Digital Rights: an Approximation to Discursive Practices on the Internet from Virtual Ethnography

Derechos digitales: una aproximación a las prácticas discursivas en internet desde la etnografía virtual

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to provide an approach based on a study case for the understanding of online practices related to digital rights. It is an exploratory research done with ethnographic techniques of online observation that proposes an analysis on the conception of digital rights in the Mexican context. In this sense, the main objective of the study is to know, classify and understand the discursive practices in the digital environment about digital rights, so it is possible to know the interests, the actors, the speeches and the contexts related to this subject.

Keywords
Digital rights; Online practices; Virtual ethnography

RESUMEN

El siguiente trabajo es una aproximación a un caso de estudio que busca comprender y dar seguimiento a prácticas discursivas online relacionadas con los derechos digitales. Se trata de un estudio exploratorio realizado con técnicas etnográficas de observación en línea, el cual propone un análisis sobre la concepción de los derechos digitales en el contexto mexicano. En este sentido, el propósito de la investigación es conocer, clasificar y entender las prácticas discursivas en el entorno digital sobre los derechos digitales para conocer los intereses, los actores, los discursos y los contextos que se abordan en relación a esta temática.

Palabras clave
Derechos digitales; prácticas online; etnografía digital

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Introduction

In today's scenario, part of the social, work, cultural, political and economic life develops through technologies, hence, a significant part of the network potential is shaped by the interactions of the users and the way they exercise their rights mediated by digital means. This paper[1] is an approximation to digital rights by taking as research a case study to understand and follow up on online practices with ethnographic observation techniques to generate an interpretive analysis on the presence of the topic on the Internet.

The first section of the text briefly explains the transit that human rights and their generational classification have followed in order to understand the relation between the rights of the fourth generation and digital rights, as well as the definition we revisit for this study. The second section explains the relevance of the methodology and the construction of the methodological path based on the decisions adopted for the collection, classification and interpretation of the data obtained.

The third section presents the results and identifies the main practices found in ethnography. In parallel, it offers an interpretation to the users' most relevant discourses on digital rights and sets them up in dialogue with the context and the relevant debates for their comprehension. Lastly, a reflexive exercise is conducted to understand how online practices are shaped in regard to digital rights.

From the rights of the fourth generation to digital rights

In light of new scenarios in the society of the 21st century, where information and communication technologies (ICTs) are part of the everyday life and of the socio-cultural transformations, the human rights of the fourth generation emerge as a proposal to re-think the practices of the rights of the first, second and third generation within the new digital environments (González, 2008).

Along these lines, Bustamante (2001) designates the expansion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in the setting of cyberspace as the "fourth generation of human rights", that provides new meanings and shapes to the rights from the Internet, mainly those related to communication and information.

This generation of rights associated with the Internet has changed the way people, civil society and the governments communicate, since "every citizen becomes an issuer and a recipient at a time, and interactivity and participation are revealed as basic rules of the game" (Bustamante, 2001, p. 7). In this context, the author cautions that the Internet provides coverage of cheap, horizontal and global environment

communication, which can be translated as a democratic mean that allows freedom of speech and the rest of liberties associated and applied to all the extension of personal and collective activities carried out on the network and which entail digital rights.

When speaking about digital rights, we understand the double function these rights have; on the one hand, there is the function that is in charge of protecting and promoting human rights in online environments through an approximation from civil, political, social and cultural rights (Derechos, 2016); and, on the other hand, it seeks to guarantee the freedom of speech and the users' privacy as well as alternatives to protect copyrights, the access to knowledge and the generation of unrestricted communications such as surveillance, Internet censorship, content blockage and laws that silence dissension (Bertoni, 2012). Hence, while the Internet can be used as an organization and communication space, it is also a space that highlights inequalities and that can be threatened by espionage, censorship and discrimination.

This paper aims at exploring in digital settings the ways to produce expressions, construct narratives and modify the language to understand the users' practices, by seeking through a virtual exploratory ethnography to know the practices related to the ways of producing, distributing and circulating symbolic assets on digital rights available on the network.

