

Online Journalism Education in the hybrid media system

Teaching Innovation Projects (UPV/EHU)



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Universidad
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Preface

Over the last decade the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) together with other specific adaptation processes, such as the Bologna Process, have been motivating a search for new educational strategies that take into consideration the principles of creativity, quality, skill and cooperation. Above and beyond new tools and technologies, it has become necessary to apply educational programmes that are in harmony with the social and cultural changes that derive from technology and digitalization (Keating, 1998).

Taking this idea as a basic principle of action, in this context of constant educational change and adaptation, the foundations of which were laid during the first decade of the new millennium, this book will examine a range of Educational Innovation Projects (EIPs) aimed at dynamizing and improving teaching-learning processes in the field of Social Communication (the degrees of Audiovisual Communication, Journalism, and Advertising and Public Relations) at the University of the Basque Country. These innovative educational projects responded to specific moments in research into pedagogical innovation and the professional development of networked communication.

From its first appearance until the present day, research into the concept of “teaching-learning” has sought to improve the pedagogy of the different disciplines and reconcile the fields of academic research and education

(Boyer, 1990; Hutchings, Huber & Ciccone, 2012). These pedagogical trends favour the creation of ever more collaborative environments, in which the use of technological tools is gaining in importance, something that is particularly the case in the field of communication and journalism (Deuze, 2001; Howland, Moore & Caplow, 2015).

These projects demonstrate the usefulness of subjects linked to the Web when it comes to introducing innovations into teaching central aspects of Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, and Audiovisual Communication.

Media companies in the present day seek professionals with skills connected to working with content in different media and in cooperative environments, and so web or online journalism can be considered to be one of the fields with the greatest capacity for innovation at all levels: professional, research and educational. With regard to this last level, the educational, online journalism has become one of the main motors of renewal in Communication curricula in the last two decades (Bhuiyan, 2010; Cochrane, 2014; Salaverría, 2011; Finberg, 2013; Larrondo & Peña, 2018; etc.).

It is worth pointing out that the EIPs covered in this book are part of the consolidated activity of KZBerri, a group that specializes in educational innovation and new teaching methods, which has the IKD (Ikaskuntza Kooperatibo eta Dinamikoa) stamp, given by the University of the Basque Country's Educational Advisory Service (HELAZ-SAE). KZBerri is part of the Gureiker Consolidated Research Group of the Basque University System (IT1112-16), which specializes in the analysis of digital communication and journalistic innovation on the Web. The Gureiker team has shown an interest in accompanying its study of online journalism with research into education in this field and, particularly, with an application and transferal to the classroom of the results obtained in its studies.

This look at those projects aims to offer a specific and, at the same time, integrated perspective on the educational advances introduced over the course of a decade (2010-2020). This is a period that has been crucial for university teaching in general, and particularly for the teaching

of web journalism, due to the progress that has occurred during these years at the educational, research and professional levels.

The book is divided into two main thematic sections. The first is entitled *Advances in university education. Opportunities in the field of journalism and communication* and it looks at the changes experienced by university education based on two factors that offer a fundamental and decisive contextualization. The first of these is common to all degree-level university teaching and is related to the development of Information and Communication Technology from the 1990s onwards, thanks to the digitalization of teaching-learning tools, processes and systems and, very particularly, the development of the Web medium (WWW). This part of the book includes theoretical contributions of interest for the understanding of the main advantages and implications of using digital resources in university teaching (social media, blogs, forums, chatrooms, wikis, openware publication services, etc.).

The second major factor analysed in this preliminary part of the book is the development of what is known as the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). From a more specialized point of view, one that considers the book's goal, this part covers the rise of web journalism as an educational field in the university. The pages dedicated to this matter set out the main advantages, in terms of future career development, of the acquisition of web journalism skills, based on the demands of 21st-century communications companies. Furthermore, this section of the book tackles useful methodologies for transmitting theoretical-practical content linked to working as a journalist in the new media settings.

These methodologies include the well-known Project-based Learning (PBL) and also Internationalization at Home (IaH). Both options are useful for simulating real professional environments and for motivating students, going beyond the use of another language in the classroom (Baldassar & McKenzie, 2016).

The "learning by doing" approach of PBL has become a central proposal in response to the directives of the European higher education framework, while also allowing excellent use of online resources and platforms.

These methodologies have been shown to be useful in the field of web journalism with the introduction of funded Educational Innovation Projects, whose practical application is covered in the second part of the book, entitled *Innovative experiences in the teaching of online journalism at the University of the Basque Country: context of application, methodologies and results*. These experiences clarify the need to continue researching the pedagogy of online communication in order to improve university curricula, in harmony with the changing profiles of communicators in the era of the online media.

To end this preface, the authors would like to thank the Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, and Audiovisual Communication students at the University of the Basque Country for their role in incentivizing the authors' teaching and research efforts. Furthermore, we would like to express our gratitude to the University of the Basque Country's Educational Advisory Service (SAE/HELAZ), for its support through the funding of various EIPs, without which the work of analysis and dissemination involved in the following pages would have been impossible.

We also extend our thanks to the Research Group that the team which wrote this book belongs to, Gureiker (IT1112-16), as well as the Department of Journalism and the Faculty of Social and Communication Sciences of the University of the Basque Country. The authors are also very grateful to all those students who have participated in the projects referred to in the book and, in general, to all our students, because they are the true heart of all innovation.

Advances in university education. Opportunities in the field of journalism and communication

1.1. Introduction

Recent history has not only given examples of the new possibilities for receiving and distributing the message but has also opened the way for narrative experimentation and innovation. New professionals therefore see the need to develop new aptitudes, knowledge and skills to be able to adapt to new times.

The teaching and the study of journalism necessarily bring a continuous adaptation to the changing digital context, which began 25 years ago with the appearance of the first online media and the development of new professional profiles. However, recent alumni tend to criticize the contents of their degree courses as excessively theoretical, as not dealing with changes, and failing to cover the social aspect, creating graduates without the skills needed to perform adequately in the professional sphere.

In this context, in the last decade there have been efforts by university lecturers to make practical use of digital tools that improve the dissemination of information among their students (Montiel & Villalobos,

2005). Furthermore, it is important to highlight the use of these tools when it comes to practical learning in the area of web journalism writing and linked to professional development.

In the case of journalism, the changes in technologies, the emergence of new communications actors and new dynamics of news production continue to cause changes to professional profiles, which requires a continuous adaptation of degree teaching in this area (Acosta, Machado & Tolentino, 2017). As indicated by Freire and Schuch (2010) some years ago, Journalism learning requires changes in order to be able to confront emerging problems, in ways that go beyond traditional teaching forms, integrating informal educational processes. The goal is for students to work on skills which will be important in their careers in a hi-tech journalistic context. The educator's ultimate aim is not for students to learn something theoretically, or even practically, but rather to spark their interest in what is being imparted and to make them reflect on the new scenario in which they will work as journalists.

Given this situation, the practical training that Journalism students must do in the classroom should contribute to uniting classroom theory with ways of working that are required outside the academic context (Sánchez, 2014), developing skills such as the ability to cooperate. In the words of David del Prado (2011), classrooms should become places for creative learning, workshops for invention, spaces for special expression for creating and developing creativity.

Responding to social demands brings a substantial change to the theory of innovation and education. Preparation for a career and education in active citizenship should become the two major goals of university education (Martínez, 2009).

The priority is to set up ways of working that see universities as experimental laboratories (Sánchez & Fernández, 2015) in which to carry out projects that are similar to the professional reality that students will encounter once they are outside the classroom, with innovative methodologies that allow the development of an enterprising spirit (González, 2014; Aceituno, Casero, Escudero & Bousoño, 2018). These forms of working would be made possible by the creation of conditions for running projects and planning

cooperative learning, drawing up action plans and a final assessment with proposals for improvement (Monge & Montalvo, 2014).

The innovation initiatives analysed in this book are based on the realization of this situation and of the teaching needs it brings with it. In this regard, they underlie a strategy of didactic innovation with a use of ICT and interactivity, based on running cybercommunication projects (Project-based Learning, PBL) that are made collaborative through the use of the social media. In line with the results offered by other educational innovation projects involving cybermedia, and also considering different expert contributions (Moody & Burlison, 2013; Carvalho *et al.*, 2014; Chibás, Borroto & Almeida, 2014), it is possible to state that these initiatives lead to a more active participation among students when creating multimedia projects, and to a less rigid and hierarchical structure of feedback and assessment.

These initiatives were beginning around the time of the Bologna Process for implementing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (2010) and were instigated by lecturers from the KZBerri group mentioned above, part of the Journalism Department in the Faculty of Social and Communication Sciences of the University of the Basque Country, and a member of the Gureiker group (IT1112-16).

A decisive factor for the creation of KZBerri was the fact that its members belonged to an area of knowledge and study closely linked to communication in the new environments (online journalism, online corporate communication, etc.). However, the changes introduced by the University of the Basque Country around 2008, for the implementation of the EHEA, were certainly the touchstone in this regard.

This group sought educational innovation focusing not only on the mere application of the new technologies. These technologies do not, *per se*, bring improvements from the educational point of view unless they are used according to appropriate methodologies. That is to say, in educational practice, pedagogical approaches should take priority over technological matters (Barberá, 2008). Discovering what the approach could be was the priority goal of the KZBerri lecturers, and to do this, different EIPs were begun, funded by the University of

the Basque Country¹. In line with the recommendations of different experts (Fernández, 2005; Ferrés, 2008; Ruiz, 2010) the approach chosen was to apply and test the innovation strategies considered for each of the projects in small groups in order to work in teams in collaborative environments, which was a key factor.

Around 2015, the KZBerri group entered a new stage with the award of an Expert Innovation Project (2015-2017, EIP Aditua). With this project, applied to the subject *Online Journalism Newsriting*, which is common to the three degree courses in Communication at the University of the Basque Country, in their second years, the group undertook a highly innovative educational approach, based on the perspective known as Internationalization at Home (IaH). This made it possible, without needing to participate in a student mobility programme, to bring into the students' curricula international or intercultural capabilities, achieved through ICT. This perspective began to be applied to the PBL methodology for virtual, multimedia work and for making use of interactivity by students at two universities, the University of the Basque Country itself, and the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), in Brazil (Peña, Larrondo & Agirreazkuenaga, 2017).

The goal of this was to meet an outstanding need, in line with KZBerri's approach of avoiding both technophobic and technophile positions: to build, among University of the Basque Country Communication students, skills that go beyond those which are merely instrumental and practical, and involved in writing content; that is to say, to promote more "social" skills as part of the communicator's professional development. What was being sought was for online journalism to be a learning not limited to the technical handling of technological tools and platforms, but rather one based on the critical reflection on the use of these tools for the creation of up-to-date content on the Web.

It is important to point out that the University of the Basque Country's Communication students were not aware of the IaH perspective before they

¹ Previously, some members also participated in a pedagogical innovation project linked to multimedia (University of the Basque Country-EITB broadcasting company), aimed at postgraduate students (Transmedia Laborategi Pedagogikoa, managed by the lecturer Agurtzane Elordui, 2012-2014) (Peñafiel, *et al.*, 2014)

participated in the project, which turned out to one of the first initiatives in the Ibero-American area for the application of the laH perspective in a subject linked to web journalism.

This innovative educational perspective was extended with a second stage (2017-2019), through a new pedagogical innovation project (EIP Aditua 63), a strategy whose aim was to take extra steps in terms of the internationalization of students' multimedia projects, based on virtual cooperative production and carried out in English. On this occasion, students from four other universities participated, two Brazilian and two Portuguese institutions, joining the University of the Basque Country. These students could all be considered to be "digital natives" with much more advanced needs from an educational point of view. Among these, as well as multilingualism (focussing on English), something that was considered to be essential was learning in complex, virtual and, at the same time, cooperative environments (Barney & Purcell, 1999; Carvalho, *et al.*, 2014).

