

Referencia completa:

Publicado en Nos-Aldás, Eloísa (2019). From grassroots action to public discourses of cultural peace, en Iranzo, Amador y Farné, Alessandra (eds), *Comunicación para el cambio social: propuestas para la acción*, (pp.25-45). Valencia: Tirant Lo Blanc.

From grassroots action to public discourses of cultural peace¹

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1. Introduction

This chapter reflects on the capabilities and responsibilities of communication to strengthen a global civil society to support processes and new political agendas towards social justice, from the local to the global. In this scenario, the approach to communication developed here is advocacy, understood as communicative actions towards awareness, public education and lobby on political power and legislative decisions for social change. In this sense, the goal is to draft the basis of what I call here Peace Communication, defined by cultural peace (Galtung, 1990)², as a way to apply to the field of Communication for Change the epistemological and practical proposals of Peace Research and nonviolence.

The aim of this work is to study the role of communication in peacebuilding and how public discourses produced by all kinds of senders that range from social movements to international organizations, companies or NGOs, can either influence the possibility of peace cultures and policies or legitimize cultural violence and war economies. In other words, the following pages review how the proposals of the different social actors that work towards global social justice clash and interact with the hegemonic discourses in the arena of public communication. The concern here is how

¹ This text is the product of field research developed in New York, San Francisco, and Spain under different research projects (UJI P1·1B2015-21, MINECO/FEDER FEM2015-65834-C2-2-P y MINECO CSO2013-48612-C2-1-P). I acknowledge the support of Javier López Ferrández and Alessandra Farné (researchers of the IUDESP) for reviewing some of its drafts. We could say this is a resilient text. I wrote a first draft in 2008 for a journal, and it has gone through different versions and projects until it has found this book.

² The approach of this work arises from the initial reflections of Johan Galtung on cultural peace as the way to point out symbolic violence and the strategies to transform it, and the epistemological turn proposed by Vicent Martínez Guzmán regarding Peace Studies and Peace Research (Martínez Guzmán, 2006). Accordingly, it assumes there are as many different ways to understand and practice peace as cultures and logics exist. Different cultures for many different concepts and forms of peace that can learn and unlearn from each other through dialogue.

communicative processes and strategies can succeed in making visible and part of the agenda certain topics and alternatives silenced by mainstream information flows.

Consequently, this chapter explores the educational, cultural and political impact of the discourses that are uttered (or not uttered) by the actors (senders) involved in activating a global civil society concerned about transforming injustice and inequality from its root causes.

The subject matter proposed here involves plenty of complexities. It is a huge issue, which includes very different actors and organizational cultures, with a variety of fields of concern and scopes, and also that operate in different kinds of contexts and networks. Even if communication is the main goal here, it is impossible to understand its reach and limits without considering its necessary interaction with education, activism, research, political action and decision making as all factors involved in fostering social change.

In this sense, we will not deal directly with all these spheres, but will look at how communication, approached here from the concept of “public discourses” (those stories made visible in public contexts and which initiate interaction with different publics) act as informal education. In dialogue with formal and non-formal education³, they play a central role in advocacy and constituency. This approach explores how discourses can prevent and transform inequality, military structures, wars, poverty, hunger and social hatred through a steady short-term and long-term process of transforming cultural and structural violence (material and symbolic ones) into inclusive ones (cultural peace).

2. Communicative action, Public Discourses and Peace Cultures

To delimit the reach and focus of this research, we are going to develop specifically on communication both as the scenarios of communication where justice or violence are negotiated, and a tool for social engagement and a social empowerment that relates to informal education.

Communication here relates to the fields of Communication for Development, Communication for Social Change and Communication for Peace and Justice, different study traditions we call on from its root understanding of communication as scenarios and spaces where society configures itself, where values, ideas and relations are

³ The distinction among formal, non-formal and informal education comes from Coombs and Ahmed (1974) as quoted in American Educational Research Association (1992). With the use of informal education we refer to how people get as much education in daily life contexts outside the classroom (the family, the media, street experiences...) as they do in classes or in other non-formal education activities.

constructed and negotiated. As Pablo Zareceansky (2015) explains, “communication is societies breath”. Without communication, societies and cultures do not exist. Communication delimits which kind of cultures we configure.