Virtual ethnography: data collection methodology technique

This exploratory exercise used qualitative and ethnographic methodology. More specifically, virtual ethnography was used as field work technique to study online practices on digital rights. The data presented in this paper are part of an ongoing research; hence, this work is a provisional preview of a research conducted in Mexico between May 2016 and March 2017.

Virtual ethnography is a method that seeks to recover the perspective of the stakeholders based on their everyday digital communication practices (Flores, 2017). However, the approach in this paper is a research on online practices more than the identities of who carry them out; the main interest is to identify the discursive lines that are generated on the topic of digital rights.

Pink and Postil (2012) claim that this methodology generates descriptions and a greater understanding of the use of digital technologies as well of the content located in the context of everyday places, practices, relations and cultural practices routine.

The proposal is to address the online context exclusively and, thus, the discursive practices obtained are considered recognizable entities in a specific time and

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space that allow, through observation, identifying the degree of regularity, repetition and key ideas on the topic.

Since ethnography is a method without any precise application formula (Gómez Cruz and Ardévol, 2013; Hine, 2008, 2015), the construction of the design presented used a follow up system of the online activity through digital platforms, as well as a series of web pages on digital rights. The criteria to select study were as follows:

The initial approach was proposed through a *hashtag[2]* #derechosdigitales follow up and the words *derechos digitales* (digital rights) on three social networks: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We decided to use these three networks since they are open and public entry platforms, i.e., any user may access them without being invited by another user (as is the case with WhatsApp or Telegram groups); they were also chosen since they are social networks with the highest number of users[3] in Mexico, and because they allow the use of *hashtags* and the association of words to make direct search of information.

We use the *hashtag* feature as a way of categorizing contents that explicitly talk of digital rights in addition to being a native form in online space to seek contents (Tsur and Rappoport, 2012) and the ways users take in sharing, quoting and expressing content as well as similar or related ideas with said search.

We chose to use contents referring to Mexico, produced by Mexicans – in those cases where it was possible to recognize it – as well as content alluding to the country, its context or inhabitants. Text, hypertext, multimedia and image contents were exclusively taken into account; we discarded video format or GIF content formats,[4] since these involve another level of content analysis.

Therefore, "#derechosdigitales" (#digitalrights) and "derechos digitales" were placed in the search engine of each chosen network and the posts were collected to be classified later on according to the rest of the criteria. Based on the observation units obtained, we identified the hyperlinks or tags within the users' social networks which led us to include in this sample three web pages dedicated to the diffusion of digital rights prevailing in Mexico.

The analysis of the web pages allowed us to know the representational version of the stakeholders as part of the practices social space. These in turn, are extensive references that allow us to understand the institutional part from which digital rights discourses are addressed. Choosing this study aims at connecting theoretical conceptualizations and empirical data to extend mediation processes based on the interpretative analysis of the relations between uses, meanings and technological routines.

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Results: practices and discourses on digital rights on the Internet

By means of the aforementioned methodology and after classifying the posts according to the criteria, a total of 173 posts were collected from social networks that explicitly contained the words *#derechosdigitales* as topics. In Facebook, 30 were identified, 69 in Twitter and 74 in Instagram.

The main resources used annexed to the use of *hashtag* are the text, hyperlink and image as routes to render explicit the practice and the discourse which are of interest in this paper. According to every network, a main resource is highlighted; e.g., to "retweet" on Twitter, "share" on Facebook or to "upload" photos on Instagram. Most of the posts aim at providing information (through hyperlinks mainly) on some specific topic that refers to digital rights.

The following transcript[5] is an example of one of the posts collected, where the link is attached to the report titled *Freedom on the Net 2016*:[6]

> Freedom and rights on the Internet are not yet won; therefore, it is important to continue defending them and, in some cases, even fighting for them. According to a Freedom House report, freedom on the Internet decreased in 2016 (Network advocating for digital rights, November 15th, 2016).

