

Presentation of the Dossier

Academic and Scientific Cooperation in Communication: Dialogue, Reciprocity, and Situated Knowledge

Presentación del dossier

Cooperación académica y científica en comunicación: diálogo, reciprocidad y conocimiento situado

Apresentação do dossiê

Cooperação acadêmica e científica em comunicação: diálogo, reciprocidade e conhecimento situado

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This dossier arises from a set of questions that are both urgent and strategic for the contemporary field of communication studies. At a time marked by geopolitical tensions, technological transformations, institutional asymmetries, democratic fragilities, and renewed debates on coloniality, gender, open science, and public communication, academic and scientific cooperation can no longer be understood merely as a technical matter, an administrative procedure, or a diplomatic extension of institutional life. Cooperation must be examined as an epistemological, political, communicative, and ethical practice.

The call for papers that gave rise to this collection invited contributors to reflect on the principles that should guide dialogue and cooperation among academic entities, scientific associations, universities, research groups, and individual scholars. The questions were deliberately open-ended in order to allow for broad reflection. Some of these questions were: how can cooperation be built on dialogue, respect, and reciprocity rather than on direct or indirect forms of hegemony? How can decolonial, feminist, and other critical perspectives contribute to more just forms of knowledge production? How can public communication of science and open science strengthen academic cooperation? How can past traumas, inequalities, and historical difficulties be addressed without jeopardizing present and future collaboration? And how can cooperation be sustained in contexts marked by unequal academic cultures, economic limitations, and geopolitical asymmetries?

These questions are important because they shift the debate from the general value of cooperation to the concrete conditions under which cooperation becomes possible, fair, and transformative. The problem is not only whether scholars, associations, and institutions collaborate, but how they do so, who defines the agenda, which languages are used and legitimized, whose theoretical traditions are cited, who provides resources, who makes decisions, and who benefits from the outcomes. In this sense, cooperation should not be reduced to participation, representation, or occasional exchange. It requires shared design, shared responsibility, shared recognition, and shared capacity to intervene in the production and circulation of knowledge.

This concern is especially relevant in communication studies. In Latin America, the field has historically been shaped by critical reflections on dependency, cultural imperialism, popular communication, communication for development, media concentration, democratization, and epistemic autonomy. For this reason, communication research is particularly well equipped to

examine cooperation not only as an institutional practice, but also as a symbolic and material process through which power, meaning, legitimacy, and recognition are negotiated. To cooperate is also to communicate across differences; it is to create spaces of listening, translation, disagreement, mediation, and collective meaning-making.

A first group of contributions places decoloniality, epistemic justice, and the geopolitics of knowledge at the center of the discussion. The texts by Jair Vega, Toby Miller, Adilson Vaz Cabral Filho, César Bolaño, Zhang Yanqiu, Jenny Carol Ampuero Justiniano, and Tanius Karam interrogate the uneven structures through which communication research is produced, circulated, translated, published, and recognized. These contributions remind us that academic cooperation cannot be separated from the historical conditions of knowledge production. The hegemony of English, the dominance of corporate publishing, the unequal distribution of resources, the persistence of North-centered frameworks, and the marginalization of Indigenous, Afrodescendant, community-based, and territorial knowledges affect the possibilities of dialogue.

This issue seeks to engage in a decentralized dialogue between researchers representing each continent from a decolonial perspective of communication. This implies, on the one hand, an epistemological and methodological dismantling (Castro Lara, 2016), but also a political bet aimed at unveiling the space of subalternization of certain theories and perspectives and, concomitantly, the recognition of specificities that only take place in relation to territories, cultures and situated social practices, but are also linked to a geopolitics of legitimate knowledge that seeks to be questioned.

It is necessary to investigate, to know and to make room in the thinking of the Global North for the new epistemic, methodological, participatory and pedagogical forms that are being developed in the Global South. This imaginary space is not only translated into a specific territorial division, but is also constructed within countries, institutions and academic fields, operating as a barrier for the recognition, appropriation and legitimization of practices and knowledge, as well as for the enunciation of complex problems.

The call for epistemic disobedience formulated some years ago in relation to decolonial studies in general, implies the modification of the locus of enunciation and recognizes in the communication studies a double subjection: the one linked to the transactions between North and South, and also those that respond specifically to the space of legitimacy of the study of

communication and media, that which Miller (2012) names as a kind of class division between the humanities where the communication studies occupies a subaltern space.

Following Chasi and Rodney Gumedé (2018) we can affirm that both, the communication studies and the epistemologies and methodologies that underpin academic communication research have remained lodged mainly in the Global North and have thus isolated the erudition from the Global South. Therefore, to advance the communication studies as a whole and generate a "ferment" in the field's debate, it is necessary to take into consideration studies from different parts of the globe.