Therefore, we will use here the term Peace Communication defined as communication towards global justice or as a communication towards peaceful social change, as a cross-cutting element that influences beliefs, capacities and behaviours and can, thus, contribute to spreading systemic peace culture scenarios through people’s capacities and engagement towards actions and decisions that transform injustice structures and policies. In other words: communication for empowerment and engagement towards collective justice.

Peace cultures are delimited here in terms of cultures based on the freedom and responsibilities of individuals and groups. Cultures that trust the power of the people in order to avoid wars and transform injustice by active involvement in different social and political scenarios. We refer to a communicative work based on the belief in the possibility of change for the better (Mesa et al., 2013). In order to approach such complexity, this study seeks to explore and develop some criteria that may help us think about the role of communication in spreading cultural peace (Galtung, 1990) as the symbolic layer that denounces how cultures legitimize or support structural violence (a slow deprivation of life as a result of certain structural conditions) or direct violence (immediate deprivation of life by a specific actor). Galtung refers to the importance of justice to overcome the limitations of thinking about peace in negative terms (as being just the absence of war). He refers as well to all human basic needs by including security (be safe), welfare (no hunger, no poverty), identity and freedom (Martínez Guzmán, 2006).

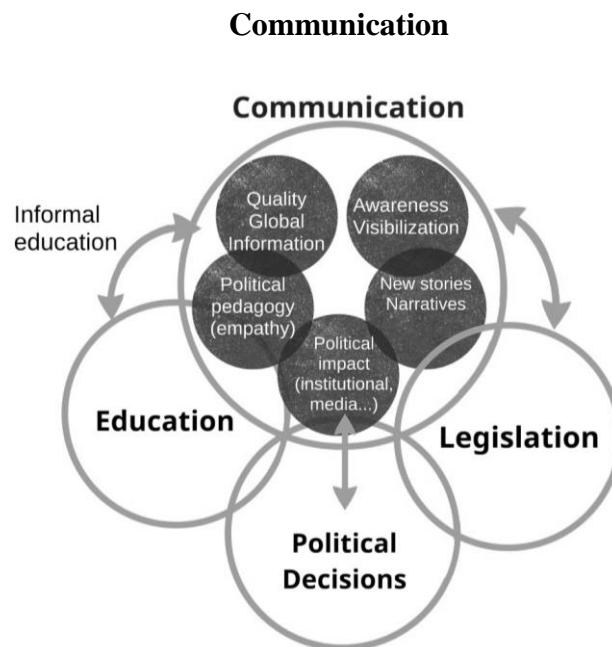
The concept of peace culture gives us a global challenge to work towards, and, at the same time, emphasizes the relevance of the symbolic level and the need to transform its violence. As Galtung says, “the major causal direction for violence is from cultural via structural to direct violence” (1996: 2). Thus, communicative experiences for cultural peace will imply the implementation of long-term advocacy communicative projects that work on justice from the grassroots to the mass media, local and global, policies and laws.

This subject matter also mingles with the responsibilities and biases of the mass media. We will dialogue with the rhetoric of the mainstream media as a necessary element that takes part in every societal communication and education scenario.

However, we are not going to talk specifically about how the media work in relation to peace, as there are other works that have focused specifically on this aspect⁴. We will consider them here as a main source of public discourses and a part of communication scenarios, which we need to look at, and which influences, to a big extent, the present-day styles of interpreting reality and thinking about it (Postman, 1986; Stein, 1979, among many others). The media will be regarded as one of the public spaces that peace cultures need to discuss, appear in and be part of. Nowadays, for instance, they can be counteracted by social media and the options that digital communication scenarios open in the line of a fourth networked communicative citizen power (Sampedro, 2015) supported by the tools and modes of technopolitics (Toret, 2013) that we will explore.

As a discipline, therefore, Peace Communication assesses the awareness, activism, engagement and education capabilities of discourse and how the social civil actors working for a culture of peace can use communication in order to involve the civil society in their projects and proposals and to achieve their transformative actions through direct political action.

Figure 1. Communication for Peace and Social Change as Advocacy



⁴ Just some monographic examples are Adam & Thamotheram (1996); Bruck & Roach (1993); European Centre For Conflict Prevention and IMPACTS (2003); Fawcett (2002); Fernández Viso (2014); Galtung (1998); Hazen, Winocur et al., (1997); Keeble, Tulloch & Zollmann (2010); Mcgoldrick & Lynch (2000); Manoff (1997); Melone, Terzis & Beleli (2002) and Wolfsfeld (2004), , plus the materials constantly produced by Transcend Media Service (<https://www.transcend.org/tms/>) and other institutions such as PeaceMedia (<http://peacemedia.usip.org/>), as far as international journal articles.

