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**CHALLENGES OF
LABORATORY
PRODUCTION IN
JOURNALISM IN YEAR
I OF THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC. REPORT
AND EXPERIMENTS**

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Abstract: Report on the impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent adoption of remote teaching in the practical subjects Printed Journalism Laboratory Project and Radiojournalism Laboratory Project in the Journalism Course at the ``Universidade Católica de Santos``, from March 2020. Focuses on the challenges caused by the transition in pedagogical dynamics, the lack of accessibility, social isolation and trauma caused by the disease, as well as the alternatives for overcoming it.

Keywords: Printed Journalism Laboratory Project. Radiojournalism Laboratory Project. Pandemic. Remote Teaching. Newspaper: ``entrevista`` (interview).

INTRODUCTION

The formulation of the pedagogical proposal for laboratories in the Journalism course differs from academic models developed in structured environments within the educational institution and isolated from contact with the external environment. And it comes close to those models in which fieldwork is the basis of support for the entire experimental production process.

Print Journalism and Radio Journalism laboratory projects are subjects that encourage students to have contact with society, in the same way as occurs in professional dynamics, certainly discounting the total time allocated to the task. In both, the same happens in the preparation of reporting programs and interviews for the products developed. The raw material is found outside the studios and newsrooms, some in the institution itself, another - larger and more necessary - in the community.

The great dilemma for communication schools is to develop an academic project that encompasses theory and practice. That does not frustrate young people, but at the same time offers responsibility in a well-crafted and

refined text. Highlighting the importance of laboratories, Marques de Mello (1984) states: "Training journalists, without awakening their interest in critical analysis of the standards in force in society and without offering them the opportunity to test such models in laboratories and create innovative alternatives, it has been a source of widespread frustration in the area since the 1950s."

However, despite the unquestionable importance of laboratory bodies, it is necessary to be aware of the transformation of teaching into something extremely technical, which Marques de Melo considers a mistake in the practical learning process. Laboratory vehicles must be used for true theoretical-practical articulation. "When doing journalism, in these laboratories, we apply a set of skills that university education must develop, mainly the critical spirit and creative and innovative capacity." (1984).

Evidently, each educational institution defines its teaching procedures. What is presented here, therefore, is the experience of the Journalism Course at the ``Universidade Católica de Santos`` in Year 1 of the Covid-19 Pandemic. It focuses on how the challenge was interpreted and the alternatives imagined and applied in the subjects Laboratory Project for Print Journalism and Laboratory Project for Radio Journalism, taught in the 7th and 8th semesters.

A HISTORICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

TEACHING JOURNALISM IN BRAZIL

Pressured by the Brazilian Press Association (ABI), President Getúlio Vargas promulgated, in 1938, Decree-Law Number: 910, which determined the creation of a preparatory school for the training of journalists. However, despite the determination, it was up to the Cásper Líbero Foundation, in agreement with

the Pontifical Catholic ``Universidade de São Paulo``, to create the Journalism Course, on May 16, 1947. (PPC,2020).

On July 15, 1952, President Getúlio Vargas signed, in Rio de Janeiro, Decree No. 31,134, which granted authorization for the Baccalaureate course at the Catholic Faculty of Law of Santos, which was recognized in 1955, to operate. In 1954, the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Literature was authorized to operate, with courses in Pedagogy, Literature and Journalism. The Pedagogy and Journalism courses were recognized in 1957.

Called the Jackson de Figueiredo School of Journalism, linked to the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters, it gave rise to the Faculty of Communication (Facos), recognized on August 26, 1974, and published in the Official Gazette on August 27 of the same year. It is integrated into the Center for Education and Communication Sciences at the ``Universidade Católica de Santos`` (UniSantos) and offers three courses: Journalism, Public Relations and Advertising, structured over four years divided into eight academic semesters.