This will imply the recognition and construction of a heterogeneous, complex and revolted "other". It is key to understand that native intelligence cannot benefit from borrowing and appropriating developments obtained elsewhere (Mbembe, 2001). As we have learned from Paulo Freire (1969), the transformation requires a state of consciousness of both the oppressed and the oppressor. We ask then: How is it possible to decolonize communication and media studies? And furthermore, what should be the role of researchers, universities and scientific associations in this task?

However, these texts do not simply denounce inequality. They also propose alternative principles and vocabularies: cognitive justice, epistemic justice, inter-epistemic dialogue, situated horizontality, epistemological plurality, non-extractive reciprocity, institutional memory, care, and the recognition of multiple "Souths." In different ways, they argue that cooperation must create conditions for unequally situated actors to participate not only as guests or recipients, but as co-definers of problems, methods, concepts, languages, and expected outcomes. This is one of the central ideas of the dossier: cooperation becomes meaningful when it moves from invitation to co-design.

A second group of articles focuses on the institutional forms through which cooperation becomes possible and sustainable. The experiences of SOCICOM, AMIC, ABOIC, AANZCA, ORBICOM, INTRACOM, the UNESCO Chair Comunic.ar, and international journalism research networks show that cooperation is not sustained only by goodwill or by isolated events. It requires structures, continuity, memory, leadership, flexible mechanisms of coordination, and spaces for follow-up. These contributions allow the dossier to move from abstract principles to concrete practices: forums, seminars, working groups, academic associations, research networks,

journals, prizes, collaborative projects, digital literacy programs, and cross-border training initiatives.

In this regard, the articles by Anderson David Gomes dos Santos, Lizy Navarro Zamora, Jenny Carol Ampuero Justiniano, Renee Barnes, Malvina Eugenia Rodríguez, Juan Carlos Suárez Villegas, Beate Josephi, Miguel Garcés Prettel, and Fengler and colleagues offer different ways of understanding cooperation as an organized academic culture. SOCICOM and AMIC illustrate how national and regional associations can foster dialogue among researchers, support younger scholars, and create spaces for feedback and collective discussion. ABOIC shows how institutionalization in Bolivia can be read as intellectual resistance and as part of a broader Latin American tradition of democratic and ethical communication thought. AANZCA brings a different perspective by presenting disciplinary pluralism as the basis for non-hegemonic international cooperation. The Journalism Role Performance experience shows how comparative research may become a space for methodological deliberation, student training, and social appropriation of knowledge.

The UNESCO Chair Comunic.ar and INTRACOM introduce another key dimension: the relationship between cooperation, public communication, and knowledge transfer. The article on Comunic.ar analyzes how a UNESCO Chair based at a public university in Argentina articulates local, regional, and global networks around public communication, democracy, human rights, digital literacy, and territorial development. The INTRACOM proposal, in turn, recovers the classical notions of *philia* and *parrhesia* to reflect on the public responsibility of the university. Both texts suggest that academic cooperation should not be oriented exclusively toward publication, ranking, or institutional visibility. It should also contribute to critical citizenship, democratic deliberation, and the circulation of socially meaningful knowledge.

This point connects directly with the principles of public communication of science and open science. If academic cooperation remains confined to closed circuits of specialized publication, its transformative potential is limited. Open science does not only refer to access to publications or data; it also implies more transparent, participatory, and socially accountable forms of knowledge production. Public communication of science expands this horizon by asking how knowledge is translated, shared, discussed, and appropriated by different communities. Several texts in this dossier show that cooperation becomes more relevant when it

strengthens not only academic productivity, but also public debate, training, outreach, digital literacy, and the social uses of research.

We seek to identify specific agendas and problems within a geopolitics of knowledge that constructs and reinforces different forms of subalternity and periphery.

Such actions are linked to languages, legitimized knowledge, and evaluation and measurement systems that define modes of knowledge circulation, enabling and obstructing according to rules that were not written with diversity or the asymmetrical conditions in which valuable forms of knowledge are produced in mind, but rather with efficiency and productivity in mind.

We believe that one way to counteract processes of colonization and definitions of legitimate knowledge is to commit to an open science with access for different types of research and researchers. Therefore, we understand that it is necessary to investigate, understand, and make space for the epistemic, methodological, participatory, and pedagogical approaches that are woven from the Global South.

This space not only translates into a specific territorial division, but is also constructed within countries, institutions, and the academic field, operating as a barrier to the recognition, appropriation, and legitimization of practices and knowledge, as well as to the articulation of complex problems.