1.2. Teaching in the University: moving towards a new paradigm through ICT

University education has always been an animated field, one constantly adapting to change. However, one might say that it is since the late 1990s that it has experienced its most profound change. Specifically, there has been a move away from unbalanced methodologies in which the teachers adopted an active role in the teaching process and students a passive role in the learning process.

At the beginning of the new century, a commitment was therefore made to what are known as "active methodologies", which give students a more active role and increase the demands on lecturers to be more proactive, as well as establishing a less vertical communication between these two groups (Vega, *et al.*, 2014).

Apart from a greater interactivity between educator and student, something else sought was a greater interactivity among students, through the introduction of cooperative working methodologies. This is an approach taken by the University of the Basque Country, based on its IKD

strategic model (Ikaskuntza Kooperatibo eta Dinamikoa – Cooperative and Dynamic Teaching), approved in 2010.

The University's meaning and mission should keep in step with the social and cultural dynamics of each period. Just as the world has changed enormously in recent decades, so the 21st-century university's general curriculum should also evolve to adapt to the demands of a society that is changing continuously, one characterized by uncertainty. The mission of higher education consists of moulding people who are aware of and sensitive to what is happening around them, who are able to adapt to continuous changes and who can respond creatively and ethically to new problems.

(Requirements for curriculum development of University of the Basque Country degree courses, 2010)

According to the University of the Basque Country itself², this student-focussed, cooperative and dynamic teaching-learning model (IKD), involving active methodologies and supported by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), promotes learning in a multilingual teaching context. This model is based on the cooperation of the different agents that constitute the educational community: students, lecturers... In a climate of mutual trust, all of them share projects and initiatives related to teaching-learning processes.

Contributions to this new 21st-century educational paradigm are the gradual introduction of ICT, particularly the Internet and, in the case of Europe, the process known as the Bologna Reform, aimed at the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (2010).

In this context, university teaching therefore began an unavoidable adaptation of its processes thanks to digitalization and the later expansion of the Internet, part of what is known as the Network Society or Knowledge Society (Salaverría, 2000). From an educational point of view, the incorporation of ICT into university teaching involved not only a structural transformation, but also a change in the "learning culture" (Montero & Pozo, 2003; Zabalza, 2006; Ruiz, 2010).

² <https://www.ehu.eus/es/web/sae-helaz/ikd-curriculum-garapena-oinarriak>

Thanks to the new role of the student as active and participative subject, lecturers have also gradually focussed classroom-based teaching activities on the development of abilities and skills that are appropriate to the professional sphere (Zabalza, 2008). This sphere, in turn, has been experiencing changes since the early 21st century, due to the introduction of ICT and the expansion of media companies across the Web.

In this context, a consensus has arisen regarding the need to apply an educational logic that is appropriate to professional demands, with a particular emphasis on those aspects that students must take into consideration in the professional sphere their studies belong to (Tejedor, García & Prada, 2009).

Therefore, university lecturers are starting to pay more attention to those skills that companies demand from students when they have finished their degrees. According to a range of studies, the development of pedagogical qualities that are closely related to skills that the sector demands is very useful for motivating students: when they are aware that what they are doing in the classroom is very similar to what will be expected of them outside of it, their degree of involvement tends to be greater (Ferrés, 2008; Fanjul & González, 2010). In this regard, it is worth remembering the familiarization that, over a decade ago, university students began to demonstrate with regard to the use of ICT, specifically, of connected devices and social media sites such as blogs and social networking services.

At around that time, the Universitic report (2010) analysed the evolution of ICT in the Spanish university system, showing that universities were introducing the new technologies as an educational support, with 90% of universities having, or developing, a regular and continuous plan for renewing their technological infrastructure.

It also indicated that the changes in degree courses in Social Communication brought about by the creation of the EHEA meant that a greater number of subjects related to the new technologies were being incorporated, including subjects linked to cybercommunication and particularly web journalism (Sánchez, 2017).

Proposals in educational innovation involve the introduction of digital tools into learning processes (Sánchez & Fernández, 2015); however, critics say they are limiting themselves to the mere incorporation of ITC into the educational system (Lafuente & Lara, 2013). As Magro and Cabello (2013) point out, although technology plays an important role in this change, the principal role will be played by people, specifically students.

This new context makes possible a way of working, from the student's point of view, oriented at meeting "targets" (Himanen, 2004) and a greater involvement of them in tasks (Del Moral, Villalustre & Neira, 2014), thus assuming responsibility for their learning and at the same time maintaining motivation by means of different strategies (Butler & Winne, 1995; Wolters, 1998).

One of the most important characteristics of the new educational model was the move towards a focus in which abilities or capabilities become the guiding light of educational practice (Delors, 1996; González & Wagenaar, 2003), with these understood as:

- The fundamental knowledge that prepares subjects to face the new challenges of the present and the future (Imaz, 2015).
- The development of personal and professional abilities that are put into practice in different scenarios (López, 2011).

Educating in this new scenario involves developing, in the student, abilities linked to social and ethical elements by means of collaborative learning that emphasizes the construction of knowledge and not just its transmission (Folgueiras & Martínez, 2009; Martínez, 2010). In this way, the university can recover its central position, socially speaking, becoming an agent of change, obliging it to overcome any hint of deadlock in order to fulfil its basic functions, with ever greater levels of openness and flexibility. As well as the content that students must be taught, there arose a current of reflection regarding the very process of teaching-learning, the seed of the development of new methodological proposals, "active methodologies". Learning tasks take on importance because they include knowledge, skills and attitudes, and reflect the complexity of reality. The focus of attention of any learning is based on significance, connection, interrelation, collaboration and dialogue (Arandia, Alonso & Martínez, 2011).

These practical perspectives respond, in a certain way, to the misgivings of some companies with respect to the university's educational proposal. There were disagreements, even after the Bologna Reform, about the educational model and its usefulness, the orientation and quality of the programmes, and the final result of the learning process (Meso, Pérez & Mendiguren, 2010).

1.3. The potential of online journalism as a field of educational innovation within Communication

Communication degree curricula have traditionally aimed at the preparation of professionals who are qualified for the use of writing techniques adapted to the specific requirements of each medium (written, audiovisual, spoken). It was only a matter of time before these study programmes started to respond in a determined and imaginative way to the most innovative trends of the profession, symbolized by web journalism, considering the need to train journalists as communicators qualified to work in all media (Anàlisi, 2008).

With the arrival of the new century and the consolidation of cybermedia organizations and their business models, there was an increase in specifying the kind of specific training required by the "digital journalist", as the job was then known; this was a new kind of professional that could be distinguished by specific abilities for news-related work on the Internet, linked essentially to real-time news production, the use of Internet for finding sources, the creation of content in different media formats, and interaction with sources and audiences (Deuze, 2001; Scott, 2002; Mencher, 2002). This gradual consolidation of online journalism at the educational level was supported in the new century by significant research activity.

In Spain, the White Paper on Degree Courses in Communication (ANECA, 2005) defined 21st-century journalists as professionals qualified to a) communicate in the language of each of the different traditional media (press, photography, radio, television), in their combined forms (multimedia) and digital media (Internet); and b) use information and communication technologies in the different media.

The Bologna Process (2010) motivated the definitive introduction of web journalism-related content, through compulsory and core subjects, into curricula. This consolidation has also been possible thanks to the boosting of lines of research into the new field, studies that began to feature significantly in the mid-1990s, coinciding with the launch of the first Web-based media, and this increase only continued at the beginning of the new century. In other words, the Bologna Process was opportune at a time when the kinds of expectation regarding journalism training were necessarily different from those expectations covered by the previous university degree course, introduced at the beginning of the 1970s.

As the years passed, online journalism became a field that involved a growing convergence, tending towards an expansion of services, unlimited supply, the segmentation of audiences and interactivity with the public. This new reality means the profession has been confronted with hitherto unknown levels of complexity. The rise of new media and devices, with the entrenchment of new hypertextual, multimedia and multi-platform communication styles, has necessitated a renewal of the educational response with regard to professionals working in journalism and communication in an Internet context.

Online journalism professionals are recognized, to an ever greater extent, for their creative and innovative capacities, as well as for their ability to produce information by means of different integrated expressive codes (text, video, audio, image, etc.), with resources such as immersive and transmedia narratives.

Interaction with sources and audiences is another fundamental requirement that has arisen in recent years. The media use social networking sites (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) based on a logic of multiplatform distribution and convergence processes that today are present to a lesser or greater extent in almost all newsrooms. In this regard, many theoretical-practical teaching strategies in current journalism and web journalism-related subjects at Spanish universities cover the writing of multi-platform content and the use of 2.0 communications resources.

Although the media initially became involved in the use of social media without a defined strategy, today, at least those organizations with greater levels of resources have already developed specific action plans. In some organizations, specific job positions have been created (community manager) that respond to the need to have a plan to reach out to user-citizens and customers, according to the case, as well as to the need to have procedures for measuring interactivity with these users. This need to adapt has meant that universities have a special interest in offering future journalists resources for developing social skills and working with information from the point of view of the community and collaborative work.

Also gaining in popularity are pedagogical methodologies based on the simulation of real professional environments from a cross-media and collaborative viewpoint. These initiatives, similar to the philosophy of MediaLabs, stress the importance of thinking in different formats when working on information, as well as of bearing in mind the participation of the public when thinking about content. In this respect, it is worth remembering the existence of different international educational projects which, focussing on the development of practical skills, have acted as an inspiration for developing courses on online journalism on both sides of the Atlantic, as is the case of the initiatives undertaken by the Poynter Institute and the Knight Center for Journalism, among others.

In short, online journalism has become one of the main engines for renewing Communication curricula in the last two decades (Tejedor, 2006; Anàlisi, 2008; Bhuiyan, 2010; Cochrane, 2014; Salaverría, 2011; Finberg, 2013; Larrondo & Peña, 2018; etc.). The definitive introduction of online journalism as a compulsory subject occurred in different European countries, including Spain, thanks to the renewal of curricula that occurred in 2010 in order to adapt them to the EHEA. In the case of other countries in the Ibero-American area, such as Brazil, in the year 2013 new national regulations covering curricula were introduced. These did not bring specific changes to web journalism, which had already been covered for over a decade in similar subjects such as *Introduction to Digital Media* and *Webjournalism and Cyberculture* (Teixeira & Larrondo, 2019).

The potential of online journalism and cybercommunication as an incubator of educational innovation has motivated different researchers and lecturers in the field of Social Communication to examine pedagogical actions such as those described in this book (EIP), which have been useful in achieving a constant adaptation and improvement of subjects linked to the Web medium (Ivars, 2010; Angus & Doherty, 2015; Flores, 2016; Teixeira & Larrondo, 2019).

Innovative experiences in the teaching of online journalism at the University of the Basque Country: context of application, methodologies and results

2.1. The subject *Online Journalism Newsriting*

Changes in the university in Europe and Spain have happened in parallel with advances in the structure of the profession and in research. In fact, in the mid-1990s the educational approach of the Faculties of Communication and Social Sciences in Spain started to offer subjects covering web journalism that were initially very general and optional.

In this regard, in the Ibero-American area, Brazil and Spain have been two countries with a particularly proactive attitude. Outstanding examples of pioneering research groups that study the phenomenon of Internet journalism are, in Brazil, the Grupo de Pesquisa em Jornalismo On-line (GJOL)³, founded in 1995, at the Faculdade de Comunicação, Universidade Federal da Bahia. In Portugal, the study of online journalism has been closely linked to the successful Laboratório Labcom.ifp, at the Universidade

³ <http://www.facom.ufba.br/jol/>

da Beira Interior (UBI). In Spain, cutting-edge examples are the Laboratorio de Comunicación Multimedia (MMLab) at the University of Navarre, the Laboratorio de Comunicación (LabCom) at Malaga University, the Grupo Novos Medios at the University of Santiago de Compostela, the University of the Basque Country's Gureiker Group, the Laboratori de Comunicació Digital (Digilab) at the Universitat Ramon Llull and the Observatorio de Periodismo en Internet (OPEI) at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Salaverría & Barrera, 2009).

