

# JOURNALISM RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

a historical review and prospects  
for the production of guidance  
manuals

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## ABSTRACT

As a scientific area Journalism has been beset with the scarcity of specialized manuals for guidance regarding methodologies and procedures adopted in research practices. During more than a century only one book of this type was published in English. At the beginning of this millennium with the growing institutionalization of Journalism as an area for studies, we have identified the appearance of new reference works for Journalism research.

In this article we will first present an evaluation of these manuals (from the pioneering ones up to the most recent ones) from the viewpoint of structure, content, types and methodologies discussed. Secondly, we intend to indicate aspects which we consider to be relevant for the legitimatizing of the more systematic production of guidance manuals for scientific practice and for the consolidation of Journalism research.

**Key-words:** Manuals Methodology; Research Methodology; Research in Journalism; Types of Methodology

## INTRODUCTION

As an autonomous scientific area, Journalism has existed for little more than a century, although we have records of specific studies since the XVII century in Germany and in Portugal (GROTH, 1948; SOUSA, 2007). The production of guidance manuals for research goes back an even shorter time. The first book of this type in the United States, *An Introduction to Journalism Research*, published by Ralph Nafziger and Marcus Wilkerson, dates from 1948, having been republished in 1968. In Brazil, Professor José Marques de Mello of the Communications and Arts Faculty at the University of São Paulo (ECA/USP) was the author in 1972 of the oldest manual: *Estudos de Jornalismo Comparado* (Studies in Comparative Journalism), which replicated the method proposed by the French researcher Jacques Kayser in *Une semaine dans Le Monde. Etude comparée de 17 grands quotidiens pendant 7 jours* (1953) and *Le*

*Quotidien Frances* (1963).

During the long period of more than a century, in the bibliography in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and French, we have identified these works as rare examples of reference works capable of offering parameters for the practice of scientific Journalism research, with the predominance of manuals devoted to research of the much broader and more diversified scientific field of Communication Sciences. Only at the turn of this millennium, in conformance with the international legitimizing of Journalism studies, we have encountered a more systematic publishing production of specialized manuals such as *Metodologia da Pesquisa em Jornalismo* (Journalism Research Methodology) (2007); *Global Journalism Research* (2008) and *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* (2009).

In this article which we have prepared for this dossier of the *BJR*, we will first evaluate these manuals (from the pioneering ones' to the more recent examples) from the viewpoint of structure, content, types and methodologies discussed. Secondly, we intend, as this work's specific contribution to the field studies, to indicate aspects which we consider to be relevant for the legitimatizing of the more systematic production of guidance manuals for scientific practice and for the consolidation of Journalism research. The article is divided into five parts: 1) Introduction, 2) The merits and the omissions of the pioneering works, 3) The new landmarks as a scientific discipline, 4) The challenges for the production of manuals and 5) Conclusions.

### **The merits and omissions of the pioneering works**

Despite the interval of more than 30 years between the appearances of the two, the first manuals which we have identified as pioneering works in the United States and in Brazil, *An Introduction to Journalism Research*, published by Professors Ralph Otto Nafziger from the University of Wisconsin and Marcus M. Wilkerson, from Louisiana State University, in 1949, and *Estudos de Jornalismo Comparado* (Studies in Comparative Journalism), published by Professor José Marques de Melo from ECA/USP in 1972, have much in common. Instead of systematic textbooks with the definition of Journalism as a scientific area with its own status, with an objective and specific methodologies, each manual in its own way presented a collection of essays and articles with the results of studies conducted, with the charting of the existing bibliography on various topics relating to Journalism, in addition to listing the lines of research considered to be priorities.

First of all, we need to reconstitute the spirit of the time in that

period in order to comprehend the importance of these works. Until then Journalism had very little academic legitimacy, being considered as a course with a vocational characteristic, disconnected from the process of knowledge production (ROGERS, 1994, p. 19). In both cases those responsible for the manuals were disciples of the founders of Journalism as a scientific area in the United States and in Brazil and who took upon themselves the herculean task of consolidating Journalism as a Social Science. Ralph Nafziger earned his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin in 1936, in the Doctorate Program in Journalism created by Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, in 1927 (AVERY, 1990, P. 296). José Marques de Melo, the first doctor with a thesis on Journalism in Brazil, in 1973, studied and developed his scientific initiation activity with Luiz Beltrão, the dean in the institutionalization of systematic research among Brazilian professors in the 1960s in the Catholic University of Pernambuco.

