ANDEAN MIGRANT ASSOCIATIONS ON THE WEB. THE RELEVANCE OF VIRTUAL NETWORKS FOR ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY TIES

ASSOCIAZIONI DI MIGRANTI ANDINI SUL WEB. L'IMPORTANZA DELLE RETI VIRTUALI PER COSTRUIRE LEGAMI COMUNITARI

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ABSTRACT

Migrants are groups affected by ICTs technological transformation from an uprooting paradigm into a connected one, known as the paradigm of the *connected migrant*. The Internet is one of the most used technologies by these groups to organize virtual communities and create transnational networks. This paper focuses on the study of websites of migrants' associations from Andean countries in Argentina. To begin, we will analyze the potential and extent of the aforementioned websites. And then, we will reflect on techno-sociability and the construction of community ties in the era of connected migrants.

KEYWORDS

Andean Migrants, Social Networks, associations, ICTs, Argentina.

SOMMARIO

I migranti sono gruppi colpiti dalla trasformazione tecnologica prodotta dalle ICT da un paradigma di sradicamento ad uno connesso, noto come il paradigma del *migrante connesso*. Internet è una delle tecnologie più utilizzate da questi

gruppi per organizzare le comunità virtuali e creare reti transnazionali. Questo articolo si concentra sullo studio dei siti web delle associazioni di migranti provenienti dai paesi andini in Argentina. Per cominciare, analizzeremo le potenzialità e la portata dei suddetti siti web. Successivamente, rifletteremo sulla tecno-socialità e la costruzione di legami con la comunità nell'era dei migranti connessi.

PAROLE CHIAVE

Migranti Andini, Social Network, associazioni, TIC, Argentina

1 Introduction: social networks and virtual communities

Advances in ICTs and transportation along with the organization of international labor and consumption and the effect of population movements (Castells, 1995; 1999; Licoppe, 2004) have generated qualitative changes in density, magnitude and mobility of the linkages and networks established by international migrants (Komito, 2011; Peñaranda Cólera, 2008). The uprooting and the breaking of ties which characterized migratory practices throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century have led to different experiences represented by the continuity and maintenance of bonds (Ryan, Klekowski von Koppenfels & Mulholland, 2014). There has been a paradigm shift from an uprooted migrant toward a connected migrant (Diminescu, 2011). This new paradigm is represented by a double presence – physical or real, and imagined or virtual – which enables migrants to participate simultaneously here, their destination community, and there, their community of origin. As a consequence, the distinction between origin and destination is becoming increasingly obsolete.

Traditional ICTs such as postal mail, telegraph or telephone have historically facilitated long distance contact between people. As a result of a complex process in constant change, new ICTs have diversified into many different resources such as the Internet, e-mails, online chats, videoconference applications like Skype, and mobile phones. These tools or cultural artifacts (Hine, 2004) enhance and modify the uses and hiper-mediations given to other devices in the past (Bacigalupe & Camara, 2012; Scolari, 2008; Winocur, 2007; 2010). The first technology applied to communications used by migrants to connect with their families was the telephone (Gonzálvez Torralbo, 2012; Thompson, 2009; Vertovec, 2004). Internet is the second. Through the World Wide Web, migrants are able to contact their immediate family and countrymen, search for information, access and create websites anywhere (Baldassar et. al., 2016). Unlimited access does not imply ignoring the digital divide and the level of connectivity. According to CEPAL (2013), 40% of the population in Latin America uses the Internet, while in the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the access is about 80% (Barrantes, Jordan & Rojas, 2013).