TEACHING JOURNALISM AT UNISANTOS

The discipline of Experimental Projects, introduced into the minimum curriculum of Brazilian Social Communication courses with the norms of Resolution of the Federal Education Council (CFE) nº 003, of April 12, 1978, meant an attempt to circumvent the crisis caused by the national press which, at that time, questioned the quality of the courses and their competence to train professionals in the field of Journalism (FONSECA et al, 2007).

The Journalism Course closely monitors the changes that have occurred in the journalistic environment in recent decades, promoting the necessary curricular revisions

to face this reality, which is a concern for all those involved: teachers and students. We can say that there has not been a radical change in the field in terms of editorial production in recent years. The arrival of the internet and its technology can be considered the change with the greatest impact within media newsrooms, considering all facets of social practice and resulting social interaction.

Although they are always up to date, what seems most difficult to change is a traditional attitude that puts the work of editors, reporters, photographers and layout designers into conflict. For teachers responsible for laboratory projects, showing the reality of writing newspapers, magazines (printed or digital), radio and TV is essential, so that graduates assimilate, in essence, the entire process of investigating news, creating from the agenda to the finalization of the report to be published on any information platform.

At the present time, courses in the area of Communication at UniSantos present the following programs of a structuring nature, with a predominantly interdisciplinary bias: a) Electronic laboratories - ``Rádio Boa Nova`` and TV UniSantos; b) Printed Laboratories - Arco Magazine and Newspaper: ``entrevista`` (interview); c) Communication and Education Day.

IN THE CASE OF ELECTRONICS

Radiojournalism laboratory activities, in 1955, when the Journalism course was implemented at the Faculty of Sciences and Letters, were limited to learning radio language and preparing a journalistic program, presented live in an auditorium. With the implementation of the Communication Course in Brazil, in 1969, laboratory practice expanded, including the organization of newsrooms, studios and the acquisition of equipment. And it required more workload. The objective was to guarantee a graduate

with a strong humanistic, political and ethical base, but equally equipped for professional practice. It thus met the legal and equally recent requirement of higher education to obtain professional registration and enter the job market; and on the other hand, it tried to respond to the demand, by the media business community, for an effectively specialized workforce.

In 1994, in the Communication Course at the ``Universidade Católica de Santos``, the Journalism qualification distributed the teaching of Radio Journalism over four consecutive semesters, a proposal that is in force to this day. The current semester structure is as follows: 5th semester focused on building a historical and theoretical framework, ensuring, through awareness-raising exercises, a renewed understanding of the oral-auditory process of communication; 6th semester, entry into the field of journalistic formats, from news construction to the development of recorded reports and preparation of news bulletins.

It is worth highlighting that the recorded reports served the ``Agência Rádio Facos de Notícia`` project, which distributed the material to broadcasters in Baixada Santista, weekly, for broadcast on their journalistic programs; 7th semester, focused entirely on practice, with weekly production of radio newscasts lasting 30 minutes each; 8th semester, completing the pedagogical proposal, the weekly production of the Round Table Program takes place with the presence of guests from the community and distribution of the product to broadcasters. The intense development of journalistic activities within the regional community, of around 1.8 million inhabitants, over a period of three academic semesters is evident.

The University's partnership with ``Rádio Boa Nova FM`` (93.6 MHz), maintained by the Educational and Cultural Foundation of

Praia Grande (SP), provides broadcasting of radio programs, with creative production of projects of different themes and formats. This way, the proposal for the Radio Journalism Project discipline integrates the teaching-extension-research tripod. And, as it articulates varied professional knowledge, theoretical references and creative freedom, it makes it possible to offer quality information to society and instigate academic research in the area of Communication, especially in the electronic media segment.

Among the laboratory experiments produced through integration with the community through Rádio Boa Nova, the Mesa-Redonda radio program, carried out by students in the 8th semester of the course, deserves attention. This is a 30-minute debate program that addresses a current topic of proven journalistic interest with the participation of experts and authorities. The program is broadcast on the Internet and on Rádio Boa Nova. On average, 32 programs are produced per semester.

