

## **Radio Language and Aesthetics**

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Resumen: What intensity of morphology, semantics, syntax and rhetoric do we need to create a structure for radio language? The radio speaks with words, music, sound effects and silence, the structure of construction of radio language must be distinct from language structures applied to other media. Through these four elements, radio language is created, and all the elements have the same significance although they may vary in the relevance they acquire according to the aesthetic line adopted. The use of each of these elements must be justified in the preparation and production of the content, contrary to the indiscriminate ad hoc use of each element thus condemning improvisation. This article proposes an approach to the relationship among the elements of radio language (word, music, sound effects and silence), verified in the application of a structure capable of defining such language; it aims to find spaces that create a language for radio through the relationship previously studied. We conclude that, from the relationship among the various elements and their use in greater or lesser degree, a radio aesthetics is generated, one which is not singular but plural and with segmented features.

### **The sound that carries the message**

Radio is an exclusively sound medium and those responsible for producing its content can only use sound recording languages. All messages, frames and environments created can only be developed using sound. It is an exclusively sound medium. A sonosphere that was created and developed. The early days were marked by the recreation of writing through sound and the journey has been made until today in a sound creation based on new aesthetics that create new worlds to the detriment of the recreation of the real. For this, there was a technological contribution in the context of recording and sound

reproduction. The sound message went to aesthetic and artistic universes, the result of a nature formed through creation and not with a real basis: the sound in the creation of worlds.

Radio content can fall into four categories: informational, advertising, educational and entertainment. It is impossible to create content from a single category, although all content has a dominant content. In addition, it should also be borne in mind that each listener has their own way of receiving and identifying the category of content, sometimes creating a difference of opinion between sender and receiver or even between receivers. As with all communication acts, messages are also intended on the radio to persuade “...el intento persuasivo existe siempre, aunque se trate únicamente de llamar la atención sobre el mensaje, bien para estimular a la compra del producto comunicativo o para atraer el interés sobre aquél en el caso de los medios gratuitos, como es la radio” (Merayo, 2003: 19). Rhetoric plays an important role here so that speech can move and excite. This rhetorical use has three categories: *Delectare*, which is the attempt to persuade through fun; *Docere*, which is an appeal to reason; and *Movere*, which is to address affection. We are thus trying to tune a pathos. As we are talking about collective communication, the starting point is always *Movere*, which becomes more demanding in the case of radio communication because it is a limited medium where there is a total absence of image and where resources are scarce and limited to voice, silence [Silence is seen here as the absence of sound, an antonym of sound], music and sound effects: “...desde el primer momento de cada programa y a lo largo de todo él, captar la atención del público: conseguir que no huya a otro punto del dial, que permanezca en la escucha, ha de ser el primer y principal objetivo del emisor radiofónico” (Merayo, 2003: 21). These demands provoke the need for a greater efficacy of the discourse due to the fact that there is an absence of the visual element so immersed in contemporary societies. The fact that the radio has a free character creates a pre-disposition for the listener to change the form of consumption. Although the receiver is paid and in some countries citizens have to pay a financing fee for audiovisual, the truth is that the radio has a free component that comes from its beginnings. In other media, where the content is paid for, the consumer is conditioned to change for the payment he made and committed to the purchase made. When a song that plays on a radio station is not to the liking of the listener, he has the opportunity, without any kind of prejudice, to change positions and look for a radio that at that moment plays a song that he likes (an increasingly easier process due to digital receivers in relation to the old analog models using a pointer and a mechanical system for

tuning). The same is not the case, or at least the reader of a newspaper is unlikely to dislike a story, quit the newspaper and buy another one. What this reader does is change the page and continue to consume the newspaper he bought, although this behavior is also being modified with online publications.

Radio professionals, especially those who give voice to messages broadcast by the channel, must take into account the need to persuade, to fix the auditorium at every moment, because what we said earlier about the ease of changing the broadcast station makes it very strong attention is needed at each of the broadcasting moments / times: the radio must not lose sight of the rhetoric that, in addition to the structures applied to language, must also incorporate a "... musical rhetoric" (Merayo, 2003: 21). Still on this subject, we highlight the words of Moragas Spa (1976: 276) when saying that "...entre las posibilidades retóricas instantâneas resaltan todos los médios particulares de su componente hablada: la entonación, el acento, la admiración, y figuras retóricas como la ironía, el discurso socarrón, las burlas, la euforia reconocida por um determinado falsete en el torno de la voz (...) la seguridad (...) la rapidez en la pronunciación (...), el tono melancólico (...), el acento afectado, lento, grandilocuente (...) la euforia e lo que denominaré *énfasis del próprio nombre*" When Movere, an animation based on feelings, is reached, it is possible to move on to Delectore, which is to try to persuade by having fun. Radio is a predominantly entertainment medium. Using Arias Ruiz, "la radio es distracción, espectáculo a domicilio, siempre amena pêro nunca vacía de contenido" (1964: 112-113).

