

NEW TENDENCIES OF RESEARCH IN JOURNALISM

The Spanish case¹

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ABSTRACT Amongst the countries of the European Union, Spain has the longest tradition of teaching journalism at the university. A tradition that is shorter, however, than that of many Iberoamerican countries. With its gaze directed both at Europe and at Latin America, Spain occupies an advantageous position, but at the same time finds itself at a crossroads since in a short time the European countries must harmonise their university education systems, dividing studies into graduate and post-graduate levels (master's degrees, which did not exist before, and doctorates). This is a challenge that, in certain fields, such as research in cyberjournalism, the Spanish university must confront by establishing a dialogue and collaboration with neighbouring countries. In this paper we review the development of journalism studies in Spain, the academic associations and scientific journals on journalism and, finally, we refer to the key time in which we are living with the change in the university system.

KEY-WORDS Spanish journalism studies; cyberjournalism; Bologna Declaration.

INTRODUCTION

The situation of teaching and research in journalism in the Spanish university is truly a case that merits study, with its highlights and shadows, with the advantageous position it occupies in Europe (that is, in the European Union; the countries formally in the Soviet orbit, with Russia at their head, deserve a separate study), and also with respect to Latin America. While with the Old Continent it shares geographical position and, shortly, a certain unity in the system of higher education, with Latin America it shares both culture and language, a language that is widely spoken, the first tongue of over 400 million people, with all that implies: a huge publishing market, for example. In reality, I believe that

this affinity should be extended to include at least two of the Portuguese-speaking countries: Portugal and Brazil.

Nowadays, the situation of journalism in Spain, as with the rest of the academic disciplines, is one of change, and also a certain lack of definition. Change because every university system in the European Union is in the process of adapting to the directives of the Bologna Declaration and the so-called European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with a new concept of education that, above all, is going to divide university studies into undergraduate and postgraduate levels (the latter consisting of master's degrees and doctorates). This would be no novelty in countries like Brazil that have had this system for decades, or in other American and Anglophone countries – whose university system has essentially served as a model for Bologna, but it certainly is in Spain. The lack of definition arises from the apparent lack of a clear model on which to base the teaching of journalism. In fact such a model does in fact exist: it can be found in Iberoamerica, to look no further.

To understand, albeit very briefly, today's panorama of research in journalism in Spain we shall, in the first place, make a historical review. Next, we will talk about the most novel tendencies in research today – with special attention given to my own field of work: cyberjournalism, which is logically what I best understand. Finally, given that I am sharing this panel with two lecturers from European countries (Thomas Hanitzsch, from Germany, and Nelson Traquina, from Portugal), I fell obliged to refer to the challenge, and the opportunity, represented by the need to establish postgraduate studies in Spain following the directives of the Bologna Declaration, a process that, in 2005, has just begun in the universities of my country.

1 ■ THE TEACHING (AND RESEARCH) OF JOURNALISM IN SPAIN

1.1 ■ History of journalism studies

The first theoretician of journalism – as one way of putting it; the first person who reflected on the profession – about whom we have information in Spain was Miguel García de la Madrid, whose work “Compendio de Retórica” sacado de los autores de mejor nota (*Compendium of Rhetoric extracted from the most notable authors*) was published by the Brusi Office (the popular name for the newspaper *Diario de Barcelona*) in 1817. If I mention García de la Madrid, it is to make one thing clear: how, since before the official founding of university studies in journalism, the

Spanish tradition was to a large extent orientated towards the essay and the manual, of newswriting above all. Other currents were to arrive later and have probably not achieved the strength of these studies.

Over the course of the Spanish XIX century, when journalism went through stages that were highly ideological, reflecting the social and political tension of the period, auto-didacticism was the rule in journalism. A profession that only managed to escape from this rule in very few cases. In spite of everything, and doubtless due to the proximity of the parliamentary chronicles – plagued as they were with opinion – to oratory, some scholars of rhetoric, which was in decline, became interested in our discipline.

Thus we find José Coll and Vehí, author of the “Compendio de Retórica and Poética” (*Compendium of Rhetoric and Poetics*) and parliamentary chronicler of the *Diario de Barcelona*. For this writer, military and journalistic eloquence could be considered two branches of political oratory: “The articles of the journalists, facts to be read today and forgotten tomorrow, employ forms that are in all respects oratorical, and are no less than versions of parliamentary speeches,” he asserted. Other theoreticians, Antonio Gil y Zárate and Clemente Cortejón “Curso razonado de Retórica y Poética” (*Reasoned Course of Rhetoric and Poetics*), 1890) thought in similar terms. In 1887, Fernando Araujo y Gómez organised a journalism course at the University of Salamanca, the first known case in Spain.

Journalism had not yet entered the University, which was on the other hand highly discredited, above all the numerous chairs of rhetoric that still survived. However, some teachers were by then already proposing to separate newswriting from rhetoric. For example, Esteban Moreu Lacruz, who taught rhetoric and poetics at the “Caspe College of the Jesuits” at Barcelona, asserted in 1912 in his book *Fundamentos de cultura literaria* (*Foundations of literary culture*) that journalistic articles could not be included amongst the oratorical genres. Rafael Mainar was of the same opinion. The latter was one of the first in Spain to theorise on journalism in his book of 1906 “El arte del periodista” (*The art of the journalist*), recently reissued (Barcelona: Destino, 2005).

Although the book by Rafael Mainar did not have a great impact at the time, we can nowadays admire the rigour with which this lawyer and journalist systematised the journalistic knowledge of his day in a brief manual. While it is true that he deals with questions such as writing, the news company and design (it was intended as a handbook for the professional), it is no less true that an overall vision was needed at that time.