In some other cases, materials generated from organizations or associations working in benefit of digital rights are shared in order to diffuse them, as is the case of the following transcript that shares a privacy manual which was translated into Spanish:

> There are some people that think that monitoring and censuring contents is the best way to protect us from network risks. On the other hand, at Derechos Digitales[7] (Digital Rights), we believe that education and accompaniment are the best strategies for our siblings, cousins, daughters, nephews, friends to make of the Internet a personal, free, interesting and fun space. To do so, we happily share this privacy manual for children translated by our friends of Son Tus Datos (These Are your Data). Share it and study it with the Little ones, because the Internet we are fighting for today is the one they inhabit and will inhabit:) <3 (ONG Derechos Digitales, March 2nd, 2017)

Lastly, other posts publicize events, workshops or face-to face forums on the subject. Here are some examples of Twitter transcripts:

> ¿Cuáles son los retos para #OSC y colectivos en la defensa de #DerechosDigitales? Conversatorio este 14/10 #IGF2016 http://bit.ly/preIGFdf (Social TIC, 13 de octubre de 2016).

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> (What are the challenges for #OSC and collectives advocating for #DigitalRights? Conversatory 14/10 #IGF2016 http://bit.ly/preIGFdf (Social ICT October 13th, 2016))

> ¿Estás en el #IGF2016?[8] Acompáñanos en el #Nucleo para hablar de #DerechosDigitales porque #InternetesNuestra (Colectivo Luchadoras, 7 de diciembre de 2016).

> (You are at #IGF2016?[8] Join us at #Nucleus to speak about #DigitalRights because #InternetisOurs [Fighters Collective, December 7th, 2016])

It is worth noting that most of the posts are created and disseminated through agencies dedicated to this task, i.e., that take advantage of virtual scenarios to extend their diffusion and propaganda tasks. It is possible to identify those that post on their personal behalf since they are stakeholders that, in the virtual scenario, have a double function: the first, as users that request and demand from institutions and the State neutrality and protection conditions that make up a critical apparatus to confront neoliberal discourses on technological development; and the second, that take advantage of the Internet as a space for social learning and knowledge distribution.

In this sense, these users' posts refer to a type of product on digital rights, they send invitations to attend an event on digital rights or share contents generated by institutions or groups which make up the profile catalogue they have on their networks. From the analysis of web pages, we focus on the Defense of Digital Rights Network (R3D)[9], a Mexican organization dedicated to the defense of human rights in digital environments that houses its information in a site and that recognizes within its objectives, the promotion of digital rights in Mexico. More specifically, the freedom of speech, privacy, access to knowledge and free culture were taken into account.

We analyzed the Latin American Digital Rights web page,[10] a non-governmental organization whose initiative originated in Chile and it has a direct incidence in Mexico. The main areas of advocacy of human rights are: privacy and personal data, freedom of speech, copyrights and access to knowledge.

Lastly, the Dominemos las TIC MX web page[11] (Mastering ICTs Mexico web page), was included. This web page represents a collective campaign with incidence in several countries which is part of the Association for Progressive Communications Women's Rights Program (WRP) that advocates digital rights but particularly women's rights. This program was developed with a gender perspective and promotes non-violence toward women in digital environments to prevent blackmailing, cyberbullying and the dissemination of hate discourses.

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Online discursive practices on digital rights

The emergence and acknowledgement of digital rights is generated mainly as an opposition to the regulatory scenarios that seek to control the ideals of democratization and openness with which users conceive the Internet.

The founding idea of a free and unrestricted Internet began to clash with a reality that became hostile and threatening: a growing commercialization of cyberspace, the perception of a monopolization of the access codes of the same, the unequal development of the infrastructure of access to information and communication technologies, as well as relentless battles of governments and supranational agencies to legislate and regulate the Network (Warkentin, 2003, p. 77).

Different organizations throughout the world are working from different positions to defend digital rights, although a considerable importance is given to the legal aspect; the rights disrupt social, cultural, political and economic aspects and they are also addressed from these angles.

