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ICAES

**Complexity, Atomization and  
Utopian Pragmatism in Latin  
American Communicational  
Thought**

**Complexidade, atomização  
e pragmatismo utópico no  
pensamento comunicacional  
latino-americano**

**Complejidad, atomización y  
pragmatismo utópico en el  
pensamiento comunicacional  
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## ABSTRACT

The creative wealth of Latin American communication studies has promoted the broadening of the object of study of communication, which has now exceeded two centuries, revealing collective realities and concerns about society and the media, processes that imply rethinking the link between thought, knowledge and academia. Complexity, fragmentation, atomization and utopian pragmatism distill authors such as Antonio Pascuali, Luiz Beltrão, José Marques de Melo and Jesús Martín-Barbero, who have built a theoretical and elastic mesh to think and rethink Latin American communicational thinking within the framework of complexity and the utopian pragmatism of a mestizo science under construction. Faced with the fragmentation of the communicational field, we perceive a deeply atomized terrain.

**Keywords:** fragmentation; utopia; atomization; Latin American thought.

## RESUMO

A riqueza criativa dos estudos da comunicação latino-americanos tem promovido a ampliação do objeto de estudo da comunicação, que já ultrapassou dois séculos, revelando realidades coletivas e preocupações com a sociedade e os meios de comunicação, processos que implicam repensar a ligação entre pensamento, conhecimento e academia. Complexidade, fragmentação, atomização e pragmatismo utópico destilam autores como Antonio Pascuali, Luiz Beltrão, José Marques de Melo e Jesús Martín-Barbero, que construíram uma malha teórica e elástica para pensar e repensar o pensamento comunicacional latino-americano no quadro da complexidade e o pragmatismo utópico de uma ciência mestiça em construção. Diante da fragmentação do campo comunicacional, percebemos um terreno profundamente atomizado.

**Palavras-chave:** fragmentação; utopia; atomização; pensamento latino-americano.

## RESUMEN

La riqueza creativa de los estudios comunicación latinoamericanos han promovido el ensanchamiento del objeto de estudio de la comunicación, que ya superan dos siglos, revelando realidades y preocupaciones colectivas sobre la sociedad y los medios, procesos que implican repensar la vinculación entre pensamiento, conocimiento y academia. Complejidad, fragmentación, atomización y pragmatismo utópico destilan autores como Antonio Pascuali, Luiz Beltrão, José Marques de Melo y Jesús Martín-Barbero, quienes que han construido una malla teórica y elástica para pensar y repensar el pensamiento comunicacional latinoamericano en el marco de la complejidad y el pragmatismo utópico de una ciencia mestiza en construcción. Frente a la fragmentación del campo comunicacional percibimos un terreno profundamente atomizado.

**Palabras claves:** fragmentación; utopía; atomización; pensamiento latinoamericano.

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## **Introduction**

Since 2020, life for huge groups has become more turbulent, complicated and difficult and the communicational terrain has become a swampy terrain, rushed with concepts, an enclave that receives complexities, and where theories often collapse into his attempt to explain reality.

This essay builds a review of the main concerns of Latin American communication where we place some attention on the idea of complexity, atomization and utopian pragmatism present in Latin American communicational thought, where the perspectives obey the harsh present that the societies of this region live, and where we subscribe that such contributions from those who developed the field should be considered socially situated. This does not rule out putting into dialogue the contributions of authors such as Antonio Pascuali, Luiz Beltrão, José Marques de Melo and Jesús Martín-Barbero, with other perspectives.

In the field of communication, the fragmentation of the field has produced a growing atomization, which allows possibilities and alternatives. The impossibility of academics to generate a dialogue between different conceptual constructs and to overcome atomization in communication studies is also

the cause of a certain delay in the broad umbrella of the social sciences. The recognition of hybridity, miscegenation, fragmentation and atomization are conditions to find a space of shared commitment with a common set of problems, knowledge and debates. Scholars such as Craig (1999, p.163) highlight that “the different traditions of communication theory offer different ways to conceptualize and discuss communication practices and problems”, while Waisbord (2019) has stated that communication studies are best seen by acknowledging its dispersion, embracing pluralism, fostering cross-cutting lines of inquiry that address real-world problems, rather than expecting to meet conditions that qualify it as a discipline. In opposition to this thesis, we could say that what is known as the field of communication is a deeply atomized terrain.

