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Reading Practices of Communication Professionals in Uruguay: Areas, Genres and Strategies[I]

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Abstract:
This article presents the general results of a survey on reading practices, carried out among acting professionals, graduates of a degree in Communication from a public university in Uruguay. The survey is part of an action research project started in 2020 focusing on disciplinary literacy (HYLAND, 2004; MOJE, 2007; ACHUGAR; STAINTON, 2010; ACHUGAR; CARPENTER, 2012), professional reading practices (LEINHARDT; YOUNG, 1996; WINEBURG, 2001) and genres (BAZERMAN, 2005, 2008; BAJTÍN, 2008; MARTIN; ROSE, 2008) to inform the planning of reading comprehension courses of this degree. The questionnaire of deductive and inductive items was carried out by 82 professionals. The results show that reading in the professional context is carried out in several languages in journalistic, academic and professional genres, which are read to produce written texts, but also to perform oral presentations. The main goals include finding general information about facts and their context and accessing theoretical information. The most used practices and strategies are to historically contextualize the texts, extract their orientation, analyze their graphic material and the reliability of their sources, analyze their institutional prestige, that of the authors cited, the quality of their evidence and that of their arguments.

Keywords:
Reading practices. Professional activity of communication. Disciplinary literacy.

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Reading Practices of Communication Professionals in Uruguay: Areas, Genres and Strategies

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Introduction

Learning a discipline implies not only incorporating certain knowledge, but also new ways of using language, which respond to the objectives and characteristics of a community of professional practice. Disciplinary literacy integrates specialized knowledge of content, technical vocabulary, particular grammatical uses and forms of reasoning used to build knowledge in the discipline (HYLAND, 2004). That is, these literacy practices are associated with social activities that allow to achieve objectives in a given cultural context. Literacy practices, then, are sensitive to socio-historical and cultural changes, so it is necessary to explore in a situated manner these ways of being and doing in the disciplines. Having access to these disciplinary practices allows novices to use and critically question the community's knowledge and its production practices. From this sociosemiotic and sociocultural perspective of disciplinary literacy (ACHUGAR; STAINTON, 2010; ACHUGAR; CARPENTER, 2012), teaching reading seeks to make visible and democratize access to the tools and practices of knowledge production (MOJE, 2007).

This article presents the general analysis of a survey of professionals graduated from the degree in Communication of a public university in Uruguay, who work in the different areas in which this field is divided (organizational communication, journalism, audiovisual, educational and community communication, ICT and multimedia, cultural management, research and teaching). This study is part of a larger research project entitled Comprehensive approach to reading: a curricular and didactic innovation in language courses in a large enrollment and heterogeneous level context, started in 2020. This project seeks to incorporate a disciplinary literacy perspective to the teaching of reading comprehension (Spanish, English and Portuguese) in the undergraduate courses of our school. The objective of the survey we report on in this article is to obtain a preliminary overview of reading practices in the first language (L1) and in additional languages (L2) of graduated communication professionals, which, together with subsequent interviews with qualified informants and observations of practices in the university context, will allow us to guide the design of reading courses.

We consider that the metacognitive awareness of the respondents provides data to identify reading practices associated with the spheres of practice of communication professionals in Uruguay at this historical moment. Likewise, knowing the activity systems, genres and their organizational systems shows, in part, what constitutes literacy practice in this professional community (BAZERMAN, 2005, 2008). Mapping the reading practices used in this community will allow us to select genres, strategies, and dispositions that bring classroom practices closer to professional practice[2], as well as guide us in the construction of "expert" actor profiles and in the definition of evaluation criteria.

[2] We define reading practices as the ways of approaching reading in the context of an interpretive community. They include particular objectives and ways of approaching the texts to interpret and evaluate them. Reading strategies refers to metacognitive plans and tools used to facilitate information, processing and understanding. The dispositions refer to the readers' orientations towards the text, which can be critical, passive or convergent with interpretations and meanings of the text.

This is especially relevant since instructors of the reading courses are not, necessarily, communication professionals, and our reading practices do not coincide with those of the students' academic training area (LABELLA-SÁNCHEZ; CRISTOVÃO, 2015). In addition, although there are some works that have studied literacy in journalism academic training (DI CAPUA-HIDALGO, 2016a), there are no investigations related to the literacy practices of communicators in their activity outside the academic field[3]. This activity constitutes a complex object of study due to its multifaceted and transdisciplinary nature (FRANCO, 2019), and because communication professionals carry out their activities in very diverse areas. Nor are there many previous studies in Latin America focused on disciplinary reading (NAVARRO et al., 2016). In this sense, this work contributes to the preliminary elaboration of a construct of disciplinary literacy for the area, which is useful not only for our reading courses, but also for the understanding of the métier of communicators.

From this perspective, we ask: 1) What are the reading practices of communication professionals? and 2) What genres and reading comprehension strategies are associated with these practices?

We organize this article in 5 sections: an introduction; a brief theoretical exposition; an exposition of the methodological aspects; an analysis of the results; and final considerations and their pedagogical implications.

Professional Practices, Genres and Literacy

From a critical and social justice perspective, teaching disciplinary literacy involves not only teaching linguistic tools and literate practices associated with spheres with social power such as academic or professional (MARTIN; ROSE, 2008), but also to give access to ways of building knowledge (MOJE, 2007). The search for a democratic and egalitarian nature of education supposes an attempt to approach social cohesion, that is, the possibility that all people can be inserted and participate effectively in the multiple collective activities that take place in our society (BRONCKART; DOLZ, 2002). In our case, it is necessary to know the professional practices in the area of communication, as evidence to design higher education courses on reading (Spanish, English, Portuguese), as well as to generate opportunities to critically reflect on them and offer opportunities to use them in a context that has an impact on the world.

