

The social function of independent podcasts: the examples of Redes da Maré and Cirandeiras

A função social dos podcasts independentes:¹ os exemplos Redes da Maré e Cirandeiras

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Abstract

In this study, we aim to understand the quality of podcasting as a reinventor of audio narratives and its potential as part of an independent and social radio. In this conception, radio is seen more as a language than as a medium, and the resulting productions aim to disseminate educational-cultural content with an authorial and counter-hegemonic bias. To exemplify these arguments, two Brazilian podcasts are described: Redes da Maré, a community communication initiative in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, and Cirandeiras, a project in Northeast Brazil that gives voice to various feminist causes.

Keywords: Communication. Radio Language. Social Radio. Podcasting. Independent Podcast.

Resumo

Neste estudo, busca-se compreender a qualidade do movimento podcasting como reinventor de narrativas de áudio e seu potencial como parte de um rádio independente e de caráter social. Nessa concepção, o rádio é visto mais como uma linguagem do que como um meio, e as produções resultantes têm como objetivo difundir conteúdo educativo-cultural com um viés autoral e contra-hegemônico. Para exemplificar esses argumentos, são descritos dois podcasts brasileiros: Redes da Maré, uma iniciativa de comunicação comunitária na periferia do Rio de Janeiro, e Cirandeiras, um projeto no Nordeste do Brasil que dá voz a diversas causas feministas.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação. Linguagem Radiofônica. Rádio Social. Podcasting. Podcast Independente.

Resumen

En este estudio, se busca comprender la calidad del movimiento del podcasting como reinventor de narrativas de audio y su potencial como parte de una radio independiente y de carácter social. En esta concepción, la radio se ve más como un lenguaje que como un medio, y las producciones resultantes tienen como objetivo difundir contenido educativo-cultural con una perspectiva autoral y contrahegemónica. Para ejemplificar estos argumentos, se describen dos podcasts brasileños: Redes da Maré, una iniciativa de comunicación comunitaria en la periferia de Río de Janeiro, y Cirandeiras, un proyecto en el noreste de Brasil que da voz a diversas causas feministas.

Palabras clave: Comunicación. Lenguaje de radio. Radio social. Podcasting. Podcast independiente.

Introduction

Two decades ago, before it became common for people to have a smartphone in their hands, podcasting was already available technology. Between 2004 and 2005, podcasts emerged on the internet as a new form of on-demand transmission, primarily focused on consuming sequences of music and content based on live radio programming (HERSCHMANN and KISCHINHEVSKY, 2008). The term “podcasting” refers to a movement of production, distribution, and sharing of digital files, particularly in audio format, while “podcast” denotes programs and episodes.

Currently, podcasting has become an increasingly autonomous movement compared to traditional radio (both terrestrial and web radio considering continuous transmission). The flexibility in listening and the conceptualization of a practice free from editorial content regulations and transmission rights give podcasting the status of something more radical (LLINARES et al., 2018).

Bottomley (2015) believes that to this day there is still no academic consensus on the condition of podcasting, as it is seen as either just an extension of radio or a "new medium" with its own characteristics. According to the author, it is possible to consider podcasting as a "new medium" because this concept has become popular in many academic discourses and has been embraced by the music industry. However, he makes reservations, explaining that he prefers to adopt the same understanding as Sterne *et al.* (2008), in which podcasting is regarded as a set of interconnected technologies, practices, and institutions that employ radio strategies different from those of traditional radio.

In the same vein, Newman and Gallo (2019) argue that referring to podcasting as radio immediately associates it with the specificities of broadcasting on traditional radio, particularly outside the academic circle that surrounds this discussion. According to the authors, many of the podcasts that are currently highly popular originated as radio programs but are now being accessed and consumed in a new cultural context.

According to McHugh (2020; 2022), radio and podcasting are “cousins” that exhibit certain tensions, which will be discussed further. Nevertheless, podcasting can be considered a “reinvented radio”, primarily because podcast creators did not emerge from an “audio big bang” but rather adapted old formulas from traditional radio and developed them through new technological resources, with a focus on producing content for direct publication on the internet. With the popularization of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICTs), such as smartphones, mobile internet networks, and data streaming,

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the podcasting movement has not only revitalized radio but also propelled access to more pluralistic communication and reshaped audio narratives, strengthening the relationship between creators and listeners.

In this study, it is considered that there are differences between traditional radio and podcasting, particularly when observing the dynamics of production and consumption linked to the technological structure. However, from a theoretical standpoint, it is proposed to position traditional radio and podcasting within the same semantic field in terms of audio as a language that, in addition to communicative and expressive potentialities, values the more experimental dimension and the social function of sound communication.

