**Letter to Editor & Reviewers**

**The Ibero-Americanization of Communication Studies**

**Through Scholarly and Linguistic Expansion**

Dear Prof. Gross,

Dear anonymous reviewers,

Please find enclosed below the detailed responses to the valuable feedback provided by three anonymous reviewers. Overall, we would like to thank you and the reviewers for the helpful comments on the manuscript. We have revised the paper thoroughly in light of these comments. The bulk of the changes are focused on 1) a better discussion on how our study contributes to higher levels of de-Westernization (including paradigm changes and higher education). We also added a new subchapter dedicated to this aspect that was addressed by both reviewers; 2) a clearer description of our measurements 3) better discussing the scope of the research and its limitations 4) a more consistent terminology. Because these changes are substantial and they need considerable space, we had to considerably trim the historical parts to keep word limits. As our paper is not longitudinal but cross sectional, we are sure that the shortened historical parts and a better discussion on our immediate focus – current de-Westernization process in communication studies – made the paper more robust and clear.

This letter follows a comment/response structure that makes it easy to see how we revised the paper. Text in italics refers directly to the revised parts in the new version of the manuscript. We look forward to hearing from you and would like to express our appreciation to you and the anonymous reviewers for your guidance and helpful suggestions.

Sincerely,

The authors

**Editor:**

**COMMENT:**   
We have reached a decision regarding your submission to the International Journal of Communication, "18485-als| The Ibero-Americanization of Communication Studies Through Scholarly and Linguistic Expansion."

Our decision is to invite you to revise in light of the reviews, and resubmit. Please note that the necessary revisions are not minor.

**RESPONSE:**

Dear editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to present a revised paper. We were delighted to see that the reviewers see potential in the paper, and in the revised version, we addressed their queries. Considering these changes, we believe that the paper is much clearer and sounder. Please find our point-by-point responses below.

**Reviewer #A:**

Dear colleague,

Thank you so much for your help with the paper, and we are delighted to hear that you see merits in the article. In the new version, we have conducted revisions to address your comments. Please find our point to point responses below.

**COMMENT:**  
The article makes an important contribute to de-Westernizing communication studies by comparing scholarly output from Ibero-America with other non Ibero-American regions. Indeed, few studies have investigated to Ibero-America and other non-Western regions using a triangulated approach (editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends) to document contemporary shifts in the contribution to communication scholarship and perhaps show a path towards de-Westernizing communication scholarship.

I recommend a few revisions that will strengthen this important article for publication in IJOC

RESPONSE:

Dear colleague, thank you for the positive feedback! Please find our revisions and responses below.

COMMENT:

There are ongoing debates advancing the de-Westernization of communication studies , including scholarship unpacking the hashtag #CommunicationSoWhite. Taking up this body of work is needed to update the literature reviewed and better position the valuable contribution of the article:

a. The author has this in the reference list, but the reference is not taken

up in the article: Chakravartty, Paula, Kuo, Rachel, Grubbs, Victoria, &

McIlwain, Charlton. (2018). #CommunicationSoWhite." Journal of Communication

68 (2): 254-266. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqy003

b. Here is another reference from Canada: Hirji, Faiza, Jiwani, Yasmin, &

McAllister, Kirsten Emiko. (2020). On the margins of the margins:

#CommunicationSoWhite—Canadian style. Communication, Culture & Critique,

13(2), 168-184. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcaa019

c. The same authors take up #CommunicationSoWhite within Canada again here:

F. Hirji, Y. Jiwani, K. McAllister, & C. Russill. Putting Race at the

Forefront of Communication Studies. ©2021 Canadian Journal of Communication

46(3), 689–710. doi:10.22230/cjc.2021v46n3a4173 /

https://cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/4173/4679

d. I also recommend looking at this article, referenced by the one above in

point b.: Alhassan, Amin. (2007). The canonic economy of communication and

culture: The centrality of the postcolonial margins. Canadian Journal of

Communication, 32(1). Retrieved from

<https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2007v32n1a1803>

RESPONSE:

Thank you for suggesting these important titles. We were familiar with the #CommunicationSoWhite discourse and formerly we thought that gender inequality and racial underrepresentation are distinct narratives and addressing them might distract our focus. However, we agree that these are, on a higher level, related issues and we have to mention this discourse. Consequently, we included the following paragraph in the theoretical frame (pp. 4-5)

*“The topicality of the de-Westernization narrative has been recently affirmed by an intersectional discourse with a focus on a lack of racial and gender diversity in communication studies (Chakravartty et al, 2018). Scholars found that even in societies like Canada that is thought to be more inclusive than most countries, racial diversity is relatively low (Hirji et al., 2020). Thus, while our study is limited to the analysis of geographical diversity in communication studies, our results can contribute to a narrower discussion regarding the diversity and inclusiveness of the discipline.”*

COMMENT:

The author should define “diversity” early on (like on page 2 where it first comes up) and also clarify the reason diversity is defined this way. It seems diversity is defined by affiliation to a university, but why is this choice made? What does it mean for a non-Arab (for example) to have an affiliation to a university based in the Arab region? Or what about a US university that has a satellite campus in Ibero-Amercia – does this still count as a non-Western affiliation ? Or an author from Ibero-Amercia, working at a US university and researching communication in the Ibero-American region – how are they categorized? Or what about authors that have two affiliations, which one is counted? This should be addressed in the methods.