The listener cannot be required to concentrate on listening. Sometimes the radio is just an electrical appliance that is connected to deliver sound and without concentration on the part of those who connected it or are close to it. The content producer has to realize that he cannot request a listening effort from the auditorium, and that many of those who are tuned in to that station are actually concentrating on the development of another task. Despite this association with entertainment, the radio also has space for a formative function despite "No se facilita uma formación igual cuando se difunde una información superficial, ligera y precipitada, que quando esta es profunda contrastada y rigurosa" (Merayo, 2003: 24). However, this function, according to Francisco Sanabria Martín (1974), occurs when it cognitively enriches the social, political, economic and artistic thinking of listeners.

In some moments of the broadcast, the listener is available to make an effort in the concentration applied to the act of listening to the message. Finally, the information

function, where what matters is the importance and practical use of the message. Despite the fact that Man wishes to be more and more informed, this is not the primary function of the radio, despite, in some cases, being the predominant one in radios dedicated exclusively to information.

### **People's radio: the public and private sphere**

It is interesting to understand the characteristics adjacent to the listeners' relationship with the radio, the space where it is founded and how it happens. The relationship between listeners and the radio has always been intense and in many cases it was / is on the radio that hopes for solving particular problems or the family sphere are placed. The radio became the first global communication medium, accessible in most western places, becoming part of home furnishings. One of the well-known examples and presented by Bruce Lenthall in the book *Radio's America - The Great Depression and the Rise of Modern Mass Culture* (2007), happened in a triangle of relationship between the sponsor of a certain program, the listener (in this case it was a child of 15 years) and, of course, the program. Janet, as the young woman was called, was in a sanatorium. Her father had stopped smoking so that, with the savings made there, he could afford a Christmas visit to his daughter. Janet's desire to offer her father a Christmas gift was enormous, and particularly, to offer a packet of tobacco. Without great solutions, the resource was radio, in this case, a quiz show sponsored by Janet's father's favorite tobacco brand, the Kentucky club. With a letter sent to the program, Janet got the attention, not only from the program, but also from the sponsor, who brought him a large can of Kentucky club tobacco to offer to his father. In addition to a special moment, which is an example of so many similar cases in which the radio intervenes and, in this particular case, being able to be inspiring of a Christmas tale, it is above all illustrative of what we intend to present about the radio's relationship with its members. heard in the 1930s. America has always been an embryo or space of excellence for many events associated with the history of radio, and in this case, where it is intended to speak of the beginning of this relationship between listeners and radio with regard to the establishment of an auditorium, it is impossible go beyond what happened in America even more with the social scene and the ancestry of radio as a medium.

Janet's story shows well the relationship that was established between a public sphere, created by radio and enhanced by the fact that it is supported by a broadcasting

model, and the private sphere. A relationship of mutual influence and with several aspects capable of offering strength to that relationship, “Listening to the radio was an act of negotiating between the power of the mass medium and one’s own interests” (Lenthall, 2007: 64). Isto é a utilização de uma influência em benefício da outra: [sobre a história de Janet] “When she could not manage on her own, when her local and personal community proved inadequate, she reached for an ethereal connection. Through radio she found ways to personalize a vast, anonymous world. She heard a human voice attached to a large commercial company – and believed it might hear her. The broadcaster who spoke to millions felt like an intimate friend, someone she might trust – perhaps like someone who might help her find a measure of control in her own life” (Lenthall, 2007: 54).

The final part of the previous quote is curious because the story told allows us to immerse ourselves in what we can call an intimacy that is created in the vastness of the broadcast. Despite the fact that the broadcast is from one to many and that is why a vast audience is created with the absence of a sender, the listener feels the message as exclusive to him. It is in this context, fueled by the relationship of a public and a private side, that a relationship between listener and environment has solidified. This is another way of understanding the relationship between the public sphere created by radio and the private sphere. The fact verified by the entrance of a strange voice in the private and intimate space (the house, the bedroom, etc.) means the immersion of the public space. Radio was the first medium to make spaces and times hybrid, uniting the public with the private, as well as the present and the past.

It was on this relationship that the establishment of an auditorium was based on the radio's 1930s. A rich relationship where new relationships were formed, similar to the daily relationships built and rebuilt every day. Through radio, Americans perceived and interacted within a new mass culture, bringing the benefits found there to their private sphere. When no answers were found, radio was used as if this form of mass culture that emerged through broadcasting could be an inspiring beacon of life in the private sphere. The radio brought the world to those who listened to it.

