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Video Activism: A Descriptive Typology

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Abstract

Video activism is currently enjoying a phase of buoyant expansion after more than a century of history. Video-activist practices are becoming more widespread as audiovisual production equipment becomes more accessible and distribution chanels cheaper and faster. At the same time, however, the development of epistemological tools to facilitate the academic study of video activism has not kept pace with these changes.In the absence of such established conceptual foundations, the studies that are beginning to emerge have few means of finding common ground or a meaningful basis for comparison. It is currently not feasible to undertake diachronic analyses, comparative studies or impact assessments as long as agreed conceptual limits and valid typologies are not available. This article presents a proposed descriptive typology of video activism with the aim of contributing to overcoming these deficiencies. This study forms a unity with two previous works, one dealing with the question of definition and the other tracing the history of video activism. Together they comprise an epistemological framework that may pave the way for the development of systematic empirical studies in the future.

Key words: Video activism; Video-activist taxonomy; Protest

Introduction

This article forms part of a previously initiated line of research whose aim is to establish an epistemological framework for the study of video activism from the perspective of media and communication studies. In previous articles we have presented a model of definition and description of video activism (Mateos and Rajas, 2014) and a historical outline within certain conceptual limits (Mateos and Gaona, 2014). The aim of these works was to enable us to identify the practices of video activists and the contextual factors in which the emergence of video activism about a century ago became possible. In these texts we describe video activism as an audiovisual discursive practice that sets out to counter a discursive abuse or gap and is carried out by actors outside the dominant power structures. The audiovisual practice engaged in by these subjects of counterpower is one of political intervention (Shamberg, 1971; Buchloh, 1985; Harding 2001; Widgington, 2005; Bustos, 2006), which can be considered a direct heritage from militant cinema´s goals (Linares, 1976; Burton,1986; Sheppard, 2004; Mestman, 2011). The practise confines itself to a certain extent to the area of protest, but also includes other objectives such as education, the construction of a collective identity, social rebellion and denunciation, demonstration, meeting and bearing witness, all within the broader aim of promoting social change. "A way for film-makers and radical organizer-agitators to break into the consciousness of people. A chance to say something different... to say that people don´t have to be spectator-puppets. In our hands film is not an anesthetic, a sterile, smoothing-talking apparatus of control. It is a weapon to counter, to talk back and to crack the facade of lying media of capitalism" (Film Quarterly, 1968-69: 44).

These objectives manifest themselves in the range of discursive strategies deployed by video activism, all of which are aimed at constructing an emancipatory consciousness, which is to say, a consciousness that equips people with the tools necessary to resist political manipulation, symbolic domination or cultural subjugation. In other words, video activism is an audiovisual mode of communicative action that consists in *taking possession of discourse itself* from

the public sphere (*occupying it by means of an audiovisual narrative*) with the aim of fighting against repressions of a symbolic nature that have biopolitical repercussions on the individual. Such repression often does not take the form of straightforward physical repression, but is in fact intangible because it operates in the symbolic realm.

The conceptual and theoretical framework we have developed in these works may be capable of providing a sufficient basis for some empirical studies: "Finally, language is a third way of ordering and managing the World. Language is used not just to name objects and thus have some control over them; the linguistic choices made reveal a particular symbolic reality, a particular way of seeing the World" (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011: 239). But the objectives pursued by other studies require a different set of epistemological tools not currently available in the specialist literature. Within this general aim of promoting empirical studies, this article also attempts to make a contribution by providing an underlying methodology insofar as it sets out to create a typology and suggests ways to implement it. It is clear that a typology of the activity and production of video activists is needed if we are to be in a position to elaborate useful samples for such studies. "The constructed type serves as a point of reference for the analysis of the empirically occurrent" (McKinney, 1966: 49)

Moreover, to consolidate this field of research it is necessary to foster these empirical studies, whether in the form of doctoral dissertations or research projects initiated from both within academia and in professional media and collective forums. An interdisciplinary collaboration between all these areas of activity would undoubtedly also be of great interest, in order to induce an `videoactivist turn´ in media studies in the same sense that Notley, Salzar and Crosby (2013) refer to an `activist turn´ in translation studies regarding translating and subtitling as emerging practices of media activism.

