

Web Radio: A Collaborative Learning Based on Flexibility Multimedia

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Abstract: The cyberspace can be considered as one of the factors driving the transformation of mass media, associating new forms in network communication and making the information more accessible to any person that has access to the worldwide network of computers, promoting the production and dissemination of information in science and technology for teaching and research in all areas of knowledge and different sectors of society. In this sense, the radio online brought facility of access to communication by the increase of storage capacity of news and by the processing speed of information in real time, promoting their educational applications inside and outside classrooms, with the possibility of sharing and storing contents in audio, video, image or text. At the moment, with a web format, the radio makes available in virtual space an ample group of technological interfaces with an alternative and complementary environment of teaching-learning. In this communication, we will make a reflection about the concept of web radio, presenting its present panorama as an educational-communicative interface.

Keywords: Web Radio, Multimedia Flexibility, Education, Collaboration.

1. Introduction

The radio found on the cyberspace the possibility to acquire another temporality, when it makes available multimedia files, asynchronous transmission, flexibility, collaboration and then, straiten the relationship between listener/user, functioning as a social communication vehicle of local communities and as a valuable space for the divulgation, socialization and popularization of science, education and technology, produced by different departments at the teaching institutions. To Perona Paéz (2009, p.107): “The possibilities offered by Internet, but especially its interactive potential, have helped to the emergence of real on-line audiovisual platforms whose fundamental aim is media education”.

Nowadays, the virtual learning environments connects users and institutions, making available to both a great range of opportunities and services, providing the virtual space and a set of interfaces for technology that teachers can disseminate their scientific work, suggest readings, stimulate debate on issues related to discipline (forums discussion), information notes, reviews, interviews with local experts and invited, promotion of academic events (congresses, seminars, lectures, conferences or meetings), lessons in podcast, beyond the possibility of synchronous and asynchronous communication with the network, through email, blog, messenger, chat, myspace, facebook, newsletter, twitter and others (Teixeira, 2009).

According to Jauma Trilla (1998), when it comes to mass media that develop sociocultural activities of informal and non-formal education, they almost always include formal

programs when oriented directly to the school's curriculum. That is the case of school and college web-broadcasted radio stations, which have an informative nature, but are very much biased towards formativeness, establishing mixed-type educommunicative configurations. This is directly related to the possibility of interaction between the transmitter and receiver at the time of use.

The informal and non-formal contexts provide a great source of knowledge, always constituting an important source of innovation and stimulus to the search for knowledge, through methods and techniques that deviate from the traditional means of educational formation (Correia & Tomé, 2007). In the educative communication context, the focus is on language acquisition and enrichment as well as on communicative competence. Communication is not seen simply as a helping tool anymore, but as a basic pedagogical and methodological component to be used in both teaching and learning.

In this sense, Perona Paéz & Veloso (2007, p.18) establish a typology for radios with cultural and educative tendency – community, popular, formative, municipal, scholar and university – asserting, quoting Merayo (2000), that “even though, all seem to share a common line: they attempt to reach non-commercial objectives and are guided especially and directly to a social character purpose”. As education and communication are indissoluble concepts, the institutions are intensively using the technological resources, aiming at the transformation of information in knowledge, now more than ever, in virtual educational environments.

2. Research Methodology

The purpose of this communication is to feature a conceptual approach concerning the foundations of the Web Radio, presenting its present panorama as an educational-communicative interface and their educational potentialities in cyberspace. Given the characteristics of the study, the research methodology used was of qualitative, analyzing the case study of RUC online. Beyond this literature review on the concept described, this investigation considers it important to analyze the educational potentialities of the web radio for the academic community of the Universidade de Coimbra.

3. State of the Art

The radios on the web appeared at the end of the 90's, ever since has been associated with a change in social behavior, since the public learned that they could hear other things in addition to music and at almost no cost. The entertainment is only part of the history of art and science on the diffusion of audio over the network.

