Learning with 'Generation Like' about Digital Global Citizenship:

a Case Study from Spain

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on the practices and challenges faced by higher education in order to engage 'Generation Like' (Frontline 2014), the generations who have grown up with social media, in learning to be critical, cosmopolitan, and global political subjects. We present here a specific case study based on the experience at the *Universitat Jaume I of Castellón* (UJI), Spain, in the undergraduate degree course in Advertising and Public Relations at the Department of Communication Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in the subject of 'Communication towards Equality' (one term, 4th year).

This pedagogical project contributes to international discourses on global education by sharing evidence from an interdisciplinary approach that combines Global Citizenship Education with areas of Media Literacy and Communication for Social Change, to explore and design an innovative syllabus on 'Transgressive Communication of Social Change'. This aims to train future professionals in the field of communication to foreshadow in their daily practice the social and cultural effects of communicative action, considered as part of informal global education.

The adjective 'transgressive' specifies the concept and method developed, which derives from feminism and critical pedagogy (Hooks 1994; Lagarde-y-de-los-Ríos 2005) and applies ethical and political strategies for a collective and nonviolent transformation of the local and global status quo. Here, it is specifically utilised to study Communication for Social Change (Tufte 2017). These proposals combine 'theory and practice in order to affirm and demonstrate pedagogical practices engaged in creating a new language, rupturing disciplinary boundaries, de-centring authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes a condition for reasserting the relationship between agency, power, and struggle' (Giroux and McLaren 1993 in Hooks 1994: 129). In this way, both the pedagogical foundations and the communicative perspective developed here can be transferred to the epistemology and methods of Global Citizenship Education as well.

In the present day, we need to link this programme to its contemporary context, which is characterised by the ambivalence between transmedia mainstream digital scenarios (Sampedro 2018) and the potentialities of techno-politics (Bennet and Segerberg 2015). Most of our students socialise on media platforms designed with business and promotional interests, which construct a segmented and homogeneous socio-political pseudo-reality, but they are also the generations maturing following

international movements such as #metoo and other global networking activist actions (Jenkins 2016).

Thus, this proposal is part of a broader project named 'Digital dietetics'[2], following Sampedro's metaphor of a healthy social media diet, which works towards collectively responsible media literacy actions. We address the pedagogical and political consequences of mainstream digital scenarios: how social media socialisation develops into specific cultural relations and political economies resulting from the individual and collective identities they configure. The Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018 and the sophisticated data analysis engineering of Facebook, which benefited the Trump campaign, revealed to the broader public some major questions about social media. This was already being discussed in research on media literacy and political digital communication (Livingstone 2008), mostly linked to the opaque functioning of private social media platforms and apps. Their programming and algorithms result in users relating to one another, and to information, in very determinate individualised relations trapped in an advertising rationale configured through 'liking' reactions more than dialogical interactions.

In addition, we have to take into account the background of our students, their relevant experience, social composition and global outlook. They enter our degree with a previous overall academic grade close to 9. Geographically, they do not come just from Castellón province, but also from other parts of Spain, attracted by the originality and practice-oriented nature of this degree at UJI, which includes regular seminars with companies and professionals from the communication sector and the development of real campaigns for them (such as the "Live Creativity" with McCann Group every year).

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[2] Further information at www.dieteticadigital.net

Students also participate in the organisation of these events. It is also worth mentioning that our university is very active in promoting student national and international exchange programmes: our students visit other universities and we receive incoming students to Castellón (from the Netherlands, Greece, France, Italy, Korea…). These international students are present in higher numbers in the subject analysed here than in others (from 2 to 10), as it offers 30% of the teaching in English (60% in Spanish and just 10% in Valencian, our local language). Every year, the presence of students from migrant families also increases, with several students from backgrounds such as Venezuela, Russia, Rumania or Argentina (10% of the students). This also affects the composition of the group due to the fact that at least 20% of the students have a part-time or full-time job simultaneously to their classes (either in the afternoons or the weekends), although only 5% do not attend classes for this reason and need to be assessed with a final exam instead of the continuous evaluation presented here. It is also interesting to consider that there are always from 3 to 5 students involved in university student associations.