Surveying disciplinary reading practices allows for the identification of the genres used in professional contexts and the practices carried out to take them as a reference for pedagogical implementation (DE PIETRO; SCHNEUWLY, 2019). According to Bronckart and Dolz (2002), one must start by analyzing the properties of the tasks or collective activities to construct the teaching objects. The same approach guides the research program of educational psychologists such as Gaea Linehardt (LEINHARDT; STAINTON; VIRJIJ, 1994; LEINHARDT; YOUNG, 1996) and Sam Wineburg (WINEBURG, 1998, 2001; WINEBURG; REISMAN, 2015; REISMAN, 2012), who have studied disciplinary reading and writing by experts and novices. Similarly, from educational linguistics research, the identification of academic genres associated with different areas of knowledge have been described in empirical investigations in academic and professional contexts to inform pedagogical work (HALLIDAY; MARTIN, 1993; MARTIN; ROSE, 2008; SCHLEPPEGRELL, 2004, 2011).

In Latin America, Navarro et al. (2016) synthesized the region's research and projects in the last 20 years and found a growing number of studies of disciplinary reading and writing in higher education that address these practices as situated processes, and that identify discursive characteristics of these disciplinary spaces.

[3] The only studies we encountered focusing on professional literacy in the area of communication are those of the so-called media literacy. These studies do not derive from the empirical analysis of the ways of working of these professionals, since they focus on the processing by ordinary citizens of the texts emanating from the media system (POTTER, 2010).

Their study shows that educational programs are researched and designed based on genres and literate practices identified in the empirical study of intellectual communities or particular academic contexts. From linguistics, the studies of Functional Systemic Grammar researchers stand out, for example, the work of Manghi (2013), Moyano (2000), Moss (2010). From a more quantitative perspective, empirical contributions have been made to the description of disciplinary literacy in corpus studies. Parodi's (2010) research constitutes an important precedent in the characterization of disciplinary discursive genres in Spanish with a computational linguistics approach.

These previous studies are based on the proposals of Bakhtin about the intrinsic relationship between the spheres of human activity and the forms of language organization. For Bakhtin (2008, p. 245, authors' translations), "The various spheres of human activity are all related to the use of the language. That is why it is clear that the character and forms of this use are as varied as those spheres [...]." According to Bazerman (2008), language practices include both the ways of thinking and acting of individuals and generate social events with material consequences. In this framework, the diversification and specification of social activities specializes the usual practices of text production, which give rise to stabilized genres, actions and activities. According to Bazerman, individuals perform their actions "through standardized, typical and, therefore, intelligible forms, or genres, which are related to other texts and genres that occur in related circumstances. Together, the various types of texts are accommodated into sets of genres into a system of genres, which are part of systems of human activities" (BAZERMAN, 2005, p. 22, author's italics, authors' translations)

Professional practices occur within the framework of activity systems in which various individual actions carry out social purposes through texts. They belong to sets of genres that each person, exercising a certain social or professional role, uses for their work, forming systems that define their relations of production, circulation, sequencing and complementarity (BAZERMAN, 2005). For Bazerman (2005, 2008), knowing the skills necessary to use the texts of a professional activity, as well as the motivations, situations, participants and actions associated with them, is equivalent to knowing a large part of what an individual should learn to perform in a professional community (understand, have a voice and influence). This need is more important when these practices are mediated by writing, in which the weight of stabilized and codified forms of action through language is greater (BAZERMAN, 2008).

The configurations of practices that characterize the disciplines include forms of communication, knowledge and agreements on how to negotiate differences and argue positions (HYLAND, 2015). The disciplines constitute interpretive communities (FISH, 1980) that share ways of interpreting texts through intertextual ties and frames, and construct disciplinary and individual identities. Shared knowledge and expectations about how to participate in culturally legitimized ways are expressed through these practices indexed to social identities and professional areas.

Disciplinary literacy studies confirm the close relationship between language use and professional roles. There is no general academic discourse, but varieties of literacy according to the discipline (HYLAND, 2002, 2004). The notion of specificity allows us to recognize the diversity of ways of constructing meanings in the academic communities through which students and professionals travel in a world that also varies within disciplines according to different theoretical orientations and positions. In other words, in interdisciplinary contexts such as the communication profession, language is used in different ways.

Hyland (2008, 2015) describes disciplinary discourse as an approximate practice of rhetorical conventions that allow positioning on relevant and valued topics through recognized ways of constructing meanings. According to Shanahan and Shanahan (2012, p. 9), "disciplines differ extensively in their fundamental purposes, specialized genres, symbolic artifacts, traditions of communication, evaluation standards of quality and precision, and use of language." For this reason, the teaching of reading or writing

must consider the "know-how" of the experts in each area. According to Shanahan and Shanahan (2012, p. 10), "as students examine various disciplinary choices or relatively specialized patterns of language use, they may become better equipped to deal with the learning demands of the particular disciplines."

In relation to the reading practices of experts in academic disciplines such as history, language, mathematics or natural sciences, the work of Spiers et al. (2018) offers a synthesis of the existing literature on the different ways of approaching texts, the strategies used when reading, the dispositions with which the construction and criticism of the meanings of texts and the differentiated uses of those interpretations. The studies surveyed by Spires et al. (2018) show that practicing professionals in these areas not only read different genres, but also practice and select particular strategies appropriate for their discipline. As Di Capua-Hidalgo (2016b) points out, the notion of genre has accompanied the historical evolution of journalistic practices and the professional communities of social communication currently possess consolidated traditions, practices and scientific knowledge, driven, more recently, by the college-level training in the area. The aim of this paper is to describe these practices in Uruguay, focusing on reading comprehension.

