the Catalan Audiovisual Council
44 ADCOMUNICA. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA DE ESTRATEGIAS, TENDENCIAS E INNOVACIÓN EN COMUNICACIÓN ADC	Study and analysis of the current communication landscape, in a broad sense, mainly from the perspective of strategic management	
45 ARCHIVOS DE LA FILMOTECA. REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS HISTÓRICOS SOBRE LA IMAGEN AF	Historical studies on the image	
46 ÉTIC@NET. REVISTA CIENTÍFICA ELECTRÓNICA DE EDUCACIÓN Y COMUNICACIÓN EN LA SOCIEDAD DEL CONOCIMIENTO ETIC	Application of the media and technologies to education, with special emphasis on issues arising from the evaluation of the ethical, aesthetic and scientific quality of contents	

Table 1.7: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
47 EL PROFESIONAL DE LA INFORMACIÓN. REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE INFORMACIÓN, DOCUMENTACIÓN, BIBLIOTECONOMÍA Y COMUNICACIÓN (EPI)	EPI	Organisation, systems, methods, management and communication of information and knowledge
48 TELOS CUADERNOS DE COMUNICACIÓN E INNOVACIÓN	TEL	Interdisciplinary journal (...) field of communication and culture, information and communication technologies (ICT) and their social impact
49 MEDIATIKA. CUADERNOS DE MEDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN	MDTK	Media Researchers, academics and anyone interested in the thematic scope
50 QUADERNS DE FILOLOGIA. ESTUDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN (*)	QFEC	
51 EU-TOPIAS. REVISTA DE INTERCULTURALIDAD, COMUNICACIÓN Y ESTUDIOS EUROPEOS	EU-TOP	Three fundamental objectives guide the work of the journal: 1) to reflect on the multiplicity of the cultures that make up the global village and the intercultural character of the contemporary world; 2) to analyse the "interested mediation" undertaken by the mass media to naturalise their own version of reality in the social imaginary; and 3) to open the debate on the horizon of the economic and primarily cultural project of a common Europe
52 TEMPS DE COMUNICAR	TEMPSC	History of Social communication; preliminary or final research results on any aspect of social communication. Past, present and future of communication and journalism Researchers and the general public

Table 1.8: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
53 GRÁFICA	GFK	Scientific research in graphic design; as a tool for communication between people, organisations; intentional communication Academic, scientific and professional sectors
54 (*) TREBALLS DE COMUNICACIÓ	TC	
55 SESIÓN NO NUMERADA. REVISTA DE LETRAS Y FICCIÓN AUDIOVISUAL	SNN	To promote and disseminate research on film and television series from a humanistic perspective.
56 COMUNICACIÓN Y PEDAGOGÍA: NUEVAS TECNOLOGÍAS Y RECURSOS DIDÁCTICOS	COMyPED	Use of the media and ICT as a pedagogical resource; Communication and pedagogy: new technologies and teaching resources (Early news)
57 SIGNA. REVISTA ESPAÑOLA DE LA ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE SEMIÓTICA	SIGNA	To boost studies on sign systems and communication in various fields, to serve as a channel of expression for theoretical and practical semiotic works undertaken by researchers from Spain, Europe, Latin America and other geographic areas; to introduce theoretical models that have not had a wide dissemination in Spain and to encourage the analysis and discussion of different signal-related aspects Researchers from Spain, Europe, Latin America and other geographical areas
58 L'ATALANTE. REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS CINEMATográfICOS	ATLNT	Original essays on interdisciplinary or monothematic issues related to film theory and praxis that stand out for their innovative character; to analyse and disseminate film; journal of Humanities; cinematography; studies on the image; film analysis; film criticism

Table 1.9: List of journals, titles, stated scope and target audience

TITLE	STATED SCOPE	STATED TARGET AUDIENCE
59 SECUENCIAS. REVISTA DE HISTORIA DEL CINE	SECUENCIAS	Film studies, from an eminently historiographic approach; film history in any of its forms and orientations Spanish and foreign researchers with different profiles and from different generations, with special preference towards the work of the youngest researchers
60 FRAME. REVISTA DE CINE DE LA BIBLIOTECA DE LA FACULTAD DE COMUNICACIÓN DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA	FRAME	Cinema Professors and students of the School of Communication of the University of Seville
61 MAKING OF. CUADERNOS DE CINE Y EDUCACIÓN	MKOF	Dissemination of content related to the audiovisual world Professors
62 REVISTA DE CINE VERSIÓN ORIGINAL	VO	Application of film in teaching and learning activities; offers professors timely information on all the film resources that are at their disposal on the Internet
63 COMMONS. REVISTA DE COMUNICACIÓN Y CIUDADANÍA DIGITAL	COMMONS	Communication, the ordinary, understood as the public and the political. The techno-political dimension of the communicative processes in their various manifestations. Social advertising and the third sector; Audiovisual media; Communication for social development and change; Digital art practices and social thought; Communication rights. Digital citizenship. International scientific community.

