Listeners' profiles: perspectives and challenges in radio scenery

Perfis de ouvintes: perspectivas e desafios no panorama radiofônico

■ CLAUDIA IRENE DE QUADROS[a]
Universidade Federal do Paraná, Graduate Program in Communication. Curitiba – PR, Brazil

FLÁVIA LÚCIA BAZAN BESPALHOK[b]
Universidade Federal do Paraná, Professional e Technological Education Sector. Curitiba – PR, Brazil

GRAZIELA SOARES BIANCHI[c]
Universidade Estadual de Ponta Grossa, Graduate Program in Journalism. Ponta Grossa – PR, Brazil

MÔNICA PANIS KASEKER[d]
Universidade Estadual de Londrina, Education, Communication and Arts Center. Londrina – PR, Brazil

ABSTRACT
The main purpose of this paper is to consider possible radio listeners' profiles that can be used in a converging communication context. Based on literature review, we observe listeners' role, as well as communication exchanges over radio's history, and we think over reception in the age of convergence. We work with the habitus concept, according to Pierre Bourdieu and Norbert Elias, to analyze listeners and their relations towards radio. We also rely on Reception and on Digital Communication Studies to complement the theoretical discussion. Eight listeners categories have been created to understand these types of action regarding conventional and expanded radio.
Keywords: Listeners, audiences, transformations, convergence

RESUMO
A preocupação central deste artigo é refletir sobre possíveis perfis de radiouvinte que tenham validade em uma realidade comunicacional convergente. A partir de uma revisão teórica, procuramos observar o papel do ouvinte e as trocas comunicacionais ao longo da história do rádio, refletindo sobre a recepção na Era da Convergência. Utilizamos o conceito de *habitus* de Pierre Bourdieu e de Norbert Elias para analisar o ouvinte e suas relações com o rádio. Os estudos de recepção e de comunicação digital complementam a base teórica da pesquisa. Para compreender as ações do consumidor no rádio convencional e no rádio expandido, apresentamos oito categorias.
Palavras-chave: Ouvintes, públicos, transformações, convergência

[a] Postdoctoral scholar in Communication at Universidade Pompeu Fabra, professor and coordinator of the Graduate Program in Communication at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR). She is part of the research group COM XXI and Grupo de Rádio e Mídia Sonora do Intercom. Orcid: http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1322-8971. E-mail: clauquadros@gmail.com

[b] PhD in Communication and Languages (UTP) and professor at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR). She is part of the research group COM XXI (UFPR), the Incom (UTP) and Grupo de Rádio e Mídia Sonora do Intercom. Orcid: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3263-2542. E-mail: flabespa@gmail.com

[c] Professor of Journalism (Undergraduate and Gradute Program) at Universidade Estadual de Ponta Grossa (UEPG-PR). She is part of the research group COM XXI (UFPR) and Grupo de Rádio e Mídia Sonora do Intercom. Orcid: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4940-9849. E-mail: grazielabianchi@yahoo.com.br

[d] Journalist, master and PhD in Sociology, and professor of Radio Journalism at Universidade Estadual de Londrina (UEL). Orcid: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1613-6231. E-mail: mkaseker@gmail.com

LISTENER'S ROLE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

AT THE BEGINNING of the 21st century, we experience ways of communication which suggest different means by which we relate to them – in some cases, such means are rather distinct from the possibilities employed during the last century. Looking at these current reconfigurations, we observe that the radio reception phenomenon is changing, as it happens with other media's audiences. Our main concern, with this paper, is to ponder on possible radio listeners' profiles, which could be used in a converging communication reality.

We want to think, for instance, about today's offered possibilities to listeners, regarding interaction with their favorite radio stations and how it can affect its very definition. Likewise, we want to bring out other concerning questions, for these are also considered important. Is it still possible to talk about listeners only, with a specific kind of characteristics, or do we need to expand this concept? In this sense, how does the concept need to and can be thought? These are some inciting questions for a better understanding of today's radio reception reality. Therefore, we find important to acknowledge topics such as radio's evolution throughout the years and, particularly, transformations regarding radio and its audiences.

From the theoretical point of view, recent radio studies will help us deepen our comprehension about such phenomena, as well as other studies, which try to comprehend listeners' position in such communication context. Operatively, our paper resumes the historical relationship between radio and its audiences, especially by resorting to journals of the area; the aim is to comprehend how these profiles evolved and developed. Our main idea is to understand how a radio audience notion is presented today, but we also want to consider challenges and potentialities we might describe and bethink from that. We have, as an important support, papers developed for the Radio and Sound Media Research Group at Intercom – Interdisciplinary Communication Studies Brazilian Society, a scientific society which has been developing researches for over 30 years.

Thus, this paper intends to contribute with this study area, in order to provide a more deepened, focused look upon the audience-radio relationship. Our intention is to help comprehend what are the main topics that need to be observed in order to not only better understand listeners' position and presence in radio, in today's communication system, but also to propose acting ways for the radio stations, in view of the main characteristics we observe regarding the audience-radio relationship.

