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HYBRID PROCESSES ON RADIO: HOW THE VIDEO CAMERA IS BECOMING PART OF A NEW FORMAT OF RADIO SHOWS

ABSTRACT

Web gave radio the possibility to create new content conformed to new forms of audience. For example, the website of a station allows the simultaneous video transmission of an aired program, with cameras installed inside the studio. In most cases, the video transmission simply emulates a fixed “security camera”, with no other function than to record whatever happens inside the studio. However, today one may find examples of radio shows with video cameras performing a more significant role, using the most of visual language to complement the sound. This new configuration brings a double-question: How to serve two different audiences, one that is just listening and other that is also watching, without losing some radio language’s characteristics – like mental images’ creation and listeners’ engagement?. The proposed paper analyses some Brazilian radio shows, such as *Jovem Pan Morning Show*, of Jovem Pan Network, and *Cultura Livre*, of public station Cultura Brasil, in order to understand the dynamics between camera and sound. In addition, the paper also compares original radio productions to their adaptation to TV; and briefly discusses the simultaneous transmission of a TV show both in television and in radio stations – especially newscasts and talk shows.

KEYWORDS

Radio; video; Internet; remediation

INTRODUCTION

To say that radio today is a high resilience communication media is not an overestimation. The radio enterprise is a complex body whose main business is to broadcast sound production through electromagnetic waves, although its arms easily grown and adapt into the digital landscape due to the medium’s own nature. In other words, the radio company – as every

single communication enterprises bourn in an analogue electronic era – transforms itself to assume demands emerging from the digital scenario.

For example, it is mandatory for a radio station to have a website offering special content to the listeners, as much as a social network profile to talk back to a 24x7-connected listener.

This last [radio] model modifies the conception and practices of radio communication, becoming an advanced interactive model without replacing the former models, once it sums up to them... Interactivity is a defining element to cyber radio: it is the key to a new communicative paradigm facing the unidirectional former ones. (Herrerros, 2007, pp. 11-12)

This is one main reason to a shared concern roused by studies throughout the world; all those about the conformations radio is undertaking to maintain its space as a significant element among communication media of a community, even a country.

The digital hypertext, then, arouses in this scenario as the interface responsible to take to the listener the message that once have been only analogic. It is then necessary to take into account *hybridization*: texts, photos, moving images, sound are all mixed into a coherent and open piece, responsible both for the user's navigation fluidity and to maintain her attention to a given subject. According to Steven Johnson back in 1997, the digital world must have filters to make it easier to access information, "as more and more of the culture translates itself into the digital language of zeros and ones... the interface is a way of mapping that strange new territory, a way for us to get our bearings in a bewildering environment" (Johnson, 2001, p. 33).

It is possible to assume that, today, the listener/user has got used to a scenario of content-offering multiplicity (Ferraretto, 2014, pp. 16-18), that is, media companies offer various contents, most of them derived from the product that defines the enterprises' prime business. Bernard Miège (2009, p. 118) discusses what he calls the "enlargement of the media domain" through the multiplication of content and devices: the need a company has today to broad its field of business. The author relates this phenomenon to the social-rooting process of a technology, when practices and uses are defined simultaneously with the launch and engagement of a new technology. In this sense, the diversified offering of content should observe the defining characteristics of a previous medium to create some continuity to a habit already established in the user's life. Thus, a listener seeks the hypertext interface not only to copy whatever she had in the analogic system, but

something metamorphosed into a new set of significances, a hybrid content that offers the most profound experience of the web while maintaining the some of the old medium's characteristics. Bolter and Grusin (2000, pp. 70-71) call this process the "double logic of remediation", being the concepts of immediacy and hypermediacy of media related to the quest for experiences' authenticity.

When the video production is placed to a radio station's website it is both offering an expanded content to an online audience, and renewing the bounds between the station and its main audience, that of the broadcasted radio. In certain cases, such content can be complex at the point it surpasses the status of remediation and turns into a hybrid production, placed at the crossing of different languages; "(...) in hybrid media the languages of previously distinct media come together. They exchange properties, create new structures, and interact on the deepest level" (Manovich, 2008, p. 89). This paper analyses productions with such a complex structure, allowing us to call them "hybrid media". We highlight, however, that the presence of video cannot interfere with the self-sufficiency of radio language and its capability of creating mental images.