The four journals that seemed to be defunct are marked with an asterisk (*). In some cases, the information needed for the study was not provided by some journals but still they were maintained in the sample because the study sought to take into account the totality of the Spanish journals that have arisen in the field of Communication.

2.3. Procedure

The journals' websites were subjected to content analysis to identify the terms included in the titles, and in the description of the scope and the target audience. The analysis includes exclusively the terms related to the thematic or professional field of Communication and its sub-disciplines (vertical analysis). The combination of different scientific fields has been considered, establishing contingencies between the classifications of databases and the fields mentioned in the public platforms of each journal (title, stated scope and target audience).

To assess the degree of specialisation we developed three groups with different levels (table 2):

Table 2: Scope: conceptual groups and specialisation level

LEVEL	SPECIALISATION	TERMS CONSIDERED
N1: GENERAL FIELD	Minimal: mentions the scientific field	Communication; Social Communication; Information
N2: AREA	Medium: mentions the areas of knowledge	Journalism; Audiovisual communication and advertising
N3: SPECIFIC SCOPE	High: mentions specific sub- disciplines or subject areas .	Very diverse. For instance, cinema; press, television, etc.

The variables taken into consideration are: journal's title, launch year, age, presence or absence of stated scope, literal thematic description, presence or absence of stated target audience and its terms, literal description of public, presence of terms coincident with the scientific field (Communication; Social communication; Information); the presence of terms coincident with the area of knowledge (Journalism; Audiovisual communication and advertising) and the presence of other terms related to the sub-disciplines. The 1,827 resulting data were coded in a spreadsheet.

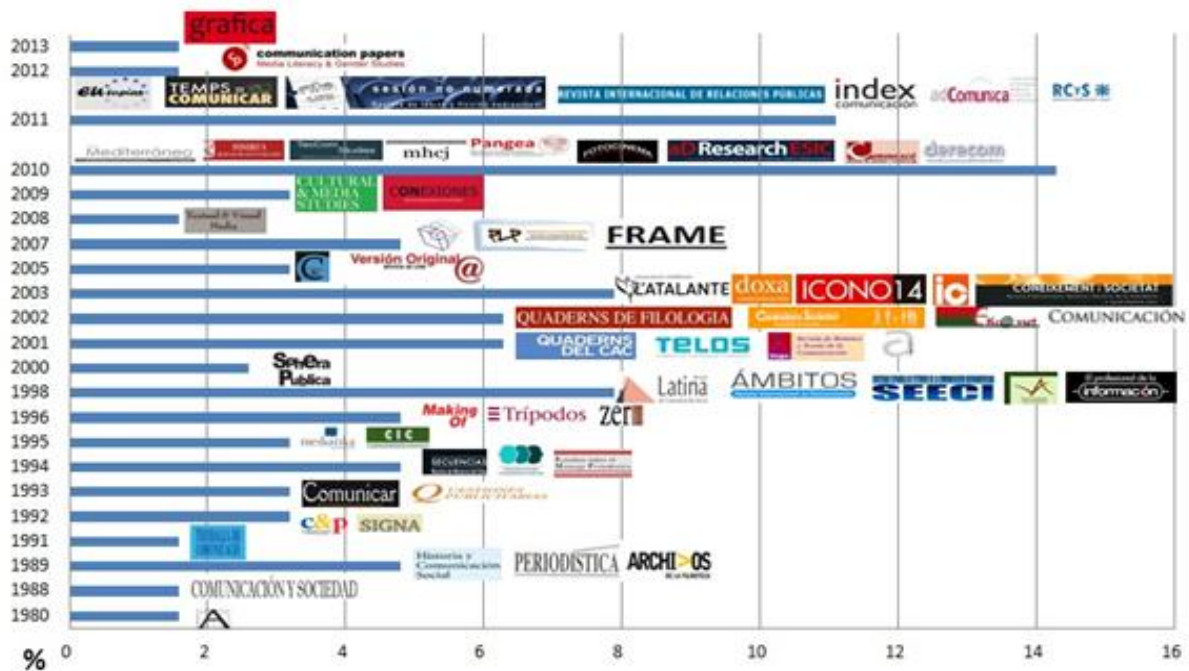
We undertook a cross-sectional descriptive analysis that highlighted the frequency and percentage of each variable in relation to the hypotheses.

The Tagxedo software was used to identify the scopes with higher specialisation (sub-disciplines) and to be able to create a cloud of tags to visually represent the data. The size of the terms represents their frequency.

3. Results

The first part of the analysis focused on the launch year of the Spanish communication journals. Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the historical evolution of the emergence of the different Spanish journals of communication.