RESPONSE:

We defined how the literature defines academic diversity in general, and we also clarified that we work with a limited concept (p 2)

*“Although diversity in academic knowledge production may be related to multiple and complex traits, such as race, gender, class, language, institutional affiliation, or geographical location (Chakravartty et al, 2018), in this study it is understood as the relative level of endogamy or exogamy in networks established at three levels: editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends. Accordingly, editorial boards, authorships and citation patterns are more diverse if scholars from many different geographic background participate in them. While this is a limited understanding of diversity, this approach in not unique in communication studies (Demeter, 2019; Lauf, 2005).”*

We also disclose your subsequent queries in the methodology section, thank you for the suggestion (p 12)

*“Following previous methodologies (Lauf, 2005), editorial board members were categorized by the geography of their current affiliation, without considering the origin or the nationality of scholars. In accordance with Scopus, content and citations were categorized by the current affiliation (in the case of multiple affiliations: the first affiliation) of the first author and by the affiliation of the citing author. The categorization scheme of Scopus and, consequently, of our current research follows a geographical logic so, for example, those satellite American universities that are affiliated beyond the US are categorized by the host country. The reason behind considering current affiliation– and not nationality or the geography of the field where scholars do their research – is that this is the sole public data by which not just researchers but also readers can develop their perceptions on geographical diversity.”*

In short, our focus is the diversity that can be seen, that can be measured. On journal editorial board lists, one can see only the affiliations (but not the nationality or the origin of researchers). In many cases, they even refer to the country of the affiliation. The similar holds to journal papers where only the affiliation is presented. Regarding multiple affiliations: it is unlikely to present multiple affiliations for editorial board members; however, this can be the case with authorship. In this cases, we followed former research and worked with the first affiliation.

COMMENT:

I also recommend enumerating how many countries make-up Ibero-America, how many of these contribute to the body of scholarship examined (the article assumes all are). The article seems to move from history to this study of Ibero-American communication scholarship and does not explain the rise of the term Ibero-America to categorize a sub-field in communication studies. Saying it is a category of Scopus is not enough.

REPONSE:

We have taken up this suggestion and explained better which Ibero-American countries contributing to our study (pp 11-12)

*“In accordance with the categorization of Elsevier’s Scopus, we use the category “Ibero-America” to include all the Latin-American countries, extended to include Spain and Portugal. This region shares several cultural, historical, social, institutional, geographical and linguistic bonds (Cifuentes-Madrid, Couture, & Llins-Audet, 2015) despite local contrasts. Accordingly, Elsevier’s Scopus use this category to distinguish the specific body of knowledge published in the region. In communication research, the following countries are listed as Iberoamerican countries in Scimago/Scopus (2020): Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.”*

COMMENT:

I am not sure the author needs to reference “diamond open access publishing” or if open access publishing would suffice. If diamond is needed than this detail should be explained for any reader, or novice, who doesn’t know if DOA is different from OA.

RESPONSE:

We agree and we have changed the terminology accordingly, thank you.

COMMENT:

How does Table 2 compare with the majority of communication journals on Scopus – data needs to be presented in context.

RESPONSE:

We agree; as we have to stick to Scopus/Scimago data, we present the total number of journals and the open access ratio per Scimago region in the revised version. In this context, it is even clearer that the Iberoamerican region offers the highest share of OA journals (p 9).

*Table 2. Open access ratio of communication journals indexed in Scimago by region (2020).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **N of journals** | **Open access (%)** | **Non open access (%)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| *Africa* | 4 | 25 | 75 |
| *Asia* | 15 | 40 | 60 |
| *EU 28* | 284 | 22 | 78 |
| *Middle East* | 4 | 50 | 50 |
| *Northern America* | 174 | 5 | 95 |
|  |  |  |  |
| *Iberoamerica* | 46 | 87 | 13 |

COMMENT:

On the methods, the author picked 35 from each set of journals collected, this means an equal number despite the very different total numbers of journals from each category (hundreds to tens). Can this be explained? Also, why random only, was this to not select the top journals in

each category? How would the data look differently if the method of selection was top ten in each category, plus ten randomly selected in each? The method of selection either should be revised or better justified given the differences between data sets.

RESPONSE:

Thanks for this suggestion. In several categories we have a limited number of journals only, so we had to restrict the pool of analyzed journals in the case of Western journals in order to run the statistics on sets of the same size. We also decided to control for journal prestige as expressed by SJR values thus we aimed to compare journals with similar SJR. For this end, it is impossible to pick top journals as, amongst Western journals, we have dozens of journals with very high SJR numbers, while in other world regions, even the top journals have low SJR values (as contrasted with their Western counterparts). Thus, we decided that the statistics will be the most solid if we compare journals with similar SJR.

