

Interinstitutional Academic Cooperation: Reciprocity, Power, and Situated Dialogue among Scientific Communication Associations

Cooperación académica interinstitucional: reciprocidad, poder y diálogo contextualizado entre asociaciones de comunicación científica

Cooperação acadêmica interinstitucional: reciprocidade, poder e diálogo situado entre associações de comunicação científica

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Abstract: This article examines interinstitutional academic cooperation (IAC) among scientific associations, universities, research groups, and scholars in the field of communication. Although cooperation is a frequent practice through conferences, publications, networks, exchanges, and joint projects, it has not always been subjected to systematic critical reflection. The article argues that IAC should not be understood merely as an administrative or diplomatic activity, but as a communicative, epistemological, and political practice shaped by power asymmetries, material inequalities, linguistic hierarchies, geopolitical differences, and disputes over knowledge production. Drawing on Latin American communication studies, critiques of the coloniality of knowledge, epistemologies of the South, and debates on the geopolitics of science, the article proposes several guiding principles for more just and sustainable cooperation: non-instrumental reciprocity, situated horizontality, epistemological plurality, institutional memory, and care. It also discusses practical challenges such as moving from invitation-based models to co-design, recognizing the invisible hierarchy of language, addressing material and symbolic asymmetries, establishing shared responsibility and follow-up mechanisms, and creating flexible, multilevel, hybrid, and differentiated forms of collaboration. The central argument is that academic cooperation must create conditions for unequally situated actors to participate, decide, contribute, and benefit from shared intellectual work. In this sense, IAC can become a strategic practice for building more reciprocal, non-extractive, and regionally situated forms of knowledge circulation and recognition.

Keywords:

Interinstitutional academic cooperation; communication studies; epistemological plurality; geopolitics of knowledge; situated horizontality

Resumen: Este artículo examina la cooperación académica interinstitucional (CAI) entre asociaciones científicas, universidades, grupos de investigación y académicos en el campo de la comunicación. Aunque la cooperación constituye una práctica frecuente a través de congresos, publicaciones, redes, intercambios y proyectos conjuntos, no siempre ha sido objeto de una reflexión crítica sistemática. El artículo sostiene que la CAI no debe entenderse únicamente como una actividad administrativa o diplomática, sino como una práctica comunicativa, epistemológica y política atravesada por asimetrías de poder, desigualdades materiales, jerarquías lingüísticas, diferencias geopolíticas y disputas en torno a la producción de conocimiento. A partir de los estudios latinoamericanos de comunicación, las críticas a la colonialidad del saber, las epistemologías del Sur y los debates sobre la geopolítica de la ciencia, se proponen varios principios orientadores para una cooperación más justa y sostenible: reciprocidad no instrumental, horizontalidad situada, pluralidad epistemológica, memoria institucional y cuidado. Asimismo, se analizan desafíos prácticos como el tránsito de modelos basados en la invitación hacia esquemas de codiseño, el reconocimiento de las jerarquías invisibles del lenguaje, la atención a las asimetrías materiales y simbólicas, el establecimiento de mecanismos compartidos de responsabilidad y seguimiento, y la creación de formas de colaboración flexibles, multinivel, híbridas y diferenciadas. El argumento central es que la cooperación académica debe generar condiciones para que actores situados de manera desigual puedan participar, decidir, contribuir y beneficiarse del trabajo intelectual compartido. En este sentido, la CAI puede convertirse en una práctica estratégica para construir formas más recíprocas, no extractivas y regionalmente situadas de circulación y reconocimiento del conocimiento.

Palabras clave: cooperación académica interinstitucional; estudios de comunicación; pluralidad epistemológica; geopolítica del conocimiento; horizontalidad situada.