Digital rights can be understood, developed and discussed in multiple, complex, diverse and contextual ways both locally and globally at the same time. Oftentimes, they respond to specific socio-historical moments that emerge within a specific geographical space but extend without barriers through virtual space.

Warkentin (2003) acknowledges that there is an unfinished and ever-changing debate on digital rights. The principles with greater acknowledgement are those related to: 1) the right of freedom of speech, 2) the right to online privacy, 3) the right of everybody to access the Internet and 4) the right to associate in communities. In this sense, digital rights as extensions of human rights protect the Internet users, emphasizing the freedom of speech and privacy, but at the same time, acknowledging other rights that are proper to the Internet environments such as the right to anonymity or universal access (Warkentin, 2003).

As noted, the mixture of complex rights and their exercise pose a profound and robust debate on democratic principles and fundamental rights from digital settings. This discussion does not start or end with the Internet; a first approach of what is being said about the topic can help us understand where priorities from the virtual aim at.

Privacy as digital rights priority topic

Users, while browsing the Internet, interact with different digital services and exchange data of different nature. The control over the origin and destination of those data refers to

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the Internet privacy. Currently, to understand stakeholders we cannot only think of the users and the technical aspects of the Internet but it is necessary to take into account the States and the private enterprises as stakeholders that have, beside their presence, a regulatory incidence and control over the network.

Some of the basic principles most quoted regarding digital rights refer to data privacy, network anonymity and surveillance that specific stakeholders exercise over users. Hence, "from this standpoint, the Internet is a private sphere that has public consequences" (Martínez and Flores, 2016, p. 24). This stands out in the empirical exercise where we observe that web sites address the topic of privacy as a priority.

On the R3D web page for example, privacy is highlighted as one of its permanent projects as it is one of the important lines. The site addresses more explicitly the topic of data collection and use, as well as legal topics on the Telecommunication Act and its collaboration guidelines on security and justice. In this regard, the special section presents an introductory text which is being transcribed as follows:

> R3D began its labor during the discussion of the National Criminal Procedure Code (CNPP, [Spanish acronym]), at the end of 2013. The CNPP had provisions on the intervention of private communications, geo-location and the collection and access to retained data (metadata) in several of its articles, such as Articles 293 and 305. However, it did not have any safeguards to inhibit such measures: transparency, independent oversight and notification to the affected party. These provisions were transferred to a draft of the Federal Law of Telecommunication and Radio Broadcasting at the beginning of 2014 (Network advocating digital rights, November 20th, 2016).

In this case, the role played by the network as social stakeholder advocating for data privacy of those using the Internet is obvious. In this regard, we observe four hyperlinks within this section. The first, named QDTD,[12] redirects to a microsite that includes the results of a study that evaluated the main telecommunication enterprises in Mexico.

The second reports the legal lawsuits and incidences that the network has had on the initiative of the Federal Telecommunication and Radio Broadcasting Act, sent in 2014 to the Senate. The third hyperlink provides detailed information on the protection imposed by the network before the collaboration guidelines of the Telecom Act. Lastly, the so-called Hacking Team Mexico link presents a news report on the purchase of spyware.

Although the topics we have described are concrete and have an incidence on the country's legal framework; in terms of telecommunications, the web page operates

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as an information centralizing entity that allows users to access more extensive reports or links that provide depth to key elements to understand Internet privacy.

Figure 1. R3D Instagram Post on Data Protection
Source: Instagram.

In addition to the content on its web, R3D is constantly present on social networks, posting on this and other topics on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (Figure 1). We also detected that different users shared their contents as benchmarks to speak about privacy (Figure 2).

First, a discourse that wants to highlight that data (or metadata) can be anonymous and public at the same time it is conspicuous. The discussion between the public and the private takes on more significance and outlines different reflections on that which is presented consciously but also whatever is done to answer a different need, e.g., when sites ask for an authorization to purchase something or access a certain type of content.

Figure 2. Post on Twitter with R3D link
Source: Twitter.