The model created for radio and other media, from one to many, is centralized. Economist William Aylott Orton<sup>1</sup>, along with other intellectuals, even questioned whether there would still be room for the individual: “...right that radio was a crucial

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<sup>1</sup> 1889-1952

source of that culture (Lenthall, 2007: 55). This and other critical views have even based their thoughts on culture as a mass phenomenon. Now the radio, it is true, brings a message that is heard by many and, therefore, it is located in a space of centrality and enhancer of a uniformity of culture and thought, in a kind of globalization of the times. But even so, there is a space where the message is subject to negotiation or mediation. It is the space where the listener has a chance to participate and shape an agreement between collectivism and centrality with the private side. This was quite felt in the 1930s on the radio, with the active participation of listeners in a relationship with the medium of real activity. The listener showed an ability, and once again we recall the example of Janet's story, in bringing to your benefit the listener. There is in fact a centralizing and collective space associated with the broadcasting characteristic of the radio, but through the interaction, which was intense in the 1930s, the listener tried to bring from that collective side something to the benefit of his private sphere: "Popular listeners did not dictate the shape of radio or its programs, but within the bounds of the centrally controlled form, those listeners discovered some room to use radio in ways that helped them to count in modern society" (Lenthall, 2007: 55). Thus, each listener had a hope that the radio could reflect a model to that listener's idea.

One of the ways of perceiving this relationship created between listeners and the radio, was to understand the relationship created with the voices and characters of the radio<sup>2</sup>. This relationship is fueled by the listeners ability to create a certain personality for the voice they hear. It is based on the qualities of the sonorous, as on the voice in which a physiognomy always appears. Once again the relationship between public and private is felt, in some cases even though there is apparent confusion. To these created relationships, we try to add the same characteristics of the relationships we had in the private or public sphere. Even without a knowledge of the speaker's physiognomy, the listener felt the relationship with the person who spoke on the radio as a true friendship. When we previously said that it was the radio that we used to obtain information, it is clear that we were talking about the voices of the radio or, better, to the people who spoke on the radio. It was to these figures, in some cases characters to play, that listeners felt like friends or family and placed trust in them.

The involvement of listeners with the radio in this beginning of audience formation should also reflect on a very curious phenomenon of contents that were the

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<sup>2</sup> Relationship studied by psychologists Hadley Cantril (1906-1969) and Gordon Allport (1897-1967).

Radio Soup. Format characterized by being a radio soap opera with several episodes and with listeners, mostly female, following the adventures of a set of characters<sup>3</sup>. As would happen later on television with soap operas, there was a strong involvement with the characters of these programs, which, in a way, justifies the great fidelity that listeners deposited in the relationship with these programs. It was with these characters that the listeners lived on a daily basis, it was these characters that entered the listeners' house and these characters in the development of their roles vented to the auditorium. The listeners felt very closely, in an even intimate way, the relationship with these characters. Radio soup characters were more than characters from a fictional space. They were close to the listeners and with them the listeners lived and shared the joys, frustrations, disappointments and sufferings. An involvement that is not reached with the series or with the television soap opera. In the letter written to the main character of one of these programs, at a certain point the listener says that the character of a radio soup called Mary Marlin is "...so real to me" (Lenthall, 2007: 66).

Once again we can talk about the collective or public that belongs to everyone and is the result of the experience of listening to the same content, but in a relationship with the private side, as these characters functioned as models brought from the public to the private. This hearing process was not passive. On the contrary, it showed a strong level of interaction. In fact, only with this interaction is it possible to understand the relationship between the public and the private. The listener was required to be able to become part of the process: "Integrating radio into their lives meant interacting with the broadcasts they heard" (Lenthall, 2007: 62). It required an interaction that had in the 30s of the last century a series of activities capable of showing the practical side of this action, for example, sending correspondence for the programs<sup>4</sup>, participation in hobbies, various requests and some unusual ones made to those responsible by programs: requests for clarification, purchase of products from sponsors, creation of different feelings with the presenters or characters of programs, idolatry, gifts and creation of a relationship with the sponsors of the programs.

The emergence of large radio networks highlighted the idea of creating a community of listeners. Perhaps it was one of the most important points in the history of

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<sup>3</sup> We refer to the following readings for further questions related to this kind of programs: Jim Cox, *Historical Dictionary of American Radio Soap Operas* (2005), *The Great Radio Soap Opera* (1999); *The A to Z of American Radio Soap Operas* (2009); John Dunning and *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (1998).

<sup>4</sup> See Bruce Lenthall, *Radio's America: The Great Depression and the Rise of Modern Mass Culture* (2007).

the radio, as it allowed more people to hear the same content and the same message. In the early 1930s, America was the country in the world with the largest number of radio stations. There were more than 600 radio stations<sup>5</sup> that served the population and that had broadcast licenses with sufficient power to reach an indiscriminate layer of the North American population and, in other cases, with a limited power to serve the people of a region and to constitute a local or regional audience.