Thus, the Web Radio can be defined as the radiophonic emission on the Internet in real time, usually in audio formats (MP3 or MP4, OGG Vorbis, WebPlayer, Real Audio, Windows Media Audio and HE-ACC). Different from traditional radio, your transmission could be followed by images, videos, texts, pictures and links. This advance allows the listener to do much more than just listen, making communication much more dynamic. Currently, it is possible to conduct online education, offering didactic material in PDF files or Word documents, video, podcast, and have access to up-to-date information through the RSS feed,

clear up doubts with the instructor / educator through messenger, e-mail, chat, twitter, forums, as well as the interactivity in real time, through audio-conference or video-conference. It is about the combination of various elements: Ubiquity; flexibility; low cost; emission in real time; synchronous and asynchronous communication; multi-directed connectivity; multimedia sharing; streaming; collaboration and the interactivity integrated with e-learning (Teixeira, 2009).

Often, the online reproduction of hertz signal through codification in the personal computer, through streaming, reproduces the emission on the Internet. The data is sent from personal computer packages for audio, video, text, images for Internet, which are stored on the platform online and made available to the public, which has access to a range of interactive resources. Thus, the main differences between traditional radio and Internet radio are the ways of accessing radio: By the computer; the flexibility of synchronous and asynchronous programming; geographical coverage (from local to global); the quality of emissions (without interference or noise), and active participation of the public. The user not only listens, but reads, writes and assists the programs of radio, having at their disposal a set of integrated interfaces. Finally, the interactive multimedia together with the audio in virtual environment is the essence of what has been called “Web Radio”, which has the potential advantage of network, enriching its programming with multimedia content and additional resources, allowing a constant interaction transmitter-receptor (Ibdem).

In some European countries, the web radio is being used as an educational interface in virtual learning environments responsible for the divulging of various cultural activities on schools or universities, with programs dedicated to music, theater, cinema, education, science, technology, politic, poetry, literature, economy, news and transmission of popular festivals. Through this technological resource, there is no possibility of losing the program if the person is busy, the programs are available online and can be accessed when necessary or possible. This model of educational web radio is what we call educational web radio, actually expanding in many parts of the world.

Perona Paéz (2009), believes that the web radio enriches its offer with complementary multimedia spaces and incorporates the necessary tools for a constant sender-receiver interaction that neutralizes the sequential character, the fleetingness and the vertical position of analogue broadcasting. Based on a cooperative work, with interactivity among the participants and sharing of ideas, the interface “web radio” is presented as a mean through which the students feel an important and active part of the educational-communicative process.

4. Results

4.1 The Case Study of Rádio Universitária de Coimbra Online

The Rádio Universitária de Coimbra (RUC) exists since 1986 and was one of the first university radios in Portugal with web emission. Nowadays, it develops its activities based on the following categories: the formative, the informative, the academic and the cultural-educative. The formative category is established through periodic courses of formation and

recycling for speakers, editors/speakers and technicians, besides the realization of didactic programs in collaboration with public and private institutions. The informative category is a space focused on the debate of questions related to the Universidade de Coimbra and to up-to-date news. About the academic life at the Universidade de Coimbra, the RUC dedicates an ample space in its program grid, transmitting the main occurrences of the learning institution. Finally, the cultural category is responsible for the divulging of various cultural activities going on in Coimbra, at the North Region or in the rest of the country, with programs dedicated to music, theater, cinema, poetry, literature and the transmission of concerts, shows and popular festivals.

The means of social communication have always performed a significant pedagogical role, something that has already been thoroughly investigated and it is known to have roughly two separate moments: a moment of open pedagogy, entertainment and leisure fulfillment as its main activity; and another when the media decide to broadcast a specific form of knowledge organization (Moran, 1994).

However, The RUC online stands out presently for its diverse and segmented program on the web, dedicated to the promotion and divulcation of cultural, scientific and support activities to the lectures of the Universidade do Coimbra, representing, at the same time, some of its departments and academic unities, besides a strong cultural intervention in the local communities of the Coimbra.

5. Conclusion

The process of digitization suffered by conventional broadcasters and the availability of its content on the Internet, produced the latest step in the recent history of media - the Web Radio. In turn, the education has been used in the new technological resources to produce educational programs multidisciplinary in several areas of knowledge and in different parts of the world.

This way, the educommunicative potentialities of the web radio started to be found by lecturers, school managers, educational institutions and university radios, as a complementary or alternative mean for people's formation. Hence, the main activity yet to be developed by educators is to advise educational institutions on the use of New Technologies of Information and Communication as a didactic support, promoting and spreading their educative applications inside and outside classrooms.

6. References

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