What is considered radio here is, in fact, a language that, regardless of the production source, moves through different media and adapts to contemporary audio consumption practices. It is characterized by the evocative power of its expressive systems (word, music, sound effects, and silence) that adapt, allowing for the reinvention of radio even if new technologies undermine its characterization as a media platform (BALSEBRE, 2004; 2013).

Based on this, the study highlights podcast productions that can be considered part of independent and social radio (SILVA and OLIVEIRA, 2020). This perspective encompasses programs or individual pieces distributed through soundwaves, the web, or podcasting, which arise from the commitment of the ideating agents to a daily praxis that must meet the interests and needs of the groups, organizations, or communities they serve or represent.

For the purpose of illustrating the study, two Brazilian podcasts are described: *Redes da Maré* (a community communication initiative in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro) and *Cirandeiros* (a project in Northeast Brazil that gives voice to various feminist causes).

Tensions between podcasting and traditional radio

Suppose you are tuned in to a radio station and there are five minutes left for your favorite program to start. Unexpectedly, your neighbor asks for help in moving some furniture around. This takes about forty minutes, and when you return home, you realize that you missed the most interesting part of your favorite program.

The exercise of supposition is useful to highlight that traditional radio values a linear and continuous programming schedule, broadcasted at specific intervals throughout the day, mainly through real-time transmissions and aimed at a broad audience. In podcasting, the consequences of the unpredictability mentioned in the example are eliminated as programs are characterized by episodes and seasons, specifically intended for on-demand consumption with audiences segmented by niche interests.

Podcasts are distributed and accessed via the internet; therefore, they do not depend on a broadcasting station with concession contracts or regulations regarding transmission and content rights. You simply need to search for a podcast on your preferred application or platform and listen to it as many times as you want and wherever you find it convenient. Additionally, you can produce and distribute your own podcast independently.

Newman and Gallo (2019) and McHugh (2022) emphasize that podcast listening is done in a more active manner, as the listener tends to attentively follow programs and episodes since their narrative construction is usually tailored for intimate listening. On the other hand, in traditional radio, especially commercial radio that follows the basic formula of music/news, distracted listening can occur as a result of content arranged in topics that may include subjects and music that are not immediately of interest to the listener.

Another difference is interactivity, as traditional radio, although it has updated its real-time interaction strategies through multi-platform applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram, podcasts can utilize various other forms: spaces for comments, question and answer boxes, polls, and quick editing for short content (known as “podcast quick cuts” or “sound bites”). Furthermore, the concept of podcasting is no longer limited to audio, as podcasts can be made available in other types of digital media, such as audiovisual, depending on the platform on which the programs are hosted and how they will be shared.

In traditional radio, programs usually have well-defined durations and regularity, and although there are pre-recorded and edited programs, they make up a small percentage. Thus, the programming is primarily based on live formats. As an example, we can observe the program *CBN Primeiras Notícias*⁵ from *Central Brasileira de Notícias* (or CBN Radio), which airs Monday to Friday between 5:00 AM and 6:00 AM via FM radio waves. Simultaneously, the program is also streamed on the CBN Radio website and its YouTube

⁵ Available from: <https://glo.bo/3Fnmb5F>

channel. Subsequently, the *CBN Primeiras Notícias* program undergoes editing, resulting in a duration of approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes, and is made available daily as a daily news podcast.

The major Brazilian radio stations only began to realize the potential of podcasting from 2018 onwards, a year in which there was a significant expansion of on-demand audio content consumption in Brazil (BARROS, 2019). According to Ferraz and Gambaro (2020), most of them adapted a portion of their live programming to be subsequently published as a podcast, even though the programs were not originally produced with that intention. This is a quick and cost-effective way to repackage the programs, allowing them to join the podcasting movement without additional production costs.

When these major radio stations fund native podcasts, that is, podcasts specifically designed for direct internet publication, they have sought to attract a younger audience who are more open to elaborated narratives and less interested in continuous live listening (NEWMAN and GALLO, 2019). This is the case with the podcast *Vozes: Histórias e Reflexões*⁶, a production of CBN Radio, which has an average duration of thirty minutes to one hour and aims to promote reflection and connect people to each other's experiences on controversial and dramatic topics being discussed in society. It is a production that pays careful attention to the expressive use of radio language and does not need to worry about inherent characteristics of traditional radio, such as immediacy and instantaneity.

