

“MAPCOM, Communication Research in Spain and the EU, Contesting Policies and Methods, Past, Present and Future”.

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Introduction



This Poster presents the results of the national research project **MapCom** «The Research Structure on the Social Practices of Communication in Spain. Mapping of Projects, Groups, Lines, Objects of Study and Methods» Reference Code CSO2013-47933-C4-1P, funded by the Research Excellence Programme at the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness in Spain within the period of 2013 to 2016. We present the analysis of Phase I, Phd-Doctoral Theses (DT) and National Research Projects (NRP) in the areas of Social Sciences and Humanities whose object of study comprised any socially relevant dimension of the practices of «Communication» between the 1st of January 2007 to the 31st of October 2014, undertaken within Spanish Universities. This poster provides synthetic results of the **Mapcom** and main Url links, its methodological approach and the longitudinal and internationalization potential it embodies in becoming an advanced research tool and method for the analysis of the state of the art of research within Universities and other Research Institutions in varied areas of scientific knowledge.

Research methodologies and practices in communication in our cultural context date back to the late twentieth century sponsored among others by the AICE (Association of Communication Researchers in Spain) one of the promoters of today's **AE-IC (Spanish Association for Communication Research, www.ae-ic.org)**. Researchers like Caffarel, Dominguez and Romano (1989), Caffarel and Caceres (1993), Jones (1994, 1998, 2000) had examined at the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the first faculties of Information Sciences and Communication in Spain the manner of the who, what, how and where communication research did take place.

Subsequent investigations have been carried out by among others Alsina and Jiménez (2010) on the paradigmatic case of communication research in this socio-humanistic discipline. Arcila and Piñuel (2013) extended the spectrum to the e-communication and practices of Latin American researchers. The framework of bibliometric analysis of doctoral theses in Spain was investigated by the work of Delgado et al (2006), Castillo and Xifra (2006), Sources and Arguimbau (2010), Repiso et al (2011) and more recently Blazquez (2015). Regarding the analysis of research on communication relevant investigation has been carried out by Fernandez, Masip (2013) Martinez and Saperas (2009, 2011), Lopez and Vicente (2011) on methods and techniques of dominant research Spanish scientific journals and mainly works by Piñuel, Lozano, Gaitan Garcia et al (2011, 2015, 2016) on research in communication, developing a methodological and theoretical mapping of the Spanish and Latin American sphere.

In order to investigate the profiles of teaching theory of communication/information and resource conditions, routines and approaches to research on communication as an object of study in European and Latin American universities, the Research Group **MDCS** at the Complutense University (Madrid, Spain), and **sponsored** by the **AE-IC, FELAFACS** (Latin American Federation of Social Communication Faculties) and **ECREA**, promoted two surveys on teaching and Communication research as a study in 2012. These surveys analysed frames of research activity, objects and general contents of research, research methodology and objects of study as well as theoretical paradigms involved and dissemination of results and transferring them (Piñuel et al, 2011). The results of these investigations were completed with two symposia held in Spain under the direct responsibility of **José Luis Piñuel** as Scientific Director of the Commission for Scientific Policy at the AE-IC. These events were held in Madrid at the Rey Juan Carlos University in 2011 and Segovia at the University of Valladolid in 2013, bringing together almost all relevant R&D running Researchers and Projects, as well as spokesmen for Consolidated Research Groups within Spanish Universities in this field of work.

Methods



The “**Research Scenario**” on the social practices of Communication is an object of study poorly analysed in our scientific context. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of Research Projects, Groups, Objects and lines of Research and Methods, is an area of analysis which has been recently institutionalized as a disciplinary field under the research partnerships of the AE-IC and ECREA. It has not **yet** been done an objective analysis with methodological rigor of scientific projects, research groups, lines, objects and methods which shape the state of the art of “Communication” as an area of R&D in Spain or Europe. The **MapCom** distributes the “mapping” of the objects of study in **Four Geographical Areas**, - see map above-. The project is divided in Three Phases and Methodological Research Techniques: We present **Phase 1 “Coding DT & NRP”** results, **Phase 2** is based upon the “**Phillips 66**” group discussion technique (2016Q4-2017Q1 “underway”), Phase 3 (2017Q2&Q3).