Figure 1: Launch year of the Spanish journals of communication



The first journal, *Anàlisi*, was launched in 1980. We detected growth peaks in 1998 and 2003, with five new journals launched per year. The period with the greatest emergence of journals was 2010-2012, in which 16 journals were launched, 25.4% of the total (9 in 2010 and 7 in 2011). The first exclusively electronic journal, *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, emerged in 1998. Since then, almost all the journals that were published on paper have generated an electronic version.

Before contrasting the hypotheses, we created contingency tables with the terms, locations and combinations that appeared in the title and in the text of the stated scope (tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Terms (N1 and N2): presence and location

PRESENCE AND LOCATION	COMMUNICATION	INFORMATION	SOCIAL COMMUNICATION	JOURNALISM	AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION	ADVERTISING
	N1	N1	N1	N2	N2	N2
ONLY IN TITLE	5 (7.9%)	2 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.6%)	0
ONLY IN STATED SCOPE	14 (22.2%)	6 (9.5%)	8 (12.7%)	6 (9.5%)	10 (15.9%)	8 (12.6%)
IN TITLE & STATED SCOPE	32 (50.8%)	2 (3.2%)	2 (3.2%)	2 (3.2%)	1 (1.6%)	3 (4.8%)
NOT INCLUDED	12 (19%)	53 (84.1%)	53 (84.1%)	55 (87.3%)	51 (80.9%)	52 (82.5%)
Totals	63 (100%)	63 (100%)	63 (100%)	63 (100%)	63 (100%)	63 (100%)

Table 4: terms associated to journals

	COMMUNICATION N1	INFORMATION N1	SOCIAL COMMUNICATION N1	JOURNALISM N2	AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION N2	ADVERTISING N2	SUB-DISCIPLINE N3
COMMUNICATION N1	ZER, TRI, QFEC, TC	CIC, DOXA, SPH, I/C, SEECI, VA, EPI, TEL	RLCS, AMB, I/C, VA, MHCJ, PANG, CRRA, CJC, TEMPSC, COMMONS	EMP, DOXA, RMC, CP, TVM, ADC, TEMPSC	DOXA, ICAPEC, AA, QP, SEECI, RMC, CP, CAC, ADC, FRAME, COMMONS	DOXA, ICAPEC, AA, QP, RMC, CP, ADR, CJC, ADC, COMMONS	CS, EMP, CIC, AMB, DOXA, COM, IRP, ICAPEC, ANALISI, I14, CyH, HyCS, I/C, SEECI, VA, RMC, FJC, TEC, CP, IDX, ADR, CRIC, DERC, LOGO, RCS, TVM, CJC, ADC, AF, ETIC, EPI, EU- TOP, GFK, COMYPED, SIGNA, FRAME, COMMONS
INFORMATION N1	-	-	I/C, VA	PRA, DOXA	DOXA, SEECI	DOXA	CIC, DOXA, RCIS, I/C, SEECI, VA, PARA, EPI
SOCIAL COMMUNICATION N1	-	-	-	TEMPSC	COMMONS	CJC, COMMONS	AMB, I/C, VA, CJC, COMMONS
JOURNALISM N2	-	-	-	-	DOXA, RMC, CP, ADC	DOXA, RMC, CP, ADC	EMP, DOXA, RMC, CP, PARA, TVM, ADC
AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION N2	-	-	-	-	-	DOXA, ICAPEC, AA, QP, RMC, CP, ADC, COMMONS	DOXA, ICAPEC, SEECI, RMC, CP, ADC, SNN, FRAME, COMMONS
ADVERTISING N2	-	-	-	-	-	PLP	DOXA, ICAPEC, RMC, CP, ADR, CJC, ADC, COMMONS
SUB-DISCIPLINE N3	-	-	-	-	-	-	MS, FOTO, ASOCREA, ATLNT, MDTK, SECUENCIAS, MKOF, VO

Journals located in the diagonal cells exclusively use that term, and do not mention other terms in their title or stated scope, which can be considered as specialisation by exclusion.

3.1. Presence of generic terms alluding to the scientific field

Of the sample of 63 Journals, 79.4% (n=50) includes the term Communication, 73% (n=46) uses it in combination with other terms, and 6.4% (n=4) uses it exclusively [15]. The term is located both in the title and the stated scope in 51% of the cases in which it is present.

Only one active journal included the term in the title but not in the stated scope (CS).

The terms Social communication and Information are less frequent. Both terms were present only in 16% of the analysed journals (n=10) and are located more often in the description of the scope than in the title.

The number of journals that use different combinations of the terms is higher than the number of cases in which the journals use a single general term (N1). Communication is exclusively mentioned by *Zer*, *Trípodos*, *Quaderns de Filosofia-Estudios de Comunicación* and *Treballs de Comunicació*. The terms information and Social communication are not mentioned exclusively but in combination with other terms.

There are 10 journals (16%) that do not mention any of the terms related to the general scientific field: *Mediaciones Sociales*, *Pensar la Publicidad*, *Fotocinema*, *Creatividad y Sociedad*, *Mediatika*, *Sesión No Numerada*, *L'Atalante*, *Secuencias*, *Making Of* and *Versión Original*. Thus, hypothesis 1 is not confirmed, as there are journals that do not use the generic terms that refer to the scientific field.