The idea of a community of listeners, and the constitution of that same community, begins to be justified to be considered from the moment of the construction of networks of broadcasters and the constitution of audiences. The emergence of networks brought the possibility of broadcasting content for the hearing of an indiscriminate set of listeners. That is, many to hear the same and to constitute themselves as a community based on what is heard “listeners across the country could hear the some programming, the same events the same ideas” (Lenthall, 2007: 57).

It is also with these large radio chains that large audiences are created and radio is considered as a means capable of contributing to the construction of a national identity culture. Something in common capable of creating an identity and influencing a collective personality. However, this creation is not linear because there are variables that are not always easy to control: differences in ethnic identities within the same population, geographical issues, characteristics of regional unity and the contrasts between urbanity and rurality. The idea of community is formed in the relationship created between listener and environment and also by the ability of large networks to provide the same content to large audiences.

The feelings experienced through the radio and everything we refer to as supporting a relationship between the listener and the environment, with emphasis on a relational balance between the public and private spheres, leads us to the idea of constituting communities. The idea of a joint sharing and a similarity of ties leads to the constitution of a community that is created and developed through the relationship that is established with the radio. A community of people united through a sharing that takes place over the radio. It is not only through radio soap that feelings are transmitted over the radio. There are various forms of interaction with the radio station, its presenters and producers. Ways that radio listeners used to vent their feelings, and thus “they found in radio, listeners revealed their sense that the wider world increasingly pressed upon their

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Federal Radio Commission - Fifth Annual Report, June 1933 bulletin, which is available at [https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-308654A1.pdf](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-308654A1.pdf) (accessed in August 2017).



daily experiences, eroding their efficacy even in their own lives and washing away the support traditional communities might provide” (Lenthall, 2007: 66). In certain circumstances, this characteristic and the idea of a community of listeners was very present in the definition of programs, not only in the 1930s but throughout the history of the medium. The tendency of programming was to feed an idea of community and create it: “Such radio clubs urged children to feel a link between the radio program, themselves, and others who joined the special listening family” (Lenthall, 2007: 69). Radio is not only entertainment, but it is also a company because the relationships created are very strong<sup>6</sup> and in these relationships the notion of community is created. An identity and semantic force that will be very useful in the media already in invention and in others that will be important in the beginning of the 21st century.

But these relationships are the fruit of ether. These are ethereal relationships just like the communities that are created around the radio medium: “they created that new sense of personal connection and individual significance through the air (Lenthall, 2007: 81). Much of what happens in the community, in the radio collective, is introduced into relationships belonging to the private sphere. For example, the possibility of the content heard being the subject of conversation in the private sphere: “communities of listeners grew up in private settings” (Lenthall, 2007: 77). News, contests and other content heard on the radio enhanced the conversation within personal relationships, not only within the family and in the private space, but also between acquaintances and friends in the public space.

This experience of constituting the notion of community through radio, resided in the experience of listening to radio as a group<sup>7</sup>. The radio was even thought of as an element capable of providing pleasure and unity to the family. The popular quiz contests were a source of fun and family life. We reinforce the idea of this relationship present in the collective to shape and influence the private sphere, in this case as an element that enhances the “face-to-face” relationships.

It is clear that this sense of community and the relationships created within the listener-environment did not manage to have the same depth as the relationships consummated in a physical space of coexistence and ambulation: “But equally certainly, the imagined interactions of listening and occasional letter writing could not provide the

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<sup>6</sup> See examples of the strength of this type of relationship in Bruce Lenthall's work, *Radio's America - The Great Depression and the Rise of Modern Mass Culture* (2007).

<sup>7</sup> Experience that has been lost throughout the history of the radio. Nowadays it is a more solitary act than in a group.

same level of personal Exchange and potential support that face-to-face relationships might: radio permitted only a moderate degree of social participation” (Lenthall, 2007: 79). Many of the feelings in the space of this Etherian community identified as friendship do not even have face-to-face knowledge. However, the ethereal communities embodied, reformed and evolved according to the audible content, which makes us think about the new notion of community of digital media and social networks.

A collective arena that enhances new horizons for those who listen to it and with the ability to have a strong influence in the private sphere of each listener. Here we can see the influential capacity of the radio and the way in which there is truly a relationship between the medium and the listener. A penetrating capacity within the private sphere of those who consume radio content.

All of this was well understood by some important influencers: “It challenged individual’s autonomy in their own lives and their ability to speak out to the broader world” (Lenthall, 2007: 80). In this game of influence between public and private, there were / there are those who understand the possibility of instilling their private side in the public: “By using radio to personalize the public world that touched their lives they felt they could claim a measure of importance and control” (Lenthall, 2007: 80). This last quote is an example of highlighting words like importance and control.