Methodology

This study presents a proposal for a taxonomy of video-activist practices developed on the basis of a method we have chosen to call categorisation by progressive biconstruction. As will be explained in more detail below, the starting point constitutes an initial sample of works

subject to analysis using an initial typological grid itself in the process of being formulated. This part of the analysis is thus provisional and will consist of two phases before achieving final definition:

1. Formulation, adjustment and modelling.
2. Validation.

In the first phase an initial random exploratory sample, *Sample A*, was compiled This comprised twenty piece by video activists selected at random[i] and subjected to the initial typological grid. The aim here was to continue constructing the typological grid through successive evaluations of its application, making the grid continually variable and provisional. The initial version of the grid was formulated from a purely theoretical point of view based on compiling and analysing a range of suggested taxonomies already in existence. Since some of these suggestions were either incomplete or repetitive, we considered it necessary after the "formulation" to develop a procedure to test the viability of our initial proposed taxonomy. We thus classified *Sample A* (comprising these initial twenty pieces) through a process of constant fine-tuning, taking as reference our first provisional typological grid. This task allowed us to discard come categories and redefine others to arrive finally at a second typological grid once these adjustments had been made.

Equipped with this second proposed grid, we proceeded to elaborate a second sample, *Sample B*, which expanded upon *Sample A*. We used this second sample to repeat the adjustment process several times. Once we had completed the adjustments to the grid, we progressed to the second phase, that of validation. Here the expansion of the sample was no longer the result of our selection, but rather we resorted to agents outside to identify new pieces. This was how we developed the *Master Sample*. This is composed of forty new pieces suggested by forty different people related to the practice of video activism and the areas of media and communication. This allowed us to guarantee the presence of a condition we consider essential, namely that the exploratory sample should be expanded upon in successive waves in a process of "collaborative production" (Kuhlen, 2004: 21-38; Innes & Booher, 2003:33-52), thereby making the scope for consensus as wide as possible. The construction of

categorisations requires a number of different steps that make it possible to address the complete range of practices used in video activism and to develop a functional distinction between non-overlapping classes. It was for this reason that we used the mechanism of progressive biconstruction. Its various phases and objectives will be explained in greater detail in the next section while our proposed taxonomy will be set out in section 4.

Categorisation by progressive bi construction

1. Phase 1: design based on trial and error.

We have designed a trial-and-error procedure in which the sample is constructed in four successive stages. We repeated the same dynamic in each one of the stages:

1. Formulation of an initial typological grid following the theoretical analysis of existing taxonomies.
2. Elaboration of a random exploratory sample (A) (20 pieces) to put to the test the inclusiveness of our typology and any possible gaps or overlaps between the categories included at the start.
3. Following the first application, correction of the grid by adding, excluding or modifying categories.
4. Reapplication of the grid to Sample A (20 pieces) expanded by a new intentional sample B (+ 10 pieces). The expansion was intentional in the sense that we deliberately selected pieces with elements and features not contained in the first sample.

We repeated the complete procedure four times. Ten new pieces were added each time until we reached a sample of fifty pieces or activities from the field of video activism in the last round.

2. Phase 2: validation experiment.

Once the taxonomic grid had been established in the first phase, we proceeded to conduct an experiment.

We developed a participative sample by asking 40 different people to suggest a work, piece or activity from the field of video activism. The typological grid obtained from the first phase was then applied to the resulting *Master Sample*.

The profile of the collaborators corresponded to four types:

- social activists

- experts and researchers in media and communication
- non-activist citizens who watch pieces on the internet
- professionals from the fields of journalism and social communication

Discussion

Other proposed taxonomies

In the bibliographical research we have conducted since the publication of the first theoretical works on video activism we have found very few systematic classifications.

The most defined proposals for taxonomies published to date contain two major drawbacks:

1. They mix together parameters of a different order to determine the types. This presupposes that we come across a type of video activism defined by its form of production together with another category whose defining characteristic is its type of content.
2. They fail to apply a sufficiently inclusive typological grid, one which is able to assimilate all the communicative practices generated by video activism.

Tina Askanius (2013: 5-8) of the Department of Communication and Media of the University of Lund in Sweden proposes a taxonomy composed of five types of video activism:

1. Mobilisation videos "explicitly calling for political action".
2. Witness videos: "videos documenting specific unjust conditions or political wrong-doings/doers, police brutality, human rights violations etc."
3. Documentation videos: "videos that, in a simple and straightforward manner, document activist marches, speeches, community meetings, direct actions, political happenings etc."
4. Archived radical video: "videos from historical Left-wing collectives".
5. Political mash-ups: "the amalgamation of multiple source materials that are montaged together to construct a political argument".