The teaching of journalism did not begin in Spain until 1926. This was when Ángel Herrera Oria, in charge of the Madrid newspaper *El Debate*, advised one of his men, the priest Manuel Graña González, who had previously been sent to *Columbia School of Journalism* (New York) to study at the prestigious American University, to set up the first School of Journalism in Spain. That same year, the *Basque Studies Society*, which had been founded in 1918, at its IV Congress which was dedicated to teaching, invited Manuel Graña to give a talk on journalism. The text of his talk, titled *Schools of journalism*, was published in 1927. It is the first on the subject that we know of, since it was not until 1930 that Manuel Graña published his book “La Escuela de Periodismo” (*The School of Journalism*), in which he set out his theories and experiences. In a somewhat dispersed way, this theoretician linked newswriting with Christian rhetoric, but above all with the United States currents. From then onwards, the American theory was to be established as the norm in Spain, as it had been previously in other countries.

It is possible that journalism would have entered the University had it not been for the enormous reverse represented by the Francoist dictatorship, with its systems of propaganda, prior censorship (until 1966) and instructions. However, the authoritarian regime created certain bodies for the teaching of journalism. On the one hand, the *Official School of Journalism*, founded in 1941; on the other, the *School of Journalism of the Church*, created by the Episcopal Conference in 1960, which is where numerous journalists were trained. When the time arrived, it was from these schools that the proposal to introduce the teaching of journalism in the university arose. That was to happen in the 1970s.

1.2 Journalism in the Spanish University, the present day

In Spain, Communication has been an academic discipline since 1971 (Decree 2478/1971 of the Ministry of Education and Science. B.O.E. 16th October 1971), when the first information sciences faculties appeared. To the journalism schools of the Church and the state a third must be added: the Institute of Journalism of the University of Navarre, belonging to the Opus Dei, which was to become a faculty of Journalism in those years. The first PhD in journalism in Spain was awarded to Angel Faus by that university in 1979². At practically the same time, faculties were established at the Complutense University of Madrid and the Autonomous University of Barcelona, both universities with a huge number of students. In 1981, the Information Sciences Faculty of the University of

the Basque Country (which was later to adopt its present name of Social and Communication Sciences Faculty) was created from what had been a branch of the Autonomous University of Barcelona since 1977; its first intake of students graduated in 1982. The information sciences became a pillar of democratic society, since, as José Luis Desantes stated in his book “El autocontrol de la actividad informativa” (*Self-control of informative activity*), “democracy demands the continuous training of the citizenry, and that supposes prior information, in order to be able to take part in the political system”. Amongst those information sciences is to be found newswriting, a discipline that, as José Luis Martínez Albertos reminds us, is not only concerned with language, but is also a type of mass communication. By this we understand, following Janowitz and Schulz, the ensemble of actions through which different specialists, using certain technical resources (press, radio, television, cinema), transmit a symbolic content to a broad, heterogeneous and geographically dispersed public. Newswriting was the discipline that received the earliest recognition from researchers who gave it their priority attention. Mention must be made of the names of José Luis Martínez Albertos, Luis Núñez Ladevéze, more inclined to grammatical questions, or Josep Maria Casasús, who has tried in his work to cover more than the mere technique of writing, above all introducing the German school of journalism. Following the German science, Josep Maria Casasús brings several areas of study together under the rubric of Journalism, which receive different names depending on the country:

- 1 ■ The science of events: in German *Phänomenologie* or *Thematischen*, in English Newsmaking: why certain subjects and events are chosen, why they are news and why they become a journalistic text;
- 2 ■ Theory and analysis of sources;
- 3 ■ Rhetoric and Newswriting in the strict sense. Theory of journalistic genres;
- 4 ■ Critical history of Newswriting;
- 5 ■ Theory and analysis of the mass media. Composed in its turn by several disciplines: the classification of the media, the organisation of the media or News Company, and content analysis.

Specialised journalism is another of the currents deriving from the above, and its principal advocate is Javier Fernández de Moral from the Complutense University of Madrid. Design has received less attention outside the area of teaching and the manuals, although it is the other

big area of professional training for journalists. Together with this more practical tradition, which, in its origins at least, drew its main inspiration from United States sources, there are other traditions that are, naturally enough, more theoretical. The field of the news company has traditionally been a strong one in Spain, above all under the auspices of Ángel Benito at the University of Navarre, and also the group at the Complutense University of Madrid.

The eternal argument over whether we are dealing with a science, a technique or an art, of whether journalism deserves to be ranked with the high disciplines, whether it should be studied by applying systematic scientific methods and criteria, and whether it should be taught, is now definitively settled. In view of the proliferation of faculties of Information Sciences we must indeed conclude that it should be considered a fully fledged academic discipline. The first teachers in Spain to favour this position were Juan Beneyto and Angel Benito.

Another characteristic of journalism studies in Spain is that from the outset - and in spite of the fact that it is today a degree course (*licenciatura*), a qualification different from Audiovisual Communication and Public Relations and Advertising (although taught in the same faculties) – 40% or 50% of the subjects it offers are in more general subjects, such as contemporary history, sociology, economics, language and literature and even social psychology. There are exceptions, such as journalism studies at the Pompeu Fabra University of Barcelona, promoted by Josep Maria Casasús. In fact, at some universities, such as the University of the Basque Country, we are dealing with a single faculty (of Social and Communication Sciences, in that order, although it was created to train journalists; today it also offers undergraduate courses in Sociology and Political Science), where sociologists, historians, political scientists or psychologists, with more extensive scientific traditions (in some disciplines more than others), direct these centres, although the immense majority of the pupils are studying for degrees in communication.

1.3 ■ The teaching of journalism in Spain today

Today there are 40 public and private universities that offer studies in journalism and communication in Spain, with a total of over 30,000 students in the three degree courses in communication.

At present, and until the Government promulgates the decrees that will configure the map of the new qualifications in Spain, the system is governed by the Decree of May 1991, which regulates the study plans of

three qualifications: journalism, audiovisual communication and public relations and advertising – previously a single degree course – within information sciences. This gives some idea of the popularity of courses related to communication in Spain – with a number of students that is only exceeded by economic and business sciences. In 2002 there were over 33,000 pupils registered in the three degree courses in the 40 universities that offered them in Spain. This was in spite of the bleak job prospects facing the graduates from these courses, over 5,000 each year. We can expect this specialisation to be maintained in the future study plans, which makes Spain, once again, a peculiar country in this respect, probably the only one in the European and Iberamerican region that has three different qualifications in communication.