Brazil, Spain and Portugal have stood out particularly for having different academic conferences and specialist scientific events that have contributed to granting web journalism a solid intellectual foundation as a discipline. In this regard, events worth mentioning are the International Online Journalism Symposium, held each year in Brazil, at the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul; in the Basque Country, the International Conference on Online Journalism (Ciberpebi); and in Portugal, the University of Oporto's Online journalism Conference.

Brazil, Spain and Portugal have also promoted research cooperation in international networks (Tárcia & Marinho, 2008), aware that the study of online journalism means being aware of production taking place both in Europe and in the Americas. In this respect, the MEC/CAPES cooperation agreement for the project Journalism on the Internet: A Comparative Study of Cybermedia in Spain and Brazil (2008) stands out⁴. Spanish-Brazilian collaboration was also present in other joint actions, such as the organization of the Spain-Brazil International Colloquium on cybermedia, and the production of the publication *Online Journalism: Research Methods* (Palacios & Díaz, 2009).

The University of the Basque Country was one of the pioneers in introducing, in 1996, the optional subject *Multimedia Electronic Journalism*. However, a study carried out in the mid-2000s concluded that most faculties were not managing to respond to contemporary educational needs (Tejedor, 2006; Deuze, 2008).

⁴ Project CAPES/DGU 140/07 (Brazilian side) and programme PHB2006-0004-PC0041/ PHB2006-0005-TA0041 (Spanish side).

This debate about the need to adapt educational programmes to the multi-skilled professional profiles of the new media environment became especially intense in the second decade of the new millennium (Bhuiyan, 2010; Salaverría, 2011). In fact, it is at this time when communication companies started to undergo profound restructuring processes involving technological, business and professional aspects. These companies say they seek journalists with the ability to work with content in a range of formats and in cooperative environments, and so web journalism is considered to be one of the areas with the greatest capacity for innovation.

This was reason enough to lay the foundations for the inclusion of online journalism as a compulsory subject in journalism and communication curricula, both transversally and in a specialized way. The transversal approach sought the innovation of programmes and the adjustment of teaching content in traditional subjects linked to technology, journalistic design, professional ethics, etc. The specialized approach sought greater depth through the creation of specific subjects. This approach was the one prioritized by the University of the Basque Country. Although most universities in Spain and Europe opted for more general names (online journalism, Internet journalism, cybercommunication, etc.), at the University of the Basque Country, the name *Online Journalism Newsriting*⁵ was chosen.

Recently, it has been possible to see the prominence of this kind of training in cybercommunication in Spain, with figures showing that this subject is taught as a specialized, obligatory subject (68.23%) and, to a lesser extent, in specific and optional subjects (31.76%) (Tejedor & Larrondo, 2018).

As was argued at the time, 21st Century communicators should be trained as competent professionals able to transmit news and entertainment content in their combined forms via digital formats (multimedia). The adaptation to the EHEA must therefore have acted in favour of the development of areas that are outstanding within and fundamental to the discipline and university teaching of Journalism, such as newswriting and genres (Salaverría & Díaz, 2003). Genres have always represented for the journalist an educational element of the first order and are the most simple

⁵ Since 2019/2020, this has been called *Newswriting for the Web*.

way of teaching (cyber)journalism, and hence the importance of creating theory and promoting its educational consideration (Larrondo, 2008).

The first compulsory online journalism subject present on Communication degree courses at the University of the Basque Country was created with the new curricula that resulted from the Bologna Process reforms. The result was the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject, introduced in the 2011/2012 academic year as a second-year subject, common to the three degree courses of Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, and Audiovisual Communication. The subject is taken by an annual average of two hundred students of these three degrees.

Since it was introduced, the theoretical-practical contents of this subject were focussed on boosting those capabilities needed to create messages adapted to the characteristics and possibilities of online media, in real time, and to work collaboratively on online journalism projects. In this way, the subject had a didactic approach related to content, genres, narrative styles and formats. Although it focussed on questions of the writing, editing and production of news, from a general theoretical point of view, the subject aimed to offer the resources needed to “learn how to learn” about network culture, and allow the students to familiarize themselves with the Internet media ecosystem, one that is ever more complex (Larrondo, Rivero & Meso 2014).

From a specific point of view, this subject was intended to bring students into contact with online journalism routines, putting special emphasis on the production of quality content that made use of the characteristics of the informative discourse on the Internet (hypertextuality, multimedia and interactivity). In this way, the subject combined a conceptual approach with the practical handling of tools for editing and publishing on the Web. In short, it was an innovative subject that aimed to go beyond technological trends, and which was intended to instil in students professional values such as responsibility, teamwork, self-sufficiency and empathy with audiences in the online environment.

This subject was based on knowledge acquired in the first-year subjects *Newsriting for Press* (first term) and *News Genres* (second term); and continues the teaching of a range of newsriting skills that are

complementary to those required for print and audiovisual media. Specifically, the subject *Online Journalism Newsriting* was a look at the bases of the structure of the journalistic message on the Internet, and the specific qualities of journalistic genres in the new multimedia environments. During the term, basic concepts for effective Internet writing are explained, and Internet writing techniques are taught that are related to the organization of texts in terms of hypertext, multimedia, incorporating links into content and giving published texts a high profile on search engines.

The subject's specific capabilities are:

- Formation of specific journalistic criteria for working in Internet media.
- Acquisition of writing skills that complement those necessary for print and audiovisual media.
- Develop the capacity to plan and produce messages in accordance with the differentiating characteristics of cyberjournalistic language (hypertextuality, multimedia and interactivity) and with the narrative conventions, principles and functions of Internet journalism genres.

The general or transferable abilities covered are:

- Acquire knowledge and understand the meaning and relevance of theories, concepts and methodologies in the context of the (inter) disciplinary field of communication (transferable).
- Critically analyse, interpret, explain and assess facts, social processes, texts and communication projects (transferable).
- Apply methodological theories and tools to practice in different communication processes and contexts (transferable).
- Look for, select, hierarchize and analyse information and documentation from different sources, adapting the content to different narrative forms and strategies (general).
- Develop skills related to participation in and management and optimization of teamwork, applying informed criteria to decision-making and to evaluating the results (general).
- Synthesize, develop and apply new creative approaches to the resolution of communication problems (transferable).

Online Journalism Newsriting also contained a section of contextual or general matters (history and beginnings of online journalism, structure of Web media, professional ethics, development within the framework of convergence and the social media, multi-platform and transmedia web design, etc.). In this way, the subject's content was boosted by more general knowledge regarding the cybermedia and journalism on the Web. This aim of this focus was to avoid the initial risk of linking teaching in this area with excessively technological or instrumental matters with an expiry date.

Specifically, the practical work plan of the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject is based on Project-based Learning (PBL) (Larrondo, Rivero & Meso, 2014) with multimedia interactive macroprojects that tend, in general, to adopt the form of cyber-reports and web-docs. This subject makes use of free web creation tools (blog services, website development tools such as Wix, Shorthand, etc.) to build these productions.

These products become, in practice, an amalgam or set of products that are textual (news, short or long reports, opinion articles), visual, audiovisual and audio (videonews, text news, image galleries, infographics, opinion texts, etc.).

This educational approach gives the student different tasks or problems: planning content, that is to say assessing the kind of item to create in order to be included within each news super-production (hypermedia news and reports, videonews, supplementary audios, simple infographics, opinion texts, image galleries, etc.). Also to be considered are the human resources available for the work (number of students, division of tasks and coordination, etc.), as well as the available material and sources; finally, and from a more general point of view, it is important at all times to make the best possible use of time and effort (Larrondo, Rivero & Meso, 2014).

In this regard, the subject aims to bring into the classroom and, quite particularly, into the practical time spent in the laboratory, the professional routines of digital newsrooms involved in the production of up-to-date content. Therefore, these practical projects make it possible for students to adopt roles characteristic of a professional newsroom, identifying the responsibilities that will be encountered in the professional world (manager, chief writer-content editor, writer, SEO, etc.). So, in the practical classes,

students face typical problems involving the selection of news, planning, web design, dissemination via social media and others. This obliges students to take creative and innovative points of view, which are closely related to their own prior technological and social lives as digital natives.

The teaching-learning methodology implemented in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject also ensures that the production and publication of content is totally virtual. This means that the activity can leave the physical limits of the classroom and can be carried out from elsewhere if need be, using other devices (smartphones, tablets...).

In short, what is sought is for students to interiorize the kind of specific planning required for projects with online content, the pace of work involved in these, as well as the responsibilities or capabilities characteristic of the cyberjournalist as a creator and manager of multi-platform content, without forgetting the importance of being up to date in terms of online sources, the responses and reactions of users to information, as well as the need to work with other journalists in the same or in other organizations (Larrondo, Rivero & Meso, 2014).

With regard to evaluating the project, this is done based on the following criteria:

- Shows awareness of the structure and characteristics of the Internet report genre and identifies each one of its parts.
- Writes the proposed journalistic content following the guidelines explained in class, defines a main theme, and organizes ideas following a logical structure, adding multimedia elements that offer relevant information.
- The links and keywords used are appropriate and provide relevant information.
- Follows spelling and punctuation rules. It also takes into consideration journalistic style (e.g. with fluid writing, avoiding too many subordinate clauses or excessively long paragraphs).
- Appropriate use of ICT tools proposed for carrying out activities (e.g. Wix, Shorthand, Thinglink, etc.).
- Collaborative work.
- Offered with a public presentation and defence of the project.

In the second half of the new century, as online journalism was becoming increasingly complex in the professional sphere (convergent or integrated newsrooms, specialized profiles: transmedia writer, content curator, data journalist, etc.), it became more and more important to introduce changes to the subject and offer future cybercommunicators resources to develop their social capabilities and work on content from the point of view of the community and collaborative work (multi-platform, multimedia and transmedia products). Also to be worked on within the framework of online journalism teaching were attitudes favourable to a less monomedia and more brand-based professional culture, to teamwork, and building a range of skills (Bor, 2014).

The need was starting to become evident to stress a non-instrumental model for educating journalists, a model centred on the production of content in all of its stages (documentation, creation and dissemination), whatever the final medium might be (traditional or cybermedia), in which the tools are, consequently, perceived as part of the journalist's job. However, the assimilation of new media realities linked to convergence and the Web 2.0 have still only been introduced into course curricula to a limited extent (López, 2012; Sánchez, Campos & Berrocal, 2015).

2.2. Use of the social media and the Web 2.0

A summary is given here of the results of the use of Web 2.0 tools, including social media, in two subjects: *Media Models* (2010/2011) and *Online Journalism Newsriting*, during the first year it was given (2011/2012).

The aim of using these 2.0 platforms was to bring about the interiorization of values associated with the new rules present in the second decade of the new century with respect to audiences:

- a) Humanization and transparency: Journalistic information favouring trust and offering an image of the media organization and journalists as more friendly, familiar and free from influence.
- b) Attention and humility: The audience has the feeling that the media organization serves them and responds to their informative needs with greater speed and based on more egalitarian positions.

- c) Content: As well as providing information, the content is reassessed based on the dialogue that may arise between users and journalists.

KZBerri's Web 2.0 initiative began in the second term of the 2010/2011 academic year in the subject *Media Models*, a compulsory subject in the second year of Journalism. This initiative had the intention that students would use these web tools as a collaborative space and become involved in a permanent learning process, promoting cooperation and exchange. The main tool for the work was Facebook.

