

## The Literacy of Adults Must Be Added to Media Literacy

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**Abstract:** An ethnographic investigation was carried out in the municipality of the state of Mexico in the suburbs area of Mexico City to a group of adults who are in the process of literacy. The intention, besides, to know the use and consumption that make of the television was to establish the contribution of the television content in the perception of its social reality, how much the reading that they make of the television broadcasts allow them to develop a sense Critical and reflective To understand their environment, since they lack a school education, are the audiovisual media (radio, film and Television) to which they have access and these have become their literacy. However, they have not been literate to make a critical reception of the media in general and in particular television. In Mexico the illiterate population represents a significant proportion, it is estimated, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) that 6% of the population at national level has no education of any kind. If we take into account that according to the Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT), the ones who watch television the most are the sectors of lower socio-economic resources, we have that the vast majority of the viewers are illiterate functional who read the audiovisual content with a lack of intellectual training and a limited cultural spectrum.

**Key words:** literacy, adults, media

### 1. Introduction

According to data from the 2015 intercensal survey conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), 5.8% of the population nationwide (in Mexico) do not have education of any kind and in the case of people who did have A formal education, only a little more than half has the basic level, that is, 53.5%.

This means that nearly seven million people in Mexico do not know how to read and write. And if this is related to data provided by the Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT) in its quarterly report of 2015, which points out that the sectors that watch most television belong to the lower and middle classes low with 59.5%, it can be noted that a low or minimum school education and economic marginalization are factors that are linked to television consumption.

Establishing a relationship between education (the school) and television (social media) has already been in place for many decades, since both instances are social institutions that allow the subject to develop his worldview of the world. In this case, television represents the so-called social communication; Which plays an important role in the socialization process of the individual, because by linking its content with the daily life of the subject, it is represented on television the system of moral, social, sexual values, etc. That govern their social environment,

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television shows and privileges a lifestyle and informs political and economic events according to their interests, which are usually commercially cut.

As an example of linking education with communication we have the work of Paulo Freire whose pedagogical principles contributed to promote and facilitate citizen appropriations in the media and inspired the most progressive democratizing currents. "Freire was the advocate of communication as a facilitating process for social literacy, with the aim of generating the appropriation of knowledge and fundamental tools for the self-government of Destiny" (Chaparro, 2015, p. 96).

According to what this Brazilian educator postulated in Latin America, communication has a primary role in integral learning, life literacy and the recovery of legitimate spaces. In his work pedagogy of the Oppressed (1975) reveals the mechanisms of alienation created by the capitalist system, the interest of the elites and the means to manipulate the masses, the cultural invasion and the system of dependencies it generates.

The point here is to try to analyze how these forms of marginalization and domination of the popular sectors of the population can be reversed and that the most vulnerable social groups can be transformed into citizens with greater possibilities of participation in Public activities of their localities.

That is why it is important to investigate, what relationship is established between television, the dominant and most penetrating medium even in today's society in Mexico, and a sector of the population that is little or nothing taken into account in the studies of media reception, but are the most frequent consumers of the content of television and at the same time the most prone to manipulation.

Because it is paradoxical that public television aimed at promoting education and culture is the least seen by the groups that most require education to enable them to develop their levels of social consciousness, an education against naivety, against the dogmas imposed and turn them into subjects of transformation and not of adaptation, but their contents and efforts of the public television are directed to satisfy necessities of the sectors of higher level intellectual; In counterpart, the television of commercial cut whose purpose is the profit, its contents are based on the advertising performance, with greater audience more demand of spaces by the advertisers and at lower cost of production and higher advertising performance then greater gain. Therefore, this type of broadcasters are not interested in informing, educating, politicizing, but simply entertaining, having fun even in the spaces supposedly aimed at reporting and/or analyzing, to capture audiences you have to surprise and ponder the sensationalism, the spectacular and the sensationalism. And this type of television is the one that has the greatest presence among the most vulnerable sectors of society.

Now as soon as the illiterate adult or functional illiterate is incorporated into literacy or continue their basic education in an adult education system may be the opportunity to not only instruct them in writing and reading, which is already import But they could also be literate in the media, to alphabetize them for social life, generating critical and reflective receivers of television messages and go managing citizenship.

