

THE THEORETICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE LOGIC OF SCIENCE IN ACTION

ANTONIO TEIXEIRA DE BARROS¹

1. Introduction

Based on the observation that the theoretical frameworks that orient research in environmental communication are directly related to the field of social sciences,² the text presents an analysis of how these theoretical repertoires are managed and how the concepts are appropriated in the studies on journalism and the environment.

It is worth mentioning that the appropriation of theoretical contributions of the social sciences in other areas is a common procedure in several other fields, which is justified by the permeability of the social sciences and their direct relation with the various areas of knowledge and with human experiences (BAUMAN, 2015). After all, as the author points out, the social sciences are rooted in the world of life and they cut their themes and objects of study.

The empirical focus of the research is the examination of how the sociological explanation is regrouped, from the mapping of the main social paradigms and its mode of application throughout the period from 2001 to 2016. The assumption that guides the study is that the speeches mediated environments should not be understood as autonomous production, since they refer to the voice of various social actors, such as state institutions, political parties, scientific entities, social movements and environmentalists (BARROS and SOUSA, 2010). It is a discourse conditioned by multiple factors, according to the perspective of the multifactorial theory of news (SOUSA, 2000). Journalism, as a porous and permeable social discourse, receives influences from various aspects of the ecological discourse, therefore, even from the sociological field, one of the areas most used in the studies of communication and environmental journalism (Barros, 2015).

The agency of the repertoires of the social sciences follows, therefore, from the very configuration of the main aspects of ecological discourse and its sources: official, scientific, business and socio-political-environmentalist (BARROS, 1999). From the theoretical

1. PhD in Sociology and Master in Communication. Professor and researcher of the Post-Graduation Program of the Training Center of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies (CEFOP). E-mail: antonibarros@gmail.com

2. This finding is widely recognized in the literature. For a systematization of this relationship, see Barros and Sousa (2010).

point of view, the agenda of the environmental news receives direct interference from the global agenda, a phenomenon explained by the multifactorial theory of news (SOUSA, 2000), depending on the context, international organizations (UN and Club of Rome) governmental organizations, universities and political parties (BARROS, 2015). The combination of these factors results in cognitive and behavioral effects on the scientific community and public opinion (SOUSA 2000; CRESPO, 2005).

2. Methodological assumptions and analysis logic

The corpus of analysis comprises 492 scientific communications presented at the annual congresses of the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom), from 2001 to 2016.ⁱ The corpus corresponds to 6.15% of the works presented at the Intercom congresses in the period, whose approximate total is eight thousand communications. Intercom is recognized as the oldest and most important scientific institution in the area of Communication and stands out for the incentive to inter and multidisciplinary studies (BARROS, 2003). The choice of scientific communications is justified by the notion of science in action, by Bruno Latour (2004), that is, science under construction and not that already consolidated. Understanding that events constitute the most dynamic space for the construction of science, we chose this framework (TARGINO and NEYRA, 2006). After all, it is an important sphere, “not only for the peer review body, but above all for the opportunity to debate” (MOURA, SCHWAAB, SILVA, 2003, p.1).

The methodology consists of a combination of documentary analysis, systematic review (meta-analysis) combined with content analysis. In addition, 36 interviews were conducted with researchers from the area of environmental communication / journalism. The documentary research consisted of the compilation and analysis of the set of 492 scientific papers presented at the annual congress of Intercom from 2001 to 2016. The meta-analysis (CLARKE and OXMAN, 2001; AGUIAR, 2011) was applied from analytical data treatment secondary, that is, surveys carried out by other researchers (GIRARDI ET ALI, 2013, LIMA, 2015, MOURA, SCHWAAB, SILVA, 2013, PESSONI, 2015).ⁱⁱ In sum, the meta-analysis consisted in mapping studies already carried out on academic production in the areas of environmental communication and environmental journalism in Brazil for the purposes already mentioned. Content analysis (BARDIN, 2004) was applied to identify the concepts of the field of social sciences most cited in the articles, with the help of the qualitative research software atlas.ti (<http://atlasti.com>).

The directed or focused interviews (MARCONI, 1999) were applied during the period from 2014 to 2016, during the Intercom congresses, in order to understand the reasons that lead the researchers of the area to opt for the application of the theoretical repertoire of social sciences in the studies about environmental communication and journalism. In total, 36 researchers were interviewed, the majority being in person. Only eight of them asked questions to be sent by e-mail. The responses were numerically coded in order to facilitate the use of transcriptsⁱⁱⁱ.