This opens the beginning of a path that we will return to, in this work, when the time comes to deepen the propaganda through the radio and the way this medium was used to spread political ideas and ideals and as a medium to service of political systems and other interests.

### **The radio like a curtain**

Acoustics has always been connected to the radio. The radio's functions are just that: a space for the creation of the artificial where the notion of the acousmatic is concretized. When making a contextualization of connection with institutions such as opera and dramaturgy, we perceive the existence of an acousmatic space, in which the radio assumes the functions of the Pitágoras curtain. These institutions are fully realized with the existence of a public that, in addition to listening, eliminates the experience of the acousmatic because there is a need to see.

What we write here takes us to questions that should be further investigated, but which we consider to have a greater scope in other types of work. However, we want to mention the following: is it totally legitimate to talk about opera through the radio, when

in reality what can be broadcast is the music of the opera, or its soundtrack? Is it also entirely legitimate to be able to speak in theater when what we hear on the radio is, despite possible staging and decorations using sound effects, more than the presentation of the text of a dramaturgy? The same problems are raised when listening to an opera recording on CD, vinyl or any other form of sound recording.

The acoustics and the alteration of the forms of listening are themes addressed in *The Radio Symphony*, text included in Theodor Adorno's *Essays on Music* (2002). In this text the author states that the transmission of symphonies over the radio causes the loss of what he calls sonic power, because:

- i) the listener starts to listen to miniaturized music without the possibility of being involved;
- ii) this miniaturization leads to a structural listening. An atomized listening with loss of the notion of work and of the ensemble, which isolates the music making the listener lose the ability to listen to the music with the notion of the present work, but to isolate pieces: “It contributes to what he regards as the patently offensive practices of humming and whistling—both, it should be pointed out, sounds that fall somewhere between voice and music”. (Mowitt, 2011: 34).

The audiences of theatrical performances, operas and concerts are a fundamental element of these productions, motivating an idea of dialogue that consists of stimuli and responses: “...the claque, the hired clappers, constitutes a deception necessary to the success, indeed to the very existence, of the production” (Weiss: 2001, 08)<sup>8</sup>. This cheerleader reacts with cheers, whistles, clapping, kicking or with vocal effects like Bravo's shout from the middle of an audience as a way of praising and extolling someone's vocal qualities and, why not, thanking them for the pleasure provided by a diva from opera. The mechanization of technological progress is presented here as one of the factors in the loss of dialogue between the public and artists. In fact, it cannot be said that there is a total loss of dialogue because the auditorium continues to exist in mechanical reproduction, but there is great conditioning. Perhaps for this reason the composition of theater or other stage arts for the radio obeyed different rules, as we can see for example in the radio plays by Samuel Beckett or in texts by Walter Benjamin.

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<sup>8</sup> Referring to the words of the French writer Villiers de L'Isle-Adam (1838-1889) about the short story *La Machine à Gloire*, written in 1874, dedicated to the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898).

Another author who had the opportunity to address the issue of acoustics in his writings was Jean-Paul Sartre, who in *Critique of Dialectical Reason* had the opportunity to reflect on the issue of distance and the presence reflected on the maximum and minimum distances capable of providing relationships direct. That is, what is the maximum possible distance to consider that two people are in contact with each other? This thought makes us move towards the function of radio related to telepresence. The existence of means such as those presented by Sartre as an example (telephone and two-way radio such as that used for communications between airplanes and control towers) are associated with an idea of distance and the ability to create relationships. Sartre gives the name of presence and in his words "...will be defined as the maximum distance permitting the immediate establishment of relations of reciprocity between two individuals, given the society's techniques and tools" (Sartre, 1982: 270). Thus, for Sartre, the radio is like an indirect door, and through a direct door the author considers, for example, the bus stop. It is the creation of a space with reciprocity that can lead us to the association of this thought with a Marxist thought integrated in a logic of solidarity: "It is not about the face to face but about the anthro-technological conditions of a totalizing proximity. It is about the Near that may also be far, the distance that is not distant, in effect, the essence of humanity such that that essence might express itself in common with others concerned to wrest praxis from the robotic grasp of the practico-inert, or what Marx called dead labor". (Mowitt, 2011: 52).

The transport of the visible to the radio is comparable to the act of placing the Pythagorean curtain between the source and the receiver, causing a large part of the perception process to be understood in another way, because the stimuli become smaller and the response to give meaning to the sensations produced by the stimuli received are also more difficult to obtain<sup>9</sup>.