## 2. Objectives

To know the contribution that television makes in the perception of the social reality of a group of subjects in the process of adult literacy in the municipality of La, State of Mexico.

To determine the use and consumption that a group of illiterates makes of the television medium.

### 3. Research Description

The design of the research to know the contribution of television in shaping the perception of the social reality of the illiterate adult was made among the population who attends literacy courses for Adults carried out by the National Institute of Adult Education (INEA).

An ethnographic methodology was established that consisted in conducting interviews in depth and semi-structured to know the interaction that interviewees have with television, their preferences on certain types of programs and the Learning that they derive from these contents.

These interviews were conducted to 17 individuals who study at an INEA training center located in San Cristobal Centro, the municipal head of the city of the State of Mexico, the municipality that borders Mexico.

Four thematic axes were established for the elaboration of the interview matrix:

- 1) Socio-Cultural Profiles
- 2) TV consumption
- 3) Meeting with the TV Educational-Cultural
- 4) Contribution of television in the perception of social reality.

Each thematic axis was oriented to know in a detailed way its interests with respect to the television and the way in which the emissions are interpreted. In relation to the socio-cultural profile was intended to know the conditions in which the subject has formed as a social being; From its economic situation, characteristics of its family, to the cultural capital that it possesses, that is to say, to know that recreational activities and of educational-cultural stimulation attends frequently.

The second axis was destined to know the tastes and preferences of those interviewed by the television programs, what type of television they see (TV. Open or pay), the bonuses that they find in the programs of their preference, the themes that they call their Attention, as well as their interpretation of the contents they consume.

The third thematic axis was designed in order to establish the level of knowledge that the interviewees have regarding the television content denominated as educational and/or cultural, if they recognize them and see them, they are present in their habits of Exposure and yes these contents have had some impact on their knowledge.

Finally there is the thematic axis on the contribution of the television in its perception of the social reality. This axis was structured to know how it is that the interviewees externalize the learning or teachings that the television contents have impacted them in their mental schemes and how it is seen in the television incorporate it in their vision that they have on their reality Social.

These four thematic axes were the basis of the interview developed to each individual of the investigation, the interview was semi-structured so there were questions open to all the interviewees, and in each case there were particular questions to obtain more detailed information and more spontaneous answers.

However, for the interpretation of the discourse of each informant, the open codification was used, a technique of interpretation of the data that Uwe Flick retake of the researchers Strauss and Corbin (2004) and which consists in establishing an analytical process by the Which concepts are identified and developed from the point of view of their properties and dimensions, so the final result is a list of categories that were assigned to the text.

Some aspects that characterize the demographic context of the municipality of suburbs, State of Mexico to which the interviewees belong are: that it is part of the zona of the Valley of Mexico because of its proximity to Mexico City. According to the last census of Population and housing 2010 made by the INEGI, this is the most

populous municipality at national level with 1,656,107 inhabitants.

In addition to overpopulation, data are recorded that show difficult conditions for coexistence, as reported by the National System of Public Safety (SNSP) in the year 2016 was recorded an index of 40 violent incidents per 100mil inhabitants, While the national index was 13. Within the state of Mexico is one of the municipalities with the highest incidence of crime, the crimes that are most frequently committed are homicides, kidnappings, extortion, robbery to passers-by and of motor vehicles, according to the SNSP.

In the field of public services the situation is also delicate, according to the 2013 report of the Municipal statistical and geographic Information system of the city (SMIEGE) although the area is urban, the population lives a precarious situation. Of the total population 37.29% live with income of up to two minimum wages, even 0.10% of private households are without electricity, 2.38% of households do not have piped water, 1.98% of the houses have ground floor and 33, 87% of the houses have some type of irregular overcrowding.

In education, 2.7% of the population of 15 years or more is illiterate, there is also a significant percentage of school backlog because 31.15% of adults have not completed their basic education, even the situation is aggravated as it has been recorded that 3.63% of the population of six to 14 years does not go to a school, this reported the SMIEGE in the year 2013.