With respect to Europe, David French and Michael Richards from Great Britain underline certain characteristics that, in their opinion, stand out in the panorama of communication studies: the tendency of communication studies to form an area of studies independent from other disciplines on the one hand, and, on the other, to occupy a differentiated place in academic research. Another phenomenon is also evident to these authors: the divorce between professionals and academics is becoming blurred, and these two positions that were antagonistic in the past are drawing closer together. However, this is not so clear today. It is true, on the one hand, that it is not compulsory at present to hold a university qualification in journalism to work as such, and when this question has been raised (for example when the College of Journalists of Catalonia was formed on the basis of the Francoist press association) the companies and even the public powers were opposed, arguing constitutional reasons. But is also true that today the majority of the newspaper companies contract their journalists from amongst the graduates of the communication faculties - some 91.3% according to María Luisa Humanes. In the 1980s, some of the most powerful of those companies – for example *El País*, from the powerful Grupo Prisa, or *El Correo*, which later created the Grupo Vocento, the regional press leader – decided to create higher courses in journalism in collaboration with some public universities. These were denominated *másters*, with a selection system for pupils and high prices (some 5,000 to 6,000 euros per year). However, that denomination will tend to disappear today, given that it is reserved for postgraduate courses and would in reality correspond to master's degrees.

2 ■ RESEARCH IN JOURNALISM IN SPAIN

2.1 ■ General panorama

In view of the panorama of journalism studies, and concentrating exclusively on this subject – thus leaving to one side the interesting studies on the theory of communication and other, juridical aspects - we can say, *grosso modo*, that there has been a predominance of research into the profession itself – so precarious in Spain - and into the techniques that are more relevant to professional training, such as newswriting and, to a lesser degree, design. Similarly, historical studies have received a considerable impulse, as we shall see, proceeding not so much from those historians interested in journalism or communication, as from journalists who are themselves historians (as in my case). The news company has also received a considerable impulse, with the school of Ángel Benito in Navarre as pioneer, and even specialised journalism, a discipline seeking emancipation. This is a current led by the professor of journalism at the Complutense University of Madrid, Javier Fernández del Moral, followed by the professor of the “Pompeu Fabra” of Barcelona, Montserrat Quesada³. A large part of the first studies made in the Spanish communication faculties were indebted to the methodologies of other sciences (for example, the so-often employed “Sociología de la comunicación” (*Sociology of communication*) by the Catalan Miquel de Moragas), and even today this is still a rewarding path.

With respect to research in journalism, it would be impossible to mention all of the research that has been done in its different aspects over the last 35 years. We will therefore limit ourselves to describing the main bodies that centre their attention on communication in general and on journalism in particular, and on the main academic journals on the question published in Spain.

2.1.1 ■ Associations

As we have said, the history of journalism, as part of the history of communication (and that as part of social and cultural history), has received the attention of a fair number of teachers at the Spanish university, many of whom combine their interest in the object of study and historiographical methodology with other very different subjects. The majority of those scholars are affiliated to the “Association of Historians

of Communication”⁴, whose president today is Francesc Andreu Martínez Gallego, of the University of Valencia. It was created in 1992 by the lecturers Timoteo Álvarez, Rosa Cal, Juan José Fernández Sanz, M^a Antonia Paz and Ingrid Schulze. Every year and a half it holds a congress at a different university in Spain, with a monographic subject and a methodological section. I would venture to say - I belong to its board of directors and I am an active member - that this is a fertile association, given that it has held seven congresses to date, the majority of which have seen the publication of their proceedings (in total six monographs with their corresponding ISBN). The eighth was held at the University of Seville in March 2006, thanks to the energy of the lecturer Antonio Checa, and its subject was Republicanism and the mass media.

Another association with several years experience is the “Spanish Journalism Society”, formed in the 1990s by Spanish professors like Josep Maria Casasús, José Luis Martínez Albertos, Ofa Bezunartea or María Pilar Diezhandino. Every two years it holds a congress, nearly all of whose proceeding have been published, seven in total. In 2005, the Society held a scientific meeting⁵ at the University of Santiago de Compostela under the title “Research in journalism”⁶, the contributions of which have been published on a CD with the same title.

Together with these two national associations, which include researchers from all of Spain, it is worth mentioning at least three more that have a regional scope (an autonomous scope to use the Spanish terminology). The three have similar characteristics, including that of being based in autonomous communities with their own languages and cultural traditions. These are the communication sections of scientific societies that cover all the fields of knowledge. The first of these societies was the “Institut d’Estudis Catalans” (*Institute of Catalan Studies*), created at the start of the XX century and whose achievements include having published the first normative dictionary of the Catalan language and having established the orthographic norms of that tongue. The “Institut” is structured in scientific sections⁷ (in fact, the language section of the “Institut d’Estudis Catalans” also functions as an academy of the language), the majority of which – those of disciplines with more academic tradition – were created at the start of the XX century. Other were added later, some with a subsidiary character, such as the “Societat Catalana de Comunicació” (the *Catalan Society of Communication*), created in 1986. The society’s presidents have included the lecturers Miquel de Moragas, Josep Maria Casasús, Jaume Guillamet and Josep Maria Martí⁸.

The SCC publishes two journals, both in the Catalan language: “Treballs de Comunicació” (*Communication Works*) and “Periodística” (*Journalism Studies*).

The same is the case with the mass media section of the “Sociedad de Estudios Vascos” – “Eusko Ikaskuntza” (*Basque Studies Society*)⁹. The Society, following the model of the *Institut d’Estudis Catalans*, was created in 1918. Its work, based on a structure of sections, was interrupted after the Spanish Civil War. It began working again in the 1980s, and in that decade created its mass media section, of which I had the honour of being president from 1997 to 2001. At present its president is the lecturer Joseba Etxebarria Gangoiti. Each section – including ours – publishes its own journal. It was first called “Cuadernos de Sección: Medios de Comunicación” (*Section Notebooks: Mass Media*) and then *Mediatika (On media)*, its present name. Between them, the two titles have published 11 numbers, with research mainly centred on journalism.