## **1. About communication**

The pompous name of “communication and information sciences” has highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of this field of knowledge, its construction based on objects, which can be looked at and examined by a variety of disciplines. Communication studies are also allied to education and culture and cannot be separated since they are affiliated in theory and in practice (GLANDER, 2000). Communication as an object of study emerges in the 21st century as a set of problems, interweaves, themes, concerns that arise from social phenomena. Communication can be understood as an infinite network of meaningful exchanges carried out by people, a process that permeates our social life. Communication is also a social phenomenon,

an object of study and an interdisciplinary field of knowledge. It has been seen successively as a channel, instrument, arrow, projectile, conflict, contract, orchestra, spiral or net. Each of these metaphors, Scolari (2008) points out, configures the researcher's perceptions, questions and methods and allows different questions to be established.

## **2. Latin America, Globalization and Modernity**

Months ago we were witnessing a world that lived successive globalizations, liquid modernity (BAUMAN, 2015) nationalist tendencies, emerging environmental and religious conflicts, development, crisis of capitalism, rebirth in the exhibition of popular culture and citizenship, the growth and development of communication networks and tensions between sovereignty, national narratives and globalizing processes, to which was added the tragedy of the COVID 19 pandemic, the subsequent quarantine and disrespect for the civil rights of citizens. As a term for communication, the idea of "social distancing" is opaque and ambivalent. It was a time when the Epistemologies of the South formulated by Sousa Santos (2005), proposed the expansion of the political imagination beyond the intellectual and political exhaustion of the global North. This exhaustion translated into the inability to face the challenges of this century, and in threats to democracy, rights, and dignity. These disabilities were compounded by new problems with the appearance of the COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent quarantines. Authoritarianisms, restrictions, emergence and crisis of health systems, lack of respect for human life and

competing digital rights were experienced in the countries of South America.

In the context of globalization, the rules of the game were established by the industrialized countries that modeled a “globalizing” system that favored their own interests. Sousa Santos (2005) has pointed out that globalization constitutes a specific universe of social power relations and that different relations or sets of relations leads to a different globalization, distinguishing between globalized localities, localized globalisms, cosmopolitanism and the common heritage of humanity.

There is a more accentuated perception among Latin American citizens that the well-being and industrialization that international capitalism has promoted has not turned out to be a driving force behind the development of so-called undeveloped countries, as there is a disconnect between politics and citizenship. The global south was a metaphor for the social crisis caused by capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy and the various forms of struggle and resistance to oppression amplified by all the vicissitudes and without reasons of the year 2020.

The recurring crises that Latin American countries are experiencing, enhanced by the presence of the Covid 19 Pandemic and subsequent quarantines, expose new inequalities and new poverty, while promoting geopolitical strategic changes transforming the forms and operations of global power and influence, culture politics, redefining the role of media networks and publics based on their power and influence in the geo-political order and global functioning. The absence of substantial dialogue in the social and political spheres, the political

patronage promoted by the state taking advantage of the poverty and misery of the people, also present in the universities, and the lack of transparency of public information in the state organisms constitute worrying signs to when thinking about the future of Latin American societies.

According to the South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han (2014) in global society we are marked by hopelessness and a meaningless present, a happy world of chained illusion and disappointment. Han points out that individuals are distressed by vertigo, in which the next moment will overcome the bitterness of the previous one and the contemporary problem of dyschromia is characterized by the loss of history, by a series of unwound events from each other, where human beings, in the absence of meaning, run. The new society in which we live has called to enhance and develop technological capacity, promoting new ways of doing science with new status for scientists and researchers, and where technology has permeated all fields of social life.

