Media Consumption Patterns and Communicative Competence of University Students

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Abstract:

The concept of media competence arises in the last decade to describe audiovisual education levels of citizens, the interaction of individuals with complex media environments, and the effects of the screens and their influences on audiences. This paper analyzes media consumption patterns and perceptions of university students to certain stimuli emitted by the screens (Internet, social networks, and television), recreating an overview of the uses and acceptance that recipients give to the media content they broadcast. In that sense, the results of this work allow to establish a relationship between screen consumption patterns of university students and the media contents. This research was conducted in a Mexican university. First, an exploratory questionnaire was applied to a stratified probabilistic sample, which helped to interpret how audience uses the new communication artifacts. Then, a second structured questionnaire was applied, to demonstrate the dynamism of current communication processes in contemporary societies, where the role of media is fundamental for public life, society, culture, and even a major element in private life of the subjects.

Keywords: Audience; Communication; Communicative Competence; Media Consumption; Media Narrative; Mexico; Perceptions; University Student

Résumé:

La question du concept de la compétence des médias se pose depuis les dernières décennies pour décrire le niveau de l'éducation audiovisuelle des citoyens, l'interaction des individus avec l'environnement complexe des médias et les effets des écrans et leurs influences sur les audiences. Cet article analyse les standards de consommation des médias et les perceptions des universitaires face à certains stimuli émis par les écrans (Internet, réseaux sociaux et télévision). Recréant ainsi une vue d'ensemble de l'utilisation et de la réception que les bénéficiaires donnent au contenu des médias qu'ils programment. En ce sens, les résultats de ce travail permettent d'établir une relation entre les standards de la consommation de l'écran des universitaires et le contenu des médias. Cette recherche menée par une université mexicaine élabore premièrement, un questionnaire exploratoire appliqué à un échantillon probabiliste stratifié, lequel aide à interpréter comment le public utilise les nouveaux objets de communication. Par la suite, un deuxième questionnaire structuré a été adressé, pour démontrer le dynamisme des processus courants de communication dans nos sociétés contemporaines, où le rôle des médias est fondamental pour la vie publique, la société, la culture, et est, de plus, un élément majeur dans la vie privée des sujets.

Mots-clés: Audience;   Communication;   Compétence   communicative; Consommation des médias; Étudiant universitaire; Mexique; Narratif des médias; Perceptions

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Introduction: Screens, Consumption, and Communication Competence[1]

Hypermodern society, invaded by images in grotesque labyrinths of sound, luxury, consumption, and trends imposed by media, is characterized by a proliferation of digital, urban, technological, and consumerist phenomena, with which learns to see, but is also blinded by; its sails in the perfect illusion of the visual seas, almost psychedelic, generated by screens, globalization, and the use of technologies.

Per se, the screen is precisely a new line of coexistence between the new media discourses. To Ferres Prats, "the current profusion of images and sounds is causing the birth of a new kind of intelligence. The new man, with a predominance of the right hemisphere, understands mainly in a sensitive way, letting all his senses vibrate" (1994: 26).

The term screens, has emerged from the study of media narratives, which operating ways are the digital screens: cell phones, PCs, laptops, cinema, television, tablets, smart devices based on informatics systems, and Internet connection.

However, the study of these new communication devices comes from the interest in understanding the rapid rise of media and their interaction with audiences. Different communication theories have tried to understand such phenomena; from the effects they make in society to the role society assumes to modify the visual narratives. In that sense, Gutierrez, Valero, and Pereira (2006) state that only when the individual becomes aware of the emotions

experimented through screens, he or she will be able to capture the true message such emotions propose. The message is invaluable when communication becomes experience, and the spectator reflects his reality, interests, and desires, to the recognition of his world in the media narratives.

From this perspective, there are two research objectives: to know the media consumption guidelines of a population section in order to establish relationships between preferred television formats or social media—being this last one the most used—and the objectives made in each medium to generate reflections and critics, among other qualities.

The hypothesis is that new media—computers, cell phones, etc.—are modifying the communication scene of 21st century. The old media are facing problems that not only matter to them, but that generate evolutionary waves in the whole system, helping maintain social media up to date, and make dependencies of information between the individuals.

Such evolution is present in human links made through Internet. The audience has a starring role in messages production and construction of meanings, as Carballar (2012) mentions. Social media are online platforms where the content is made by the users, allowing them to interact with others in a simple, easy, and even entertaining way. According to the same author, the average Facebook user has around 130 friends, spends more than 55 minutes a day on it, accessing its content through mobile devices, and is a member of 12 groups of interest. This provides a problem line about the use complexity of new media and their possible repercussions in political, cultural, and social spheres.

