

THE ROLE OF ORALITY IN RADIO NEWS FRAME BUILDING

PROCESSES: Testing a model of analysis applied to Spanish news radio

ABSTRACT

Frame analysis of radio news requires a specific methodology that goes beyond mere textual analysis. The phonic features of the medium, especially its orality, substantially modify the construction of frames on air. We propose a methodological model for frame analysis for radio that analyses oral discourse as well as text. The proposed analytical model endeavours to locate emphatic intonation resources, specifically stress and strategic pauses, as devices used in the construction of media frames in oral discourse. These devices add nuance to the text and provide strategic information regarding the frame/communicative context. Analysis of their use enhances our understanding of the role played by radio journalists in building frames in the news format. Indeed, in applying the model to a corpus of Spanish radio news reports, we find that intonation may make communicative acts more effective by: (a) acting as a framing device; (b) reinforcing an existing frame through attitude, emotion, or paralinguistic information; or (c) contradicting textual content and suggesting a subtext, resulting in a dual frame.

Keywords: orality, intonation, frame analysis, news radio, Spain,

INTRODUCTION

A variety of methodological and theoretical approaches have been taken when applying the concept of frame/framing to the analysis of the media. We are interested in a qualitative approach that draws on the sociological value of the concept and points to the centrality of on-air actors and their expressive resources, such as image or sound, to the frame building process. This article specifically argues for a better understanding of the oral resources used to construct radio frames. Given that radio is an exclusively sound-based medium, such resources play a fundamental role in decoding radio frames, particularly in information and opinion content. Incorporating orality into radio frame analysis requires methodological and theoretical contributions from the pragmatics domain of linguistics. Pragmatics, understood as “the study of how utterances have meanings in situations” (Leech 2014) offers, in the theoretical tradition of frame analysis, a good basis for contextualizing the interpretations and meanings of mediated oral communication.

In this article, we present a brief introduction to media frame analysis before examining its application to radio studies. Drawing on the pragmatics domain of linguistics, we develop a model for identifying oral devices centred on intonation that may be used in the construction of media frames. Finally, we apply the model to a corpus of Catalonia radio news broadcasts, finding that intonation as a framing device may be deployed to construct media frames, reinforce existing frames, or establish a counterpoint to coincident content framing to generate a dual frame.

TRENDS IN FRAME ANALYSIS

Framing was introduced as a conceptual term in sociology in the mid-1950s and then taken up in a range of social sciences (Entman 1993). Vliegthart and van Zoonen (2011: 103) highlight the work of Erving Goffman (1974) in clarifying a sociologically-grounded approach to framing, in arguing that the meanings of statements ‘only arise in processes of interaction, interpretation and contextualization ... [t]he outcome of which are “social frameworks” that provide meaning, determine what is relevant and irrelevant when considering certain actors, issues or events, and suggest appropriate behaviour’. The subsequent emergence of framing as a key concern of media and communication studies followed Robert Entman’s (1993) call to synthesise the conceptualization and application of framing, which was scattered across social science and humanities, as a communication research paradigm that would, at least in part, underpin the disciplinary status of communication studies.

Although Entman’s (1993) ‘paradigm’ call went largely unheeded and was subject to criticism that it undervalued the benefits of the theoretical and methodological flexibility of the concept (D’Angelo, 2002), his definition of the term offers a solid starting point from which to consider the diverse range of framing studies that have subsequently been conducted in the media communication studies discipline. Entman (1993) contends that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item (Entman 1993: 52).

As noted by Vliegthart and Van Zoonen (2011), Entman's definition highlights the intentionality of the media in constructing frames to promote a particular version of reality in contrast to earlier sociological frame analysis work that pointed to the emergence of particular configurations from a messier interaction of social and political processes. In exploring frames as an intentional configuration by the media, the media and communication discipline has generated three main types of study: studies of media products from the perspective of content analysis that seek to identify/classify frames as constituted by framing devices (frames); studies of actors in the communication process from the viewpoint of the sociology of journalism and political communication (framers); and studies of audience reception, with the frame understood from the perspective of the effects of communication (framing).