Resumo: Este artigo examina a cooperação acadêmica interinstitucional (CAI) entre associações científicas, universidades, grupos de pesquisa e pesquisadores no campo da comunicação. Embora a cooperação seja uma prática frequente por meio de congressos, publicações, redes, intercâmbios e projetos conjuntos, nem sempre foi objeto de reflexão crítica sistemática. O artigo argumenta que a CAI não deve ser compreendida apenas como uma atividade administrativa ou diplomática, mas como uma prática comunicativa, epistemológica e política atravessada por assimetrias de poder, desigualdades materiais, hierarquias linguísticas, diferenças geopolíticas e disputas em torno da produção do conhecimento. Com base nos estudos latino-americanos de comunicação, nas críticas à colonialidade do saber, nas epistemologias do Sul e nos debates sobre a geopolítica da ciência, o texto propõe diversos princípios orientadores para uma cooperação mais justa e sustentável: reciprocidade não instrumental, horizontalidade situada, pluralidade epistemológica, memória institucional e cuidado. Também são discutidos desafios práticos, como a transição de modelos baseados em convites para processos de codesenho, o reconhecimento das hierarquias invisíveis da linguagem, o enfrentamento das assimetrias materiais e simbólicas, o estabelecimento de mecanismos compartilhados de responsabilidade e acompanhamento, e a criação de formas de colaboração flexíveis, multiníveis, híbridas e diferenciadas. O argumento central é que a cooperação acadêmica deve criar condições para que atores situados de maneira desigual possam participar, decidir, contribuir e beneficiar-se do trabalho intelectual compartilhado. Nesse sentido, a CAI pode tornar-se uma prática estratégica para a construção de formas mais recíprocas, não extrativistas e regionalmente situadas de circulação e reconhecimento do conhecimento.

Palavras-chave:

Cooperação acadêmica interinstitucional; estudos de comunicação; pluralidade epistemológica; geopolítica do conhecimento; horizontalidade situada

1. Introduction

Interinstitutional academic cooperation (IAC) has been a frequent practice in the field of communication, although it has not always been the object of systematic analytical reflection. There are numerous experiences involving exchanges, conferences, networks, publications, and forms of support among associations, universities, and research groups. However, less attention

has been paid to the principles, conditions, and tensions that make a fairer, more reciprocal, and more sustainable form of cooperation possible.

We understand IAC as a space of intellectual collaboration among higher education institutions, scientific associations, research centers, academic networks, and individual scholars. Its purpose is not limited to the exchange of information or the organization of joint activities; it also includes the circulation, translation, appropriation, and shared production of knowledge at regional and international scales. In the field of communication, such cooperation involves processes of representation, intercultural dialogue, the circulation of knowledge, and the construction of common agendas. In this sense, it may be linked to mechanisms of academic cooperation and inter-university networks aimed at articulating institutions, teachers, researchers, and regional organizations in order to expand the social and academic impact of knowledge (Gamarra Z., 2021; Red de Cooperación Interuniversitaria..., 2020).

Drawing on the call for papers, this article takes up three of its guiding questions: What principles should guide activities of dialogue and cooperation? How can relationships be built on dialogue, respect, and reciprocity rather than on imposition or hegemony? And how can cooperation take place while taking into account cultural, economic, and geopolitical differences? The article's hypothesis is that IAC applied to the field of communication must also consider power asymmetries, material inequalities, geopolitical differences, and epistemological disputes. Rather than asking only how to cooperate more, it is necessary to ask how to cooperate better: under what conditions, according to what rules, through which forms of recognition, and by means of what mechanisms in order to avoid extractive or subordinate relationships.

2. Principles for Situated Academic Cooperation

Cooperation among associations, universities, research groups, and scholars cannot be reduced to agreements, panels, or joint publications. To cooperate means to bring into relation institutions, trajectories, languages, intellectual traditions, resources, and unequal positions within the international scientific system. For this reason, cooperation requires a relational ethics, a politics of recognition, and an institutional methodology capable of making visible the asymmetries that traverse academic exchange.

From this perspective, cooperation should be defined not only as an administrative or diplomatic practice, but above all as a communicative, epistemological, and political one. It

involves diverse processes such as translation, representation, and the construction of trust; it is also epistemological, insofar as cooperation brings into contact and dialogue different ways of producing knowledge. Moreover, it distributes, at different levels, forms of visibility, authority, and resources. For these reasons, this section proposes five guiding principles for the type of cooperation defended here: non-instrumental reciprocity, situated horizontality, epistemological plurality, and the value of institutional memory.