The starting point was a study carried out in 2008/09 with second-year students from the Advertising and Public Relations and Journalism degrees at the University of the Basque Country, which analysed the influence of these websites in their daily communication practice, as well as the reasons for using them, and the degree to which they used these sites. After working with 130 students, the study showed that these websites were very familiar to young Basque people and had become part of their habitual communicative practice. 87% were active users of at least one of them, and 66% connected on a daily basis, which was a good demonstration of the culture of "constant connection" and reflected the fact that these forms of interpersonal relation were integrated into daily communication processes. In fact, only 5% of students stated that they were connected for less than half an hour each day. With regard to the social media most used by students, Tuenti was at the top of the classification with 60%, following by Facebook (14%), Fotolog (14%), MySpace (8%), Messenger (2%), Blogger (1%) and Hi5 (1%).

This was reason to think that the use of the Web 2.0 opens the door to a different scenario in which education can also benefit from the learning possibilities it offers. So, at a time when old educational methodologies were being questioned, it was thought that it could be of interest to use Facebook as a strategy in the classroom. This online tool can contribute to creating a new environment for learning and to improve the education offered, since it favours teamwork and offers an enriched learning process, one that students can participate in to a greater degree.

This experience in innovation was continued the following academic year in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject, a core second-year subject

in the Advertising and Public Relations, Journalism, and Audiovisual Communication degree courses at the University of the Basque Country. This subject was given for the first time within a new curriculum, and meant that the content specific to online journalism was compulsory for the first time in the three degree courses of the Communication area.

At this second stage, the experience was carried out using the Blogger platform and the Twitter social networking service. The students used these tools to create an autonomous, independent media service, recreating the newsroom of an online publication in the classroom, covering local issues, politics, economics, culture, etc. in which to publish weekly practical exercises (news of interest) created with the contributions made in the social media by pertinent figures or institutions.

The proposal had the following goals:

1. Familiarize the student with the new characteristics of work in the media, such as hypertextuality, multimedia and interaction. Writing for the Internet means dealing with these three aspects and requires the acquisition of professional skills that enable the student to build and transmit information to audiences efficiently.
2. Make the leap from monomedia to multimedia. Move away from traditional patterns of content creation for a single medium (printed press, radio or TV) and start to produce multimedia content. The social media offer two advantages worth highlighting when it comes to working cooperatively: the degree of student involvement in networked contexts, and the possibility of creating closed groups for work.
3. Recreate an online newsroom in the classroom as an educational strategy, for the first time publishing, in real time, news written by the students. This grew out of the hypothesis that the publication of their first journalistic texts on an online media service created on the Blogger platform would help *Online Journalism Newsriting* students to acquire that integrated set of knowledge, capabilities, aptitudes and skills that would allow them to advance in their training as a journalist, since the students would publish their information and this information or news would have the

same repercussion as content published by professional media organizations. In this way, the students would experience the real work of journalists; furthermore, by publishing their content as journalists, this would increase their motivation (adding value to the teaching process).

Therefore, during the 2010/2011 academic year, the strategy of the *Media Models* subject consisted, firstly, of the creation of a Facebook group for the subject, called *Modedukak* (Figure 1), whose access was private and only open to members invited by the administrators, who in this case were educators involved in the initiative. This meant that all the information and comments were only shown on the students' private profiles, creating an atmosphere of trust, as well as a feeling of building a community. There also existed the option of switching settings so the group could not be seen by anyone except members, but it was considered that it would be a good option for other people to see the group and, consequently, the work carried out by the students.



Figure 1

Profile of the *Media Models* subject on Facebook

The group had the following sections:

- Current information. As the practical part of the course was being carried out, each week students looked for, wrote and included news about the world of the media. Together with this, lecturers put to them questions that contributed to the debate on matters dealt with previously in class.
- News and related content. Periodically, the lecturers in charge of the subject included links to articles, audiovisual material and any other content of interest, which may or may not have been current affairs, linked with matters worked on in class.
- Events. The subject was treated as an opportunity to take into full consideration conferences, seminars, lectures, etc. that dealt with themes studied in this subject, and which could have been of interest to students.

The use of Facebook was integrated with the use of other social networking services: YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, Google Sites and Google Groups, and this was seen not just as a new form of communication, but as a new scenario of collaboration and knowledge transfer.

Some of these tools applied were networks that specialized in particular themes. So, Google Sites allowed the shared construction of knowledge, which is indispensable for sharing material and resources and for carrying out collaborative projects and investigation experiences, overcoming time and distance constraints.

Flickr was used to store, order, find and share photographs (and also videos) created by the users themselves. Particular emphasis was placed on the tools that allow authors to label their photos and explore and comment on other users' images.

YouTube, the world's most popular online video community, allows users to find, watch and share original videos. YouTube offers a forum to communicate with users around the world, to inform them and to inspire them, and acts as a broadcasting platform for creators of original content.

As well as social media, blogs and wikis were also used as tools for the subject.

Without any doubt, the blog was up to that time the most widespread and studied Web 2.0 tool. Before the social media became popular, blogs made it possible to update content (texts and/or images) very frequently, presented chronologically. The blog was used as a tool for the discussion and exchange of ideas on the Web, which allowed the creation of virtual communities.

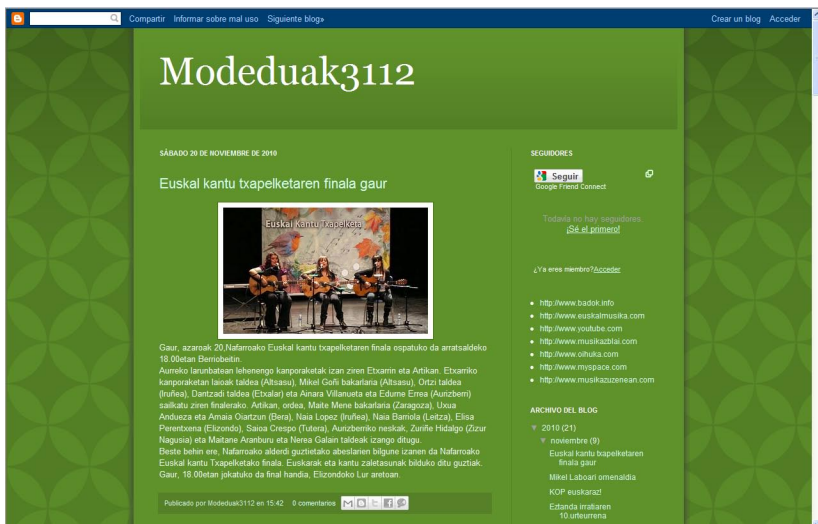


Figure 2

Example of the blog *Modeduak*

From the educational point of view, blogs can be used individually or collectively and are very easy to design and update. In this project, blogs were used so that students, in groups of three, could express their ideas about a subject chosen by themselves, and so that they could comment on their classmates' blogs, creating an interesting virtual community.

Another tool used in the initiative was the wiki. A wiki is a website for collective work by a group of authors. Its logical structure is very similar to that of a blog, although there is a difference in that, in the case of a wiki, anyone can edit and add content to texts written by other people, making it possible to do collaborative work in a group, create dynamic interaction among classmates and involve the lecturer (via the inclusion of comments, suggestions, corrections...), and to see the history of changes made, allowing lecturers to monitor the evolution of the work done. As content, it was proposed that students carry out an analysis of a media outlet of their choice, following a pre-set outline, which was the same for everyone. Later on, as well as appropriate corrections by the lecturer, the rest of the class could also make contributions with the inclusion of more information, details, etc. which enriched the work done.



Figure 3

Homepage of the Lotaldi site

Furthermore, students were asked to create online content in groups of three, which was later to be uploaded to Lotaldi, a global website for uploading news-related videos, making them immediately available for distribution to the world's media. The site was based on a web portal that could be accessed from any browser, via mobile phone or computer. Students registered on the website and later uploaded a multimedia file (film or photo), indicating the title, place where the events occurred, keywords and the subject matter of the video. Students also had the chance to consult the state of the files they had sent, to see whether they had been accepted or rejected.

One of the most interesting contributions of the Lotaldi service in class, apart from its value as a collaborative learning tool, was the reward offered to the students who had made the video with the highest evaluation. These students had the opportunity to cover, officially on behalf of Lotaldi, an important sports event that took place in December of that year in Bilbao.

The experience with Facebook in *Media Models* was expanded in the following year with the new specific subject, *Online Journalism Newsriting*, a second-year subject given to everyone studying on the Journalism, Audiovisual Communication, and Advertising and Public Relations degree courses. This subject involved the use of Web 2.0 tools for the immediate publication of content produced in class by the student, and in order to thus round out the communication process.

In this second stage, in order to put this paradigm change into practice, a media outlet was created on the Blogger platform that had the same name as the subject, *Ziberkazetaritzako Idazkera (Online Journalism Newsriting)*. This platform was adapted in order to divide the students of groups 32, 31 and 17 into the following sections: Euskadi, Politics, Economics, International, Sports, Society and Culture. Before starting, a session was given to each group in order to explain to them how the service worked. They were taught how to write on the platform, insert photos and videos, add links that complemented the texts, and publish their news on the social media.

for our students, a tool to find ideas about news and to stay up to date with the specific information about their assigned area.

The news was published in the appropriate section of the online newspaper in real time, although later on lecturers corrected the information published by the students, indicating spelling and grammar corrections and the number and relevance of links inserted, drawing attention to the correct labelling with keywords of news items, as well as to the inclusion of appropriate multimedia elements such as photos or videos. In this way, the educators could continuously monitor the students' learning process by seeing how they made use of hypertextuality, multimedia and interactivity in their news. This, of course, required a dedication of lecturers' time above and beyond what is normal, given that, as well as lectures and tutorials, educators had to check, weekly, almost 175 news items published by students in the digital newspaper.

Once the news item created in class was published in the online newspaper, a second stage began that involved publicizing the information using social media. Every time students completed a story, they were asked to start up a conversation on Twitter or Facebook about the news they had published, or to send a link by email to the people interviewed, asking them to tweet it. Some students went even further, and instead of waiting until the news item was written and published before sharing the link, they tweeted the information as they wrote it. All this information was updated in real time on the main node or homepage of the digital newspaper.

As well as this weekly practice, they were also asked to carry out occasional tasks such as transmitting a complex news item by means of an infographic, attend a conference and produce a multimedia news item for the local section of the online newspaper, or write a multimedia sports report.

During the first stage (2010/2011 academic year) a first assessment of this experience made it possible to identify both positive and negative aspects. One of the first good points observed was that the creation of a social media space meant closing the gap between the lecturer and the students. It both brought academic content into one of the students'

favourite environments, and also contributed to creating an image of the educator as someone who is less distant, and able to communicate on the same channel as students.

Another of the advantages observed was the communication of messages and notifications to the whole group, quickly and effectively, since the students checked Facebook and their email inboxes at least once a day.

There were also some areas that were seen to be in need of improvement. So students demonstrated different levels of involvement and participation. In fact, while there were people who conscientiously published their news on the wall and commented on items included by lecturers or classmates, there were others who hardly participated. Furthermore, some of the information posted on the wall was not very, or not at all, interesting in terms of the real development of the subject, and even sometimes inappropriate.

With regard to the goals set when creating the subject, it can be said they were satisfactorily met. Both lecturers and students found a new channel of communication and information that contributed to broadening knowledge in a practical and applied way. In short, new and more horizontal and participative channels and forms of communication were created.

After the application of the new educational tools, an evaluative survey was set up in the form of a spoken exchange of ideas that took place in the classroom. A questionnaire was also carried out so students had the chance to assess, specifically, freely and anonymously, the different aspects of the new features the subject presented that year.