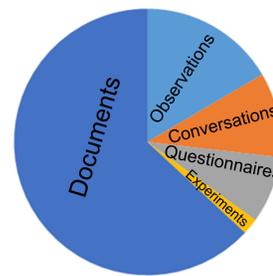
The analysis we present is related to the **entire detected universe** (1122 documents) distributed in **DT** (979 items) and **NRP** (143 items), (n.b. See Table 1 a.f. for percentage-split). The following Url -<https://goo.gl/X1qEfb>- shows registration guide and document analysis methodology implemented within **Phase 1**. The **questionnaire** used includes 28 questions and their respective **coding categories of analysis**, it was run by researchers in a secured digital survey environment at Url <http://www.e-encuesta.es/encuesta/datosMapCom>. The coding was conducted between the months of September to December 2015 by previously trained researchers, quality control coding was undertaken between January to February 2016 on the total sample in order to minimize inaccuracies.

Results @ Mapcom.es

	Frequency	Percentage
DT	97	87,3
NRP	14	12,7
Total	112	100,0

The following Url gives you access to the Final Report of **Phase 1 Mapcom** – i.e. <https://goo.gl/49fJ1L> - this document provides data from the **Four Research Groups** and demarcation Areas which split the distributed geographical *loci* of research. Please visit www.mapcom.es for full access to database, reports and analysis.

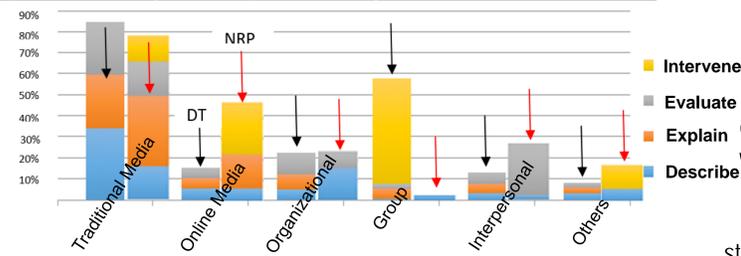
Graph 1. Type of Technique Mostly Used 2007-2014.



From a methodological perspective, the object “to describe” the dimensions of the social practices of communication is always more frequent in NRP (49%) and DT (56% alike), although it has a differentiated evolution between Regions and years analysed.

On the other hand as shown in **Graph 1**, the type of technique primary used in DT and NRP on the aggregate was based upon the analysis of “Documents” and mere “Observation”, “Conversations”, “Questionnaires” or “Experimental” procedures where more scarcely used.

Graph 2. Research “Objects” and implemented strategies in DT and NRP 2007 to 2014.



Graph 2. Shows how **Traditional Media** and **Online Media** prime as objects of research within DT and NRP and what methodological strategies “correlate” more in each case.

Conclusions

- In relation to the **gender of authorship** there exists a **decompensation** in favour of men for DT and NRP, this imbalance is dramatic when it comes to NRP, 7 to 1 ratio Men/Women on average.
- Research objects are similar in DT and NRP, however objectives differ significantly. DT face preferably **exploration or diagnostic targets** (description and explanation) while NRP give preference to evaluative objectives (evaluative and intervention strategies).
- It is relevant to note that within DT and NRP we have detected a prime axis of research concentrated in **Mass Communication** (traditional or online) prior to other objects of study.
- Research in Communication is an object of study which will be analysed in diverse academic spheres following the trends that are consolidated in a society and economy which is increasingly more digital and interconnected. The data derived from the work of many represents a significant contribution in the analysis of research in Communication in Spain and Europe. The theoretical and methodological innovations implemented in this project should be fostered and promoted in other regions like Latin America (Piñuel et al, 2016) and Europe in order to be able to shed light on the state of the-art and prospective research in an area of knowledge increasingly central to our society, economy, politics, ... and future, our dear **Communication Research Studies**.

5. This work also provides a discussion and analysis of past and current national and EU legal, regulatory and policy directions in the field of Research in Media and Communication at the EU, including an analysis of European media and communication research law, regulation and policy.

Mapcom-EU Proposal for analysis within H2020 and after: i) R&D Policy Analysis, National and EU perspective, ii) Research Data and Indicator Construction, iii) Consortium Construction under way, contact fortega@usal.es for more information and collaboration.

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