The methodological course was inspired by the ideas of Giddens (2009); Boltanski and Chiapello (2009) and Latour (1994, 2004, 2012). For the first author, research in

the social sciences is guided by a process of hermeneutic construction. This means that the researcher has as object phenomena “already constituted as significant”. Sociological descriptions are based on interpretative categories that also call for an effort of translation within and outside the networks of meaning involved in the theories (Giddens, 2009, p.335). This is what Giddens (2009, p. 386) calls the hermeneutic elucidation of networks of meaning. The analysis of the bibliography will be carried out in a selective way, without pretensions to elaborate an exhaustive and extensive work, since the purpose is not to carry out a quantitative cartography of the studies, but an analysis of their hermeneutical logics. This operative mode is methodologically evident in the study of Boltanski and Chiapelo (2009), in the mapping of the new social discourses that support the new spirit of capitalism.

The contribution of Latour’s studies is due to the relevance of his methodological proposal regarding specifically the use of bibliographical material for the social construction of science (2004). In his view, texts are transformed by researchers into semiotic characters, that is, they serve as reference and beacon in terms of scientific prestige and authority discourse. These semiotic characters act in the construction of the scientific networks from the associations, traces and hybrid configurations that they carry out. Therefore, scientific texts play a privileged role in sociotechnical networks of knowledge. After all, scientific publications function as inscription devices (FOUCAULT, 1986), which enable the mobility and interchangeability of concepts. Scientific communication carries with it a hidden network of meanings and reveals an implicated system of associations, taxonomies, and logics to bring allies together or to ease controversies (LATOURE, 2000). Within these semiotic networks of texts, “the circulation of tracings of all kinds is improved, increasing mobility, speed, reliability and the ability to combine” (LATOURE, 2000, p.377).

Besides working as registration devices, the communications presented at congresses stimulate science in action, that is, the one that is under construction. This dynamic character provides the circulation and expansion of networks, through hermeneutic operations of translation and translation (LATOURE, 1994). In this dynamic, a recurrently cited author or concept becomes a spokesperson for certain analytical tendencies.

Before presenting the research data, we discuss the complexity character of environmentalism and its networks of actors, one of the key ideas that guides the analysis of data and interviews.

3. Environmental alism as a network of actors

Ecological thinking arises as a result of a hermeneutic alliance between politics, science, culture, diffuse education and everyday life, shaped by the complexity paradigm (MORIN, 1994; LEFF, 2001). The conceptual fluctuations, the contradictions, ambiguities and oppositions between currents of explanation, within the scope of complex thinking, are considered positive elements, since it is moved by a permanent tension between the aspiration to an unfragmented knowledge and the recognition of the force of uncertainties, ambiguities and processualities (MORIN, 1994).

This theoretical configuration that began to orient the studies of communication and environmental journalism from the 1990s was directly influenced by the emergence of new social actors of the environment, in a socio-historical context of different productive bases and different axes of social transformations. The diversification of actors is directly related to the complexity of socio-environmentalism, in an aggregating perspective, despite the existing incompatibilities, of disputes of interests (Barros, 1996). This rearticulation of forces brought advantages, due to the network of agents involved and the expansion of ecological awareness (CRESPO, 2005). The constitution of this network has contributed to diversify and strengthen theoretical aspects, in order to contribute to complex and relational explanatory models (MORIN, 1994).

Thinkers such as Bobbio (1992), Hobsbawn (1995) and Castells (1999) also contributed to the study of environmentalism with a network of social and political actors. For the former, movements in defense of nature are part of a set of claims for the guarantee of human rights, including individual freedoms, political and social rights. For Hobsbawn these movements claim changes throughout the structure of society and call for widespread acceptance of people and not just specific social categories. Castells draws attention to the close relationship of these actors with the media in dealing with the symbolic force that mediated frameworks exert in the formation and diffusion of public opinion with broad effects on social relations and the lived world. In this aspect of insertion in the worlds experienced, the studies of Habermas (1984, 1987) were crucial.

Within this constellation of knowledge developed in the field of social sciences, the communication and journalistic studies in the analysis of the relationship between ecology and public sphere stand out. The assumption is that the different discursive aspects about environment, with resonance in the press coverage, contribute to the constitution of a new public space, based on the media visibility, on the Habermasian track (BARROS, 2013).

The ecological discourse, in the case in question, creates a special space of social appearance, from the convergences and antinomies peculiar to the diverse identities, interests and strategies of the actors involved and their logics of social action. However, the conceptions of ecology and the environment that each one defends refer to a worldview that points to a common order of values, that is, a same hermeneutic picture.

From this broader scenario, there are some considerations about the constitution of these networks and the agency of the theoretical repertoires mentioned by the researchers in communication / journalism. The literature registers a parallelism between the emergence of environmentalism and the sociology of the environment (SCHMIDT, 1999). Ferreira (2006) explores the ideological aspects of this complex relationship:

Environmental sociology, as a scientific and academic production, emerged in the wake of the social contestation movements that emerged in the early 1960s and the emergence of the natural state of degradation of natural resources and the development of industrialism. The birth of the movement in the 1960s surprised sociologists, who at that time did not have a theoretical body or empirical tradition, to guide them towards understanding the relationship between society and nature (FERREIRA, 2006, p.15).