IN THE CASE OF PRINTED MATTER

The focus is the Jornal ``ENTREVISTA`` (interview), implemented in April 1970, that is, 51 years of continuous operation, considered one of the oldest active projects among journalism courses in Brazil. And, throughout these years, the course is based on the values of its tradition, ethics and excellence during the four years of graduation, where students develop content that brings them closer to the job market.

With an editorial line focused on the theme of Baixada Santista, current circulation of five thousand copies per edition with free distribution in 70 newsstands in the Region, and via the mailing list. It is treated, within the scope of the course, as an extension, because it is an important link between the production of students and society, since, in addition to

promoting the circulation of information devoid of marketing interests, it promotes dialogue between students and their readers, through email, letter and the ombudsman, a position held by a guest journalist with no professional ties to the University and who criticizes each issue of the newspaper, for a maximum of one or two years. Such proximity makes the subjects of great relevance to society, contributing to the transformation of social reality and contributing to the student's education.

``ENTREVISTA`` (interview) is produced by students from the 7th and 8th semesters who effectively participate in the entire process of preparing the newspaper. From choosing the agenda, investigation, copyediting, editing, layout and closing. The didactic part is worked on with reinforcement in reporting techniques: guidance in capturing data and writing the report; in interpretive and opinion reporting writing training: commentary and editorial. In addition to editing guidance: title, subtitles, opening, importance of the material in the edition, order of importance of the subjects in the edition, choice of photos and layout coordination; and also, monthly evaluation of the final product.

The word experience comes in as a key meaning. In the case of the newspaper ``ENTREVISTA`` (interview), the learning room is the newsroom that functions as a space for exchanging information and the place to learn to be a journalist, gain a lot of knowledge and professional improvement. In addition to meaning the newsroom has a real space, an atmosphere of exchange of experiences and discussion among team members.

PROBLEM: LABORATORIES WITHOUT STREETS

The common level for everyone and each laboratory is the same across the world: surprise in the face of the unknown virus, the emergency health measures adopted, social isolation, remote teaching. The pedagogical structure needed immediate repair: how to experience the social raw material, with everyone, denialist or not, retracted in their mobility?

With the suspension of face-to-face classes and the adoption of remote teaching on an emergency basis in our institution, from March 16, 2020, the face-to-face laboratory cycle started the previous month was interrupted. The transition to the synchronous remote teaching model did not only mean replacing classes in the face-to-face environment with a technologically mediated meeting with all the limitations of this process and confronted as a novitiate of users, students and teachers, but ensuring the preservation of the pedagogical objectives foreseen and others are just as important, such as interaction and empathy between students, the mental health of the collective, and health in general, avoiding, in any case, providing possibilities for contagion.

Everything was very new and no longer in person. The raw material, on the streets, was isolated. Reporters and editors were distant, scared and fearful about the situation. The University campuses are closed and compliance with health protocols to avoid exposing the academic community to the risk of Covid-19.

BACK TO YEAR 1 OF THE PANDEMIC

PRINT JOURNALISM PROJECT - NEWSPAPER: ``ENTREVISTA`` (INTERVIEW)

This new reality has deconstructed the familiar environment, made it distant and also threatens to significantly alter the relationship of professional proximity between teacher/editor and student/reporter. And this relationship has always been a major differentiator in the course, an element for personal and professional learning. In addition to the concern for students to master journalistic fundamentals, it is important to discuss ethical issues and develop their critical sense.

Synchronous remote classes still do not formally have an academic etiquette along the lines of in-person dynamics, so to speak, of relationships and participation. The virtual classroom, even the best designed ones, does not hide the fragility of being distant and, often, hidden by letters or avatars. We can explore various resources on teaching platforms, such as Moodle, (text, audio, video files; exercises; work carried out by students), but contact is subordinated to the reality that we are not together in a common school environment, but each one in your square.