While effects studies have emerged as the dominant of the three approaches in the media and communications discipline generally (cf. the work of Lecheler and De Vreese 2013; Iyengar and Zinder 1987; Iyengar 1989; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Scheufele 1999; Pingree et al 2012), and radio studies particularly (as discussed in the next section), our work primarily intersects with the first two approaches.

First, we are interested in identifying how sound, as a formal and distinct feature of radio, may be deployed as a framing device—a move that accords with a stronger focus on media form in framing studies (Grabe and Bucy 2009). Our research builds on a general body of media studies work that has examined the deliberate use of sound within the media studies discipline to promote certain interpretations of political information (cf Batcho 2012; Bucy and Grabe 2007; Iyengar 2005), and crosses over into the discipline of linguistics where relevant studies include Mendoza-Denton and Jannedy's (2011) examination of intonation in political speeches, and the examination

of the intonation used by newsreaders conducted by Swerts and Marsi (2012), Rodero (2001, 2002) and Delamota and Rodero 2010.

Second, we assert the importance of understanding the role of media actors in the frame building process. This position accords with a push back against the proliferation of quantitative media effects and content analysis studies by Gaye Tuchman, Todd Gitlin and Irving Goffman and others in favour of recovering some of the sociological essence of the frame concept (Vliegenthart and Van Zoonen 2011: 106-107). In line with López Rabadan's (2010) concept of 'framing strategy', this article takes into account the author's previous (2012a) methodological proposal, that argues for an understanding of framing that not only reflects the framing devices associated with content analysis (vocabulary, use of metaphors, etc.) but also the role of the actors participating in the frame construction process.

FRAMING AND RADIO

Application of frame analysis to the radio medium has been limited in both scope and methodology—studies have almost exclusively focussed on the political talk radio (PTR) genre, have tended to take a media-effects approach, and identify content-based framing devices evident in radio-text transcriptions with little or no regard for devices that hinge on the medium's distinctive phonic qualities.

In the United States, PTR broadcaster Rush Limbaugh has been a prominent subject of studies using frame analysis. These include a range of media effects studies that seek to determine the impact of Limbaugh's framing of political issues on public attitudes to particular policies, such as healthcare (Barker, 1998); political participation and voting behaviour (Barker, 1999; Jones 1998); public interpretation of election results (Hall and Cappella 2002); and political knowledge (Hofstetter et al 1999).

Barker and Knight's (2000) study exemplifies the application of frame analysis to a sample of material from Limbaugh's syndicated national radio show. From a three year (1993-1995) corpus of written summaries of Limbaugh's show, Barker and Knight identified the key issues discussed, their framing, and frequency. This data was then used to inform an analysis of surveys conducted by the American National Election Study Board in 1994, 1995 and 1996 that identified the opinions of Limbaugh listeners on a subset of the issues identified in the corpus analysis. Barker and Knight found a correlation between the opinion held by Limbaugh listeners on an issue and the frequency with which Limbaugh articulated his opinion on the issue. They concluded that 'when Limbaugh levels criticism toward particular ideas, groups, or individuals on at least half of his broadcasts, regular listeners show a marked tendency to buy the Limbaugh message—displaying hostility toward those items beyond what can be accounted for by ideology, party identification, exposure to other conservative messages, affect for Limbaugh, or a host of other factors' (Barker and Knight 2000: 167-168). In accordance with the valence framing analysis of political radio speeches conducted by Lagerwerf et al (2015), Barker and Knight (2000) found that Limbaugh had greater impact on the opinions of the audience when he used negative framing to present an issue.