2.1 Non-Instrumental Reciprocity

This type of reciprocity does not imply the total absence of interests, nor does it seek to offer a naïve view of cooperation. On the contrary, it recognizes that every relationship seeks certain benefits and is not exempt from interests: publishing, training, expanding networks, gaining access to resources, increasing visibility, or influencing agendas. The problem arises when such interests are unclear or defined unilaterally. In asymmetrical relationships, reciprocity requires being attentive to these differences and making them explicit, so that they are not intensified during institutional interaction.

In the so-called “Global South,” this issue becomes particularly relevant. Countries from this region are often treated as empirical cases or sites of study, but they may not always be regarded as equals or as interlocutors, much less as producers and generators of theory, information, or science. Knowledge produced in these contexts is frequently used or consumed by the “center” or by hegemonic sites of information, production without granting those contexts equivalent epistemic recognition.

In response to this, non-instrumental cooperation requires clarity regarding objectives and expectations. Throughout the process, it is valid to negotiate the benefits that each participant seeks to obtain, to distribute responsibilities openly, and to recognize contributions in a balanced manner. The aim is not to pretend that equality exists where inequalities persist, but rather to prevent asymmetry from generating tension, discomfort, or forms of subordination.

This principle can be examined through critiques of the colonality of knowledge and through the epistemologies of the South, insofar as they question the division between centers that produce knowledge and peripheries that supply information or experience, as has been widely studied and disseminated in the works of Quijano (2000) and Sousa Santos (2014), among others.

2.2 Situated Horizontality

By this form of “horizontality,” we understand a type of academic cooperation that does not assume an abstract equality among participants, but instead begins from the explicit recognition of their institutional, material, linguistic, geopolitical, and epistemological differences. Horizontality, in this sense, is not a point of departure but a practice to be constructed through shared objectives, transparent distribution of resources, balanced recognition of authorship, rotation of spokesperson roles, care for languages, and mechanisms of follow-up.

This perspective strongly resonates with a Latin American tradition of critical and participatory communication. Freire (1972) questioned vertical relations of knowledge, while Beltrán (2007) formulated horizontal communication as a relationship based on access, dialogue, and participation. Thus, situated horizontality seeks to prevent asymmetries from being translated into subordination, the imposition of agendas, or inequality in the capacity to make decisions. This perspective entails the challenge of considering issues such as funding, mobility, the management of academic languages, and the use of digital infrastructure, as well as teaching loads, job stability, and each participant’s capacity to influence international agendas.

Situated cooperation does not conceal asymmetries under the language of dialogue, diplomacy, or superficial respect. It therefore demands shared objectives, transparent distribution of resources, balanced recognition of authorship, rotation of spokesperson roles, care for languages, and mechanisms of follow-up.

Latin America has a communication tradition that has understood dialogue not merely as verbal exchange, but as a situated social relationship traversed by inequalities, cultural mediations, disputes over meaning, and historical conditions of enunciation. From this perspective, to engage in dialogue is not only to speak, but also to recognize from where that act is performed, what resources participants possess, what sensibilities they mobilize, and what real capacity they have to influence the definition of common problems.

Latin American communication studies contributes here a critical sensitivity toward linear, diffusionist, or vertical models of communication by insisting on mediations, participation, active reception, popular cultures, and the situated production of meaning. Within this framework, situated horizontality allows us to conceive IAC not as the application of external models of cooperation, nor as the neutral circulation of knowledge, but as the shared

construction of interlocution, categories, agendas, and forms of recognition among institutionally unequal actors.