The routine of conducting face-to-face interviews with the sources of the reports selected for the bimonthly edition had to be replaced by other, safer ones, such as telephone conversations or digital correspondence. The face-to-face interview is a very rich process in obtaining information about the subject to be reported. The answers are filled by intonations and voice changes, by gestures and body movements, by distractions or pauses when asked questions. Without forgetting the entire scenario where the interview takes place and the theatricality, innocent or not,

of the source. A conversation via meeting platforms, such as Google Meet, can still provide some approximation to the previous model. Replying to a questionnaire via email or Whatsapp often pushes the resulting text into an almost cold, journalistic report.

How to face this problem? One principle is to encourage the student to try a telephone or digital conversation. Another, if correspondence is necessary, is to provoke the quality, variety and quantity of the questions proposed. And in a second contact, to clarify doubtful points, if necessary. Another important point is to expand the territorial range of sources, encouraging contact and dialogue with people from other regions. It is also worth mentioning the increase in data research to interact with the answers from the sources.

An alternative is to promote activities that encourage interchange and exchange between students. For example, conventional steps in the work process, such as discussing agendas and selecting stories for the cover. Production of reports, review, layout and image processing were adapted to be done electronically. And it's worth, for example, recycling the project.

Of the four editions of the ``ENTREVISTA`` (interview), newspaper produced in 2020, three took place entirely during the pandemic. And thinking about recycling the laboratory project, another modification came here that also impacted the newspaper's presence among its audience. Due to restrictions, these editions mentioned were not printed, but edited and designed on the computer and placed online, published in digital PDF format, on the course page on the institution's website. There was no access record. Distribution directed to a regional mailing list; the distribution of copies via newsstands; and, through the students themselves, it guaranteed very interesting feedback from readers.

Whereas during its 50 years of production, all editions were printed on paper, in 2020 the editions received the entire production process through digital platforms. Production of reports, review, layout and image processing were adapted to be done electronically and remotely. As mentioned, the newspaper is distributed free of charge in some key points in the city of Santos, such as at newsstands.

The announcement of the pandemic occurred in the middle of the production of the first edition of 2020. The uncertainties about the return to normality, about the return to school, ended up compromising the schedule and it was decided to invest in adjusting the pedagogical model, experimenting in the production of the following editions planned for 2020, but without any certainty that they can be achieved.

FROM PRINTED TO PDF

There is a difference between the culture of technology and the culture of journalism, especially between their interests. Technology, for its part, is concerned with issues linked to technical devices for the production, distribution and consumption of information. The teachers who work on the production of reports together with the students, both in the verbal aspect of the information and in the visual graphic aspect, are carried out by the students, for example, how to assemble the information on their respective pages in the best possible way.

With the exchange of means of production from in-person to online due to the pandemic, the innovations that occur in people's daily lives, especially those who work in journalism, have been causing changes in printed media, especially in the work routine of journalists, editors and graphic designers. In the current moment of information products, including printed and multimedia, where many highlights that it would be the replacement of

printed paper in place of the computer screen, the introduction of elements shows changes and forms of action, proposing other ways of working with huge amount of information we receive these days. It is up to academia, once again, to think about the correct way to promote journalist training for a new and changing competitive job market.

With this bias, what we tried to do in the editions of the ``ENTREVISTA`` (interview) newspaper was to convey to the student what online work is, in an extreme condition. Both editorially and graphically, these editions were made differently without harming the pedagogical project. And within this context of the new age of information evaluating the role of printed journalism, a topic that deserved to be placed in the focus of discussion between teachers and students was the use of infographics in journalism. Furthermore, by adopting this approach, it was possible to place some of the theoretical discussions that take place regarding this practice in the field of discussion and reflect on its role and importance within this content.

Among the proposed innovations, the second edition was themed, about Covid-19 and with a different cover, addressing only the subject. A highlight: all students prepared a statement about their own perception of the disease and its multiple consequences; and illustrated the page with selfies, all with masks. The third edition was again plural, by specific editorials, welcoming reports still impacted by the virus and the disease, but not only. And celebrating the newspaper's 50 years of existence, the latest one presented a different format, using pages doubled in space and spread, and an innovative proposal: reports with 50% of the graphic area destined for an illustrative proposal. An edition focused on pandemic data was designed in its respective editorials, as well as the use of infographics being the fundamental element of importance

in terms of structuring the page.