The institutions that coordinate and stimulate the activity of researchers at the national, regional, and international levels have an important role in the academic and political discussion of these problems and must also develop a social and historical responsibility in relation to the construction of a field of study that has undergone significant transformations in the last decade in relation to socio-technical development.

Furthermore, it is important to consider that we face new questions in a scenario that seeks to build new agreements and recover forms of sociability for the future after the humanitarian tragedy and economic collapse represented by the COVID-19 syndemic.

For many years our association has been participating in this session promoting dialogue between researchers from different latitudes and international associations with the aim of building reflections and a work agenda from the global south in the key of decoloniality.

At IAMCR 2023 we ask ourselves how contemporary communication processes can contribute to, or represent risks to, the development of democracy in our regions in the light of the profound transformations underway linked to digitalisation and accelerationism.

As expressed in the presentation of this conference:

The digitalization of society and the technological transformation of nature are key problems that require sociopolitical debate and governance (Feenberg, 1999; 2002). These are the issues that stand at the heart of IAMCR 2023. The concepts of radical modernity (Giddens, 1990), risk society (Beck, 1992), hypermodernity (Ascher, 2001, 2009), and social acceleration (Rosa, 2010), among others, reflect different perspectives on these transformations. They ultimately address the fundamental questions at the core of IAMCR 2023: What does it mean to be human in a digital world? What does it mean to build a common future?

The spread of networks and platform capitalism has given rise to a new information ecosystem integrating the advances in artificial intelligence whose unique transformation has had a far-reaching impact on traditional forms of socialization and institutional organization. In this process, the collection, storage, accumulation and processing of data as an asset involves a broader set of global value chains whose Autonomy replicates a colonial form of extraction inherent to capitalism that is much more complex than the traditional model described by dependency theory.

Considering the complexity and uniqueness of AI, it is necessary to broaden analysis protocols in order to gain a better understanding of the problems arising from risk regulation in relation to both humans and non-humans and how this phenomenon is linked to the logics of valorization (Srnicek, 2018; Van Dijck et al., 2018; Zuboff, 2020). Following Benjamin Bratton (2015), it is understood here that a new nomos is being created in the Internet era, in which socio-political debates on sovereignty and territory have to be reformulated to generate new forms of sovereignty in the virtual space in which national governments, transnational institutions and big tech overlap in current social cybernetics (Zerené, 2017; Borovinsky, 2022). This exceptional situation of transition towards a new information ecosystem and a logical organizational framework for ecologies of life is of special concern in regions, like Latin America, that have historically occupied a subordinate and dependent position in terms of technology and information.

A third axis of the dossier is gender. The articles by Marta Rizo García and Yanet Martínez Toledo demonstrate that cooperation cannot be democratic if it reproduces the exclusions and invisibilities that have historically structured academic fields. Feminist approaches to communication research show that the production of knowledge is inseparable from recognition, care, situated experience, intergenerational memory, and the reconstruction of

disciplinary genealogies. These contributions reveal that epistemic inequality is not only geopolitical; it is also gendered, institutional, affective, and embodied. Rizo García's article, focused on the trajectories of pioneer women researchers in communication in Mexico, shows how academic recognition has often been shaped by subtle but persistent forms of gender inequality: epistemic invisibility, the impact of motherhood on academic careers, lack of citation, unequal distribution of institutional work, and the under-recognition of women's intellectual contributions. Martínez Toledo's article, in turn, analyzes feminist agendas in Latin American communication through the trajectory of ALAIC's Thematic Group on Communication, Gender, and Diversities and the *Mujeres de la Comunicación* collection. Both texts show that feminist cooperation is not only a matter of including women in existing structures; it requires transforming the canon, the criteria of recognition, the modes of leadership, and the institutional cultures through which knowledge is produced and legitimized.

The dossier also includes a technological and epistemological concern that is increasingly unavoidable. The article by Paulo Faustino and Wilson Gomes Caldeira on generative artificial intelligence and scientific communication raises urgent questions about authorship, authenticity, bibliographic reliability, retracted literature, and the algorithmic mediation of knowledge. Their concept of "synthetic scientific memory" is especially relevant for this collection because it shows that academic cooperation today is shaped not only by people and institutions, but also by platforms, databases, automated writing systems, citation infrastructures, and algorithmic validation. The future of cooperation will therefore depend in part on how academic communities respond to the new infrastructures through which knowledge is generated, circulated, and recognized.