2.3 Epistemological Plurality

Epistemological plurality involves recognizing that academic knowledge is not produced from a single center, language, theoretical tradition, or methodological model. In communication studies, this means accepting different legitimate ways of constructing problems, formulating questions, interpreting data, and relating research to society. There are, in fact, successful experiences that point in this direction, such as the exercise carried out by F. Paulino *et al.* (eds.) (2020). The issue is not merely to include Latin American, African, feminist, or decolonial authors as bibliographic complements, but to acknowledge that these traditions can modify the central categories of the debate. For this reason, the example cited above may be understood as the kind of exercise that can contribute to the discussion of this plurality.

This principle questions the idea that some theories are universal while others are merely local or testimonial. Epistemological plurality is not equivalent to relativism or to the absence of criteria; rather, it implies broadening the criteria of validation and recognizing that all knowledge production is historically and socially situated.

Connell's (2007) proposal regarding "Southern theory" is relevant here because it shows how the social sciences have tended to universalize theories produced in metropolitan contexts. Its contribution does not consist solely in demanding greater inclusion of peripheral authors, but in questioning the very architecture of social knowledge: who defines the problems, from which historical experiences categories are formulated, and which intellectual trajectories are recognized as theory. For academic cooperation, this perspective allows us to think of Latin America not as a mere space of application or empirical contrast, but as a site of conceptual production capable of challenging, correcting, and expanding dominant frameworks.

Within the idea of "plurality," it seems important to consider a kind of "philosophy of dialogue" with an intercultural component, in a sense similar to what Sousa Santos (1998) proposes in another field. This can serve as a matrix for moments when different regions bring together their points of reference and commonplaces, establishing a pragmatic dialogue concerning what each region can genuinely contribute to the others.

2.4 The Value of Institutional Memory

This dimension allows us to understand that relations of cooperation do not begin from zero. Almost no relationship “begins from zero,” since institutions and groups are traversed by previous histories, forms of recognition, disagreements, alliances, exclusions, hierarchies, and accumulated learning. In academic associations, memory does not merely preserve documents, conferences, declarations, or publications; it also organizes shared meanings about what a scientific community has been, what it has defended, and what it has left unresolved. History recovers traditions and sensibilities, while helping to reassess processes and efforts carried out by specific actors or bodies at particular moments in the history of each organization, institute, or research centre.

Although emphasizing the importance of recovering memory may seem like a commonplace, without memory cooperation can become improvised or repetitive. With memory, however, institutional bonds can draw on previous experiences, generate renewed reflexivity regarding conditions of success or failure, recognize symbolic debts, and build continuity. Remembering does not mean merely celebrating; it also implies identifying asymmetries, silences, and conflicts. In this sense, institutional memory is also related to epistemic injustice, since cooperation without memory may forget contributions, invisibilize trajectories, and naturalize hierarchies (Fricker, 2007).

3. Challenges in Building Reciprocal Relationships

Another fundamental question regarding IAC is how to build relationships based on dialogue, respect, and reciprocity rather than on imposition or hegemony. Cooperation is not, in itself, a horizontal practice, even when there is a genuine will for it to be so. It may expand networks and produce shared knowledge, but it may also reproduce coloniality, symbolic dependence, linguistic hierarchies, material inequalities, or subordinating forms of representation.

For this reason, it is not enough to declare a willingness to cooperate. It is also necessary to examine how agendas are defined, how resources are distributed, how events are organized, how calls for participation are written, how authorship is assigned, how working languages are chosen, and how results are presented. Cooperation must be analyzed as a communicative and institutional practice in which meanings, positions, and authority are negotiated.

Within this complex task, we select several aspects that form part of the kind of dialogue and challenge implied by the “horizon” of reciprocal relationships. This horizon is always desirable, even if it is never fully achieved; nevertheless, its aspiration and desire help us move forward, in a sense similar to Galeano’s (1989) description of utopias. Ultimately, learning to build reciprocal relationships contains something utopian.

3.1 From the Invitation Model to the Co-Design Model

This transition challenges the very logic of cooperation. In the “invitation” model, an institution, association, or group with greater organizational capacity may be the one that defines the topic, objectives, schedule, language, and criteria for participation; only afterward does it invite other actors. Although this dynamic may appear open, it preserves a vertical structure: some design, while others participate.