But, what is media competence? It is a derivation of the concept screens that arises in the last decade to determine the citizens' levels of audio-visual education and the subjects' interaction with complex media environments, as well as the effects screens are generating in new consumers, all from a complex vision, where the new EMIRECs (transmitter, receiver, and transmitter producer) emerge. This concept indicates the communication dynamism to overcome the traditional banking model[2]. The EMIRECs have certain qualities that translate into a new way to see the communication process, in which audiences assume not only reception but also messages production.

According to Aparici (2007), the receiver stops being a spectator to become a producer, or a message transmitter. The EMIRECs model is based on a horizontal and democratic communication approach, as it happens in everyday life. In a real communicative relationship, there are continuous interactions between receivers and transmitters, interchanging these roles dynamically.

Study of the Screen Impact

This paper rejects the hypothesis that screens have an automatic impact on audiences. Current users give meanings to messages actively, not in the basic model of passive recipients. Citizens have their own interpretations before receiving the messages. Pecheux (cited in Morley, 1996) called this phenomenon "interdiscourse" where subjects experienced a multiplicity of discourses, some of them relate to the others, harmonize, contradict each other, and/or depend on the individuals' cognitive schemes to be rejected or accepted by audience.

This research parts from the fact that media competence is contextual to subjects, it is marked by the historical moment in which the viewer stands before the TV, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, movies, or video games. Most of the messages received by society are through screens, generating perception and reception processes that are very different from those made generations ago.

There are a variety of discourses because users are not monothematic subjects. They interact in various institutions, are part of political parties and sports clubs, and come from a diverse range of social backgrounds. Their interactions reflect communication flows that underlie relationships with everything around them, besides the intra and interpersonal communication mechanisms.

Thus, to talk about media impact or effects, is to investigate the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour that humans assume by using the media, although they have little immediate influence on their attitudes, they may produce other important effects. Particularly, they seem to have great influence in defining what issues are important to people and their discussion terms (Hartmann & Husband, 1974).

For McLuhan (1992), all of the western scientific models are linear, logical, and sequential, and for the electrical age use, communication models of the brain's right hemisphere are required to demonstrate the immediacy of information that moves at the speed of light. The image and the sensory data proceed simultaneously, where the objective of any technology is the side effect in the formation of a new subject's culture.

Therefore, the research of communication processes to study effects, reception, or communicative competence, requires dynamic methods of inquiry. Per se, audiences are active components of contemporary communication processes: "[t]he consumption or reception of the screens message is thus also itself a moment of the production process in the larger sense, though the latter is predominant because it is the point of departure for the realization" (Durham & Kellner, 2006: 34).

The study of audiences has had different epistemological and historical stands over time. However, the interdisciplinary constant has marked most researches, for example: Ang's (1985) *Dallas*, Morley's *Nationwide Audience* (1980) and *Family Television* (1986), and Loll's (1990) *Study of Family TV View-work on Children Viewing*, among others, have marked important references for the characterization of viewers profiles, setting scenarios on how individuals construct interpretations through complex social and cultural processes, based on the life stories and cognitive schemes of each subject.

To investigate the subjects of this paper, a hypothesis was made saying that the interpretation schemes of the subjects are mediated by their socio-cultural profiles, so their communicative competence—which is the way they interpret, send, and build screens messages—is intimately linked to their role in their environment. So, a group of students from a Mexican University was selected to test this hypothetical approach and three research questions were outlined:

    1. What are the media consumption patterns of university students?
    2. What level of communicative competence do university students show, according to their professional profiles?
    3. What do university students think about the content of media, and what kind of formats seem more artistic to them?

Methodology and Sampling

The research starts from a systematic construction of the screen users' qualities and the way they interpret the audiovisual narratives to give meanings to the social world, tightly related to their life stories. It proposes the idea that there is a direct relationship between screens users and media content, according to their cultural, educational, and social backgrounds. However, they are not always aware of it; individuals do not clearly understand the communication process in which they are immersed. This work also establishes relationships between areas of study, for example, students of engineering or areas related to social sciences.

In a first step, an exploratory survey is made to know which shows were the most consumed by college students—both undergraduate and graduate—and the media they resorted more to in their every-day life. Then a structured face-to-face questionnaire was applied with ten controlled variables. Therefore the methodological route can be summarized as follows:

1. Inquiry of primary sources for the construction of the analysis units.
2. Exploratory questionnaire applied to students from a Mexican University.
3. Structured questionnaire applied to a stratified sample.
4. Research report according to the previously structured analysis units.