Internet technology is of paramount importance for migrant groups because it considerably enhances the creation of transnational networks based on virtual communities (Gómez Escalonilla & Campos Zabala, 2009; Hunter, 2015). Being a member of a network means working with others as a part of a process of information flow, communication, and exchange of experiences that alters the classic hierarchical pyramid structure. Cyberspace entails refreshing the idea of virtual communities as a point of transference of beliefs and shared practices that link people physically separated (Wellman & Berkowitz, 1988). Cyber-communities make evident a shift in the concept of community, from a physical location to a virtual network. Nevertheless, as Piscitelli states, «Technology does not

remedy the evils of biology or culture, it complements and amplifies them, either to make them better or worse.» (Piscitelli, 2002 p. 83). Accordingly, electronic communities are free (Finquelievich, 1999) because they are not subjected to the time-space limits, however, they do not cease to further engage in local matters rather than global issues and to strengthen the existing social networks, such is the case of some migrants' associations in Argentina.

In Argentina, the use and appropriation of the Internet by migrant communities has allowed the development of different practices, like the online migrant press, the websites of political, cultural and social associations, and the heterogeneous presence of Facebook (Oiarzabal, 2012). The presence of migrants' associations on the Web has particularly facilitated the creation and operation of social networks, usually without State intervention or mediation, and it has also supported the political, family, community, cultural and economic changes of transnational migrant groups (Nedelcu, 2012; Portes, 2005). Hence, by studying the websites of migrant associations from Andean countries in Argentina, not only are we able to analyze their potential and scope, but we can also reflect on techno-sociability (cultural changes related to ICTs) and the development of bonds in an era when the definition of migrant seems to outpace territoriality in pursuit of the formation of virtual diasporas (Georgiou, 2005; Kissau & Hunger, 2010).

The experiences of migrant websites are interesting from the point of view of civic agency and citizenship education from the perspectives of media and education and media literacy. We agree with Renee Hobbs (2009; 2010) in understanding teaching/learning practices as political practices that exceed educational institutions.

> These digital and media literacy competencies, which constitute core competencies of citizenship in the digital age, have enormous practical value. To be able to apply for jobs online, people need skills to find relevant information. To get relevant health information, people need to be able to distinguish between a marketing ploy for nutritional supplements and solid information based on research evidence. To take advantage of online educational opportunities, people need to have a good understanding of how knowledge is constructed and how it represents reality and articulates a point of view. For people to take social action and truly engage in actual civic activities that improve their communities, they need to feel a sense of empowerment that comes from working collaboratively to solve problems (Hobbs, 2010 p. 6).

In this sense, media literacy would include access, participation and promoting speeches created by minorities. In the analysed cases, immigrants created alternative discourses on their websites against the mass media discourses based on a discriminatory conception to Latin American immigration. Is remarkable the creation of the migrant press of the Bolivian community (*Renacer* newspaper), Peruvian (*Gaceta del Peru*) and Paraguayan (*Paraguay* Ñañe *Reta*) during

the 1990s in Argentina. These newspapers functioned as spaces of denunciation against xenophobic, racist and discriminatory discourses that circulated in the media during that time. These discourses blamed the immigrants as the cause of the Argentine´s crisis, and at the same time accused them to usufruct the public services, to influence the reduction of work for the Argentineans and to be the focus of infectious-contagious diseases (Melella, 2013; 2016).

These digital media open up new channels for participation, activism and civic engagement in a Latin American democratic context that would tend to deepening democracy and access to rights. In fact, this migrant websites contributes to make a critical analysis of news and mass media entertainment. Also they are resources and tools to establish and engage with diferent ideas and information to make decisions and participate in a diversity cultural life (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009; Manca & Ranieri, 2015).

We selected communities of Andean countries because they adjust to a migration pattern that has been strongly increasing from that area to Argentina since the 1990's. In addition, these communities depict two types of migration – one recent and young, represented by Colombians and Ecuadorians, and another traditional and established, represented by Bolivians and Peruvians. Both groups create different social, political and cultural practices in the host society, such as civic and religious festivities, the founding of associations, and the distribution of newspapers, among others. Consequently, this paper claims that each group adopts different practices in the use and appropriation of the Internet.