### **3. Social Sciences in the region**

Most of the Latin American social science production since the 1980s has been disenchanting with revolutionary and hopeful Marxism, with the open possibilities of democratic transition. Faced with the expansion of political democratization, what De Sousa (2005) calls "social fascism" coexists at the same time, a concept that has served to describe extreme inequality in access to power and social capital. Yocelvezky (2013) points out that the history of the social sciences in Latin American universities is inextricably linked to the problems

of national development and this idea covered the entire ideological horizon of Latin America, as an unquestionable goal, which required technical knowledge from social disciplines. Schuster (1992) has wondered what it is to do social science and how it is done. To that question there is two answers: the first was to do the same as natural science, highlighting the fact that this answer was given by many epistemologists and social theorists until 1960/70, a concept that is still in force in a part of the scientific community. Schuster (1992) highlights that since the 1970s a second response has been developing, characterizing the subject as an object of social science, and how he does not behave like passive matter in his world, but interprets it, does it, judges it and changes it. This way of conceiving science means that the method you use has its peculiarities and characteristics. We are in the presence of hermeneutics, among other positions, which, instead of posing a classic relationship between subject and object of knowledge, suggests the idea of a communicative approach between subjects. The subject builds the object and, in this relationship, aspects of the subjectivity of social life, the daily interpretations of the world, the action and the meanings socially attributed to it are valued.

The presence of hybrids and sometimes invisible cultural borders established in the field of social and human sciences, constitute an element that favors and at the same time, complicates academic debates in an overloaded agenda of the academy of the South. An academic discipline is constituted in a branch of knowledge formed historically and

progressively as an object of recognition and subsequently becomes an object of research. The disciplines with a greater tradition are more defined than the new ones, and the knowledge is recognized by the social legitimacy they achieve, the development of the professions and the social need for their emergence.

#### **4. Communication theories**

As Scolari (2008) points out, the first map of communication theories may indicate that we are in the presence of an academically and scientifically consolidated space, but if we place this map in the context of social sciences, communication studies still appear without a clear profile and without institutional recognition. Waisbord (2019) asks if a more or less integrated disciplinary field could be built if the same concept of “communication” is discussed among the communicators themselves? Definitions of what is communication have been going on for decades and constitute a classic subgenre within theoretical production. The study of communicative phenomena links us to the presence of a multiplicity of meanings of hegemonic discourses and imaginary, where we can recognize the production of meanings of social subjects challenged by power, struggles and social inequalities, theoretical developments with a critical and liberating perspective, which serve to reexamine the meaning of social studies, framing them in the material-historical context of popular cultures assuming and from Latin American traditions.

Throughout more than sixty years, different traditions and currents of thought have sought to explain the object of study of communication with

multiple edges such as the social phenomena arising from the media, the transformations operated in the form of relationship between people through the irruption of communication technologies, communication productions derived from social changes, the social values imposed by the media and the different perceptions of reality that they grant, the media, the public, the speeches and the theoretical approaches that developed through the different modes of human communication. Waisbord (2019) has recently proposed six possible conceptions of communication such as connection, dialogue, expression, information, persuasion and interaction, in an attempt to order academic conversations.

## **5. Marginality, Communication and Latin America**

Raúl Fuentes Navarro (1998) has pointed out the triple marginality of science in the Latin American context. These three assumptions refer to the position and hierarchy of science: with respect to the presuppositions of science in the first place, the position of weakness of the social sciences vis-à-vis the other sciences in second place, and the fragility and weakness of the field of communication science within the social sciences. The Mexican academic has argued that the hegemonic concept of communication of our time and society, summarized in the idea of diffusion or the exchange of messages, has been put into crisis from within, as well as from outside the academy (FUENTES NAVARRO, 2005). Meanwhile, Sánchez Ruiz (1992) maintains that communication is not a science, nor is it a discipline, but it is an object of study, in which all communication processes are

immersed in a culture, in a socio-historical context and as social researchers, the approach to communication must come from the place of borders and intersections (GARCÍA CANCLINI, 1999).

The creative wealth of Latin American communication studies has promoted the broadening of the object of study of communication, which has been revealed for a long time, exhibiting collective realities and concerns about society and the media. Processes that involve rethinking the link between thought, knowledge and academia. Martín-Barbero (2010) affirmed that the global connection freed the space for the encounter between marginalized masses and cultural productions, while Canclini (2015) emphasized that “modernization has diminished the role of traditional and popular worship in the symbolic market in as a whole, but it does not suppress them” (CANCLINI, 2015, p. 22).