Until the launching of the books by Nafziger and Wilkerson and by Marques de Melo both in the United States as well as in Brazil, no scientific parameter for Journalism research existed. The scarce localized bibliography was divided between essay-type theoretical studies, memoirs of old journalists and technical manuals for teaching of the professional practice. Nafziger's book appeared at the precise moment in which, after remaining for 14 years, 5 of which as research director of the Journalism School at the University of Minnesota, the author, then 53 years old, returned in 1949 to Wisconsin, in the position of director of the Journalism School. The book by Marques de Melo, who in 1968 at the age of only 25 had become the head of the Journalism and Publishing Department in the recently-created School of Communications and Arts at the University of São Paulo, in which he taught the subjects of Comparative Journalism and Journalism Research Theory and Method, presented the results of the first research works conducted on a scientific basis in Brazil, some of them developed by the Casper Líbero Journalism School. Previously, Marques de Melo had replaced Luiz Beltrão as professor of the Journalism Course at the Catholic University of Pernambuco and directed the Scientific Research Department at the Information Sciences Institute.

While they had much in common from the historical significance viewpoint, there was a basic difference between the two works with respect to the purpose behind these initiatives. The work organized by Nafziger in partnership with Wilkerson, which had been prepared by the Journalism Research Council of the Association of Accredited Schools and Departments of Journalism, an entity founded by Willard Bleyer in

1917, fulfilled the institution's interest in promoting and extending the application of research methods to the study and practice of journalism (NAFZIGER, 1949, 05). The work published by Marques de Melo represented the personal effort of the main leadership of what would become in the period from 1970 to 1990 the most important Journalism School in Brazil, and intended to contribute to the development of studies concerning professional practice, offering appropriate methodological guidance for the implementation of scientific research in Journalism schools (MARQUES DE MELO, 1972, 11).

The collection published by Nafziger and Wilkerson contains, in addition to the introduction by Nafziger and a conclusion by Frank Luther Mott, professor at the University of Missouri, texts by professors who were actively engaged in the practice of research at Missouri, Stanford, Northwestern and Illinois Universities, and by researchers linked to the Columbia Broadcasting System in fields of interest such as History and Legislation and in the application of methods such as Statistics, Interview, Content Analysis and Experimental Research. The book by Marques de Melo, more than just a survey of the various methodologies utilized, as revealed by the work's title, adopts one of them as a model and presents three more theoretical chapters devoted to the study of comparative journalism in Latin America, the press as the subject of scientific study in Brazil and research of the press in Latin America, and three chapters with the results of empirical research works with the application of the method developed by Jacques Kayser from France: comparative study of the São Paulo daily newspapers, comparative study of five illustrated weekly magazines and comparative study of violence in Brazilian journalism.

An analysis of the works' structure indicates that the difference in purposes becomes clearer in *An Introduction to Journalism Research* with the inclusion of an introductory text by Ralph Nafziger which, even without a more systematic discussion in the other chapters, raises, as we will see below, basic issues in the definition of the subject, in the conception of scientific research, in the need for professionalization in the procedures adopted in studies of the area and in the absolute necessity for the articulation of research with the instruction in the Journalism schools. In the introduction by Marques de Melo, which seems more to be a preface, at no time is there any definition of Journalism as a scientific area, nor – as Nafziger did with propriety – is there any listing of aspects considered important for delimiting the practice of field research. An explanatory note concerning the nature of the book deals with the origin

of the essays, previously disseminated in specialized periodicals, and the objectives of their publication in book form.