Figure 2: Mentioning of terms related to the scientific field



3.2. Presence of terms alluding to areas of knowledge

The areas of knowledge only appear in one of every five journals (Journalism: 8; Audiovisual communication: 12; Advertising: 11). They are only used by a minority of journals. Only one journal includes the name of the area in its title (*Periodística*, although it is not the exact term, the allusion is obvious), but it also mentions the generic term *information* in the stated scope. The terms related to the area of knowledge are more frequently located in the stated scope than in the title.

Only two journals do not mention general terms or specific thematic areas and only mention the areas of knowledge: *Pensar la Publicidad*, which uses the term advertising (which is part of an area of knowledge), and *Quaderns del CAC*, which uses the term Audiovisual communication. Consequently, hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

3.3. Scientific field/areas of knowledge vs sub-disciplines

Three of every four journals that identify themselves with the term Communication use additional terms to describe their scope, and 37 (58.7%) of them do so with sub-disciplines.

Of the journals that use the term Information, eight resort to sub-disciplines (*Cuadernos de Información y Comunicación CIC*, *Doxa*, *Coneixement i Societat*, *Revista d'universitats*, *Recerca i Societat de la Informació*, *I/C Revista Científica de Información y Comunicación*, *Revista de Comunicación de la SEECI*, *Vivat Academia*, *Periodística: revista académica* and *El Profesional de la Información*).

It can be said that the presence of specialised thematic sub-disciplines is very common (N=48, 76%); they are used in three out of every four journals.

Only 15 journals (24%) exclusively use general terms of the scientific field (N1) or the area of knowledge (N2). The remaining 76% mentions at least one sub-discipline. Hypothesis 3 is confirmed, if we take into account that pure thematic specialisation (only sub-disciplines, without scientific field or areas of knowledge) is only expressed by 8 journals: *Mediaciones Sociales*, *Fotocinema*, *Creatividad y Sociedad*, *Mediatika*, *L'Atalante*, *Secuencias*, *Making Of* and *Versión Original*.

3.4. Equivalent presence of each area of knowledge

Only eight journals mention the term journalism (*Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, *DOXA*, *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, *Communication Papers*, *Periodística*, *Textual & Visual Media*, *Adcomunica- Revista Científica de Estrategias*, *Tendencias e Innovación en Comunicación*, *Temps de Comunicar*), but none of them mention it in an exclusive manner.

Twelve journals mention the term Audiovisual communication (*Doxa*, *Comunicación-Revista Internacional de Comunicación Audiovisual*, *Publicidad y Estudios Culturales*, *Área Abierta*, *Questiones Publicitarias*, *Revista de la SEECI*, *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, *Communication Papers*, *Quaderns del CAC*, *Adcomunica- Revista Científica de Estrategias*, *Tendencias e Innovación en Comunicación*, *Sesión No Numerada*, *Frame* and *Commons*) and 11 mention the term advertising (*Doxa*, *Comunicación-Revista Internacional de Comunicación Audiovisual*, *Publicidad y Estudios Culturales*, *Área Abierta*, *Questiones Publicitarias*, *Pensar la Publicidad*, *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, *Communication Papers*, *Adresearch*, *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, *Adcomunica- Revista Científica de Estrategias*, *Tendencias e Innovación en Comunicación* and *Commons*), and that is why we examined separately the two terms which, in fact, belong to the same area of knowledge (105).

Both terms, Audiovisual communication and advertising (according to the full name of area 105), are only mentioned by 8 journals (15%) (*Doxa*, *Comunicación-Revista Internacional de Comunicación Audiovisual*, *Publicidad y Estudios Culturales*, *Área Abierta*, *Questiones Publicitarias*, *Revista*

To determine the maximum degree of specialisation, we examined the presence of terms coincident with thematic sub-disciplines and ignored the generic terms used to refer to the scientific field and the areas of knowledge. A tag cloud was generated to represent the results. The thickness and size of each term tag reflects its frequency.

Cinema is the most quoted sub-discipline. Technology is mentioned on 15 occasions while Social, Research and Media appeared with similar frequencies. Other frequently quoted thematic terms are: Television, Audiences, Innovation and History. The other sub-disciplines appear only in one or two journals at most and, therefore, constitute a factor of differentiation and specialisation, although as we have seen, in few cases it is a case of pure specialisation. Hypothesis 5 is thus confirmed.

3.6. Target audience

The target audience is referred to in 31 journals (49.2%) despite it being an indicator of quality in some databases, as mentioned in the introduction. The terms used in the definition of target audience are: professor, researcher, teacher, scholar or academic. The journals expressly targeting young researchers or students are a minority just like the journals that claim to target *doctors*. The text dedicated to define the target audience of the journal is frequently used to also express the target geographic area. In this sense, the most commonly used terms are Spain, Latin America, Portugal and international. Hypothesis 6 cannot be confirmed because not all the journals provide information about this aspect.