On the other hand, it is witnessing the development of relationships between “new”, hybrid and “traditional” media and the presence of information technologies that promote new cultures and social habits, floods the digital universe with interfaces and platforms – new forms of participation in the field of circulation, construction and transformation of the contents of network culture and the disappearance and crisis of the idea of text, author and reader.

Authors such as Antonio Pascuali, Luiz Beltrao, José Marques de Melo and Jesús Martín-Barbero have built a theoretical and elastic mesh to think and rethink Latin American communicational thinking. Mediations have been described in the work of Jesús Martín Barbero, Andreas Hepp, Freiderich Krotz, Sonia

Livingstone and Nick Couldry, the pioneering works of Eliseo Verón, and the fragmentation of the field by Raúl Fuentes Navarro. This exposes the condition of dialogue that Latin American communicational thought has with other perspectives.

Waisbord (2019) has recently argued that communication studies are a fragmented field and that, as a result of its roots in various disciplinary traditions, it is based on fluid intellectual boundaries without a theoretical or analytical center. It affirms that communication studies are a subsequent discipline and that it is impossible to transcend fragmentation and specialization through a single project of intellectual unity, since what unites communication studies is an institutional architecture of academic units, professional associations and magazines, a place of engagement shared by a common body of knowledge, questions, and discussions.

There are multiple ways of conceiving and thinking about communication as a consequence of the progressive atomization of the field. Communication and its multiple meanings as an object of study crossed by different disciplines (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ, 2002) and we recognize that communication is not a science, but rather an "object of study" (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ, 2002, p. 25) that has brought together a series of knowledge, a set of crossroads with different directions with multiple forms and dynamic borders (SCHRAMM, 1972). This series of knowledge grouped under the name of information and / or communication sciences are exposing a high instability and heterogeneity (WOLF, 1987, AGUIRRE, 1999)

Scolari (2008) highlights that "the territory of mass communication theories is traversed by a web of theoretical models, methodology and particular dictionaries impossible to encompass in a single discourse" (SCOLARI, 2008, p. 33). Communication can also be understood as a set of exchanges from which identities, norms, values are processed, interests are articulated, knowledge and powers are accumulated and legitimized (MATA, 2006).

### *5.1 Communication episteme*

Regarding the epistemological status of communication, Múnera has expressed that "the meaning that has taken the most force is that of the trans and interdisciplinary field of knowledge of the human and social sciences" (MÚNERA, 2010, p.12). Communication begins to be woven and recognized as a vital space, as multidimensional and complex processes, as a place of hinges, from which to dimension and study territories in the transnationalization processes in the emergence of cultural identities, placing the accent not only on the media but in mediations (MARTÍN BARBERO, 1987).

We conceive communication (we should speak of communications, communicology?) as an object of study crossed by different disciplines, a field that appears as integrated by the intersection of theories and methods, as a space for meeting and searching for the original, of assumption of complexity and the constant search for paradigmatic transformations, seeking to abandon the rigidity of the instrumental nature of institutionalized conventional research, to the theoretical articulations and new search strategies in diverse and asymmetric spaces, which are also places

from which to promote our shared reflection and self-reflection. This requires new efforts and exercises, understanding as Schelesinger (2002, p. 20) states that “the lack of clear discipline has been its great strength”.

Researchers from Latin America have had to stand on the side of those who celebrate the interdisciplinarity and fragmentation of the field, since they see in it a disruptive element that would differentiate communication from other “disciplines” and gives it broad methodological freedom. Waisbord (2019) looks suspiciously at the benefits of hyper specialization and fragmentation, but at the same time expresses that reconstructing a communicational “vase” (using “vase” as a metaphor), which in reality never existed, is now impossible.