In this class context, how can we deal with learning aims such as living together and understanding each other, assuming a 'cognitive diversity' (Zuckerman 2014; 2013)? The following pages analyse the tensions between who our students are, how they learn (and communicate) and the challenges of a critical cosmopolitan education with regard to communicative competences, as both professionals and global citizens.

Theoretical and methodological framework

As mentioned above, the approach undertaken here applies a critical pedagogy which envisions alternatives. It does not focus on criticising bad practices, but instead searches for what can be defined as successful practices to learn how to re-imagine

political options through communication actions (Duncombe 2007). 'We combine an epistemological revision of how representations both subject and activate political agency along with innovative methodologies that raise students' awareness and engagement' (Gámez-Fuentes, Nos-Aldás y Farné, 2015, p. 36-37). The main challenge is that students not only reflect on their own present role in digital scenarios (consumption or interaction), but also prepare themselves as the future designers of these scenarios. This learning model considers the class as a communication community capable of transforming reality through their learning process as citizens, and their future actions as communication professionals.

The theoretical and methodological traditions applied here define transformative communication from the tradition of Communication for Development and Social Change (CDCS) (Enghel 2013; Gumucio and Tufte 2006; Marí-Sáez 2016; Tufte 2017). This field has evolved in a continuous dialogue with Development Education and its latest trends as Critical Global Citizenship Education (Torres 2017). One of the core reflections comes from the field of Non-Governmental Organisations for Development (Bourn 2018) and their rich debate on the strategic role played by Development Education in their global projects and the sort of educative efficacy needed for their communication (Pinazo and Nos-Aldás 2016). This has defined the so-called Communication for Social Change (CSC) as communication aimed at capacities, justice and freedom, in dialogue with trends on epistemologies of the South and decolonisation (Sen 1999; Da-Sousa-Santos 2012).

The epistemological lens of this model of communication is in accordance with Austin's discourse ethics (1976) on the performativity of language. This assumption on the social commitments established by language and how communicating is acting, also looks at cultural studies and postcolonial proposals, gender and queer studies to highlight discourse as a cultural representation (Hall 1997). The design of this learning programme

is based on the responsibilities the students need to acquire from the belief that they are political subjects and that doing things in a different collective and rights-oriented way is possible (Martínez-Guzmán 2015; Martínez-Guzmán and Ali 2008).

The core proposal relies on the concept of an *alterative* communicative efficacy. The concept of 'alterative' is taken from the Peruvian author Roncagliolo (1988; Marí-Sáez 2017), who refers with this adjective to the belief that we are not working on an alternative proposal to hegemonic discourses, but on one which can transform them, alter them at their roots and eradicate the causes of violence, suffering and exclusion. We are therefore dealing with social communication as practical politics (Hopgood 2013), from a radical approach 'to assess the context, root out the problems of prevailing systems, and suggest where progressive alternatives may be found (…) to advance an emancipatory project that aims at deepening and radicalizing the democratic horizon (…) the conditions of possibility for radical political solutions' (Fenton 2016: 178-179). This pedagogical practice, where equal participation is a core element, explores the role of *counter-publicity* (Downey and Fenton, 2003) by looking at language, discourses, communication processes, cultural processes and social movements as the storyline of cultures, as the mediations which interweave their complexity (Martín-Barbero 1998; 2014).

Beyond marketing and instrumental approaches (educative communication)

Cultural efficacy

sociocultural objectives (reframing cultural assumptions)

alterative, transformative, pedagogical

Cultural efficiency

when combining educational aims with other goals (branding or funding) + **long-term** education as a cross responsibility beyond immediate goals (*not diseducating*).

Figure 1. Cultural efficacy model. Source: Own elaboration

From this comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, we have designed a critical methodology on how to produce and evaluate communication from a cultural perspective in order to be aware of the relations and commitments which are established by our discourses. This leads us to look at three different levels:

1. The idea (image) of (the) reality represented (dignity or misery, for instance).

2. The suggested type of relation with that reality (equality or superiority).

3. The kind of reaction sought in society (which can seek to evoke hatred or reconciliation, inclusion or exclusion, individual power or collective interests).