The radio listener is a social category, emerged by this very medium's emergency, and, throughout the way, it has suffered transformations not only in how to listen, but also in how to socially interact and to participate in radio's programs.

Thompson (1998) classifies interaction in three types, being face to face interaction, mediated interaction and mediated almost-interaction. About face to face interaction, emitter and receiver share the same space and time, so dialog is possible. On the other hand, mediated interaction occurs through a technical mean, such as a paper sheet, and time and space are not the same for emitter and receiver. Finally, mediated almost-interaction is the one introduced by media, for radio, television and newspaper messages are broadcasted under many different contexts, precluding simultaneous dialog. However, we can observe social interactions more widely, as social uses and appropriations of radio listening, producing other kinds of answers, not necessarily or directly affected by the programs.

Interactivity and participation are usually seen as ways of interaction, implying communication exchange, listeners' answers and expressions, being either synchronous or asynchronous, influenced or not by the stations' programs (Quadros; Lopez, 2014: 40-41).

This paper meditates about the roles listeners play in these many ways of interaction. We look for identifying social roles played by listeners during these interactions, which many times go beyond the radio universe and reverberate in other social spheres, such as politics, economy and culture.

We suggest looking at listeners' actions as from the habitus concept. For Pierre Bourdieu, habitus would be a structured structures system, acting as structuring structures, this is, social actions are concretely performed by individuals, but the chances to actualize them are, objectively, socially structured (Bourdieu, 2003: 68-69). One subject's action happens within the field and from the habitus, supposing there is a dialectical relation between subject and society. As for radio listeners, it is difficult to apply this notion, for these subjects come from different fields, and, besides being structured by each subject's action field, habitus is also constituted by other structures, such as family and religion structures, both with their own beliefs and symbolic games.

Habitus, therefore, is related to lifestyle, to a series of dispositions incorporated in certain social positions space. It could be defined, in turn, as a "generating and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position in an unequivocal lifestyle"[1] (Id., 1996: 21-22). Thereby, once habitus is a product of determined social positions, it also operates social distinctions. Namely, it generates both distinct and distinctive practices at the same time (Ibid.).

For this author, actions are commanded by the "sense of the game" and, thereat, they happen objectively adjusted to the situation, strategically produced. There is a practical sense in a subject's action, constantly adjusted to the immanent

[1] Quotes used in this paper were originally published in Portuguese or Spanish. We preferred translating them to English for better understanding.

A requirements of the game. Therefore, Bourdieu (2004: 24) says "habitus maintains a social world which produces an authentic ontological complicity, source of a conscienceless knowledge, of an intentionless intentionality and of a practical domain of the world's regularities".

Norbert Elias' vision is complementary to Bourdieu's, regarding social habitus. For this author, the complete repertoire of autoregulation social patterns an individual has to develop inside him or herself, when growing up and becoming a unique individual, is specific to each generation and, consequently, in a broader sense, specific to each society (Elias, 1994: 8). Relation between individual and society would be like a fabric "where people interweave variable images of their objects" (Ibid: 18). Society is, thereafter, "the simultaneous existence of many people, their life in common, their reciprocal acts, the totality of their mutual relationships […]. The relation between a part and a whole is a certain way of relationship, nothing else" (Ibid: 19).

The place an individual occupies on the social web predetermines his or her behavior's possibilities. Both Elias and Bourdieu consider the invisible order in this type of common life, which cannot be directly perceived, offers the individual a more or less restrict range of possible roles and behavior manners. Since birth, the person is inside a functional complex with a well-defined structure. One must abide to it, shape his or herself according to it and, perhaps, evolve based on it. Even freedom of choice, amongst the preexisting functions, is quite limited. So, we understand listeners' habitus is constantly changing along their life and in relation to the social, historical and cultural configuration.

We find important to understand some specific relations in order to advance acknowledgements about the communication reality we discuss here. We do so, especially, when we observe the development processes of listeners' profiles throughout the years. Specifically, our attention lies upon Brazilian radio context.

We find important to point this paper's ponderations, which discusses matters about radio listeners and other related conceptions, are directly connected to the investigation field where Reception Studies are included. This is because we are directly discussing about a subjects' position against media – in this particular case, radio.

Researchers and their groups, especially in Brazil and other Latin-American countries, are concerned in developing studies privileging the media content receiver's perspective in the discussions regarding several communication contexts. Such discussions are marked by many challenges, especially because of the fast changes we observe in communication sceneries, particularly in the

first decades of the 21st century, a consequence, as well, of different technological possibilities which allowed media to perform substantial shifts in their structures, their content and, by effect, in ways and forms of consumption.

Based on aforementioned reflections related to reception studies' development context, we find relevant to recapitulate, though briefly, some conceptions regarding this study field, especially in a Latin-American scope. Such conceptions are directly linked to our discussions about the notions of listeners.