Source: Own elaboration

3. Communication Scenarios and Challenges of the Peace Movement

Communication is considered here as all forms of, and contexts for, interaction among social actors in spaces of collective reflection where individuals and groups try to present their different opinions and identities in the public sphere. In other words, we emphasize the role of discourse for sharing ideas and constructing social relations among active and recognized interlocutors whose endeavour is to understand each other and discuss the contents and facts connected to a collective concern.

We define the scenarios of communication as public places to negotiate and work collaboratively on common interests (Nos Aldás, 2013). Scenarios of public discourses that can engage people towards a “society in movement” (Alfaro, 2005), towards “social movement building” (Reinsborough & Canning, 2017). Numerous benchmarking experiences of multifaceted communication actions which have achieved social mobilizations can be found in campaigns such as #Metoo, or, previously, in the general peaceful protests and camps in Spain in 2011 with the “indignados movement” and all the projects still active related to them, such as the PAH (platform against evictions).

In this sense, Peace Communication faces the challenge of involving global civil society in the project of cultures for peace. This implies the reconfiguration of common scenarios of communication to give voice to local and global issues, to put into dialogue different worldviews and recognize their contributions instead of silencing such plurality, portraying them as dichotomous and confronted, or imposing a unique voice.

These ideas dialogue with Boaventura da Sousa Santos proposals (2012) of recovering the epistemologies of the South in terms of incorporating as mainstream the practices of good living (Sumak Kawsay), of degrowth (with Latouche) and of postcolonial thinking, of legitimizing this important knowledge for sustainable cultural styles to challenge and improve the accepted general system.

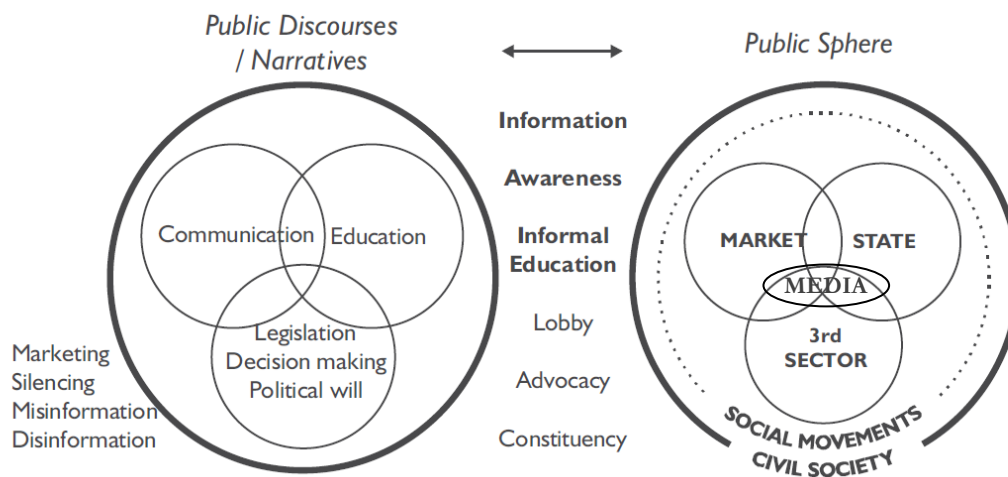
We are dealing, therefore, with the short-term and long-term cultural consequences and capabilities of stories and narratives, messages and images, which configure societies and cultures (which can contribute towards violence or towards peace). Discourses that are the result of certain cultural approaches and wisdoms. In other words, this approach to communication takes into account all discourse elements that construct the public presence of people and ideas (relations) with the aim of

contributing to a culture of peace through communication scenarios based on collective intercultural interests and justice.

This faces the challenge pointed out by Castells (1997) that Peace Communication, as other proposals from the margins (Rodríguez, 2015), goes against the established order, and it needs to open spaces on the opaque and thick wall of mainstream discourses which are officially the “public” ones, as they are the most visible and numerous. However, we trust Giró’s proposals on how peace discourses need to “leak” through mainstream media, find those spaces that can be used to make certain topics and approaches visible (Giró, 2010). Mainstreaming, cross-cutting approaches that transform globally.