The perspective of “co-design” assumes that actors intervene from the beginning in the construction of the agenda. It is not simply a matter of being invited to “something” — a roundtable, a book, a panel, or a project — but of participating in the definition of questions, approaches, methodologies, forms of circulation, and expected benefits. For this model to function, it requires shared diagnosis, identification of interests, rules of authorship, distribution of responsibilities, and mechanisms of follow-up. It does not eliminate conflicts or differences in power, but it transforms cooperation from a relationship of adhesion into a relationship of co-responsibility.

3.2 The Invisible Hierarchy of Language

English has become an almost unquestioned lingua franca. It undoubtedly facilitates international circulation, the organization of conferences, and joint publication. The problem arises when it ceases to function as a practical instrument and becomes a criterion of authority, prestige, or belonging. Lillis and Curry (2010) have shown that academic writing in English is not merely a technical matter of translation, but a practice shaped by systems of evaluation, support networks, editorial mediators, institutional inequalities, and gatekeeping in international publishing.

Respectful cooperation can promote multilingual panels, abstracts in several languages, partial translations, simultaneous interpretation whenever possible, shared glossaries, and

bilingual or trilingual publications. It must also accept different levels of linguistic proficiency without penalizing accents, rhetorical styles, or non-native forms of writing. The aim is not to eliminate English, but to prevent it from operating as an exclusionary filter or as the sole measure of excellence.

3.3 Recognizing Material and Symbolic Asymmetries

Recognizing asymmetries means accepting that cooperation does not take place under equivalent conditions. Not all researchers have the same resources to travel, publish, pay membership fees, attend conferences, access libraries, or sustain international networks. Addressing these differences does not mean reducing cooperation to a situation in which those with financial resources passively fund those who lack them; such a logic may lead to paternalism, which is also undesirable. Material conditions matter, but they must be articulated with organizational, symbolic, epistemological, and political dimensions.

In practice, recognizing asymmetries may involve differentiated fees, grants or scholarships, translation funds, open access, hybrid modalities, flexible calendars, realistic distribution of tasks, technical support, shared repositories, and the reduction of bureaucratic barriers. Contributions may also be different and complementary: an institution with resources may provide infrastructure, while a regional association may contribute intellectual legitimacy, local networks, historical memory, and situated knowledge. Fair cooperation does not artificially equalize all contributions; rather, it prevents material inequality from becoming inequality in voice, authority, and benefit.

3.4 Shared Responsibility and Follow-Up Mechanisms

Reciprocity cannot remain an abstract value. It must be translated into procedures that make it possible to assess whether cooperation distributes benefits, responsibilities, and recognition. Rather than speaking of “accountability” in a bureaucratic sense, it is more appropriate to refer to shared responsibility, institutional transparency, and follow-up mechanisms. The purpose is not to monitor participants, but to make visible the real conditions of the relationship and also to reflect on what this means, or how it contributes to the development of the participants and the organizations involved.

These mechanisms may begin with basic questions: Who decided the agenda? Who coordinated the process? Who obtained funding? Who carried out the invisible work? Who signed the publications? In what language did the results circulate? Who had access to the final products? What benefits did each party receive, and who was left out? In practice, they may take the form of prior written agreements, meeting minutes, clear authorship criteria, explicit distribution of tasks, brief reports, and collective evaluation. The International Science Council (2023) emphasizes that the governance of knowledge dissemination processes must be accountable to the scientific community; this principle may be extended to any form of cooperation that produces knowledge, visibility, or recognition.

4. Possible Cooperation: Scales, Resources, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge

Taking into account differences in academic and social cultures, as well as economic and geopolitical difficulties, requires us to think of cooperation as a realistic form of institutional design. It is not enough to formulate normative principles if these are not translated into organizational forms capable of sustaining relationships in unequal contexts. Cooperation takes place amid limited budgets, divergent calendars, different evaluation systems, unequal mobility, digital divides, migration regimes, political crises, and international hierarchies of publication.