Therefore, in Latin America, popular culture, strongly marked by orality and by exclusion, has made a huge difference for communication studies, this is, the two axes aforementioned, culture and power, are permeated by the crossing of the popular and the subaltern. This crossing demands from Latin-American communication studies choosing themes and research problems whose theoretical-methodological treatment rework notions of subject/subjectivity and their relations with the collectivities they are a part of[2]. (Figaro; Grohmann, 2015: 5)

This perspective brought by the authors is related to issues which directly address elementary points in the studies that consider singularities which are consistent with the notions about radio listeners. The idea of a popular culture strongly marked by orality is problematized, and such oral culture is one of the main aspects to conform radio culture's development, which is directly linked to radio's advancement and expansion in Brazil, and to the very notion of a radio listener in Brazil, as well as in other Latin-American countries. These are relevant considerations, and they provide subsidy for better thinking about how a shifting radio context is organized.

Still discussing about the importance of published studies and also about the notion of reception itself, we find appropriate to recover other considerations, these ones operating in a complementary direction towards the work of authors previously mentioned.

The cultural acknowledgement of alterities could be combined with the critical and creative reception of multimedia communication, in which is very clear that the "receiver"/symbolic producer is, in fact, a subject-communicator. There were never only receivers, for resignification processes happened even under the most authoritarian forms of inter-relation[3]. (Maldonado, 2013: 29)

As from this expressed point of view, notions related to the receiver are problematized. Although they introduce different terminologies, they aim to ponder on quite related matters. In this sense, we find adequate to locate another

[2] In the original article: "Desse modo, na América Latina, a cultura popular, fortemente marcada pela oralidade e pela exclusão, fez toda a diferença para os estudos da comunicação, ou seja, os dois eixos acima apresentados, cultura e poder, são permeados pelo atravessamento do popular e do subalterno. Esse atravessamento exige dos estudos latino-americanos da comunicação a eleição de temas e de problemáticas de pesquisa cujo tratamento teórico-metodológico fazem retrabalhar as noções de sujeito/subjetividade e de suas relações com as coletividades das quais faz parte".

[3] In the original article: "El reconocimiento cultural de las alteridades podría juntarse con la recepción crítica y creativa de comunicación multimedia, en la cual queda mucho más claro que el 'receptor'/productor simbólico es en la realidad un sujeto-comunicante. Nunca hubo solo receptores, los procesos de resignificación se dieron hasta en las formas más autoritarias de interrelación".

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important aspect of role-defining questions. The subject is considered the main point of the developed discussion regarding the notion of reception:

> The subject concept is what needs to be problematized. The individual/social, subject, when contextualized in social relations' complexity with collectivity, in everyday life, in institutions, in power relations, in class relations, in conflicts, in speeches and in media starts to be comprehended as a particular and historical being, as patient/agent of the social transformation[4]. (Figaro; Grohmann, 2015: 05)

The authors continue to point communication relations as essential to comprehend reception: "Latin-American reception studies interest us in order to comprehend how subjects relate to media, how these relations happen and how effects of sense are built" (Ibid.: 9).

Regarding radio, specifically, we find important to point the challenge investigation processes have when we observe the link with reception, this is, with listeners. Studies joining these two aspects are still scarce[5]. Even the studies already made leave uncovered some topics future investigations need to embrace.

Thus, is important to consider this double approach – relating radio studies and reception studies – presents specific demands for the investigation process. Such fact, in many cases, becomes a challenge for researchers and their investigation groups, so the relevance and the necessity of a study perspective of such nature are highlighted.

This paper presents eight categories with the intention to comprehend consumers' actions towards conventional and expanded radio. These categories are thought to register tendencies regarding ways of listening and interacting with radio. They are neither static nor excluding among themselves. They try to outline, didactically, listeners' profiles since the dawn of radio in Brazil.

LISTENERS TYPOLOGY
Enthusiast listeners

Initially, in Brazil, radio stations worked as elite clubs. "A radio society would anticipate in its statutes the existence of associates whose obligation would be to collaborate with a certain monthly fee" (Calabre, 2002: 12). Although many people would enroll and soon quit paying those fees, it is fair to say radio was an enterprise for radio listening lovers, who would arrange hearing sessions by appointment and with programs chosen by the associates. It was common for these listeners to borrow their records to fill in the programs, in exchange of a

[4] In the original article: "O conceito de sujeito é o que precisa ser problematizado. O indivíduo/social, sujeito, ao ser contextualizado na complexidade das relações sociais com a coletividade, no cotidiano, nas instituições, nas relações de poder, nas relações de classe, nos conflitos, nos discursos e nas mídias passa a ser compreendido como ser particular e histórico, paciente/agente da transformação social".

[5] In this sense, we find important to observe the study developed by Anna Paula Knewitz (2014), who maps the recent theses and dissertations about radio and reception in Brazil.

thank you message on air. Besides, the first radio listening equipment, the crystal radios, were, in many cases, built by the listeners themselves, who would acquire imported pieces and build their sets based on manuals, which were widespread by specialized magazines and by societies (Matallana, 2006).