3.7. Communication journals in the Spanish databases

The results of the analysis indicate that, in general terms, the treatment given by the Spanish databases to the different journals of communication is very irregular and based on disparate criteria. There is no homogeneity in relation to the scientific field or area of knowledge.

3.7.a. Scientific field

If we examine each of the databases, we can see that of the sample of 63 Spanish journals of Communication, only 21 are listed in INRECS within the scientific field of Communication, despite the fact that many of the journals that do not appear have a rather long trajectory (more than ten years). This database is selective, only considers journals after their fifth year of continuous publishing and, preferably, those that have been cited by peers.

RESH classifies 37 journals in the main scientific field of Communication (RESH refers to it as *temática* [scope]), 3 under Fine Arts as the main scope, and 2 under Linguistics, Philology and Literature as main scope. A total of 21 journals do not appear in this database. Regarding the secondary scientific field (RESH refers to it as *temática* [scope]) 1 journal is classified in Fine Arts, 1 in Legal Sciences, 1 in Communication, 1 in Education, 1 in Latin American Studies, 1 in History and 2 in Sociology. The rest of journals do not have a secondary scope according to this database.

DICE classifies 32 journals in Communication, 2 in Fine Arts, 1 in Fine Arts and Communication (mixture of two scientific fields), 1 in Education Sciences, 1, in Linguistics, Philology and Literature, and 8 in others. DICE does not list 19 journals.

The ISOC database classifies the content of journals in subject areas based on Unesco's system. In terms of the scientific field (ISOC refers to it as *área temática* [thematic area]) the field of Communication does not appear in its classification. Of the sample of journals, 3 are classified in the scientific field of Fine Arts, 2 in Education Sciences, 1 in Literature and Linguistics, 2 in Sociology, 26 in Sociology and Social communication, 1 in Sociology and Political sciences, 10 in others, and 18 are not classified. In relation to Unesco's classification, one journal from the sample was classified in Educational Theories, 3 in Cinematography, 1 in Advertising, 1 in Education, 1 in Journalism, 1 in History of Sociology, 1 in Documentation, 1 in Semiology, 1 in Stylistics (style and rhetoric), 3 in Mass Media, 1 in General Sociology, 2 in Sociology of the Mass Media, 1 in Sociology of Science, 10 in Social Communication, 18 in mixed fields. A total of 17 journals from the sample do not appear in this database.

Regarding the classification of the sample of journals according to scientific field in the Carhus Plus database (which refers to this category as *ámbito*), 14 journals are classified in the field of Information and Communication, 1 in Psychology, 2 in Multidisciplinary field and 4 in others. A total of 42 journals from the sample are not listed in this database.

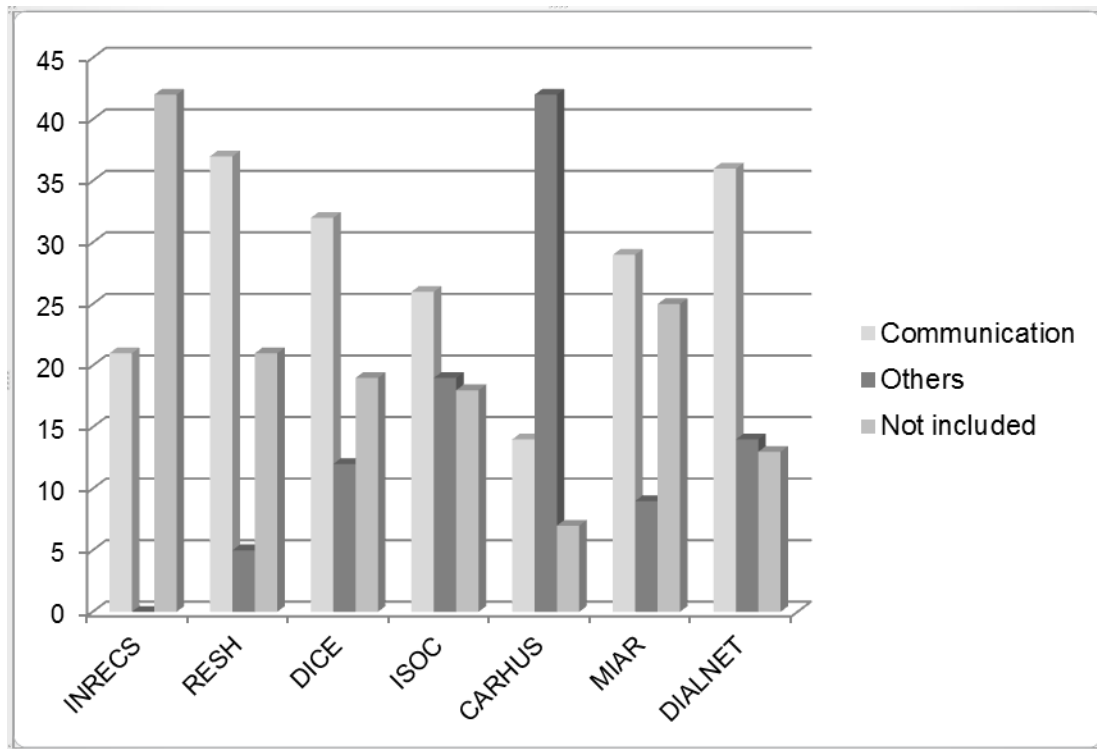
Regarding the classification of the sample of journals according to scientific field in the MIAR database (which refers to this category as *ámbito*), 3 journals are classified in the field of Arts, 29 in Social Communication, 1 in Documentation, 1 in Psychology, 1 in Semiology, 1 in Sociology, and 3 in others. A total of 25 journals from the sample are not listed in this database.