COMMENT:

There should be a way to name the categories without reproducing Eurocentrism. The category of “Central” to refer to the West does this (makes the West central or the center ) and given the focus of the article on investigating the de-centering of the West, this should be avoided.

RESPONSE:

We agree and thus we changed the terminology accordingly, many thanks for the suggestion!

COMMENT:

Some of the journals in the tables are included twice, like Arab Media and Society is in both Central and Regional. The tables need to be fixed.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for the observation, indeed, some journal names were duplicated; we checked the data again and made it sure that the correct name and data is presented in each case. Now journal names and corresponding data are in their right places, thank you again for spotting this.

COMMENT:

I am surprised that peer review does not come up at all with regard to the decision to publish or not. This study’s three tier focus includes the editorial board, but no mention is made of the peer review process that editorial board’s facilitate and deliberate based on. Peer reviewers are

not public as the process is “blind,” but how would this research agenda be different if the diversity among peer reviewers would or could be accounted for and included?

RESPONSE:

We agree, but unfortunately there is no public database on reviewers. Some journals – but not all – publish the list of peer reviewers in every years; however, as it is neither mandatory nor usual, researchers with a focus on peer reviewers should restrict their analysis to a limited set of journals. Of course in this case the research can not be representative, it is possible to analyze some journals only. However, in line with your comment, we can assume (by experience) that editorial board members should be committed to write a given number of reviews in each year thus their gatekeeper role – through their participation in the peer review process – should be mentioned, as we did in the revised version. Thank you for the important suggestion! (p 16)

*“International visibility can be acquired by publication output and citation measures (Freelon, 2013; Lillis et al., 2010; Walter, Cody & Ball-Rokeach, 2018), and through their participation in the review process as reviewers and their influence on the final decision on submitted manuscripts (Dhanani & Jones, 2017), editorial board members are gatekeepers of publication success (Lauf, 2005; Demeter, 2019; Youk & Park, 2019). Accordingle, we assumed that Ibero-America would perform well in all three of these segments.”*

COMMENT:

Is the Scopus’ bias to areas of study, as mentioned by the author, within communication studies towards those areas that are more popular in the West? The author mentions a focus on communication for development, among others, in the Ibero-America region – are journals focusing on areas of study popular in the the Ibero-America region ranked on Scopus or excluded. For example, one area I publish in is media literacy or media education and there is only one Q1 journal this field (and that one is from Ibero-America).

RESPONSE:

This is an important question indeed, but we afraid it could be investigated only by association as Scopus does not have any formal criteria on the topics of the journals. However, we can assume that papers in more popular journals (with more popular topics) will be better cited thus the rank of the journal, measured in SJR, will be higher. But the same hold for language as well, so English papers might be cited better than other than English languages, providing higher SJR numbers to English journals. But linguistic hubs – such as the Iberoamerican – can help this problem through higher citations to the papers published in their journals (actually, as this paper testifies, this is what happens). A similar procedure could help in the case of non-mainstream journals. But since thematic focus (neither methodologies, content, perspective etc) are not formal features that Scopus considers in the indexing process, we omitted these features in this current, more quantitative study.

**Reviewer #B:**

Dear colleague,

Thank you so much for your work with the paper, and we are delighted to hear that you see some merits in the article. However, we also agree that there were several points in the first version that we had to revise in order to present a more compelling paper. In the new version, we have conducted significant revisions to address your comments. Please find our point to point responses below.

COMMENT:

I have read the paper with a great deal of interest. Unfortunately, I am not convinced that the paper makes significant contributions, and believe that it needs substantive revisions. The main problem is that the data do not show what supposedly the paper sets out to prove, namely “the Ibero-Americanization of Communication Studies.” First, it is not clear what this concept means – the growing presence of IB communication studies? Where? Global expansion? Influence as measured by citation and other indicators? Instead, the paper show the growing consolidation of an academic publishing space of dozens of journals in Spanish and Portuguese that provide outlets for scholars (mostly based in the Latin American, Portugal and Spain). Yet this alone doesn’t mean that there’s something like “IB’zation” if we understand global presence and influence.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for this important comment that let us add an argumentation that clarifies how the international presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals contribute to de-Westernization on a higher level of the global field of publishing, higher education and research (HEI). We argue that 1) global scientific boards and especially the most important university rankings are based on Scopus (or WoS) data. As the internationalization of HEI is more and more prevalent and many (if not most) countries, HEI policies support or even make it mandatory to publish in Scopus-indexed journals. Through raising the number and share of Iberoamerican journals in Scopus, a real de-Westernization takes place because scholars that are disadvantaged in publishing in Western based Scopus journals now have better chances to publish in Iberoamerican Scopus journals and thus not just their visibility as individual scholars, but also the visibility of their institutions can be higher.