In general terms, our learning approach aims at the interconnection between rhetoric, values, beliefs and behaviour. Students learn how to communicate towards:

*an informed, engaged and critical civil society as the main 'engine' for social change: active(ist) global solidarity

*societies in movement made up of political subjects triggered by 'communicative information' (illusion, hope, possibility) (Alfaro 2005).

We, therefore, position ourselves close to Global and Cosmopolitan Media Studies (Christensen and Jansson 2015) in the line of a critical Cosmopolitan Citizenship Education framed from Human Rights (Starkey 2017; Osler and Starkey 2018). This adds to pedagogical methodology assumptions such as:

1. 'Cosmopolitans recognise that there is more than one acceptable way to live in the world, and that we may have obligations to people who live in very different ways than we do' (Zuckerman 2014 on Appiah's thought).

2. 'It's not a surprise that complex stories that require us to understand interconnection are hard to develop audiences for' (ibid.)

Challenges and practices

The specific learning process we are presenting here deals with topics and competences related to peace cultures (Martínez-Guzmán 2006) – as the effective realisation of social justice and freedom – as well as a critical, social and sustainable economy (Mies and Shiva 1993; Herrero 2013) with students in the 4th year of a BA in Advertising and Public Relations at the UJI (Spain) who are attending the compulsory subject of 'Communication towards Equality' (first term of the year, 4 months)[3].

Taught in higher education, this subject develops innovative methodologies through the application of the latest trends in 'Communication of Social Change', understood as those practices which civil society is successfully applying in order to achieve transformative goals towards global social justice. Educating professionals in

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[3] More details on Spanish education and gender equality legislation can be found in Gámez-Fuentes, M.J., E. Nos-Aldás and A. Farné (2015).

Communication of Social Change implies developing with them theoretical and practical wisdom for a political and radical transformation of cultural violence (Galtung 1990). This involves raising students' awareness of the relevance of symbolic violence, its effects on legitimising and sustaining structural violence and direct violence in all different social fields (from gender violence to poverty or forced migrations) and learning strategies to transform through nonviolent communicative actions the root causes and structures which maintain these situations.

This proposal is supported by the key concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991), so that all different variables of exclusion/inclusion are taken into account: structural, political and representational, related to gender, race, colour, religion, geographical origin, capacities, age or class.

The first step is to train students to identify the communicative strategies that legitimise and provoke social injustices (cultural violence/symbolic violence). The second step is to use communicative creativity and potential to re-imagine oppression-free societies by re-framing representations of reality (Lakoff 2004; Darnton and Kirk 2011) through story-based strategies to re-tell hegemonic stories (Reinsborough and Canning 2017). In this learning process we work with social movements' initiatives and Third Sector campaigns, vade-mecums and other working papers elaborated by them. Moreover, students need to distinguish culturally-effective proposals from those which have different intentions, such as those which commercialise social struggles or use them for corporate and private interests (Gámez-Fuentes and García-López 2015), such as the so called *pinkwashing* or *greenwashing* trends. An underlying aim, therefore, is to challenge their own 'deep frames' (Darnton and Kirk 2011; Nos-Aldás and Pinazo 2013), as far as rewording Canning and Reinsborough's words on communication for change, '(...) the obstacle to learning [they say, convincing people] is often not what they don't

yet know but actually what they already do know. In other words, people's existing assumptions and beliefs can act as narrative filters to prevent them from hearing social change messages' (2012).

As hinted at in the theoretical and methodological framework, the understanding of education and communication on the basis of this experience builds on the main concepts of identity (as individual cognitive and emotional models) and framing (the way we frame reality through representation influences our behaviour as a result of how values, emotions and beliefs play a role in such a process). Particularly, we work here on how beliefs act as filters between reality and society, and which beliefs can lead us to pro-social engaged behaviours (Nos-Aldás and Pinazo 2013). Positive pro-social values lead to 'collective action frames' (Sireau 2009 in Darnton and Kirk 2011, p. 32). Collective action frames emphasise self-determination. Self-determination refers to the individual's sense of agency to make change for the betterment of society (empowerment and self-awareness). From this perspective, we must incorporate in critical global citizenship education values of self-transcendence, which are linked to values of personal openness to change. According to Kasser and Ryan's Aspiration Index Life-Goals (1996), this approach to life has the potential to increase a feeling of agency, one connected to affiliation and community feelings instead of individualistic and consumerist interests (Kasser et al 2004).