The attention of sociologists to the theme was reinforced by the convergence of interests of various segments, such as social movements, business sectors, international organisms, scientific community and governmental institutions. Thus, “it became evident that the environmental issue was not just a passing fad, nor a dramatization of militants or radical scientists” (FERREIRA, 2006, p.15). Environmental sociology therefore “takes a significant position to study the divergences and conflicts over nature (...) and the causes and extent of environmental problems among the various actors involved” (p.15). This process came to an end in the mid-1980s. It was assumed that in order to understand the global ecological crisis, it would be necessary to reflect in the light of the principles it governs the organization and functioning of the sociopolitical system (LEIS, 1995).

Media, as agents of the social production of reality, resulting from negotiation among different actors, reflect the dynamics of the social context, since it is a production of meanings about the present and carries the conflicts and forces of action and reaction existing between the various social fields (SCHWAAB, 2011). Such production constitutes an arena of disputes of attention and credibility, in which the news ceases to be conceived as a mirror of reality and is now seen as the result of processes subject to subjective interventions. This conception refers to the multifactorial theory of news (SOUSA, 2000) according to which the scheduling of the environmental news receives interference from multiple factors, depending on the context, international organizations (UN and Club of Rome), nongovernmental organizations, universities and political parties. This perspective allows the study of communication and journalism in a relational way, consistent with social theories about the formation of public opinion, the functioning of the public sphere, symbolic power and sociomaterial complexity.

The success of mediatization, therefore, is the result of combining a set of visibility strategies. It is also worth mentioning the ambiguous nature of mediatization. There are times when it seems that all communication vehicles are supportive of environmental claims, but there are also situations where these same vehicles seem to test the credibility and strength of movements (BARROS, 2013a).

Environmentalism itself is seen as sociocultural interdisciplinary and complex thinking, related to several fields of social sciences (BARROS, 2013b, p.63). This implies a “multireferenced view of social systems, culture and nature, resulting in a fabric of heterogeneous symbolic constituents.” A concrete reference for such studies is the socio-environmental thinking developed in the Brazilian context, in its multi-sectoral perspective, characterized by the involvement of multiple socio-political actors and discourses. In short, it is a social thought that implies the construction of collective meanings and shared identities within a complexity marked by the redefinition of meanings and values.

According to this reasoning, the interdisciplinary plane lies at the level of the normative ideology that shapes the environmental ethos. It is from this normative orientation that the value scales are derived to guide the planetary agenda and its interconnections with contextualized agendas, at their different levels: hemispheric, sectoral, regional, state, municipal and community. Contentious relations, in turn, are the result of socio-cultural processes of constitution of the codes of values that guide political conduct and environmental practices, based on the subjective interpretation that social actors attribute

to their own actions and to the attitudes, discourses and practices of actors of the broad, complex and polynuclear environmental field (BARROS, 2013b).

In studies supported by the paradigm of complexity, ecology is pointed out as the articulator of new concepts within the scope of Knowledge Theory. Due to its paradigmatic interdisciplinary position in the recent historical context, result of the connection of several branches of scientific knowledge (BARROS, 2013b). Thus, ecological thinking started to play the role of protagonist and articulator of a type of scientific knowledge of multi and interdisciplinary nature. This is because Ecology comprises the study of the rationality (logos) of this complex socio-environmental domain, its discourses (lexis), its logics of action (praxis) and the forms of power involved in them (kratos). Thus, a new arena of knowledge (scientific-technological) arises that no longer claims traditional scientific “purity” (LATOURE, 1994). On the contrary, this new field of knowledge agglutinates and juxtaposes knowledge from several other fields, both theoretical and normative and practical (MORIN, 1994; LEFF, 2001).

4. Presentation of data

In the period under study, 492 papers on environmental themes were presented at the annual congress of Intercom, with predominance of interdisciplinary studies, represented by the heading of environmental communication, with 87.90% of the total texts (Table 1). The area of environmental journalism appears with 18.10%.

The difference between the two categories lies in the fact that the studies on environmental journalism deal specifically with news analysis, reporting framework and other processes specifically related to production routines related to news coverage on environmental guidelines. Environmental communication, on the other hand, is more comprehensive and addresses broader processes that transcend journalism. In the words of Bueno (2007, p. 34), environmental communication includes “the set of actions, strategies, products, plans and communication efforts aimed at promoting the promotion / promotion of the environmental cause”, while environmental journalism “ important restriction: it concerns exclusively journalistic manifestations “.

Quadro 1: Total de comunicações científicas (2001-2016)

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATIONS	N	%
Environmental communication	433	87,90
Environmental journalism	089	18,10
TOTAL	492	100.00

Source: Prepared based in Lima, 2015; Pessoni, 2015, with complementary information from the Intercom Portal.

If in the area of environmental journalism there are exclusively researchers in the field of journalism itself, in the category of environmental communication, more than 50% come from the various fields of social sciences, especially Sociology, as shown in Table 2. As highlighted in the interviews, this owes to Intercom’s interdisciplinary keenness since its inception.