The sample is made of undergraduate and graduate students; the study case is Universidad de Occidente, public institution located in the State of Sinaloa, Mexico. The research was conducted in 2012.

This institution has a graduate population of 18 students in the Doctorate of Administration Sciences program, 49 enrolled in the MBA, and 54 Master of Public Politics students. Regarding undergraduate degrees the university has 388 students in Business Administration, 210 in Tourism Administration, 616 in Communication Sciences, 163 in Accounting and Finance, 178 in Law and Social Sciences, 96 in Government and Public Administration, 619 in Marketing, 251 in Psychology, 194 in Computer Systems, and 247 in Industrial and Systems Engineering; having a total of 3083 students enrolled.

Stratified sampling was chosen because—from the point of view of the selecting method—it allows to work or study each stratum separately. The formula used was:

$$n = \frac{k^2 N p q}{e^2 (N - 1) + k^2 p q}$$

***Figure 1*: Distribution of Students by Program**

Stratum	Population Size	Sample Size	Program
I	619	18	BA Marketing
II	616	19	BA Communication Sciences
III	639	19	BA Business Administration BA Psychology
IV	651	20	Industrial and Systems Engineering BA Tourism Administration BA Computer Systems
V	558	17	BA Law and Social Sciences BA Accounting and Finance BA Government and Public Administration Master in Business Administration PhD Administration Sciences
Total	3083	93	

For this research, a sample was selected with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The proportional allocation criterion for the sample size of each stratum indicates that larger-sized samples are assigned to larger-sized strata and smaller-sized samples to smaller-sized strata. One way to make proportional allocation is by assigning it according to the weight of each stratum.

Results

Consumption of Media Content and Audience NarrativePpreferences

In the sense of the subjects' normal routine to consume certain things, there is a remarkable relationship with rationality for selecting some TV shows according to their life stories. So, it can be seen that consumption of communication messages makes an impact in other areas of the audiences' lives, such as, fashion, eating habits, technology, etc.

Figure 2: **TV Content Consumption**

Degree and Program	Soap Opera	TV Series	Shows	Newscasts	Documentaries	Entertainment shows	Sports	Politics	Reality Shows	Movies	TV Magazine
PhD Administration Sciences	0%	50%	10%	60%	70%	25%	20%	50%	0%	25%	10%
Industrial Engineering	0%	80%	0%	20%	20%	90%	70%	5%	40%	55%	20%
BA Business Administration	10%	70%	20%	23%	29%	55%	47%	28%	39%	80%	0%
BA Tourism	30%	68%	0%	38%	18%	44%	38%	10%	29%	78%	10%
BA Communication Sciences	39%	61%	18%	81%	22%	59%	39%	39%	45%	79%	21%
BA Accounting and Finance	17%	38%	12%	23%	40%	33%	54%	25%	13%	59%	0%
BA Law and Social Sciences	19%	39%	4%	67%	32%	15%	31%	60%	30%	49%	0%
BA Public Administration	24%	41%	8%	68%	13%	55%	20%	81%	22%	49%	0%
BA Marketing	0%	39%	0%	70%	39%	82%	12%	8%	19%	39%	0%
BA Psychology	29%	33%	21%	17%	39%	35%	3%	10%	19%	59%	2%
BA Computer Systems	0%	41%	0%	10%	12%	51%	62%	10%	0%	71%	0%
MBA	9%	19%	0%	82%	12%	20%	39%	57%	0%	65%	3%
Master's in Public Politics	11%	28%	12%	88%	31%	47%	18%	68%	5%	57%	3%

Figure 2 shows that Entertainment shows are the ones the audience interviewed in this research consume the most; however, the sample also shows some differences. Groups that have certain cultural and academic codes present consumption patterns shared between their members. For example, psychology students are interested in TV content related to fiction stories such as, soap operas, TV series, movies, etc. On the other hand, subjects studying industrial engineering or computer systems prefer sports, TV series, entertainment shows, etc.

In this manner, it can be assumed, as Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood (1990) argue, that social groups select and establish through collective agreements—which are sometimes unconscious—the meanings that rule their lives, rituals, consumption patterns, and the way they will behave to certain phenomena.

We cannot deny that we live in an era of fractures, heterogeneity, and segmentations; but in this great diversity, there are codes that unify us. For example, *Figure 3*—which refers to the use of social media—shows a tendency to prefer certain media, according to the academic formation each one possesses, but this segmentation is getting thinner. Most people use two social media apps: Facebook and Twitter.