Methodology

Data collection Instrument

The exploration of reading practices could be approached through observation, from an ethnographic perspective, of the use of previous knowledge from related studies taking advantage of pre-existing taxonomies or questions asked directly to the actors. In this case, due to time constraints and since the general objective of our research is the design of a curriculum organized around discursive genres and the approach to reading practices in a situated way, we chose a data collection method that would provide inputs quickly in order to complete the next phases of the action research project.

The technique used for this phase was a survey that includes quantitative and qualitative data collected through closed and open questions, since it provides a general overview of the problem and also permits obtaining specific information on the practices of a large number of people in the communication professional community. The objective of the survey was to determine the diversity of professional literacy practices used in a community of professionals of communication in Uruguay.

The survey included deductive and inductive items, that is, a set of previously defined topics, categories and dimensions, to recognize which ones were identified by the group, according to their numerical quantification (JANSEN, 2010). The use of a considerable number of deductive items was justified because they allowed us to obtain, in a limited period, a significant volume of information, in order to take a first step in defining the characteristics of the object of study, from which we organized the next steps of the investigation.

The designed questionnaire included demographic questions and others in which the participants were asked to identify the reading practices and genres that characterize their professional activities. The writing of these items was based on Bazerman's (2005) conception of a system of activities and a genre system, by investigating the genres read and produced, their sequence, their relations and their purposes. Regarding reading practices and strategies, we took as a basis the work of Spiers et al. (2018) on reading practices in the humanities and natural sciences, considering the interdisciplinary nature of the communication profession and incorporating the exploration of the use of different languages. In the professional communication community, there is a debate about the disciplinary nature of the area. On the one hand, it is argued that communication constitutes a discipline in itself, since there are university

degrees and academic jobs, and, in addition, there is also a historical tradition of accumulated knowledge production in the field. On the other hand, it is argued that this professional community is characterized by its interdisciplinarity, integrating different disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities in the construction of knowledge about a complex problem such as communication (CALHOUN, 2011). In our context, the interdisciplinary perspective more fully represents the professional community dedicated to communication[4].

The items related to reading practices, the selection of different languages and the purposes of reading were elaborated by our research group taking into account languages most commonly used in Uruguay, modalities of text production and comprehension[5] (production of oral text, production of written text, etc.) and possible professional purposes of reading. The inventory of genres was constructed based on Dolz and Schneuwly's proposal (2004). However, other genres suggested by the communication professionals consulted, as well as by the members of the research team, were added to this list. Some closed-response items include a Likert scale associated with frequencies (from very frequent to not frequent), while the rest of the closed-response items offer non-exclusive options (for example, languages in which the participant reads).

The questionnaire was pre-tested by members of the research group (5 university professors) and by 3 communication professionals (an organizational communicator, an audiovisual communicator and a journalist). The feedback of these participants, collected in private interviews, allowed to corroborate the understanding of the statements, add options not originally contemplated (purposes for reading and genres), simplify several items to make them more understandable and add to each closed list of options an open field so that the participant could incorporate information not contemplated in the options (genres, purposes, strategies, etc.).

To investigate the sequence of use (reading and production) of the texts for each genre, we resorted to an open question ("Do you remember if, in your professional practice, you associate the reading of any of the genres in the previous question with the production of some other specific genre? For example: 'Yes, I have read novels to write a screenplay' or 'Yes, I read legal regulations to write news'"). Finally, the reading practices and strategies items were formulated based on those proposed by Spiers et al. (2018).

The responses to the 7 questions of the questionnaire (6 closed and 1 open) were collected using the Google Questionnaire tool, sent by e-mail from an initial database, which was expanded with contacts suggested, progressively, by the participants (snowball technique).

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[4] According to Bernstein's (2000) code theory, disciplines can be distinguished by different types of knowledge construction processes. We can differentiate between knowledge structures that distinguish situated and local forms of knowledge construction from others specialized and defined in such a way that meanings can be related between particular instances over time. More recently, Karl Maton's (2013) code legitimation theory extends this perspective, and dialogues with Systemic-Functional Linguistics to characterize the ways in which knowledge is constructed through different configurations of practices, cosmologies and semantic options in areas of knowledge, such as the hard sciences or the humanities. In the case of communication, the characterization of the area would correspond to more situated knowledge structures and weaker semantic density due to the diversity and heterogeneity of knowledge construction practices typical of this professional community.

5 For the writing of the three options of the item referring to the purposes of reading (reading to produce a written text, reading to produce an oral text, reading to produce a multimodal text), we define written text as one in which a linguistic and graphic semiosis predominates, oral text as one in which a sound linguistic semiosis predominates and multimodal text as a text in which no mode of semiosis predominates and that also contains other systems for constructing meanings, such as audiovisual resources. For this definition, we take as basis the concepts of Marcuschi (2007) related to the continuum orality/writing/other semiotic forms, in which the texts of the different genres occur. The simplicity of our categorization was not due to an intention to reduce the complexity of the theory, but to offer an intelligible taxonomy for the participants.

Construction of the Sample

In order to collect the data from a group that had the outstanding characteristics that affect the reading practices of this professional community (symbolic representation) (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003), guaranteeing sufficient diversity of profiles (saturation) (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003; JANSEN, 2010), the participants were chosen intentionally (purposing sample) (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003). We wanted to obtain a group of professionals who act in different areas (organizational communication, educational and community communication, journalism, advertising, audiovisual, multimedia and ICT, teaching, cultural management and research), having as a reference a survey carried out on graduates in communication (URUGUAY, 2016). This survey functioned as a sample frame (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003), as it included a description of the main characteristics of the general population of graduates, which provided us with selection criteria for the preparation of a balanced sample (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003).