2 How to analyze virtual social networks? An interdisciplinary methodology

The main objective of this paper is, firstly, to analyze the web presence of migrants' associations from Andean countries in Argentina and, secondly, to investigate their connectivity possibilities and their chances of developing social networks. Still, the double definition of the Internet as a space and as a tool presents the challenge of its methodological approach, where its characterization as an object of study and as a research tool is constantly overlapped (Estalella & Ardévol, 2010). So the Internet is understood from two dimensions. First of all, it is a cultural artifact, a technology, a tool that carries cultural meanings and different practises in accordance with the context in which it is used. Then, it is a place, a space where culture is developed (Hine, 2004). Because of this dual role, we mainly used a qualitative methodology combining different knowledge from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Firstly, in order to analyze websites as places or spaces where a culture is developed (Hine, 2004), from the sociosemiotic perspective focusing on textual analysis, we considered the portals (websites) as texts. These «texts» are the result of social discourses crystallized by the analyst and to be studied (Verón, 1993). The theory of social discourse developed by the Argentine semiologist

Eliseo Verón (1993) conceives the phenomena of social dimensions of meaning as clusters of signifier matters referring to a semiotic network conceptualized as a productive system. It starts with the creation of a general theory of the production of meaning where the dimensions of production, circulation and consumption or recognition are articulated. Speech (social discourse) is a point of passage, a meeting of all the relations of production and recognition of the phenomena of social meaning. Social discourses (crystallized as texts) are constituted by a set of marks of three types: rhetorical, thematic and enunciative.

Thus, from a semiotic approach, we resorted to discourse analysis and contents from the associations' websites considering them as texts composed of three dimensions (rhetoric or figurative, thematic and enunciative) that reflect their characteristics (Steimberg, 1993). So we detected textual and paratextual elements which allowed us to account for the main rhetorical, thematic and enunciative strategies of each of the selected sites.

The rhetoric surface is composed of the essential elements that define the text structure and allow to differentiate it from other texts (Barthes, 1986). Features such as graphic design strategies, the use of color and space, the presence of photographs, advertisements, logos and layout are the discursive strategies that set the websites of Andean migrant groups on a rhetorical level.

The study of the thematic dimension consists of the expression of various themes reflected in the text: discrimination and xenophobia, religiosity, indigenousness, expanding rights (political, civil and social) and migration policies.

The enunciative analysis was presented after the rhetorical and the thematic analyses, because these two dimensions affect the enunciation setup, which can be summarized as the meaning-effect built in a communicational situation. To expedite the analysis, we resorted to the concept of «Reading Contract» created by Eliseo Verón (1985), who defined it as the relation between a support and its reading, a link between what is said and the modalities of saying.

Secondly, we draw on an structural analysis to discuss the Internet as a cultural artifact, that is, as a technology with specific properties in a context of use and appropriation (Hine, 2004), we focused on a communicational perspective that enabled us to examine the structure of each site according to the presence of the technological resources and the communicative possibilities they proposed. We took into consideration the categorization used by Argentine professor Luis Albornoz for his research on digital newspapers entitled «Digital Journalism», 2007, and we analyzed the aforementioned presence in each website: *news content; user services; participation areas and audiovisual resources, multimedia and hyperlinks*.

Finally, from a connectivity analysis, in order to examine the connectivity between different websites we applied the concept of social tie created by the network theory, particularly, the work of Mark Granovetter (1973) on weak ties. Granovetter states that the most interrelated groups are characterized by the establishment of numerous ties of low intensity (physical or emotional contact), which he calls weak. In this way, technologies like the Internet promote connectivity through the creation of such ties (links). Moreover, we surveyed the density of the hyper-

links in the selected websites employing two different softwares, Navicrawler and Gephi, used by the e-Diasporas Atlas project of Dana Diminescu (2012). The e-Diasporas Atlas project aims to analyze the formation of virtual diasporas (on the web) from different groups of immigrants around the world.