Thus, to explore the role of public discourses as informal (peace) education for the transformation of the present-day global war culture into a peace culture, we need to look simultaneously at a good number of actors, target groups and interests that take part in these scenarios (consciously or unconsciously).

Figure 2. Interaction among sociocultural spheres and agents



Source: Adapted from Nos Aldás (2013: 101)

This figure shows the necessary interaction that takes place among different sociocultural spheres and agents and at the same time interact with each other through different scenarios and discourses. The relations among all these actors, their actions and their discourses configure cultures⁵. The state, the market, the third sector, the

⁵ Although the approach of this study tries to be global and intercultural, from this point of the chapter on, I will focus on the scenarios of Western Cultures to delimit the focus of this research. Nonetheless, the

social movements and the civil society could be defined as main variables when looking at the gears of social relations. I introduce social movements between the civil society and the third sector as a spontaneous and flexible sphere that shares aims with the publicly aimed third sector but not structures. Both are born out of the perceived need to pressure the state and the market to accept their responsibilities; they appear to try to balance the mistakes and dangers of markets and states. We should also remember that they are movements and institutions that are born from the civil society and share collective aims. However, we should not forget that the market and the state are coordinated by individuals who are part of that same civil society. Also, international organizations such as the UN or the UNESCO are those official offices created to work on social issues as mediators between the governments and the civil actors.

In these scenarios, communication plays a central role as a tool for those who work for a culture of peace to denounce and call attention to the problems they face, to press other actors towards coherent and just actions, and to spread proposals and alternatives.

In fact, the media appears as a fourth actor with the market, the state and the third sector. Notwithstanding, it is differentiated as an actor, but at the same time it is related to the rest of actors, as media companies or organizations respond to either a market actor, a state actor or a third sector actor. Although this is not the space to discuss it, we should keep this in mind during the discussion that follows.

In order to try to see through this forest, I place below the following schematic chart that tries to sketch some of the main criteria that determine the forms of communication that all of these initiatives foster. Please look at it just as an initial draft we can keep completing and discussing together.

Table 1. Main criteria determining the forms of communication

	Identity	Structure	Resources	Communicative Styles
Social Movements	Independent Spontaneous Voluntary Non-official/civil/non-governmental	Without a fixed structure	Limited economic resources for communication Shared knowledge approach and shared communicative resources	Horizontal Collective Communication Collective approach Networking Open code approach

conclusions reached here, in future works, will have to dialogue with, and be enriched by, other perspectives and fieldwork from other cultural frameworks.

Third sector Organizations	Non-official/civil/non-governmental Private	Have to maintain a structure Organizational	More resources for communication (although we are referring to a very heterogeneous sector in terms of size and supports)	Combination of collective communication and private (funding, branding) (advertising) (advocacy)
Networks / Global Actions	Independent Heterogeneous (involve social movements and third sector organizations) Non official/civil/non governmental and governmental	Structured in network (each organization supports according to their own structure and resources)	Variable resources for communication (usually, scarce budget)	Horizontal communication Public approach (collective campaigns, networking) Corporate
International Organizations	Official Governmental	Fixed structure	Resources for communication	Institutional communication
Governments / Ministries	Official Governmental Party approach	Fixed structure	Resources for communication	Institutional communication Corporate communication
Companies	Private	Fixed structure	Resources for communication	Private communication (sales, branding, corporate)

Source: Own elaboration.

Among all these different actors and discourses, we will now focus specifically on socially committed organizations that are established through collective aims and advocate for peace education or social transformation towards cultures of peace. The focus is on the organizations that are born from civil society and that try to take its goals and needs towards the rest of spheres to exercise influence on them and achieve social justice. We could doubtless say that the peace movement is a combination of most of these actors, which belong to the third sector and to social movements. Besides, we ask: do they also include international organizations such as the UN and the UNESCO and the different states of the world? In theory, they should, but a critical glance at the experience obtained so far may suggest that certain interests are often imposed over the emphasis on peace and human beings. The same can be said of the market, as the role of ethical and socially committed companies can also play a main role on justice.