Finally, with regards to the classification of the sample of journals according to scientific field in the Dialnet database (which refers to this category as *materia*), 5 journals are classified in the field of Performing Arts and Cinema, 36 in Social Sciences, 1 in Social Sciences and Humanities, 1 in Education, 1 in Spanish Philology, 1 in Psychology and Education, and 5 in other fields. A total of 13 journals from the sample are not listed in the database.

The classifications of communication journals into scientific fields by the Spanish databases are too varied. To provide a clearer idea, the following section describes the most representative classifications that coincide with the term "Communication".

Of all the journals of communication examined in this study, IN-RECS lists 21 (33.33%) and excludes the rest (42 or 66.66%); RESH lists 37 (58,73%) in the Communication category and 5 (7.93%) in the "others" category, and excludes the rest (21, 33.33%); DICE lists 32 (50.79%) journals in the Communication category, 12 (19.04%) in the "others" category, and excludes the rest (19, 30,15%); ISOC does not list any journal in the Communication category (and instead puts them in the field of Sociology and Social sciences), classified 45 (71.42%) journals as "others" and excludes the rest (18, 28.57%); Carhus Plus does not list any journal in the Communication category (and instead puts them under the label Communication and Information), lists 21 as "others" (33.33%) and excludes the rest (42, 66.66%); MIAR does not list any journal in the Communication category (and instead puts them under the Social Communication category), lists 38 (60.31%) as "others" and excludes the rest (25, 39.68%); finally, Dialnet does not list any journal in the Communication category (the most related field is Social Sciences), lists 50 (79.36%) journals in "others" and excludes the rest (13, 20.63%) (see figure 5).

Figure 5: Inclusion of Communication as a scientific field in the Spanish databases



3.7.b. Area of knowledge

The consideration of the areas of knowledge related to Communication in the different databases is minimal: only three databases include them in their classification systems.

RESH lists 30 journals whose main area of knowledge is Audiovisual communication and advertising, 1 that has the Communication as the main area of knowledge (despite it actually being a scientific field and not an area), 1 whose main area of knowledge is Administrative Law, 2 Spanish Literature, 3 Journalism. A total of 26 journals are not included in this database. RESH lists 4 journals whose secondary areas of knowledge are audiovisual communication and advertising, 4 whose secondary area of knowledge is History of Art 1, and 4 whose secondary area of knowledge is Journalism.