Following this protocol, after having gathered the information of the websites of the migrants' associations manually, we entered the data into Navicrawler to examine the structure and links of each of them and create a database to import it into Gephi. This allowed us to design graphics in order to view and explain the structure and distribution of migrants from Andean countries associations in the cyberspace.

3 Andean Migrants in the Web

Although there are several periodizations, it is traditionally understood that the migration from Andean countries began in pre-Columbian times (Pellegrino, 2010). Nevertheless, in the big cities of Argentina, its visibility has been increasing since the last decade of the twentieth century. Andean migration's main exponents are Bolivians, Peruvians, Colombians and Ecuadorians. We observed two types of migration in these groups: one more recent and young, represented by Colombians and Ecuadorians, and another traditional and established, represented by Bolivians and Peruvians.

Bolivians constitute one of the largest South American migrant communities in Argentina, the most popular destination for Bolivian migrants, a fact reflected by their extensive territorial distribution and constant flow. The Bolivian presence is significant in the City of Buenos Aires, Gran Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires suburban area) and some inland cities such as Córdoba, San Salvador de Jujuy and Mendoza. Currently, Bolivian migrants are engaged in various activities, especially in the horticulture and clothing industries (Sassone, 2007).

Peruvian migration dates back to the 1950's, but it increased considerably in the 1990's due to high unemployment rates in Peru resulting from the implementation of an economic model characterized by neoliberal policies. Another decisive factor of this new wave of migration was the political violence in Peru because of the clashes between the government forces and the guerrilla group Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), (Altamirano, 2010; Lapenda, 2010). The Peruvian community in Argentina is concentrated mainly in the City of Buenos Aires.

Compared to current Peruvian and Bolivian migration flows, Ecuadorian and Colombian migration rates are lower, even though they continue to grow considerably. The profile of Ecuadorian and Colombian migrants is mainly composed by students traveling abroad to pursue their studies in Argentine universities. Therefore, they settle down in the cities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba and La Plata.

It is noteworthy that there are hundreds of Bolivian and Peruvian organizations with physical locations (off line) in Argentina, but only a few of them extend into cyberspace. Meanwhile, Ecuadorians and Colombians – being a more recent migration composed mainly of young students, who we assume to be

digital natives (Piscitelli, 2005) – have fewer organizations with physical locations, but most of them are present on the web. Piscitelli (2005) proposed that, in addition to a generation gap, there is a knowledge gap.

We studied 48 Bolivian community associations' websites, 55 Peruvians, 8 Colombians and 3 Ecuadorians, all of them with Argentine domains. Websites of associations can be classified as civil, cultural, commercial, institutional and media associations. These migrants' associations can be divided into two types according to their network access (Melella, 2013; 2016). On the one hand, there are those we label as associations of «digital immigrants», which already existed and after some time created an Internet site. On the other hand, there are those we understand as associations of «digital natives», which have an Internet presence, but do not have a physical space to carry out their functions on a regular basis. The most deeply rooted Andean migrants' associations in Argentina, such as Bolivians and Peruvians, belong to the first type; Ecuadorians and Colombians, with less territorial roots, belong to the second type. According to the «Censo de Población, Hogares y Viviendas de 2010» there are 345,272 Bolivians, 157,514 Peruvians, 17,576 Colombians and 4,820 Ecuadorians. In the City of Buenos Aires, there are 76,609 Bolivians, 60,478 Peruvians, although there are no numbers for Colombians and Ecuadorians emphasizing their recent migration (INDEC, 2010). Hereafter, we will discuss an example of each.

4 The presence of Andean migrants' associations on the Web. Connectivity and community building. The Peruvian and Ecuadorian cases

4.1 *The Peruvian case*

The Consulate of Peru in Argentina has registered at least thirty associations throughout the country. However, as it has already been stated, the presence of associations on the Web far exceeds that figure. Unlike Bolivian associations on the Web, which have mainly solidarity purposes (culture, civil rights and media), predominant Peruvian websites are aimed at commercial activities, especially ethnic restaurants that use the Internet to promote and grow their business (31 out of 55 sites). These commercial websites are followed by media websites (11 of 55) and civic associations (8 of 55).