In the very beginning of the short eight-page text, after stating that Journalism research is a field of activity undergoing constant progress and evolution, Nafziger argues that the scientific work in the area cannot be limited to descriptions or explanations of how things are done or how the press, radio and movies operate, but should also include historical studies, examine critically the social aspect as well as the market value of communication practices and services, and explore the relations of the communication media with other fields of study (NAFZIGER, 1949, p. 1). And a little further along Nafziger maintains that the most significant development in the study of Journalism has probably been the recent progress in the use of new methods and procedures deriving from disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology and political science for comprehension of its problems. Based on the possibility of the utilization of scientific methods for resolving problems involving professional practice and research, Nafziger concludes that the question is: which are the sciences that are contributing to Journalism? how can the sciences help Journalism to perfect its methods and practices? and how could Journalism provide continuity in its relations with science? And Nafziger himself answers that the development of Journalism research led gradually to the incorporation of the four stages of scientific method: 1) search for the facts, research by observation and experiment; 2) formulation of theories to explain the data; 3) analysis of the material and 4) testing the theory and checking the data.

The manual's pre-established task of functioning as an exploratory probe which would be capable of suggesting areas and methods for study, trends and possibilities of future research, in a certain way, as recognized by Nafziger (op. cit., p. 6), influenced the collaborators' choices and the option for discussion of methodologies, with the quantitative techniques dominating. From the beginning to the end of the collection, Nafziger (op. cit., p. 7) emphasizes, certain presuppositions are essential, for example: a) the communication media cannot be studied disconnected from the public and from its problems (DEWEY, 1927) and b) the social complexity requires a broader perspective of what constitutes the field of study and the problem of Journalism. In the modern world, Nafziger concludes, the test of the value of Journalism studies involves the practical aspect or the utility of the knowledge obtained for the media and for society because research cannot be disconnected from the human beings who operate or who are affected by the communication media.

As we have seen, while not discussing the merit of defining Journalism as a science with its own status, Nafziger's introductory text postulates the need for the use of methods established by the social and exact sciences and deals with crucial points which must be considered in the application of these procedures to Journalism studies. And, which appears to me to be a more important aspect, and which as we will see below would be partially emulated years later by Marques de Melo, the continuous mutation of Journalism in the societies of that period led Nafziger in another direction, concluding that the use of quantitative methods focused on content analysis of the media and on audience response would involve an initial step in the development of the Communication Sciences<sup>2</sup>. A new science, different from Bleyer's original proposal focused on Journalism, and which counted on the direct contribution of Nafziger, who published in 1958 with David White, the author of the gatekeeping theory applied to Journalism, the *Manual Introduction to Mass Communication Research Methods*.

In the book by Marques de Melo, the project for constitution of a science of Journalism, albeit in a unsystematic way, is found in several of the essays in the initial part of the work, starting with the first one in which he introduces the methodological model proposed by Jacques Kayser. In the opening paragraph, Marques de Melo highlights the work done by Kayser, who conceived a set of methodologies based on the dissection of newspapers, on their critical and comparative analysis, capable of propitiating the creation of a science of the press (MARQUES DE MELO, 1972, p. 17). Based on studies of the press carried out by sociologists, psychologists and educators, with visible contributions from the social sciences, Kayser sought to perform research which would make possible comparative studies making clear the structural characteristics of the periodicals, especially of daily newspapers in different languages in the same country.

While the collection of articles by Nafziger and Wilkerson compiled texts on several research methods, the work by Marques de Melo prioritized the exposition of the comparative method, and at the same time sought to demonstrate how the press would constitute a subject for scientific study in Brazil. And in this case, contradictory as it may seem, Marques de Melo who undertook a meticulous task in order to survey studies of the press as a source, instead of following along the path of Jacques Kayser betting on the autonomy of the journalistic field, what he was doing was to reveal that as a subject, Journalism was susceptible to serving the purposes of the most varied sciences, from

Sociology to Psychology, from Geography to History, from Anthropology to Linguistics. In the second part of this chapter, Marques de Melo turns to the Journalism studies which he calls scientific, identifying the work of Professor Pedro Parafita Bessa, from the Philosophy Faculty at the University of Minas Gerais, published in 1952, as the first quantitative research in Brazil.