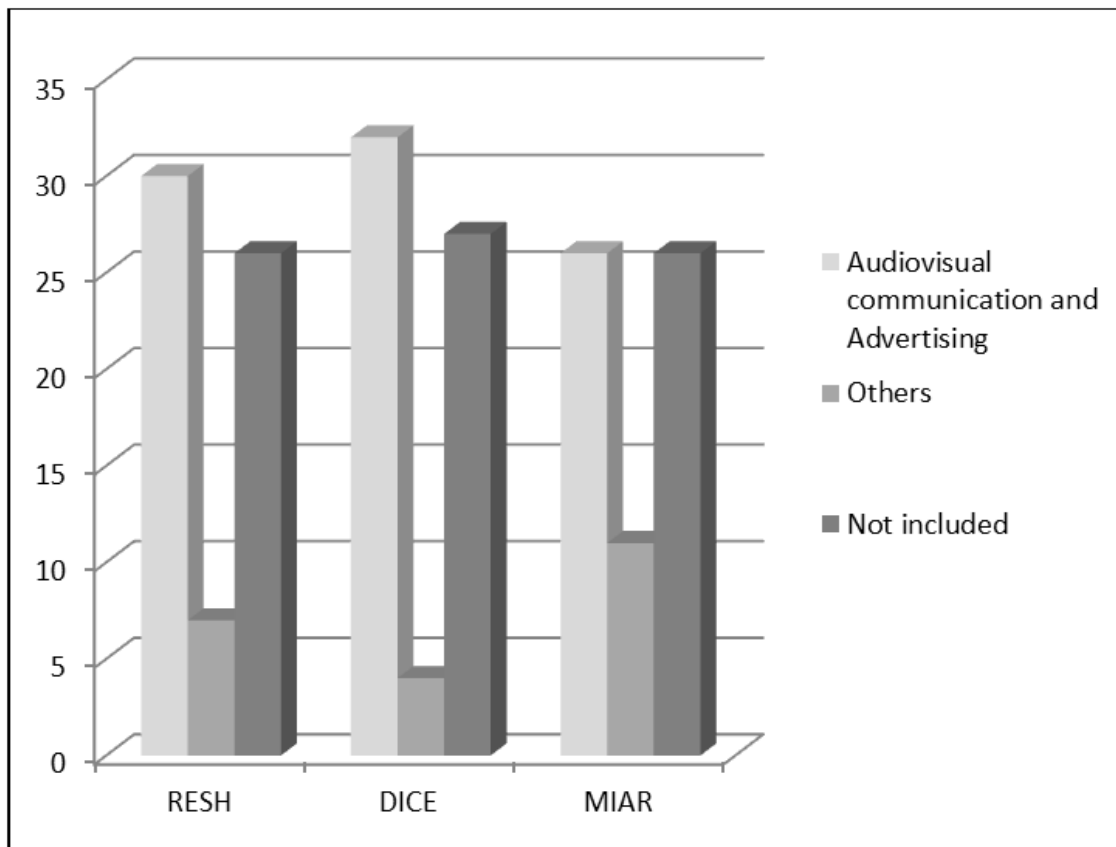
For its part, in DICE the area of knowledge of 32 journals is Audiovisual communication and advertising; of 1 is audiovisual communication, advertising and journalism, of 1 is History of Art, of 1 is Literature, and of 1 is Journalism. A total of 27 journals do not appear on this database.

Finally, MIAR refers to the areas of knowledge as “academic fields”. This databases lists one journal in the Performing arts category, 3 in Cinema and Audiovisual communication, 26 in Social Communication, 1 in Documentation, 1 in Linguistics, 1 in Educational Psychology, 1 in Sociology and 3 in the “others” category. MIAR does not list 26 journals from the sample.

Following the previous procedure, and taking into account the fact that not all databases mention the area of knowledge, we can point out that RESH lists 30 (47.61%) journals in the area of Audiovisual communication and advertising, 3 (4.76%) in Journalism, 4 (6.34%) in the “others” category and excludes 26 (41.26%). Meanwhile, DICE lists 32 (50.79%) journals in Audiovisual communication and advertising, 1 (1.58%) in Journalism, 3 (4.76%) in “others”, and excludes 27 (42.85%). Finally, MIAR does not list any journal in the categories of Audiovisual communication and advertising

(which is referred to as Social communication) or journalism, lists 37 (58.73%) in the “others” category, and excludes 26 (41.26%) (see figure 6).

Figure 6: Inclusion of *Audiovisual communication and advertising* and *journalism* as areas of knowledge in the Spanish databases



Based on these results, we cannot confirm hypothesis 7 (H7: databases use the same categories), hypothesis 8 (H8: all journals in the sample are listed in the studied databases) and hypothesis 9 (H9: journals receive the same classification in the different databases).

3.7.c. Presence of journals in databases

Of the sample of journals, only *Comunicar* is included in all databases and their corresponding fields. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, *Zer*, *Estudios del Mensaje Periodístico* and *Cuadernos de Información y Comunicación* appear on all databases but in one of the secondary fields of RESH. The journals *Área Abierta*, *Comunicación y Sociedad*, *Ámbitos*, *Doxa* and *Trípodos* are included in all data bases but in the two secondary fields of RESH. The rest of the journals are not present in all of the databases, and only have a random presence in some of them.

The studied databases do not use the same categories to classify the journals of communication. In addition, not all journals of communication are included in the databases, so there is a great disparity in their inclusion and exclusion. Finally, the comparison of the databases has shown that different classifications are used to refer to the same journal.

4. Conclusions

The most common profile (76%) is a mixed specialised Journal: it mentions general terms and includes some sub-disciplines. These journals preferably accept articles from sub-disciplines but do not reject articles related to the more general field or area. One of every four journals mentions some thematic sub-discipline to position itself. The data suggests that there is certain suspicion from journals to place themselves in an exclusive area of maximum specialisation.

The journals that mention any sub-discipline of Communication constitute the majority. There are only eight journals that have exclusive specialisation in thematic sub-disciplines –and could be considered to be “very specialised”-: *Mediaciones sociales*, *Creatividad y Sociedad*, *Fotocinema*, *Mediatika*, *Atalante*, *Secuencias*, *Making Of* and *Versión Original*.

The names of the areas are hardly used. The term Audiovisual communication and advertising seems to be a forced union between two different areas, and it is hardly cited as such.