The last society to be created, in 1981, was the “Consello da Cultura Galega” (*Council of Galician Culture*)¹⁰, in this case on the initiative of the “Xunta de Galicia” (the executive body of the regional government), carrying out a mandate contained in the autonomy statute of Galicia. In its turn it is structured in sections. One of these is the communication section¹¹, which began working in 1990. At present it is coordinated by Xosé López, from the University of Santiago de Compostela, and it is divided in its turn into commissions¹², with several projects underway.

2.1.2 ■ Journals

Research in journalism, at present very abundant in Spain due to the large number of lecturers, many of them young people and therefore producing doctoral theses¹³ and research work for the civil service exams (titular lecturer and professor), is channelled through monographs and the scientific journals created to this end. We will make a brief survey of the main ones, dividing them into two groups. Firstly, those whose content is indexed by the “Centro de Investigación en Documentación” (CINDOC¹⁴ - *Centre of Research in Documentation*) of the Higher Centre of Scientific Research (*Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* [CSIC]), that is to say, those that have in some way had a greater impact. Secondly, there are those – generally of more recent appearance – that, while they have not received this recognition, are not therefore of any lesser quality.

Journals recognised by the CINDOC

“Anàlisi. Quaderns de Comunicació i Cultura” (*Anàlisi. Notebooks of Communication and Culture*)¹⁵: was founded in 1980 and is linked to the Department of Journalism and Communication Sciences of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, one of the oldest in Spain. It is mainly published in Catalan and Spanish, although it accepts articles in other languages, English for example, and all the romance languages. To date it has published 23 numbers, two of them double issues. Its director is Eugeni Giral.

One of the first and longest surviving is, naturally, the journal of the University of Navarre, which was a pioneer in establishing university studies in journalism in Spain: “Comunicación y Sociedad” (*Communication and Society*)¹⁶. The first volume appeared in 1988. By the end of 2005 it had published 17 volumes, with two numbers - at times joint numbers - corresponding to each, giving a total of 27 different numbers. At present its director is the lecturer José Javier Sánchez Aranda.

Another journal with a tradition of research into journalism in Spain is that of the Department of Journalism of the Complutense University of Madrid, “Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico” (*Studies on the Journalistic Message*)¹⁷, which is even more focussed than the others on the concrete study of journalism, rather than on all aspects of communication. It started annual publication in 1994 and has issued ten numbers. It always dedicates a block to a monographic subject, another to miscellaneous research and a third to reviews. Its present editor is a lecturer from that department, María Jesús Casals Garro.

Other departments of the Information Sciences Faculty of the Complutense University of Madrid also have their own journal. This is the case of the CIC. “Cuadernos de Información y Comunicación” (*Notebooks of Information and Communication*)¹⁸, with a content that is less research orientated and closer to essay form, and that is also recognised by the CINDOC. It was founded in 1995 and today has reached its 7th number; it is edited by the professor of Communication Theory Felicísimo Valbuena. The Department of the History of Communication has the journal “Historia y Comunicación Social” (*History and Social Communication*), the only one in this specific specialisation. It appeared in 1996, has published nine numbers reaching 2004, and is at present edited by professor Alejandro Pizarroso.

The next journal I will mention is that of the Social and Communication Sciences Faculty of the University of the Basque Country, of which

at present I am proud to be the editor (I was preceded by Carmelo Garitaonandia and Gotzon Toral; I must also mention my colleague and teacher Alberto Díaz Mancisidor, who was responsible for setting up the journal and died before seeing it published). This is Zer. "Revista de Estudios de Comunicación" (*What. Journal of Communication Studies*)¹⁹, whose first number came out in 1996. It has a six monthly periodicity, appearing punctually in May and November, with a normal structure of research and reviews. Number 19 was due out in November 2005. From the start it was recognised by the CINDOC.

"Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación" (*Ambitos. International Journal of Communication*)²⁰ has, after several numbers, been indexed by the CINDOC. It started in 1998 and belongs to the Faculty of Communication of the University of Seville. It is edited by the lecturer Aurora Bernal.

"Trípodos" (*Trípodos*) is the journal on communication of the Blanquerna Communication Sciences Faculty of the Ramon Llull University of Barcelona. It has digital²¹ and printed versions and is recognised by the CINDOC. It was founded in 1996 and since then has published 16 numbers, the majority of which are monographs and nearly all of its texts are in Catalan.

"Doxa Comunicación" (*Doxa Communication*), a recently founded annual journal, published by the Universidad CEU-San Pablo of Madrid, has in a very short time won recognition from the CINDOC. It has only published three numbers, with a considerable formal quality and excellent contents. For several years, starting in 1990, the CEU San Pablo of Valencia (today CEU-Cardenal Herrera) published the journal "Comunicación y Estudios Universitarios" (*Communication and University Studies*).

The communication sections of the "Institut d'Estudis Catalans", the Basque Studies Society and the "Consello da Cultura Galega" also publish several journals on communication and journalism. Only the journal of the Basque society has achieved recognition by the CINDOC. Under the name "Cuadernos de Sección. Medios de Comunicación" (*Section Notebooks: Mass Media*) several numbers of the journal appeared between 1985 and 1995; its intended annual periodicity was in fact irregular. From 1996 up to the present (the latest number is from October 2005) it has been called "Mediatika" (*On media*). Its present editor is José Larrañaga, a lecturer at the University of the Basque Country.

Journals without recognition by the CINDOC

“Telos”²² was a pioneering journal of great quality, published every three months by the Fundesco Foundation. It achieved wide recognition, even internationally, in its first period (1985-1992), when it published 50 numbers. Then it ceased to appear until, under the Fundación Telefónica and with the subtitle “Cuadernos de comunicación, tecnología y sociedad” (*Notebooks of communication, technology and society*), it reappeared in 2002. Since then it has published thirteen numbers. In this second period it is not recognised by the CINDOC.

“Sphera Publica” (*Sphera Publica*)²³ is a journal of the Catholic University of Murcia, edited by Joaquín Guerrero. It has been published since 2002, in which time it has issued five numbers, each dedicated to a monographic subject.