It should be noted that as part of the suburbs area of Mexico City, much of its population is formed by individuals who migrate from the countryside to the city and not find shelter in the city are moving to the nearest areas. This migration is of individuals with a lack of training or no schooling.

#### **4. Results**

We started with the sociocultural profile of the interviewees. Seventeen deep and semi-structured interviews were performed on nine women and eight men; whose ages range from nine to 66 years; their occupations are within the construction industry, street vendors, domestic workers and housewives.

Within the INEA are studying their basic instruction, some finishing primary and others secondary. There are those who began their schooling and others try to retake and finish their basic instruction. Almost all interviewees have access to open television only. Only two to pay TV.

As expected the group of interviewees does not have the habit of reading, because their condition of recent literate had not allowed them to approach the books and print media, now that they can read and write only sporadically read some publication that It arrives at their homes or the texts that let them read as homework in the INEA. Some texts referred to are tabloid or tabloid newspaper, personal improvement books or heart magazines (from the middle of the show).

With regard to other cultural activities such as theatre, museum attendance, art exhibitions, concerts, etc. They are not their custom, because they refer that for their cost they cannot attend, so they do not develop activities of cultural cut out of their domicile. In some cases they mentioned that they do not know the theatre, even the cinema is little frequented by the group of informants, and its cinematographic consumption is the one that they can see through the television.

It is so, what if they consume regularly and at different times of the day and are their main source of information, entertainment and cultural window is radio and television.

TV consumption: With regard to this item, what was found in the interviews is that the informants spend a significant time to tune the television throughout the day, because their viewing is while doing their work and

when they arrive at home after Work.

They refer to preferentially to see programs of informative cut, infantile (for their children), sports and of entertainment. In particular, the most attuned are the soap operas, followed by magazine programs, newsreels and comedy programs.

The soap operas are the kind of programs most viewed by the interviewees and the reasons they give are that they deal with current problems such as addictions, abuse and gender violence. They also comment that they feel identified with certain characters in the soap operas; Whether it be because of their way of being, by recognizing some moral value that is admired by the interviewee; or by identifying their own family situations or because they imagine living life as represented in the soap opera.

With regard to the news programs, they refer that they see them because they consider it necessary to know the situation and the events that happen in their locality and the world and to say of them the television gives them that panorama. Television is its main and, in some cases, the only source of information, because they do not read magazines or newspapers, although they also listen to the radio, that means they use it only to listen to music and not spoken programs.

Other programs that are often seen by the group of interviewees are those of comedy or comedians, broadcasts based on the representation of sketches or monologues of comedians in which are counted gags or jokes. Also they are seen the spaces called talk shows, whose thematic is to present problems of family type but with a high degree of sensationalism, to popularizing the situations that are presented and with a good dose of visual and verbal violence.

I'm meeting the TV. Educational-Cultural: most of the respondents say they know programs called educational although they admit not to see them. This situation becomes paradoxical given that by asking them about what they would like to be incorporated into the television they respond that they create educational programs, answers obviously taking care of their image of positive people, and although several indicated to know programs of Educational Court, The truth is that most did not know how to explain what makes a broadcast is classified as educational. Those who say they know what an educational program said is giving information and providing knowledge.

Among the programs mentioned as educational were emissions from the state channels, which their content deals with topics of dissemination of science (physics, Chemistry, biology, etc.) and that their treatment is designed to support schoolwork. They also mentioned documentary cutting programs, some from pay television (National Geographic, Discovery Channel, etc.). The documentaries they mentioned as to their liking are those that deal with nature's issues, history of Mexico and Universal. As well as those who present the customs and traditions of the different regions of Mexico and the world.

In spite of this recognition they did not mention to the public channels within their preferences, they mention them by references of third, which implies that they interact little with this type of television channels.

Contribution of television in the perception of the social reality: in this axis of analysis it was revealed that, on the one hand, they recognize that the television helps them to understand some values especially of moral court, and on the other, they do not give to the television medium them Teach something they say they don't know; Although they recognize that the news shows them the situation that lives in their locality. When they argue not to get any education from television, it is because this is mainly promoter of antivalues.