This section proposes several practical conditions that point toward the same idea: cooperation does not consist merely in producing joint events or documents, but in creating the conditions for unequally situated actors to participate, make decisions, contribute, and benefit from the relationship.

4.1 Flexible and Multilevel Cooperation

Flexible and multilevel cooperation begins from a simple premise: not every collaboration needs to take the form of a large international conference, a solemn agreement, or a high-cost transnational project. In contexts marked by economic inequalities, mobility restrictions, calendar differences, linguistic gaps, and heterogeneous working conditions, cooperation requires variable scales and different degrees of formalization.

Alongside conferences, publications, or agreements between associations, it is possible to promote virtual seminars, reading groups, interinstitutional mentoring, shared classes, methodological workshops, common repositories, editorial laboratories, or small-scale

comparative projects. These practices are not minor substitutes for formal cooperation, but spaces in which trust, continuity, and organizational capacities are built. This logic is close to the notion of knowledge production in “Mode 2,” proposed by Gibbons et al. (1994), in which knowledge is generated in contexts of application, with diverse actors and flexible organizational forms.

4.2 Hybrid Modalities

Hybrid modalities became consolidated after the pandemic as a fundamental tool for expanding academic cooperation. By combining face-to-face participation, remote participation, the digital circulation of materials, and continuity between meetings, they reduce barriers to access: travel costs, migration procedures, accommodation, commuting time, work restrictions, family responsibilities, and funding inequalities. In the case of ALAIC, we may recall the experience of the 2020 continental meeting and the challenges it posed for the Colombian hosts, who had to translate what was originally conceived as an in-person conference into the association’s first fully virtual congress. However, the experience of broadening participation and incorporating more voices produced lasting results, and it continues to shape a different understanding of the relationship between the in-person and the virtual.

It is important to recognize that a hybrid modality is not simply the online transmission of an in-person event, as the ALAIC 2020 congress itself made clear. When organized in an improvised manner, remote participation may become relegated: with less visibility, limited interaction, technical failures, lack of translation, or an inability to intervene in debates. Hybrid cooperation requires specific design: moderators attentive to online participants, equivalent speaking times, stable platforms, prior access to materials, available recordings, question channels, rapporteurship, and subsequent follow-up.

4.3 Differentiated Funding and Equity of Access

Differentiated funding begins from a basic observation: academic cooperation does not take place under equivalent economic conditions. Registration fees, travel, accommodation, translation, publication, and connectivity carry different weights depending on country, currency, salary, type of contract, institutional location, and availability of internal support. Applying the

same economic requirements to everyone produces formal equality, but not real equality of access.

This criterion should not be understood as charity, but as a mechanism of equity: tiered fees, grants, mobility funds, translation support, waivers for editorial charges, open access without author fees, or the reduction of administrative barriers. It also includes non-monetary forms of support: shared use of platforms, digital libraries, editorial advice, methodological accompaniment, or technical collaboration. Latin American experiences in open access and non-commercial scientific communication show that the region has developed cooperative infrastructures to expand the circulation of knowledge, such as SciELO, Redalyc, and other editorial networks (Alperin et al., 2014).

4.4 Calendars and Local Conditions

Recognition of calendars and local conditions directly affects the viability of cooperation. Associations often plan activities as if all actors shared the same institutional rhythms, even though academic calendars, vacation periods, evaluation dates, budget closures, hiring cycles, and teaching loads vary across countries and institutions. This lack of attention produces silent exclusions: researchers who cannot travel because their university releases funds too late, colleagues at the end of the semester, students without timely scholarships, or teams that miss editorial deadlines due to precarious labor conditions.

Recognizing these conditions does not mean lowering academic standards. It means designing realistic timelines, anticipating needs, diversifying forms of participation, and distinguishing between individual non-compliance and structural obstacles. It also implies an ethics of rhythm: not every project should advance at the pace of the institution with the greatest administrative capacity. Temporality is not a logistical detail; it is part of the social infrastructure of collaboration.