In the second part of this chapter, Marques de Melo credits Luiz Beltrão with the merit of founding the pioneering center for scientific journalism research in the Catholic University of Pernambuco in 1963. In that period, whether it was due to the worldwide dissemination of Wilbur Schramm's proposal or whether it was due to the growth of the relations with CIESPAL (MEDITSCH, 1992), the Institute founded by Beltrão came to life with the appearance of the new Science of Communication, receiving the name of *Instituto de Ciências da Informação* (Information Sciences Institute). The association with the communication field did not prevent in any way the development of Journalism research. The first project consisted of the performance of research on the reflections of the lack of daily newspapers in Recife during the printing workers' strike and the second dealt with the study of crime reporting in the Recife newspapers. Marques de Melo, who participated as Beltrão's assistant, considered this case to be the first regular activity in the initiation of scientific Journalism in Brazil.

In the third part of this chapter and in chapter three, the mutation of the subject of Journalism to the Communication Sciences becomes increasingly clear. From Comparative Journalism the discipline moves to Comparative Communication and the bibliographical survey covers 100 titles published regarding Comparative Communication in Brazil or by Brazilians overseas. If the title of the third chapter still maintains the indirect link to Journalism – Press research in Latin America. The role of CIESPAL – precisely in the opening topic of the text – Communication Research – this type of relation disappears. Marques de Melo himself, in the third and last part of the chapter, maintains that one cannot analyze press research, disassociating it from the context of communication research, it being a natural association, due to the interrelationship of the communication media in the society.

The main limitations of these two seminal manuals result from at least four complementary factors: 1) the simple fact of the nonexistence of specialized literature concerning research methodology until then indicated the difficulties for the institutionalization of Journalism as a autonomous scientific discipline; 2) the books are clearly works involving

the introduction of methods and procedures and neither of them represented a manual prepared for the purpose of teaching journalism research; at the most, they shared research experiences. Commenting on the book by Nafziger and Wilkerson, Avery (1990, p. 299) evaluates that in general the best that can be said is that it was a beginning, a collection of six essays on various aspects of Journalism research; 3) neither of the two books took the form of a manual structured for the teaching of Journalism research, with a concrete definition of Journalism as a scientific discipline, delimitation of its study subject, demarcation of a theoretical chart of reference and enumeration of the methodologies employed for the scientific study of this subject; 4) at that time there was increasingly clear tension between Journalism as a science with its own status, devoted to the study of the professional practice as Willard Bleyer maintained, in contrast to the Communication Sciences, more concerned with communication research as a broader human phenomenon, which went beyond the scope of the communication media, as proposed by Willbur Schramm (ROGERS, 1994, p. 18-19).

### **The new landmarks as a scientific discipline**

At the turn of this millennium, in conformance with the international legitimizing of Journalism studies, we have encountered a more systematic publishing production of specialized manuals such as: *Metodologia da Pesquisa em Jornalismo* (Journalism Research Methodology) (2007); *Global Journalism Research* (2008) and *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* (2009). If in the first part of this article we saw that there was an interval of time of more than 30 years between the publication of *An Introduction to Journalism Research* and *Estudos de Jornalismo Comparado* (Studies in Comparative Journalism), we perceive that now, on the contrary, Brazil led the way in the publishing of a reference manual, with researchers associated with the country, before overseas colleagues did the same. As in the case of the two pioneering works, these three manuals have much in common: they are collections of essays produced by well-known academicians in specific areas or with experience in specific methods, developed based on the actions of researchers articulated with scientific associations.

The book *Metodologia da Pesquisa em Jornalismo* (Journalism Research Methodology), a collection organized by Márcia Benetti from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and Claudia Lago from Anhembi Morumbi University in São Paulo, both of them directors of the Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers, has as its purpose to help researchers and supervisors, postgraduate and undergraduate,



in the articulation between theory, questioning, subject and method, specifying methods and cases of methodologies applied to this field of knowledge: “the reader will find at first articles which, when talking about specific methods, discuss their pertinence in relation to their application in Journalism research. Following this, texts are presented which detail their application in research. Finally, there are texts which describe methodologies of applied research”. (BENETTI; MACHADO, 2007, p. 18). Divided into three parts, 1) Methods, concepts and intersections with Journalism; 2) Application of Journalism research methods and 3) Examples of research works and their methods, the book also offers an introduction and preface by the dean of Brazilian researchers, José Marques de Melo, author of the first Brazilian manual.

