


SYSTEMATIZATION OF THE DEGREE WORKS OF THE SPECIALIZATIONS IN COMMUNICATION IN THE UAC

SISTEMATIZACIÓN DE LOS ARTÍCULOS DE GRADO DE LAS ESPECIALIZACIONES EN COMUNICACIÓN DE LA UAC

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ABSTRACT

Review, reflection, and research articles are part of the degree requirements for students of the Communication specializations of the Universidad Autónoma del Caribe. Taking into account the firm purpose of the quality assurance of both specializations, it is necessary to systematize and analyze the degree projects, the exercise allows us to establish precisely the most and least used topics, and the results will be a key piece for the sake of to contribute to the development of new degree projects and the contribution to the structuring and implementation of new curricular contents defined within the conceptual threads in Organizational Communication Management and Communication Management for Social Development. For the systematization and analysis of the degree projects, the statistical software for the social and human sciences SPSS will be used. From this, areas were identified on which it is prudent to go deeper to improve them, such as the constant search and quality of the education offered in these postgraduate courses.

KEYWORDS: degree works, management, specialization, systematization, organizational communication, social development.

RESUMEN

Los artículos de revisión, reflexión e investigación hacen parte de los requisitos de grado para los estudiantes de las especializaciones en Comunicación de la Universidad Autónoma del Caribe. Teniendo en cuenta el firme propósito del aseguramiento de la calidad de ambas especializaciones se hace necesario la sistematización y el análisis de los trabajos de grados, el ejercicio nos permite establecer con precisión las temáticas más y menos utilizadas, y los resultados serán pieza clave en aras de aportar a la elaboración de nuevos proyectos de grado y la contribución a la estructuración e implementación de nuevos contenidos curriculares definidos dentro de los hilos conceptuales en Gerencia de la Comunicación Organizacional y Gerencia de la Comunicación para el Desarrollo Social. Para la sistematización y análisis de los trabajos de grado se empleará el software estadístico para las ciencias sociales y humanas SPSS. A partir de ello, se

identificaron áreas sobre las cuales es prudente profundizar con la intención de que se mejoren, como es la búsqueda constante y la calidad de la educación ofrecida en estos posgrados.

PALABRAS CLAVE: comunicación organizacional, desarrollo social, especialización, gerencia, sistematización, trabajos de grado.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Specialization programs in Management of Organizational Communication and Management of Communication for Social Development, activated in 2011, have been scenarios to promote research within the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences-FSHS- of the Autonomous University of the Caribbean (UAC by its acronym in Spanish). From the implementation of the degree work modality as the final stage of the process of taking each postgraduate degree, dozens of research articles have been produced.

However, considering the current state of digital convergence that the modern information and knowledge society is going through, the integration of social networks as well as mobile devices in everyday life is essential, especially in the fluctuating socio-cultural context of Colombia, for which reason this work aims to systematize the undergraduate articles in order to create new pedagogical strategies that allow information to be provided to support other academic productions and make modifications to the respective Syllabus.

Therefore, it is necessary to consider what is the current state of research, as well as training in Social Communication both in Colombia and in Latin America, to understand its variations and particularities, which are the basis for the analysis framework that will be implemented for the systematization of the degree works in the Specializations in Communication at the UAC. Based on this, it is imperative to understand how communication training has developed at said university in the last decade. Beltrán (2016) raises the need to tighten the existing links between teaching and research, so that a deeper approach to reality can be developed and from which the areas of action of both students and teachers can be re-evaluated.

This is not a minor contribution, since currently within the UAC there is a modality of articulation of the FSHS undergraduate degrees with the Specializations of the same area, so it is pertinent to consider the type of education that students are having in the face of their link to postgraduate degrees thanks to this possibility. Based on

reflections in this regard (Gonzales and Rosero, 2015), Communication programs in Colombia require an optic focused on social and participatory aspects, but which also recognizes the importance of organizations in structuring the social fabric. Thus, the need to review how students, once they are about to graduate, are articulated with notions like these or if they are disconnected from it, is denoted. In turn, this research works as a diagnosis to understand how FSHS graduate students connect with the immediate context and respective needs.