Graph 1 shows the proportions in the composition of both groups: the reference sample one and the sample of this study one. The values are not the same because the reference survey allowed participants to identify with more than one professional area, while in our questionnaire the participants had to choose the predominant area of their professional performance in order to specify the analysis by area in future studies.

However, we made sure that the predominant area in this study was also organizational communication, as in the reference sample, that is, that it duplicated each of the areas of the second largest group (journalism, educational and community, audiovisual and advertising). In addition, the areas that occupy the third numerical group, in the reference sample (teaching, research and cultural management), had the same proportion in the sample of this study. We excluded the Multimedia and ICT area from this requirement, considering that it was included in the identification of participants from other areas (advertising, audiovisual, organizational communication, cultural management).

In this way, the diversity of the participants made it possible to build a sample that represented important aspects in the constitution of the professional practices studied (RITCHIE; LEWIS; ELAM, 2003). Following these criteria, upon reaching 82 participants, we obtained a sample with proportions relatively similar to those of the reference sample.

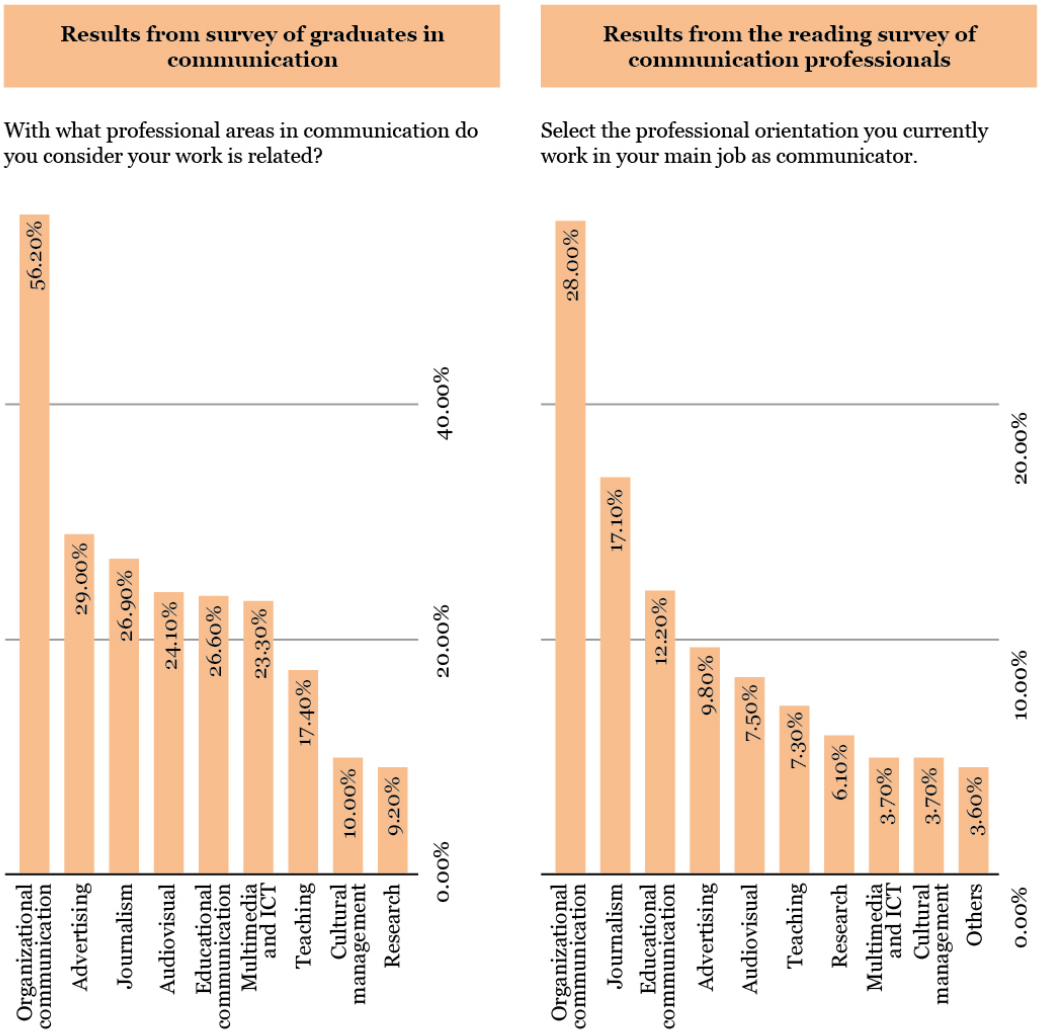
The second balancing criterion for the sample was also to include participants with professional careers of different lengths (up to 5 years, between 5 and 10 years, and more than 10 years). Table 1 shows the similar proportion of participants in each group in this study sample.

Table 1: Participant´s professional trajectories of practice by years. Source: the authors

How long have you been practicing in this area?	
Up to 5 years	25.6% (11/82)
Between 5 and 10 years	36.6% (30/82)
More than 10 years	37.8% (31/82)

Source: the authors.

Graph 1. Professional areas of the survey participants comparing graduates survey (URUGUAY, 2016) to the survey conducted in this study



Source: the authors.