When we begin to read this manual, which brings together works by 15 collaborators from 12 different institutions in Brazil, the United States and Portugal, we immediately note the organizers’ alert that the preparation and execution of a research work involves a complex process of theoretical construction, methodological search and particularly technical choices which always require an epistemological posture: “In the case of research works in the field of Communication in general and of Journalism in particular, marked by multidimensionality, it is absolutely necessary to go deeply into the methodological sphere of the research works, at least because our subjects studied are frequently multidisciplinary and are supported by methodologies formatted in other disciplines” (BENETTI, LAGO, 2007, p. 17).

Less than a year later there appeared *Global Journalism Research, Theories, Methods, Findings, Future* published by Martin Loffelholz from the University of Ilmenau in Germany and David Weaver from the University of Indiana in the United States. The collection, which is structured in six parts: 1) Introduction to journalism research; 2) Theories of Journalism Research; 3) Methodology and Methods of Journalism Research; 4) Selected paradigms and findings of journalism research; 5) The Future of Journalism Research and 6) Conclusions, contains works presented in the Journalism Research in an Era of Globalization symposium held in the city of Erfurt in 2004 by the Media and Communication Institute of the Technical University of Ilmenau with the support of the Journalism School of the University of Indiana in the United States and of the Journalism Studies Division of the German Communication Association.

*Global Journalism Research* is described by the authors, without false modesty, as a compendium which for the first time deals with four relevant aspects in a single book: 1) it presents the main contemporary

theoretical issues, taking into consideration that journalism research needs to transcend national or cultural parameters; 2) it describes comparative research methodology and the main instruments for conducting empirical studies (investigation, content analysis, observation); 3) it provides a real perspective by presenting relevant paradigms and discoveries of journalism research in Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and Latin America; 4) Finally, it raises questions about how globalization affects journalism research as a discipline and challenges the traditional paradigms based on the concept of nation-state and its borders.

The most recent and last of the three manuals, *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* of 2009, published by Thomas Hanitzsch from the University of Zurich in Switzerland and Karin Wahl-Jorgensen from the University of Cardiff in the United Kingdom, bears the official seal of the Journalism Interest Study Group of the International Communication Association. The manual charts the growth of Journalism studies, exploring the study of theories and suggests an agenda for research works in the international context. The volume is structured around theoretical and empirical questions and covers knowledge of journalistic organizations; content of the news; journalism and society and journalism in a global context. Each chapter explores concepts, thinkers and texts; historical context; state of the art, methodological questions, merits and advantages of the studies and directions for future research works.

Instead of a discussion of methodologies, at least of those most utilized in Journalism studies, as in a certain way occurred in the other two works of this period, in this manual throughout the various chapters a review of the reference bibliography in each one of the topics, categories of analysis or concepts chosen by the editors as essential for the comprehension of the studies in this research field. Not even in the only three cases in which specific methodologies are discussed: agenda setting, audience and history, the methods themselves are defined, their epistemological matrixes discussed and the procedures adopted for the development of this type of scientific activity are presented in a systematic manner. In apparent contradiction of this predominance of the exposition of concepts or of the review of the reference bibliography, as can be seen from the preface written by the authors, the manual claims to have the purpose of offering a perspective of the various theoretical, epistemological and methodological traditions (HANITZSCH; WAHL-JORGENSEN, 2009, p. XI). All the other 27 chapters are devoted to topics such as teaching, research, journalistic routines, gatekeepers, genre, objectivity, sources, convergence, news values, discourse, ideology, classification, narrative,

commercialization of the news, citizen journalism, democracy, public relations, ethics, legislation, regulation, reception, globalization, public service, coverage in times of war and peace, comparative studies and de-occidentalization of Journalism studies.

Of these three manuals, *Metodologia da Pesquisa em Jornalismo* (Journalism Research Methodology) is the one which has a more balanced proposal, with a structure in three parts, each one of them devoted to various complementary aspects, ranging from concepts and intersections with other areas, through the application of methods, up to the mention of examples of the use of these methods, although it is much less systematic than the other two works, lacking an explicit conception of Journalism as a scientific discipline and with a disparity among the different chapters, some being more solidly based than others, something very frequent in these collections, always dependent upon various collaborators, each one trained in a specific scientific tradition. As we saw previously when we analyzed the pioneering works by Nafziger and Wilkerson and by Marques de Melo, none of the books incorporates the classic form of the research manual, with definitions of science, subject, methodology, problem formulation, hypothesis construction and project development, adopting a hybrid structure, with the predominance at times of conceptual discussion, at others of the application of the methodologies or of the presentation of examples of the use of the methods and sometimes existing with tension between two models, without succeeding in assuming from the viewpoint of the content an identity appropriate for this type of reference work.