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Lessig (2004) points out that identity and authentication on the Internet are different issues. While data anonymity is foreseen in the network design, the content that users share can be treated differently regarding private enterprises and other power instances such as public agencies and other government entities:

> The relative ease with which online information transfers can be monitored has prompted the development of databases with users' profiles that are being sold unrestrictedly to some online marketing agencies as well as to individuals or agencies, including fraudsters, responsible for most of the spam we receive. These profiles usually indicate the sites most frequently visited, the time spent on them, place of connection, e-mail; and thus, making it possible to infer tastes and preferences that can be commercially exploited (Pérez, 2016, p. 35).

Another debate highlighted in the posts questions the data obtained from e-mail, location applications, searches and visits to some site of a user's particular interest, reveals information that goes beyond content and which is disseminated for commercial purposes at the very least, or espionage and censorship that irrupt the freedom of speech and the privacy in more violent scenarios. Along these lines, the "condition of anonymity allows generating bonds of trust between the stakeholders involved. This is especially important in violent scenarios in which identifying oneself represents a risk and where anonymity allows providing safety to the participants" (Martínez and Flores, 2016, p. 24).

Posts regarding privacy seek that the information be used as an emancipating vehicle or a way to solve how to maintain the privacy of data; hence, these are posts that explain the functioning and importance of privacy; they caution against the use of certain applications or seek to inform the users through recommendations or diffusing actions on how to protect their data in different applications and types of browsers (figure 3):

Figure 3. Infographics Post on Identity Protection
Source: Signa Lab's Facebook account.

The surveillance of users through their uses or their contents calls into question the people's right to protect themselves, as well as their right to maintain control over their data (Figure 4). This form of control that legitimizes the idea of digital security,

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from the users' standpoint, inhibits the freedom of speech and the posts on this topic, hence, pointing out this aspect in an accusatory manner.

Figure 4. Post of Data Surveillance
Source: Instagram.

Discourses on the Trans-Pacific Partnership

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (knows as TPP) is a trade agreement of investments and new economic rules based on market policies involving twelve countries of the Pacific Basin: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, United States, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam (Brown, 2017).

Brown, an economic analyst (2017), in his report *TPP Impacts and Implications in Mexico* claims that:

> For Mexico, the TPP would imply the permanence and expansion of its participation in global value chains in exchange of accepting provisions and policies that would harm most of its population in terms of access to health, food safety, Internet freedom, environment, labor rights and conditions for small and medium enterprises (p. 5).

Contextually, Mexican senators generated a debate over the treaty in September 2016, which was ratified at the end of 2016; hence, it is no accident that this treaty and its implications appear within the posts as one of the most recurrent discourses on social networks.

The main concerns identified in the posts refer to the protection of copyrights and intellectual properties since TPP prioritizes copyright and maintains control over

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different types of content that are currently part of the public domain, and the main action is denunciation and a call to action.

The following quote of a Facebook post highlights the above: "The TPP Agreement poses a risk for our freedoms and rights on the Internet. Join us on November 8th to say out loud and clear to the Mexican government and to the world: TPP will not go through!" (Network advocating digital rights, November 1st, 2016).

Brown (2017) mentions that the TPP Article 14.11 prohibits States from establishing measures that limit the trans-border stream of personal data which means that, under this prohibition, it is impossible to establish a legislation that protects personal data and, conversely, facilitates the access to mass surveillance programs among the signatory States.

Posts on social networks emphasize the dissemination of information and materials on the impact that the ratification of this treaty represents for privacy and copyrights, as seen in Figure 5, where the rejection of the TPP is evident from the civil front.

Figure 5. Graphic Post on TPP
Source: Instagram.

To this day, the state of the TPP is uncertain as of Donald Trump's election as President of the United States and his intention to exit the block. For Mexico, the internal ratification process is still in effect and it is remarkable that content on this issue is still being produced on networks and web pages as shown in Figure 6.

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Figure 6. Graphic Post on TPP
Source: www.derechosdigitales.org.