Data Treatment

The data were analyzed following quantitative and qualitative criteria of recurrence and proportionality, seeking to recognize outstanding and marginal aspects of the group's practices (JANSEN, 2010). As it is a first exploration, the analysis for this article sought to recognize, by means of numerical descriptions of a descriptive nature, the practices present in the group as a whole, leaving for later stages the analysis based on professional areas and duration of trajectory of practice. To analyze the responses to the open question, the descriptions provided by each participant were synthesized, considering the social/professional and language activities (writing a news, making an oral presentation) and the genres mentioned (read and written). This synthesis allowed creating recurring categories and establishing their proportion within the totality of the responses. Coding was done by two of the authors and verified to ensure consistency in categorization.

Results

Practices and Purposes of Professional Reading: *in which languages do they read and for what?*

The results show in which languages the participants can read and in which languages, including L1, they carry out readings related to the profession. The main reading language is Spanish, although English and Portuguese also occupy important places (Table 2).

Table 2: What foreign languages can/do they read?

Indicate the foreign languages in which you can read texts		**Indicate the languages in which you read texts for professional practice**	
English	92.7% (76/82)	Spanish	96.3% (79/82)
Portuguese	70.7% (58/82)	English	72% (59/82)
Italian	23.2% (19/82)	Portuguese	39% (32/82)
French	2.4% (2/82)	Italian	4.9% (4/82)
German	1.2% (1/82)	French	3.7% (3/82)
Catalan	1.2% (1/82)	Catalan	1.2% (1/82)
Others	2.4% (2/82)	German	0% (0/82)

Source: the authors.

The most recurrent professional action is reading to write, followed, at similar frequencies, by reading as an activity not related to production. Then, reading to prepare oral or multimodal texts is less frequent (Table 3).

Table 3: Frequency of reading purposes

Read a written text in preparation for another written text (news, script, report, etc.).	
Very common	62.2% (51/82)
Somewhat common	20.7% (17/82)
Common	13.4% (11/82)
Less common	2.4% (2/82)
Uncommon	1.2% (1/82)
Read one or more written texts without necessarily leading to the production of another oral or written text.	
Very common	46.3% (38/82)
Somewhat common	20.7% (17/82)
Common	17.1% (14/82)
Less common	8.5% (7/82)
Uncommon	7.3% (6/82)
Read a written text in preparation for another oral text (presentation, meeting, conference, class, etc.).	
Very common	40.2% (33/82)
Somewhat common	17.1% (14/82)
Common	13.4% (11/82)
Less common	12.2% (10/82)
Uncommon	17.1% (14/82)

Read a written text in the preparation of another multimodal text (radio piece, audiovisual piece, publicity piece).	
Very common	22.0% (18/82)
Somewhat common	25.6% (21/82)
Common	25.6% (21/82)
Less common	11.0% (9/82)
Uncommon	15.9% (13/82)

Source: the authors.

Regarding the specific purposes of reading, in the first place (from 80% to 100% of the participants) there is reading to search for information sources and to search for information of a theoretical nature (1 and 2 of Table 4). At the second place (60% to 80%), there is the expansion of a theoretical concept or its greater understanding, the search for general information on a subject or the context of a fact, the search for more than one point of view on a specific topic, and obtaining specific information necessary in instructions or contest bases for the development of a project (4 to 8 of Table 4). Finally, with less instances (40% to 60%), we found the search for specific sections to cite, the search for information for theoretical verification, the search for text models, and the search for examples of specific facts (9 to 13 of the Table 4).

Table 4: Specific purposes of reading

Check the options in the column that YES correspond to reasons why you READ A WRITTEN TEXT in your professional practice.	
1 - To obtain information as a source to write another text (oral or written)	87.8% (72/82)
2 - To use it as a theoretical reference to produce another text	80.5% (60/82)
3 - To expand a concept read in another written text	78% (64/82)
4 - To understand a specific concept that is to be used in another text (oral or written)	78% (64/82)
5 - To obtain general information on a topic on which it must be produced (orally or in writing)	76.8% (63/82)
6 - To obtain information on the context of an event on which it must be produced (orally or in writing)	70.7% (58/82)
7 - To obtain more than one point of view on a specific topic on which it must be produced (orally or in writing)	67.1% (55/82)
8 - To obtain information (in instructions or bases) necessary for the preparation (oral or written) of a project	63.4% (52/82)
9 - To find specific sections to cite in another text	51.2% (42/82)
10 - To verify the validity of the statement of an author in another text	51.2% (42/82)
11 - To take it as a model to write another text	48.8% (40/82)
12 - To look for examples of facts to be reviewed in another text	45.1% (37/82)
13 - To obtain information about the way of thinking of a particular person and reflect it in a text (oral or written)	40.2% (33/82)
14 - Others	3.6% (3/82)

Source: the authors.

Therefore, the most frequent professional practices are to read in Spanish or in other languages (English and Portuguese), very frequently in relation to writing, and in order, mainly, to find general information about facts and their context or to access general theoretical information on certain topics.

Practices and Genres: *what do they read to produce what?*

The analysis from the genre perspective allows us to recognize readings of genres from the journalistic sphere such as news and interviews with a public figure (80% to 100%; 1 and 2 of Table 5). At the next level (60% to 80%), there are genres from the same sphere (interview with a specialist, opinion article, reportage and editorial), from the academic sphere (book chapter, academic book chapter, scientific article), and technical reports, which can correspond to different areas of activity (3 to 10 of Table 5). In a third group (40% to 60%), there are genres from various spheres: calls for entries, essays, legal norms, critical review, divulgation article, short story and novel (11 to 17 of Table 5). Finally, biography, full academic book, literary chronicle, poem and play were selected by a smaller number of participants (less than 40%) (18 to 22 from Table 5).