The first type is defined by its communicative end, while the second corresponds to the type of production and the third to the type of acts that are filmed, and finally the fourth and fifth to the origin of the audiovisual material, although this

origin in the last case is joined to the element of a reedited mix of that material.

Askanius thus sets out an interesting collection of attributes capable of helping to articulate tools to analyse the production of video activists. However, from an epistemological perspective this set of categories lacks two basic requirements needed to ensure a functional typology:

1. that the categories are exclusive, and
2. that the catalogue is inclusive (covers all possible practices).

Without meeting these requirements it would not be possible, for example, to use Askanius's scheme to construct study samples for researchers who wish to compare different subgenres. A mobilisation piece (type 1) could be an archive piece (type 4); a mash-up (type 5) could function to mobilise (type 1); while a video of an eyewitness account (type 2) could at the same time be a document (type 3) and also be used as a promo for political action (type 1).

It might be interesting, for example, to investigate and compare the narrative strategies of different subgenres in the field of video activism. Are the strategies employed in mobilisation and news reporting by video activists the same? Do all subgenres in the field of video activism share attributes with mainstream narrative? Or perhaps some do and others don't and, if that is the case, which subgenres have more in common with mainstream narrative?

To conduct studies that answer these questions it would be necessary to develop a typological table using criteria that turn out to be absent in the mentioned classifications. Only by means of a table of exclusive categories would it possible to select samples for studies that aim to answer these questions.

In 2012, in the first issue of the journal *Toma Uno* of the Department of Film and Television of the University of Cordoba in Argentina, the documentary filmmaker Nuria Vila Alabo describes the practices of contemporary video activists bringing together a number o new observations, albeit unsystematically. The work does not in fact set out explicitly to outline a typology, but rather organises the description of the video pieces according to six types, for each one of which she presents a paradigmatic example. The problem encountered with this catalogue is

that each point deals with different aspects, mixing a descriptive system of attributes with a typological system. The six stages that capture the filmmaker's attention (Vila Alabo, 2012: 169) are:

1. Collective aesthetic. Describes some forms and uses of the reappropriation of images. This type could be aligned with classic collage or the smash-up production that Askanius cites.

2. Anonymous. A type of production that can be understood as the trace or inheritance that cyberculture has left in the practices of video activists as a consequence of the transfer of its collaborative philosophy. In this way she defines a radicalism that locates itself in the environment of post-identity rationalities.[ii]

3. Flash mob. Two values stand out in the specific example selected by the author – a flash mob in defence of education in Chile: one as a tool to coordinate actions that, without video activism, would be extremely costly and complex to organise; and second as a means of documenting the actions to increase their repercussion.

4. The world's largest communications media. She describes the collective power that is formed through video activism when it is employed in the classic functions of information, counter-information and denunciation.

5. The DSRL effect and advertising. She discusses how the technological tools determine the forms of representation. She takes a critical look at the aesthetic continuity of some pieces by video activists with the emotive strategies used in advertising. In this sense she presents a number of arguments which show that the influences run in both directions since the conventional media themselves sometimes copy the stylistic methods of video-activist narratives.

6. Mobilisation as a central function of video activism.

Vila Alabo's observations are extremely interesting on their own terms. However, the points she identifies cannot be used as a basis for a classification grid for the very same reasons as in the case of Askanius, [different types of concept overlap and are mixed together indiscriminately]. Moreover, in some cases she is describing a type while in others she is describing general attributes or faculties of video activism.

The majority of the descriptive approaches we have encountered list in one form or another the variety of functions carried out by video activism (not always called as such by the authors or groups in question). This is true whether the work is by an established author studying the subject from the viewpoint of radical cinema (Linares, 1976) or from the audiovisual frontline (Harding, 2001; Widginton, 2005), or is a contemporary manifesto produced from within video activism itself (Alhurria, 2012). There is no doubt that such functions represent a key variable for classification, but they cannot be the only parameter enabling types to be established when they coincide with other factors such as the features of production or the relationship with the hegemonic discourse.