On other point of view, the feeling of a radio programme as a daily event and the broadcaster-listener relationship, revealed intimate throughout the years, have lead a transformation of other level to some successful shows: their adaptation to TV. Even today, when Brazilian radio faces a loss of audience to digital media, there are examples of programmes recreated on television, assured by the credibility and success first acquired on radio. On the analysis of those shows falls the curious look on what they gained and what they lost in comparison to their radio versions.

The present paper analyses examples of language crossings in some São Paulo radio stations, with special attention to the production of video and its relation to the radio. We propose to compare and to discuss whether these kind of productions are good or not to radio as a medium. Our main goal is to discuss the broadcast companies' strategies to face the today's scenario of content diversification demanded by digital audience.

VIDEO AS REGULAR RESOURCE IN WEB SUPPORT

São Paulo's radio stations Jovem Pan FM (JP, 100.9 MHz) and Kiss FM (102.1 MHz) are the only two among 37 FM stations that broadly use video resources in their programming to create a greater interaction with their listeners. Both stations target a young audience, although pertaining

to different musical style segments, and some shows stream video on their websites simultaneously to the programming broadcast.

Kiss FM has three weekly shows that use web-video resources: *Gasômetro*¹, *Filhos da Pátria*² e *Bem que se Kiss*³. These three shows are part of a strategy of the station to come closer to the “young rocker” (an audience segment today divided between Kiss and 89 FM, a radio station that turned into the pop/rock segment in 2012). They consist of people professionally borne outside the radio – on TV or as member of musical groups – presenting and promoting non-mainstream musical styles. We may notice that the placing of a camera inside the studio intends to create immediacy between listener and the programme, especially because she recognizes the presenter image from references other than the radio. This legitimation through image involves and commits the listenership to the programming.

The strategy would be complete and would work better if the video language had been incorporated to the studio dynamics, and we mean simple resources such as framing, scenario and art direction, switching timing, as well direct interaction of presenters towards the cameras’ lenses, aiming at the internet audience. The disposition of cameras in studio are much more like the old proposal of “security camera”, which performs a “vigilant sight” that invades the privacy, than an interactive proposal that allows the user/listener to take part of the show. There is one possible reason for the station to make this choice: according to Hill (2005, p. 58), there is an important change in the sight today, since we make scene in front of the unknown look, and we are prepared to live under surveillance, acting to the surveyor. Machado (2001b, p. 221) comments on the surveillance devices of great cities: we are living more likely in a “society of vigilance” than in one of spectacle, and the public is more and more interpenetrated by private. The vigilant look also changes the society organization. Programmes that take advantages on those systems, investigative journalism and some cultural works are demonstrating this new form of seeing and being saw.

(...) we have always said that, regarding photography, cinema and even television, there is no camera without the implication of the human eye (...) the surveillance circuits,

¹ Gasômetro is a weekly show presented by Gastão Moreira, and shows curiosities of the rock world from noon to 1p.m.

² Filhos da Pátria is also a weekly show presented by singer/guitar man Clemente Nascimento, showing Brazilian rock scene (from oldies to new talents’ songs), aired every Wednesday from noon to 1p.m.

³ Bem que se Kiss is a weekly interview show aired on Fridays at noon, presented by Bruno Sutter, a very know musician in Brazil.

however, seems willing to entirely dismiss the man behind the camera (...) here, the movements are immotivated, the look is erratic and arbitrary, generally ruled by the occasion surprises. If there is not a significant intention, the mechanical eye does not transmit, primarily, any information. (Machado, 2001b, p. 230)

Thus, although it is possible to attribute a meaning to the use of a security camera on the studio – a legitimization though the image and the appropriation of its immediacy – this use could gain narrative form into the shows' contexts, if the camera allowed the user interaction from what she observes.

If the user/listener accesses the station's website when the show is being broadcasted, a pop-up window opens over the website. There are two devices into the studio with the same appearance of a security camera, as shown in *Image 1*. Switches between the two shots happen randomly without respecting a specific rhythm or the presenters' needs. We used *Gasômetro* to exemplify what happens in all three shows: while talking, the presenter stand back to camera 1, and during the playing of songs Gastão has to walk through the studio to show the cover of the album he is playing (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Frames of *Gasômetro* shows aired on February 23, 2015

Camera angles and the lenses' field are limited to the presenter's desk space, and the studio colours and the composition of visual elements are common to any station that does not need to work with images. That should not be the case in here, since Kiss opted to merge two different languages. We may also note that camera 1 shots have a drum set "leaking" in the scene, although the instrument is never used and does not compose harmonically the places aesthetics. Thus, we may affirm that there is not a language applied to the camera device in Kiss shows: by closing the pop-up window with the video, the listener can follow the program as if the image have never been there.