We added this line of argument early in the Introduction (p 3)

*Our findings also imply that, due to the growing presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals, the institutions of those scholars that tend to publish in Iberoamerican journals now have better chances to publish in Scopus. As the number of Scopus indexed papers is an important factor in university rankings (Érdi, 2019), the contribution of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals might contribute to the de-Westernization of higher education as well, and it can help to raise the global visibility of Iberoamerican higher education institutions and research (HEI) in the long run.*

COMMENT:

Second, the literature review and the hypotheses are not well connected. The review touches on important issues about global inequalities in academic production and the need for further de-Westernization. However, the hypotheses aim to measure specific aspects of IB journals. Just the existence of IB journals doesn’t mean de-westernization, if the later implies a more comprehensive shift in the ontology and analytical perspectives in communication studies. One can imagine that IB journals may exist almost in parallel to English-language journals, with few linkages. So, it’s not clear if IB journals, together, help to de-westernize perspectives and subjects of study.

RESPONSE:

We agree, thus, we conducted the following revisions. 1) we clarified that our understanding of de-Westernization is limited to the features we measured in this paper 2) we added an argumentation on how the growing presence of Iberoamerican journals and citations in them contribute to de-Westernization of not just the publishing field but also to the de-Westernization of higher education and research fund. First, in the Introduction (3)

*“Our findings also imply that, due to the growing presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals, the institutions of those scholars that tend to publish in Iberoamerican journals now have better chances to publish in Scopus. As the number of Scopus indexed papers is an important factor in university rankings (Érdi, 2019), the contribution of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals might contribute to the de-Westernization of higher education as well, and it can help to raise the global visibility of Iberoamerican higher education institutions and research (HEI).”*

Also, we included a new subchapter that addresses the limitations of our focus but it also refers to the interconnectedness of measurable quantitative features and other, mor qualitative aspects of knowledge production (pp 5-6).

*“Different Aspects and Implications of de-Westernization*

*De-Westernization is a complex process with several features of global knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), including not just the growing presence of non-Western academic journals, institutions and authors, but also a geographically more balanced presence of ontologies, perspectives, methodologies and research subjects (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). However, these different levels of knowledge production and global visibility are tightly interwoven, and each aspect has an influence on others. Researchers found empirical evidence on the national diversity of journal authors and editorial board members (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), and the interconnectedness of authorship and citations are obvious (Gelman & Gibelman, 1999). Research also found that by guiding the type of research (topics, methodologies, perspectives) that can be published, editorial board members set the standards of scholarly publishing in a subject field (Pan & Zhang, 2013). Finally, university rankings and international funding bodies work with scientific databases when assessing the performance of both individual scholars and academic institutions (Érdi, 2019). For example, two from the most popular international university rankings, the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE) and the QS Topuniversities Ranking calculate scholarly performance from Scopus data (Stack, 2021). As a consequence, the national diversity of editorial boards, journal authorship, research topics, approaches and the international visibility of both individual researchers and institutions are interrelated and, in theory, significant changes in one aspect can contribute to changes in other related features of academic knowledge production. Thus, while the focus of our paper is limited to a quantitative analysis of journal editorial boards, authorship and citation networks, we argue that it is reasonable to assume that a quantitatively measurable de-Westernization of the field might have implications to other aspects such as the visibility of non-Western approaches and perspectives, and the visibility of non-Western institutions in the long run.”*

COMMENT:

Some statements need to be reworded or explained more in depth. For example, the author affirms, “The paper argues that the process of trailblazing the pathways to de-Westernizing communication scholarship is best accomplished when it is actively led by peripheral regions.” However, this is not demonstrated. Do we need to do a comparison to be able to assess the strengths of different tactics to “de-westernize”? I suggest you define the multiple dimensions of de-westernization and provide the evidence that, indeed, the IB journals examined here do that, how, etc .

RESPONSE:

The revisions for the previous comment address the queries of this comment as well. We better clarified the limited focus of our paper as we do not touch all aspects of de-Westernization. In addition to the revisions discussed under the previous comments, we also added a further paragraph in the revised version that discusses why we think that de-Westernization as a complex process can be measured through the metrics we used, and we also argued that this trajectory of de-Westernization is initiated by the periphery; specifically, we demonstrate that Scopus-indexation is a key for internationalization (in terms of both scholarly visibility and higher education internationalization), but Scopus-indexation is not automatic: it should be initiated by the journals themselves, and they have to meet several criteria (pp 19-20)