The other discourse: violence toward women on the internet

The United Nations declaration on the elimination of violence against women (UN, 2013) claims that any gender-based act of violence resulting or that may result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or sufferance, whether in public or private life, is violence. The main forms of violence against women on the Internet are related to the full exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Although violence is not necessarily gender-based and "threats are threats; violations of privacy are violations of privacy; harassment and stalking are harassment and stalking […], if we wish to understand what motivates and allows this violence in particular, gender is an essential lens to do so" (Vela and Smith, 2016, p. 61); in this case in the virtual environments and practices.

The discourse on violence is present in posts on digital rights. The main explicit objective suggests actions that render this problem visible. An example is the result of the observation we made of the Dominemos las TIC MX[13] web page which is defined as a group of digital activists that have established a permanent campaign to provide information and tools that can be used against gender violence on the Internet and, mainly, through the use of digital social networks. Within this web, we notice that three visible forms of violence are highlighted in the start menu: cyber bullying, blackmailing and hate discourse; in turn, these are associated with the actions that exert violence on the rights and present strategies to fight against these issues.

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Cyber bullying against women seeks to intimidate them in leaving online spaces through tactics such as harassment, humiliation, isolation, fear or even through adopting the identity of another person. Likewise, cyber bullying acknowledges the existence of an intrusive surveillance that uses spyware by activating a GPS or other mechanisms to control women. Within the web page, we find information of rights related to this type of violence, e.g., the right to freedom of speech, privacy, to be free from defamation and live a life free of violence. We notice that every section offers specific strategies to prevent cyber bullying.

Online blackmailing is defined as "the offence of making threats to reveal defamatory or harmful information about a person to the public, their family or colleagues unless this person buys the blackmailer's silence" (Mastering technology, January 12th, 2017); thus violating the right to privacy through the use of intimate photos that are published maliciously and without authorization to ask for money in exchange of deleting them. This fact is the product of the conception that certain societies have of women's sexuality and which can affect this person's social, family and labor life (Vela y Smith, 2016). In this regard, the web page offers general information and makes reference to related rights and proposes strategies.

Hate discourse attacks the right of freedom of speech, it seeks to silence or avoid any kind of expression practices on the Internet. These attacks are aimed mainly at journalists, bloggers or activists present on the net; however, it is not exclusive to public figures. In Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts, violence was not identified as an isolated topic but rather as part of the infringement of digital rights.

The most highlighted posts are those that share resources that advise users to implement violence prevention strategies as well as computer resources to increase their privacy. Several posts aim at promoting events (forums, talks, workshops, etc.), in which feminist women participate to establish dialogue, protection relations and networking with other women.

.**Figure 7**. Post on cyber bullying debate
Source: R3D's Instagram account.

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Other posts highlight support tools to construct protection strategies or emphasize the work done by different groups on the Internet to eradicate digital violence, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Post of mastering technology to make their work known
Source: https://twitter.com/DominemoslasTIC.

Lastly, as in the other discourses, we note that links and materials that give access to specific information are shared. Figure 9 shows the case of a foundation that promotes "Mastering Technology" as a direct link to the web page.

Figure 9. Campaign Promotion
Source: Mujer Derechos y TIC's Facebook account.

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Conclusions on digital practices and discourses on digital rights on the Internet

Hamelink (2003) proposes certain basic principles for Internet users: freedom of speech, privacy protection, inclusion, diversity and participation. Digital rights are necessary in today's context to understand the way actions carried out on the Internet affect the users in different ways and attack principles and fundamental freedoms. The results of this virtual ethnographic approach reflect certain premises of the treatment of the topic of digital rights in virtual environments.

First, it is necessary to understand the origin and destination of data on the net which do not have technical implications only, but also can be involved in processes that disrupt the private as well as the public, and entail rights that protect the user. Pérez (2016) cautions that: "the Internet users' privacy constitutes a fundamental variable in such processes, given the risks they imply of possible computer attacks that can cause property damages and the representation of the subjects in virtual spaces" (p. 33).