Casa del Perú is a civic non-profit organization committed to the mission of organizing cultural and artistic works as well as performing tasks related to social welfare, health, housing, and professional advice. *Casa del Perú* aims at encouraging the integration of Peruvian migrants and residents into Argentinian society. Even though it was created in Buenos Aires in 2009, its founding members are Peruvians who immigrated to Argentina in the 1950's and 1960's. This puts them in a privileged position to help new generations of migrants to participate both in the host society and in their community in a more productive and less traumatic way.

We studied the website of the association that represents the Peruvian community from the three analytical dimensions of the proposed methodology:

1. Textual Analysis: The home page design includes *graphic strategies*, because it has several input labels that address the interests and issues considered relevant («methodology», «projects», «volunteering», among others). The formal layout gives the website an air of solemnity. Nevertheless, the logo is a nut, which refers to the idea of building a stronger community. We also noted the predominance of the red color, which connects us metonymically to the Peruvian world through the shades of their national flag.

   The central theme is solidarity, which is present in cultural activities, housing and health projects, and the extension of civil and social rights. Other prominent themes refer to the unification of the community, the movement of Peruvian culture, and the sharing of experiences between Peruvian residents in Argentina and the new generation of migrants. Consequently, *Casa del Perú* is positioned as a pedagogical enunciator leading the group to the union within the host society; it sets up a relation based on the complicity between the sender and the recipient (potential readers-users), who share the same codes and generate solidarity ties.

2. Structural Analysis: In relation to the analytical characterization developed in the structural analysis, we observed that the *informational content (news)* of *Casa del Perú* keeps the focus on the activities proposed by the association and excludes general news from other websites (Table 1). Services for readers-users, considering the scarce use of technological tools and devices: the blog archives and an internal news search engine are the only tools available. The *areas of participation* for readers-users are too scanty and they only include «the reader's letter» («carta de lectores», in Spanish). Finally, the *audiovisual resources, multimedia and hyperlinks* include a Facebook account, links, and audio and video *on streaming*.

TABLE 1.
**Structure of websites Casa del Perú and Ecuatorianos en Argentina.
Personal development by Cecilia Melella**

		Casa del Perú	Ecuatorianos en Argentina
1. Informative content, services and leisure	Last news	Yes. Week activities	No
	Forecast	No	No
	Transportation	No	Yes
	Entertainment	Yes. Cultural	Yes. From the community
	Useful addresses	Yes	Yes. Emergencies, Airports, Hospitals, cell phone companies, Embassy
	Games	No	No
	Competitions	No	No
	Music	No	No
	Institutional Information	Yes, Mission, authorities	Yes
	Personalization	No	No

2. Services	Newspaper Library	No	No
	Files	Yes, from blog	Yes, from blog
	Personal folder	No	No
	Navigation bar	No	No
	News search engine	Yes	Yes
	Mobile content	No	No
	Advertisements	No	Yes. Ecuadorian restaurants
	On-line shop	No	No
	Employment classifieds	No	No
	Promotions	No	No
3. Participation	On-line interviews	No	No
	Chat	No	No
	Forum	No	No
	Reader letters	Yes, with comments	No
	Survey	No	No
	Debate	Yes	No
4. Sources	Links	Yes	Yes. Studies in Argentina, Immigration to Argentina, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Information of Argentina
	Web 2.0	Yes, Facebook	Yes, Facebook, Ecuadorian websites and «*Red de profesionales ecuatorianos en Argentina*»
	Graphics	No	No
	Audio On Demand	No	No
	Audio On Streaming	Yes	Yes
	Video On Demand	No	No
	Video On Streaming	Yes	Yes