Table 5: Genres read in professional practice

Check the options in the column that DO correspond to the written texts that you read in your professional practice.	
1 - News published in a written communication medium	86.6% (71/82)
2 - Interview with a public figure published in a written communication medium	81.7% (67/82)
3 - Interview with a specialist in a topic published in a written communication medium	76.8% (63/82)
4 - Chapter of a book written by a specific author or authors	73.2% (60/82)
5 - Article or opinion or column published in a written communication medium	70.7% (58/82)
6 - Chapter of an academic book written by several people	70.7% (58/82)
7 - Technical report	69.5% (57/82)
8 - Scientific article published in a specialized magazine	65.9% (54/82)
9 - Extensive reportage	64.6% (53/82)
10 - Editorial published in a written communication medium	62.2% (51/82)
11 - Calls and bases for funding	57.3% (47/82)
12 - Academic essay	57.3% (47/82)
13 - Legal norms	52.4% (43/82)
14 - Critical review published in a written communication medium	52.4% (43/82)
15 - Divulgation article	40.0% (33/82)
16 - Short story	40.2% (33/82)
17 - Novel	40.2% (33/82)
18 - Biography, autobiography	35.4% (29/82)
19 - Complete academic book written by a specific author or authors	35.4% (29/82)
20 - Literary Chronicle	25.6% (21/82)
21 - Poem	18.3% (15/82)
22 - Play	7.3% (6/82)
23 - Others	1.2% (1/82)

Source: the authors.

The information about the genres associated in sequence in reading and in production (which are read to produce another text) was collected through an open response question that resulted in a total of 59 descriptions of professional practices (e.g., "I read news to generate economic and social diagnostic reports"). The responses were categorized by grouping the genres associated with reading and production within non-exclusive categories, since most of the participants referred to reading various genres in their responses and in different quantities. The terms used by the participants to refer to genres, for the most part, reflect those used in the previous item, although different nomenclatures arose and were grouped

under a common term when coding (e.g., "oral presentations", "oral texts", "oral texts for classes," "presentations in the workplace"). This coincidence in relation to the terminology used to designate the genres calls for subsequent more in-depth qualitative work. Doing semi-structured interviews would allow us to confirm which are the terms most used by professionals to define the genres that are part of their practices, since the lexical selections used in these open responses in the current survey could be due to a priming effect.

This categorization reaffirms, to a large extent, the previous observations in relation to the vitality of reading texts from the journalistic and academic sphere (Table 6), since the most mentioned reading genres (more than 10 mentions in total) are from the journalistic (news and interviews) and academic spheres (scientific articles and academic texts), although legal norms (legal and political sphere) and technical reports (various technical-professional spheres) are also prominent.

Table 6: Sequence of reading and production of genres

READING	**PRODUCTION**
Legal norms 34% (20/59)	News 50% (10/20) Projects 10% (2/20) Scientific articles 10% (2/20) Legal norms 5% (1/20) Notes on social networks 5 % (1/20) Work plans 5% (1/20) Oral presentations 5% (1/20) Essays 5% (1/20) Interviews 5% (1/20)
News 32% (19/59)	News 26% (5/19) Oral presentations 16% (3/19) Scripts 16% (3/19) Visual communication pieces 11% (2/19) Projects 11% (2/19) Technical reports 5% (1 / 19) Interviews 5% (1/19) Work plans 5% (1/19) Scientific articles 5% (1/19)
Technical reports 31% (18/59) releases	News 56% (10/18) Announcement 11% (2/18) Oral presentations 11% (2/18) Scripts 6% (1/18) Note in social networks 6% (1/18) Audiovisual presentations 6% (1/18) Graphic content 6% (1/18)
Scientific articles 25% (15/59)	News 27% (4/15) presentations Interviews 13% (2/15) Oral presentations 13% (2/15) Scripts 7% (1/15) Projects 7% (1/15) Scientific articles 7% (1/15) Journalistic investigations 7% (1/15) Opinion articles 7% (1/15) Scientific divulgation notes 7% (1/15) Work plans 7% (1/15)

Interviews 20% (12/59)	News 42% (5/12) Interviews 17% (2 / 12) Scripts 8% (1/12) Advertising pieces 8% (1/12) Oral presentations 8% (1/12) Institutional reports 8% (1/12) Work plans 8% (1/12)
Academic texts 19% (11/59)	News 27% (3/11) Oral presentations 27% (3/11) Scripts 9% (1/11) Journalistic investigations 9% (1/11) Opinion articles 9% (1/11) Interviews 9% (1/11) Projects 9% (1/11)

Source: the authors.

The most common genre in production is news, that is, many participants read news, interviews, legal regulations, technical reports and scientific articles to write news, be it within the area of journalism, advertising, etc. One possible explanation for the predominance of this genre is its presence in the professional practice of communicators from the two largest areas of professional activity of the participants (institutional communication and journalism). However, a differentiated study of the relationship between professional areas and different genres of reading and production still needs to be done in greater depth to understand this. A second notable type of production is oral presentation, a fact that is also explained by its usefulness in all professional areas, an aspect that highlights the relevant role that reading for oral production could play in the teaching of reading. Finally, as Table 2 suggested, the participants focus their readings on the journalistic, technical and academic spheres, in order to produce genres typical of their spheres of professional performance (news, interviews, oral presentations, scripts, audiovisual communication pieces, projects, etc.). It remains to deepen, in later studies, the explanatory capacity of this finding for the practices of professionals in all areas of communication in a specific way, that is, if in all of them the reading revolves mainly around journalistic, technical and academic genres.