Most of the students that took part in the educationally innovative initiative involving the incorporation of different social media into the classroom assessed the experience positively. 72% of students thought it had worked well or very well. Only 5% of the students surveyed gave an opinion that the experience had been poor or very poor (Figure 5).

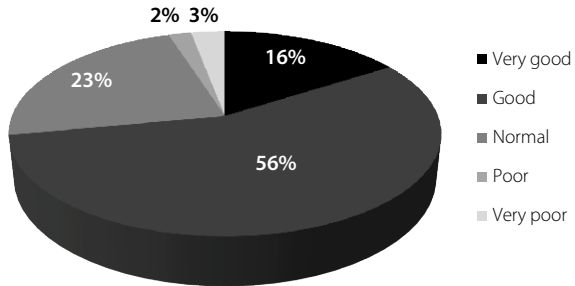


Figure 5

How would you rate the inclusion of social media in class?

Furthermore, 74% said that the experience had been beneficial and 55% stated that they had learned something new about the social media and blogs. Furthermore, 68% considered that the use of these new educational tools had helped them in their practical classwork (Figure 6).

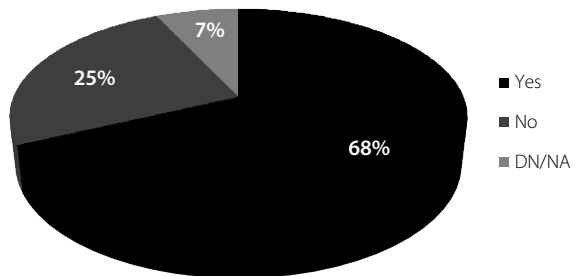


Figure 6

Did using them help in your practical work?

The general feeling transmitted by the students was positive, although some of them offered constructive criticism in order to improve future applications of social media in practical classwork. They felt, for example, that the incorporation of these kinds of resources in the classroom was

a good idea, because it helped young students to keep up to date with things related to the Web 2.0, but at the same time, some felt that they should be made more useful by allowing and facilitating greater interaction among groups.

Asked about what they would improve (Figure 7), the students' opinions varied considerably. Although most of them were happy with the new resources applied in class, 31% suggested changing the type of practical classwork that had been carried out, 29% did not feel anything should be changed, 15% of those surveyed would have included more social media and 7% would have preferred not to have had any incorporated.

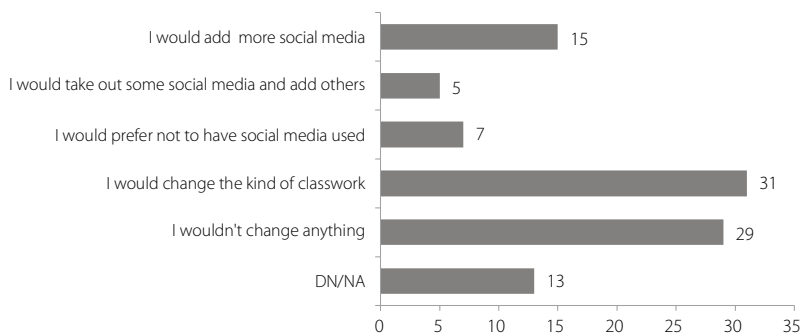


Figure 7

What would you improve?

It is interesting to note that a number of students gave the opinion that the idea and the use of social media in class had been a good one, but that there were some aspects that should be improved, such as the incorporation of the Twitter messaging service, or registering the subject as a website rather than registering it as a personal profile on Facebook. It was felt this change would facilitate the interaction of the group and the publication of shared work. These proposals were taken into consideration in later years.

There were very few strong criticisms of the initiative, and these questioned the relationship between the tools and the subject matter, or the time required for these. However, most people said that the initiative

had acted to give them a better knowledge of certain social networking services and to give them greater motivation with this subject. Many of them stated their satisfaction with having learned to create and maintain a media outlet and to see another side of the social media, one that went beyond leisure and personal relationships, as well as allowing group work from home.

One of the most conclusive aspects of this project was the positive assessment of the potential of the social media, and specifically, in this case, Facebook, as long as the content created and tasks carried out using them were handled effectively. In fact, the use of ICT in the learning process constitutes an opportunity for evolving towards better and more effective learning practices, but is also an extra effort for educators, who have to face new challenges.

Therefore, the success of using Facebook in class depends to a large extent on the kind of content that is put up on the site, on the specific objectives set, and on correct use of the platform. It is not a matter of putting the subject's materials onto a social networking service, but rather to bring the subject to students via a social media channel.

In the second stage of this initiative, a total of 175 students participated by publishing their news, from the first day, on the platform set up for this purpose.

By bringing practical exercises into line with the professional reality, the students became involved in a process of permanent learning, which boosted their motivation. Almost 90% said they were satisfied with the experience and gave the opinion that online newswriting in class, using the Blogger platform and complemented by Twitter, was very useful when it came to learning the essentials of *Online Journalism Newsriting*.

As occurred with the use of Facebook the previous academic year, the majority agreed that this classroom strategy was useful for preparing students with regard to the new technologies they would need to use in their professional future. 20% of the students also indicated that the subject was made more engaging to study through the use of social media. This is additional evidence that the blog, if used appropriately, can

be a very useful teaching tool, and is an encouragement for introducing Web 2.0 tools into future educational considerations.

In terms of negative aspects, it is important to point out that 7% of the students were not happy with the teaching strategy used in class, since they considered that using the tools proposed was too complicated. For a high percentage of these students it was the first time they had entered into contact with these Web 2.0 applications. In fact, 92% of the class did not have a blog when they started the subject, and just 27% had a Twitter account.

2.3. Project-based Learning (PBL) as an innovative methodology

PBL or project-based teaching-learning strategy is oriented at carrying out an activity, job, product or plan that includes three stages: planning, undertaking and notification of results (Mujica, 2012). In the first stage, the problem and the necessary resources to deal with it are identified; in the second stage, the question or subject is studied, possible solutions are formulated and a product is created, bearing in mind the most viable solution and the results of the investigation process; and the third stage involves the presentation of the final product to the pertinent evaluators (Brooks-Young, 2006).

The PBL method is a part of the open learning environment, which links complex problems with everyday experiences (Parra, Castro & Amariles, 2014). In this regard, students have to offer a practical application in the real world, beyond the limits of the classroom (Nadelsson, 2000), creating a connection between the academic and professional spheres. PBL is particularly useful for boosting autonomy and facilitating the learning of connected and transferable skills such as professional autonomy, critical reflection, working in a team, and ethics and social responsibility.

As has been stated above, the characteristics that define PBL are based on the development of an interactive method, with the goal of carrying out a project that, in many cases, contains the resolution of different problems and is based on real situations or problems. This is a method that emphasizes the role of the student, putting the learner at the heart of the learning process, under the constant supervision of

educators, who move from a position of teacher to one of mediator or guide in this process (Harwell, 1997; Vizcarro & Juárez, 2008). So, PBL:

- a) Turns the conventional learning process on its head, based on self-directed learning by the student groups, with the lecturer taking up the role of facilitator.
- b) Gives importance to both the final product and the process.
- c) Develops high-level intellectual skills (analyse information, take decisions, make judgements, etc.).
- d) Proposes motivating learning scenarios.

PBL often requires cooperative work. The aim is that students, in groups, work on skills they will need for their careers and their lives: cooperation, creative thinking, communication, time management, etc. As stated by Imaz (2015), the goal is for students to learn to deal with the style of work that they will face in their future professional lives. There are many advantages involved in bringing teamwork into teaching (Moruno, Sánchez & Zariquiey, 2011), in a scenario requiring collaboration among team-members with radically different profiles and viewpoints, in which cooperation is essential to the smooth running of the project.

Sánchez and Fernández (2015), and Martí *et al.* (2010) have specified these, and other advantages in the application of the PBL method:

- a) Elimination of memory-based learning. The aim is to replace mechanical and repetitive learning with work based on challenges, requiring an interdisciplinary approach that responds adequately to the complex social reality of the contemporary world.
- b) Extension of abilities and skills. The aim is to make students use abilities such as problem solving, based on decision-making and the assumption of leadership.
- c) Increase in the students' involvement by running professional-style projects in conditions that are similar to the reality of the labour market.
- d) Students tend to apply the knowledge acquired in order to run a project that satisfies a social need. This contributes to strengthening their values and their commitment to the world around them (Maldonado, 2008).

Along with the authors already mentioned, there are other experts who have highlighted these benefits. For Savery (2006), PBL helps students in the self-directed learning process, since it makes it possible to work in a relatively autonomous fashion and to achieve better results with respect to the problem considered (Thomas, Mergendoller & Michaelson, 1999). For Vygotsky (1988), the construction of knowledge occurs thanks to social interaction in a context of collaboration and exchange, in order to later, individually, internalize the knowledge acquired in the group and to reconstruct one's own knowledge. Comparing traditional teaching environments with others in which PBL is applied, it has been shown that students in PBL environments show a better capacity for problem solving (Finkelstein, *et al.*, 2010), and they are considered more committed, more self-sufficient, and show a greater tendency to pay attention (Thomas, 2000; Walker & Leary, 2009).

Currently, companies and organizations require new formulas for action, as well as professionals with the skills needed to solve problems, take decisions, work in a team and be flexible enough to adapt to the rapid changes that are happening in the information society (Cenich & Santos, 2005). Such needs mean that future professionals have to be educated taking innovative and participative methodologies into consideration.

In this regard, it is important to point out that collaborative learning is an essential part of Project-based Learning, in which teams are created. The organization of teams promotes better task execution and a more effective search for information; it means the group is more efficient and the project is run more effectively; and it also allows students to get to know one another and learn to work with each other, in order to achieve common goals (Mujica, 2012).

In terms of the tasks involved in Problem-based Learning, also included are those practices oriented towards improving the effectiveness of headlines and titles with regard to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and social media parameters.

The introduction of PBL into the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject is facilitated by the subject's practical nature. PBL is a didactic strategy in

which students, organized into groups, carry out projects based on real situations (Boss & Krauss, 2007; Bender, 2012; Patton, 2012; Garrigós & Valero, 2012), projects that go beyond the limits of the classroom and which are aimed at achieving a real-life impact (Challenge 2000 Multimedia, 2002). In this context it is important to bear in mind the opinions and contributions of all team members, in order to arrive at the goal collectively, in such a way that both individual and group skills are boosted.

In some cases, PBL can adopt a perspective based on the analysis of problems. It is very suitable to the requirements of online journalism, characterized by the need to take decisions frequently and quickly with regard to agenda setting (the continuous selection of news that will be of interest to the public, and the continual renewal of content), a task traditionally given to management teams. This dynamic form of operating required by digital publishing requires students who are trained to make fast decisions based on quality criteria, without losing sight of ethical demands. PBL is also useful for working in a practical way on other challenges, such as those that result from the use of the social media for news-related tasks. PBL, involving the integration and use of Web 2.0 tools in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject, brought a major change in teaching processes and involved a transformation in the educational model, proposing educational practices that are more similar to practices found in the professional world, where new tools and technological resources have an important place.

According to a survey of over a hundred *Online Journalism Newsriting* students, taken during the 2016/2017 academic year and covering the PBL teaching method, 70% of the students felt that it favoured teamwork, something that was supported by the conditions of the multimedia rooms (approximately one computer per person). This level of satisfaction rose to 75% when asked about their interest in the learning process involved in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject; and rose to 90% when students were asked whether it had stimulated participation.