However, these conditions must be explored depending on which of the two specializations and what respective works are being observed. Regarding the organizational aspect, according to Piñeros (2018), there is a lack of interest in how the approach to this area of communication has been developed from the country's degree programs:

On the other hand, there is little regularity in the number of research produced according to the referenced years, which shows a growing disinterest in organizational communication as an object of research, the epistemological projection of the profession being seriously affected at a time when it demands scientific foundations to consolidate its status, generated from the communication faculties since the contributions that come from other disciplines will be biased towards their own epistemologies. (p.64).

It is not a factor to take lightly, the diversity of approaches in which students focus their degree work is an indicator of which area they are interested in as graduates, generating an impact on society. Although the Specialization in Management of Organizational Communication has a greater number of degree articles production, consequent research products, it is pertinent to review, categorize, and understand from them, the contribution that the results can generate for reflection or renewal of the debates necessary to keep the postgraduate current. It is estimated that possible conceptual axes can be found among all the texts that have been approved as degree projects, for which it is intended in turn to consider how they interpenetrate with the environmental conditions of the time in which they were produced.

In this vein, these articles, as they are products of specific research, place a special emphasis on empirical fieldwork in communication, which could lead to greater proximity to the immediate environment and therefore the context.

The survey is a descriptive study, with emphasis on the collection and systematization of empirical data for practical use, while social research starts from the empirical foundation of the data to contribute to the body of theoretical and methodological knowledge of a certain field of studies, regardless of its immediate use. This is, in my view, the condition that should govern academic research on Communication, since only through the interpretive elaboration of data can a pattern of scientific work be achieved in the field of Communication (Vasallo, 2012, P.10).

In turn, this becomes more necessary when considering the focus of the second specialization, which is in Social Development. Although this concept has been developed since the 80s (Gumucio, 2011), it is conceived with a communication alternative in which it is conceptualized as a process of creating links and meanings,

oriented towards the media being aware of serving the needs of communities within a cultural context with complexities, the communicator being a manager rather than a protagonist. This implies a particular emphasis on experiences and as conceptual thinking is strengthened from these (Cadavid & Gumucio, 2014), it can lead to a communication practice more in tune with the current socio-cultural context. But, as with its sister specialization, this must be verified with the systematization of the degree works, if one wants to have an adequate foundation in this regard.

Now, if we want to talk about a possible curricular renewal, or rather, nourish it with the results and interpretations of this research, it is still very premature to make a proposal in this regard. Therefore, it is necessary to review the very foundations of the entire study plan, to have an intersubjective relationship with the eventual results of this research, which can lead to an interpretation attached to the context and on which it is built a pragmatic educational process.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. General Objective:

Systematize the degree works of the Communication Specializations at the UAC so they give some contributions for new degree projects and the basis for making modifications in their curricular contents in the framework of the current information and knowledge society.

2.2. Specific Objectives

Examine the degree works of the Communication Specializations at the UAC to identify frequent conceptual threads.

Establish categories in which the degree works of the Specializations in Communication of the UAC are framed, relating them to their curricular contents.

Develop proposals to transform or modify the current Syllabus of the Modules that make up the curricular network that make up the Specializations in Communication of the UAC.

3. REFERENTIAL FRAMEWORK

Going to professional degree works, theses, scientific articles, citations, or bibliographic references already prepared as documentary sources for new research, beyond the field practice or case study, forges the theoretical mapping and history of the new research process that is being undertaken and, incidentally, allows reviewing the micro-curricular status of academic programs. In other words, an initiatory and complementary relationship is established between the epistemological need of the research, which can be found in other similar works, and field actions, a theoretical line that accompanies the development of the new paper in all its stages, plus the possibility of a curricular redesign of academic programs.

After a research design, the manager collects documentary material produced by other authors on the subject to be researched and needs to classify a table of thematic ideas with nuclear words or phrases (key) that leads him to review some texts with reliable approaches and other experiences very useful for their new production, in this case, either to create content for bibliographic review, reflection, or research results, to update an academic syllabus.