Particularly interesting is the four-fold classification set out by **Presence** to map the contemporary scene of video activism in Britain (Presence, 2014):

1. Video-activist NGOS
2. Access organisation
3. Aggregators of oppositional media
4. Radical video-activist

This typology allows Presence to describe the catalogue of functions employed by the communicative agents acting in the field of video activism in Britain and the relationships between them. He argues that the current map of British video activism is determined to a great extent by the composition of the groups who were the driving force behind video activism at the end of the 1990s in Britain. His main focus is a comprehensive description of these relationships, with the result that he devotes less attention to the types of film and reportage produced by these agents. At the same time, however, the criteria he uses to distinguish these various groups allow us to articulate two premises that prove extremely useful in isolating parameters for classification:

1. The type of subject-producer determines the audiovisual production. Indeed, this phenomenon occurs in such as way as to affect the transformative or revolutionary nature of the proposals for change of the film or report. The video activism of NGOs supported or funded by government programmes, argues Presence, condemns, reveals or draws attention to the negative aspects of the system but does not question the system itself. It collaborates in the status quo, does not propose change but

reform, and campaigns for "improvements". This video activism produces what we will call a *consensus narrative* (Renó et al., 2015). On the other hand, Presence assigns a specific category, that of *radical video activism*, to video activism that produces what will call a *transformative narrative*.

2. The function of video activism is not limited as far as Presence is concerned to audiovisual production. His second and third types encompass groups or entities who devote themselves to empowering and equipping people so that they can be creators of the audiovisual discourse. These types "focus on expanding access to production rather than the content of what is produced" and facilitate the connection with the audience because they are "dedicated to collecting and ordering video-activism online". The practice of these strands of educational video activism on the one hand and of exhibition and distribution on the other is also a feature we have seen confirmed in our previous research (Mateos and Rajas, 2014; Mateos and Gaona, 2014).

These two premises extrapolated from Presence's classification allow us to isolate two parameters useful in classifying the works of video activists:

- There is both a consensus discourse and a transformative discourse in video activism.
- Video activism can take the form of production but also of distribution and exhibition, and even an intervention like translation and subtitling over the film or report made by others (Notley et al., 2013).

Consequently, it is possible to establish video-activist typologies according to different parameters:

- Type of communicative activity (production, exhibition, distribution, subtitling);
- Type of subject-producer (integrated or external, government or activist, etc.);
- Type of production (own production, collage, found footage, etc.); and
- Type of discursive strategy (to be discussed below).

Our proposed taxonomy revolves around this last, discursive parameter. It is from this parameter that we are able to distinguish five categories that, by implication, reflect different forms of realizing a discursive strategy, which in

turn enable us to address the different aims of activists.

The aims of video-activist production

We have compared elsewhere the ends pursued by video activism with the risks of political and news acculturation on the part of audiences (Mateos and Gaona, 2014). The range of contributions we identified in this previous study, in which we traced the history of the form, has certain points in common with some of the classifications we dealt with in the previous section. Video activism, whether in the form of an audiovisual work, an educational/didactic activity or a collective viewing of a film, seeks to contribute in the following ways pointed out by different authors:

1. Witness: evidence about what is happening or has happened (Shamberg, 1971; Campbell, 1977; Gregory et al., 2005).
2. Action: information and motivation to take action in the face of what is happening or has happened (Getino and Solanas, 1973; Uzelman, 2005; MacPhee and Reuland, 2007; Alhurria, 2012).
3. Meaning and signification: a means of revealing the (mis)information about what is happening or has happened (Waugh, 1976; Sanjinés, 1984)
4. Identity: identification of the subjects involved in what is happening or has happened, as well as the relations between them (make visible the structures of dominance and responsibility) (Rocha and Pottlitzer, 1970; Rodríguez, 2009; Lynn Petray, 2013).
5. Empowerment: education to equip people with the tools and skills to manage this evidence and information and also to be able to act, participate in the proposed activities (O´Neil and Wayne, 2008; Valenzuela, 2011).

We have developed the typological tool presented in the next section based on this spectrum of factors characterising the actions and productions of video activists. This proposition comprises five categories organised according to the attributes of the discursive strategies employed. These five discursive strategies can be found in turn in different types of work or actions by video activists depending on the type of communicative practice, type of production or type of subject-producer. In other words, it is possible to find them in a collage of fragments of television broadcasts, a

documentary recuperation of "historical memory",[iii] or in a report distributed on the website of an activist forum, to name a few possibilities.