The main communicative differences among these actors lie in the “real” final goals of their communication and the nature of their structures and organizational

cultures. In this sense, for instance, the third sector arises as a structured sphere of civil society, adding to social movements the potential to reach certain areas that they previously could not due to their organizational dynamics and resources, for example. But it is precisely this structured identity and the need to maintain it (funding and institutional associations with the state or the market, for instance) that causes most of the problems of the third sector, reduces the freedom and flexibility that civil society institutions have and most of their educational potential. Along the same lines, international organizations add to the problems of working from very rigid structures, the control and dependence of the states and governments.

4. Communication of change: telling the story of how peace culture is taking place

Peace culture includes a cross-cutting and intersectional approach to the fields of social justice, post-development and cooperation, conflict transformation, interculturality, equity and non-discrimination, environmental concerns and many other related issues. That is, in coherence with the approach of positive peace and cultures of peace developed here, when we review the links and relations among all the different interlocutors drafted above and their areas of interest, we find a broad heterogeneity of concerns and actors involved that go beyond the antiwar movement.

When we explore the experiences of communication for the articulation of a global peace culture made of different cultures and realities (as a big colourful mosaic), we realize that the articulation of public discourses for peace lacks an actual use of communication with a general common long-term agenda and scope. Nonetheless, many protests and actions show that many successes are being achieved by collaboration among different networks and movements for common concerns.

In other words, there are thousands of successful initiatives happening all around and contributing to cultures of peace. We can look at communicative projects such as People Witness, Global Voices, *La Minga Comunicativa*, The Communication Initiative, the training and campaigns by the Center for Story-based strategies, and so many others. Other global actions include the Global Campaign for Peace Education, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (that organizes the initiative called People Building Peace), the Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict, and many other associations and networks that foster initiatives in favour of a

better world based on solidarity, justice and respect. They have achieved many successes, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, signed 24 December 2014, just to mention a recent one.

These initiatives use numerous communicative strategies to achieve results (Mann, 2004; Mathieson, 2007; Rodríguez, 2015). Table 2 compiles some of the most significant activist strategies.

Table 2. Examples of communicative strategies

Collect support signatures for certain causes (petitions)
Creative and nonviolent street protests: Walkouts, speeches, concerts or mass prayers in public spaces to remember certain anniversaries or injustices; civil initiatives and performances (such as bicycle rallies for alternative transportation to protect people's health, promote environment sustainability and a peace culture without wars for oil)
Lobbying and campaigning against governments that do not respect human rights or public health
Boycotts against brands or banks that fund wars, and <i>buycott</i> and other political consumerism initiatives
Creative actions such as smart mobs, graffiti or many other kinds of street art
Documentaries and films by directors who believe in a culture for peace
Film or art festivals and exhibitions to denounce injustice, to work on a reconciling memory, and to spread information about existing alternatives and projects
Farmer markets and community gardens
Newsletters and information campaigns by individuals or groups to denounce cases of injustice and to inform about alternative projects taking place to transform them
Initiatives which launch web pages, organize conferences and release brochures for specific actions
All kinds of alternative media: web pages, blogs, wikis, social networks tactics for change, community radio, transformative/educative videogames; different communication for change from the margins
Craftwork, T-shirts, buttons

Source: Own elaboration

There are plenty of possibilities for communicative actions and some may lead to wider social mobilization, such as the anti-globalization peaceful protests in the 1990s or the reactivation in 2011 with the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, or in Spain, where it even led to new political parties.

In short, an overview of public discourses in the international level may project hundreds, if not thousands, of manifestations of cultural peace (Boyd & Mitchell, 2012; Tufte, 2017). These relate to the notion of “imperfect peace” introduced by Muñoz (1998; 2001). He emphasised the constant presence of peace experiences in History and in daily life as opposed to the belief that History suggests that we always had a tradition of war and violence only. We face the similar approach of imperfect peace also in public discourses for peace, as all the different cultures articulate peace initiatives and discourses. However, many of these actions communicate with limited groups of people, and usually with groups already aware of these issues and committed to them.

The challenge remains to reach those influenced by the logic of war or violence or those who are not aware of peace proposals, which range from learning alternative ways of producing and consuming energy, producing and consuming food, or clothes, in a way that the environment, public health, human rights or equality are respected and promoted. An effective Peace Communication in these terms can only happen through interaction among informal education, advocacy and constituency and work in parallel ways to teach peace in all educative levels and modes to reach peace, promote peace culture and transform social, economic and legal structures into those of cultures for peace and social justice.