Aside from this specific experience, in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject it was possible to see that the creation of accounts with Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube, linked to publication platforms (Wix, blog, etc.), supplemented activity on these platforms in an ideal way. These

accounts included the blog's logo or the brand image of the media outlet created by the students, and also contained a clear description of its activities. What is more, it encouraged students to use monitoring tools and metrics to evaluate use (Twinfluence, Twitalyzer, TweetDeck, HootSuite.com, Facebook Insights, etc.). As well as contributing to the design of a group or outlet brand, they were used mainly to distribute the content created and contact sources.

The *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject paid particular attention to Twitter and aimed to let students understand how using it can bring great benefits to the journalist's task, as long as this use is appropriate. Therefore, students meet, in the classroom, specific problems linked to this platform, such as the opening of accounts and the distribution of one's own information, checking third-party information, looking for sources and direct contact with these sources in order to cover specific subjects.

On the other hand, although it does not demonstrate such a great impact, the Case Method (CM) can also be a useful technique for learning in the context of a subject like *Online Journalism Newsriting*. This methodology involves students having to deduce knowledge based on the resolution of problems and clarification of principles taken from real professional contexts. Therefore, as well as putting students in the position of undergoing the day-to-day experiences of professionals in the main digital newsrooms, analysis of the online news strategies of these companies was designed. These case studies involve the analysis of the effectiveness of their current 2.0 strategy and of its opportunities to create conversation, and of the resources available to manage social channels.

PBL also fits well with the Internationalization at Home (IaH) perspective (Healey, Marquis & Vajoczki, 2013; Beelen & Jones, 2015; De Wit & Leask, 2017) and the promotion of complex levels of interactivity in the classroom, aimed at cooperative production that is both virtual (Wächter, 2002) and international, as is explained in the following section. These initiatives emphasize the collaborative side of learning in the area of Communication and Journalism, including an international dimension (Kurthen, 2008), which, it is understood, should be interiorized as an essential part of the work of media professionals (Messersmith, 2015).

During the 2016/17 academic year, the lecturers who taught the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject on the degree courses of Journalism, Advertising and Audiovisual Communication at the University of the Basque Country introduced the Project-based Learning methodology as a way of renewing the subject's educational strategy.

The study sample was made up of the students from the three degree courses, including both the Spanish-language and the Basque-language groups. 72% of these students were women and 28% men. Of them, 70% fell into the 18-21 age bracket, and the remaining 30% into the 22-35 range.

At the beginning of the course, students were asked to carry out, in groups of four people, a project to create a digital media outlet that responded to the subject's goals: that students learn to plan and write, effectively, journalistic news items for online media outlets and also produce their own multimedia content. In general, the goal was for the student to interiorize the skills needed to carry out the profession of journalist on the Internet, teaching them to solve the problems characteristic of the task of informing the public, in a creative way.

The subject was divided into two parts. The theoretical programme was given each week in the classroom (two hours) and was based on the lecture format. It covered not only the subject's theoretical foundations, but also the features of Internet-based journalistic language, the characteristics of the genres of journalism in the new multimedia environments, how to write for search engines, and the importance of SEO and Web analytics.

This process of theoretical learning was complemented with the practical application in the multimedia room of the knowledge acquired. The aim was to introduce students to hypermedia news in the online media and to other genres such as the multimedia report and the particularities of the online chronicle. These practical parts of the project were carried out in the multimedia rooms (two hours per week) in order to encourage learning and to allow the different levels of skill development in the students' educational process to be appreciated. The students wrote content under the constant supervision of the lecturer, who commented to each group on any problems with the projects, or additions required, proposing improvements that ranged in kind from spelling and grammar

corrections, to using more sources, statements or data, in order to achieve the rigour demanded by journalistic content in general.

At the end of the term, and before the exam, a public session was held to present and defend the projects, involving the active participation of students and lecturers.

The project was assessed according to the following criteria:

- Shows awareness of the structure and characteristics of the genre of Internet report and identifies each of its parts.
- The journalistic content proposed is written following the guidelines explained in class, defining a main theme and organizing ideas following a logical structure, adding multimedia elements that provide relevant information.
- The links and keywords used are pertinent and contribute relevant information.
- Spelling and punctuation rules are applied. Journalistic style is taken into account (e.g. writing that is not fluid, abuse of subordinate clauses, or excessively long paragraphs).
- Adequate handling of the ICT tools proposed for carrying out the activities (e.g. Wix, Storify, Shorthand, Thinglink, etc.).
- Work is done collaboratively.
- Final presentation of the project in public.

The first step was to make groups of four, chosen by the students themselves, in order to create a website using Wix software that would work as a container in which to publish the practical work done in class, as and when it was completed.

The initial instructions for carrying out the project, in all of its stages, were sent out via the eGela platform (the University of the Basque Country's corporate Moodle). This channel was used to publish the bibliography, the various instructions, the links to the software used in class, and to the websites created by the students. It also included steps for drawing up the final report on the work presented and which had to be handed in, in video format, at the end of the term in order to complete the practical part of the course.

The project consisted of eight content sections focussing on the skills developed as part of the subject. In this regard, carrying out the practical work proposed allowed students to interiorize knowledge and develop the abilities needed to work as a journalist at an online media organization.

With the goal of offering a theoretical foundation to the contents that were to be included in the project, the first two lectures started with an explanation of the main narrative characteristics of the language of Internet journalism, paying particular attention to hypertextuality, multimedia possibilities and interactivity, features that differentiate this kind of language from that of conventional print media, radio and television. During the following five weeks, the attributes of the cybergenres to be used in the project, and their evolution compared to the traditional genres, were covered. The remaining seven weeks were given over to teaching how to write, for readers, but also for search engines such as Google and Bing. In these classes, emphasis was placed on the quality of texts, but also on how they should be positioned with respect to search engines, making them visible so that readers can find and read them. To do this, the positioning of information in search engines was explained. Different techniques for improving this were offered, covering the usefulness of Google Adwords, Google Analytics and Google Trends for choosing keywords when creating content and generating more traffic and improving visibility.

Meanwhile, every week students attended the multimedia room where the lecturer gave them instructions for carrying out the practical parts of the project. As has been mentioned above, as the set exercises were carried out, the lecturer examined and evaluated each of them, making personalized proposals for improvement and selecting the most common mistakes to show them in class, to avoid them being repeated.

The exercises carried out were the following:

- The writing of two hypermedia news items with links to further information —that provided context or background— and with a 30-second video to complete the information (a simulation of a live television report at the place where it occurred, for example, in front of the pertinent workplace, at the scene, or in front of the affected person's house, etc.). Furthermore, the groups were encouraged to

work on positioning, in accordance with the information's key terms. They were allowed to rewrite their texts, keeping these keywords in mind so that if someone made a query about this matter, it should appear among the first results given by search engines such as Google.

- Writing a real-time chronicle using the social media. The platform used was Storify because it made it possible for the student to extract information published on different social media services in order to carry out a process of monitoring a specific subject, present social media discussions and comments in a structured way, and provide a real-time story of a newsworthy event.
- Creation of interactive images with the Thinglink application: the students selected various parts of photographs obtained for making other contents, and texts, links, tweets, audio, video and photos of people who attended a given event, or connected to the main figures in a news story, were added.
- Creation of infographics using Piktochart software. One of the project's contents consisted of creating a journalistic infographic with the aim of transmitting information about something in a visual way in order to facilitate its comprehension.
- Creation of an interactive and multimedia timeline. In class, the students created images showing chronological sequences using applications such as Dipity and Tiki Toki that accept texts, images, videos or links to add additional information.
- Creation of a multimedia report. The project's most important part consisted of creating a multimedia report using one of the following programs: Shorthand or Atavist/Creatavist. What was evaluated was the writing of a quality text to act as a backbone, and also the use of multimedia possibilities such as videos, photo galleries, audios and the use of Storify, Thinglink or Piktochart, etc. to enrich the report.
- Coverage of the 8th International Online journalism Conference, held in Bilbao. Taking advantage of this event, which brought together experts in digital journalism, being held near the Faculty of Social and Communication Sciences of the University of the Basque Country, all the groups were asked to create a special multimedia report in order to put into practice everything learned up to that point.

At the end of the term, an anonymous satisfaction survey was given to students. In terms of the educational plan, 68% stated that they either agreed somewhat or fully agreed with the fact that the teaching-learning approach was appropriate to the characteristics of the student group, while 80% said that it was appropriate to the nature of the subject. In this same section, almost 80% of students rated very positively the resources used by the lecturers, as well as the practical activities proposed by them.

With regard to the Project-based Learning educational methodology, 70% of the students gave the opinion that this favoured teamwork, something that was supported by the conditions of the multimedia rooms. This level of satisfaction rose to 75% when they were asked about their motivation in terms of taking an interest in their learning process in the *Online Journalism Newsriting* subject, and to 90% when they were asked if this had stimulated participation.

2.4. Internationalization at Home (IaH)

Despite its relative novelty, the concept of Internationalization at Home —IaH— is attracting a growing level of interest in the academic sphere (Crowther, *et al.*, 2000; Harrison, 2005; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Holmes & O'Neill, 2005; Beelen & Jones, 2015; De Wit & Leask, 2017; etc.).

In its first definition (Crowther, *et al.*, 2000), IaH was specifically connected to the promotion in university education of activities and spaces of diversity and interculturalism. The concept was later broadened to incorporate other kinds of activities, such as international contributions to study programmes, teaching and learning processes, extracurricular activities, and academic and research activity (Knight, 2006). In a broader sense, Nilsson (2003) defines IaH as any activity that has an international dimension that is carried out in the university, excluding mobility, but including matters such as curriculum content, community work or interaction with visiting students, among other things (Jones, 2013).

IaH therefore refers to the possibility for university students to have formative experiences of an international kind without having to take part in a mobility programme. These are innovative learning experiences

involving the promotion of interculturalism based on different strategies, going beyond the traditional learning of foreign languages or multilingual approaches (Ishikura, 2015). Internationalization can be, then, a very useful approach for renewing subjects, introducing into them educational processes based on cultural exchange, for example, with activities that involve cooperation or interaction with international students, which is the case with the project analysed in a later section of this book.

As Beelen and Jones (2015) point out, IaH is valid for promoting the empathetic resolution of problems in the classroom and, in general, for boosting new forms of critical thinking. Despite these advantages, there are also obstacles that make it difficult for it to be systematized in the university setting, including barriers that some students might feel when faced with communication in a language other than their own, due to a fear that this might be seen as having poorer academic capabilities. Together with this, it is worth considering also that some students have an excessively instrumental view of academic success, which impedes their interest and motivation when it comes to participating in educational initiatives that involve an additional effort in terms of language and cooperation with foreign students.

In other words, Internationalization at Home means going beyond the intrinsically international dimension that university studies have always had, particularly in the field of research (De Wit, 2002), and introducing intercultural and global aspects into all spheres of educational institutions, especially into teaching-learning processes. Furthermore, being transferable, Internationalization at Home experiences are always complementary to mobility programmes, and the two are not mutually exclusive (Knight, 2006).

One of the main benefits of introducing it is the democratization of internationalization, bringing it to a much greater part of society, without it depending on economic possibilities. This favours the situation whereby, for example, Internationalization at Home is more common in what Chan and Dimmock (2008) call translocalist models of university, which are more usual in developing countries. What is more, Internationalization at Home also offers a commitment to diversity, which allows students to compare their cultural heritage with those of their classmates, promoting a critical spirit (Holmes & O'Neill, 2005).

All this is done in a context in which, according to International Association of Universities (IAU) data, contact with other realities and contexts is considered to be a catalyst to research activity and international cooperation, although obstacles are perceived in terms of its development that include lack of funding, lack of interest among workers, poor knowledge of languages, and a lack of experience in managing mobility programmes (Beelen, 2011).