So, this phase was the dawn of a process which would perpetuate itself the following years. Such process regards relations between radio listeners and radio transmissions. Speaking of that time, we still find difficult to talk about programs and radio stations *per se*. However, we observe radio listeners' genesis precisely from that moment on.

It is worth mentioning, though, the lack of researches focused on radio listening at that time. Some Brazilian studies about this topic aim to register and ponder on the matter by analyzing processes involving radio memories (Bianchi, 2010; Maia, 2003). Thus, we can realize there are limits imposed by the inherent conditions of the context, whether it is the death of memory holders – whose memories might be reported – or the lack of other aids, such as registers like archives and sound collections, which might allow analyzing the subject under different perspectives.

Still, we consider important placing that specific time as the originator of what we previously pointed in this paper as a conformation of the radio listening habitus. From a rather initial acknowledgment of potentialities regarding the then new medium, we can observe a binding movement towards radio, a characteristic soon to be developed and reinforced the following years, as radio structure in Brazil continued to spread and become more specialized.

Regarding that period of time, Ferraretto (2012) highlights how the then new medium insertion was perceived by those who, at that moment, constituted its audience. That time was what the author calls "implementation phase", which was just the moment when radio transmission experiments were held in public events. It was a time of certain confusion about the notion of radiotelephony, the most approximated knowledge the potential radio audience had at the time.

Regarding radio listeners' participation at that phase, as well as the development of radio programs, Ferraretto (2012) indicates some topics to comprehend how radio advanced during its first movements in Brazil.

> Among bourgeois values, therefore in vogue, irradiations had an educational and cultural pretention, including, besides recorded and live music, even scientific lectures. In this scenario, the most popular music expressions, such as samba, initially faced resistance to be broadcasted. Radio clubs and societies were, thus, oriented towards an idealistic elite association, mixed with a certain technological

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enthusiasm: once turning to illustrate its listeners, a cultural and scientific perspective was imposed[6]. (Ferraretto, 2012: 9)

According to the author, we can comprehend this radio listening conformation, which, during this medium's development, at first, was strictly attached to a scientifically characterized broadcast, related to a "high culture" approach. Besides, due to its constitution in radio listening clubs and societies, such conformation permitted a quite limited inclusion to this universe, whether because of the number of existing groups (small and concentrated in a few cities throughout the country), whether because of a budget limit, once participating in hearing sessions meant contributing as an associate, whether because the broadcasted content was not so attractive, or even because of other reasons concerning that time's radio context which might be listed.

Therefore, we find fair to say listeners, in those first years of the radio era, were, above all, curious, discoverers who, while having contact with the sound universe the new medium provided, even in its preliminary state, turned out to be enthusiasts. This early condition must be considered and comprehended because it bases the constitution of a later radio listener status, which we will hereafter develop.

Builder listeners

In an initial movement towards radio listening and its constitutive process, we observe several expressions which made possible radio habitus to be configured and developed.

After a later development stage of this medium, when radio was already a business and became gradually a part of people's daily lives, we can also observe a shift regarding radio listening's meaning. During radio's professionalization, listeners had a fundamental role: to collaborate, in an extent, with stations' programming grid making.

After a first attempt, with an intention of educating listeners with cult programs, radio became interested in increasing the audience – thus, making its content more popular. For such an effort, listeners themselves were searched for as potential program critics and beacons, as mentioned by Calabre (2002: 26):

> Program templates were released and stations measured ratings. The most common way of doing so was by promoting contests and distributing gifts. Secondly, came the analysis of received mail. If audience's reaction was negative, the show would be reformed or withdrawn. The more the quantity of radio stations increased, the pickier became listeners.

We find worthy of mention such phase coincides with the so-called Golden Age of radio, when stations were already structured and also, with a help from advertising, regulated, still in the 1930s, becoming affordable businesses.

Thus, radio listening habitus, built still during the early contacts with this medium, was now strengthened and expanded. Possibilities offered by programs – which also, to some extent, aimed to establish interaction with radio listeners, whether because of live shows with audience's participation, or even through letters to different radio protagonists and programs – were further and further developed by radio productions and longed for listeners. Calabre (2002) recalls most music programs happened live and with a studio audience. "Releasing popular songs during these shows, such as samba or Carnival music, was common practice, because each song could be tested, so audience's acceptance could be verified" (Calabre, 2002: 39).

During this time of radio's ascension and further penetration in Brazilian society, listeners' behavior was being built, and, in a way, they both started influencing radio production and acting as influencers for other potential listeners of their favorite stations and programs.

As aforementioned, some researches focus on analyzing uses and appropriations by radio listeners of the so-called Golden Age of radio. In this sense, we find possible to understand such period as radio's full experience. Radio became part of some people's daily lives, as well as a longed for object for other people – indeed, a consumer good.