For some years now, Jovem Pan Corporation have been restructuring a video service that complements the website of its AM, news-based

stations. More recently, the company added video productions to the FM branch's website, a musical radio network targeting teenagers and young adults. They are recorded by the presenters on the street and show short interviews, following a journalistic structure. They serve as extra material to the listener that navigates on Jovem Pan FM's website or social networks.

Nonetheless, the main result of Jovem Pan's investment on video are the programmes *Jovem Pan Morning Show* and *Pânico no Rádio*. The first is the station's bet to transit from the older audience⁴ that listen to Jovem Pan up to 10 a.m. and the teenager audience of the afternoon. A team of five presenters hosts the show for one hour and a half, conducting interviews and chats. This is a hybrid production: starting with the opening credits, that is both a "jingle" to whom is just listening and an animated video to those watching. Four cameras are positioned in the studio and the switching obey to an order most common in televised talk shows. Figure 2 shows this disposition. Even though the cameras have no movement, there is variation in frame scale and repositioning when necessary to accommodate guests. In addition, their positioning emulates the 'line eyes' logic of cinema. The interaction with the device is possible, although the presenters are not always looking to the cameras. Diverse colours on the walls compose the scenario, along with the presence of video monitors showing the programme's logo and photos, videos and information related to the subjected being presented, disqualifying what is commonly known as a 'radio studio'. The images showed in the monitors sometimes occupy the entire screen of those watching to create a dynamic set of cuts. However, there is no prejudice to whom is just listening, since the presenters still make good use of radio language to describe in detail what is showed, remaining the invitation to watch the show latter, when it goes on demand.



Figure 2: Frames of *Jovem Pan Morning Show*

Pânico follows the same basics, only with more presenters inside the studio, more guests, sometimes listeners that are invited to accompany the live recording and, sometimes, interact with the hosts (even if away from

⁴ During the morning, this musical station syndicates the news programming of its AM sister.

the microphone). Nonetheless, despite the show has a TV version aired weekly (discussed further on this paper), the camera work is less evident here than during *Morning Show. Pânico* is one of the oldest shows of Jovem Pan, on air since 1993, always run by the creator and presenter Emilio Surita. In the beginning, Surita and Marcelo Baptista had the idea of provoking listeners that called the station to ask for a song to play or to take part in some contests, sometimes going beyond the simple “making fun of” them. People who called the show knew they would be the target of the presenters’ jokes. Latter, other characters started in the show, such as Bola and Paty Lane. *Pânico* undertook some changes throughout the years, always marked by funny talks to guests in studio, phone pranks and listeners’ phone-ins.

Both Kiss FM and Jovem Pan’s programmes have as central elements the voice of presenters and guests. JP creates a hybrid shows that can be equally listened to or watched, but the experience on video serves mostly the audience who seeks the on demand. On the other hand, Kiss FM, just like other stations that use explore even less the resources of their cameras on studio, only achieves a listener that would be motivated to watch the video only out of curiosity, and not because she seeks a more complete experience.

To conclude this first part, we must clarify that the leader hosts of those shows must keep the information comprehensible to the listener by making use of the simplicity, the redundancy and the detailing of information that characterizes the radio language. As stated by Armand Balsebre, “the word on the radio is not only the word through radio (...) besides it transmits the natural language of interpersonal communication, it is the imagined word, an evoking source of a more complete sensorial experience” (1994, p. 35).

VIDEO AS A SPORADIC RESOURCE

89 FM (89.1 MHz) used the video for a short period as complement to their morning show *Do Balacobaco*⁵, but this resource did not become part of the programme’s regular structure. On October 31, 2014, in a Halloween special, the radio station made available a service called ‘camera rock’ – a partnership with a streaming service company – to transmit the show live on video on the station’s website.

Different from the ‘security camera’ of Kiss FM, and because of the space limitations, the camera was held by one of the presenters of *Do*

⁵ The videos is available at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/do-balacobaco-2-z%C3%A9>

Balacobaco, facilitating a possible variation of angles and a better use of the intimacy the lens produces (Figure 3). On the radio, the show provides the listeners with interactions that activates imagination; in this particular day, the presenters wore costumes to conduct something similar to that to the viewers.