Thus, the starting point for this course is the learning biographies of the students, defined by the curricular and socio-cultural context, namely the last year of a degree which is extensively focused on corporate and commercial communication. Moreover, a key element is to critically address the socio-political pseudo-reality created by the politics of consumption and sensationalism (Ouellette and Banet-Weiser 2018) and which have played an important role in Brexit, Trump's election as President of the USA,

Bolsonaro's election as President of Brazil or the extreme right-wing party VOX being elected to the Andalusian Parliament in Spain. We question the influence of present-day mainstream transmedia mediated-relations (the aforementioned social media and generalised advertising rationality) on their identities, life-styles and behaviour: whether they are 'self-centred' and 'de-politicised' identities (Chouliaraki 2018).

We consistently and slowly work on moving from their understanding of communication, from a logic of opaque individual persuasive messages to Communication for Social Change based on open source collective cooperative and participatory processes. We develop the learning process in the form of invitational (Foss and Griffin 1995) and dialogic communicative interactions (Kaplún 1998) to make them understand relations beyond reputation, branding (promotion) and business goals through an un-learning and re-learning process that searches for social and critical business models and active global citizens. This justifies the fact that we apply participatory and cooperative methodologies, a pedagogy of dialogue, in spite of working with groups of 90 students in theory classes, divided into 2 groups of 45 for seminars. Nonetheless, both theory and practice lessons rely on participation and discussion.

There are two main filters which are dealt with:

Firstly, related to their individual identities, we highlight the limits of considering themselves prosumers instead of critical and media active citizens (Jenkins 2006). We focus on the main ideas which help them realise collective identities, such as 'The personal is political' (Millet 1970) or 'What you buy is your vote' (Ballesteros 2007), so that they become familiar with the consequences of their individual choices, as well as collective political projects and the social economy.

Secondly, there is what Sampedro (2018: 48) defines as the chimeras of digital natives:

1. digital natives' 'proficiency': they assume they know everything related to digital scenarios, ignoring the relevance of experience, media literacy or digital humanism.

2. 'global (digital) village': sometimes young generations have the feeling that they are connected to the whole world through their screens, that everything is accessible for them, ignoring the technological breach or how algorithms filter their 'worlds'.

3. 'we can be whoever we want to be' in the digital world: young generations sometimes disregard the difficulties of the real world overselling the possibilities of anonymity in digital worlds and overlooking its risks (selling your privacy).

4. 'screens are enough', insofar as everything can be done in the digital world, ignoring the benefits of offline life.

In relation to this debate, we work on their awareness as political subjects, as citizens, and draw together the different actors who interact in multi-layered scenarios – online and offline, interpersonal and mediated– (Toret 2013) in order to conform cultures:
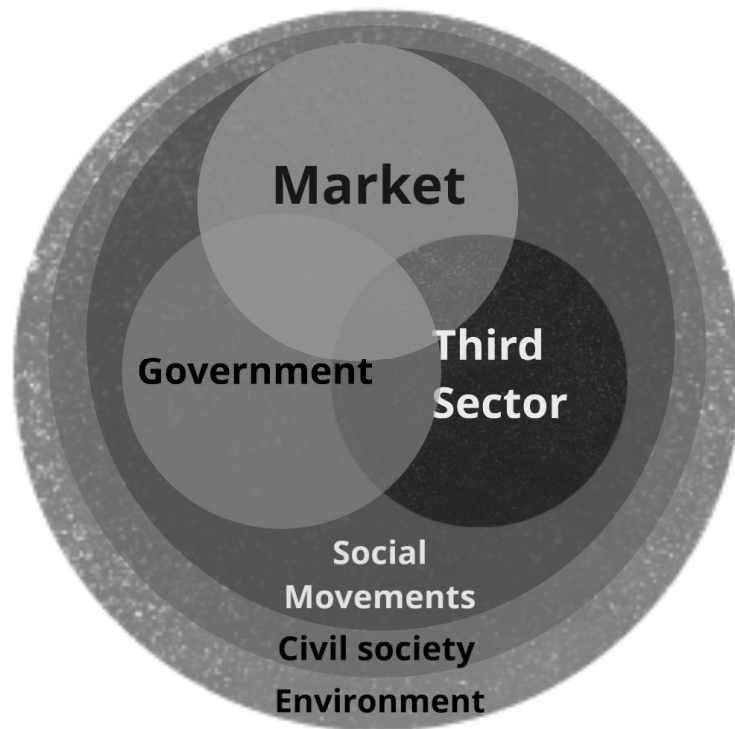
Figure 2. Actors on Global Communication Scenarios. Source: Own elaboration