*“The implications might go beyond the publishing field as journals, editorial boards and citation networks are parts of the narrower HEI system. As funding bodies and global university rankings work with Scopus data (Stack, 2021), the increased presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals and publications from scholars with Iberoamerican affiliations will have a considerable effect on the representation of Iberoamerican HEI on a global scale. As universities are primary agents of knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), and the ranking position of universities influence education choices of international students (Érdi, 2019), we assume that the greater presence of other than Western universities also helps to de-Westernize scholarship. It is important to note that, through international databases as Scopus or the Web of Science, and global University rankings such as THE, QS or the ARWU, world regions and individual countries participate in a common world-system of knowledge production. Being indexed in Scopus is not automatic: it should be initiated by the journals, and – based on several quality factors – Scopus decides if the journal could be indexed (Krauskopf, 2018). Consequently, we can assume that the growing participation of Iberoamerican journals in Scopus is strategical, and through indexation, journals aim to raise their international visibility that can enhance international funding and better positions for Iberoamerican universities”*

COMMENT:

I am not sure that the paper actually “test[ing] the structural patterns of communication journals in the Ibero-American region alongside similar central and regional journals.” It does some different. Also, please define “structural patterns” and “internal share values of regional

journals.”

RESPONSE:

Following this concern, we have rephrased the words “test”, “the” and “similar” (p 2)

*“**Based on the theoretical framework of de-Westernization (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014), this study examines the actual course of de-Westernization, contrasting some the structural patterns of communication journals in the Ibero-American region alongside comparable central and regional journals. Specifically, as a unique approach for the analysis of the structural features of a given academic field, it compares diversity at three different levels (authorship, editorial board, and citation patterns) and shows that Ibero-American journals are less diverse than both central and regional journals.”*

What we mean as “structural patterns” is specified in the sentence following the reviewer’s suggestion. “Internal share value” are defined at its first occurrence in the revised version (pp 2-3)

*“The concept of “internal share value” relates to the share of internal items in a given set. For example, the internal share value of Iberoamerican editorial boards is higher if there are more Iberoamerican editorial board members, the internal share value of a regional journals’ authorship is higher if the proportion of regional authors is higher, and the internal share value of a regional journal’s citation pattern is higher if there are more regional citations for the journal’s papers. The concept – on a different level – is similar to the concept of academic inbreeding in recruitment, when a given department has a tendency to recruit from its ingroup – from a set of their past students (Altbach et al., 2015).”*

COMMENT:

It would be important to define in what sense IB journals are “alternative scholarship” to mainstream Anglo-Saxon communication research. This would require a comparative content analysis, which is quite ambitious, but it not done in this paper.

RESPONSE:

We have added a more explicit definition of “diversity” in which we emphasized that our study aims to analyze scholarship and diversity in a limited way. However, we also argue that quantitatively measurable dimensions of the academia are related to other, more qualitative aspects (content, methods, perspectives of research) (p 2)

*“Although diversity in academic knowledge production may be related to multiple and complex traits, such as race, gender, class, language, institutional affiliation, or geographical location (Chakravartty et al, 2018), in this study it is understood as the relative level of endogamy or exogamy in networks established at three levels: editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends. Accordingly, editorial boards, authorships and citation patterns are more diverse if scholars from many different geographic background participate in them. While this is a limited understanding of diversity, this approach in not unique in communication studies (Demeter, 2019; Lauf, 2005).”*

Also, we dedicated a new subchapter to the discussion of how diversity of journals, authors and editorial boards might contribute to de-Westernization on different, more qualitative levels (p 5-6)

*“Different Aspects and Implications of de-Westernization*

*De-Westernization is a complex process with several features of global knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), including not just the growing presence of non-Western academic journals, institutions and authors, but also a geographically more balanced presence of ontologies, perspectives, methodologies and research subjects (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). However, these different levels of knowledge production and global visibility are tightly interwoven, and each aspect has an influence on others. Researchers found empirical evidence on the national diversity of journal authors and editorial board members (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), and the interconnectedness of authorship and citations are obvious (Gelman & Gibelman, 1999). Research also found that by guiding the type of research (topics, methodologies, perspectives) that can be published, editorial board members set the standards of scholarly publishing in a subject field (Pan & Zhang, 2013). Finally, university rankings and international funding bodies work with scientific databases when assessing the performance of both individual scholars and academic institutions (Érdi, 2019). For example, two from the most popular international university rankings, the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE) and the QS Topuniversities Ranking calculate scholarly performance from Scopus data (Stack, 2021). As a consequence, the national diversity of editorial boards, journal authorship, research topics, approaches and the international visibility of both individual researchers and institutions are interrelated and, in theory, significant changes in one aspect can contribute to changes in other related features of academic knowledge production. Thus, while the focus of our paper is limited to a quantitative analysis of journal editorial boards, authorship and citation networks, we argue that it is reasonable to assume that a quantitatively measurable de-Westernization of the field might have implications to other aspects such as the visibility of non-Western approaches and perspectives, and the visibility of non-Western institutions in the long run.*

COMMENT:

The categories of IB, central and regional journals need to be defined. Central as in based in the Global North? What would be regional? Central makes sense in relation to periphery.