The contribution on community communication, decoloniality, and ancestrality by Adilson Vaz Cabral Filho expands this reflection toward territories, platforms, and community media practices. It reminds us that cooperation should not be limited to universities, journals, and formal associations. Community media, Indigenous and Quilombola initiatives, peripheral communication practices, and territorial networks also produce knowledge and intervene in the public sphere. Their experiences challenge the field to recognize other forms of expertise, other temporalities, and other relationships between communication, territory, memory, and political agency.

Jessica Retis, Iolanda Tortajada, and Carmen Peñafiel examine the evolution and

internationalization of the Spanish Association of Communication Research (AE-IC), showing how academic associations can operate as infrastructures for transnational collaboration and the construction of horizontal Ibero-American knowledge networks. Their contribution proposes a model of academic cooperation grounded in reciprocity, multilingualism, epistemic plurality, open science, and sustained institutional dialogue.

Taken together, the contributions gathered in this dossier suggest several principles for academic and scientific cooperation in communication. First, cooperation should be dialogic rather than extractive. It must create conditions for all participants to contribute to the definition of problems, methods, concepts, and results. Second, cooperation should be reciprocal but not naïvely symmetrical. Reciprocity does not mean assuming that all actors participate under equal conditions; it means recognizing inequalities and designing differentiated forms of participation, support, and recognition. Third, cooperation should be epistemologically plural. It must be open to different theoretical traditions, methodological cultures, languages, and forms of knowledge, including feminist, decolonial, Indigenous, Afrodescendant, community-based, and territorial perspectives.

Fourth, cooperation should be institutionally sustainable. It requires more than enthusiasm, personal contacts, or isolated events. It needs working groups, shared agendas, mechanisms for continuity, institutional memory, and flexible structures capable of surviving leadership changes and material difficulties. Fifth, cooperation should be publicly oriented. Its value should not be measured only by academic productivity, but also by its contribution to democratic life, public debate, social justice, critical citizenship, and the circulation of knowledge beyond specialized spaces. Sixth, cooperation should include care as an institutional and epistemological principle. Academic collaboration often depends on invisible work: coordination, translation, mentoring, listening, emotional labor, conflict mediation, and the maintenance of networks. Recognizing this work is part of building more just forms of cooperation.

The questions of the call for papers also invite us to consider past traumas and difficulties. Latin American communication studies have been marked by experiences of dependency, authoritarianism, censorship, unequal exchange, epistemic subordination, and exclusion. These histories cannot be ignored in the name of neutral internationalization. Cooperation becomes more ethical when it recognizes wounds, asymmetries, silences, and

interrupted dialogues. This recognition does not imply closing the field to global exchange; rather, it allows such exchange to be more honest, reflexive, and transformative.

The dossier further shows that cooperation operates across multiple scales. Some experiences are local and territorial, such as digital literacy workshops, community communication initiatives, or national association activities. Others are regional, such as Latin American seminars, thematic groups, research networks, and scientific associations. Still others are global, such as UNESCO Chairs, international comparative projects, transnational associations, and cross-border journalism education programs. The challenge is to avoid treating these scales as hierarchical. Local and territorial experiences are not minor forms of cooperation; they are often the spaces where the social meaning of knowledge becomes most visible. Likewise, global cooperation is valuable only when it does not erase the situated conditions from which participants speak and act.

This dossier therefore proposes a relational understanding of academic cooperation. Cooperation is not a finished model but a process. It is built through dialogue, disagreement, translation, negotiation, care, institutional work, and shared intellectual labor. It involves the ability to create common agendas without suppressing difference. It requires both critique and construction: critique of hegemonic structures, and construction of new networks, pedagogies, publications, platforms, and public interventions.

The articles included here do not offer a single answer to the questions posed in the call for papers. Instead, they provide a constellation of perspectives, cases, concepts, and experiences that allow us to think of cooperation in more complex terms. From community media to scientific associations, from feminist genealogies to artificial intelligence, from public universities to international journalism networks, from decolonial critique to institutional proposals for knowledge transfer, the dossier shows that academic cooperation is one of the decisive challenges for communication studies in the twenty-first century.

The future of cooperation will depend on our ability to build shared spaces that are less hierarchical, more reflexive, more plural, and more committed to the societies in which research is produced. It will also depend on the capacity of associations, universities, research groups, journals, and networks to transform cooperation from an occasional activity into a sustained academic culture. In this sense, cooperation is not only a means for producing knowledge; it is

itself a way of imagining what kind of academic community communication studies wishes to become.

The texts reinforce the communication and academic and scientific cooperation activities carried out by entities such as the Latin American Association of Communication Researchers (ALAIC). These actions have gained even more relevance due to the current geopolitical context, which demands more dialogue to overcome challenges within and outside universities, as can be observed in the texts of this volume of JLACR and also in present and future activities. Enjoy your reading!

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