Nowadays, we can observe that the program *CBN Primeiras Notícias* uses YouTube as a platform to expand the reach of the transmission initially designed for traditional radio. There are highly popular programs in the podcasting scene that reach a large audience by embracing the principles of traditional radio and being streamed on video platforms such as YouTube, Twitch, and Facebook Watch. This practice has been referred to as videocast or vodcast (PEIXOTO, 2014), and in Brazil, formats that have adapted classic radio programs in journalistic or informative genres prevail, transforming debates and interviews into long and informal “bar conversations”.

The recipient can access these programs through live streaming or simply disregard the visual aspect and appreciate only the audio content, as if listening through traditional radio. This behavior, according to Godinez Galay (2015, p. 137), underpins the idea that it is not only the radio language that adapts to new media, but also the internet and audiovisual media that seek to conform to the *modus operandi* of radio, as

⁶ Available from: <https://glo.bo/3siUHk9>

“who hasn't found themselves ‘listening to videos’ while continuing to work on something else? Isn't this the audiovisual and the internet forcefully adapting to the uses of radio?” In this case, the program is inherently audiovisual, but the audio can be sent to hosting platforms and podcast aggregators, thus reaching an audience that prefers asynchronous listening. The audiovisual podcast remains in the archive of the platform where it was recorded and can also be accessed later on.

With these examples, one can perceive the positioning of audio communication as convergent, present both in the airwaves and on the web and in podcasting. Thus, although the tensions between traditional radio and podcasting are significant, it is possible to reconcile them when considering the communication language they are based on.

The evolution of production and consumption conditions in the last two decades has granted podcast creators the freedom to explore and reinvent genres and formats, separating radio as a signal transmission channel from the ways of using and accessing radio language. Thus, Sterne *et al.* (2008) argue that podcasting is not an alternative to broadcasting; it has its own peculiar characteristics and should coexist side by side with traditional radio, sharing experiences. Similarly, it should not be forgotten that podcasting is a movement that has gained popularity following its predecessor, reinventing the strategies of traditional radio while also putting pressure on broadcasters to adapt to cultural changes in media consumption of sound (CLARK and McLEAN, 2020).

Podcasting has successfully appropriated what was once the essence of traditional radio and is now known as audio storytelling: the ability to tell creative and engaging stories. In addition to that, there is the facilitation of access to technologies that have expanded production opportunities for various individuals, enabling a reappropriation of expressive and aesthetic experiences of radio language that have facilitated independent production.

In this regard, what makes podcasting a growing movement is not its condition as something separate from traditional radio, but its technological structure for audio production and distribution, and primarily the revival of old formulas that have been present in the history of radio since its early days and were often overlooked by broadcasters, especially commercial ones (MARKMAN, 2015).

Independent and social podcast

Podcasting has become popular because it caters to a strong need for self-discovery, forming networks of collaboration with identities based on specific interests and independent participation in public discourse, especially among young people. The movement aligns with a maker culture as an extension of the do-it-yourself premise, requiring only the desire to speak and a smartphone connected to the internet to start a program or an episode (SPOTIFY, 2020).

Through podcasting, Millennials and Generation Z are facing a movement that allows them to create projects that represent and empower themselves, their groups, and communities. These new creators have seen independent podcast and music production as an open space to bring their ideas to light that had been ignored for a long time. Unlike strictly audiovisual media, which typically require expensive equipment, greater technical expertise, or large teams, audio creators face fewer obstacles at the beginning, thus encountering fewer prejudices when venturing into the field of communication (SPOTIFY, 2021).

In this scenario, contrary to the editorial guidelines and funding that support large radio communication groups like CBN Radio, we are interested in highlighting the podcasting movement as part of an independent and social radio. The concept of independence here refers to productions that celebrate the plurality of voices in society without being subservient to the interests of economic elites. Therefore, independent media is typically associated with alternative communication outside the control of politicians, religious figures, and businesspeople who serve their own interests or those of the companies that finance them (SILVA and OLIVEIRA, 2020).

Independent media is a fundamental part of creating environments that guarantee the right to freedom of thought, creation, expression, and information, as stated in Article 220 of the Federal Constitution of Brazil of 1988 (BRASIL, 2022). However, according to the mapping conducted by the Media Ownership Monitor (2017) regarding media outlets in Brazil with the greatest potential to influence public opinion and the groups that control them, it can be said that the guarantee of a diverse public media is still a utopia in the country. In Brazil, the main mass media outlets (referred to as the “big media”) are still spaces dominated by exclusive oligopolies.