Table 2: Training area of environmental communication researchers

AREA	N	%
Communication	203	46.88
Political Science	65	15.01
Anthropology	31	7.16
History	11	2.54
Other	2	0.46
TOTAL	433	100

Source: Elaboration of the author.

The explanation for the predominance of the area of environmental communication, according to the interviewees, is due to the profile of the congress held annually by Intercom:

- Since Intercom was created in 1977, there has always been this emphasis on communication and its interfaces, bringing together researchers from related fields, especially sociology, because environmental communication is studied under different approaches and theoretical approaches. I consider this strategy much more interesting than closing the field of research only for communicologists or journalists (I18).^{iv}
- The Intercom congress was always a multidisciplinary fraternization and even though it was transposed to the research on environmental communication. Such a multifaceted object could not be reduced to the monopolized gaze of a restricted community of researchers. The more the interfaces are exploited, the better researchers in the area (I37).

Regarding the focus, according to the interviewees, the media visibility is the main framework studied, since the work is basically concentrated at the pole of production and dissemination, that is, privileging news analysis and coverage of critical events and their repercussion in the public sphere, as discussed earlier. It is clear, therefore, the recurrence of contributions on the sphere of news, which is justified by the analysis of sources and issuers, ie “its social function to foment public debate and its contribution to more pluralistic dialogues in Journalism” (MOURA, SCHWAAB, SILVA, 2013, p.7). Thus, the news is understood as a device that demonstrates the symbolic effectiveness of mediatization, as it relates to its ability to confer visibility to the disclosed issues (BARROS, 2011).

Because it is a very broad category, we consider a brief allusion to its use in the social sciences, based on the analyzes of Brighenti (2007) and Barros (2013). For these authors, visibility is an indispensable symbolic resource for the public recognition of

certain themes, guidelines or issues. For this reason, visibility is relational and socially constructed, which implies the realization that visibility results from the confluence or dispute of interests between different social actors and their logics of discursive action. In the case of media visibility, there are several levels of tension in the relationship between these actors, especially as regards the dispute between them for the control of the issues and visions they try to prioritize in the media space. Thus, each segment uses specific strategies of action so that their discourses are represented in the media space, with the purpose of obtaining the maximum of political effectiveness of their manifestations, from the point of view of attracting public attention.

The interviewees' observation above, regarding the centrality of the media visibility category, is consistent with the analysis of the material analyzed, especially in the case of studies on environmental journalism, whose main focus is the analysis of news coverage on environmental issues. Here, environmental news appears as the main mechanism of media visibility of ecological guidelines. Of the 89 communications that make up the corpus of analysis mentioned in Table 2, 81 fall within this analytical perspective (news analysis), which corresponds to 91%.

Over the period, the volume of scientific communications increased progressively from 20 texts in the beginning of 2001 to 43 in 2016, as shown in Table 3. There was an increase in both areas, but the theme of environmental communication remained the predominant one. According to the analysis of the interviewees, this is due to the following arguments:

- Research on environmental journalism has gained more relevance in recent years, but this has not diminished the importance of more comprehensive interdisciplinary studies, with the participation of researchers who are not journalists and are interested in broader issues (I11).
- The interdisciplinary analyzes were strengthened with the expansion of the research agenda in the environmental area. The environmental news is relevant, but also the institutional campaigns, the engagement of scientists, third sector entities, entrepreneurs and new ecological movements (I3).

Table 3: Communications distributed per year with environmental theme

	YEAR	ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION	ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM	TOTAL
1	2001	12	8	20
2	2002	11	9	20
3	2003	19	10	29
4	2004	10	12	22
5	2005	13	12	25
6	2006	19	10	29
7	2007	21	10	31
8	2008	20	17	37
9	2009	19	11	30
10	2010	20	11	31
11	2011	20	18	38
12	2012	21	12	33
13	2013	21	11	30
14	2014	22	14	36
15	2015	28	10	38
16	2016	28	15	43
	TOTAL	304	190	492

Source: Elaboration of the author, with data from the annals of the congresses of Intercom.

3.1 Mapping of theoretical repertoire

The mapping of the most cited concepts of the theoretical repertoire of scientific communications analyzed shows a predominance of the basic concepts of the social sciences. Second are the concepts related to the theory of discourse. The following are terms related to environmental sociology. Following are the notions related to the sociology of communication and finally terms referring to theories of social movements, as shown in Table 4. The mapping was carried out from the titles, abstracts and keywords, with the technological support of the Atlas.ti, a software for content analysis.