Rizzo (2010) argues that this idea is inserted in the debate about the autonomy and disciplinary entity of communication, which has its origin in the sixties, in the reflections of authors such as Schramm and Peters. Communication is constituted in a multidisciplinary and multicultural terrain, intentional, present in social relationships and promoter of diverse understandings. The existence of textual conglomerates produced and designed elsewhere, which are then inserted, messages that refer to others and are triggered in a symbolic continuum (MATA, 1996). Gómez (2013, p. 7) although “the communicative does not have an existence in itself, as an autonomous object, but linked to another series of objects”. That is, communication and the sciences that deal with its phenomena are interdisciplinary (GÓMEZ, 2013).

Waisbord (2019) has coined the concept of “institutional globalization” as a culture that affects

faculties and events and that describes the majority and decisive presence of researchers from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany and neighboring countries. The Latin, European and American, African and Asian world, with the exception of the countries that have direct connections with the Anglo-Saxon group, are in a marginal situation. Waisbord (2019) affirms that this situation ranges from the hegemony of English, to the epistemological differences that limit the dissemination of these works. The poor insertion of the thinking of Latin American communicators in the main international publications of the field and the inbreeding of regional publications itself, allows the creative voices of the region to not gain light among the multiple communities of communicators.

Livingstone (2016, p.6) has pointed out that the communicational field goes beyond traditional mass dualism and interpersonal forms of communication to encompass new interactive forms of network communication, whose influence can be traced in multiple spheres of modern life and where it appears that "everything is mediated", this action represents a historically significant change. In the era of dominance of the media and social media, it is necessary to critically examine the processes of redefining the role, forms and possibilities of mediated communication, designing a new sustainable paradigm with social and economic development. It is the establishment of new relationships between technologies and social practices inscribed in a new culture, characterized by hyper mediations, multimedia and new forms of interactivity.

Modern media have promoted imaginaries, ways of seeing the world and thinking, and a set of monocultures. The monoculture of scientific knowledge discredited all alternative knowledge, the idea of linear time, the naturalization of hierarchical differences, that of the logic of the dominant scale and the monoculture of capitalist productivity (DE SOUSA, 2005).

Communication emerges in the 21st century as a set of problems, interweaves, themes, concerns that arise from social phenomena. The concepts that they interweave can be understood as an infinite network of meaningful exchanges carried out by people, a process that permeates social life. Communication is also a social phenomenon, an object of study and an interdisciplinary field of knowledge.

We must conceive of communication and its multiple meanings as an object of study crossed by different disciplines (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ, 2002) and we recognize that communication is not a science, but rather an “object of study” (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ 2002, p. 25) that has brought together a series of knowledge and knowledge, a set of crossroads with diverse directions with multiple forms and dynamic borders (SCHRAMM, 1972). This series of knowledge grouped under the name of information and / or communication sciences are exposing high instability and heterogeneity (WOLF, 1987, AGUIRRE, 1999). Communication can also be understood as a set of exchanges from which identities, norms, values are processed, interests are articulated, accumulated and legitimizing knowledge and powers, it is inevitable to recognize it as a privileged terrain for the construction of meanings of

social order, which will compete with each other to become hegemony (MATA, 2006).

An academic discipline is constituted in a historically formed branch of knowledge, which is progressively recognized and becomes an object of research in higher education institutions by professors called academics. The disciplines with a greater tradition are more defined than the new ones and the knowledge is recognized by academic publications where the results of research processes are exposed. We can understand communication from a broad perspective as the set of exchanges that constitute the discursive network of a society. This network is woven by the meaning-producing practices of social agents (individuals, institutions, companies, etc.) that are expressed in discourses (MATA, 2002). Greimas highlights that "communication is just a series of misunderstandings" (GREIMAS, 1996, p. 3).

Marques de Melo, a Latin American communication scholar, promoter of Latin American studies in communication, reviewed in 1999 the contributions of the Latin American communication scientist Luiz Beltrão de Andrade de Lima (1918-1986). In the Brazilian and Latin American intellectual scene, Beltrão is seen as a paradigmatic figure, since his name is associated with Folkcommunication, a discipline that integrates the universe of Communication Sciences in Brazil. Luiz Beltrão promoted the conceptual bases of what is known as folkcommunication and thought that popular demonstrations, activated by agents of information of facts and expression of ideas, had as much communicational importance as those that were disseminated by the mass media. His interest was his

passion for popular culture, for the working classes, and his sensitivity to understand the daily life of the impoverished sectors of society. He discovered that modern mass communication processes coexisted, in the Brazilian Northeast, as pre-modern communication phenomena and that popular communication vehicles or folkcommunication, as he preferred to call, primitive or artisanal, acted as mere relays or decoders of unchained messages by the mass communication industry (MARQUES DE MELO, 1999). We also owe Luiz Beltrão his broad conception of journalism, today absent in many universities.