The diversity of the conceptualization of digital rights becomes more complex with the emerging new platforms and their use policies, but also given the public policies applied in different contexts. The TPP section explicitly refers to the existence of international agreements that allow the trans-border use of data and the transfer of local legislations to a second plan, by alienating the subject from making decisions in a controlled and direct manner.

Along these lines, discourses that interfere with freedom through violent trends such as cyber bullying, blackmailing and hate discourse are highlighted. Regarding what we have encountered in our universe, the tendency is to provide information to recognize these discourses and encourage actions or resources that render them visible and propose strategic solutions to prevent these types of actions to continue. These discourses include dissident and oppositional voices that reinforce the idea of making digital rights visible as a need to contribute to the understanding of the importance and impact digital rights have on users and their common actions.

It is possible to establish a relation between users with digital competences and the society of knowledge, since, as mentioned previously, digital rights refer to fundamental rights which are constrained in digital environments and, being a topic with legal principles, they highlight the transversality of social, cultural, economic and politic issues. Hence, the approach points to an efficient, effective proposal that adheres to human rights but also takes into account the spaces where practices that attack these rights are produced and reproduced.

Likewise, even though the objective is not to make a distinction between users that are excluded/marginalized from artifacts and technological logics against those that are integrated to these structures, this ethnography cast as a result that those that generate

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online practices on digital rights are mainly non-governmental organizations that indicate concern or even have a certain incidence (and posture) on the topic.

This allows us to infer an unuttered but clearly evident discourse on the role of the disseminators of digital rights, who serve as agents that have on the one hand a level of knowledge that denotes a sector of privileged users and, on the other hand, a particular interest in that other users be informed. In this sense, it is important to understand that through digital practices we can question and contribute not only to a proactive dynamic but the agency can contribute to human development in such a way that it makes it possible to propose new modalities of relevant understanding between technology and development.

Tufte and Enghel (2009) claim that social change requires a critical approach regarding the agency, not only in accessing or using media but also facing new inequalities and forms of exclusion of social disconnections. This exploration serves as a basis to identify, in discourse and practice, elements from which the logics of action are shaped based on the perspective of ITCs for development, pointing out how digital rights and their dissemination are part of the imaginaries about the development generated around these agency social forms.

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[1] This text is part of the contextualization of the doctoral thesis which is currently being developed under the title: *Knowledge and Free Culture for Development: stakeholders, discourses and practices.* The main objective is to understand the meaning that social stakeholders of practice communities give to human development in promoting knowledge and free culture. These practices include among others, those that provide the defense and dissemination of digital rights.

[2] The *hashtag* is a chain of characters preceded by the character *hash* (#). In many cases En *hashtags* can be considered as topical markers, as an indication or as a main idea expressed.

[3] The Mexican Internet Association in the *Study on the habits of the users of the Internet in Mexico 2016* informs that of the total of Internet users in Mexico, 92% have a Facebook profile, 55 % use Twitter and 39 % use Instagram.

[4] In Spanish it is "graphic exchange format" used on the web as bits map to present images or animations.

[5] In the way of referring to quotes, we have chosen to keep the text as it appeared on social networks without any modification.

[6] It is a report from the Freedom House Organization that measures the impact of the censorship tools on digital platforms in different countries. Freedom House develops different programs to attend human and political rights with headquarters in the United States.

[7] The words *derechos digitales* (digital rights) refer to the Latin American Digital Rights Organization.

[8] The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is a yearly event that gathers different stakeholders at world government level, private sector, civil society, technical and academic community, to establish dialogues on issues related to the Internet. In 2016, the forum was held in Jalisco (from December 6th to 9th).

[9] [Web page] n.d. Retrieved from https://r3d.mx/

[10] [Web page] n.d. Retrieved from https://www.derechosdigitales.org

[11] [Web page] n.d. Retrieved from https://www.takebackthetech.net/es/node/5763

[12] Question acronym: "Who defends your data?"

[13] [Web page] n.d. Retrieved from https://www.takebackthetech.net/e

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