Table 4 - Main areas of social sciences used in studies^v

Basic sociological concepts	N	Discourse theory	N	Environmental sociology	N	Sociology of communication	N	Social / environmental movements	N
Sociocultural	98	Social and environmental discourse	129	Social and environmental	114	Cultural mediations	79	Social movements	53
Sociopolithic	92	Environmental speech	128	Sustainability	102	Technological mediations	78	Environmental movements	51
Scientific community	89	Ecological speech	92	Sustainable development	97	Sociotechnical mediations	56	Ecological Movements	47
Scientific field	88	Discursive representations	88	Local Development	38	Techno-social mediations	42	Political Engagement	36
Modernity	87	Discursiveness	72	Environmental risks	28	Institutional Mediation	35	Social Mobilization	23
Modernization	76	Discourse Analysis	71	Ecological risks	26	Journalistic field	34	-	-
Globalization	75	Construction of senses	62	Environmental conflicts	24	Public opinion	33	-	-
Social science studies	67	Discursive marks	41	Social and environmental paradigms	12	Sociology of the emitters	26	-	-
Complexity	63	Semiology of social discourses	28	Citizenship and environment	11	Agenda-setting	22	-	-
Symbolic systems	59	Intertextuality	17	Environmental visibility	10	Gatekeeping	21	-	-
Identity	43	Argumentative disputes	14	Ecological contract	09	Newsmaking	19	-	-
Sociology of science	42	Disciplinary speech	06	Environmental contract	08	Mediation	17	-	-
Public interest	36	Knowing considered by speech	02	Natural contract	06	Sociology of scientific communication	13	-	-
Social imaginary	29	-	-	Environmental responsibility	06	Public image	11	-	-
Political imaginary	18	-	-	New ruralities	06	Network society	09	-	-
Symbolic disputes	17	-	-	Environmental complexity	06	Digital society	08	-	-
Framework	16	-	-	Ecological know-how	02	Communicative action	07	-	-
Narratives	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sociotechnical networks	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Symbolic power	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1.020	-	760	-	617	-	611	-	210

Source: Elaboration of the author.

It is appropriate to emphasize that the terms listed in Table 5 were taken from the texts analyzed. In most cases the expressions have been mentioned without precise definition of their meanings, taking them as current vocabulary. In other cases, the terms were cited according to certain authors. In the first case they are: sociocultural, sociopolitical, modernization, modernity, scientific community, globalization, identity, social imaginary, public interest, symbolic systems, framing and narratives. Two explanations are plausible for this type of appropriation of concepts. The first is due to the limitation of the space for the communications presented in the event (up to 15 pages). The second is justified because they are terms that, although they are susceptible of problematizations and controversies, are relatively well-known to the reading public of such communications. Nevertheless, in using the concepts without problematizing them, the authors take their senses as data, gaining in synthesis and conciseness, but losing in terms of the limitation of the senses attributed to them by common sense.

In the second case, there are terms such as: social studies of science, complexity, sociotechnical networks, scientific field, symbolic power and symbolic disputes. The first one has a predominant mention of authors such as David Bloor (1991), Bruno Latour (2000), and Michel Callon (2006), with their analyzes on the social determinants that interfere in the production, circulation and legitimation of scientific knowledge. The complexity appears from the perspective of Edgar Morin (2007), who understands science as a complex interrelationship of knowledge, which implies a multi-referenced view of these knowledge. Sociotechnical networks are used in the sense of Bruno Latour (1994), as the articulation of human actors and non-human actors (technical and technological) in the constitution of research networks today. The concepts of scientific field, symbolic power and symbolic struggles are derived from the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1994). The scientific field is understood by the author as a space of struggles and disputes by scientific authority and the legitimation of scientific knowledge. In the case of symbolic power, the emphasis is on the power of words, discourses and images and their potential to construct hegemonic visions and disputes around the legitimation of certain discourses and visions.

What would justify the use of the basic concepts listed in column 1? The interviews point to three main reasons: (a) the historical contribution of the social sciences to the formation of the academic field of communication; (B); the epistemic proximity between the social sciences and communication / journalism; (c) the valorization of the use of this repertoire by researchers in the area of communication and environmental journalism. Some testimonials are illustrative about these three topics:

- The area of social communication in Brazil is very new and owes much to social scientists, especially to sociology. When the first undergraduate courses were created in Brazil in the 1970s, there were no communicologists to fill the positions of professors at universities. The teachers of the theoretical disciplines were recruited from the social sciences and the teachers of the practical disciplines were recruited from the market (I7).

- Both the social sciences and communication have as object of study the society. But the proximity goes there. The way of studying is very similar and the theories and methodologies of the social sciences fit perfectly into the applied studies of communication and environment. The social sciences are not seen as strange sciences for us, for we understand perfectly the language, the concepts, the theories. In fact they are part of the same epistemological family (I31).
- Using sociological concepts in environmental communication and journalism studies is a way of valuing our studies before our peers, as this is something highly valued in the academic community of communication. So there is an amplifying effect of this practice. A quote because the other quotes and finds it legal and so on (I27).