### *5.2 Vital Space, Negotiation and Enclaves*

Communication begins to be woven and recognized as a vital space, as a multidimensional and complex process, as a place of hinges, from which to dimension and study territories in the processes of transnationalization and the emergence of cultural identities, placing the accent no longer on the means but in mediations. We conceive communication (we should speak of communications, communicology?) as a conceptual matrix crossed by different disciplines, a terrain that tries to know itself integrated by intersections of theories and methods, the assumption of complexity and the constant search for paradigmatic transformations. An intercross, an enclave as Barbero calls it (1987), who seeks, in the midst of his frustrations, to abandon the rigidity of the instrumental character in the theoretical articulations, in the search for new strategies for the recognition of diverse and asymmetric spaces and spatiality, from where to promote our shared reflection.

John Durham Peters (1986) more than three decades ago observed as main topics the institutionalization of the uses of information theory and self-reflection as institutional apologetics. According to Fuentes Navarro (2009), what took place was a negotiation on the theoretical scope of the academic territory when reflecting on the fate of information theory.

The relationships, synergies or integration between communication and culture have been pointed out for quite some time. Culture and society are two faces of the same reality. Communication cannot be thought without referring to social culture. Schmucler (1984) highlighted that the displacement of the borders of any discipline that is constituted as such, gradually widens its limits, leaves its reduced area that impoverishes it and seeks new horizons in the celebration of what Schmucler called the binomial formed by the words communication / culture, not communication and culture.

We consider then, that it is impossible to speak of communication without referring to culture. If culture and communication permeate all processes of social life, the question is how they can be examined in isolation. Approaching culture allows us to face issues such as mixtures, changes and stability over time, coherence, integration and disintegration, and borders. Communication studies born in the Latin American region have highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of this field of knowledge, its construction based on objects, which can be viewed by many disciplines. Communication is also allied to education and cannot be separated since they are affiliated in theory and in practice (GLANDER, 2000).

Rizzo (2010) argues that this idea is inserted in the debate about the autonomy and disciplinary entity of communication, which has its origin in the sixties, in the reflections of authors such as Schramm (1975) and Peters (1986). According to Schramm (1975, p. 56) "communication is not an academic discipline, in the sense in which physics or economics is designated, but rather a crossroads discipline in which many passes, but few those who stay".

Peters (1986, p. 528) has emphasized that "*communication has come to be defined not conceptually but administratively. Each department, school or university recreates the area according to its own image*" Eduardo Vizer (2005, p. 33) highlights that "communication can be considered the concrete and objective manifestation of the permanent processes of reconstruction of the different contexts of reality that we build and cultivate in everyday life."

Communication is constituted in a multidisciplinary, fragmented and multicultural terrain, intentional, present in social relationships and promoter of diverse understandings. Gómez (2013) has indicated that "the communicative does not have an existence in itself, as an autonomous object, but linked to another series of objects" (GÓMEZ, 2013, p. 3).

Raúl Fuentes Navarro (1998) has pointed out the triple marginality of science in the Latin American context. These three assumptions refer to the position and hierarchy of science with respect to the presuppositions of science in the first place, the position of weakness of the social sciences vis-à-vis the other sciences in the second place, and the fragility and weakness of the field of communication science within the social sciences. The Mexican

academic has argued that the hegemonic concept of communication of our time and society, summarized in the idea of diffusion or the exchange of messages, has been put into crisis from within as well as from outside the academy (FUENTES NAVARRO, 2005). Sánchez Ruiz (1992) argues that communication is not a science, nor is it a discipline, but it is an object of study. He points out that "communication is (or should be) a privileged object of practically all social or human sciences and / or disciplines, since there is probably nothing human or social that cannot be better understood without taking into account communication between humans" (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ, 1992, p. 10)

Rizo (2011) provides us with a definition that attends to several aspects as "Communication is the basis of social relationships. Communication processes involve, before anything else, interactions between different subjects who, for the sake of understanding, establish links in the world of everyday life" (RIZO, 2011, p. 362).