Although no theory is absolutely true (Popper, 1989), retrospective scientific texts, citations, or bibliographic references allow the researcher to approach a criterion of significance about the object to be researched.

Going to documentary sources to feed a new process is not to remove its originality, on the contrary, it is, on the one hand, to demonstrate the honesty of the researcher and, on the other, to legitimize the result with accurate contributions already disclosed by people with better knowledge of the subject or who have processed information that is not necessary to build as new, concurring to a socio-critical approach to address the mechanisms of reflection and interpretation, giving, of course, the corresponding credit.

Villaseñor (2008), going to Krummel (1993), recommends the researcher to make a thematic repertoire that can serve as a reference or allow some clues in the bibliographic chain to recover the most original information possible. Given that the bibliographic work is abundant both in the physical and virtual world, and that reducing it to contents of specific interest is expensive, it is necessary to attend the joint institutions/individual selection on documentation and thematic compilation, in such a way that the referential seal is exponentially enclosed.

This phase of pertinent thematic documentation is fundamentally important for the theorizing and granting a clear and different idea of the research problem and the delimitation of the object of study, since if there is a diversity of authors on the same topic that leads to dialectical tensions, implying, therefore, different logics of thought, rationalities, discourses, and different epistemological supports, according to circumstances and cultural environments, then the retrospective knowledge must be compared, excluded, incorporated, or complemented with which it is intended to build new knowledge.

Therefore, it is recommended that for the organization of said thematic repertoire, first a printed or digital reservoir of texts is defined that serves as a reference to house, consult, and guide information of interest in the development of specific research work, and then, after that material is classified in the particular shelf, it is systematized in a segmented instructional model that facilitates the work of the new researcher.

For Pérez (2016), systematizing information is to classify, order, and clarify a data collection process regarding a subject carried out that includes titles/keywords/authors/bibliographic references, etc. It is a complex compendium, which involves a list of identifications, background, and basic testimonies to support new work.

For the systematization process, it is necessary to resort to all kinds of information and documentation from printed, digital, oral, visual, experiential, and other sources, available in the institution, organization, or in the community that sponsors or houses the experience. Therefore, it is significant to retrieve reports, diagnoses, technical reports, operational plans, annual reports, statistical data, notes and records, photographs, videos, newspapers, personal data of those involved, conduct interviews, hold conversations with those involved. Likewise, it is important to incorporate general bibliography and materials related to the specific topic of the experience, among others (Pérez, p.38).

All these codified data must be procedural for the ease of obtaining information in a friendly environment and with referential and ideational clarity in the definition of theoretical and epistemological content.

This empowerment comes from the "dialogical reflexivity", typical of systematization. As Ghiso (2011) puts it, the first impulse is to follow the routines of traditional research, with a framework of preconceived theories. The object pursued by systematization establishes the need to find other possible routes, in which before adopting a theory or a concept, we can establish dialogues with ourselves and with others, recognizing different positions and constructions loaded with objectivity and subjectivity (Pérez, p.18).

The bibliographic, documentary, or "papers" systematizations, according to the case that this presentation occupies, are of three kinds:

1. Total, if it includes all the bibliographic information on a specific topic, typical of the exercise of libraries, newspaper libraries, or related dependencies, generally academic.
2. Partial, if it is reduced to a type of documentary work, for example, graduate thesis or scientific articles, which includes thematic axes/titles/authors/dates, and bibliographic references, filled out by an academic agency or research group.
3. Internal, when the information contained in a single document is processed, making use of thematic axes, topics, bibliographic citations, and keywords¹, among other aspects, that the researcher processes.

Now, the degree option (PEP, 2016) of the specializations in Social Communication of the Autonomous University of the Caribbean, both in the mention Management of Organizational Communication and in the Management of Communication for Social Development is the making of a "paper" or publishable scientific article, students and undergraduates who are in this final phase require available information on works already approved for the degree, in such a way that it serves as a bibliographic, thematic, theoretical, or experimental framework for their new production; In other words, these productions have an academic impact that has to do with the appropriation that is made of the knowledge elaborated in other research works, so

¹ Minimum syntactic nuclear units of lexical/semantic and semantic/pragmatic classification or their derivations and dispersions or recurrences, which collect the internal properties of the basic discourse.

systematizing the projects already positively sentenced by the Unit is of precious value.