Nonetheless, the promotion of global cultures of peace remains a challenge, as war, inequality and hunger stay a serious and unacceptable daily reality. There exist a large number of international networks and organizations launching and co-ordinating initiatives to obtain a high degree of effectiveness in terms of social change. An example of the fast appearance of new tools for this work for justice can be observed in the process of writing this chapter. From its first draft in 2011, most of the approach and the conclusions had to be rewritten due to the strong innovations occurred in the field of communication for peace since then. In fact, currently, we could re-name it “communication of change” because it has to be understood as the collection of good practices taking place, as a toolbox of how peace cultures are being woven. This applies mostly —but not only— after what has been defined as the digital revolution, that has broadcasted and strengthened collective intelligence and has allowed multitudes to be “interconnected”. All this is contributing to build a “network consciousness” that results in global action though technopolitics (Toret, 2013), which constitutes a powerful gear to achieve peace cultures.

As different studies started to show long ago, such as *We are everywhere* showed (Notes from Nowhere, 2003), there is a growing world movement for peace. Nonetheless, it would not be wrong to say that when we analyse any of the initiatives in this field, we find that the main problem (or challenge) is that of losing (or maintaining) the scope of collective aims and action, short and long-term effects and impact on the media, the market and the different institutions. Indeed, activating the potential of communication as informal education from every organization or network is not the general norm, but rather the general wish. And last but not least, war industry keeps on growing and the governmental peace policies don't.

5. Communicative efficacy⁶ for cultural peace and a narrative social transformation

One of the main questions that remains unanswered is how to bring these actions into broader public discourses? How can their peace stories and proposals find an echo in the global cultural scenarios so that wider and louder articulation of public discourse for peace and peace culture is ensured and sustained? How can they coordinate to balance political lobby actions, which ask for necessary structural changes to the market and the state, to the system, and education- actions that push the proposals for a culture for peace to be part of a global citizenship? How do we make sure that all our actions have a long-term focus? How do we make sense of all these heterogeneous but at the same time related initiatives?

A possible answer is found in this chapter in what we call cultural communicative efficacy. When we talk about Peace Communication and Social Change, we talk about a complex and long process, which has to be taken into account by the actors involved in such a project in every action planned and undertaken. It is an imperative to continually evaluate these communicative actions from a cultural, transformative and educational perspective as far a main transformative weapon for the peace movement is social imagination through communication as a way to build alternatives and influence public behaviour.

That is the reason why we always need to look at the senders' messages from the double perspective of short-term efficacy and long-term efficacy to foreshadow its cultural effects. What does this communication need to achieve? How can we plan and evaluate these needs amid the tensions of professional communication, human communication and a culture for peace? In other words, what we need to ask is which kind of efficacy and efficiency is required for cultures for peace?

In this sense, we need to combine the traditional concepts of communication and advertising efficacy based more on criteria of impact and behavioural short-term change (usually more quantitative approaches) with a more qualitative analysis based on beliefs, values, attitudes and long-term behaviour analysis including the role played by discourse and creativity in establishing and promoting certain relations in the society.

⁶ The use of “efficacy” in this chapter is as a synonym for effectiveness, meaning the achievement of the set goals for our communication, being here these goals cultural, transformative and educative. Depending on the cultural, theoretical and professional contexts, different translations in English for *eficacia* have been found and “efficacy” has been the author’s choice.

Therefore, the identity, principles and aims of those senders created and legitimated by their role as civil actors for social change (from informal networks to official international organizations) are linked to a cultural responsibility: a need to make social proposals respecting the particularities of each society and issue. As we call it, their “communicative personality” requires coherence and sociocultural efficacy in terms of a culture for peace. This particular sociocultural personality requires to prioritize cultural responsibilities: symbolic goals based on social and collective aims (committed to improve society) have to become central claims and methods for the peace movement agenda. In consequence, this sort of discourse is sustained by certain constraints and limits resulting from the constant challenge of awareness and education.

The approach developed in this text (based on discourse ethics and Austin’s performativity of language) implies that every discourse, according to the way it is presented, establishes: a) a determinate image of the reality presented; b) a certain type of relation with that reality; and c) a kind of reaction sought in a society (hatred, reconciliation).

In other words, discourse proposes a specific conception of reality, which reflects the attitude of the sender towards the contents and the people they are communicating about and with; it also reflects the real aims of that communication, and through these intentions and proposals shows the coherence and consistence between their actions and discourses.