4.5 The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Dispute over Agendas

Cooperation must recognize that scientific relations are traversed by a geopolitics of knowledge. Universities, journals, indexes, rankings, funding agencies, migration policies, and academic languages do not occupy equivalent positions in the international system. Altbach (2004) warns that university globalization did not eliminate inequalities between academic

centers and peripheries; in many cases, it reorganized them through new forms of competition, institutional dependence, and concentration of prestige.

The international circulation of certain university models also does not occur under neutral conditions. Marginson (2016) shows how Californian model of higher education achieved global influence, but also entered into crisis due to political, financial, and social transformations. This reference reminds us that institutional models circulating globally are not universal formulas: they condense specific historical conditions and may lose relevance if transferred without attention to the inequalities of each academic system.

The geopolitics of knowledge appears with particular clarity in evaluation systems based on metrics, university rankings, and indexed journals. The Leiden Manifesto proposed principles to guide the responsible use of metrics (Hicks et al., 2015), while DORA (2012) questioned the use of the impact factor as a substitute measure for the quality of articles, researchers, or institutions. Both documents remind us that indicators organize incentives, hierarchies, and forms of recognition.

For Latin America, Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto (2014) warn that the contemporary regime of scientific competition, based on globalized criteria of excellence, affects regions unequally when their publication systems, academic languages, research priorities, and institutional conditions do not always coincide with dominant circuits. Their argument allows us to distinguish between excellence as adaptation to international metrics and quality as the scientific, social, and regional relevance of the knowledge produced. The UNESCO Science Report 2021 places this discussion within a broader panorama of scientific governance and unequal national capacities (Schneegans et al., 2021). In this sense, cooperation does not simply mean internationalizing activities, but transforming — even if only partially — the conditions of circulation, validation, and recognition of knowledge.

5. Final Reflections

It is important to think about IAC from within communication itself: as a way of planning, carrying out, experiencing, and evaluating cooperation. The first challenge is to move beyond an administrative or diplomatic conception of cooperation toward a reflection on power, recognition, mediation, and the shared production of knowledge. Even for interinstitutional

relations, the well-known saying seems to apply: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

Cooperation is not merely a matter of “organizing things” — conferences, books, or agreements. It must be understood as a communicative, strategic, and intercultural practice that does not happen “automatically,” even when there is good will. It requires sensitivity and the application of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies: negotiating agendas, understanding the sociocultural meaning of language use, managing hierarchies, and dealing with asymmetries. Misunderstanding or confusion is not the exception but the rule in social relations, especially in intercultural environments. Rather than viewing cooperation, agreement, or reciprocity as something “natural,” it is important to recognize their strategic component. If cooperation is left only to good will or to empirical improvisation, the result will most likely not be fully satisfactory. In this sense, initiatives such as this journal’s call contribute, if not to professionalizing, then at least to strengthening a strategic line of work within academic communication organizations.

As principles and “horizons of work,” the form of IAC proposed here is grounded in non-instrumental reciprocity, situated horizontality, epistemological plurality, institutional memory, and care. Rather than a closed model, these criteria should be understood as tools for distinguishing between collaborations that produce shared capacities and those that may become relationships that reproduce dependence. One of the most visible dimensions of cooperation is operational: procedures, time management, agendas, and resources. However, it is also necessary to consider intercultural competencies, including linguistic justice, recognition of asymmetries, and the management of shared responsibility.

One of the most controversial concepts is that of “non-extractive academic cooperation,” which does not propose eliminating interests or denying inequalities. All cooperation seeks benefits and takes place among unequally situated actors. Its contribution lies in asking how those interests can be made explicit, how benefits can be distributed, and how inequality can be prevented from becoming subordination. In the case of scientific associations in communication, this approach allows us to imagine more sustainable relationships among institutions, regions, and intellectual traditions.

Ultimately, cooperation may be a means for each organization to achieve what it seeks beyond itself. This is especially important in the field of academic communication, when

cooperation is based on dialogue, critique, self-reflection and, why not say it — even if it may sound like a distant or remote argument — the possibility of building a more fraternal world, less unjust and less intolerant, through the exercise of education, science, and communication.

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