The contributions of discourse theory appear second in the conceptual repertoire of the studies analyzed. It is a wide field of studies in the social sciences, with different aspects and analytical methodologies. The analytical clipping and the method employed here do not allow us to scrutinize the nuances of these different discursive aspects. We will only be in the general plan, in consonance with the research problem investigated here: how the use of this repertoire is given by the researchers of the areas of communication and environmental journalism. The interviews summarize the researchers' arguments:

- For both the social sciences and communication and environmentalism the discourse is very relevant as an object of research. Studying discourses is therefore a way of understanding society, the media, environmental movements and their agents (I9).
- Understanding environmental discourses that gain media visibility is a form of sociological understanding of environmentalism (I23).
- Environmental discourses are produced by societies and the means of dissemination as well. It is therefore important to study both the discourses themselves and the forms they acquire in the different media and channels of dissemination, as well as understood and received by the public (I16).

Environmental sociology ranks third as a conceptual source for the studies examined. This is a relatively recent field, but it is already undergoing ramifications, such as the sociology of sustainability, the sociology of ecological risks and the sociology of environmental conflicts.^{vi} The third column of Table 5 shows that this repertoire appears emphatically in the key terms identified in the articles, alluding to the various areas of environmental sociology. One of the interviewees argues that “environmental sociology and environmental communication developed in parallel,” which would explain the expressiveness of his repertoire in Intercom's studies (Interview 05). Other interviewees argue that:

- Environmental sociology emerges with the media visibility of ecological issues and evolves as the green agenda is defined and redefined (I31).
- The growth of the environmental projection also opened space for environmental social scientists to present their ideas both in the academic sphere and in the media arenas (I14).
- The complexity of the environmental agenda has opened spaces for different approaches to sociology and this has facilitated our research activity, as emerging concepts “fell like a glove” for our analyzes (I2)

The concepts of sociology of communication appear fourth in the repertoire used by scholars of environmental communication and journalism. According to Barros (2015b), the sociology of communication contributes to the current sociological debate about the centrality of the media in today's society and its influence on social processes, actions and interactions. In this perspective the media emitters are no longer treated as mere vehicles, means or channels of social expression and are analyzed as institutions with specific patterns of behavior and logic of social action organized and objectified in their routines and dynamics and procedures that survive beyond the limit of space and time. Thus, in the case of environmental communication, the media are directly involved in the production of consensuses and values that guide the lives of citizens and in the representation of the various strands and tendencies of the green agenda. For the researchers interviewed:

- The vocabulary of the sociology of communication applied to the field of environmental communication nowadays is part of the day-to-day of undergraduate courses and with more refinement in postgraduate courses. Therefore, it is something that begins already in the formation of the students, which becomes almost common for the researchers (I22).
- The sociology of communication applies to all media discourses, but in the ecological case is even more visible because it is a set of concepts of the type “umbrella”, which can be used in most cases. In addition, it is easy to master on the part of researchers in the areas of communication and environmental journalism (I8).
- The sociology of communication is used as a form of theoretical reinforcement, besides being a language widely known among our peers (I35).

Theories about social movements are the ones that present the least resonance of the studies, with a small block of concepts, as can be seen in the last column of Table 5. This area of studies also presents several analytical possibilities. In the specific case

of studies on environmental communication / journalism, from the terms listed in the above mentioned table, we note that the main focuses are environmental mobilization and political-ecological engagement. For the researchers interviewed:

- Studying the mobilization from the point of view of communication is important to understand the composition and organization of the public, be they organized ecological movements, be they small groups located (I26).
- Social movements are part of a tradition of media studies. Therefore, adapting this line of research to environmental studies was almost a necessity for those already in the field (I28).
- The diversity of environmental movements is very large. For this reason, it is important to study their relationship with the media, because it is a vast field of studies that requires a detailed mapping of this diversity (I18).

The appropriation of the theoretical repertoires of the social sciences by the Intercom researchers constitutes a kind of epistemic operation, that is, how the terms are expressed in specific contexts of knowledge, different from the theoretical context from which they originate (MORTIMER, MASSICAME, and TIBERGHEN, 2007). The mentioned epistemic operations, which occur in the different areas identified in Table 5, are consistent with the sociological analyzes mentioned above, such as Giddens (2009) for whom social scientists are methodologically guided by hermeneutical processes, both in the construction of the object of study as in the choice of analytical categories.

In this approach, it is opportune to retake the idea of Latour (2004) regarding the social construction of science (2004), in which texts, concepts and theories assume the function of semiotic characters, that is, they serve as reference and beacon in terms of scientific prestige and authority discourse. The analysis of the interviews points precisely to this theoretical perspective in which social capital reputation capital is used by researchers in the areas of communication and environmental journalism as a strategy to build strong research networks according to the logic of science in action (LATOUR, 2000).