Results: Proposed typology

As we have indicated, our proposed taxonomy, developed based on a categorisation of progressive biconstruction, takes the discursive parameter as its central axis. The taxonomy is developed based on the discursive strategy or function and integrates the main ends of video activism as set out in section 4. As we have already pointed out, the construction of an emancipatory consciousness is an objective that distinguishes video activism. The attempt to achieve this objective is made using tactics with different ends as discussed above (witness, action, meanig, identity and empowerment). The discursive strategies in each piece will be adapted in each case to one or some of these ends but always from the perspective of equipping people to resist political manipulation (Castoriadis, 2000; Taylor, 2010), symbolic domination (Hall, 1980; Voloshinov, 1992) or cultural subjugation (Butler, Judith, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek 2000). Consistent with these objectives, we propose a division of the discursive strategies (Bourdieu, 1991; Fairclough, 1992-1995; Morrison and Love, 1996 [iv] ; Graham, 2002; Tang, & Yang, 2011) found in video activism into five types: document, rally call, reaction, self-representation, didactic.

1. **Document**: an audiovisual piece is produced that bears witness to an event. Something has occurred and video activism produces documentary evidence. Example: a police officer beating someone up is filmed on a mobile phone. Case: video of *The brutal beating of Rodney King* video filmed by George Holliday in Los Angeles in 1992 or the reports by Madrid Film Collective (1975-1977).
2. **Rally call**: a call is made for people to participate in activist actions. There is a focus, explicit to a greater or lesser degree, on the possible course of action to be adopted in a specific context or situation, e.g. take part in a strike or demonstration, sign/support a collective denunciation, support a manifesto, join a campaign, join in an act of civil disobedience. People are explicitly invited to adopt a particular type of conduct or attitude regarding activist

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actions or arguments in favour of such are put forward. As we have already argued, all pieces include some attempt to influence behaviour, but in these works the specific behaviour whose aim it is to encourage is explicitly identified. Generally linked to specific campaigns. Example: a piece by a trade union to take part in a strike. Case: *Únete a la marea verde* (*Join the Green Tide*), video encouraging people to join the movement in defence of public education, 2011 Spain.

3. **Re discursive reaction**: one type of discourse is articulated with respect to another, in this case the dominant or hegemonic discourse. The strategies of response employed may be aimed at changing the signification or meaning of something that is already circulating in the dominant media, reveal something that is not being reported or give rise to new ways of understanding that which is being reported. These can therefore appear in three types:

Resemanticisation or redefinition: modifies a preexisting discourse, operates on the plane of an already produced prior discourse to dismantle its constructions of meanig and signification (Cárdenas, 2014: 72-74). The discourse is produced based on the referential function, on the relationship between the signifier and the signified already prevailing in the public sphere of communication. The discursive works focuses on this catalogue of possible relations between signifiers and signifieds. New connections are proposed between this discourse, to which the response refers or about which counterinformation is offered, and the signifieds that the audience might associate with it. It contains a metalinguistic element in converting the very use of language by the communicative actors into referent. This species of video activism discusses how other social actors speak of and promote ideas (ideology). It is a structural form of activism, which focuses on the underlying communicative pact, on the agreement about the signification of things, the code governing their meaning (De Certeau: 1999). It operates in the

plane of the morphology of the sign or chain of signs. Example: a piece which combines declarations by the same politician made at different times, whereby this juxtaposition reveals a lie or contradiction. In this case, therefore, something that the audience already knew or has already seen acquires a new signification. Case: *Que se vaya la mafia* (*Mafia go home*), by Juventud Sin Futuro (Youth without future), 2013 Spain, or *I am not moving* by Occupy Wall Street, 2011 USA.

Exposure: the production of this discourse reveals issues either not present in the public sphere or which are barely represented, subject to silence and marginalised. It sets out to make certain data, facts, relations or results visible, and is likely to be related to research activities. The referent is a fact or idea not treated in the mainstream media, a lacuna in the factual information. In this sense it represents a new agenda, not simply a new frame as would hold for the next type, contextualisation. Example: a piece reconstructing "historical memory" which brings to the attention the torture of prisoners. The piece allows us to find out about what was not known and what was purposely hidden. Case: the film *Yawar Mallku* (*Blood of the Condor*) by Jorge Sanjinés (Bolivia, 1969).