“Revista Latina de Comunicación Social” (*Latin Journal of Social Communication*), which only has an electronic format²⁴, is an original and well-known initiative of the lecturer José Manuel de Pablos Coello, of the Information Sciences Faculty of the Universidad de la Laguna (Canary Islands, Spain). The project dates back to 1988, although it materialised in 1998. In 2005, after nearly 60 numbers, a second period began, with improved formal characteristics, incorporating an editorial committee, referees, etc. In spite of everything, it is not recognised by the CINDOC.

The journals of the Societat Catalana de Comunicació “Treballs de Comunicació” (*Communication Works*) and “Periodística” (*Journalism Studies*), in spite of several years of publication, have not been mentioned by the Spanish body that recognises scientific journals that have an impact. The first of the two was first published in 1991, and has published 17 numbers since then, the last in 2002. “Periodística” has been published, with ups and downs, since 1989. It has the honour of publishing the first thesis on journalism, that of Tobias Peucer dating from 1690, which was first translated from Latin into another language (Catalan) in 1990. In spite of everything, it has not won a place on the database of the CINDOC.

Nor has recognition been achieved by the journal “Estudios de Comunicación” (*Studies of Communication*)²⁵, which was founded quite recently (it has published three numbers: 0 in 2001, 1 in 2002 and 2 in 2003, all coordinated by Xosé López). It is written entirely in the Galician language.

The journal “Revista I/C (Información y Comunicación)”²⁶ (*Information/Communication Magazine*) of the Journalism Department of the University

of Seville is in the same situation. Two issues have been published, the latest in October 2005. It is edited by Manuel Bernal Rodríguez.

Finally, and although they clearly fall outside the category of scientific journals, I would like to mention another two that, in spite of their professional character, regularly publish articles of university research. These are *Capçalera* (Newspaper title), of the “Col.legi de Periodistes de Catalunya” (*College of Journalists of Catalonia*), which is bimonthly and has published 122 numbers in Catalan, and *Periodistas* (Journalists), journal of the Federation of the Spanish Press Association (FAPE), which started to appear as a journal in 2005.

2.2 ■ New lines: cyberjournalism

To conclude this section dedicated to analysing the research that is currently being developed in journalism in Spain, I feel obliged to refer to what is being done regarding a very novel journalistic technique, cyberjournalism (we prefer this term because of its concision and economy, although other terms exist: electronic journalism, digital journalism - which is most widely used in Spain, online journalism...). It also what I am most familiar with as I dedicate a large part of my efforts to it. Besides, it is a line of research for which, in its turn, a greater presence is being demanded in the study plans, which are about to be changed. Digital communication appears to be the field of teaching with the most future at the moment, now that many Spanish universities are trying to organise postgraduate courses, whether these involve professional specialisation or academic research.

2.2.1 ■ Teaching cyberjournalism in Spain

At present teaching at Spanish universities is basically regulated by a decree of 1994. Journalism took the leap onto Internet – better put, the World Wide Web – in 1995. It is therefore understandable why in many cases the teaching of cyberjournalism has had to seek compromise solutions, given the impossibility of establishing compulsory, or even specialised, subjects. And that is in spite of the fact, as we shall see in the following paragraphs, that there has been a considerable research and bibliographical production in the last ten years.

Between 1995 and 1996, the first universities that opted to create subjects dealing with cyberjournalism were those of Navarre, the Basque Country and the Pompeu Fabra of Barcelona. In the first case, María

José Pérez Luque, who had recently completed a master's degree in the United States, was contracted to teach a compulsory, main subject called Technology of Printed Media, which is given in all the Spanish communication faculties; she made use of the name to establish a new program, taking into account the new techniques of what was then called electronic journalism. What was taught in that subject is reflected in the manual of 1998 "El periodismo y las nuevas tecnologías" (*Journalism and the new technologies*) (Pamplona: Newsbook Ediciones). At the University of Seville, the lecturer José Álvarez Marcos, a pioneering journalist in the use of computer technologies (he created the electronic newspaper for Expo 92 at Seville, even before the birth of the WWW), had recourse to a similar solution, although in 2002 a new course was finally established, Technology of Cybernetic Journalistic News. At the Pompeu Fabra and at the University of the Basque Country a different solution was employed: the creation of optional subjects on the initiative of young lecturers (in Barcelona, Joan Francesc Canovas proposed the initiative to his Dean, J. M. Casasús; in the Basque Country, the initiative came from the author of this paper). While in Barcelona two subjects have now been created that are related to this question, in the Basque Country two departments teach two optional subjects in the final course: Cyberjournalism (the lecturers are Koldo Meso and myself) and Design and electronic journalism (taught by Juan Carlos Pérez); the latter is only partially dedicated to the design of media on Internet.

Other more recently founded universities were able to change the content of their degree courses. This happened at the Carlos III of Madrid, which from a single second cycle moved to a complete degree course. The University of Santiago de Compostela, which has a strong research group, offers a complete second cycle itinerary. The University of Málaga, which in a brief time (between 2000 and 2002) awarded two PhDs for theses on the question to María Ángeles Cabrera and María Bella Palomo, also has several specific subjects. Journalism studies at the University of Valencia, recently created, also has several specific subjects, including one dedicated to the news hypertext. The Spanish communication faculties with the most students, those of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Complutense of Madrid, do not have specific subjects, although they do have researchers interested in the question. Other more recently founded faculties like the Rovira i Virgili University or the Ramon Llull, of Tarragona and Barcelona respectively, have researchers but not specific subjects.

Obviously, this contradiction will have to change, taking advantage of the European convergence promoted by the Bologna Declaration, which requires a revision of study plans. When the new structure of qualifications is established, the new skills will probably be taken into account, since the Libro Blanco (*Memorandum*) of Communication qualifications²⁷ - in Spain there are three: Journalism; Audiovisual Communication; and Advertising and Public Relations; the first is the most popular with over 14,000 students - lists four:

- Newswriting for any media;
- Editor or press and institutional communication officer;
- Communication researcher, teacher and consultant;
- Manager of portals and contents editor.