Radio listeners who were interviewed for researches focused on recapping information about that time (Bianchi, 2010; Maia, 2003) report very similar interests, realities and senses regarding acknowledgements and established relations with radio. Among narrated memories, topics concerning the desire and the difficulties in obtaining a radio set, the presence to follow live broadcasted shows, acting radio figures of that time, among others, are recurrent.

We consider affirming, then, a more perceptible, substantial notion of radio listeners, who were approaching and understanding the medium better each day, was developed during that time. Therefore, they also came to act as influencers among other listeners, and even among radio stations and programs.

Consumer listeners

Another listeners' acting facet regards their role as consumers. Radio was an icon of modern times and spread urbanity characteristics, creating consumer market directly, due to advertised products, and even indirectly, during shows which talked about new lifestyles and consumption habits. As Calabre

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(2002: 29-30) recalls, radio was multinationals' favorite medium to release new brands and products. At Rádio Nacional, the station's strength was measured by received mail.

> Sponsors for *The Pursue of Happiness* promised artists' photographs and an album with chapters' summaries to listeners who mailed a Colgate label. During the first month, 48,000 requests came, and expectations were of an increase. Sponsorship ceased[7]. (Rádio Nacional apud Saroldi; Moreira, 2005: 104)

[7] In the original article: "Os patrocinadores de *Em Busca da Felicidade* prometeram fotografias dos artistas e um álbum com o resumo da mesma aos ouvintes que enviassem um rótulo *Colgate*. No primeiro mês chegaram 48 mil pedidos e as perspectivas eram de aumento. Cessou o oferecimento".

We can consequently observe such consumption related characteristic, which obviously is not exclusive to radio, kept being reaffirmed. This means radio has played an important role along the years as a space for publicizing an infinite amount of products and services.

However, we judge relevant pointing out a series of transformations in this radio-advertising relationship since mid-20th century. In this sense, a first highlight aspect is how consumption itself shifted over the years. Especially during the Golden Age, radio stood out as one of the main broadcasters for consumption possibilities in the societies it was located. Due to this prominent position, radio also propitiated, with ads, offering products in general, but, to a certain point, they came with a proper notion of cultural consumption.

Like the coin and its mold metaphor, used by Elias (1994: 28) to explain the habitus concept, we can say, while consumer listeners' behavior was shaped by structural conditions, they also actively participated in the making of their own modern cultural consumption market.

So, it is right to say radio helped building a few consumption notions among its listeners. Obviously, we should also admit and point out advertising investments in Brazilian radio diminished gradually along the way. If during the Golden Age radio stood out as the main channel for advertising investments, it did not keep up with such status the following years, when television arrived in Brazil, during the 1950s. Nowadays, data regarding the advertising market's investment share in different media reveal radio as receiving the lowest amounts in general.

Fan listeners

"If today I am next to him, tomorrow I might perfectly be just like him", said Mario Lago in his book *Bagaço de beira-estrada*. He was talking about the belonging and social participation feeling listeners built when joining fan-clubs (apud Saroldi; Moreira, 2005: 122). When they describe the dynamics in Radio

Queen pageants, the authors recall fan voting was held via cut-out coupons published in specialized magazines, such as *Radioland* and *Radio Magazine*. Audiences' euphoria was so huge the expression *macacas de auditório*[8] appeared. It was invented by Nestor de Holanda to name women in the audience, usually afro-descendant women, "many times marked by certain hysteria" (Saroldi; Moreira, 2005: 124).

8 Literally, "audience monkeys".

According to Haussen (1997: 58), in the 1950s, the city of Rio de Janeiro alone had around 50 programs with an audience. Fan audiences usually consisted of housemaids, seamstresses, factory workwomen and housewives. Calabre (2002: 48) says "these radio shows created and fed the fan-clubs phenomenon". Fans were split in organized gangs, who would travel to follow their idols, raise funds for parties and gifts, and feed rivalry, which also filled pages in specialized magazines. Calabre (2002) tells fans would commonly camp in queues, during programs' eves, in order to get a ticket. "They slept on the sidewalk and woke up on the street. Everything was worth it so one could see her favorite artist up close, as well as compete for prizes handed out by radio show hosts" (2002: 48).

Another aspect Moreira and Saroldi (2005: 121-122) highlight is audiences' behavior during such programs. "Audiences were countless times labeled as 'no-mannered' due to the quantity of enthusiastic shouting, provoked by an idol showing up or by the organized gangs, during contests drawing prizes to spectators". Because of such phenomenon, the firstly free tickets ended up being charged, so a social selection of viewers could be possible.

When we observe fan listeners' habitus, a shift in radio's social configuration becomes clear. Once restrict to elites, the medium was, after this context, now popularized.

On-the-scene listeners

Radio shows with an audience gave rise to another phenomenon: listeners' participation on the scene. Whether in talent contests or quiz programs, listeners started not only having direct contact with their idols, but also becoming part of the spectacle. Great names of popular music were discovered during talent contests, such as Dolores Duran, Emilinha Borba, Isaura Garcia, Angela Maria and many others (Aguiar, 2010).