Thus, acoustics has always been linked to radio functions because "Radio, unlike other apparatuses, is reduced to the signal of a voice articulating reciprocal invisibilities" (Mowitt, 2011: 75). in the context of its technology, the radio is a mechanical institution that in its characteristic of capturing an auditorium and in the way that early in its history it gained importance in the most varied facets of societies (politics, training, entertainment, help and support) inserted based on what we can call mass culture with

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<sup>9</sup> It is no accident that many adepts and true opera aficionados reject the idea of listening to it on CD or on the radio, considering opera to be an art that, in addition to being heard, is to be seen. The reduction of this art only to hearing eliminates the real enjoyment of it.

content addressed in a multidirectional way (one to many), still on the scope of modern literacy.

It was Schaeffer who saw it best and who worked it best. The curtain is present on the radio. It is, for example, between the speaker and the listener. The curtain is between the orchestra that interprets a certain song and the listener who listens to it on his radio. The curtain is exactly the radio, the means of reproduction, the dematerialization: “Even so, this is but mere art; the aleatory effects of the *claque* can, in fact, be eliminated, according to Villiers, by mechanizing the process. This is the ‘Glory Machine,’ which will be constituted by the auditorium itself, where the entire audience will surreptitiously be transformed into the *claque*” (Weiss, 2001: 09).

Throughout his work in the French public radio studios, Pierre Schaeffer sought to find music capable of consolidating itself in a new aesthetic and using tools<sup>10</sup> little or nothing used until then in musical composition because they are not the most conventional objects for composition musical. The motivation of this artist was musical composition using concrete objects, everyday situations and finding a set of theoretical bases for the composition of this type of music. On the one hand, the practical aspect of sound and, on the other, a theoretical aspect: In those early days, Schaeffer’s improvised compositional techniques were indissociable from an improvised ontology, not only in search of a concrete music but a basic theoretical unit upon which to compose such music.” (Kane, 2014: 15). In an early phase of this artist's work, there is an attraction for the notion of object, understood as physical matter, and the possibility that this object can play a role in the constitution of a song. But this concept of sound object was gaining a new perspective and the possibility of sound manipulation allowed in the studio was gaining new forms in which the important thing was no longer the physical object, but the capacity for sound manipulation, making the sound produced from given object to gain a life of its own, to gain autonomy of object and to free itself from its origin. It is here that, in our view, is the true presence of the notion of the *acousmatic* in Schaeffer's work. From this point, the artist takes us to another term, *sound fragment*, which is a piece of recording, the effect emitted from a sound object. Here, there is a total dematerialization of the object because the important thing becomes the recording of that sound: “Identifying the sound fragment was an important step in breaking the grip of the physical-causal source. The recorded fragment, not the physical source, acquired the plasticity of compositional

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<sup>10</sup> Some tools: clock alarms, bicycle bells, pieces of wood, coconut shells, trains etc.

material.” (Kane, 2014: 16). Schaeffer was one of the precursors of the creation of new theories associated with a practice verified in the work done in the studio and in the experiences that were presented in the notion of the sonorous. The power of creation was vast with possibilities for new experiences and for the discovery felt through the construction of sound metamorphoses.

### **A Portuguese case: TSF - Rádio Jornal**

First, inserted in the Portuguese movement of Rádios Piratas, and later in the organizational development resulting from the legalization process, some of the radio projects that were born in the 1980s were gaining a strong consistency and became strongholds of an avant-garde radio culture. Some more structured and defined projects propose to face national radio stations, challenging the installed system with the purpose of being more than mere local radio stations.

In this regard, it is important to highlight the TSF radio<sup>11</sup>, which is considered to be “... one of the most solid projects during the period of Portuguese pirate radio” (Bonixe, 2012: 319) and which would become a national reference radio station. Among its founding group are important radio professionals such as: Emídio Rangel<sup>12</sup>, Adelino Gomes<sup>13</sup>, David Borges<sup>14</sup>, Fernando Alves<sup>15</sup> and António Macedo<sup>16</sup>. A group of radio professionals who, through the formation of a cooperative, developed a project with their own ideas and whose component was the formation of a new generation of radio broadcasters and sound designers. On a regular basis, the broadcasts started in 1988 and soon it was noticed that there were new ideas brought by a group of professionals who found it difficult to put them into practice in the radios where they worked. A new way of thinking about radio, innovative and that resulted, above all, by three factors:

- i) New ideas;
- ii) Skills acquired by some professionals in overseas radios where the environment had developed more solidly than in mainland Portugal;
- iii) A youth committed to the transformation of society through the sound environment.

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<sup>11</sup> One of the elements of research on the TSF was the conversation with the TSF sound engineer, Mésicles Helin

<sup>12</sup> Portuguese journalist who lived between 1947 and 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Portuguese journalist who was born in 1944.

<sup>14</sup> Portuguese journalist who was born in 1949.

<sup>15</sup> Portuguese journalist.