3. Connectivity Analysis: Finally, using the open-source network analysis software *Gephi*, we were able to measure the network connectivity of Peruvian migrants in Argentina (Figure 1). Websites of associations such as *Casa del Perú*, *Asociación de Gastronomía Peruana* (AGAPERÚ, the Peruvian gastronomy association), *Asociación Mujeres Unidas, Migrantes y Refugiadas en Argentina* (AMUMRA, the association of united, migrant and refugee women in Argentina), and the website of the *National Consulate of Peru* are the ones that generate more connectivity by promoting hyperlinks. The graph shows the most significant activities of the Peruvian community in Argentina such as the gastronomy and the women´s domestic work as well as the centrality of the consular unit representing the national states.
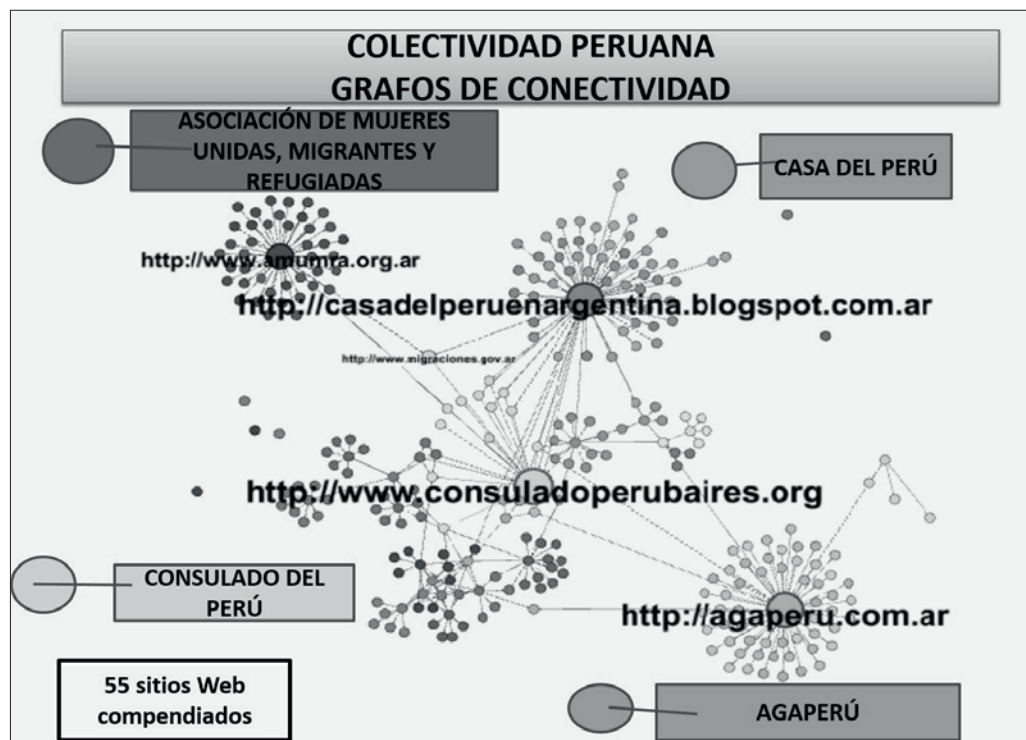
Fig. 1 Connectivity graph Casa del Perú. Personal development. Own creation by Cecilia Melella and Daniel Hereñu using Gephi

4.2 *The Ecuadorian case*

Ecuadorians in Argentina have few organizations besides the Embassy and the Consulate of Ecuador. *Ecuatorianos en Argentina*, which has become of essential importance for this group, is the website that stands out from the three that were analyzed in this study. The portal was created in 2009 by Fernanda Iglesias, a student of Design and Advertising at the Palermo University. *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* started as a Facebook group that provided information to Ecuadorian nationals arriving in Argentina for the first time. In 2015 took relevance another association: «Asociación de Ecuatorianos Residentes en Argentina».