This format's main element was people – who performed and judged. Regardless of the hosts' methods – who submitted candidates to all sorts of jokes, like gong and horn sounds –, queues to participate in these programs were huge. Every

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⁹ In the original article: "O principal elemento desse formato era o povo – que se apresentava e que julgava. Independente dos métodos utilizados pelos apresentadores, que submetiam os candidatos a gongadas, buzinadas e a todo tipo de pilhéria, as filas desse para participar desses programas eram imensas. O grande sonho de todo calouro era o de ganhar um prêmio e, talvez, um contrato com uma emissora de rádio. O público ouvinte (do auditório ou não) que acompanhava todo o processo considerava-se correspensável pelo sucesso ou pelo fracasso desse novo artista que surgia".

contestant's big dream was to win the prize and, maybe, get a contract with a radio station. Listeners (both in the audience and at home) who followed the process considered themselves co-responsible for this new rising artist's failure or success[9]. (Calabre, 2002: 49)

However, many other characters, in all sorts of programs, would never become famous. As told by Saroldi and Moreira (2005: 83), some people, who attended audiences from dusk until late night for years straight, started standing out as "real" characters in these programs. The authors mention "the gratuitous laughter one got when ridiculing a member of the audience". We find possible to see this kind of show as a predecessor to expanded radio, which came up with the internet and will be discussed further ahead, once many programs, due to the audience's 500-people limit, were transferred to larger theater rooms. These big venues ensured audiences' presence and interaction with multiple language attractions, for these were programs one could watch, listen to or participate in. Interaction schemes still present in today's radio and television stations were first used during the Golden Age. One example is Rádio Nacional's program called "Happiness Knocks Your Door", in which a van went through Rio de Janeiro's neighborhoods until finding a listener, whose letter had been draught in the audience, with special guest, singer Emilinha Borba. As analyzed by Tinhorão, mentioned by Saroldi and Moreira (2005: 120), the audience consists of "people who, ultimately, were great clothing shops' mass of clients, as well as potential buyers for cleaning, pharmaceutical and beauty products made by small Brazilian factories and labs, which were responsible for audience shows' commercial sponsorship"[10].

¹⁰ In the original article: "a massa dos clientes das grandes lojas de roupas e dos compradores potenciais dos produtos de limpeza, farmacêuticos ou de beleza de pequenas fábricas e laboratórios brasileiros, responsáveis pelos patrocínios comerciais dos programas de auditório".

Quadros (2014) recalls radio focused on information and service, during the 1960s, so on-the-scene listeners were made into information sources. They would phone radio stations and inform them about disasters, take part in the lost and found segments, and share recipes or even research sources for school work. Many artists had migrated to television, and, consequently, audience itself became radio's main act: "many radio hosts started presenting personal dramas, unrequired love stories and the rare happy moments in listeners' lives" (Kischinhevsky, 2007: 23). At the dawn of the 1970s, besides dramatized letters read on air, telephone's popularization increased listeners' synchronous interaction (Quadros, 2014: 44). Both landlines and, later, cellphones were preponderant in order to make listeners appear as radio's attraction. With their questions, opinions, personal stories, jokes, music or guidance requests, and traffic information, listeners became lead figures in many moments during radio programs.

In this sense, we can observe a habitus shift when subjects changed their acting field. For listeners, hearing their name or their story on air reinforced their belonging and social existence sense. But, once becoming radio professional, habitus starts embodying other structuring factors, other "game rules".

Internet-user listeners

Listeners' protagonism reached a new level when radio entered the internet. Brazilian newspapers had their digital version in 1995, one year before radio, but these were mere copies of their print editions (Quadros, 2002). Technological evolution, users' navigation experience and abilities communication professionals acquired contributed in many media transformations. Still in 1995, Real Audio appeared, allowing sound reproduction on the internet via streaming. One year later, in the United States only, "there were more than one thousand radio stations of all sorts (rock, classical, country, News, sports, interviews, among others) on the web" (Moreira, 1999: 213). According to Sônia Virgínia Moreira, the same period registered only 20 radios in Brazil. During this first stage, radio stations attempted to disseminate their image on the internet, while showing profiles and information about their hosts (Alves, 2004). During the second stage, the aim was to develop proper content for this medium, in order to attract more listeners. When antenna radio stations released institutional data on the internet, they intended establishing more bonds with their regular listeners and with new listeners/internet users.

At this stage, radio professionals and researchers had great concerns, regarding new forms of interaction. In Brazil, journalist Heródoto Barbeiro highlighted, as the internet developed, "conceiving radio outside the constant interaction between emitter and receiver" was no longer possible (Barbeiro, 2004: 137). Before that, researcher Nélia Del Bianco (1999) said radio programs should become segmented, no longer aiming a general public. "Tendency today is making adjusted programming, in tune with the aimed audience's taste, behavior, values and attitudes" (Del Bianco, 1999: 204).