It is important to mention that this research data were collected in the middle term of 2012, so certain social media apps such as Instagram, were not mentioned by the sample because there was not much knowledge or use of them in Mexico.

Figure 3: Use of Social Networks

Degree and Program	Facebook	YouTube	Twitter	Messenger Skype	My Space	Tumblr	Hi5	Badoo	Others
PhD Administration Sciences	90%	100%	40%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Industrial Engineering	100%	100%	30%	60%	10%	3%	24%	0%	5%
BA Business Administration	98%	100%	20%	70%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
BA Tourism	89%	90%	10%	40%	0%	0%	2%	0%	15%
BA Communication Sciences	100%	100%	70%	85%	19%	0%	6%	0%	0%
BA Accounting and Finance	100%	100%	34%	79%	4%	2%	0%	0%	0%
BA Law and Social Sciences	100%	100%	20%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
BA Public Administration	97%	100%	29%	58%	3%	9%	2%	0%	0%
BA Marketing	100%	100%	70%	30%	0%	0%	2%	0%	10%
BA Psychology	80%	90%	10%	69%	0%	0%	4%	0%	5%
BA Computer Systems	100%	100%	70%	68%	17%	12%	14%	2%	9%
MBA	70%	95%	12%	35%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Master's in Public Politics	79%	100%	18%	55%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

It is evident that, despite of the group segmentations mentioned before, the use of social media and other digital screens—such as smartphones, tablets, videogames, etc.—contributes to global society, which guides us to a market dynamic, and makes an impact in the most diverse spheres, economic life, and even personal life.

The fact that social media are shaping the consumption patterns of contemporary society cannot be denied, the combination of technology to give subjects the capability to be photographers, video producers, writers, or bloggers, is creating new communication perspectives in subjects, or at least new mechanisms for citizens to be informed and be part of an increasingly complex environment. According to *Figure 4*, when using social media, users look not only to be entertained, but also to learn about topics of their interest.

Figure 4: Purposes of Using Social Media
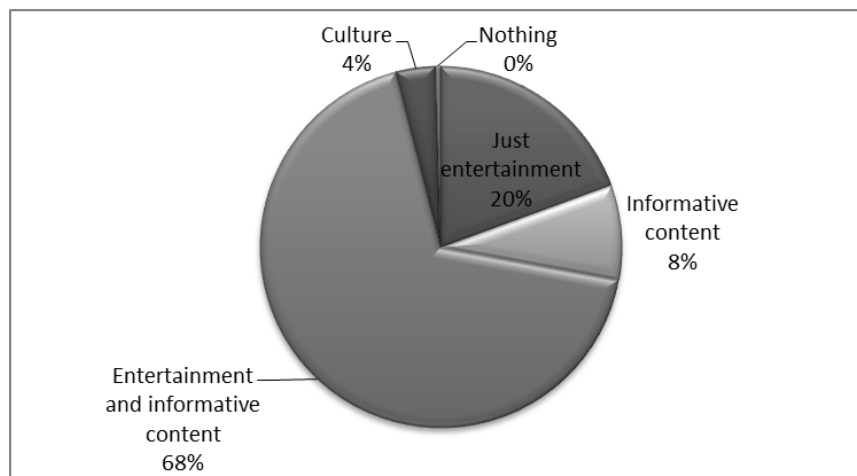
Such purposes have generated a common concept: inclusion. So far, these research findings show not only what are the consumption patterns of students from a Mexican University—a case that could be a benchmark for other places, especially because of globalization—but that the use of media is becoming more democratic, open, and inclusive, in spite of the social group one belongs to or the codes shared with other members of the community.

The contents in TV and social media are different, though. Subjects prefer to use TV for entertainment, while in social media, information, and entertainment are both equally important for the users.

This indicates, on one hand, that the way individuals relate to media is rapidly evolving, but, on the other hand, variations are being created in media precisely because of their relationship with audiences, which makes media consumption an increasingly complex field of dynamic and historic study.

Internet and TV

This research has confirmed what is already evident: we are a society connected through different media. Communication messages are faster and reach more audiences, but also seem more ephemeral.

During recent years, communication sciences experts have worried about one very specific question: will Internet defeat TV?

The answer seems clear. It is easy to see that new media, and even media narratives emerge in innovative ways through online video channels, social media, and others, but the role TV plays in contemporary society is still important. In fact, concepts such as interactivity and transmedia explain how these artifacts use tools from other media to face new generations of citizens.

