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## The Evolution and Application of Design in Visual Communication and its Influence in Social Behavior

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**Abstract.** Today with the evolution of technology, interactive processes and transmedia narratives, social behavior in communication is changing. It is growing rapidly and influencing consumers of content and for audiences, the main objective is to study how communication is becoming increasingly iconic to the point that feelings begin to be plotted, such is the case of emoticons or emojis in short messages. For this purpose, a methodology based on scientific and bibliographical research on communicative language types and individual behavior is used, coupled with an exploratory field analysis based on user experiences on mobile devices. These results of the research will strengthen the study of trans-disciplinary contents that focus specifically on the application and generation of creative ideas in the field of production, interaction or realization of a communicative or interactive product. That using technology as a support and platform, the communicator or creator of communicative products creates needs in the users. Something very different happens in creativity, this is emotional, an awareness of what is wanted to be informed and how can it be informed, ¿what is its functionality? how do we want to reach the consumer this kind of creativity comes through the evolution of experiences.

**Keywords.** ICTs, Recipient Societies, Communication, Design, Technology

### Introduction

Everyone sees what they [already] know (Munari, 2016, pág. 20). Bruno Munari in his book, *Design and Visual Communication* writes "*Knowing the images that surround us is equivalent to expanding the possibilities of contact with reality, is equivalent to seeing and understanding more. For example, it is very interesting to see the structure of things, even if it is the most superficial part, what is called <texture> "*

Moreover, the design should not be questioned in its content, because it is aimed at a specific audience and is not required to be understood by a global population. It is made based on the needs of a [specific] user and conceptualized by a person or a group of individuals who made an analysis and study of those needs of how to reach the viewer or user through design.

As Jorge Gaitto says in his article *The social function of design or design to social service* is as follows: "*Design is not the autonomous generator of its social function, but it is the designer as an active member of its society. In other words: it is not the design, but its policies*" (Gaitto, 2018, pág. 22).

For a designer or an artist of any kind, the knowledge of utilitarian software and programs defines their activities, but this does not influence their creativity. The same

[creativity] that develops from an evolutionary process of knowledge and practice, is necessary [in order] to recognize that not all programs offer the same purpose. They work for different functional aspects used in the world of visual communication, interactivity, design and their different services.

Jorge Frascara in his book *Graphic Design and Communication*, he quotes "*is not about being creative or being understood. Clarity does not oppose creativity in communication design. The creative use of the clarity of a message can in some cases help to make highly complex messages seem simple or simple messages make difficult to understand. Everything depends on the design objective.*" (Frascara, 2000, pág. 25).

This is the problem that not all design is adequate and not every message is optimal in communication, it means that the design is evolving according to current trends and the needs of users to read messages. This is important to emphasize and consider that the design in communication is used to create needs and to excite the people (understand by curiosity to feel informed) regardless of what message is issued.

The consumerism in social communication inherent in the individual, but at the same time these needs increasingly cause messages to become shorter and more concrete and that are more graphic than textual having a greater impact on society. Clear examples of these are Emoticons (graphing of emotions) and memes (Channel, 2015), (graphing of social and cultural states). They spread easily by interactivity, in such a way that they become 'viral'.

With this background, social behavior based on graphic communication is transgressing interpersonal and emotional communication. Something like the theory of chaos, as Jesus Lizcano would say in his introduction to the seminar debate (Multidisciplinarios, 2001).

*"Chaos and chaotic systems do not necessarily imply disorder in the literal and popular sense of the word; non-linear systems are irregular, highly unpredictable systems, which manifest themselves in many areas of life and nature, but which cannot be said to have lawless behavior, since there are rules that determine their behavior, although these rules may be difficult to encounter.*

Thus, it is not necessary to say that the new forms of communication are problematic, rather that it is a new challenge for society to take advantage of these new forms of communication and to move them towards better interactive communication.

Among the former theories which made the introduction of content, such as general concepts and scientific bases, it has been established that this document presents a study in the area of communication and the theories that support it, however, it is more focused on human communication and emotions.

Later, I propose a study of communication theories on symbolic interactionism (Alsina, 2001, pág. 167), Social behavior in visual communication (Frascara, 2000) is applied in design and evolution in the use of iconography. Other studies are also identified within my doctoral thesis on DTT (Digital Terrestrial Television) and the societies that participate in it. As DTT is described initially, research is directed to the areas of visual communication, the receiving participating societies and the evolution of design as a communicative medium.

### **Methodology**

This research has a qualitative-exploratory orientation. For this, a methodology has been used based on scientific and bibliographic research on the types of communicative languages and the behavior of the individual, coupled with an exploratory field analysis based

on user experiences on mobile devices. These research results will strengthen the study of trans-disciplinary contents that focus specifically on the application and generation of creative ideas in the field of production, interaction or realization of a communicative or interactive product.