During the 2000s, many researchers looked over the impact communication technology had on radio (Lopez; Mustafá, 2012). Interest about the interaction between listener and radio host was not recent, but it was intensified as internet developed and audience conquered more power: more possibilities to decide when and how to consume information and entertainment. Thus, Mohazir Salomão (2003) discusses the need to rethink radio programming in view of this new consumer. The author thinks "the new receivers demand competences

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from media. They still want a 'companion' medium, but they want this medium to help them get ready for daily life war" (Salomão, 2003: 32).

Researchers in this filed continued to point the need to explore interactivity potentialities to establish bonds with the listeners. Radio studies during the 2000s (Lopez et. al., 2015) demonstrate most stations arrived too late on the internet and interactivity potentialities on their institutional websites were little explored. Twenty years after radio entered the internet, internet-user listeners find new interaction forms on the stations' websites. Miriam Quadros and Débora López (2014) list the technological tools which allowed interactivity between listeners and radio. Among them, there are pools, forums, e-mail, blog, and social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter. "Inside these spaces, listeners are able to interact with the station and its professionals, as well as with other listeners" (Quadros; López, 2014: 46).

Internet-user listeners' role in this communication exchange is fundamental, because the use they make of radio and its content has directly affected this medium's interactional practices. The experience listeners acquired on the internet along these twenty years is related to shifts radio made in order to follow audience's tendencies. For instance, radio started using digital networks when observing how people appropriated these environments. For Lopez et. al. (2015, p.193), "if audiences, before, saw radio as their companion and idol, under a more idealized, vertical relation, and hoped to hear themselves during the programs, to feel valued […] now we walk towards a horizontal relation". We understand that, in many cases, this horizontal relation is simulated by radio stations, due to political, social and economic reasons of a market struggling to reinvent and position itself. Recent studies (Bespalhok, 2015) testify there are interaction initiatives with listeners, but there is still a long way to run. In many cases, last century strategies are still used, allowing internet-user listeners to compete for prizes. The difference is, instead of letters, now competitions are held through comments, likes or shares of a post published in the station's fanpage. A research made with three radio stations in Curitiba (Ibid.) verified this kind of viral promotion has been adopted in order to raise new listeners for the stations' dial, as well as spreading even further through the internet. Besides promotions, stations appropriate internet language and publish memes with catchy phrases, or food pictures, and also explore listeners' fan aspect, publishing news not only about famous *sertanejo*[11] singers, but also about their own hosts, who, since the beginning of radio, incite listeners' adoration and a desire to meet "the voice's owner".

In this sense, we comprehend how habitus is reproduced on the generation flow and maintains some "inherited" aspects, even though structuring aspects are reconfigured.

[11] A very popular song genre, similar to country music.

Participant listeners

Throughout all of its development stages, radio has always given space for listeners' participation, whether in its pioneer beginning, through mail, during the Golden Age, with live audiences or via telephone, or now, with the internet. After microprocessors were invented, in 1971, computer-mediated communication was established and intertwined with "our life's fabric" (Castells, 1999: 91). In this context, stations started using internet in search of internet-user listeners, who gained more participation options, especially with digital social networks. As Kischinhevsky (2012: 10) explains, today's radio left the dial and migrated to "microblogs, to relationship sites and to radio-based social media". Also, landlines were replaced by cellphones, a gadget now present in every social level, and new interaction options continued to emerge, such as SMS (Short Message Service) and, more recently, WhatsApp. This one allows listeners to send not only text messages, but also audio messages to be used during radio programs.

In a process Fidler (1997) calls *mediamorphosis*, radio started adapting to these transformations, once hertz and bits started mingling, which made stations update listeners' participation strategies to new platforms: they ask listeners to collaborate, via SMS or Twitter, with traffic information; on Facebook, they have promotions for people who like their fanpage, and they also stimulate likes and comments by posting music requests, pictures and/or news about artists, and even betting on memes; radio hosts make questions or report news and ask for audio or text comments via WhatsApp; they open telephone lines for music requests or messages, thus participant listeners still have a voice on radio.

Though radio widened to digital social networks, the kind of participation still predominant today is not the one advocated by some contemporary scholars, like Cebrian Herreros (2008: 354). He identifies a permanent shift in roles, for there are no longer "fixed and permanent emitters and receivers. Depending on the case, they play one role or the other". Participation is greater, but roles are still not well defined, especially when we analyze traditional stations which started in dial and now are also on the internet. What information and communication technologies allow now is producing new formats, such as the podcast, which enables anyone to have his or her own show, and to choose programs, editorial guidance and formats to broadcast, without the need of a radio station, whether an already existing station or a new one. These new possibilities are a part of the convergence scenario, which creates a new kind of listener. However, we find important to acknowledge some of listeners' habitus characteristics remain since earlier contexts.