- **Contextualisation**: the production of this discourse also operates along the referential function, but this time supplying data that modify the possibilities for assigning meaning, causes or responsibility. It may also modify the signification, but above all it completes the frames of interpretation that make it possible to point out menaings not proposed or favoured by the dominant discourses. It differs from resemanticisation (the first type) insofar as it opens the way for the emergence of a new meaning, whereas resemanticisation dismantles the operation of meaning previously established by the hegemonic discourse. It may resort to discursive techniques of recontextualisation, rational argumentation and contrasting of evidence. Example: a piece that allows an

appreciation of the political responsibilities or architects behind certain situations, such as the fact that the public deficit is linked to the reduction of fiscal pressure on the most wealthy. It does not modify the construction of the audiovisual signifier, its morphology, but rather associates the production of its signification with a new frame of contextual interpretation in light of which its signification acquires new meaning. The creative operation thus takes place in the context rather in than the sign. Case: the films by Emile de Antonio (1919-1989), USA.

4. **Construction of an identity (self-representation)**: this discursive strategy focuses on the enunciator, the implicit viewer of the discourse, the presumed "recipient" capable of listening to and reading the discourse. This enunciated is assumed to belong to an *us* whose motivations, ideals, objectives and form of organisation are defined during the discourse. The definition and consensus about one's own collective identity is a prerequisite for collective action: identity needs to be constructed (Rodríguez, 200): 17): "having the opportunity to recode .the own identity by signs chosen by oneself bursting into the passive acceptance of imposed identity"[v]. Some activist processes take for granted that this construction will be participatory (such as the Occupy movement, which began as the 15M protests in Spain) and open; others consider this the task of certain elites or vanguards (i.e. trade unions). There are also differences about its conception: for some movements this is a product that has to be articulated in advance, prior to action, whereas for others it is a task in a permanent process of construction. Case: *Excelente, revulsivo, importante* (*Excelent, shaking, important*) by Stephan Grueso, 2012 Spain.

5. **Didactic:** educational material dominated by an explanatory discourse aimed at facilitating the understanding and assimilation of ideas and approaches. Case: *How to Film a Revolution* by Occupy Wall Street, 2011 USA.

We will now present a table of the typology of video activism just described based on this discursive parameter together with the forms video activism may take depending on the other parameters we have already mentioned: the type of communicative practice and the type of subject-producer.

We can distinguish three types of subject-producer:

1. **Individual** production. Phase of individual activism: I go out, I film and I upload my product on the internet. Even if two people are involved, we include it under this type since these are individual projects not carried out by established groups and therefore they give rise to separate units.
2. **Institutional** production. Groups or associations, whether permanent or temporary, that come together and organise themselves expressly for the purpose of video activism. For example, *Newsreel* in United States, *Filmmakers of May* in Argentina, *Kannonklubben* in Denmark, *Undercurrents* in England, or the *Media Committee of Sol* of the Plaza de Sol Camp of the 15M in Madrid.
3. **Institutional political** production: a protest group, an NGO, a movement, trade union, political party, all of which are organisations whose primary or express aim is not audiovisual activity, but who resort to this as a tool, either from time to time or more regularly in those cases where there is an established team assigned to this task. An example of this would be the French Communist Party in its film productions after May 1968-, or the CGT of the Second Spanish Republic. Here we are dealing therefore with the classic concept of producers of radical art as discussed by Linares (1976).

Discursive Taxonomy of Video Activism

TYPE	***FUNCTION COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE***	***FUNCTION SUBJECT-PRODUCER***
1. DOCUMENT	a. Video activism of production b. Video activism of distribution-exhibition c. Video activism of empowerment	d. Individual e. Institutional f. Institutional political
2. RALLY CALL	a. Video activism of production b. Video activism of distribution-exhibition c. Video activism of empowerment	d. Individual e. Institutional f. Institutional political
3.REACTION Resemanticisation	a. Video activism of production b. Video activism of distribution-exhibition c. Video activism of empowerment	d. Individual e. Institutional f. Institutional political
4. CONSTRUCTION OF IDENITITY (SELF-REPRESENTATION)	a. Video activism of production b. Video activism of distribution-exhibition c. Video activism of empowerment	d. Individual e. Institutional f. Institutional political
5. DIDACTIC	a. Video activism of production b. Video activism of distribution-exhibition c. Video activism of empowerment	d. Individual e. Institutional f. Institutional political

In this table we have crossed our typology of video activism based on the discursive parameter with types of video activism based on the other parameters. This is because we want our proposed taxonomy to make it possible to elaborate samples for comparative studies of the work produced by the different agents involved in video activism, as well as to compare the production of video activists and the discourse produced and distributed on a mass scale by the corporate media when they deal with protests and social movements. We include first and foremost a differentiation based on communicative practice and, second, a differentiation based on subject-producer.