This methodology allowed me to increase my level of knowledge. Qualitative research, as indicated by its own concept, has as its objective the description of the qualities of the phenomenon that is being experienced at present with the creation of new ways of communicating on the basis of graphism. It also allows one to look for a knowledge that can encompass a part of this [new] reality.

It is not about testing or measuring to what extent an individual uses or receives a communicative visual content, but to discover as many qualities as possible to help to improve social behavior based on communication and also to take advantage of design techniques for a better result.

### **The evolution of visual communication.**

With the needs of information and hypermediality, visual communication and the evolution of design have not been left out, they have always been in the process of changes owing to the growth of advertising and companies in charge of managing the image, be they functional or purely for advertising purposes, which are constantly being updated and go hand in hand with the contemporary styles used worldwide.

Social image is the way in which the individual perceives himself and wants to be perceived by others. It is the representation that the environment creates in the face of social interaction. This concept is basic in the theory of verbal and non-verbal education and media interaction, which creates "characters" aimed at increasing audience levels. The communicator, the collaborators and the public, become active members of the media show, creating new identities and roles that fulfill the basic purpose of this discursive type and which entertain and capture the attention of the receiver. (Fuentes, 2013).

All this aforementioned speech is explicitly given by the evolution of graphic content via simple competition of being more effective and having the best production team with creativity and quality.

Although quality and creativity do not always go hand in hand since **quality** is the functional way to cause an effect on the viewer or the usability of a project or multimedia product, using the best tools to create a content in which the user is attracted to continue using it, or simply leave it while **creativity** is given by the technical resources in the application of strategies and procedures in the field of design, establishing, in addition, a series of creative possibilities that are related to the components, be these hypermedia contents such as images, graphics, icons and symbols.

Creativity is something very different. It describes an emotional state and is innate from the creator and based on a study of its target audience, aware of what it wants to inform and how it is going to inform it, what its functionality is, in what way and to what public we want to reach. This creativity comes through growth of experience and is inherent in each person and evolves. (Desirée, 2015).

Expressing differently, the complexity of the use of the elements of design, creativity, the application of aesthetic resources and the use of the main components of Design, can be part of the innovation of communicative products or types of audiovisual media, based on its primordial tool, the image.

Donald Norman in his book "The Psychology of Everyday Objects" wrote:

*"The central theme of PSICO is to advocate<sup>1</sup> a user-centered design, a theory based on the needs and interests of the user, with a special emphasis on making the products usable and understandable (Norman, 1990, pág. 232).*

In other words, design in visual communication should:

Facilitate the determination of what acts are possible at each given moment (use limitations).

Make things visible, the various possible acts and the results of those acts.

Make it easy to understand the informational content.

Follow the natural aspects between the intentions and the necessary acts; between the acts and the consequent effect, and between the information that is visible and the interpretation of the receiver.

The visual content is not only a given information of a casual event ... it is creating in the user needs and the inherent curiosity of receiving the information.

Therefore, design in communication is the process to develop something different and that is more utilitarian than decorative, arising from the orderly study of a need, whether personal, group or a society as a whole. This means, that innovation in communicative design must generate creative ideas that can be sold or help in the marketing of a specific audience.

Pablo Iturralde in his book. Dual and reciprocal, visual communication in Ecuador, he quotes.

*"The need to communicate is inherent in the human condition. Tools and technologies consume that vital urgency, and their evolution transforms the customs and thought of each era ... In the contemporary world, the reading of those records produces fascination: in it the vital moment of the emitter that produced them is discovered ... "* (Pablo, 2004).

Within a communicative proposal, the application of the design is not always clear due to a lack of communication concepts in relation to the image. For every time a topic is read or investigated, new ideas are generated that obscure or reject previously generated ideas. In what refers to narrative content, ideas are clear and what is going to be reported or communicated. But errors always arise at the moment of drawing these ideas, that is, what we must do is "start thinking about images".

### **Innovation**

Is the complexity of the use of the design elements, creativity, the application of aesthetic resources, the use of the main components of the design and the utilization of some utilitarian tool that can give part to the innovation of multimedia or interactive products.

Innovation is *"The process in which, starting from an idea, invention or recognition of a need, a useful product, technique or service is developed until it is commercially accepted."* Innovation is the key element that explains competitiveness. " (Castells, Pere Escorsa y Pasola, Juame Valls, 2003).