The mapping of the theoretical repertoire triggered by the researchers and the interviews reinforce the thesis of the epistemic proximity between the environmental social sciences and the environmental communication, for several reasons, with emphasis on the shared use of basic concepts by the different areas. This sharing occurs in the process of science in action, but also in the arena of the diffusion of concepts and production. As we observe in the analysis, environmental communication scientists do not necessarily act as producers of concepts and theories, but mainly as epistemic operators, that is, they stand out in the application of the theoretical categories from the field of social sciences. What is inferred from the interview analysis is that this procedure is common among Intercom researchers and that this does not compromise the scientific reputation of the area. On the contrary, it strengthens research networks and gives theoretical prestige to

studies. “We do not feel diminished because we use concepts, theories and methodologies of the social sciences, because we understand that the disciplinary interfaces are of the nature of communication and that is their strength and not their weakness”, as one of the interviewees argued.

The set of interviews reveals that the expertise of the social sciences is driven by the researchers of Intercom as a strategy to achieve recognition and prestige among peers. It is an effect of behavioral contagion, stimulated by competition with other researchers in the area. It is interesting to note that competition occurs between the communicologists themselves and the social scientists. As one of the interviewees reveals, this competition occurs “in the criticism of social scientists to the works presented by communicologists and in the effort to demonstrate consistency in the use of concepts derived from the social sciences by communicologists” (I35).

That is why scholars in the area of environmental communication and journalism resort to thinkers of wide acceptance and repercussion in the scientific community in the broad sense, such as Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Latour, Anthony Giddens and others. Thus, scholars in the area of media and the environment are calling for arguments of authority already enshrined in the social sciences. Both the authors and the texts of the social sciences are mobilized according to the logic of the semiotic characters (LATOURE, 2004).

The theoretical repertoires of the social sciences are therefore intentionally agitated by the interviewed researchers, in order to strengthen the truth regimes of their theses and arguments. The appropriation of the frameworks of environmental sociology and other areas constitutes a strategy to reinforce the truth regimes of communication studies and environmental journalism. This is what Giddens (2009) calls hermeneutic truth, that is, arguments capable of interpretation situated and contextualized, from the semantic horizon of agents. According to Giddens, the hermeneutical truth is based on a network of shared assumptions and preconceptions. Thus, the arguments trigger and mobilize meanings that refer to a discursive order that involves an intense exchange of codes and senses, as revealed in the study presented here.

In addition to addressing the dynamics of science in action, according to Latour (2000), the insertion of explanations from the social sciences strengthens the network character of environmentalism and its complex interdisciplinary nature (BARROS, 2013b), as discussed previously. The network of actors mobilized by the different aspects of socioenvironmentalism results from the connection of several branches of scientific knowledge that these actors deal with, their discourses and practices. Thus, the knowledge produced by the Intercom researchers articulates arguments of a multi and interdisciplinary nature as a way of seeking legitimation of their practices and research networks.

5. Final considerations

From the above, it is observed that the main mode of agency of social science repertoires by environmental communication / journalism comes from the perspective of four specific sectors of the social sciences: basic sociological concepts, discourse theory, environmental sociology, sociology of communication and theories of social movements.

Interviewees consider environmental communication an interdisciplinary field by nature, since its formation. Therefore, to resort to the social sciences is positive, since it broadens and strengthens the research networks, besides increasing the credibility of the studies.

The analysis allows to infer that the logic of research in communication and environmental journalism is similar to the logic of sociological research, in which the researcher acts as interpreter of the senses of the lived world, starting from the relationship with the other social actors in the public sphere. This network action, with its structures of symbolic mediation, acts as a catalyst for the construction of social and cultural paths of interpretation of the complex environmental research agenda. Based on this assumption, we reaffirm the argument that the assemblages of the theoretical repertoires of the field of social sciences by researchers in environmental communication / journalism also have a reflection on the professional field. After all, journalists also appropriate the repertoires and truth regimes of social scientists in their daily work of relying on ecological guidelines. In this appropriation, these professionals broaden the semiotic networks by translating sociological analyzes to the lay public and applying such explanations to the field of empirical experience.

In general, we can conclude that this approximation between the two fields presents a hybrid configuration that mobilizes both journalists and social scientists. Journalists, in general, go through a period of formation and sociological literacy in university courses, which facilitates the understanding of sociopolitical arguments, while at the same time building greater affinity with the social sciences' way of arguing. In the same way, with the centrality of the media in contemporary societies and the phenomenon of mediatization, social scientists are always attentive to the processes of social mobilization and news agency. It is, therefore, two networks that now enter into hermeneutic competition, but also pass through waves of epistemic cooperation, therefore, by contributing to broaden the regime of circulation, mobility and interchangeability of sociological and journalistic information in the environmental field.

Logically, environment, communication, journalism and the social sciences are complex and multifaceted fields, which hampers a universalizing critique. However, within the frame of reference defined here, one can perceive the tendency to aggregate social representations implied in the contemporary logic of mediatization, that is, the transmission of ideas, values and symbols through the media and researchers.