Even when Internet offers a world of possibilities for subjects, TV is still a powerful, productive, and entertaining narrative machine. It tells stories about the political, cultural, and social environment, and uses people's wishes and magnifies them in order to attract such people. Even if it does not influence their behaviours directly, it creates an impact that affects the consumption systems, fashion, trends, etc. But, what does the audience think about the relationship between Internet and TV?

The answer can be polarized. There are the ones who still use TV to be informed but think that Internet is a democratic medium, less manipulative; and there are those who think they cannot be manipulated by any media. Such premises are shown in *Figures 5* and *6*.

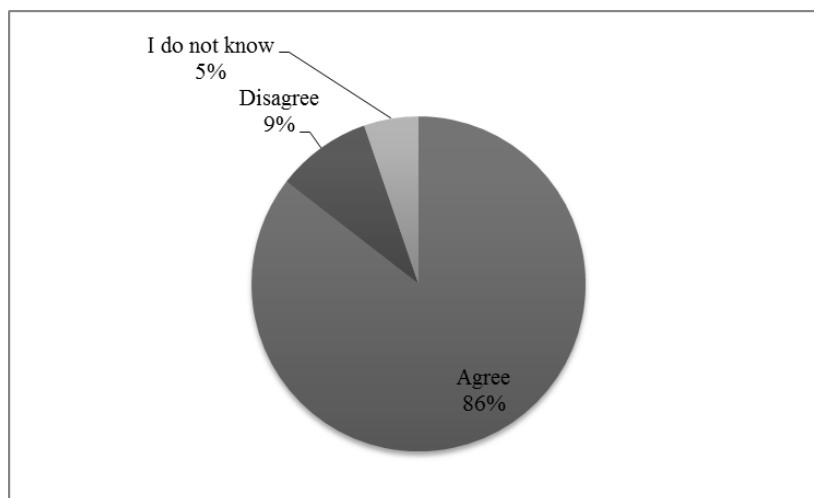### *Figure 5*: Audience Perception on Internet as a Better Provider of Information than TV

Figure 6: Perception on Internet Being the Least Manipulative

Perception	%
I agree	38
I disagree	20
Both are manipulative	35
None of them is manipulative	7

In both figures, a kind of critical awareness can be perceived about the role students consider media play in their lives. The information provided by the communication artifacts is analyzed from the credibility that such students give to each medium. In that sense, Internet is better positioned than TV regarding the topic of media manipulation.

Maybe one of the characteristics that contribute to the Internet's success is its ability to combine other media, including TV.

> Internet makes contents of all the media. What started as a medium which content was only text, expanded during the to include images and sounds, and, on the threshold of the new millennium, offers extended phone services (Internet telephone), radio (RealAudio) and TV (RealVideo).

> (Levinson, 1999: 5)

For some authors, this is the reproduction of the old media, in the new ones it is called "remediation" or "media ecology", as Marshal McLuhan (1996) proposes when stating that media are recycled, acquiring new senses with the arrival of new ways of communication.

***Figure 7*: Perceptions about TV Losing its Power to the Internet**
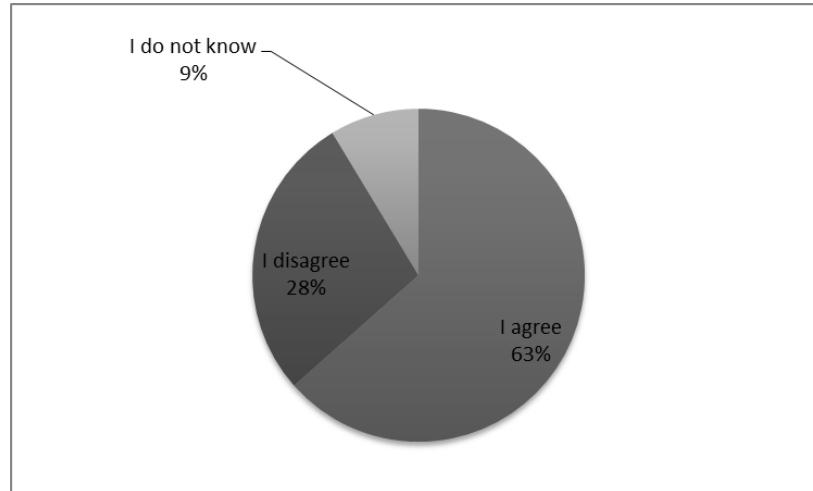
Subjects do not always perceive such change or remediation, because—as shown in *Figure 7*—audiences think TV is losing power to the Internet. Acknowledging that the population to whom the survey was applied is very young can reinforce this. Perhaps results would have changed if the survey had been applied to older people with different social and cultural conditions.