<sup>16</sup> Portuguese radio host born in 1950.

With the TSF, the sound of the radio gained a new importance capable of comparing it to the image: “[the birth of TSF] It brought the importance of making the sound something comparable to the image on television. We wanted, through sound, to bring the power to show actions, environments, feelings, experiences and emotions of each content to go to the antenna”(Helin). A respect for sound and its characteristic of creating environments and being able to bring the pulse of the experience to the radio through sound images of a reality that was being journalistically covered. The radio becomes even closer to people because life is reflected on the radio and because “... all the power of the radio is in the listener's ability to imagine, and exploring, in these moments, its most aesthetic aspect” ( Cordeiro, 2005: 04). The listened is life and not something distant and outside the context of the listeners. Once again, the notion of telepresence is noted because the presence of the sounds of life is intended to create ambiences and, with this, to transport the listener to a certain place. The importance of sounds, the innovative way in which the sound was thought at TSF and the importance of sounds to tell a story, are subjects deepened in the conversation with the TSF sound artist Mécicles Helin: by João Paulo Baltazar, editor of a weekend magazine called O Som dos Pedais. The challenge, which was launched to all [TSF] soundplants, was to tell stories with sounds only. It was very marginal. Imagine an action of the day, a walk or a trip, told only with sounds. Without verbal narrative and without the journalist's writing. Everything was sound. Words could enter as long as they belonged to the captured environment. The word was a sound. We took a trip on tram 28, the zoo, the beach, the awakening. The rubric was called Mercados' Ears, had 3 or 4 minutes”(Helin). When asked whether he agreed or not with the expression: TSF brought the sounds of life to the radio, Mécicles Helin does not refute it by saying: “That's right. That expression makes perfect sense because even in the reports we started to build the scenarios that the journalist lived in”. TSF brought a new lease of life to the radio. It innovated because it managed to do things that until then were not done, such as placing a microphone in the stadiums where the reports were made exclusively to capture the ambient sound of the stadium, to capture the feeling and ambience of the stadium. Today everyone does that, because it makes all the difference if we hear a deaf report in a studio or a report with an environment surrounding what is going on”(Helin).

TSF assumed itself from the beginning as a newspaper radio or news radio. A position demonstrated over the 30 years that it takes through special care in the way of working with information and doing journalism: “... the identity and image of are built according

to the news information of the station that is assumed as the aspect that distinguishes it in the national panorama, TSF - Rádio Notícias ”(Cordeiro, 2005: 2). In the first broadcasts, innovation was noticeable: news blocks every 30 minutes, production of daily broadcasts associated with the concept of mornings, afternoons and informative nights, a model later adopted by other stations such as Antena 1 and openness to the participation of listeners in spaces of free and public opinion like the role of radio in the beginning was described. The coverage of the great Chiado fire in Lisbon in August 1988 was a milestone for the young TSF. An emblematic broadcast that won the Gazeta Reportagem de Rádio Award in 1988. It was the opportunity for TSF professionals to show what they were coming to. In a radio scenario with little distinction between the stations existing at the time, TSF assumed itself as different and with an innovative positioning. The news radio made TSF impose itself in the public space through journalism. The Chiado fire was the event that made it possible to spread that intention: “We only thought about radio and what happened that day was that because we all ran to Chiado to ask what we could do? So the TSF had reporters on every corner, on each site there was a technician. We were all mobilized and made all the difference ”(Helin). It was the journalist Nuno Roby who set the tone for a special broadcast. “For the air it was the sounds of constant gas explosions that revealed an almost warlike scenario, where the magic of the radio allowed the listener to try to understand everything that was going on” (Mendonça, 2015: 30). TSF assumed itself as the only one in the information, with news coverage models unpublished for the time of events such as the trip of the Lusitânia Expresso boat to Timor in action for the independence of that territory and the Persian Gulf war (1990-91), with the TSF to be one of the first media outlets worldwide to have a free correspondent in Kuwait (Mendonça, 2015).

The willingness to innovate was also verified through the creation of new forms of interaction with listeners, “TSF was the radio that created the open antenna in our country ...” (Cordeiro, 2005: 04). Until the appearance of the Forum TSF program in 1995, the participation of listeners in antenna on Portuguese radio stations was limited to musical requests, participation in hobbies and, in less frequent cases, the intimate conversations that occurred during the early hours of programs with this goal. With TSF, listeners gained the opportunity to participate in debates and discussions promoted by the radio. They had the opportunity to present their own ideas. It is recalled that the TSF was founded in the movement of the Pirates and local radio stations that triggered in Portugal in the 1980s and brought people closer to the discussion of local and regional themes. The