All in all, we could sum up the overall goal of this subject as developing their competence and agency in order to foreshadow the cultural consequences of communication and be able to effectively work on advocacy communication, which implies working on all the different interconnected areas for social change from communication, education, legislation and political decisions:
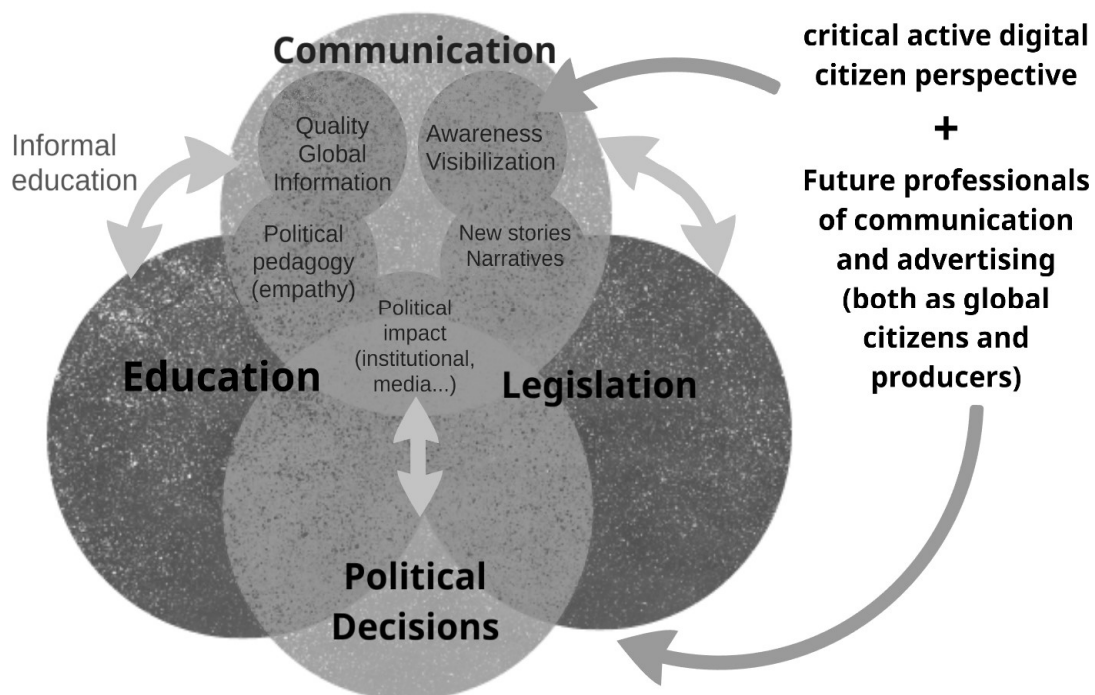
Figure 3. Advocacy scenarios for social change. Source: Own elaboration

The specific syllabus, which translates the previous conceptual and methodological framework into learning practice, is structured into challenges instead of units in order to increase students' motivation and engagement. It attempts to construct a collective project in order to complete - and relate to - their previous knowledge:

1. INTRODUCTION: hacking 'Communication towards equality'

These first sessions are fundamental to start to create the group consciousness and gather information about the group's previous learning. To that end, several activities are carried out such as a sound landscape (through active listening, we sit in a circle and make the sound of rain by

snapping our fingers or clapping on our legs[4]). The title itself questions students' prejudices on the subject, as they usually arrive in class limiting their expectations to gender studies applied to communication through the mere analysis of stereotyping. It also widens the focus from feminism (a root element) to intersectional social justice and peace culture. In this first section we also broaden their concept of advertising (promotional communication) to a double-sided approach which also involves publicity (public communication).