In the same way, these degree works in their systematized revision serve to feed the updating or modification of the Syllabus of academic programs, or to elaborate new proposals for micro-curricula, following the theoretical or experimental innovations that are shown in said works.

A paper is an academic work of scientific communication approved and publishable in an indexed journal, according to norms and structure pre-established by the Unit, whose objective is to produce new exponential knowledge about the area of knowledge in question, either by bibliographic review, reflection on published texts, or proven experiences, or on the result of research carried out, that can become a work of professional consultation or be used for the development of innovative experimental methods, which seeks to eliminate the barriers between the production of knowledge and the use of it by society.

According to Ramírez, Martínez, and Castellanos:

When the research and the knowledge generated, disseminated, and spread from it, coming from an institution or an alliance of organizations, are oriented to the objective of meeting the needs of society or are used indirectly in specific developments for their benefit, we can speak of social impact or social appropriation of scientific knowledge. The social responsibility of academic institutions becomes a conscious and ethical commitment to the actors with whom they interact (2012, p.36-37).

And, precisely, systematizing said reservoir as resources to synthesize content applicable to specific research is a dynamic that is offered in this instrument as a codified infrastructure to facilitate bibliographic and theoretical information, plus documented experiences, regarding the elaboration of final degree projects of the Specializations in Social Communication of the Autonomous University of the Caribbean.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research is quantitative, the studies that use this approach rely on numerical measurement, counting, and the use of statistics to establish exact indicators (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2015). The design is closely related to the case study regarding the specializations in Management of Organizational Communication and Management of Communication for Social Development of the Autonomous University of the Caribbean, seeking to determine the strength of association or correlation between variables, generalization and objectification through a sample to be inferences to a population (Fernández and Díaz, 2002), therefore, variables are established and the articles (review - reflection - research) carried out by students of both specializations from 2015 to the first quarter of 2020 are taken as samples.

In this sense, the implementation of qualitative research criteria is also considered, since it is prudent to analyze the interpretive aspects and the particularities (Hernández, Fernández, and Baptista, 2015) of each article to produce a more

accurate approach to the content, functioning in turn as a complement to the previously established quantitative data. Hence, although this approach is taken into account, as well as applied, it does not have enough presence within this research to qualify it as mixed. Being communication research, complexity (Múnera, 2010; Cadavid & Gumucio, 2014), demands a flexible approach to the factors involved, thus reaffirming the value of qualitative criteria even within primarily quantitative research.

Regarding the population of this research, it would constitute the articles produced by students from 2012 to 2020, so it was decided to select a non-probabilistic type of sample (Hernández, Fernández, and Baptista, 2015), composed of the articles produced since 2015-01 to March 2020. For this volume of content to explore, this research is ongoing.

Thus, this research is projected in stages. In the first, we proceeded with the compilation and organization of the degree work of both specializations, the following conceptual axes were identified for each of these:

- Management of Organizational Communication. The thematic axes established for this specialization refer to the Organizational climate and culture, External and internal communication, Communication and marketing, and, finally, Communication and technology.
- Management of Communication for Social Development. Taking into account the different topics chosen by the students in this specialization, the following thematic axes were established Community media, Communication and culture, and, finally, Minority communities.

In the second stage, a review of 50% of the works was carried out, taking into account the variables that allowed the classification of the works, the title proposed by the author or authors, gave a certain clue to the topic to be dealt with in each work, the (nuclear) keywords, which allow us to search and select articles within extensive databases, and also establish the characteristics of the article, the structural content to define what type of article it belongs to, the number of pages to determine the extension of the work, and, finally, the publication date to place it in the periods from 2015-01 to 2020-01 (first quarter). From there, the particular contents of the articles grouped in each axis were reviewed to identify particularities, connections, and differences between the texts of each axis, as well as their peers corresponding to the sister Specialization.