This distinction in communicative practice is based on our previous work (Mateos and Rajas, 2014; Mateos and Gaona, 2014) about the tradition of converting collective projections or the education in an activist action in its own right. This is something that. We have already seen that Presence (2014) also considers and identifies this as video activism. For this reason we have distinguished three types of communicative practice:

1. **Video activism of production** – produces content. The creation of audiovisual works. (Collective Militant Cinema Alhurria; Reel News).
2. **Video activism of distribution-exhibition** – produce audiences. Generates occasions on which to make contact with the audience or organise activities (in independently managed centres, festivals, etc.) or exhibition networks, catalogues, distribution channels, viewings (like the Toma La Tele website in Spain, one of whose aims is to provide an audiovisual forum for social movements).
3. **Video activism of empowerment** – produces producers (Witness)

Many of the activities in which alternative and community media are involved would fall into one of these categories. It may well be that their entire activity is not in the field of video activism. By virtue of the type of media they are, the majority would correspond to the attribute of *subjects of counterpower* implicit in the concept of video activism, but there are other conditions inherent in the definition of video activism some of which they may meet but others perhaps not: as a tool of

political intervention and promoting social change and proposal for alternative forms of behaviour, for example.

Collective projections and audiovisual meetings, as well as workshops on citizen journalism, by activist groups, people's assemblies, self-governing social centres, social movements, etc., would come under the third category, even though these might not themselves produce any audiovisual piece, but simply by virtue of the activist practice of exhibition as an activity raising political consciousness or the training of activist agents.

Conclusion

We have presented our proposed taxonomy developed based on a categorisation of progressive biconstruction, which takes a discursive parameter as its central axis. The ends pursued by the practices of video activists cover objectives of immense scope, such as education, the construction of a collective identity, denunciation, and witness. Our typology makes it possible to collect all these functions in a highly differentiated way. This typology does not include a variable with important repercussions on narrative and the interaction with the audience, namely the relative position of the institutional subject. It is important to distinguish whether the institutional subject of production is a subject implied in the narrative conflict (e.g. as an activist she forms part of the movement that is being discussed and is an affected person) or not (e.g. as an analyst, historian or external news media). It would thus be appropriate to draw a distinction between internal and external video activist production. This distinction is tied to the debate about subjectivity. It has narrative implications about the forms of enunciation and requires above all a semiotic approach. This was not the aim of this article. For the time being our aim is to design and disseminate methodological and epistemological tools to guide the academic study of video activism.

Video activism is an intervening factor in the social dynamic regardless of whether we have the tools to study it or not. Nonetheless, it is one of our tasks as academics to construct these tools and make possible the study of the subject. Nor is this simply out of a desire to encourage it – which may or may not apply – but rather emanates from the commitment to

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knowledge that is innate to the academic enterprise.

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I am not moving by Occupy Wall Street (USA, 2011) in https://vimeo.com/30346691

How to Film a Revolution by Occupy Wall Street (USA, 2011) in 2011https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QvNgofx56c

[i] The works were selected from emails from email lists of activist groups and movements and by directly accessing the websites of these movements and of trade unions and political organisations, activist forums, alternative media, and media and artistic collectives.

[ii] Vila Alabo takes as her reference a text by Lara, Ángel Luis (2011): "Volverse persona sin más...", (available online at: http://anarquiacoronada.blogspot.com/2011/10/volverse-persona-sin-mas.html).

[iii] There is no exact equivalent in English to the Spanish concept of *memoria histórica*. Apart from being a way of reclaiming a past by certain groups of victims or marginalised, it is also a highly controversial law in Spain. The concept has a very specific meaning in Spain, being associated more or less exclusively with the Spanish Civil War and Franco. This is not the case in other countries.

[iv] Meanwhile, very little attention has been paid to discourses aimed at instituting positive social changes from marginalized positions, or what Morrison and Love (1996) call the 'bottom-up' approach.

[v] Own translation.