2. CHALLENGE 1: Advertising/publicity communication, diversity, dissent and social change.

We discuss the tradition regarding Communication for Social Change and broaden the theories and models of communication they have previously worked with from collective, cultural and political criteria. We also approach the challenge of 'consensual dissent' (Sampedro and Lobera 2014), of being aware and communicating differences through nonviolence and dialogue.

3. CHALLENGE 2: Cultural efficacy as a new working tool.

The concept and method of cultural efficacy is presented through the case study of the evolution of the communication of NGOs for Development. Students critically analyse numerous communication examples and agree the main communication criteria proposed by the latest research and practical reports on this topic.

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[4] An example with a big auditorium can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQAdfH5TtAE from minute 6:50.

4. CHALLENGE 3: Transgressive Communication for Social Change: applying current trends.

Through the analysis of the successful practices of different social organisations (such as the Quepo Foundation for Social Communication in Barcelona[5]), students get hands-on experience of developing examples and actions of transgressive communication for change.

5. CULTURAL EFFICACY FESTIVAL, conclusions and final review of the learning experience.

In the final sessions, the students present their campaigns in a festival with a professional jury. Their final campaigns are assessed by participatory evaluation, both by the invited communication professionals and by their peers. The last week of the course is reserved to discuss the learning outcomes with the students: the lecturer has already corrected their different assignments during the semester, so any possible misunderstandings or weaknesses can be collectively reviewed in class.

As presented above, the first activities are related to value-based education and question the link between logics (worldviews) and identities. Going back to Canning and Reinsborough's reminder on how '(...) it is not "the facts" that motivate people to act — it is how those facts touch their values. Our actions must communicate with values by connecting with what people already know and hold dear' (2008).

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[5] All their work and proposals can be found at http://www.quepo.org/

For that reason, we use a game, a values deck of cards, made by the Public Interest Research Centre (PIRC) based on Schwartz's values, in order to work on 'Finding Frames: New ways to engage the UK public in global poverty' (Darnton and Kirk 2011). Framing theory leads us to explore their own frames and relate them to attitudes and values related to social justice:
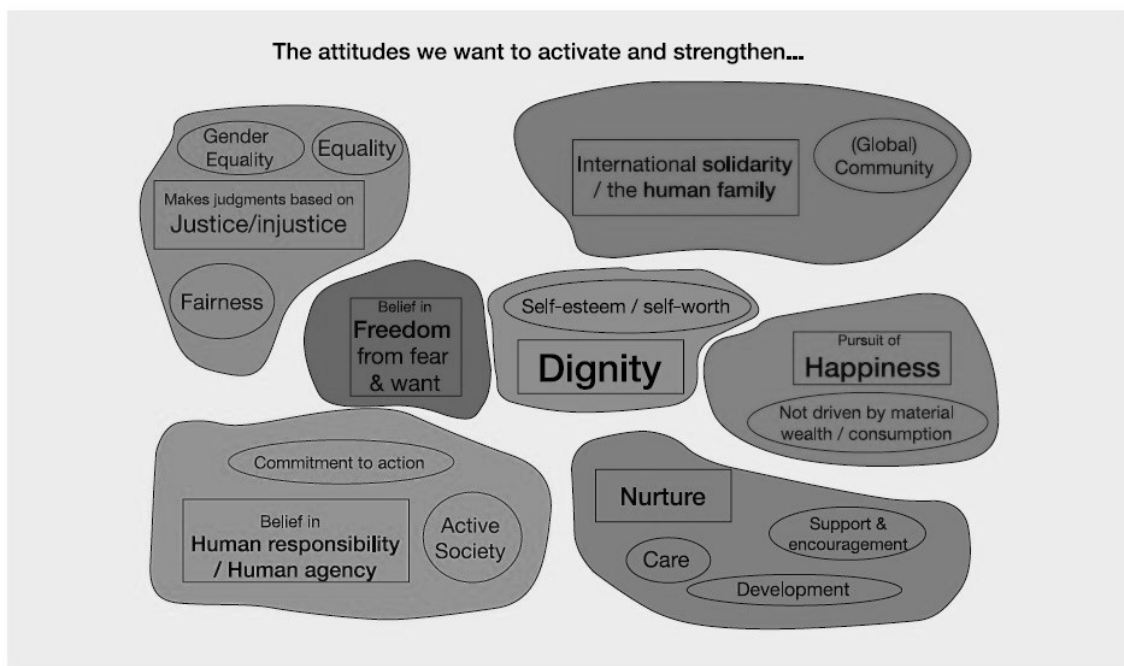

Figure 4. Attitudes for Global Justice. Source: Darnton and Kirk (2011: 58).