That is to say, the first profile would refer to general skills; the second focuses on the growing market of company and institutional communication; the third refers to a university professional; and the fourth – in spite of the prudent euphemism – to the new technologies. Although teaching related to cyberjournalism, in its facet of training the future professional or in its facet of research and reflection, would fit within any of the four profiles, it is the fourth that would best open a genuine way to acquiring full status for our studies in the Spanish university.

2.2.2 ■ Bibliographical production

As we have suggested, bibliographical production is ahead of teaching. The novelty and evident importance of the phenomenon to be studied, the requirements of a market that demands a university professional who understands the new techniques, and the need of many young lecturers to find their own research path, are some of the reasons that have led to a flourishing of books on the Spanish market.

It is worth mentioning the pioneering work, prior even to the creation of the World Wide Web, of the professor at the University of La Laguna, José Manuel de Pablos Coello, about what he denominated the “telematic newspaper”. This book, which it is true had a limited distribution - which does not detract from its importance, was titled “Periódico” facsimilar interactivo telemático: una idea de I+D (*Telematic interactive facsimile newspaper: a R+D idea*) (Santa Cruz Tenerife: Editorial de Publicaciones Insulares de Canarias, 1989).

However, the first book that was specifically dedicated to the nascent journalism on Internet appeared in 1996, one year after the first Spanish newspapers appeared on the WWW: “El periodismo electrónico. Información y servicios en la era del ciberespacio” (*Electronic journalism. News and services in the age of cyberspace*) (Barcelona: Ariel, 1996), written by the lecturers of the University of the Basque Country Emiliana Armañanzas (who subsequently gave up his interest in this line of research), Javier Díaz Noci and Koldo Meso. The latter two have continued working up until the present in this line of research, publishing books like “Medios de comunicación en Internet” (*Mass media on Internet*), a small catalogue of the media present on the Spanish Net at that time (1997), and “Periodismo en Internet. Modelos de la prensa digital” (*Journalism on Internet. Digital press models*) (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 1999). In 2002 they published “La escritura digital. Hipertexto y construcción del discurso informativo en el periodismo electrónico” (*Digital writing. Hypertext and news discourse construction in electronic journalism*) (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 2002).

Next, there were some books by two research groups that have not, however, continued working: we are referring to “Diarios digitales” (*Digital newspapers*), by Jesús Canga and other authors; “Diseño y periodismo electrónico” (*Design and electronic journalism*), a manual that is partially dedicated to cyberjournalism by José Ignacio Armentia and others, and “El diario digital” (*The digital newspaper*), research dating from 2000. There were also other manuals, such as “Ciberperiodismo, nuevos enfoques, conceptos y profesiones emergentes en el mundo infodigital” (*Cyberjournalism, new approaches, concepts and emergent professions in the digital information world*), by Jesús Miguel Flores Vivar and Alberto Miguel Arruti (Madrid: Ediciones 2010).

From then onwards books were published that were the result of doctoral theses: “La documentación electrónica en los medios de comunicación” (*Electronic documentation in the mass media*) by Juan Carlos Marcos Recio (Madrid: Fragua, 1999), proceeding from the field of documentation; “Sevilla y el periodismo multimedia: la experiencia pionera de Diario Expo 92” (*Seville and multimedia journalism: the pioneering experience of Diario Expo 92*) by José Álvarez Marcos (Sevilla: Padilla Libros, 2000); “La prensa online, los periódicos en la WWW” (*The online press, newspapers on the WWW*) by María Ángeles Cabrera (Barcelona: CIMS, 2001) and “El periodista online: de la revolución a la evolución” (*The online journalist: from revolution to evolution*) by María Bella Palomo (Sevilla: Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones, 2004), the

latter two from the university of Malaga. It is also worth emphasising the production, which has taken the form of manuals and studies of the journalistic profession in Galicia, of the group at the University of Santiago de Compostela led by the lecturer Xosé López “Xornalismo electrónico” [*Electronic journalism*], dating from 2000, with Xosé Pereira and Manuel Gago; with the same authors, in 2002 “Novas tendencias do xornalismo electrónico” [*New tendencies of electronic journalism*], followed one year later by the Spanish language version; “As factorias da sociedade da información: produción de contidos para internet” [*The factories of the information society: production of contents for Internet*], with Marita Otero, in 2002).

We must also draw attention to the production of the lecturer at the University of Navarre Ramón Salaverría, author of what is to date the most recent book on the question: “Redacción periodística en Internet” (*Newswriting on Internet*), dating from 2005. In 2003, Ramón Salaverría and myself also coordinated a thick book that aimed to bring together the majority of the Spanish university lecturers who were teaching subjects related to cyberjournalism: “Manual de redacción ciberperiodística” (*Manual of cybernewswriting*) sought to achieve a certain degree of specialisation and to concentrate on one aspect of teaching, discourse construction and the new journalistic genres. The book contained contributions from more than twelve Spanish university lecturers.

In Catalonia, books have been published on the Catalan digital media, for example the book by David Domingo “Periodisme digital a Catalunya” (*Digital journalism in Catalonia*). Barcelona: Col·legi de Periodistes de Catalunya, 2004). And the group from the University of Murcia has published a collective book (Aguado, Juan Miguel (coord.). “E-comunicación. Dimensiones sociales y profesionales de la comunicación en los nuevos entornos tecnológicos” (*E-communication. Social and professional dimensions of communication in the new technological settings*). Sevilla: “Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones”, 2004). Dating from the same year there is the book by José Álvarez Marcos and David Valcarce “Ciberperiodismo” (*Cyberjournalism*) (Madrid: Síntesis). “The most recent book (a manual) published on the subject in Spain is Modelos de comunicación en Internet” (*Models of communication on Internet*) (Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch, 2005), by Guillermo López García, a young doctor at the University of Valencia.

2.2.2 ■ *The research groups*

There are, as we have seen, a fair number of lecturers in the Spanish universities who have made cyberjournalism their main subject of research. However, it has not been possible to form a stable research group at all the universities; in fact, such a group can only be found at four of them. These are Santiago de Compostela, Navarre, the Basque Country and Málaga.