RESPONSE:

In line with this comment, that was addressed by other reviewers as well, we have changed the terminology, and we do not use the center-periphery distinction anymore. The world regions and countries under this categorization scheme are better described in the revised version under Methodologies, thank you for spotting this weakness of the previous version (pp 11-12).

*“Sample and coding*

*In order to compare the diversity levels of: 1) Ibero-American, 2) Western, and 3) regional journals, we extracted a random sample of communication journals indexed in Scimago in 2019 (n = 445). We considered as “regional” those journals that were published outside the Western world with the exception of Ibero-America. Thus, regional journals of our sample are published in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa or the Asiatic region. Western journals are those that are published in the Western world: in North America, the U.K., Western Europe and Australia. In accordance with the categorization of Elsevier’s Scopus, we use the category “Ibero-America” to include all the Latin-American countries, extended to include Spain and Portugal. This region shares several cultural, historical, social, institutional, geographical and linguistic bonds (Cifuentes-Madrid, Couture, & Llins-Audet, 2015) despite local contrasts. Accordingly, Elsevier’s Scopus use this category to distinguish the specific body of knowledge published in the region. In communication research, the following countries are listed as Iberoamerican countries in Scimago/Scopus (2020): Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.”*

COMMENT:

I am not convinced that “to de-Westernize communication studies, Ibero-American scholars must develop a significant number of internationally recognized journals, publish scholarly papers in indexed journals, frequently cite other Ibero-American scholars, and occupy as many editorial board positions as they can.” Arguably, this is only one dimension of “de-westernization”. Such developments do not necessarily lead to significant changes in inequalities and domination in global academe. They can add some form of “diversity” without altering existing patterns, rankings, citations, etc. Yes, IB journals and academe has become more consolidated and expanded, but this does not suggest major changes in terms

of other measurements of power and inequalities. It seems almost a self-contained space that exist in parallel to English-language journals.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for this comment. In the revised version, we included several passages that discuss the connection between raising diversity in publishing and other features of the academia. In Introduction (p 3)

*“Our findings also imply that, due to the growing presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals, the institutions of those scholars that tend to publish in Iberoamerican journals now have better chances to publish in Scopus. As the number of Scopus indexed papers is an important factor in university rankings (Érdi, 2019), the contribution of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals might contribute to the de-Westernization of higher education as well, and it can help to raise the global visibility of Iberoamerican higher education institutions and research (HEI) in the long run.”*

In a new subchapter (p 5-6)

*“Different Aspects and Implications of de-Westernization*

*De-Westernization is a complex process with several features of global knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), including not just the growing presence of non-Western academic journals, institutions and authors, but also a geographically more balanced presence of ontologies, perspectives, methodologies and research subjects (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). However, these different levels of knowledge production and global visibility are tightly interwoven, and each aspect has an influence on others. Researchers found empirical evidence on the national diversity of journal authors and editorial board members (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), and the interconnectedness of authorship and citations are obvious (Gelman & Gibelman, 1999). Research also found that by guiding the type of research (topics, methodologies, perspectives) that can be published, editorial board members set the standards of scholarly publishing in a subject field (Pan & Zhang, 2013). Finally, university rankings and international funding bodies work with scientific databases when assessing the performance of both individual scholars and academic institutions (Érdi, 2019). For example, two from the most popular international university rankings, the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE) and the QS Topuniversities Ranking calculate scholarly performance from Scopus data (Krauskopf, 2018; Stack, 2021). As a consequence, the national diversity of editorial boards, journal authorship, research topics, approaches and the international visibility of both individual researchers and institutions are interrelated and, in theory, significant changes in one aspect can contribute to changes in other related features of academic knowledge production. Thus, while the focus of our paper is limited to a quantitative analysis of journal editorial boards, authorship and citation networks, we argue that it is reasonable to assume that a quantitatively measurable de-Westernization of the field might have implications to other aspects such as the visibility of non-Western approaches and perspectives, and the visibility of non-Western institutions in the long run.”*

And in the Discussion (pp 19-20)

*“The implications might go beyond the publishing field as journals, editorial boards and citation networks are parts of the narrower HEI system. As funding bodies and global university rankings work with Scopus data (Stack, 2021), the increased presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals and publications from scholars with Iberoamerican affiliations will have a considerable effect on the representation of Iberoamerican HEI on a global scale. As universities are primary agents of knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), and the ranking position of universities influence education choices of international students (Érdi, 2019), we assume that the greater presence of other than Western universities also helps to de-Westernize scholarship. It is important to note that, through international databases as Scopus or the Web of Science, and global University rankings such as THE, QS or the ARWU, world regions and individual countries participate in a common world-system of knowledge production. Being indexed in Scopus is not automatic: it should be initiated by the journals, and – based on several quality factors – Scopus decides if the journal could be indexed (Krauskopf, 2018). Consequently, we can assume that the growing participation of Iberoamerican journals in Scopus is strategical, and through indexation, journals aim to raise their international visibility that can enhance international funding and better positions for Iberoamerican universities.”*

COMMENT:

Different words should express better what the author means “the Ibero-American region uses its structural, linguistic, and cultural resources to offer an alternative universe to mainstream Anglo-Saxon communication research” Alternative? Anglo-Saxon? This expression is incorrect to call Western-based scholarship or the domination of (a few) Western countries in global academia).