Its translation into communicative criteria goes hand in hand with the practical proposals from international networks of Communication for Social Change, such as the DevReporter (2016), whose vade-mecum insists on 'viewing events in perspective, and presenting them with a global dimension to encourage understanding of present and future interdependencies'. Specifically: 'showing the relationship between causes and the impacts in the countries involved' and 'catching the interest and curiosity of the audience by presenting the common problems and the commitment of citizens in all their diversity'.

The inclusive, universal and emancipated values extracted by Mesa et al (2013) from 1325 pacifist women's life-stories are also transferred to Transgressive Communication of Social Change as cultural efficacy communication criteria:
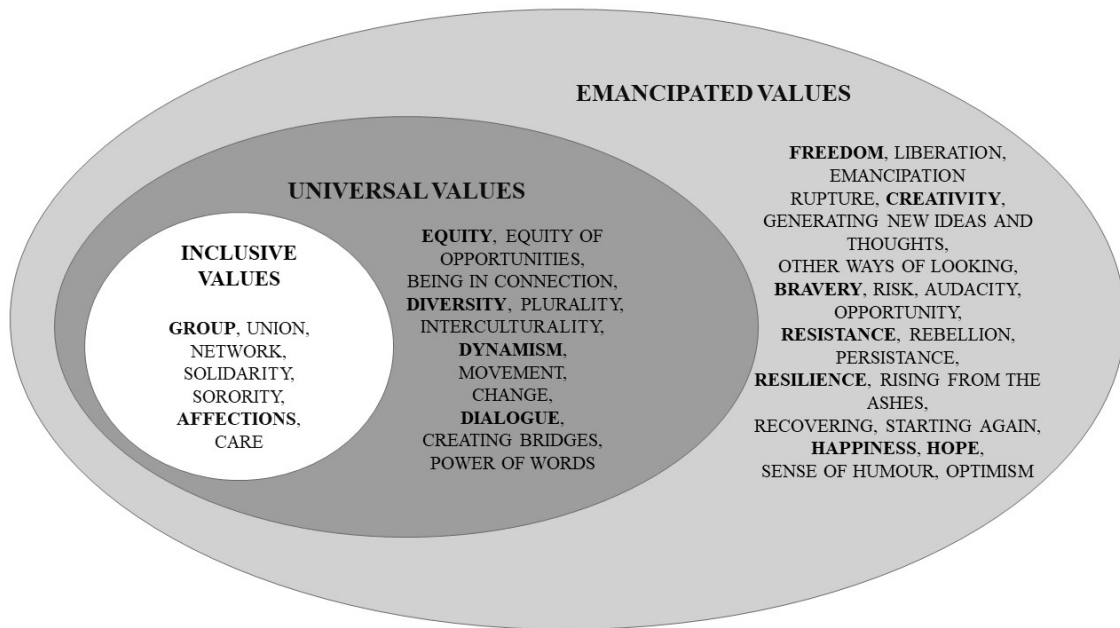

Figure 5. Values to communicate and educate in visible and transgressive plural societies. Source: Translated from Mesa et al. (2013: 46).

International research has proved that many different lines of thought are reaching very similar proposals and criteria for critical, value-based learning. This can be seen in Sharma (2018), who analyses non-western proposals and draws similar conclusions to those set out by recent research on social movements communication (Castells 2012; Moliner-Miravet, Francisco-Amat and Olave-García 2014; Espinar and Seguí 2016). Examples include the relevance of a sense of interdependence, a sense of climate change as planetary citizens or sustainable development, an understanding of peace and

nonviolence as central to the Human Rights agenda or a commitment to reflective or dialogic and transformative learning (ibid. 94).