Of those interviewed who mentioned that television helps them to rescue moral values they refer to the soap operas and the magazines that show more values such as perseverance, respect, tolerance and responsibility. On

the contrary, informants who do not recognize television as an educator show a negative perception of the environment. For them the content of television screens does not contribute anything and the only thing that promotes are anti-values and only contributes to the thinning of the social environment, by presenting too much violence and incite young people with too many images of erotic type.

## 5. Conclusions

Finally it could be verified empirically that the television that according to the state is destined to promote the education and the culture is the one that less impacts and is too far away from the sectors that most require processes of education and culturalization. In this study, the illiterate adults who do not have easy access to the diversity of social media reduce their opportunity to receive information and elements of the culture on television and in a particular way to the commercial, which aims Promoting commercial and consumerist values, as well as widening the digital divide, Their status as illiterate is not only the marginalization of print media but also of information and communication technologies, limiting their chances of having contact with other sources of information and interaction with social networks and other Subject. They co-opt the attention of the illiterate viewer without being aware of the purposes of the television content becoming a vulnerable group to ideological manipulation, as it must be added that in Mexico Commercial television operates with a high Concentration level, the ownership of the media is in very few hands and these small groups dictate what the population should know and know about the political, economic, social and cultural system. The only source that this sector of the population has to develop their spirit and their emotions is television. Therefore, it is null the possibility of comparing and diversify the information they know via television, because although the television offer is large, this sector mostly only have access to open television and the channels belong to two Television networks whose editorial lines do not differ in anything.

With regard to the contribution that television makes in the structure of their mental schemes we have to because their tendency aspirationist the medium inculcates stereotypes of selflessness, submission, conformity and individualism, so that the group of interviewees He is convinced that the state and the politics of the country have nothing to do with their living conditions and that it is with their effort and work that they can reverse their life difficulties. As it lets you see the values that say promotes television: tolerance, respect and perseverance. His role models are the characters of the soap operas and they admire the way they solve their life difficulties and are overcome socially.

It could be verified that the people interviewed could not distinguish the very objective of the programs of their preference, which led to the acceptance and not the interpretation of these contents. Given this panorama, the true autonomy of the spectator against the media content can only be taken to the extent that their individual knowledge increases. The fact of possessing a cultural baggage contributes to the recognition of its surrounding reality, to reflect on its own ideals and so it can act in consequence of them.

In the event that most people start watching television more critically and reflectively will derive in the shaping of more instructive television programming, which contributes to raise the cultural level of the viewer, an arduous task not only for the Responsibility that means for the media but for the state itself.

However, it is necessary to clarify that television is not going to replace the school as an educational institution, because it is not their duty, but the school should take the analysis of the media as a subject to develop individuals with greater capacity for analysis and Possibilities of discerning between information and social reality.

It must be recognized that television is a detonator of ideas, because either directly or indirectly, impact on the viewer through the reproduction of ideologies, social norms, as well as patterns of behavior that will serve as a model for the public, so it becomes a socializing agent that needs to be analyzed.

Therefore, social literacy should include media literacy in order to make marginal groups integrated into the social group, seeking change and transformation of subjects into active citizens. As we mentioned in the beginning of this text, Television is one of the representative means of social communication and if communication must be democratic it must seek to be horizontal and this is only achieved if the individual is empowered to achieve exchanges that promote horizontal communication, this empowerment will be possible only if the subject has a more active participation in the communicative process and this process becomes a citizen empowerment factor for the construction of more equitable societies.

In this sense, it would be more accurate to claim a communication with the aim of facilitating empowerment following Freire's postulates. For communication to facilitate reflection, decision-making, awareness-raising and action, subjects with analytical and reflection capacity are required to interpret media content.

Therefore, the proposal is that in the process of adult literacy the critical and reflective analysis of television is incorporated; although already in an inert way the subjects have a critical position in front of the television medium; however, they are not enough to measure the way in which television privileges a lifestyle over others. Faced with this panorama where the macroeconomic conditions of the market determine the actions of television monopolies and thus the content that is produced, what remains to be done for the literacy institutions is to establish a literacy for the Life that includes media literacy that reduces the digital divide and fosters active citizens in the public life of their localities.

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