At the University of Santiago de Compostela, we find the “Novos Medios” (*New media*) research group (www.novosmedios.org), one of the most active in terms of research and publication in Spain. It is directed by Xosé López García and includes nine members and several collaborators. Besides their main activity, which is of course to research everything related to the new form of communication, they have an experimental laboratory, develop communication plans, audit and prepare websites.

The Multimedia Communication Laboratory (MMLab) was founded at the University of Navarre in 1995. It is formed by members from several departments of the Communication Faculty at that centre and is directed by Ramón Salaverría²⁸, aided by José Luis Orihuela and Charo Sádaba. They have a website (<http://www.unav.es/fcom/mmlab>) where different texts can be found. Besides, they publish a bulletin containing the most important news about communication (<http://www.unav.es/fcom/mmlab/boletin>).

The Labcom (Communication Laboratory: www.umalab.com) has been functioning at the University of Málaga since 1997. It is directed by the lecturer María Ángeles Cabrera González.

There is also a research group at the University of the Basque Country. At present it is formed by five persons (three lecturers and two grant-holders), directed by myself. It arose from my collaboration over ten years with the lecturer Koldo Meso, which gave rise to the production of numerous books and articles, jointly or individually authored, and was later widened to include other lecturers. We also have our own website: www.ehu.es/impactointernet. At present this group is developing research on the impact of Internet on the Basque mass media (UPV0001 7323H16005/2004).

The four research groups maintain a close collaboration, which gave rise to a joint project, funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology, within the Program of Research and Technological Development, project reference number BSO2002-04206-C04-03. This project has now concluded and the most outstanding aspects of its three years of work

are contained in a monograph (SALAVERRÍA, Ramón (coord.) (2005). "Cibermedios. El impacto de Internet en los medios de comunicación en España" [*Cybermedia. The impact of Internet on the mass media in Spain*]. Sevilla: Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones).

Several of the members of that group from the four Spanish universities participate in another European project, the action COST A-20 (<http://tomcat.tektix.com/cost/>), which has concluded in April 2006 with a congress (the third) at the Greek city of Delfos²⁹. The group's second congress, which included research from more than twenty European countries, has already produced results in the form of publications: one, coordinated by Ramón Salaverría and Charo Sádaba, members of the management committee in representation of the Spanish group and organizers of the second international conference of this European action, is titled *Towards new media paradigms* (Pamplona: Eunete, 2004). The latest publication is a book containing a comparative study of the digital editions of the most important newspapers of the majority of those countries: Richard van der Wurff, Edmund Lauf, John O'Sullivan (eds.). "Print and online newspapers in Europe: A comparative content analysis in 16 countries in Western and Eastern Europe". Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers, 2005.

Other Spanish researchers are working in the field of cyberjournalism without yet having formed consolidated research groups. At the Complutense University of Madrid mention is deserved by the solitary efforts of doctor Concha Edo; while Jesús Miguel Flores Vivar divides his work between the Complutense University and the Antonio de Nebrija. Doctor Teresa Sandoval at the Carlos III University has written some texts on the subject. Doctor Mercedes del Hoyo has done the same at the King Juan Carlos University, also located in the Spanish capital. At the University of the Basque Country, Doctor María José Cantalapiedra has published work showing her interest in the question. Doctor José Álvarez, at the University of Seville, regularly publishes on cyberjournalism. We have already mentioned Doctor Guillermo López based at the University of Valencia. There is a research group at the CEU-Cardenal Herrera University, directed by Doctor Elvira García de Torre. Mar Iglesias at the University of Alicante works on questions related to cyberjournalism. At the Ramon Llull University of Barcelona, Pere Masip has completed his doctoral thesis, which he is about to defend. The lecturer David Domingo is preparing his thesis at the Rovira I Virgili University; he is active as secretary of the "Grup de Periodistas Digitals de Catalunya" (*Digital journalists' group of Catalonia*) and was the organizer, amongst other

events, of the congress “New research for new media”, in collaboration with the University of Minnesota, in 2004. Carlos Scolari, amongst others, works at the University of Vic, in Catalonia.

3 ■ A TIME OF CHANGE

Finally, I would like to talk once again about the time of change that, for better or worse, is being undergone by journalism studies in Spain with the adoption of the new teaching model, called the “European Higher Education Area” (EHEA). This will divide studies into undergraduate studies (240 credits of possible teaching hours) of 3 or 4 years (everything points to 4), and one or several postgraduate courses, which can be professional specialisation, research or mixed. The postgraduate courses, which in Spain are called *masters*, employing an unnecessary Anglicism, will have a class load of between 60 and 120 credits, or put differently, will last one or two years. An initial criticism that can be made of the approaching panorama is as follows: if the Conference of Deans of Journalism and Communication decide on degree courses of four years, which is what an undergraduate degree course lasts at present in the majority of the Spanish faculties, then it is certain that few universities will decide on postgraduate degree courses of two years, and even fewer will add to that doctoral courses and seminars – which, according to the ambiguous text of the decree regulating postgraduate and doctoral studies, would be optional. Thus specialised training and research will be diluted, which surely goes against the spirit of the Bologna Declaration.

The new situation that they are trying to establish throughout Europe supposes that obtaining a degree (three or four years) will be adequate preparation for professional practice. Meanwhile the master’s degree, of one or two years duration, will be a further step in professional preparation, in the form of specialisation; this will either represent an intermediate step towards realising a doctoral thesis, or either replace, or serve as an introduction to doctoral courses. Nothing is said about the possibility of writing a dissertation or about final research work, although, given that in the country where the system we are describing has the longest tradition, and given that today, with the graduate and doctorate system, that research work is necessary prior to the doctoral thesis (in general a type of introduction to it), everything indicates that this requisite will end up being incorporated into the studies for a master’s degree.