TV is still using its narrative charms to attract different population sectors. Offering sports shows, politics programs, entertainment segments, or talent competitions, among others. It establishes consumption patterns, not only about media, but also of commercial matter, and also helps to build symbolic social imaginary about what is art and beauty. That is why, even when audiences think they receive more information and are less manipulated by the Internet, they still consume TV contents to make sense of certain human needs, such as the appreciation of another subject's talent or the admiration for certain singers.

***Figure 8*: Aesthetic Perception**

| TV Program	%
Más deporte (Sports show)	3
La jugada (Sports show)	2
Pequeños gigantes (Talent show)	31
Abismo de pasión (Soap opera)	6
Cachito de cielo (Soap opera)	3
La academia (Singing competition)	10
Venga la alegría (Magazine show)	4
Clío (History program)	7
Hoy (TV Magazine)	5
None	29

For example, *Figure 8* represents the perception subjects have about TV contents they think are aesthetic or artistic. Even when, a preference for sports contents, TV series, and soap operas had been perceived—which is explained in *Figure 2*—such preference changes when they are asked about what programs they consider aesthetic, and their answers were singing competitions and talent shows. So, their perception of aesthetic is directed to music content, and the other formats are discarded for this quality.

It is perceived then, that individuals select media to fulfill different purposes. For example, TV causes passivity for being at the window of the world, but also reflects dynamism of fiction and immediacy of the already-processed content.

On the other hand, Internet, being a more democratic medium, implies greater complicity with users. For example, a computer does not search for contents by itself; it requires searching orders or instructions for topics, videos, music, or any other content, which gives it a commitment capability with media citizens. That is why individuals consider the Internet to be a more democratic medium than TV, because it gives them more freedom of choice, search, and content production, through these digital states, video production or participation in online forums, where they can receive feedback from other users.

Media competence lies in the objective to know the audience preparation, not only to receive media contents, but also to edit, produce, play, and share them. So, a series of questions was asked to inquire about the individuals' knowledge of copyrights.

Figure 9: **Audiovisual Production Competence**
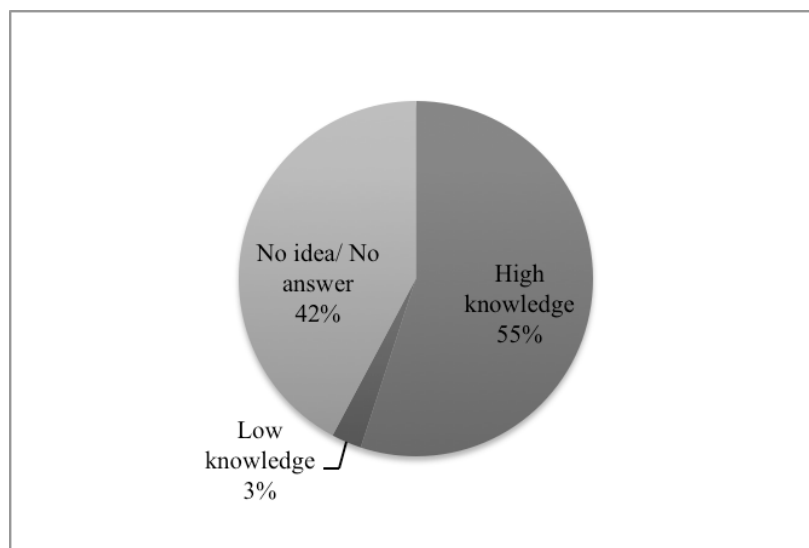
More than half of the sample knows how to produce and upload a video to social media and share it with other users, but there is ignorance about legal interference in which they could fall into by doing so, such as: copyright, insults or defamation of other users, wireless signal theft, etc. This shows that, even if young people think social networks and based-on-Internet media provide more options to be informed about certain topics in everyday life, the interests of the recipient are still determinant to consume this or that content. Whereby, the premise of communication that audiences use media according to their personal and cultural wishes, and their life stories, still remains for Internet and new screens, and they are not interested in receiving politics or economy contents on TV, neither do they want them on Internet. They do

not know about legality for their social life, so they do not intend to apply it to their life in their digital communities.