The ambiguity in the structure of these manuals results partially from the organizers' conception regarding the scope of Journalism research. From the beginning, in the times of Nafziger and Wilkerson or of Marques de Melo, it is obvious that scientific Journalism studies are dependent upon the use of methodologies derived from other scientific disciplines. Not even Willard Bleyer postulated that Journalism was a new applied social science. At most it would be a science which employed methodologies applied in the social sciences. Marques de Melo (1972) identifies psychology, anthropology, sociology, history, human geography, political science and linguistics as matrixes for Journalism research. Zelizer (2004) maintains as sources for Journalism research: History, Political Science, Language Studies, Sociology and Cultural Studies. "It is precisely this junction and articulation of different disciplines, with their own presuppositions, which makes obligatory a deepening not only with respect to the particular paradigms of what is intended to be

articulated, but also regarding the different methodological responses produced historically with reference to these parameters. And, if this premise is true, it is a fact that it is frequently not accompanied by a rigorous praxis...” (BENETTI; LAGO, 2007, p. 17).

When we compare the diversity of concepts, bibliographic references, categories of analysis and methodologies included in each one of these manuals, we see that although the degree of complexity attained by Journalism as a scientific discipline during the last 50 years has increased, in many cases the methodologies utilized are similar to the models conceived in the last century. If in the manual by Nafziger and Wilkerson (1949) we have identified six types of methodologies utilized (History, Legislation, Statistics, Interview, Content Analysis and Experimental Method), in *Metodologia da Pesquisa em Jornalismo* (Journalism Research Methodology) we have observed the use of 10 methodological applications, some of them being hybrid variations of established models such as that of the Study of Production Processes – Newsmaking, Interview and Content Analysis (History, Anthropology, Political Economics, Agenda Setting, Discourse Analysis, Content Analysis, Narrative Pragmatics Analysis, Newsmaking). *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* also includes two more methodologies: audience studies and observation studies, with at least one of them - observation studies – having as its matrix Anthropology or Newsmaking.

In this work which, as its title itself defines better than the preface and the publishers’ introduction, is a matter of a textbook on Journalism theories, two points deserve more detailed comments. For the first time in the reference bibliography on Journalism, concepts such as news values and production routines, highly dated, are subjected to a systematic criticism in the light of contemporary studies (BECKER; VLAD, 2009, p.59, HARCUP; O’NEILL, 2009, p.161). Nothing can have provoked more disastrous consequences for the comprehension of journalistic practice, especially in Brazilian studies, than the pacific acceptance of the theoretical presuppositions contained in the concepts of production routines and news values. In both cases, instead of utilizing reality to put these concepts to the test, in general the researcher adjusted reality to the limits of these concepts, constituting a vicious circle in which the more one researched, the less was known about the subject studied. In the second place, once again a textbook which postulates worldwide representativeness ignores important Journalism theoreticians such as the German, Tobias Peucer; the Spaniards, Aguinada, Lorenzo Gomis, Rodrigo Alsina and

José Luiz Martinez Albertos; the Italians, Carlo Sorrentino and Giovanni Bechelloni; the Cuban, Octavio de la Suaree and the Brazilian, Adelmo Genro Filho, among many others (MACHADO, 2006).

### **The challenges for the production of new manuals**

As we have seen, the rare manuals published until now with guidance for scientific Journalism research are deficient in various aspects since they have a hybrid structure, taking on a form which lies between the textbook on Journalism theories in which the main concepts in the area are presented, discussed and questioned and the book divulging the methods applied in scientific studies in the Journalism field, which summarizes some of these methodologies. The mere fact that we have so few manuals and that among those existing not one fulfills completely the functions which we have identified in the best examples of reference books of this type, as Avery commented in the article about Nafziger (AVERY, 1990, p. 299), indicates how immense the gaps in Journalism research are. The first challenge consists of comprehending that scientific practice presupposes the access to manuals capable of offering guidance on the nature of the discipline, of the subject of study and of the methodologies utilized to decipher its enigmas.