The system to be established gives rise to some substantial doubts. As the new Royal Decree 55/2005 that is starting to regulate the new

studies expressly indicates, the degree “will include basic teaching” and obtaining it will give the right to obtain the corresponding title (just as today, that of graduate) needed for professional practice. Let me mention in passing that unlike what happens in the case of other disciplines of greater ancestry in the University (Law, Medicine, Architecture), a university qualification is not essential for working as a journalist in Spain. Unlike the other professions, such as those mentioned above, the colleges of Spanish journalists cannot legally demand a university qualification to become a member, nor is such membership of a college compulsory (as it is for a lawyer, doctor or architect) in order to practice the profession. At the present time, the Congress of Deputies (the Spanish parliament) is discussing a bill concerning a Journalists’ Statute, which is giving rise to argument even amongst the professionals themselves, amongst other reasons because, according to that bill, it will become a requirement to be a card-holder in order to be contracted as a journalist.

At present, the situation of cyberjournalism in Spain is as we have briefly described above. On the one hand, there are now quite a few general manuals about the phenomenon of Internet journalism; on the other, there are also now specialised textbooks, above all on newswriting, although other works are needed on questions like journalistic design. Doctoral theses are being produced, with the relative slowness that is to be expected from an initial experience of personal research of such magnitude. And networks with other countries are being established. The seed has been sown, and the fruit is starting to be seen. Transferring the Spanish bibliography on cyberjournalism and those research achievements into teaching is another challenge that we have yet to fully meet in Spain; it is precisely uncertainty about the higher teaching model itself that is responsible for the delay.

This creates strengths and weaknesses. One strength lies in the existence of a mass of young lecturers, at the height of their intellectual production, who regularly attend national and international events, and who are generating a scientific contribution that is already abundant. Another strength is, at least potentially, the existence of a community of over 400 million people who speak the same language, Spanish, and of over 200 million who speak Portuguese – with Brazil as the great academic focal point of journalism and communication in that language, since Portugal has joined later. This poses an unavoidable challenge: the formation of networks for research and intellectual exchange with those countries. Above all because in Spain we need to know, at this time of transition, the contributions from the Latin American universities, since in

some cases they have already had more than fifty years experience of the system we are trying to establish. Spain's situation as a bridge between the New Continent and the Old, and the participation of its university, like it or not, in both academic traditions, makes the need of establishing contacts and agreements with universities on both sides even more urgent. The weakness, on the other hand, is the lack of important subjects in the *curricula* of the respective universities where these advances can be taught and where they can be given a truly practical character.

In meeting this challenge, and since programs and subjects have not yet been consolidated in the different Spanish universities, it seems important not to give a privileged position to technical skills, which appears to be what the students are demanding. According to the study by the Spanish Conference of Deans of Journalism and Communication, contained in the "Libro Blanco" (Memorandum), that and knowledge of languages like English are what students most highly value. Nonetheless, the mere acquisition of skills in the use of the latest versions of software programs does not guarantee true professional competence, above all if it is a question of teaching html design and multimedia programs, which quickly become obsolete. However, it must be remembered that the more theoretical subjects are those that are least valued by Spanish journalism students. Once again, the divorce between the needs of the professional world and the academic offer shows itself on occasion in all its crudity.

For cyberjournalism in Spain, this is a golden opportunity to reach that maturity which has been obtained by these studies in other countries, like Brazil, where several universities (the Federal of Bahía is a good example, with its "Digital Journalism Group", set up by the lecturers Elías Machado and Marcos Palacios) already have available master's degrees that include digital journalism in their study plans. Such a new discipline, which is seeking maturity, needs stable university structures that will help it to obtain a healthy state.

NOTES

- 1 This paper was written during a research visit as guest lecturer in the Faculty of Communication at the Universidad Federal de Bahía (FACOM-UFBa), Brazil. Presented to III National Meeting of Researchers in Journalism, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Florianópolis (Brazil), November 2005.

- 2 <http://www.unav.es/informacion/703.html>
- 3 ESTEVE RAMÍREZ, Francisco; FERNÁNDEZ DEL MORAL, Javier. *Áreas de especialización periodística*. Madrid: Fragua, 1998; FERNÁNDEZ DEL MORAL, Javier. *Periodismo especializado*. Barcelona: Ariel, 2004; QUESADA PÉREZ, Montserrat. *Periodismo especializado*. Madrid: Ediciones Internacionales Universitarias, 1998.
- 4 <http://www.uv.es/ahc/>
- 5 <http://www.novosmedios.org/sep/>
- 6 The program can be consulted at the address <http://www.novosmedios.org/sep/programa.php>.
- 7 <http://www.iecat.net/>
- 8 For the history of the Societat Catalana de Comunicació, see the articles available on <http://www.iecat.net/institucio/societats/SCComunicacio/historia/historia.htm>.
- 9 <http://www.eusko-ikaskuntza.org>
- 10 <http://www.consellodacultura.org>
- 11 <http://www.consellodacultura.org/seccions/comunicacion/index.htm>
- 12 Technical Press Commission, Technical Radio Commission, Technical Television Commission, Technical New Media Commission, Technical Creative Communication Commission, Technical Advertising and Corporative Communication Commission and Technical Historical Press Commission.
- 13 The record of all the doctoral theses defended in Spain can be found on <http://www.mcu.es/TESEO>.
- 14 <http://bddoc.csic.es:8080/RISOC/BASIS/isoc/web/risoc/SF>
- 15 <http://kane.uab.es/revistaanalisi/>
- 16 <http://www.unav.es/cys>
- 17 <http://www.ucm.es/info/emp/>

- 18 <http://www.ucm.es/info/per3/cic/>
- 19 <http://www.ehu.es/zer>
- 20 <http://www.ull.es/publicaciones/latina/ambitos/ambitos.htm>
- 21 <http://www.tripodos.com/>
- 22 <http://www.campusred.net/telos>
- 23 <http://www.ucam.edu/sphera/>
- 24 <http://www.ull.es/publicaciones/latina/>
- 25 http://www.consellodacultura.org/mediateca/publicacions/estudios_comunicacion.htm
- 26 <http://www.us.es/dperiodismo1/revistaic/index.html>
- 27 Available on the website of the ANECA, <http://www.aneca.es>.
- 28 <http://www.unav.es/fcom/guia/salaverria.htm>
- 29 <http://www.cost-a20.wb.st/>

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