Mentions of reading and the production of certain genres show us that the participants read texts/genres from the same sphere of activity in which they work, that is, the journalistic or social communication sphere, and complement those readings, mainly, with texts/genres from the academic and professional fields. This coincides with what we highlighted in the previous section, regarding the purposes of reading, that is, communicators read to search for sources of information, theoretical concepts and to obtain general information on a topic or on the context of an event. We can assume that the sources of specific information on facts and contexts are found in genres of the journalistic sphere, and that the genres from the academic and professional fields serve to broaden the theoretical or technical understanding of the phenomena on which it is intended to produce.

Further research is needed to understand the important role that reading texts from the academic sphere occupies in communication practices. It is possible that the presence of these genres is due to their importance in the field of academic training, in which, as Di Capua-Hidalgo (2016a) confirms for the Chilean case, students are trained in contact with both genres from the professional field of communication as well as from the academic field. It is also necessary to know more about the specific professional motivations for reading academic texts.

Literacy Practices and Specific Strategies: *what do they do when they read?*

The analysis of literacy practices and strategies shows that the first most selected group (60% to 80%) consists of operations such as synthesizing what has been read, relating the content to the historical context, detecting technical terminology, and evaluating the reliability of sources, analyze the graphic material, evaluate the quality of the statements, contrast the views of the text and rank the most relevant content (1 to 9 of Table 7). All these operations are collected by Spiers et al. (2018) as reading strategies in scientific disciplines, especially science, mathematics and history. Most of these strategies involve a critical approach to the texts, which could imply that this is a characteristic of the literacy of this group. Knowing the social motivations that lead these readers to a critical evaluation of the texts is an aspect that future research should address.

In second place (40% to 60%), the practices and strategies selected are contextualizing the text by its author, relating it to personal experience and the field of scientific discipline in which the text is inserted, evaluating the logical coherence of its arguments and the way in which ideas are expressed through figures of speech, evaluate the scientific validity of their statements and the prestige of the authors cited in the text, relating the text to the publication medium, analyzing its organization, synthesizing the explicit position and author's implication and the possible consequences of their claims (10 to 21 of Table 7). In the last place (up to 40%), there are operations such as analyzing the voices of the text, evaluating the relationship between the objectives of a text and its concepts, its temporal coherence, the scope of its affirmations, the suitability to its genre and the poetic value of some of his expressions (22 to 27 of Table 7). This last finding presents a question regarding the little importance that the strategies of analysis of the form of a text seem to have in professional practices, since verbal language does not occupy the same place as a means of construction of meaning for professionals of the different areas. Consider, for example, the differences between the practices of journalists and audiovisual producers.

Table 7: Reading practices and strategies

Check the options in the column that DO correspond to reading strategies that you use when reading written texts in your professional practice.	
1 - Mentally synthesize the main concepts or ideas of the text	78% (64/82)
2 - Relate the contents of the text with the social context and the historical moment in which it was published	68.3% (56/82)
3 - Analyze, highlight, investigate technical terminology contained in the text	65.9% (54/82)
4 - Analyze the reliability of the sources presented in the text	65.9% (54/82)
5 - Analyze information contained in graphs, figures or tables of the text	64.6% (53 / 82)
6 - Analyze photographs or images that accompany the text	63.4% (52/82)
7 - Analyze the quality (precision, scope, usefulness) of the concepts contained in the text	62.2% (51/82)
8 - Relate mentally the main concepts of the text with different positions, their own or those of others	61% (50/82)
9 - Analyze segments that contain relevant contents of the text	61% (50/82)
10 - Relate the contents of the text with the social or institutional role of the author or with their story.	59.8% (49/82)
11 - Relate the contents of the text with your personal experience on the subject	57.3% (47/82)
12 - Relate the contents of the text with the field of the scientific discipline in which it is inserted	54.9% (45/82)
13 - Analyze the logical coherence of the arguments contained in the text	52.4% (43/82)
14 - Analyze the way in which ideas are expressed through figures of language or terms with powerful expressive value	51.2% (42/82)
15 - Analyze the validity of the statements contained in the text according to the evidence presented	51.2% (42/82)
16 - Analyze the quality or prestige of the authors cited in the text	51.2% (42/82)

17 - Relate the contents of the text with the social or institutional role of the publication medium or with its history	50% (41/82)
18 - Analyze the way in which the contents are organized throughout the text	47.6% (39 / 82)
19 - Analyze and synthesize the author's explicit position on the contents of the text	45.1% (37/82)
20 - Analyze and synthesize the implicit position of the author on the contents of the text	43.9% (36/82)
21 - Analyze the possible consequences of the statements contained in the text	42.7% (35/82)
22 - Analyze the different voices or characters that are mentioned in the text	35.4% (29/82)
23 - Analyze the adequacy of the concepts that the text contains to the way they are presented or their objectives	35.4% (29/82)
24 - Analyze the temporal coherence of the narratives contained in the text	34.1% (28/82)
25 - Analyze the scope or strength of the statements contained in the text according to how they are expressed	34.1% (28/82)
26 - Analyze the adaptation of the text to what would be expected due to its gender	31.7% (26/82)
27 - Analyze the poetic value of expressions of segments of the text	31.7% (26/82)

Source: the authors.