By highlighting the importance of each function in the final assembly of a page or editing, the student understands the opportunity and need to use their creativity not only in the development of their report, but also in the area of layout or graphic design and its appearance. visual within communication. And looking at the visual aspect of any project can give a special pleasure, no matter how common it may be. As if it were a work of architecture, the creation of any information object is a construction of a certain space. Editorial graphic design plays a fundamental role in the way information is presented, shared and understood and, by performing this last function, this discipline can enrich each student's education. This dynamic emphasized in the editing process, taking advantage of the fact that the publication would be digital, allowed for different editorial experimentation. And it contributed to easing social distancing and renewing expectations about the new world.

RADIOJOURNALISM PROJECT – ROUNDTABLE PROGRAM

The reflections and experiences promoted in the printed project were also reproduced in the Radiojournalism Project, with the necessary adjustments to the reality of the journalistic process in Radio. Working with reports and materials in a scenic framework in oral-auditory support, contact with the community, while physically distanced, maintained the characteristic of being recorded in audio.

The abundant availability of audio editing software allowed students to continue recording reports in a family or professional environment, a fact to which they were already qualified and accustomed, not depending, except occasionally, on the use of the institution's radio studio.

The significant change that required rehearsal was the recording of the Radiojournal and Roundtable programs in the context of a remote class, with the recording taking place on the Google Meet platform. The scripts were sent to team members via email or Whatsapp. During the recording, each student in an environment outside the institution remained "muted" (with the audio open) and participated as determined by the script.

Each radio newscast includes a 10-minute interview. The new order of lives and similar events, in some way, made it easier for guests to attend, by eliminating the problem of commuting in the city's traffic. The technological impact manifested itself negatively due to limitations in internet access, adequate equipment and the situation of the students' family environment.

The production of the ``Mesa-redonda`` program, like Radiojournal, was based on the public's growing familiarity with live shows and similar events. If participating in interviews for any media outlet brings a kind of feeling of public recognition to the interviewees, it is no different in a digital, innovative process, with a wide spectrum of circulation.

On the other hand, the physical distance between the student producers affected the interaction during the recording of the debates, a practice encouraged when the process took place in person. In addition to the remote conversation shared between guests and reporters, there was a need for a second line of communication between the team, via Whatsapp almost always, so that questions, comments and suggestions derived from the statements could flow. If this was a habit until 2019, in 2020 it almost ended and for simple reasons: lack of technological resources (almost always, students had only one piece of equipment for the remote process); lack of any type of training or rehearsal for this very quick procedure to be on live watching and

acting and at the same time, sending messages to colleagues; the difference in concentration between “live” and “remote”, perhaps without measured data yet, but noticeable in the day-to-day life of virtual studios.

32 Round Table programs were recorded in 2019. In 2020, 20 were held during the period.

CONSIDERATIONS

The physical and mental exhaustion of the teaching staff faced with the reality of synchronous remote classes was not mentioned in this report, on purpose. There is a lack of a full dimension of the problem and what can be observed was the collective commitment to overcoming it, even with so many obstacles still to overcome. One way designed to alleviate anxiety and tension was to propose some new features in the subject program.

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Thus, in 2020, the “Mural da Redação” project was implemented, a digital space in the class’s Moodle community for sharing reading and film tips proposed by students. And it continued in 2021. In 2021, the PDF Open Pages Project was also created, this one on an interdisciplinary basis, aiming, as a creative challenge, to provide an objective and practical understanding of the results of two areas that were intensely mixed in sociocultural technological architecture: Journalism and Entertainment. The interviews from the Radiojournalism Project are converted into short texts and edited as a supplement to the “ENTREVISTA” (interview) newspaper, this year.

The intention of creating new ways of moving forward is simple and has proven to be a kind of shield: keeping contact between us, students and teachers, university and city, alive in every way.