Within sustainability in design and multimedia, the first thing that comes to mind is how long it lasts, what it is used for, what tools we are going to use "within the design" and what materials we will use for its elaboration, when we want to talk about communication tools multimedia and sustainability, the first thing that comes to mind as a cognitive process of perception and knowledge of sensations and emotions (Villafañe, 2006).

The power of communication is also influenced by the tools and technology they use to produce them. The development of new technologies does not just amaze us, every day we see new instruments, devices and practices that greatly facilitate the development of our daily

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<sup>1</sup> Advocate. - Defend an idea or action that is considered useful or appropriate

tasks, as is the case of hypermedia communication, this has become the latest phenomenon technology and culture, which is contributing to change many concepts of life and daily work, providing many advantages and facilities in their treatment (Porro, 2017).

Technology presents a favored combination as. The TV "Smart TV", cellphones "Smart Phone" computer, industry and all telecommunications, offering a true experience and interaction integrated by images, sounds, animation, video, texts and iconography. An interactive multimedia product allows the user to initiate and develop a virtual dialogue, ask questions, explore and discover, give and receive answers, so it is emphasized that multimedia products have great benefits in the field of communication.

Sample of this as an example is the new ways of communicating or also called virtual conversations and interaction in new technologies and platforms such as social networks, is the iconographic evolution of emotions and sensations, in other words the emoticons.

### **The emoticons**

They are a neologism of two words in English "emotion – icon" that are known as graphic representations, iconic texts, smileys, faces or sequences of emotions symbols. Those became famous by Scott Fahlman<sup>2</sup> who proposed to use the caritas in the e-mail on September 19, 1982. The emoticon was born as a way to contextualize a comment in the distribution lists of e-mail (López, 2009).

But how to represent, symbolize or graphically characterize emotions, sensations or moods. This work is attributed to Salvador Dalí<sup>3</sup> and a new artistic movement called Surrealism, who in his works manages to capture the unimaginable graphically (Dali, 2017).

Walt Disney hires him and gives Dali a new concept of emotional expression to his cartoons. One of his (Dali's) great works is "Destino" that was started in 1945 and released in 2003, where emotions are graphed in their maximum expression that, in my opinion, leaves very little understandable (Hipertextual.com, 2017).

Then brief understanding features of how emotions began to be graphically constructed emerge. We can say that currently there are applications of short messages, such as social networks, which use this way of expressing feelings and sensations through icons are these called "EMOTICONS" or currently called "EMOJIS" that are formed from a sequence of ASCII or UNICODE characters (Unicode, 2017). The emoticon is a new communication code that is formed as a compound word from several terms. Emojis establish which are the basic iconic forms that seek to transmit emotions within the hypertext and non-verbal communication.

Each emoticon exists within a communication channel that has its own meaning, representing something taken from reality, coding it from its proper system or inventory of signs. The keyboard characters of the computer are that channel through which the user

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<sup>2</sup> Scott Elliot Fahlman (Medina, Ohio, March 21, 1948) is a computer scientist at Carnegie Mellon University. he is credited as the originator of the first emoticons that, he thought, could help people on an electronic message board to distinguish between real messages and jokes. He proposed that it be used :-)) and :-( for this purpose, and the symbols pleased. The original message from which these symbols originated was put on September 19, 1982, and was recovered in 2002 by a team of computer specialists. that sought to validate the origin, which is still disputed.

<sup>3</sup> Figueres, May 11, 1904 - January 23, 1989, At the beginning of the thirties, Dalí finds his own style, his particular language and form of expression that will always accompany him and, although it will change and evolve, it will be, in the end, the one that we all know and that defines him so well. A blend of avant-garde and tradition. Dalí is completely integrated into surrealism and begins his consecration as an artist.

expresses, those graphic representations or iconic texts that are not its own creation, but function as words. Another way of saying this is that they have certain meanings, but they also constitute that warmth and human part that lacks virtual conversations or hypertext. According to Joan Mayans<sup>4</sup>: "the emoticon is a simulation because it disassociates the concrete gesture that theoretically represents its issuer" (Sánchez, 2007).

These emoticons are in constant creation, although the user, as a rule, accesses knowing its informative content or intuitively its universal meaning, which goes to form complete sentences from these icons and eliminating the text.

These emoticons have grown considerably, that WhatsApp (<https://web.whatsapp.com/>) the most used social network has a total of 1492 emoticons on its list, followed by Facebook MSM (<https://www.facebook.com/>) that has 897 emoticons ... This until December 2018.

### **Audiences and social behavior**

The graphic design and the use of icons makes the individual feel more confident in front of a content that is not textual and only represented by images, and today, by the bombardment of images in everyday life that makes human beings begin to express themselves based on the graphing of emotions. The human being no longer wants to read, it is more important that the message comes to him as a clearly designed and structured image, so he understands immediately the meaning once mentally analyzed. He is capable of reading the small letters contained within.