Knowing this, the perspective of an independent and social radio that the study adopts refers to individual or collective initiatives that appropriate DICTs and the expressive and authorial dimension of radio

language (SILVA and OLIVEIRA, 2020). These actions can come from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), social movements, projects connected to universities that often go beyond the educational realm, and authorial initiatives with no institutional affiliations but establish a sense of belonging to a cause, a social group, or a community (PERUZZO, 2009).

This theoretical perspective of “radio” aims to produce and share content with an educational-cultural character that goes against the interests of the groups that dominate communication in Brazil. It involves rethinking radio language from various fronts, ranging from large public and private communication groups to amateur and independent productions.

These initiatives are heirs to the radio experiences that emerged within the struggles for freedom, the right to information, and communication in Latin America. An example of this is Radio Sutatenza in Colombia, considered one of the first educational radio experiences in Latin America. Sutatenza was conceived in 1947 by Father Joaquín Salcedo as a space for literacy for the peasants in the Sutatenza region. Later, other initiatives inspired by this example spread throughout the Latin American continent and influenced the educational theory of Paulo Freire and Mario Kaplún, giving rise to the so-called popular radios, based on dialogic communication and active participation of the subordinate classes (LÓPEZ VIGIL, 2004).

Other examples emerged with the premise of allowing social actors who previously had no access to mass media to produce their content independently, such as the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutionary amateur radios, as well as the Bolivian trade union radios supported by mine workers. Brazilian free radios were used as a form of resistance during the military dictatorship and, following the country's redemocratization, became known as community radios. There are several other models of this type connected to traditional radio in Latin America.

Following the trail of pioneering experiences with traditional radio, more recently, there has been the prominence of university radios and web radios, but currently, it is the podcasting movement that is in the spotlight. According to Bonini (2015), among those who use podcasting for activities with social purposes are primarily independent producers motivated by the innovations brought by streaming technology, enthusiasts of a more expressive and artistic radio language, and “pirate broadcasters” who keep clandestine broadcasting alive.

In line with the understanding of an independent and social radio, McHugh (2020) elucidates that acquiring the necessary conditions for podcast production is an inclusive process that allows individuals and their organizations to mobilize and be heard. In some cases, these groups are marginalized and overlooked in public discourse, such as political or religious minorities, peripheral, rural, and traditional communities, LGBTQIA+ movements, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly, among other social groups.

Bringing this understanding to the Brazilian reality, two podcasts were chosen to exemplify how independent and social radio, embedded in the podcasting movement, operates in practical situations: Redes da Maré podcast and Cirandeiros podcast.

Materials and Methods

The selection of the Redes da Maré and Cirandeiros podcasts was made after an exploratory research on Spotify, the most widely used podcast aggregation platform by Brazilian producers (ABPOD, 2021). Two podcasts were chosen as the authors had previously defined the use of a maximum of two examples to support their arguments. The research was conducted in the months of August and September 2022, focusing on programs relevant to the study that fall into five categories on Spotify: education, society and culture, documentary, politics, and activism.

Due to the vast diversity of programs, the initial search focused on the podcast descriptions on Spotify to verify if they aligned with the purpose of the study. The objective was to find only fifteen relevant productions as a stopping point for this phase. After that, a deeper understanding of each of the fifteen podcasts considered relevant was undertaken. Information was sought about the individuals involved in their production, as well as the content of their episodes and seasons.

From this sample, the following criteria were established for the final selection of only two podcasts: a) they needed to be independent initiatives of a social nature with assertive and educational-cultural content; b) they could be community communication practices or individual projects without ties to institutions, but motivated by the defense of causes and socially cohesive groups; and c) if possible, they should be from different regions of Brazil in their geographic scope of operation. Given that Brazil is a country of continental dimensions, it was hoped, if possible, to exemplify more than one territorial context.

After an analysis that related the theoretical framework of the study and the established criteria, the podcasts *Redes da Maré* and *Cirandeiras* were chosen.

Podcast *Redes da Maré*

*Redes da Maré*⁷ is a journalistic news podcast linked to the NGO *Redes de Desenvolvimento da Maré*, a civil society institution conceived by the community movement in the set of sixteen favelas in Maré, in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The NGO seeks to achieve the effectiveness of public policies for approximately 140,000 residents in the region through mobilization and citizen empowerment (REDES DA MARÉ, 2019).