The educational projects that apply this international dimension show results on two levels: the institutional level, measurable in terms of the number and quality of agreements, etc., and the academic, measurable in terms of the student body's intercultural capabilities or overall capacity to work. What is more, the educational innovation project examined here gave the opportunity to see whether, as occurs in other strictly professional spheres —by means of consortia of journalism associations in different countries—, it is possible for the teaching of online journalism also to converge today at the international level (in this case, Ibero-America) and in what aspects, above and beyond the level of multilingualism, at universities in Spain, Portugal and South America. This is a tendency with growing interest, as is shown by recent data journalism initiatives based on international collaboration (Hume & Abbot, 2017) among journalists and/or consortia and professional associations, such as The Migrant Files (2014), Narcodata (2015), Panama Papers (2016), Investiga Lavajato (2017), and many more.

A summary is offered here of the goals, stages, methodology and results of the two online journalism educational innovation projects carried out by KZBerri.

Goals

1. Develop in students specific journalism criteria and writing skills that complement those of the traditional media, through the creation of multimedia reports.
2. Provide students with a long-distance international experience that puts them in touch with and allows them to work actively with students from other universities.

3. Facilitate the development of transferable curricular skills, such as interculturalism and ability to work in a team.

Stages

Based on these goals, the project was carried out in two stages, with different levels of interaction among students, over two academic years. During the first —2017/18— the groups at each university autonomously created a multimedia report, which they later submitted to students at the other institution for comments, in order to receive suggestions that might improve the final result. During the second stage —2018/19— the collaboration was established at the very beginning of the year, and mixed groups of students from participating universities created a joint multimedia report (Figure 8).

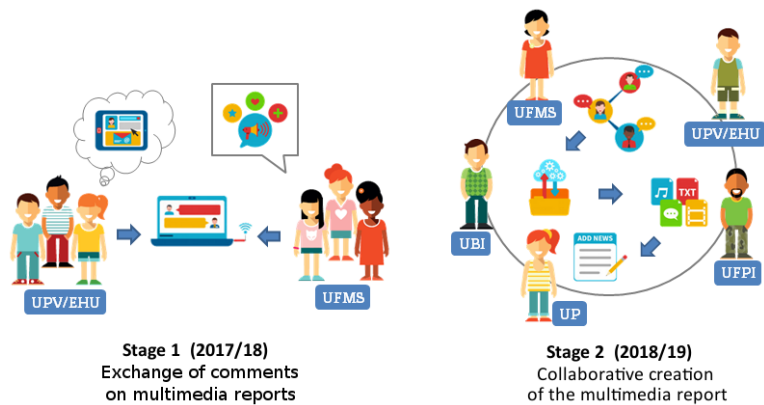
In the first academic year (2017/18) two universities took part in the initiative, the University of the Basque Country and the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS).

The lecturers of the two subjects whose students were to be involved in this project, *Online Journalism Newsriting* (University of the Basque Country) and *Online Journalism Laboratory I* (UFMS), compared the syllabuses of the two subjects in which the project was to be run, and, as became clear, these were similar. At this stage of planning for learning in a virtual collaborative environment, the aim was not to adapt the theoretical programmes of the subjects, but to match the schedules of practical exercises and harmonize the main characteristics of the exercises set. This coordination was done in Skype meetings, as well as in-person meetings of lecturers in Campo Grande (Brazil, October 2016) and Leioa (Spain, November 2017).

Due to the disproportion in the number of students matriculated in the participating subjects —250 students at the University of the Basque Country compared with 50 at the UFMS— it was decided to set the cooperative creation of multimedia reports in groups of 4-5 students at each university. At the end of the term, the lecturers at each centre chose the three best projects carried out at each institution in order to submit them for assessment by their peers on the other side of the Atlantic.

To unify, orient and facilitate this peer review among students, a guide was drawn up jointly. This text had 17 sections divided into six main areas of analysis: journalistic and creative design, hypertext design, multimedia, interactivity, mobile devices and online journalism genres.

With this as a basis, the students who had completed the projects selected at the two universities exchanged comments and suggestions for the improvement of their multimedia reports. At this stage a total of 28 students participated.



UPV/EHU (University of the Basque Country); UFMS (University of Mato Grosso do Sul); UPFI (Federal University of Piau ); UBI (University of Beira Interior); UP (University of Porto).

Figure 8

Stages of the international collaborative learning project

In the project’s second stage, carried out during the 2018/19 academic year, three more universities became involved: two Portuguese universities —Universidade do Porto (UP) and Universidade da Beira Interior (UBI)— and a Brazilian institution—Universidade Federal do Piau  (UFPI). Just as in the case of the two universities involved in the first stage, all of them had a subject with similar characteristics during the first term of their respective academic years, given by lecturers who specialize in online journalism research (Larrondo, Pe a and Teixeira, 2020; Larrondo *et al.*, 2020).

After the same work of checking and comparing the theoretical and practical subject matter given the year before, based on these results and on the comments of participating students, the project's design was altered to give it a longer and more intense model of collaboration. To do this, three joint groups, made up of five students —one from each university— were created in order to carry out, collaboratively, all stages of a multimedia report, from selecting the topic, to design, creation and publication.

All the students studying the pertinent subjects at their respective universities had to create a multimedia report collaboratively in an in-person environment, but unlike the year before, one of the sub-groups had a virtual nature, and was composed of students from the five participating institutions. At this stage, a total of 15 students participated. When the term finished, the students participating in the international sub-group presented, in person and to their classmates, the multimedia reports they had carried out.

Results

Once the two academic years during which the initiative was run had ended, the analysis of the data available provided the following results.

First, the experiences of Internationalization at Home by means of international collaborative learning generated an interest and curiosity among participating students. Once the project came to an end, 85.7% of the students said they “fully agreed” or “agreed somewhat” with the statement that these experiences enrich the university experience (overall assessment, 4.15 out of 5) (Figure 9).

Second, the general perception of the participating students was that these experiences favoured the acquisition of the skills characteristic of the subject. So, in the first stage (2017/18), 64.3% of students thought that the exchange of opinions with another group, located overseas, was appropriate for developing the abilities specific to the subject (4 out of 5). On similar lines, 85.7% of students gave the opinion that contact with other, foreign students had helped them to interiorize cyberjournalistic language skills (interactivity, etc.) (4.1 out of 5).

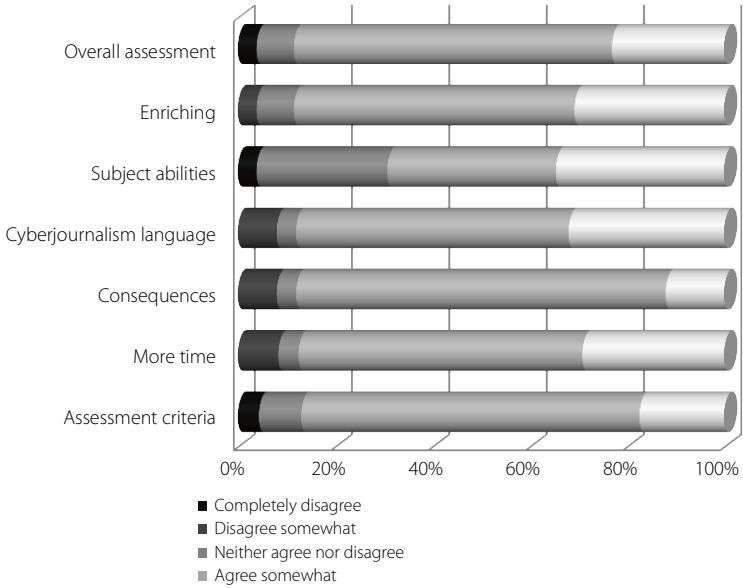


Figure 9
Assessment of skills in the first stage (2017/18)

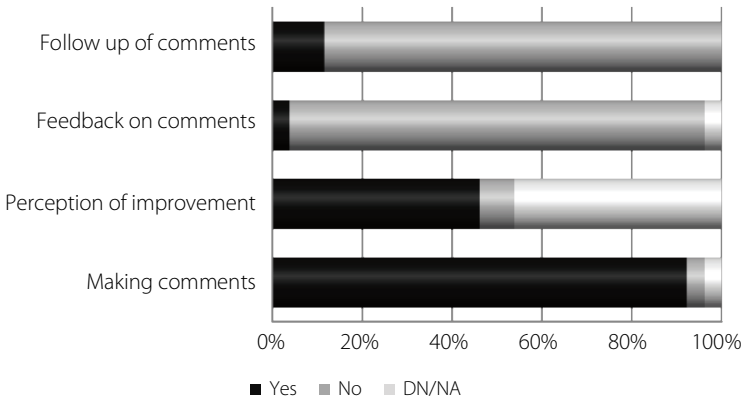


Figure 10
Types of participation in the first stage (2017/18)

However, in the second stage (2018/19), where the international collaboration was more intense, the degree of satisfaction with the final result was lower: documentation and the search for information, text writing and content creation (images, audio, video), as well as dissemination via the social media were all assessed at 2.7 out of 5, while the editing and design of the website were higher at 3.2 out of 5 (Figure 4).

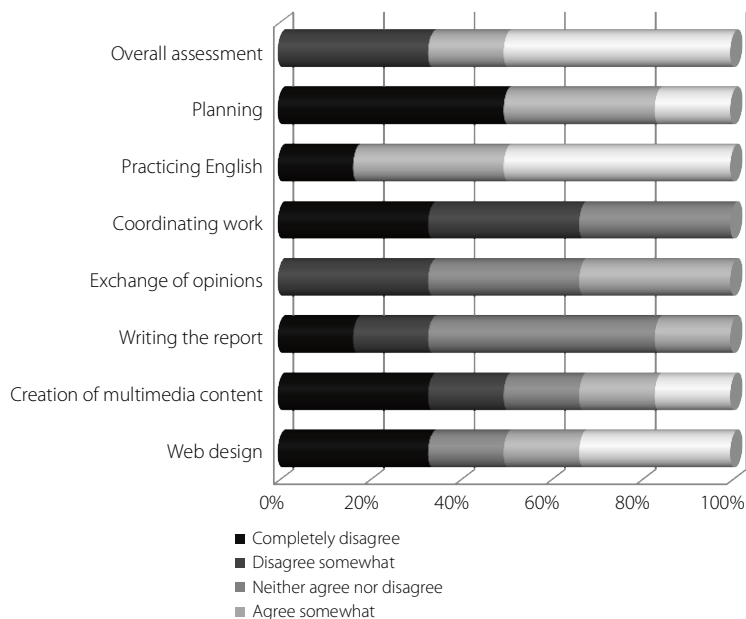


Figure 11

Assessment of skills in the second stage (2018/19)

Third, the experience made it possible to reinforce another series of transferable skills, such as interculturalism and teamwork. So, 78.6% of the participating students stated that knowing that their practical exercises were to be commented on by students from the other university encouraged them to spend more time on preparing them (assessed as 4 out of 5). These experiences also contributed to the development of a greater level of responsibility, since 85.7% stated that this exchange

made them more aware of the consequences of what they were writing (3.6 out of 5). Regarding dedication to the project, in the second stage, only a small number of students (3.8%) said that the greater demand on their time resulting from the project was a problem.

In terms of developing transferable skills, however, this involved a greater degree of complexity. In the area of interculturalism, 7.7% of the participating students said that the main problem when creating the multimedia report had been to find and tackle a common theme among students in three countries with very different news agendas and cultural contexts. If, in the first stage —the exchange of comments— this diversity was an obstacle to making contributions on the reports' content, in the second stage —the international groups— it resulted in the selection of common topics tackled from the different perspectives of the three countries, such as, for example, feminism, cultural traditions or euthanasia.