Figure 3: Moments of the camera use in *Do Balacobaco* showing the freedom in its manipulation

It is important to notice that, in this case, video complements and/or replaces what the programme offers through the radio language. The show presents in a daily basis sketches that promote the listeners imagination. The presenters create characters such as “the naked men and women”, “Estagiário Binho”, a crazy trainee, and “Azevedo”, an old man with psychic powers that uses it to involve the listeners – both who are just listening and those who call to try and earn a gift – creating a ludic scenario of interaction.

Radio listener produces mental images because acts with imagination in the process of construction/reconstruction of a multi-sensorial reality ignited from sonorous sensations (...) on this analogic-symbolic or identification-recognition relation is the key to the imaginative-visual phenomenon of radiophonic perception. (Balsebre, 1994, p. 198)

If, on one hand, video could temper with this game established between listener and broadcaster, on the other hand it offers other types of attraction and is thus capable of maintaining the listener’s engagement. A good example can be found in Figure 4: on the referred moment, Zé Luiz (the leading presenter), while interprets Azevedo, takes a tea cup and talks directly to the web listener, without putting aside those who cannot see him.



Figure 4: Detail of the tea cup showed via Internet while the presenter talked to the listeners

Even though the *Camera Rock* is a tool present in 89 FM's website and its Facebook page, the station does not use it for a while. The link, although available, directs the user to an offline channel. Video on this station changed from the possibility of live interaction to the use in short periods of programming and some promotional footage shared through social networks, as showed in Figure 5. This reinforces the strong use the station gives to its Facebook and Instagram profile pages as the main tool to communicate to the online listener.



Figure 5: Two regular programming presenters use the camera only to address promotional subjects

RADIO SHOWS ADAPTED TO TV

Pânico of Jovem Pan FM achieved from the very beginning a huge success, and the presenters ended up being more and more known by the audience. In 1997, a famous TV host, Carlos Massa, invited them to be part of his show in Rede Record, at the time the third great TV station in Brazil. The next step was a program of their own, and *Pânico's* crew had, in 2003, the opportunity to make a humour show on a small national network called Rede TV. The initial idea was to keep the same irreverence and make

fun of the audience and the population. However, they also found another segment: creating embarrassing situations to celebrities. Thus, some attractions like *the sandals of humility* (on which the presenters gave such sandals to personalities known for their arrogance) and *Vesgo and Silvio* (the comedians interviewed celebrities and put them in outrageous situations). We may say that this new approach borrowed from the radio show at the same time that gave it new characteristics. In the sound medium, the presenters first played with listeners and, later, added personalities on studio; the use of celebrities as the joke's "target" represents the extrapolation of a segmented radio audience to a much broader TV viewership.



Figure 6: Comparison of radio show Panico on Radio and TV show Panico na Band

Another strategy adopted by the TV version of the show is to conquer the audience with the sexual appeal of half-naked women in the most possible diverse situations. If on radio the humorous tone of presenters is enough, on TV these new formulas are used to impact and stimulate the viewership. It is a complete different language of TV in comparison to radio, based upon sexual and rubbish content. The scenario is far more coloured than the radio one, and all presenters stay on feet distributed all over the studio in a way the switching of cameras can show its broadness. There is also room for half-naked dancers and a group of spectators that watch the recording of the show and the live-performed games. The TV show is also

composed by musical attractions, but differently from what occurs on radio, the TV cameras switch from open angles to close-up on the private parts of the dancers. According to the presenters, such choice is made to construct rhythm, dynamics and continuity between the show's attractions.



Figure 7: Frames from the television version of *Pânico*

In 2012, *Pânico na TV* changed to a bigger network, Band, without changing its core format on television, a response to its loyal audience constructed upon the legitimization of borrowed from the radio show.

Another example of a TV show originated on radio is *Cultura Livre*, from public-state station Cultura Brasil, presented by Roberta Martinelli. This is not a humoristic show, however, for its attractions are music (pocket shows) and interviews. The show's first version consisted of Martinelli performing a huge interaction with listeners via chat in social networks, since the major part of her audience was on the internet, and not through air. The presenter used a camera to show album covers, written texts on paper, or even to appear to audience using costumes – not always synchronized with the audio stream. Listeners commented through chat the performance on video and ordered songs to play. The success of this format among the listeners was so that the broadcaster started to test a new television version, still based on the radio format⁶. At that second moment, the show started counting with guests inside the studio and camera dynamics, such as movements and switching in spite of the reduced studio space.