Launched in May 2020, the *Redes da Maré* podcast was initially published weekly until July of the same year, and then became biweekly. It was originally created to engage with residents of Maré regarding the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the podcast produced forty episodes and went by the name “*Maré em Tempos de Coronavírus*” (Maré in Times of Coronavirus).

In September 2022, it was renamed *Redes da Maré*, expanding the discussions to cover topics of interest to peripheral communities, such as the historical and sociocultural formation of favelas in Rio de Janeiro, the reach of human rights, and, more recently, the political participation of residents in the periphery. The resources of the NGO fund the podcast, and the production of content focuses on personal contact with residents of Maré and their sociocultural issues.

The *Redes da Maré* podcast aims to address topics based on the demands of the territory, which are submitted by the residents themselves or through local research conducted by the communication team of *Redes da Maré*. This approach encompasses other alternative communication initiatives in the region, such as the community journalism newspaper and website “*Maré de Notícias*”, the series of journalistic texts and videos “*Por Dentro da Maré*”, the informational bulletin “*De Olho no Corona!*”, and community radios like Rádio Maré or the so-called “*post rádios*” (SILVA and AROUCA, 2021).

These initiatives in Brazil are constituted as community media, which, as explained by Peruzzo (2005), have the following characteristics: citizens are protagonists and the communication processes aim at social mobilization and the full exercise of citizenship; funding primarily comes from voluntary work, donations,

⁷ Available from: <https://spoti.fi/3rjbmSL>

cultural support, and material and human resources provided by cooperative associations such as unions and NGOs; the content is community-oriented and often does not find space for dissemination in mainstream media.

One particularity of the Redes da Maré podcast is that, in addition to being available on streaming platforms, it reaches the population in the form of a long audio on WhatsApp, as each episode is shared with residents through the multi-platform application's groups. This characteristic is directly related to the economic reality of the territory. After all, according to producer Geisa Lino (2020), the idea of creating a podcast arose because the majority of favela residents do not have unlimited internet plans. Therefore, communication through audio reaches a broader audience. Additionally, it is designed as a space for dialogue, aiming to be an informal conversation with accessible vocabulary for all residents of Maré.

In this context, the podcast is highly beneficial because audio files are generally lightweight and do not require a large amount of data consumption. This facilitates sharing and listening on the internet through links on social networks or audio on multi-platform applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram. Another important point is that audio communication is consumable by a wide audience, including those who cannot read. The Redes da Maré podcast utilizes the mobilizing nature of radio language to develop independent strategies for communicative empowerment and the exercise of democracy in communities where the government neglects its responsibilities and the mainstream media exploits stereotypes associated with violence and poverty.

Moreover, the podcast creates a sense of intimacy with the residents, as its “tribal” characteristic deepens communities, assisting, in this specific case, the peripheral dweller in engaging in collective causes and rebelling against the sociopolitical system that oppresses them (McHUGH, 2022). The dynamic, flexible, and interactive tools provided by the podcasting movement enable the necessary means for authorial production that is both assertive and anti-corporate (STERNE *et al.*, 2008), focusing on the real issues of immediate interest to the residents of Maré.

Podcast Cirandeiras

Cirandeiras⁸ is a narrative podcast that navigates between the formats of in-depth reporting and audio documentary, aiming to give voice to women from different parts of Brazil. It is an independent project created by journalists Joana Suarez and Raquel Baster. Launched in April 2020, the podcast had a weekly frequency until August, with special episodes published in November and December of the same year. Since February 2021, it has been published monthly.

The name “*Cirandeiras*” was chosen because the conceptual structure of the podcast allows for the formation of an extensive network of collectivity among women, similar to the popular manifestation of “*ciranda*” a cultural dance practiced mainly in the Northeastern states, especially in Pernambuco, where the founding journalists are based (SUAREZ and BASTER, 2020).

The podcast was conceived during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the mission of bringing visibility to the response of various groups and popular communities to the public health crisis. Its production is based on the use of journalistic narratives that start from individual stories led by women, in order to address collective causes in which they are directly involved. The essence of the work is to showcase how Brazilian women who are changing lives, norms, and territories navigate the various issues connected to their communities and social struggles (SUAREZ, 2022).

The first season addressed the theme of the Covid-19 pandemic in twenty episodes, in which Suarez and Baster interviewed twenty women from different regions of Brazil. These women advocate for a variety of social issues related to topics such as quilombola and indigenous communities, domestic violence, female incarceration, agrarian conflicts, homelessness and the right to housing, sex work, basic sanitation and recycling, people with disabilities, racism, gender and sexuality issues, adoption, precarious work, among others (SUAREZ and BASTER, 2020). With its first season, the podcast was a finalist in the 42nd edition of the Vladimir Herzog Award for Amnesty and Human Rights, in the category of journalistic audio production.