Fourth, the project made it possible also to draw conclusions in terms of aspects related to the use of language in international collaborative projects. During the project's first stage, the students exchanged comments regarding multimedia reports created by each group (University of the Basque Country and UFMS) in their own language. This option was chosen because of the perceived possibilities in terms of mutual comprehension between Spanish and Portuguese, and because it allowed all the students to participate equally, without depending on their level of knowledge of English. Furthermore, the very nature of the subject and the analysis to be carried out, focussing on the multimedia characteristics of the language, and not on its textual qualities, did not appear to rule out this possibility.

Despite this, the assessment performed at the end of the first stage showed that language was perceived to be the main obstacle for carrying out the activity, mentioned in 57.7% of cases. The difficulty in understanding the texts written by students on the other side of the Atlantic, together with a lack of knowledge of the news context in which the report had been created, was pointed out as the main obstacle to carrying out their critical task (Figure 5).

Given these results, the decision was made to use English as a language of communication for the project's second stage (2018/19), since its

collaborative nature demanded fluid communication among students. This requirement was also conducive to the situation whereby, in the groups created, only those people who were interested in the project and had a good level of English participated.

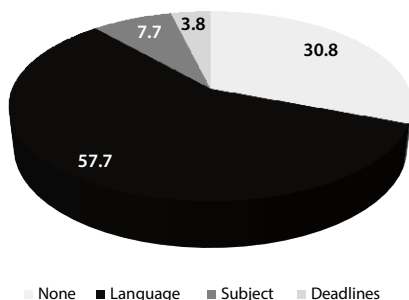


Figure 12

Main problems perceived by the students

After the second stage was over, the opportunity to work in English was evaluated as the most positive aspect (4 out of 5), and in many cases was given as one of the main attractions for participating in the project.

Fifth, the project's two stages have shown the ambivalent opinion of the student body with regard to the possibilities of international collaboration.

During the first stage (2017/18), limited to making comments about multimedia reports created at the other university, students participated actively in making observations for their peers on the other side of the Atlantic (92.3% of the total), and they perceived that these were used to make improvements to the original reports (85.7%). However, once this first exchange of opinions had occurred, the virtual dialogue ended. 92.3% stated that there was no feedback over and above these initial observations, and only 11.5% did a follow-up to check whether comments were posted later, which also demonstrated a low interest in prolonging the exchange of opinions (Figure 3).

Regarding these results, the design of the second stage (2018/19) sought to favour continued dialogue and collaborative work from the very beginning, although this set project involved difficulties among students, who were self-critical, evaluating the coordination of content planning with 2 out of 5, communication and messages exchanged with their fellow group members with a 2.7, and the same mark for the work of coordination carried out by themselves.

It is important to point out that, as well as the inherent difficulties of coordination within any team in the classroom, in a project of these characteristics many other factors intervene that make communication more difficult, such as the obligatory lack of synchrony due to time differences, the universities' different academic calendars, an uneven knowledge of English, the different curricular designs of the subject within the degree course, and others.

To summarize, despite the difficulties resulting from coordinating the work, the general assessment of the experience by participating students was 3.96 out of 5 during the 2017/18 academic year and 3.83 in 2018/19.

2.5. Transversal competencies and emotional literacy: the use of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in transmedia projects

The university teaching of online journalism at the UPV/EHU is an area in constant development. Since 2020/2021 academic year, within the framework of a Pedagogical innovation project (IKD2 i320-22) for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2020 academic years, KZBerri-Gureiker group has continued promoting news pedagogical approaches to online journalism teaching, by means of other of didactic methodologies such as working with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by the United Nations to be achieved by all member states by the year 2030. These goals are expected to be useful for the development of more ethical and social capabilities (emotional literacy) in online communicators, an area that institutions are beginning to work on with an ever greater intensity. In fact, the UNESCO focus on Sustainable Development Goals and the media places the emphasis on the news agenda and the way topics are covered, but also on other directly related matters, such as journalistic education.

University subjects covering web journalism, which centre on the learning of narratives, genres and formats —as in the case of the university's second-year subject *Online Journalism Newswriting*— also require greater attention to general skills such as *information management and digital citizenship, professional ethics and responsibility, social commitment, critical thinking and teamwork*. Clearly changes of a professional kind in the media industry demand changes in the kinds of skills taught to Communications students, and not only specific skills but also broader capabilities.

Specifically, this group, KZBerri, has started to apply, with an innovative viewpoint, themes linked to the 17 SDGs to classwork done by students on the Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, and Audio-visual Communication degrees with in-depth reports (in-depth or special coverage using hypermedia and multimedia, transmedia, etc.). The aim is for students to interiorize the kind of specific planning required to carry out projects with online content, the pace of work involved in these, as well as the responsibilities or skills that the web journalist needs as a creator and manager of content destined for more than one medium. This last KZBerri-Gureiker's teaching innovation project at the UPV/EHU also emphasizes the importance of being up to date with the activity of online sources, of the response and reactions of users to news, as well as the need to cooperate with other journalists within the same media organization, or from different ones.

At the present time, a growing interest can be seen in online media outlets to go beyond the apparent attractions of the most superficial and sensationalist subjects. In this regard, work with the SDGs symbolizes the need to convey, in the classroom, the importance of carrying out cyberjournalism coverage from an innovative, creative point of view, taking human and social interest into consideration. Furthermore, this need seems especially important in a context in which digital native students tend to demonstrate a degree of confusion when it comes to establishing clear limits between news and opinion, information and entertainment, etc. due, among other reasons, to the influence of the social media.

In line with what has been called the "affective turn" (Clough and O'Malley, 2007), positions have arisen within the field of communication that advocate for more human, more emotional perspectives. Teaching

journalism, then, should focus on how to develop the social and communicative skills, including empathy and active listening, of future journalists, since this will condition their interaction with the social environment in which they work.

It is important, at this point, to remember that journalism at present is experiencing a kind of “revival” of basic ideas, concepts and principles as a consequence of the rise and expansion of online communication. In this “post-journalism”, whose natural home is the Web, more social and service-oriented products work hard to fight against disinformation and against the established agendas based on models of journalism that have entered into crisis.

Faced with instantaneous, fragmented and sometimes superficial or sensationalist news, journalism —particularly Web journalism— needs professionals who are trained to respond to the conditioning factors of contemporary audiences. To do so, it is vital to have skills such as the ability to excite and attract these audiences by means of topics of interest to citizens in general, such as those linked to the SDGs.

As well as its work within the University of the Basque Country, the KZBerri-Gureiker group is currently working within the framework of the European project, K2, part of the Erasmus+ programme (“FORESIGHT – Future Oriented Education for Students Incorporating GSC in High-paced Times”), with the goal of exchanging experiences and developing new educational procedures that are based on the integration of the SDGs into the teaching of different subjects, including Communications.

2.6. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Europe of the Future: design and application of the FORESIGHT method

Modern society is subject to continuous change, and we are currently facing a series of challenges we must overcome if we are to ensure that future generations will be able to live in a socially and environmentally sustainable world. These challenges require special attention if we want our planet to still be inhabitable 30 years from now.

What will the future of the world be like? How will the societies of the future be structured in different parts of the world? And what habits and customs will they have? To ensure a world that offers a good quality of life for all, we need to act now and start taking complex problems such as ageing, waste management and the scarcity of food resources seriously. The Erasmus+ KA2 project "FORESIGHT - Future Oriented Education for Students incorporating GSC in High-paced Times" (2018-1-TR01-KA203-058835), aims to develop the module "Prototyping for a Sustainable Europe".

The FORESIGHT project, which is funded by the European Commission and in which the Gureiker research group is participating, is currently developing and assessing alternative visions and scenarios for a sustainable future, with the aim of designing innovative and sustainable concepts based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In several different European programmes, including Horizon 2020, the creative industries are seen as an agent capable of contributing to these large-scale social challenges. The module will focus on finding innovative solutions to one of the challenges stemming from the SDGs, using the "Prototyping for a Sustainable Europe" method. By applying this method, students will learn what SDGs are and understand why they were established. They will also learn to define the problems involved and analyse the stakeholders linked to the context of both the task they are assigned and the SDGs themselves. The four SDGs on which this module focuses are: SDG3 Good Health and Well-being; SDG8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG10 Reducing Inequality and SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities.

This project aims to anticipate and find solutions for these challenges; in other words, it aims to define a Europe formulated in accordance with these goals. It uses different methodologies for studying the future, enabling students to determine (through visualisations and fictitious and real stories) whether the future they are envisaging is the desired one, and if so, what is necessary to make it a reality. It is not a case of simply imagining a desired future; it also involves establishing a connection between future studies and innovation. In other words, based on this ideal image of a sustainable future, the idea is to think how a product or service can be developed in the here and now (2020) and design an innovative business model as a first step towards achieving the future we want by 2050.

The application of the FORESIGHT project

The method designed within the framework of the K2 FORESIGHT project was tested initially with faculty from the five participating universities: Istanbul Ticaret University (Turkey), Budapest Metropolitan University (Hungary), Karel De Grote (Belgium), Fontys University (Netherlands) and the University of the Basque Country (Spain). In November 2019, 25 faculty members (5 from each university) spent a week in Tilburg (Netherlands) designing and testing the FORESIGHT method in preparation for applying it later on with their students. During that week and over the subsequent months, they designed the module entitled “Prototyping for a Sustainable Europe”, with the aim of then including it in the syllabuses of their respective universities as an optional subject worth 5 ECTS, as and when appropriate in each institution. The content of the module is as follows: 1. Context; 2. Competences and learning objectives; 3. Foresight teaching methods; 4. Review of the content covered so far; 5. Assessment; and 6. Detailed study assignment.

The next step was to pilot the method with 200 European students from the participating universities. The first pilot was carried out in Antwerp (Belgium) during the final week of January 2020. A total of one hundred students from undergraduate courses in social sciences (20 from each university: Istanbul Ticaret University, Budapest Metropolitan University, Karel De Grote, Fontys University and the University of the Basque Country-UPV/EHU) participated in the pilot, along with 10 faculty (2 from each institution). The second intensive piloting of the method with another 100 students was scheduled for November 2020. However, due to the spread of the Covid-19 virus and the worldwide pandemic, this second pilot has been postponed to April 2021 and will be carried out online.

Given that several members of the Gureiker group participated actively in the development of the project, communication and political science undergraduates from the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) have been selected for a possible cross-cutting application of the method in the courses run by that institution’s Faculty of Social and Communication Sciences.

The aim of the methodology is to teach students to think about and create working paradigms for a sustainable structure imbued with value at different levels and systems. Students therefore focus on their expectations for the future in relation to a specific topic (linked to one or more of the SDGs) and research and narrate a probable future centred around this theme, based on assumptions and personal and social experiences, current trends and indications of change.

Whereas the European project concentrates on business needs in order to train students who are more aware of sustainability issues based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the aim of this specific initiative is to measure the awareness and foster the innovative creativity of the journalists of the future. This piece of research therefore employs the methodology of the K2 FORESIGHT project with a sample of 100 journalism undergraduates from the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU).

The results of the study make a significant contribution to the work carried out by the research team, since they offer practical insights into the aptitude profile of future journalists from the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country in relation to sustainability and the SDGs.

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In the current context of constant educational change and adaptation, this book examines a range of Educational Innovation Projects (EIPs) aimed at dynamizing and improving teaching-learning processes in the field of Social Communication (the degrees of Audiovisual Communication, Journalism, and Advertising and Public Relations) at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). These innovative educational projects responded to specific moments in research into pedagogical innovation and were carried out in cooperation with the students. These EIPs covered in this book are part of the consolidated activity of KZBerri, a group that specializes in educational innovation and new teaching methods, which has the University of the Basque Country's IKD (Ikaskuntza Kooperatibo eta Dinamikoa) stamp. KZBerri is part of the Gureiker Consolidated Research Group, which specializes in the analysis of digital communication and journalism on the Web.

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