Figure 10: **Legal Consequences of Internet Use**
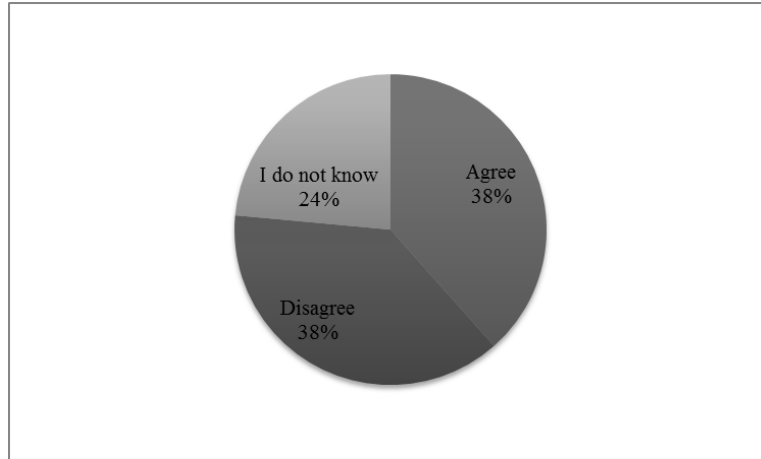
Far from being enemies, TV and Internet complement each other. Digital processes are not exclusive to one medium; they bring changes to the other communication artifacts, which also make changes in the way the audience participates in communication processes of 21st century. In other words, media studies should not be limited to relationships between media or their ecology, but must include the new consumption patterns they generate, the habits they create, the new ways of doing politics, and even, the collateral damage they cause.

Soap Operas and Advertising

Media consumption—through advertising campaigns and soap opera—is often made through fiction. Stories try to attract the recipients' interest with projects that are similar to their reality. Soap operas also have social use. They have been considered the most commercially successful TV production formats in Mexico and Latin America, which makes them ideal products for advertising investment.

Soap operas are commonplace in social imaginary. These artifacts reflect social values, promote behaviours, and create stereotypes, but also help in the construction of social relationships. They are a cultural place, an encounter between the audience's wishes and their mechanisms to legitimize such interactions. That way, soap operas are defined as dramatization spaces that poeticize reality, invite to dream, and activate social imaginary.

However, if we analyze soap operas' effects in society, it is possible to see that studies about them started to emerge at the beginning of 1980s; a time in which social scientists focused on the qualitative characteristics of the narrative or fiction in relation to real life aspects.

In that sense, the objective was to ask the sample about the narrative aspects that are more interesting to them, which influence their preference for one or more soap operas.

***Figure 11*: Narrative Preference in Soap Operas**
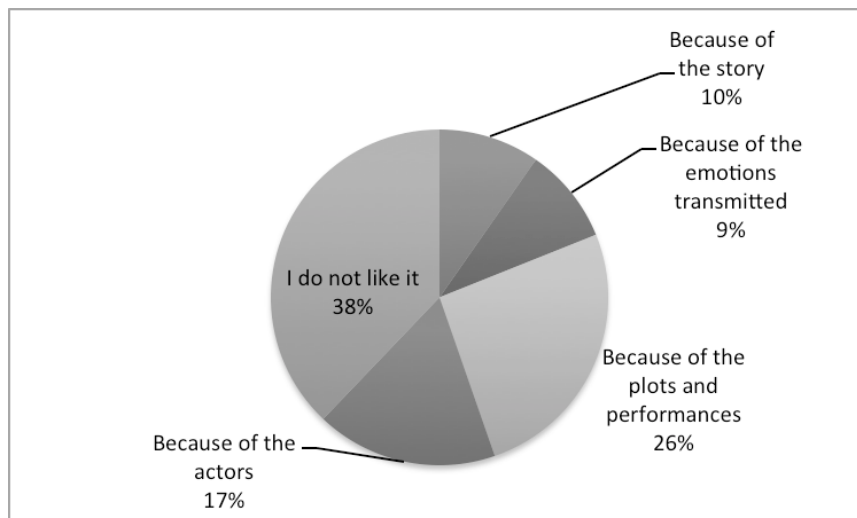
Audiences show more interest in aspects related to the cast and acting, although a high percentage said they do not consume this form of TV.

　　　Preference for this kind of narrative aspects explains the importance of audiovisual elements as factors that contribute to imagination, identification with certain gender and consumption behaviours, etc. Such imagination is also present in advertising, which use soap operas as vehicles to reach audiences. However, advertising is in almost all media formats, because commercialization is constant in our systems. Selling and buying seem like life philosophies for the society of knowledge, as called by some.