The second season, titled “*Ritmos*” (Rhythms), was launched in February 2021 and explores Brazilian artistic expressions, with a focus on music and dance, within the scope of popular and feminist cultures. In May 2022, the project began its third season under the name “*Oceanos*” (Oceans), which consists of a series

⁸ Available from: <https://spoti.fi/3alXAd7>

of narratives about and with women who have a strong connection to their ancestry and the element of water. Suarez and Baster present life stories of women living in coastal communities threatened by large-scale economic projects.

The Cirandeiras podcast does not have an extensive professional infrastructure and is financially supported through a hybrid strategy of fundraising. Funding comes from being selected in public calls and scholarship programs or coordinated crowdfunding campaigns, which involve the collaboration of supporters on platforms such as Apoia.se, Catarse, Kickante, and others. Nonetheless, in all seasons, this independent initiative has propagated community support services and information exchange, creating a national network of women for mutual assistance.

It is worth noting that in Brazil, the independent condition faces the barrier of financial sustainability. However, it enables editorial freedom, a condition that allows Cirandeiras to fulfill its social function of creating alternative spaces for communicative expression for women engaged in identity-related demands and citizen resistance. In this regard, as Larson (2015) explains, creators of independent podcasts have been free to dictate their own rules of operation and content, thus being able to experiment with new things in ways that traditional radio professionals typically cannot.

Regarding freedom of expression and communication, Baster (2020) explains that it is not enough to think about independent podcast production without considering the communication structure in Brazil. According to the journalist, in order to make communication more accessible, it is necessary to discuss media concentration, as the internet is still not accessible to a large portion of the population in the country. Therefore, a greater number of people should have their own means to produce content.

Both the Cirandeiras and Redes da Maré podcasts embody the essence of independent and social radio. They demonstrate the need for social groups and collectives to utilize different mediums to assert their right to freedom of expression, creation, communication, and information. In this regard, the alternatives offered by the podcasting movement serve as an important strategy. They can range from in-depth investigative stories seeking historical redress and social justice to actions holding the state accountable and promoting trust and social inclusion (McHUGH, 2020).

Final considerations

The study sought not to establish impassable boundaries between traditional radio and podcasting, as the limits between them are dynamic. However, by exploring podcasting as a growing space for the circulation of radio language, it was possible to reflect on its quality as a reinventor of audio narratives and its potential as part of an independent and social radio. Although it is based on initiatives with social purposes, independent producers should not and must not give up on staying up to date with the cultural and technological trends that guide the podcasting and sound communication market (SILVA and OLIVEIRA, 2020).

It was dedicated to exposing the theoretical perspective that podcasting is also radio, to demonstrate that radio language traverses multiple mediums, adapting production and reception strategies according to the technological support and channel of content transmission. Consequently, discussions about the present and future of radio are broadened, as the significant growth of podcasting is forcing traditional radio to position itself within the new "sonosphere." This does not mean transforming traditional radio into segmented niches, but rather encouraging it, like podcasting, to focus on storytelling rather than merely showcasing stories (BALSEBRE, 2013).

Furthermore, the participation of professionals and programs from traditional radio in the podcasting movement is also crucial, as it facilitates the dissemination of this practice to diverse audiences and, consequently, inspires the emergence of new producers (NEWMAN and GALLO, 2019).

The practical experiences described through the podcasts *Redes da Maré* and *Cirandeiros* deserve praise and widespread dissemination. They demonstrate the social function of podcasting and the power of community communication and independent initiatives in the appropriation of radio language. Furthermore, these podcasts represent the struggle for democratic communication, as explained by the creators of *Cirandeiros*, who state that their podcast seeks to pave a path to imagine other worlds built on language plurality, diversity of accents, and ways of living and being (SUAREZ and BASTER, 2020).

These independent and counter-hegemonic initiatives make it clear that in Brazil, to achieve the constitutional right to freedom of thought, creation, expression, and information, it is necessary for social groups and collectives to appropriate different media, languages, and technologies as spaces for social participation, resistance, and the exercise of citizenship.

The podcasting movement, driven by the spirit of independent production facilitated by easy access to DICTs, and by seeking to recover the expressive and creative potential of radio language, may perhaps occupy today the position that Martín-Barbero (2008) announced for traditional radio in the last century: a communicational instrument of cultural representation for popular groups.

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