The universality of the phenomenon, the complexity of the theories, the multiplicity of authors and the diversity of methodologies make the possibility of the production of a manual or of a textbook which deals with all these aspects in a single volume completely impracticable. In a certain way the insufficient character of this model of manual which opts for the panoramic approach which passes quickly over the field without deeper access to any specific subject was pointed out perceptively by Ralph Nafziger himself, more than 50 years ago, stating that none of chapters of *Journalism Research* completely explained the matter (NAFZIGER, 1949, p. 6). Each contribution could well be expanded into a separate monograph, permitting a more complete treatment of the topic. As occurs in all the consolidated disciplines more and more, we must distinguish textbooks on theories from theoretical manuals on research methodologies, from didactic manuals for application of a specific methodology, from manuals on how to develop research projects. Each one of these types of manual has specific purposes and experience reveals that preparation of one which fulfills all the diverse functions of the multiplicity of existing models ends up leading to a task of Sisyphus, condemned to eternal failure.

The full institutionalization of Journalism as a scientific discipline

involves the systematic production of all these manuals and presupposes breaking with the research model based on the mere importation of methodologies conceived by other disciplines, with different purposes and frequently devoid of instruments adapted to the cognitive demands of the journalistic field and of the procedures necessary for identifying, characterizing, defining, classifying and systematizing the practice of Journalism as a subject of scientific knowledge. In the situation of a multidisciplinary subject of studies which draws the interest of researchers from any area of knowledge, regardless of any direct association from the professional viewpoint, Journalism can surpass the mere utilization of methods developed in other disciplines. As a scientific discipline with autonomous status which postulates its legitimizing in the world of science, Journalism must avoid applying methodologies from different areas because the specificity of the subject constructed by the researchers of each academic field requires the creation of its own methods (MACHADO, 2005).

In the multidisciplinary practice which characterizes the contemporaneous production of scientific knowledge, instead of importing uncritically methodologies and procedures from disciplines in the same or in other areas, it is up to the researchers, always in connection with the particularities of the subject studied, to invent, based on the instruments existing in the most diverse sciences, the methods required for carrying out the research work. As an applied social science which has the practice of Journalism as its subject for study, Journalism permits three types of research: technical, empirical and applied. The three are complementary and one frequently provides feedback for another. The tradition of the Human Sciences which predominates in Journalism studies has difficulty in recognizing professional practice as a legitimate subject of knowledge, even when it is a question of theoretical research, and rejects completely the possibility of applied research.

Without theoretical manuals in which Journalism is defined as an applied social science within the communication sciences which utilizes specific methodologies and procedures and in which the diversity in the construction of subjects (theoretical, empirical and applied) is guaranteed, the discipline will hardly receive the legitimacy necessary for establishing multidisciplinary research on an equal footing with the other sciences. The multidisciplinary nature of contemporary scientific knowledge requires, especially in an applied social science, the inseparability of the three types of research: theoretical, empirical and applied. Once these three types of research are legitimized from a technical point of view,

manuals can be prepared regarding methodologies and procedures applied to the different modalities.

Manuals on specialized methodologies in the case of theoretical and empirical research are still rare and in the case of applied research, totally nonexistent. In the wider area of communication sciences, good theoretical manuals (VASSALLO DE LOPES, 2001; SANTAELLA, 2001; IGARTUA, 2006, VASSALLO DE LOPES; BRAGA; MARTINO, 2010) and with regard to specific methodologies (ALTHEIDE, 1996; BUDDENBAUM; NOVAK, 2002; LINDLOF; TAYLOR, 2002; HAYES, 2005; RIFFE, 2005, DIAZ NOCI; PALACIOS, 2008) are increasingly common. Manuals on methodologies utilized in applied research are still awaiting the good will of the researchers in accepting this challenge, which we hope is stimulated by this article. In societies that are mediatized and constituted by technology without completing the knowledge process, which goes from the conceptual definition to the study of empirical subjects and culminates in the application, through innovation, a science never achieves full institutionalization (PINTO, 2005, vols.1/2).