The current version of *Cultura Livre* is another example of a hybrid production, even a transmedia production according to Jenkins, when this author states that, in transmedia production, each medium gives the best to complement the receptor's experience (Jenkins, 2005, p. 135). Today, the show is recorded in a broad studio for television, but gathering the same characteristics of the moment it was planned for radio. Then, it is edited to have complementary material on TV Cultura's website. Radio receives

⁶ Today, the radio show is on its fourth season and all videos can be accessed through the website <http://cmais.com.br>, of Radio and TV Cultura.

another edition, with more duration – and more information – than that available only to TV spectators. *Image 8* compares the moment when the program was made for radio and transmitted on TV to the current version.

From radio to TV



From TV to Radio



Figure 8: Comparison of different seasons of *Cultura Livre*

The programme's proposal is to bring to audience new artists that both present their songs and are interviewed by Martinelli. From the

beginning, the intention is to place the listener/viewer in the backstage, just as she is watching a starting rehearsal. The opening vignette's videography allude to an informal and intimate sound studio, aligned to the proposals of both the TV and the radio shows: to establish a room to connect to the listener. We must highlight that the sound is always placed in first place on the opening, being for the conversation of people testing audio or the musical instruments and microphones stylized that appear in the composition, signalling that this is mostly a sound programme in spite of the visual resources. The simple and rustic scenario shows some apparatus common to TV studios such as light reflectors and monitors. This scenic material reflects the characterization of the programme as a 'live' show – even if it is recorded – and in spite of being regarded as a mistake, those objects and the immediacy proposed by the possibility of the error just legitimate the shows to its audience (Machado, 2001a, pp. 130-131; Hill, 2005, p. 59).

CONSIDERATIONS

“Visualised radio” is what Andrew Dubber calls some of the experiences we analysed here, in a chapter of his book that discuss “the single most challenging and confrontational aspect of the digital age for the world of radio... the growing predominance of screen-centric digital media platforms” (Dubber, 2013, p. 105). We must now point out that the exchange between video as complement to a radio show, as well the radio show re-mediated on television aims at meeting the needs of an audience that is more and more diffuse. Immediacy establishes itself from one medium to another. To Bolter and Grusin, remediation is constituted by “a genealogy of affiliations, not a linear history, and in this genealogy, older media can also remediate newer ones (...) medium, it seems, can now function independently and establish its own separate and purified space of cultural meaning” (Bolter & Grusin, 2000, p. 55). It means that two traditional media can mutually influence each other.

The simultaneous transmission in different media is what Bernard Miège points out as the consequence of the current moment. The diffusion of access to new communication tools makes the companies to offer content in different platforms. The original medium competes with the new, 'rival' one that must always present some novelty, dividing the audience in multiple points of accesses (Miège, 2009). Nonetheless, if we take into account that remediation may also bring new significances, the programs herein analysed are far from such results.

Although the examples discussed in this paper are those that make better use of the crossing of languages (radiophonic and video) in São Paulo's scenario, we can realise that the offering of content is also limited, and two main causes come to mind. First, some programmes demands the spectator to have a great level of attention, which is made difficult by the nature of the web and its dispersive structure. Second, the radio language adaptations to television disproportionately aim at great audience, publicity announcements and money, instead of creating fundamental bounds with the listener/user/viewer. Perhaps they could take better advantage of hypermediacy, that is, the experience of a medium as 'the experience of the real' (Bolter & Grusin, 2000, p. 71), if planned to be especially on demand content. According to Dubber (2013, pp. 51-53) a digital "timeshifting" is occurring, supported both by the on demand availability and the listener's ability to construct her own programming, and this is a major reason for the offering of a content that can mix different languages and can be consumed in different manners.

Society today demand for audio-visual content as the main communication form. Children are educated to respond better to those stimuli. However, radio – and radiophonic language as an extent – is the only medium capable to unite the immediacy of transmission and the imaginary construction of a narrative in order to strength the bounds with the audience and the broadcaster. This is a fundamental characteristic of radio, and should always be taken into account when a company brings up strategies like those demonstrated.

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