opening of broadcasting space for the free participation of listeners is one of the major points of the approach that has taken place with the radio medium because this activity can be seen as a new instrument of citizenship and participation, which meets the ideas developed in the years 30th century by Bertolt Brecht and Rudolf Arnheim and the consolidation of the ideas of private radio with public service (Cordeiro, 2005). The space for discussion was widened and the radio got closer to people. It was no longer just the possibility to follow the discussion of various subjects, but the possibility to participate in that discussion. Portuguese democracy, still young and looking for spaces where it could consolidate and assert itself, found here, in the participation of listeners in radio debates, a framework for its strengthening. The participation of listeners was, and is, a contribution to the strengthening of democracy because it demonstrates tolerance, openness to difference of opinion and plurality. This openness is not found in countries governed by a dictatorship regime because there is no room for debate and contradiction, the opening of communication channels for interaction between listeners and the media themselves, in most cases owned or controlled by the regime. , is denied by building a fictitious railing that prevents the crossing of opinions and a denial of the new and the other. However, it is wrong to say that in dictatorial systems the population does not have access to models of interaction with the media. This access exists, in some cases in massive participation, with radio and television programs lasting for hours. But they are controlled participations and only with the function of confirming that closing because they are participations controlled to the smallest detail by the propaganda machines. Participations are rehearsed in a speech prepared not to legitimize democracy or plurality, but, on the contrary, to reflect an attitude of pro-regime propaganda and praise for the system. Portugal gagged by censorship before the revolution that took place on April 25, 1974, had already had its railing through tight control over what was broadcast by the media and with the absence of plural spaces of interaction in order for listeners to have the opportunity to express their opinions on the most varied topics. Openness and plurality is one of the social mechanisms for affirming democracy, because the antenna was open to any opinion as long as it was presented in accordance with the rules of common sense and education. The TSF Forum, in its two hours of daily broadcast, is an opening space for modern Portugal after April 25 and has spread as a model.

The radio was even closer to the populations because it allowed a new interactivity. A new way of looking at telepresence because the possibility of expressing opinion transports listeners to a new space, which is the space for discussion without the

need for a corporeal presence. The listeners were no longer mere listeners because in the case of those who freely participated in the various debates promoted, they also helped to create and make radio and contributed to the formation of the contents. The public space became broader, with the theme of the debate, contaminating other audiovisual media such as television. From the letters to the director of the written press, we moved to an area open to the voice of citizens, a principle that is also expressive in the new digital media.

### Conclusion

By wishing to study radio in its wake and contemporary hybridity, the possibility of confining itself to a period in the history of radio was eliminated from an early age and the intention was created to study the medium in its historical fullness to understand and deepen the role of its foundation sonic as pure sound medium. With this option, the conclusions become somewhat limited, but on the other hand they gain in interpretation.

In fact, it has been the characteristics of the sonic foundation, which has the voice as the basis for construction and dissemination, to define the role of radio in various contexts and to offer it different purposes. It is the sound dimension that dynamizes the radio in its various characteristics and functionalities. It becomes impossible to think about the radio without the perception of its sonic dimension. And even when the radio's thinking is done by deepening a technical context using the evolution of its equipment, sound is also present due to the purpose of that context: the transmission of the sound clearly in the reception conditions, today very far from the radio sound with interference, with poor tuning, and that it is still possible to recover on medium wave radio. Today that sound is inscribed in a Fononostalgia, like many others that we have in our sound matrix.

Thinking about the radio by itself and without recourse to sound is exhausted in thinking about a signal transmission technique. Despite the possibility offered to radio technology to emit non-audible signals, it becomes inferior and not very potent when compared to the potentialities generated by radio transmission of audible signals. To this we add the way in which the radio business model has developed and the parallel created with the way in which the majority of the population perceives what radio is: a broadcast model. Even the extension of the notion of listening to radio to systems outside the context of traditional tuning, confirms and values the importance of the sound as a structure of knowledge of the other, of the place and of a community identity that constitutes a place of belonging, cultural and social.

The great importance of the radio medium in the media ecosystem was gained through the use of sound and its qualities: the production and editing of a time and space based on the aesthetics of the contents and reception. The importance of the radio sonor's role does not prevent the possibility of deepening a possible visual characteristic in association with the radio. Radio listeners are becoming viewers by listening to the radio through new models of distribution of radio content that are associated with the Internet. In fact, this is not a new path: synchronizing sound and image is an old desire, already inscribed in Edison's laboratories, and which had its heyday with cinema. The two senses, through technology, began to be isolated, quickly moved towards a hybrid of forms in the media. This does not mean that the pure sound medium, the radio, disappears, but that it gains a new dimension with the entry into the new media platforms. If what we understand by literary has in sound (phonetics) its capacity to multiply times, spaces and characters through vision, what is only a sound wave can also approach a literacy that aspires to be a sensorium.