Finally, it is worthwhile to mention two common mistakes in Journalism research which reinforce the urgency regarding our production of new manuals of the most diverse types, for guidance of those involved in scientific practices. The first is related to the incapability of differentiating, in the methodology, the theoretical reference chart which serves as a matrix for the methodological model adopted, from the procedures utilized in order to make operational the stages of the research (VASSALLO DE LOPES, 2001 p. 89 et seq.). In the theoretical studies, the researcher frequently reveals difficulty in constructing the theoretical referential which guides the research, and even more in presenting, defining and providing the basis for the techniques utilized in each phase of the work. The second has to do with the confusion, in part resulting from the historical tradition of the research works conducted in the Bureau of Applied Social Research by Paul Lazarsfeld, from 1940 to 1960 at Columbia University in the United States (ROGERS, 1994), between market research with the objective of identifying habits and attitudes (BUDDENBAUM; NOVAK, 2002), and applied research as a scientific activity for the development of techniques, technologies, processes, languages, formats and prototypes (MACHADO, 2006).

### **Conclusions**

After more than one hundred years of the institutionalization of Journalism as a discipline, we still do not have available good guidance

manuals for research practices on the level of the best works of this type in other disciplines, including the broader area of communication sciences. The legitimizing of Journalism as a scientific field depends on the production of good manuals, structured to attain the different objectives of the academic practices, ranging from theoretical manuals to manuals for teaching specific methodologies to manuals in the form of textbooks on Journalism theories. More than collections of works done by collaborators with varied profiles and very diverse scientific training, we need reference works capable of defining Journalism as a science, with a purpose and specific methodologies and autonomous status.

Of the various types of manuals, the textbooks on Journalism theories are increasingly more frequent (TRAQUINA, 1993; BERKOWITZ, 1997; BERGER; MAROCCO, 2006, 2008; BEER; MERRIL, 2008; TUMBER, 2008, 1997; ALLAN, 2009), although with an obvious predominance of the Anglo-European matrix, especially of the United States-United Kingdom-Germany axis. Manuals more devoted to the conceptual discussion of the discipline, which define Journalism as an Applied Social Science and journalistic practice as their subject of study, with the presentation of specific methodologies and for teaching the preparation of research projects, are still nonexistent or in a very small number. The teaching of Research Methodologies requires, in addition to textbooks on theories, which are essential for the researchers' epistemological basis and for the construction of the theoretical and methodological referential, the existence of the other types of manuals necessary for the preparation of projects and for the development of research works.

A universal phenomenon, with a multiplicity of authors and diversity of theories, increasingly more deep-rooted in all parts of the world, Journalism as an institutionalized discipline in the academic world presupposes the existence of these several types of manuals in order to guide the practices of the researchers. As a worthwhile suggestion, in the manuals of the future it should be made clear that Journalism, as an Applied Social Science, makes possible the construction of three types of subjects: theoretical, empirical and applied, permitting the development of theoretical research, which is the most frequent; of empirical research, increasingly more disseminated; and of applied research, until now very rare. The three types of studies are complementary, interrelated, with frequent feedback and in no way incompatible among them. It is up to the Journalism researchers to assume without any misgivings the specificity of the discipline, to be receptive to the multifaceted character of the subject and to produce high-level scientific knowledge.



## | NOTES

- 1 In this article, due to limited space, we will evaluate among the pioneering manuals only those published in the United States and in Brazil. In any case, having in mind the institutional character and the international dissemination of the methodology developed by Jacques Kayser, who worked for UNESCO and who had great influence in Latin America through CIESPAL, we believe that a more detailed analysis of Kayser's method would be appropriate in the future, especially at a time of globalization of Journalism research and of the resumption of comparative studies (HANITZSCH, 2009).
- 2 Proposal led by Wilbur Schramm, who founded the first Doctorate Program in Communication in the United States in 1943 at the University of Iowa and later the Doctorate in Communication at the University of Illinois in 1947.(ROGERS, op. cit., p. 29). Until then there were two Doctorate Programs in Journalism, at the University of Wisconsin in 1927 and at the University of Missouri in 1934.

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