As a consequence of its growing demand, the founders of *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* decided to upload all the information to the Internet. Thus, the creation of this website is the materialization of the networks built up by these young people who come to Argentina to study. As in the Peruvian case, the website is also the link that binds small groups of Ecuadorians living in other cities of Argentina, such as La Plata and Córdoba, connecting on line and off line spaces.

1. Textual Analysis: We resume the textual analysis under a semiotic perspective based on the characterization of features. *Graphic strategies* in the website include tags that allow multiple entries and enable information

search. In addition, there are tabs that correspond to the issues addressed by the association. For instance, main entries include «Vivir en Argentina» (living in Argentina), «Datos útiles» (useful data), «Lista de alojamientos» (accommodations), «Trámites» (migratory papers), «Contacto» (Contact). The colors of the Ecuadorian flag are present, as well as photographs of emblematic places of Buenos Aires, like the Planetarium and the cosmopolitan neighborhood of Puerto Madero, which place in the foreground the dimensions of *here* and *there*. The website includes limited advertising that refers directly to the community, such as the ethnic restaurants *Rincón Ecuatoriano* and *Ecuador 787*. *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* has no logo and focuses on sports and cultural information and services for immigrants. The website defines itself as: «Un espacio que concentra todo tipo de información que pueda aportar en tu estadía en Argentina. Toda la información ingresada son aportes desde la experiencia por Ecuatorianos para Ecuatorianos» («A space that concentrates all kind of useful information for your stay in Argentina. All the information is provided by Ecuadorians, who share their experiences with other Ecuadorians»).

The main topics are migration policies, solidarity, the use of cultural expressions as tactics for political, cultural and civil integration into the society of destination, and creating links to promote community encounters. The dissemination of the campaign to vote from Argentina in the Ecuadorian presidential elections in 2012 and 2013 is a clear example.

Finally, both *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* and *Casa del Perú* build an accomplice and pedagogical enunciator that communicates its own experiences and offers assistance to the newcomers.

2. Structural Analysis: *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* offers a variety of *information content* (news) to provide Ecuadorian migrants with guidance. Consequently, it does not offer leisure contents. Service tools are aimed at providing information and only a few elements include an *online participation area*. *Audiovisual resources, multimedia and hyperlinks* include links, the Web 2.0 and audio/video on streaming.