***Figure 12*: Products Consumed Based on Advertising Campaigns**
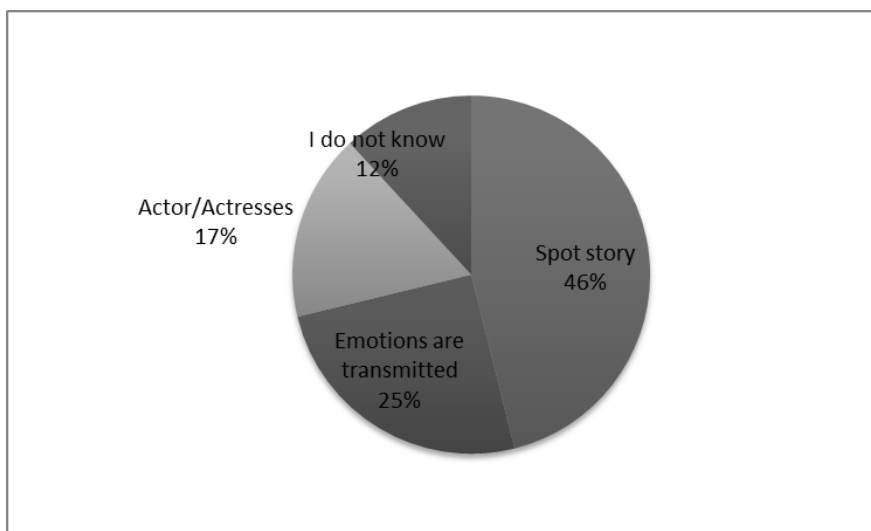
In *Figure 12*, subjects are open to answer and express what stories and emotions advertising campaigns transmit to them, through online video channels, TV, social media, etc. and the determining elements to choose a product.

Therefore, soap operas and advertising campaigns will keep looking to be influential to their audiences through spontaneous awareness promotion. Stealthily approaching, trying to make people cry, laugh, think, but above all, to sell, so the subject forgets metacognition and follows their instincts which are skin deep, and more convenient to the dominant economic system.

Conclusions

The results show that communication competence is a complex process of adaptation, understanding, and acceptance of media content, highlighting the ability of subjects to critically own the media through cultural contextualization mechanisms specific to each individual.

Communication competence is determined by the academic training of the university students. Students of areas related to social sciences and humanities, as well as administration and advertising, are the ones having greater discernment about contents broadcasted by screens. This enables them to appropriate them to their everyday life in a more discriminated way than the others.

University students associate art to media content related to the promotion of singing and talent shows, such as "pequeños gigantes", among others. So, there is a deep gap between the aesthetic vision of those who are being trained for a career and what they see on the screens.

The findings show that screens help to install topics and set priorities, as can be observed in Trending Topics that mark trends weekly, about what people think and consume in social networks. The media messages become audiovisual stimuli to reaffirm presence in the social world. No message in the screens can be considered as innocent. However, audiovisual narratives issued by social networks, television or other media, not only communicate their evident content, but also contain latent messages by implication, assumption, or connotation.

The audience—according to their personal wishes—set the direction the message will have. TV shows such as *hoy* (magazine TV show) assume that their audience coexist as families, some others such as *Tercer grado* (political talk show), are based on the premise that their viewers are subjects of a political community or are interested in the country's democratic contexts, and therefore, are members of a social and political context. Others seem to be destined to individuals with particular tastes, hobbies, etc., such as Twitter, a social network that allows users to express comments or complaints, market needs, social issues, and judgments on situations in the political context.

Media acceptance levels and interpretation capabilities enable the audience to build the term, "communicative competence". Therefore, one can speak of uses and perception when users give different meanings to messages and operate them according to their every-day life. In other words, it is not a linear message, nor it is broadcasted by a screen and decoded by the audience, but it is read differently according to other environments, family, university, other circles, and the cultural baggage the subject has. For this reason there is a diversity of answers according to each student's professional training.

The new media, as social networks, are not divorced from traditional communication devices. On the other hand, they are connected, share contents, and audiovisual narratives, and operate through the remediation concept.

From these results, it can be assumed that there are certain social or demographic factors that interfere with personal interpretations of the audience, perhaps a university student is likely to have more critical capabilities to interpret the messages of the media—because of their

academic training about social processes or abstract structures for understanding of academic contents—than a housewife or a labourer with no formal education.

Therefore, it is important to conceive university students not as a mass of individuals, but as a complex amalgam of subgroups that—even though they have aspects in common such as the objective of completing a university degree—have their own frameworks that play an important role within the limits in which the individuals operate.

Notes

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2   According to Kaplún (1998), the banking model is related to the traditional and instrumentalist communication process. In other words, it flows through mass media and audiences receive the contents with little feedback capability, or are adopted in a very behavioural way.

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