Essentially, thus, cultural efficacy means that if their final aim is social education, then every creative choice will need to go towards it, and their discourses will have to be examined and evaluated in relation to sociocultural objectives rather than purely creative or quantitative ones. They will always have to take into account long-term education as a cross responsibility, or at least, not *diseducating* society.

Nonetheless, looking at the general picture and keeping in view all the senders who work in the field of peace culture, we realize that not all their messages have education and advocacy as their main objective. As we have already seen, their use of communication (advertising included) is very varied depending on their identity and type of organization. In this sense, they need to combine educational aims with management or other specific goals. Therefore, instead of planning from a cultural efficacy, in those cases they will work from a cultural *efficiency* as a responsibility for any message that aims at achieving an efficacy different from an educational one (regarding the aims of management, branding, funding, lobby, entertainment, among

others). The axis of independent/governmental organizations, private/collective aims and short-term/long-term goals is as obvious as it is relevant.

In conclusion, we could summarize the limits and characteristics of these campaigns by saying that the important thing is the realization of a cross-cutting responsibility, global to every communicative action, not only in specific awareness campaigns but even -or mostly- in funding or branding campaigns, which may sometimes be described as aggressive and “dangerous” from the cultural perspective. These senders should not forget that they are the actors of civil society with public education as an ultimate aim. Consequently, their emphasis should always be on contents (delicate ones, moreover as they usually talk about vulnerable people, tragedies, injustices...) and social and cultural consequences.

A first step towards a communication for peace with cultural efficacy needs to focus on understanding, interaction and networking, stress a view to coordinate and collaborate and not to compete. Thus, discourses should be based on human relations, on people, on finding meeting points and on an intercultural committed citizenship (Erro, 2002; 2003). We are therefore talking about styles of communication that have multiple challenges: information, awareness (short-term), education and behavioural change (long-term), social mobilization and action (short- and long-term). Recent projects are sharing useful criteria and approaches to develop these scenarios of communication (Devreporter network, 2016).

Furthermore, we have to remember that proposing a peace culture implies a number of themes and initiatives that may go against the routines of the society, the media, the market, and the states. This makes this communication many times more difficult to deal with. What we are saying here is that communication can talk about very specific information, but it can also talk about very abstract concepts usually unknown to the large majority and which may even be unpleasant for them. How to deal with this challenge?

Clearly the challenge implies communicative actions that go (and empower and engage citizens to do so as well) from staging protest to filing proposals. These communicative processes imply interlocutors to open themselves to new themes and perspectives, to pay attention to them and to incorporate them into their reference stories and images, and to act consequently (Aranguren Gonzalo, 2000: 183-184). Again, when we talk about awareness campaigns, we essentially call attention to analysis and communication with the aim of broadening the group of people concerned about peace

and searching for peace by catching their attention through critical proposals that may be of interest to them. As part of this communication, another thing to do is to address people's ethical sensitivity (Pinazo & Nos Aldás, 2016) from collective action frames (Benford & Snow, 2000).

All these proposals can be summarized with the help of Martínez Guzmán's epistemological approach to Peace Research. When applied to the concept of a communication for peace, it gives us a series of communicative characteristics. First, these discourses configure a communication from subject to subject. Second, they are responsibility-based discourses that always talk about people as subjects and take care not to represent them as objects, thereby avoiding the dangers of dehumanization, stigmatization, inequality, discrimination or disrespect. Third, these discourses make the effort of presenting the complete picture of the situations or experiences referred to. Fourth, these discourses face the complexity of human relations, with their mistakes and assets, without bipolarity or dichotomies of good and evil but including the multiple sides and perspectives of every conflict. Fifth, these are not neutral discourses, in fact they are ethically-committed discourses that point out responsibilities and claim for justice at the same time that they present alternatives. Finally, this is a participant approach (witnesses): they search for a representative individualization of experiences to help understanding and creating awareness (Nos Aldás, 2013, 97-98). All of these characteristics seeking for peace imply a dialogic and invitational rhetoric (Foss & Griffin, 1995) in order to structure interactive and horizontal discourses.

However, the research conducted to prepare this text shows that this long-term efficacy of communication actions is scarce in many of the peace movement communicative actions due to a lack of time and financial support to plan communication as a long-term strategy and to evaluate it.