3. Connectivity Analysis: Even though Ecuadorian associations are «digital natives», their projects take place mainly in *off line* spaces, sharing activities like soccer games or networking events. The networking *Red de Profesionales Ecuatorianos en Argentina* (Network of Ecuadorian Professionals in Argentina) organizes public events, which allow professionals to make contact with peers who seek to set up a network. The networking, coordinated by Andrea Ramírez, also has an informative function for the community. Thus, the connectivity graph (Figure 2) shows that, as in the Peruvian example, the *Ecuatorianos en Argentina* and *Estudiar en Argentina* (Studying in Argentina) websites create bonds of connectivity by establishing more hyperlinks. In addition, the graph emphasizes the student profile and the characteristic dispersion of this recent migration in Argentina.
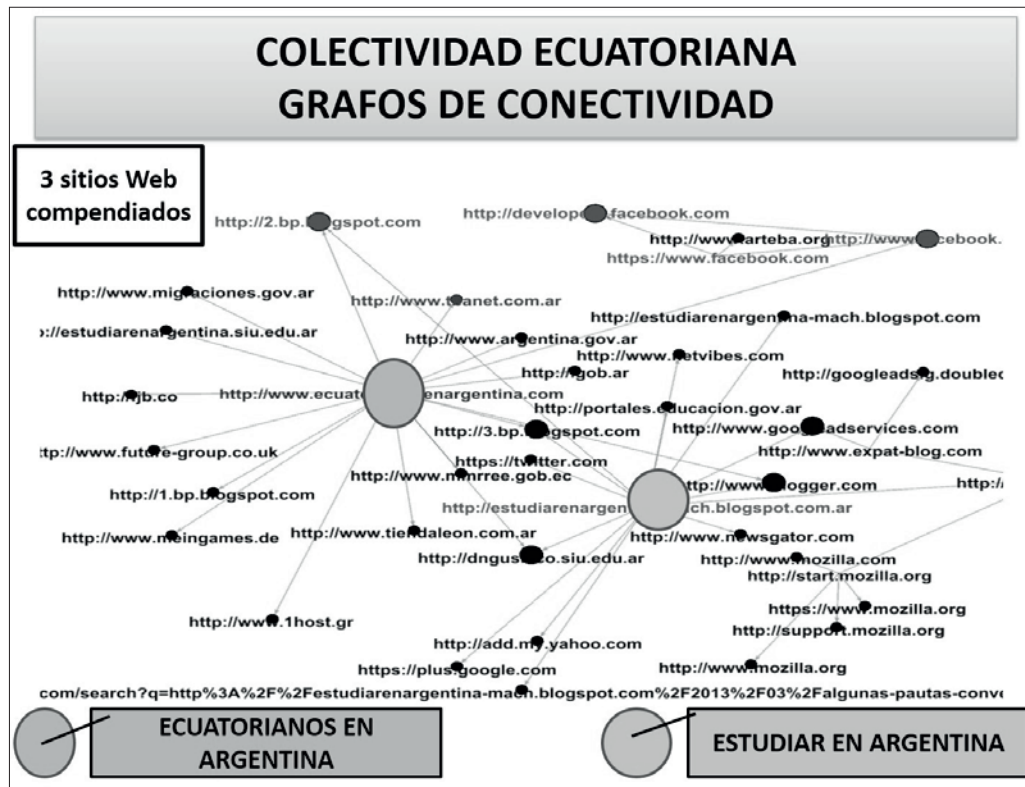
Fig. 2 Connectivity graph. Ecuatorianos en Argentina. Personal development. Own creation by Cecilia Melella and Daniel Hereñu using Gephi.

5 Final considerations

The websites studied reveal a switch in the concept of community from physical locations to the Internet. Taking into account the three analytical dimensions, we conclude that, from a semiotic approach, these websites show a prevalence of symbolic connections to the origins (references to national states through their flags). Nonetheless, the themes are related to the *here* (host country) and aim at providing information and services to newcomers, promoting solidarity and developing community ties. Accordingly, both websites establish a connection with the recipient on the basis of an accomplice and pedagogical contract. The pedagogical enunciator is explained by the distance between the enunciator and the receiver when the first provides information to the immigrant community. It also establishes ethical guidelines to continue focusing on the importance of resident institutions for the cohesion of the community at the country of destination. The mission is «to guide». However, it also works as an accomplice enunciator facilitated by the ICT and networks that created relationships of complicity between enunciator and receivers (potential readers-users) who share codes and generate bonds of solidarity.

We also observed that the purpose of providing information and services is based on the technological structure by favoring information over entertainment.

http://riviste.erickson.it/med

Similarly, the services provided (internal search engines and blog archives) share that same purpose. Participation is not a critical point, and the point-to-mass logic characteristic of traditional media like television or printed mass media is maintained. In this sense it says that the use of digital media by immigrants contributes to creating alternative discourses and promotes a virtual civic engagement that relates education, minorities and the right to communication in democracies.

Nonetheless, through the use of Gephi and Navicrawler, we demonstrated that communities which create nodes are more connected to other sites, i.e., they have more hyperlinks. Such is the case of *Casa del Perú* and *Ecuatorianos in Argentina*. These associations enjoy greater rooting power and have become network promoters. In this sense, «digital native» communities generate ties and «digital immigrants» consolidate the existing ones. The presence of these associations on the Web generates hyper-mediations and establishes a new techno-sociability in the migration process (particularly evident in the case of Ecuador). These migrant associations are set up as spaces of inter and intra-community articulation and contribute to the making and the operation of social networks of migrants.

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