It is worth emphasizing the arguments gathered in the interviews, which reinforce the interdisciplinary nature of the field of environmental communication, the epistemic and methodological proximity to the different areas of social sciences, the plurality of actors involved in the green agenda and the consolidation of an already consecrated way to do research by the network of researchers hosted by the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Studies (Intercom), during its almost 40 years of operation.

In sum, we can infer that the sum of all these factors is that it contributes to increase the use of theoretical repertoires of the social sciences by researchers in the area of communication and environmental journalism, in line with the assumptions of the multifactorial theory of news (SOUSA, 2000), the paradigm of complexity, the notions of reflexive modernization, risk society and actor-network, among other aspects pointed

out throughout the text. The logic of science in action applied to the study carried out here consists mainly of research practices that attempt to consecrate and reinforce a research model considered by the interviewees as an epistemic definer of the inter and multidisciplinary nature of environmental communication and journalism.

Notes

- i Since 2001, Intercom has made electronic annals of the annual congress available on its portal: <http://www.portalintercom.org.br/eventos/congresso-nacional/2001>. Retrieved on 08/15/16.
- ii The papers cited have different objectives from the study presented here. The data are used from the perspective of the meta-analysis, which consists in the use of this type of information, but for different purposes, with a view to other objectives and problematizations.
- iii Throughout the text we will use the coding as follows: E1 (interview 1) and successively.
- iv It is important to clarify that in addition to researchers in the area of Communication, the event also includes scholars from areas such as Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science and History, which also collaborate in the articulation of knowledge about the environment, in an interdisciplinary way.
- v The total of 3,008 refers to the sum of the frequency of terms in the 492 communications examined, that is, how many times each term is quoted in each communication.
- vi For more information on these ramifications, see: Schmidt, 1999; Guivant, 2005; Ferreira, 2006; Sartore, 2012.

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Original Article

THE THEORETICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE LOGIC OF SCIENCE IN ACTION

Abstract: This article examines how the theoretical repertoires of the social sciences are managed by the researchers in environmental communication/journalism and how the theoretical arguments are appropriated in the applied studies. The corpus of analysis comprises 492 scientific communications presented by researchers of the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (Intercom) in the period of 2001-2016, in addition to 36 interviews. The conclusions highlight: the historical contribution of the social sciences to the formation of the academic field of communication; the epistemic proximity between the social sciences and communication/journalism; the valorization of the use of this repertoire by environmental communication/journalism researchers. The interviews reinforce the interdisciplinary nature of environmental communication, the epistemic and methodological proximity to the social sciences, the plurality of actors involved and the consolidation of an already established way of doing research by Intercom scholars in its 40 years of operation.

Keywords: Environmental communication; social science and environmental communication; Interdisciplinarity. Science in action.

Resumo: O artigo examina como são agenciados os repertórios teóricos das ciências sociais pelos pesquisadores em comunicação/jornalismo ambiental e como se dá a apropriação dos argumentos teóricos nos estudos aplicados. O *corpus* de análise compreende 492 comunicações científicas apresentadas por pesquisadores da Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação (Intercom) no período de 2001-2016, além de 36 entrevistas. As conclusões ressaltam: a contribuição histórica das ciências sociais para a formação do campo acadêmico da comunicação; a proximidade epistêmica entre as ciências sociais e a comunicação/jornalismo; a valorização do uso desse repertório pelos pesquisadores de comunicação/jornalismo ambiental. As entrevistas reforçam a natureza interdisciplinar da comunicação ambiental, a proximidade epistêmica e metodológica com as ciências sociais, a pluralidade de atores envolvidos e a consolidação de um modo já consagrado de fazer pesquisa pelos estudiosos da Intercom em seus 40 anos de atuação.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação ambiental; Ciências sociais e comunicação ambiental; Interdisciplinaridade. Ciência em ação.

Resumen: El artículo examina cómo son agenciados los repertorios teóricos de las ciencias sociales por los investigadores en comunicación/periodismo ambiental y cómo se da la apropiación de los argumentos teóricos en estudios aplicados. El corpus de análisis comprende 492 comunicaciones científicas presentadas por investigadores de la Sociedad Brasileña de Estudios Interdisciplinarios de la Comunicación (Intercom) en el período 2001-2016, además de 36 entrevistas. Las conclusiones resaltan: la contribución histórica de las ciencias sociales para la formación del campo académico de la comunicación; la proximidad epistémica entre las ciencias sociales y la comunicación/periodismo; la valorización del uso de ese repertorio por los investigadores de comunicación/periodismo ambiental. Las entrevistas refuerzan la naturaleza interdisciplinaria de la comunicación ambiental, la proximidad epistémica y metodológica con las ciencias sociales, la pluralidad de actores involucrados y la consolidación de un modo ya consagrado de hacer investigación por los estudiosos de Intercom en sus 40 años de actuación.

Palabras clave: Comunicación ambiental; ciencias sociales y comunicación ambiental; La interdisciplinarietà. Ciencia en acción.