The most common disciplinary strategies and practices seem to coincide with the general activity profile described above, which assumed that most participants read genres from the journalistic and academic spheres for writing, and in the search for information on specific facts or general theoretical references. Some of the most selected strategies seem to be adapted to the comprehension of texts from both spheres: synthesizing what has been read, relating it to the historical context, contrasting the views of the text and ranking the most relevant contents. In contrast, others seem to be more associated with reading genres in the journalistic sphere: evaluating the reliability of sources, analyzing graphic material; while others seem more feasible to support the reading of genres in the academic sphere: detect technical terminology and evaluate the quality of the statements. The second-level operations also coincide with this results, with special emphasis on those that seem most relevant to the approach to texts/genres in the academic sphere: contextualize the text by its author, relate it to personal experience and the scope of the scientific discipline, evaluate the logical coherence of their arguments, evaluate the scientific validity of their statements and the prestige of the authors cited in the text. Finally, we highlight that the practices that imply a more detailed linguistic and discursive analysis, and that are associated with language professionals (SPIRES et al., 2018), were less selected: analyze the voices of the text, evaluate the relationship between objectives of a text and its concepts, its temporal coherence, its adaptation to its genre and the poetic value of its expressions.

The results of the survey allow us to outline a potential model of a system of activities (with pedagogical purposes) in which communication professionals read genres from the journalistic sphere to search for sources of general information on a subject or on its context, and academic genres to broaden the theoretical understanding of the phenomena. This profile is reflected in the most frequent reading operations, which contribute to interpreting these texts in the journalistic sphere (historically contextualize them, extract their orientation, analyze their graphic material and the reliability of their sources, etc.) and in the academic sphere (analyze their institutional prestige, the authors cited, the quality of their evidence or their arguments, etc.) (Table 8).

Table 8. Activity and reading system model

READING				PRODUCTION	
Genre	Sphere	Strategies	Purposes	Modality	Genre
News Interview Opinion article Editorial Reportage	Journalistic	For understanding and criticizing genres in the journalistic sphere	Obtaining a point of view Obtaining information on the context Obtaining information as a source	Write	News Project Script Announcement Work plan Scientific article Note in networks
Academic text Scientific article Legal norm Technical report	Academic and technical	For understanding and criticizing genres in the professional and academic sphere	Using theoretical reference Expanding or understanding a concept Obtaining general information on the subject	Orally present	Oral presentation Interview
Others	Others	For general text comprehension	Various purposes	Produce multimodal text	Visual communication piece

Final Considerations

The objective of this research project, of which this survey is only the first phase, is to recognize the reference practices in reading of textual genres in the professional field of communication, their organizational systems, as well as the needs and challenges they present for the expert actor.

The survey sought to identify the reading practices of professionals of communication in Uruguay, and, by analyzing the results, we identified that they include reading for the production of written and oral texts in the professional sphere. In other words, in this community, people read to get information and make sense of it. Among these reading practices, the production genres of news, as well as interviews and oral presentations predominate, although the list of possible genres produced is very extensive and varied. While the participants read various genres to produce other texts, some stand out more: those from the spheres of journalism (news, interview, opinion article, editorial, reportage) and those from the spheres of technical and academic knowledge (scientific article, technical report, academic text), in addition to others such as legal norms and the calls and proposals for papers or grants. The main purposes for reading these types of genres are the search for information on facts, contexts and participants, and the deepening of theories, themes and points of view, aspects associated with the most recurrent contents of journalistic genres, on the one hand, and academic and technical genres, on the other.

The disciplinary literacy practices identified are associated with reading strategies that allow for addressing the thematic content of the texts: synthesizing, contextualizing, contrasting and ranking, as well as, analyzing their graphic material. Reading strategies and practices related to a critical orientation to the management of information and sources are also common. These results lead us to suppose that some of these operations are more related to the reading of genres in the journalistic sphere, and that others are for text processing in the academic or technical spheres. This aspect is of vital importance to deepen the understanding of disciplinary literacy in this area, which is complex due to the fact that communicators read genres produced in several different spheres of activity, with different purposes, and

mobilizing different strategies for this. Although it is necessary to deepen this point in future stages of our research, we highlight that, as stated by Di Capua-Hidalgo (2016a) for the undergraduate training in journalism, communicators develop, for their professional practice, strategies for reading texts from the academic or scientific sphere and that, therefore, the role of non-journalistic genres in university teaching in the area of communication should be valued.

Lastly, the activity system model outlined, in addition to encouraging us to deepen the investigation of these practices, offers some guidelines for planning reading courses regarding:

- the importance of integrated work between reading and writing, mainly; and between reading and orality;

- the need to prioritize work with genres from the journalistic, academic and technical spheres, for work in reading;

- the importance of using the writing of the news, interview and oral exposition genres as a praxiological context of reading;

- the relevance of proposing learning situations in which students approach texts of genres from the journalistic sphere to build the scenarios of certain events and that, in addition, those situations propose the reading of texts of genres from the academic and professional spheres to deepen their understanding of the themes involved;

- the validity of deepening a pedagogical approach to reading practices and strategies that are functional for the understanding of genres from different spheres, taking into account the relevant role occupied by comprehension strategies that imply a critical evaluation of the texts.

The findings of this first part of the research provide us with inputs to build a first characterization of reading practices in the area of communication in Uruguay. As limitations to the study, it should be mentioned that descriptive statistical criteria were not used to delve into the quantified trends and that the practices of each specific professional practice area have not yet been discerned, nor the differences between the practices of novice professionals and those with more experience. Likewise, subsequent studies require a deeper understanding of the terminology used by professionals to designate the different genres and the specific representations regarding what those genres would be.

In future phases of this research, we will delve into the description of disciplinary literacy in the area of communication through interviews with qualified informants and observations of professional training practices. These data will then potentially contribute to the design of specialized programs in disciplinary literacy at the tertiary level, such as those proposed in Navarro (2013), integrating the training of non-specialized teachers in language teaching and advanced students as peer tutors.

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