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Convergent listeners

Previous studies (Quadros; Kaseker, 2014) show media convergence can be observed through technological, professional, economical, content and audience aspects. The latter involves listeners' role in convergence age. Although the communication power given to listeners during such a time is subject to critics, these people now have a receiver/emitter status, and Kischinhevsky (2012) points out the many forms of interaction such a scenario allows:

> Radio content distribution via internet, with web radios, podcasts and social radio, develops new interactional practices and new reception modalities, with multiple temporalities and ambiences, which reconfigures radio as a social and cultural mediation instance[12]. (Kischinhevsky, 2012: 429)

Expanded radio is the name this researcher adopts to define content produced for paid TV, websites, podcasts, mobile devices and digital social networks. He admits expanded radio's communication practices have more continuities than ruptures, but he highlights audio file sharing as an important innovation. Marcos Palacios (2003) also finds in memory a way of rupture, when he compares production and circulation processes in digital journalism and in traditional media. For this author, ruptures, continuities and potentialities can also be found in other digital communication characteristics (interactivity, customization, instantaneity, multimedia and hypertextuality). This paper also tries to identify ruptures, potentialities and continuities in listeners' role.

Kischinhevsky (2014: 155) stresses sharing provides "a new space for circulating user-produced content, but also to expose affections, intimacy, stories, oneself, in short, identity construction". When sharing content, listeners of the convergence age also reveal interests and establish bonds with expanded radio, with mediators and with other listeners. They do not establish a quite horizontal communication, but they do have more power than before.

Recent researches on interactivity, as the one aforementioned, relativize this convergence context, without the technological determinism early 1990s studies have shown. However, we notice concerns regarding audience – something evident on reception studies – have marked scientific discussions in the communication field. Efforts to comprehend interactions and listeners' role increase among radio and sound media researchers.

Lopez et. al. (2014: 194) says a listener is also a user. He or she "opines, creates ways to debate and breaks with stations' and/or with other radio products' communication barriers". This power given to consumers is highly criticized in communication studies, as the author herself evaluates. Henry Jenkins (2008)

[12] In the original article: "A distribuição de conteúdos radiofônicos via internet, por meio de web radios, podcasts e rádio social, traz o desenvolvimento de novas práticas interacionais e de novas modalidades de recepção, em múltiplas temporalidades e ambiências, reconfigurando o rádio como instância de mediação sociocultural".

acknowledges corporations have more power than individual consumers, but he stresses "convergence occurs inside individual consumers' brains and in their social interaction with other people" (Jenkins, 2008: 28). These consumer actions have been analyzed by the market, which tries to formulate strategies to attract audience by offering the content and the interaction convergent listeners long for.

During the Convergence Age, uses and appropriations a consumer makes of expanded radio content must be valued and respected.

> Audiences are increasingly aware of the ways companies transform their "labors of love" (in the case of fan culture) or expressions of personal identity (in the case of profiles on social network sites) into commodities to be bought and sold. (Jenkins; Green; Ford, 2014: 101)

This paper showed radio altered its programs in order to attract audiences along the years. We realize many experiences seem to be repeated in expanded radio. The relationship radio kept with live audience fans during the Golden Age is similar to the one happening on digital media. Radio stations' digital social networks, for instance, always have promotions to draw listeners in. Expanded radio mediators also try to control listeners' participation, by filtering comments and/or by deleting messages.

CONSIDERATIONS

When we analyze listeners' role throughout History, we find several continuities in Convergence Era's radio. We can recognize in expanded radio communication relations from the past, though slightly altered. But it is also in expanded radio we find transformations which indicate, for many researchers, a path towards horizontal communication.

Communication exchanges are not egalitarian among mediators and listeners, but, when we analyze the given course of events, we find listeners gained more speech power in expanded radio. This paper looks upon listeners' role, establishing categories to analyze radio consumers under different theoretical perspectives, with emphasis in Reception Studies. These categories have no definitive character and might be revisited as new shifts in communication exchanges occur. We believe it is less important to create words for these phenomena than to join efforts in order to ponder on listeners' role, for they can have their senses extended with expanded radio.

Along the course of our observation, it should be mentioned our attempt to better comprehend certain routes which have been described over the years

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so we could have, today, a clearer perspective regarding radio listeners as an important notion inside the communication studies field. In fact, it was an attempt to better understand movements related to these subject groups inside communication processes, who, as from notions we recapped along the text, signal they live through great transformations, in some senses, as well as preserve characteristics, in other aspects.

Under the listeners' habitus perspective, we have found subjects adapt to configurations and structures related to technology, culture, economy and politics, and also create new uses and appropriations for messages, as well as new ways of interaction.

We also intended to comprehend the main implications involved in radio listening processes along the years. We did so because there are various elements actively participating in such actions, and which need to be considered. At an initial moment of radio's development, we had some quite peculiar contexts. As time went by, we found shifts which implicated and still substantially implicate on how one perceives and understands radio listeners of today. M

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