Silvio Waisbord proposes going beyond the theoretical niches and provides a broader view of the fragmentation of the field of communication studies that encompasses its methodological, theoretical, thematic and institutional aspects, while not forgetting the collateral effects of digital mutations and the processes of globalization in this field of research "fragmentation is the result of the confluence of various factors. The multidisciplinary genealogy of the field has been an important cause. Communication was multidisciplinary before multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary became important trends in academia (WAISBORD 2019, p.179.

Different currents of thought have sought to explain the object of study of communication with multiple edges such as the social phenomena arising from the media, the transformations in the form of relationship between people through the irruption of communication technologies, productions in communication derived from social changes, the social values imposed by the media and the different perceptions of reality and theoretical-philosophical approaches that were developed through the different modes of human communication.

It is demanded to examine and attend to the new more flexible, regional and global dynamics that stimulate scientific creation and make sustainable human development viable. The plurality and diversity as two concomitant phenomena, of a research culture calls us to an unavoidable internationalization of science, which helps researchers from all fields and specifically from the communicational field not to be alien to their social environment. In this idea, the interdisciplinarity of science and study objects appear as the new research paradigm that seeks to overcome disciplinary myopia and builds a new object. Science and research must sustain freedom and cultural pluralism and in times of plurality, differentiation and fragmentation in different fields, it is essential to perceive and know that the communicational model that a globalized society proposes to us is not the only one and that we can from our region think and build an alternative one, recognizing relationships and influences of the knowledge-power knot.

### *5.3 Latin American Research*

Communication research promoted in the last twenty years has permanently expanded the boundaries of communication studies, which should be understood as a vital space – as a frame of inevitable apprehension – in the development of studies on communication and subjectivities, on transnationalization processes, identities, popular cultures, internationalization of cultures and education, on the meanings of citizenship in a globalized world, on the weaknesses and strengths of transnational movements, placing the accent on “mediations” and advance from them towards a utopian pragmatism (SÁNCHEZ RUIZ, 2002) without denying their original characteristics of that theoretical hybridism and methodological juxtaposition but adding the empirical relationship of intercultural relations, the self-reflective critique of disciplinary strengths (Garcia Canclini, 1999), the critical hermeneutics of Santos De Sousa and Ilya Prigogine's idea of non-deterministic chance.

The processes of fragmentation and hyper-specialization in the field of communication have generated two antagonistic positions between researchers and communication theorists; the consequences of disciplinary fragmentation are mixed. Some lament the fact that fragmentation means the dilution of well-defined and agreed-upon core elements that define any discipline. Others celebrate fragmentation because it loosens the straitjackets of disciplinary theories and methodologies and pushes academics into interesting lines of research (WAISBORD, 2019, p. 22).

Within the so-called postulates and hypotheses of communication, tendencies that seek the delimitation

of their borders coexist, characteristic of disciplinary sciences with limits and borders, but that also seek constant specialization and the recognition of a theoretical nucleus and other movements that try to agree on minimal interdisciplinary areas, both seeking legitimacy within the social sciences (AGUIRRE, 1999). In the second effort, we integrate by approaching communication as a multidisciplinary and multicultural field.

It has progressively ventured into new fields - which also constitute emerging fields of work for communication professionals - involved with the use of educational technologies, conducting research for companies, civil society organizations and government bodies, the construction of an informative and cultural offer of the media with the school, audience analysis, the elaboration and permanent reflection of new ideas and the development of Latin American communicational thought.