RESPONSE:

We agree with this suggestion, and have now used an expression related to language, not to culture, thus, instead of Anglo-Saxon, we used “English-based” in all related instances.

COMMENT:

Global science” is awkward in “accordingly, it has been systematically argued that global science lacks geopolitical diversity at all important levels of analysis, and this includes, inextricably, editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends. However, few studies have examined how the process of contestation from non-core regions unfolds at the practical level. This study focuses on the Ibero-American case through an analysis of its international contribution to communication scholarship.

RESPONSE:

We agree and thus we have changed the wording accordingly (p 1)

*“Accordingly, it has been systematically argued that English-based, international science (produced by, mainly, scholars located in North America, the U.K., Western Europe and Australia) lacks geopolitical diversity at all important levels of analysis, and this includes, inextricably, editorial boards, citation patterns, and authorship trends.”*

COMMENT:

Delete “unipolar” in “However, in the past few decades, many communication scholars have criticized the unipolar Western domination of the field.”

RESPONSE:

Thanks, we have deleted the word “unipolar” (p 4)

*“However, in the past few decades, many communication scholars have criticized the Western domination of the field”*

COMMENT:

The concept of “central scholars” is awkward.  Just institutional affiliation determines Positionality?  Isn’t this a reification of scholarship on the basis of geographical location?

RESPONSE:

We agree with this suggestion and have reworded the original text as no to mirror the Eurocentrist perspective. In every case, we are talking about Western vs Iberoamerican vs Regional scholars in the revised version, as they are defined in the methodologies section.

COMMENT:

This sentence needs to be reworded “to make the unipolar universe field of communication studies a “multipolar pluriverse” (Reiter, 2018), in which different geopolitical locations harmoniously coexist.” Pluriverse seems unnecessary and “harmoniously coexists” is quite vague. What would be the opposite? Constantly in conflict?

RESPONSE:

We have reworded the phrase “harmoniously coexist”. However, we have decided that Reiter’s quotation needs to be complete (“multipolar pluriverse” is his own terminology) (p 4)

*“Accordingly, de-Westernization can either refer to the development of a more inclusive discipline within the so-called international – that is, the Eurocentrist – framework, or to a more revolutionary attempt to make the unipolar universe field of communication studies a “multipolar pluriverse” (Reiter, 2018), in which different geopolitical locations coexist and contribute equally to knowledge-making.”*

COMMENT:

The sentence “Between the 1970s and 1980s, various coups d’état took place, with the emergence of dictatorships that closed communication schools, limiting freedom of expression.” Needs bibliographical references.   The situation varied across universities and countries and cannot be summarized in these terms.

RESPONSE:

Because of the magnitude of revisions, and with respect to the word limits, we had to reduce historical descriptions, thus this sentence was deleted from the revised version.

COMMENT:

The sentence “This relative isolation has led to the development of a regional, Latin-American field of communication scholarship (Waisbord, 2014).” Is not correct. Communication scholarship in Latin  
America has been in dialogue particularly with US and European (mostly French and Italian) influences for decades. There wasn’t “isolation”. Also, not sure that’s what Waisbord argues.

RESPONSE:

Because of the magnitude of revisions, and with respect to the word limits, we had to reduce historical descriptions, thus this sentence was deleted from the revised version.

COMMENT:

Clarify this point: “In this study we assumed that, to raise its global visibility, a non-Western world region should have some necessary structural features that make it capable of achieving a more  
robust international position, and it should also develop an operation whereby the preexisting structural advantages can be multiplied.” What would those structural features be? What if a robust position doesn’t mean a shift in inequalities given English-language hegemony and other factors?

RESPONSE:

The new and preexisting structural features are specified in the following paragraph. To make this connection clearer, we have changed the wording (p 16)

*“on the one hand, Ibero-American journals are increasingly indexed in international databases such as Scopus (new structural features); on the other hand, they offer alternative ways for scientific engagement that promote regional participation: open-access articles published in languages other than English, edited by non-profit institutions, and indexed in regional databases (preexisting structural features).*

As for the more qualitative (including epistemic) consequences of a more robust international position, we refer to the revisions related to the wider perspective of publishing and higher education.