For the third stage, the statistical software SPSS will be used to create established variables for the analysis and systematization of the degree works of both specializations. Each of the variables will be fed with the respective records and the report will then be established taking into account the relationship of the variables. These variables would be constructed with the qualitative information extracted in the stage to contrast, enrich, and deepen the most relevant findings.

In this way, it is established that the component that allows this articulation between quantitative and qualitative criteria, without transforming the focus of all research to mixed design, is the critical social perspective. This for the terms of this research corresponds to:

This perspective arises in response to the positivist and interpretative traditions and seeks to overcome the reductionism of the first and the conservatism of the second, admitting the possibility of a social science that is neither purely empirical nor only interpretive. This critical paradigm introduces ideology explicitly and critical self-reflection in the processes of knowledge. (Yelitzá; 2008, p 33).

Based on this, the aspiration is to produce the most accurate, corresponding, and articulated results with the analyzed material, as well as to make a complex proposal that does not focus only on one component or is fragmentary.

It is prudent to clarify that the preparation of articles, whether of review, reflection, or research, is part of the requirements to obtain the title of Communication Specialist in either of the two postgraduate courses, that is why we work with the final product of the second-semester students that develop the Humanism and Research course that is part of the curriculum of both specializations. Students spend around 5 months to write their article, during this process they are accompanied by the teacher in charge of the respective course who, apart from the two face-to-face meetings, schedules tutorials to monitor the work. Next, the list of the number of articles analyzed so far is shown.

Table 1. *Communication specialization articles 2015-2020*

SPECIALIZATION	NUMBER OF ARTICLES
Management of Organizational Communication	61
Management of Communication for Social Development	26

Source: Self-made

Of course, these are not all the articles produced during the time established in the research, but it is the progress that has been made in the face of the volume and the conjunctural circumstances brought about by the health emergency that the Covid-19 caused.

5. DISCUSSION

Addressing the partial results of the research, it is observed that in the sample of degree works corresponding to the Specialization in Management of Organizational Communication, the axis of Internal and external communication is present as a central topic in 35% of the documents delivered. While the axes of Organizational Climate and Culture, as well as Communication and Marketing, each appear as the main topics in 25% of the texts prepared by the students. Finally, Communication and Technology constitutes the final axis in the degree articles, with the remaining 15%. From this, there is a clear tendency for students to undertake projects in the areas that concern the management, operation, and dynamics of the organization.

On the other hand, the partial results corresponding to projects belonging to the Specialization in Management of Communication for Social Development show that the guiding principle with the greatest presence in these documents is Communication and Culture, with 40%. In this sense, Minority Communities is the

central topic in 30% of the articles produced and, finally, the Community Media is the central topic in 25% of the remaining texts. In contrast to research conducted in their sister postgraduate program, students focus on unstructured organizations or social groups with particular needs. It is not taken as an unexpected finding, but a consequence of the particular approaches of each Specialization, however, the comparison, in this case, is potentially enriching, in order to identify how it can be applied to the pedagogical processes of each program in the other.

It is prudent to clarify that these results may have variations or it is feasible to reflect on them according to the final results, the content of the articles that remain to be analyzed, as well as the observations made during the rest of the research process. Thus, any comparison made at this stage on the partial results between both specializations could lead to erroneous and inconsistent conclusions. The divergences are observed, but the conditions, situations, and meanings that led to its structuring require a longer time for its proper examination, deliberation, and articulation of knowledge.

In the particular case of the results concerning the Specialization in Management of Organizational Communication, there is a continuity with the “pre-gradual” communication training (Gonzales and Rosero, 2015; Beltrán, 2016) in the term that a trend is identified towards the instrumental or functional aspects of the internal management of the organization. Therefore, it would be necessary to consider diversifying the deepening in various sub-areas of the organizational field. Thus, several possibilities arise, such as offering other electives that make the understanding of the establishment of links and the production of meaning in an organization, the contextual variations, and the various factors involved more flexible. In that order of ideas, more activities of social appropriation of knowledge with communities, organizations, and external actors to the UAC could be pertinent, integrating them into the discussions within the modules, which build the interest in students to explore other areas within their postgraduate degree.