This social behavior begins to demand that the designs and creators of the same ones begin to innovate each month the message, although this does not produce an impact, but it can change the social behavior either temporarily or definitively. As Radio Cerrito from Argentina expresses it in an article published on his website.

*"The use of emoji, is it to the detriment of written language? They replace phrases and words. A study of the social network Instagram revealed that "iconic dolls" replace words and phrases when writing a message. It is used by both young people and adults."* (Cerrito, 2018).

With this we can simplify that the society is changing and it does not require ages to be affected, but rather the individual easily lets himself be contagious and begins to act based on current behaviors,

These consumers of visual contents, also called audiences, are vulnerable to communication and to the bombardment of images, which believe everything or almost everything, are haunted by the design industry.

Edgardo Madagán in his thesis *Interpretation of young people from Puebla ... Cap 4*, he quotes *"The word audience is familiarly linked to the collective term" receptors*, in the *simple sequential model of the mass media process*." (Madagán, 2005). The same author points out that audiences are a product of the social context that has to do with cultural interests and information. Being the audiences also changes in social and environmental behaviors based on the massive consumption of content regardless of the gender that forms it. For example, a children's program influences the behavior of the individual towards others in their environment.

The behavior of the audiences is not necessarily marked by the target; this limits the market segmentation by a company or medium. The true behavior is manifested by social

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<sup>4</sup> Research professor at the University of Barcelona, specialized in new types of computer communication

environments and the bombing or alienation of information, where a group or even a single person can massify a content through a viralization of the image. This can be interpreted as different ways depending on the degree of intellectual maturity of a person.

Marshall McLuhan<sup>5</sup>, set these groups as "global village" a term that seeks to describe the consequences and sociocultural behavior of audiences in communication within a society, be this communication in a different way than in this case is also visual.

### **Results**

To reach the audience, it is important to study how people have consumed an audiovisual communication product and how they have understood it, an important factor is the fact of knowing to whom they are directing this content, the media and marketing agencies and producers must discuss in detail what motivates consumers to understand a certain message.

This focuses on finding the different ways to decode messages by the audience. The history of it assumes that it is more in order to the values of a culture and justifies it as an essential measure to provide the interpretation of the knowledge acquired by the public.

### **Conclusions**

Once the research work has been carried out, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Visual communication is an active strategy that, when used with solid foundations, can strengthen social groups without the need for long textual content.

The graphic (emojis) does not replace the text, they should strengthen the contents, because this makes us lacking in creativity and multimedia narratives, these icons of emotional graphics should remain in that and not supplant the emotions of the individual, because they are born of personal feelings and emotions in front of an event or an interpersonal situation, as an example with a happy face (😊) could disguise my alteration and personal stress to conclude this investigation.

Once the research work is finished, it can be said that the design in the communication is desperately growing to win audiences regardless of the social behavior and the audience, it is more for the technologies and the use of networks the audiences are not limited and it is free to arrive and be susceptible to misinterpretation personally or in a group

It is important to mention that the visual communication and the evolution of the design is no longer clearly given by the big industries but rather is clearly linked to the use of tools and both innate and acquired creativity of each individual to be able to communicate, since the graphic design is reach of everybody.

### **Recommendations**

One of the most important recommendations is the establishment of government policies and to strengthen those in the management of communication on the web, because it is universal and easier to manipulate, but more complex to control, because anyone can publish a visual content without a strategic study and even not well-intentioned.

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<sup>5</sup> Marshall McLuhan Study in the faculties of Journalism and Communication. In just 20 years, from 1960 to 1980, this philosopher, scientist, scholar and teacher revolutionized with his theories what was known until now about the potential of the media in society. He predicted the influence and effects of television as soon as he was born, but the incredible thing is that he predicted the impact and reach of the Internet when only some 'crazy' technology believed in the invention that has revolutionized the way of understanding information and the communications.

Employ innovative methodological strategies that help the development of knowledge and this goes from the school, visual communication is not just a degree course. At my own criterion, it must be given as a requirement within initial education to strengthen personal ties, those that are already being lost.

The school must contribute future professionals, who must develop not only theoretical but practical knowledge, to face problems that are going to come with the evolution of design, the multiplication of accessible tools and, most importantly, to understand social behaviors to get better with the message.

This is the beginning of a progressive research and it is necessary the contributions made to this topic ... because communication evolves and the ways of communicating are available to everyone, that is why we must strengthen communication and its forms. If communication and design evolve, society should do it better.

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