In Introduction (p 3)

*“Our findings also imply that, due to the growing presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals, the institutions of those scholars that tend to publish in Iberoamerican journals now have better chances to publish in Scopus. As the number of Scopus indexed papers is an important factor in university rankings (Érdi, 2019), the contribution of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals might contribute to the de-Westernization of higher education as well, and it can help to raise the global visibility of Iberoamerican higher education institutions and research (HEI) in the long run.”*

In a new subchapter (p 5-6)

*“Different Aspects and Implications of de-Westernization*

*De-Westernization is a complex process with several features of global knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), including not just the growing presence of non-Western academic journals, institutions and authors, but also a geographically more balanced presence of ontologies, perspectives, methodologies and research subjects (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). However, these different levels of knowledge production and global visibility are tightly interwoven, and each aspect has an influence on others. Researchers found empirical evidence on the national diversity of journal authors and editorial board members (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020), and the interconnectedness of authorship and citations are obvious (Gelman & Gibelman, 1999). Research also found that by guiding the type of research (topics, methodologies, perspectives) that can be published, editorial board members set the standards of scholarly publishing in a subject field (Pan & Zhang, 2013). Finally, university rankings and international funding bodies work with scientific databases when assessing the performance of both individual scholars and academic institutions (Érdi, 2019). For example, two from the most popular international university rankings, the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE) and the QS Topuniversities Ranking calculate scholarly performance from Scopus data (Krauskopf, 2018; Stack, 2021). As a consequence, the national diversity of editorial boards, journal authorship, research topics, approaches and the international visibility of both individual researchers and institutions are interrelated and, in theory, significant changes in one aspect can contribute to changes in other related features of academic knowledge production. Thus, while the focus of our paper is limited to a quantitative analysis of journal editorial boards, authorship and citation networks, we argue that it is reasonable to assume that a quantitatively measurable de-Westernization of the field might have implications to other aspects such as the visibility of non-Western approaches and perspectives, and the visibility of non-Western institutions in the long run.”*

And in the Discussion (pp 19-20)

*“The implications might go beyond the publishing field as journals, editorial boards and citation networks are parts of the narrower HEI system. As funding bodies and global university rankings work with Scopus data (Stack, 2021), the increased presence of Scopus-indexed Iberoamerican journals and publications from scholars with Iberoamerican affiliations will have a considerable effect on the representation of Iberoamerican HEI on a global scale. As universities are primary agents of knowledge production (Demeter, 2020), and the ranking position of universities influence education choices of international students (Érdi, 2019), we assume that the greater presence of other than Western universities also helps to de-Westernize scholarship. It is important to note that, through international databases as Scopus or the Web of Science, and global University rankings such as THE, QS or the ARWU, world regions and individual countries participate in a common world-system of knowledge production. Being indexed in Scopus is not automatic: it should be initiated by the journals, and – based on several quality factors – Scopus decides if the journal could be indexed (Krauskopf, 2018). Consequently, we can assume that the growing participation of Iberoamerican journals in Scopus is strategical, and through indexation, journals aim to raise their international visibility that can enhance international funding and better positions for Iberoamerican universities.”*

COMMENT:

Drop the notion of Anglo-Saxon academic culture. It doesn’t capture academic cultures in the global North, particularly the dominant, prominent role of scholarship produced in a few Western countries.

RESPONSE:

We agree; we do not use this terminology anymore in the revised version.

COMMENT:

The following paragraph needs to be revisited. Plenty of speculation without proper evidence and references. My questions are in brackets. “As we argued, de-Westernization can be imagined in at least three ways. The first is isolation, when a world region (or a country) locks

itself up in its own language and culture [lock sounds too strong], remaining closed to the international community. While these efforts are sometimes communicated as a resistance to Western hegemony [by whom? Why?], they are most likely to end up in a breakaway from international scholarship without influencing international knowledge production [how do we know?]. Second, some regions might think that de-Westernization simply means that more and more peripheral agents should go to the West, participate in Western science, and follow Western norms [do regions think?]. The path of this type of de-Westernization goes through publications in central periodicals, citing central authors and having editorial board membership in central journals. This kind of de-Westernization results in an even stronger

central hegemony, where the most talented and dedicated [explain] peripheral scholars sell their labor to central institutions in order to gain more international recognition [who sells their labor?! Is that the reason why they work in universities located in the global North? How do we know?]. This type of de-Westernization can be understood as assimilation [really? In

what way?], which, although it benefits the individual, does not reduce or even increase systemic inequalities.

RESPONSE:

We really appreciate this suggestion. We have reworded these accordingly (p. 19.)

*“As we argued, de-Westernization can be imagined in at least three ways. The first is isolation, when a world region (or a country) is mainly concerned with its own language and culture, remaining closed to the international community. While these efforts may be interpreted as a resistance to Western hegemony, their ability to engage with, influence or confront international knowledge production may be limited. The second is assimilation, when agents beyond the Western world go to the West, participate in Western science, and follow Western norms. The path of this type of de-Westernization goes through publications in Western periodicals, citing Western authors and having editorial board membership in Western journals. This kind of de-Westernization results in an even stronger Western hegemony, where a limited group of often talented regional scholars are hired by Western institutions in order to gain more international recognition. Although this type of de-Westernization benefits the individual, it does not reduce —on the contrary, it may even increase — systemic inequalities.”*