Nonetheless, we have lately identified different communicative benchmarking initiatives that approach how to use communication to transform the world and work through networking for social change. They specialize in social change and social movements, which promote visibility for these issues, embodied in the Center for Story-based strategies⁷ and The Rules⁸, both with an emphasis on the importance of changing the story(ies) in order to eradicate inequality and injustice.

⁷ <http://www.storybasedstrategy.org/>

⁸ <http://therules.org/>

The main proposal from the communicative perspective is the story-based strategy for social change and its methodologies based on detecting which are the control stories of cultural violence so that we can transform them into peace mobilizing stories (Reinsborough & Canning, 2017). They train organizations and support their communication from the basis of the narrative skills, the creativity, the communicative strategies and the necessary evaluation (not to forget celebration for every success either) inspired in networking culture, hacker ethics, open code, sharing, collaborative cultures... success stories (as presented in their materials, with very applied and graphic tools, or in the toolbox on creative protest by Boyd & Mitchell, 2012).

In these scenarios, most of the initiatives have benefitted from new technologies and have applied the viral efficacy of memes in order to share and spread criticism and proposals. In fact, Internet provides a perfect space to deal with Peace Communication challenges. Social networks and digital environments have played a main role here, from twitter, to Facebook or platforms like YouTube, Instagram and similar others which appear everyday both from big companies or open code initiatives (main vehicles nowadays for social campaigns, aiming at reaching young people and other groups who speak the language of these spaces). It is the new trend and the main hope. However, we cannot solely depend on it and it is certainly not enough.

One of the most useful answers to achieve a culturally effective Peace Communication are the recent proposals by Toret's team on multi-layered communication (Toret, 2015). To achieve social change a multilayer Peace Communication is needed: as the last benchmarking social movements' communicative practices have proved, participatory transformative communication involves scenarios of communication on the streets (assemblies, protests, camps...), social networks conversations, mainstream media impact and institutional negotiations and presence.

6. Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the cultural influence of communication in configuring the world we live in as peaceful or violent, inclusive or discriminatory, based on equality or inequality. Discourse encourages actions and establishes certain relations among peoples and groups, supports certain policies and laws. It shows or hides the relations among Governments, private companies and civil actors and, in such way, allows transformation towards social justice or maintains the status-quo.

Peace Communication is founded on conviction, trust and belief in the possibility of peaceful social change. A process in which communication is not a final product but the process, the scenarios for the involvement and engagement of social actors.

As reviewed here, in order to achieve a committed and responsible global informed, critical and active citizenship, we need to provide visibility and increase the number of new approaches to communication based on human sustainable and collective values through dialogue and interaction. New approaches lead to new social discourses that derive in new sociocultural relations based on a social consciousness for a fair change (Darnton & Kirk, 2011; Kirk, 2015). This needs to be a cross-cutting and steady process planned from cultural efficacy methodologies based on story-based strategies.

We should mainly note that not only explicit violence discourses (direct violence) but mostly cultural violence (stereotypes, disinformation and distorted media images, not only in the news, but also in all different cultural products and discourses) retard the process towards cultures for peace. They silence or discriminate against many cultural or social voices. Therefore, the big challenge is detecting and transforming cultural violence by developing culturally effective communication in order to sustain the presence of social justice initiatives and practices in everyday life and in all the different spaces where education, culture, politics, legislation and economics are configured and negotiated.

As it has been discussed elsewhere in this chapter, one of the main ideas on the basis of Communication of Change is the challenge of a global civil society activated by a society in movement and civil organizations “for and from communication open to participation and social creativity” (Erro, 2006: 104). Organizations structured as movements (Darnton & Kirk, 2011); communicative organizations (Santolino, 2010). As for other social actors, also journalists and media would be a fundamental part of a necessary fourth networked power, as far as journalists get paid “to construct public sphere”, to build “conditions and opportunities for debate, with data and arguments” (Sampedro, 2015: 31). Therein lies precisely a desirable networked fourth power: an “informative counter-power of a transnational civil society” (Sampedro, 2015: 188-189), a re-appropriation of the public sphere by citizens through a journalism that recognizes them “as political and communicative actors with full rights” (23). A Networked Fourth Power provides digital citizens with the access to the mass media and

it connects the information with the public debate through an advocacy of information used as a strategy for social change.

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