The new paradigm of communication-web provides new possibilities to rethink communication and new areas of work for communicators. Recent advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have allowed people to create and publish in various forms and different media, content and messages that are generally disseminated through the Internet or used in educational spaces. These possibilities allow new forms of expression and participation in different areas, and are promoting a participatory culture, not only supported by individual creation but also in informal relationships that unite novices with experts. This new network culture has been described as Web 2.0.

## 6. Perspectives and Meta-perspectives

Research in Latin American communication should not forget the community sense of Latin American life, the strength of our cultures, solidarity and respect for the diversity present in Latin American societies against the tendencies of exclusion. As a possibility, the social researcher can, from the empirical analysis of cultural relations and the self-reflective examination of disciplinary strengths, approach the study of culture from the place of borders and intersections (GARCÍA CANCLINI, 1999). It is about creating alternatives to exercise the will for social change by creating rebellious subjectivities, recognizing the asymmetries of power and the ability to create alternative thinking of alternatives (DE SOUSA, 2005).

Mattelart (1997) considers that the intention of having to work for an alternative model to the globalized communication model is a challenge for Latin American researchers. It is about building a model that refers and is transparent to local complexities, regional cultures, subjects and their particular environments, creating and developing alternative alternatives. A challenge not without its difficulties, but urgent and no less inspiring that should be accompanied in the Latin American academic field by the completion of fourth-level university courses articulated between research institutions and universities aimed at training qualified researchers (AGUIRE 1999).

Faced with the fragmentation and hyper specialization that reigns in the field of communication, Waisbord (2019) proposes to assume this state of fragmentation and learn to live with it

and bets on the concept of post-discipline, reviewing concepts such as trans, post, multi, inter- disciplinarity, concepts with which the Argentine researcher Scolari has worked. Hyperspecialization is a phenomenon inherent to the very construction of science and the development of knowledge.

In addition, Scolari (2019) adds that of bi-disciplinarity, as a construct modified by Miquel de Moragas in the 1980s. Waisbord defines post-disciplines as “areas of intellectual commerce” where researchers with a common language meet and they build theories about common problems and questions. If we could recognize the communicational field as an atomized, quantum scientific field, as a place of spatiality with thousands of epistemological microparticles colliding with each other - as Scolari (2019) highlights -, we could think differently, knowing that quantum mechanics has been characterized by addressing the behavior of sub-atomic objects that are so small that we cannot perceive them with sight, touch, or hearing.

From the successive frustrations and the growing atomization of communication studies, it is time to launch into the search for broader visions in communication understood as a complex, interdisciplinary, a-circular, undisciplined process (QUIROGA, 2002) that permeate others processes of our daily life, to the formulation and conquest of new concepts, to the recognition of present subjectivities, chaos and complexity, and the permanent construction of innovations and transformations in the pompously called information sciences.

This gets closer to what De Sousa Santos (2005) discusses in the search for the construction of a new

theory of history, capable of expanding the present in order to make room for the plurality of social experiences, wasted and ignored by the monocultures of knowledge and knowledge dominant practices. We need a new attitude wrapped in a utopian pragmatism (FUENTES NAVARRO, 1998) that recognizes a certain autonomy to the different communication sciences from simple disciplinary interpretations, to the assumption of the chaotic complexity of the interdisciplinary and in consideration of the problems that oppose (AGUIRRE 1999) and that implies the responsibility of responding to the vocation of serving Latin American society, is the new challenge for intellectuals and communicators, to the development of the Latin American postgraduate course in culture and communication that makes the academic world restless and turbulent of scientific research in communication developing, towards new crossroads and frontiers (QUIROGA, 2005).

Faced with the media events that invade local environments, the machinic devices that permeate social life and the so-called new media with their new expanded applications in communication networks that help to build new narratives or transmedia narratives, a thoughtful attitude is necessary. It is about developing critical thinking about communication and culture from macrosocial perspectives, discovering the multiplicity of meanings of hegemonic discourses and imaginary, recognizing the production of meanings of social subjects challenged by power, struggles and social inequalities, of generating and articulate theoretical developments with a critical and liberating perspective and reexamine the meaning of cultural studies, framing them in the material-historical context of popular cultures assuming Latin American traditions.

It is about redesigning and building a utopian pragmatism that expresses the best hopes of the present and the future.

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