Now, regarding the results corresponding to the works in the Specialization in Management of Communication for Social Development, there is a social reason of community approach and decentralized management of communication processes (Gumucio, 2011), to which there is correspondence. But the question arises if these researches respond to needs objectified within the socio-cultural context in which the students develop. It is not a minor issue, given that the articulation between content, student research, and current affairs in the environment is a trinity that must be balanced if a coherent educational process is expected. The majority emphasis on Communication and Culture could be a beneficial indicator in this area, even if it is not conclusive.

In this order of ideas, a common factor is identified in the topics less addressed by the projects of each specialization: Technology and the media. Although “media-centric” notions (Múnera, 2010; Vasallo, 2012) that give greater value to the instruments in communication education are frequent at the undergraduate level, it is evident that within the postgraduate programs of the FSHS they are not the focus, a possible symptom of the diversification of students' practical approaches once they reach a higher level of information. However, when qualitatively reviewing the texts,

the media do not completely disappear, but rather their role is complementary in the research approaches; this is also the case with other technological tools. The minority amount of research is interesting considering the current information society (Unesco, 2012), so the results subvert expectations in this regard. This leads to the debate of how much emphasis the critical use of technologies (including media) in the curricula of both specializations should have, given that there is a consideration of these in the P.E.P (2016).

Based on the above, it is interpreted that based on the results obtained so far, the need identified for the 2 specializations is to adapt to the changing situations of the socio-cultural context. Whether it is considering implementations on the critical use of media, technologies, as well as determining factors in the creation of significant links within the organization or a macro crisis that may arise unexpectedly, the multi and interdisciplinary nature of communication training (Múnera, 2010), is the component on which the necessary modifications to meet this need can be based. However, to have any certainty about these shortcomings, opportunities to improve, and renew, it is imperative to conclude this research.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In the first instance, it is emphasized that the research is still in development, so, so far, it is on the verge of starting what is called phase 3 of the review of the degree projects, for then submitting all the information and data accumulated to the processing. Hence, up to now, it is possible to propose thematic trends, as previously stated, which guide conceptual exploration in each of the specializations.

Thus, it can be affirmed that the exercise carried out so far provides the basis and allows us to say that the general objective of the research concerning the systematization of the projects in question has been fulfilled. In the same sense, based on the examination of the documents, general areas of conceptual coincidence were found, with which it is possible to establish categories of both analysis and targeting for articles produced in postgraduate courses. Slight changes are projected on the latter, however, it is possible, according to preliminary inquiries, that the works to be considered feed the categories already established.

Based on this, it is still premature to design or develop proposals for modification of the Syllabus or the study plan of each specialization, but there are indications about possible areas on which to focus for their improvement. There is a lack of emphasis in the projects regarding the analysis that takes into account technology and its current implications, which, within the current Information and Knowledge Society (Unesco, 2012), is disconcerting, because the adaptation and appropriation of technologies are presumed as an advantage of the current generation of students. This minimal presence, compared to the currently established partial categories, invites for a deeper analysis.

Although the research is still under development, it can be seen how some aspects of education need to be reconsidered within the Specializations, such as the role of technologies in the current context, the relevance and type of training in the identified areas, as well as the articulation and coherence with the current socio-cultural

context of the region and the country. In summary, this process must be completed in order to generate a proposal for transformation in the content of the postgraduate programs of the FSHS at the UAC to address the field of communication with greater certainty and understanding of current interactions.

6.1. Recommendations

It is prudent to clarify that there are no deep recommendations, it is considered pertinent to leave a tentative recommendation on the educational processes within the specializations in question. Although, as previously established, there are not enough foundations to make formal or accurate proposals, the graduates show some inclinations about the work areas that are projected within their professional field, which, regardless of proportion or depth, exhibit the need to explore the field-students-graduates relationship and understand the consequent intersubjective relationships. Based on this, it is estimated to find a source of not only strengthening but also improvement of the educational quality of the Specializations of the FSHS at the Autonomous University of the Caribbean.

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