To apply all these learnings continuously and at their own pace, we follow a formative assessment which is part of the student methodology for continuous and participatory learning:

1. They carry out peer tutorials and flipped classes. Students work in groups to enliven a part of a class session, with them being the ones who are experts on the topic and deciding how to make the other students learn in a participatory and interesting way (they design the dynamics and methodologies to be used, tutored by the lecturers). (10% of the final grade)

2. They prepare a final conceptual map: through creative visual thinking methodologies, they synthesise their complete learning by also applying it. (20% of the final grade)

3. Project oriented: they develop a final campaign, which can be a prototype or a service-learning experience. (30% of the final grade)

4. They write a continuous learning portfolio. (40% of the final grade)

In conclusion, through participatory and cooperative dynamics and group cohesion activities, students debate and discuss, constantly applying what they learn. We encourage them to innovate and produce transgressive proposals through thoughtful processes which involve going back to simple thinking strategies from philosophy for children, which guide them to approach controversial issues (OXFAM 2018) in reflective ways.

Final discussion and conclusions

The pedagogical proposal for social justice presented here is the result of 21 years of teaching experience in different higher education levels, including Masters programmes on Development Education and Communication for Peace and subjects at undergraduate level such as Media and Peace Cultures or Social Advertising Language.

It applies action-research and innovative education approaches to the training of communication professionals as global critical citizens whose daily actions will support nonviolent social transformation towards cultures of peace. However, both the theoretical and methodological framework developed here, and the proposed criteria to address controversial issues in intersectional, nonviolent and engaging ways, apply to global education programmes as well.

Thus, regarding the relevance of the findings presented in this chapter for broader debates on global education, we can highlight the following:

First, the approaches to learning and the teaching dynamics presented here develop a critical perspective and eagerness to participate and be part of the solution (testimonies of the students' final evaluation). Student satisfaction with this learning proposal is very positive. They highly appreciate being able to take part in the decision making process of their learning, both through peer-review and being responsible for the enlivenment of a class session. They value very positively having the opportunity to discuss in class with different students and get to know and understand their different contexts, opinions and perspectives.

Although the overall opinion is very satisfactory with regard to their development in terms of acquiring new knowledge and skills to communicate effectively for social change, some of them miss a clearer distinction between theoretical and practical classes

due to their previous learning biographies. On the other hand, once they have experienced these new participatory and cooperative methodologies, some of them request even more responsibility and involvement in the development of the classes.

Second, every step and decision of the course is designed in accordance with the latest trends in research and practices of Communication of Social Change and Critical Global Citizenship Education, and applies the latest proposals, reports and guidelines debated by practitioners and international actors. The professors maintain a constant collaboration with all the different actors involved in global citizenship and social justice work (mostly NGOs, activists, international organisations, international academia, political actors…), by participating in international interdisciplinary networks. These include practitioners and academia, such as #comunicambio (in English #comm4change), mainly in Spain and Latin America or, in the broader international arena, #C4D (Communication for Development), and the DEEEP programme (Development Education Exchange in Europe Programme), the specific programme on Development Education of CONCORD (the European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs) which ended in 2015. These networks gather interdisciplinary experts who combine communicative and educative perspectives and advocate for social transformation from formal and informal contexts, through the collaboration of political, educational and communicational actors.

As part of the educative actions presented, following service-learning and transformative education, this way of understanding universities' role in higher education addresses real problems, collaborates on real proposals with organisations and communities, and develops real solutions though social transference. One example is the replication of the Radi-Aid Festival initiative by SAIH (the Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund), where they launch an annual campaign for

Global Citizenship education based on research on the failures and successes of NGODs communication, which they monitor[6]. This project was also developed in a university (in Norway) and inspired the Cultural Efficacy Festival presented in this chapter as a learning activity (Farné, Castillo-Mateu and Nos-Aldás 2018). Third, this design has a global scope, not only in the selection of topics and competences in cosmopolitan terms, but also in an interdisciplinary sense. It fosters the interconnection among formal, non-formal and informal education through a holistic approach to communication that analyses the connections between identity and social structures, using discourses as the mediation among them.

Last but not least, in keeping up with the epistemological approach to learning presented here, this is a proposal in constant change, reviewed annually and improved upon depending on contextual developments and the students' and professors' assessment of every course experience.

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[6] All the related information can be found at https://www.radiaid.com/

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