The purely general journals that exclusively make reference to the scientific field or to the areas of knowledge are 16 (34%). The journals with more general specialisation that only mention the generic name of the scientific field are *Zer*, *Trípodos*, *Quaderns de Filología-Estudios de comunicació* (defunct) and *Treballs de Comunicació* (defunct) in Communication, and *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* in Social communication. *Pensar la Publicidad* relies only in part on the name of the area of knowledge (advertising).

The description of the scope is widespread. It is included in all journals except in one active journal (*Comunicación y Sociedad*) and two defunct journals (*Quaderns de Filología-Estudios de comunicació* and *Treballs de Comunicació*). The scope is expressed with different formats: in the form of the journal’s objective, theoretical approach or areas of interest. Sometimes the scope is linked to a series of details about the type of works welcomed by the journal.

The description of the target audience is not as widespread as that of the scope. It is only present in one of every two journals, is not always clearly defined, can refer to both authors and readers, sometimes focuses on the geographical origin of the authors, and sometimes is mixed with the description of the type of works that are admitted. The studied databases show an excessive dispersal of terms to refer to the scientific fields and areas of knowledge related to communication. As for the name used to refer to the scientific field of journals, only 20.40% of the sample of databases use the term Communication. With regards to the areas of knowledge, it is interesting that only three of the seven databases take into account this criterion, which coincides with the disuse of the terms of title and stated scope, as confirmed by the content analysis. The dispersion of terms used to describe the areas is also too broad: only 32.8% of journals use the term Audiovisual Communication and Advertising and 2.11% use the term Journalism.

As García Jiménez (2004: 90) points out, it is urgent to build an ontology of the Communication Sciences that allows us to sort the profuse and complex terminology of the field, which is confirmed by the heterogeneity detected in the classification of the studied databases. Classifications made by the journals’ editors along with a full thesaurus formed with the keywords of the articles published in all journals in the field would allow us to undertake the classification we have needed in this study. Taking into account that approximately 50% of journals of communication use the OJS system and almost all have electronic versions, it would be feasible to obtain the information necessary to design a good taxonomy. The most common classifications (Dewey’s universal decimal classification or Unesco’s system) do not include the sub-disciplines of Communication most cited in the journals examined in this preliminary study.

It would be appropriate to incorporate the following variables to the future study of the specialisation of journals: coverage (which would provide information about the geographical scope of the published works); published works (e.g. essays, reviews, research articles, etc.); publication languages; historical trajectory; and opinions of experts, all of which are all sources of specialisation indicators.

It could be affirmed that the Spanish communication journals cover almost all the current sub-disciplines, with few exceptions. The described specialisation manifests certain maturity, 33 years after the first scientific journal in the field was launched, and more than four decades after the establishment of Communication study programmes in the university system of Spain.

Throughout the course of this research, two new communication journals were launched and were not considered in the analysis:

- *Compé, Revista Científica de Comunicación, Protocolo y Eventos* is a biannual journal that offers articles and original and unpublished scientific research projects within the field of Communication and its related fields: the protocol and organisation of events and their new forms.
- *Redes.com* is a scientific journal edited by the Interdisciplinary Group of Studies in Communication, Politics, and Social Change (Compólicas, *Grupo Interdisciplinario de Estudios en Comunicación, Política y Cambio Social*). It was created as a yearbook to provide the international academic community and communication professionals with new knowledge and analytical tools for the study and transformation of the information system from philosophical and cultural perspectives that contribute to the collective socialisation of the media, technologies, and the processes of public information and communication.

In general, we could affirm that the sector of Spanish scientific journals of communication is large in number of editorial projects, which indicates that the scientific field has continued to grow and is strengthen every year with the specialisation of the publications.

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6. Notes

[1] Cf. <http://www.oclc.org/dewey.en.html>

[2] Cf. <http://skos.um.es/unesco6/>

[3] Cf. https://www.aeaweb.org/jel/jel_class_system.php

- [4] Cf. http://www.redalyc.org/info_pe.oe?page=/politica-editorial/metodologiaevalua.html
- [5] Cf. criteria for printed journals http://www.latindex.unam.mx/documentos/revistas_imp.html
Criteria for electronic journals http://www.latindex.unam.mx/documentos/revistas_elec.html
- [6] Cf. <http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/psclinic/doctorado/AreasConocimiento.pdf>
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- [12] Dialnet. University of la Rioja (Spain). Online database: <http://dialnet.unirioja.es/info/ayuda/qe>
[consulted on 22/07/2013]
- [13] DICE. Online database: <http://dice.cindoc.csic.es/index.php> [consulted on 22/07/2013]
- [14] Cf. <http://www.observatorioderevistascientificas.com/administrator/index.php>
- [15] Two of these journals are defunct and have been marked with black typography: *Quadernos de Filología-Estudios de Comunicación* and *Treballs de Comunicació* in Table 4, section Communication.

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