Jamieson and Capella (2008) also point to the impact of Limbaugh's radio programme on US politics. Their study, which includes content analysis of Limbaugh and other PTR programme transcripts, highlights his capacity within US conservative media to generate an 'echo-chamber'—to amplify or transmit opinions that defend the conservative political framework while disallowing other political opinions in the form of moderate or opposing media frames. This 'echo-chamber' was reflected in the use of positive vocabulary to frame Republican positions and negative vocabulary to frame

positions held by the Democratic Party. Such lexical selectiveness was enhanced by the systematic use of popular language registers to talk about politics and to simplify political interpretation for the listener.

Outside the United States, Turner (2009) engages frame analysis in an examination of the political impact of Australian PTR. Turner focussed on Australia's radio 'shock-jocks'. These talk radio entertainers (usually they have no journalistic training) 'deal in opinion rather than information' and simplify political issues, making meta-political arguments and provocative and controversial statements to polarise their audience, although without the 'the more extreme dimensions we might associate with such exponents as Rush Limbaugh' (Turner 2009: 416). The desire of politicians to engage with shock-jock programmes provides some measure of the perceived impact they have on the opinions of the electorate. However, it is through a close examination of programme transcriptions that Turner (2009) identified evidence of just how rhetorical framing devices used by the shock-jocks translate into social impact. He found that talkback callers commonly repeat the strategic rhetorical techniques used by shock-jocks to frame an issue. This signifies the ability of shock-jocks to establish the discursive framing of an issue for the audience, which Turner (2009: 424) suggests then becomes the framing used by that audience to present the issue to others in the community, thereby amplifying the impact of the shock-jocks. Although Turner points to the distinct 'structural, industrial aspect[s]' and phonic qualities of the radio that endear PTR to politicians and enable it to 'exercise a shaping influence on the news agenda', like the framing studies of PTR discussed above, he does not look at how such factors contribute to frame building (Turner 2009: 421-422).

____ Similarly, Castelló and Montagut (2011) refer to the impact of industrial as well as some phonic qualities of Spanish PTR on the construction of interpretative frames,

but do not use these elements as analytical devices in producing a media frame analysis. Castelló and Montagut conducted interviews with representatives of Catalan political parties and the editors, managers and reporters of the four highest-rated Catalan morning shows to gauge the importance attributed to radio by political party communication managers and to assess radio's ability to influence political frame construction and generate its own political interpretive frames. They found that political parties felt that the immediacy, production simplicity and social influence of morning prime-time PTR were the features that underpinned its capacity to influence both the political agenda and the construction of political interpretative frames. Concurring with Turner's discussion of the political advantages of oral rather than visual media, the study concluded that radio enabled politicians to build frames in a more relaxed manner.

Rodero et al's (2009) research on Spanish radio news, one of the few examples of radio framing outside the PTR format (see also Binderkrantz and Green-Pendersen 2009), also drew some of radio's industrial qualities into the analysis, but stopped short of considering phonic elements as framing devices. This study is one of a number of Spanish media frame studies focussed on coverage of the 2004 Madrid train bombings (known as 11-M) (see Olmeda 2005; Noguera 2006; Rodas 2004). In examining coverage by Cadena SER (Spain's most popular radio network), Rodero et al (2009) conclude that the immediacy and production speed of radio are central to understanding the complex informational context of the event. Taking radio news transcripts as the unit of analysis from which to identify devices influencing frame construction (thereby overlooking phonic elements), the authors detect the deployment of accountability and human interest frames, while also confirming that radio had developed alternate, and indeed, contrary frames, to those presented by the government.

The present article seeks to build on this existing radio frame analysis literature and advance the field by adding to the limited volume of research examining radio formats other than PTR, as well as to add to the complexity of radio frame analysis through the use of the pragmatics domain of linguistics by exploring how expressive oral elements of radio may act as framing devices.

PARAMETERS FOR INTONATION FRAME ANALYSIS: PITCH ACCENTS AND SPEECH PAUSES

Radio language is constituted by four key sound elements: spoken words, music, sound effects and silence (cf Balsebre 1996, Bravo 1998, Crisell 1994, Hendy 2000). Within this language, spoken words are articulated through speech melody. This is understood as the set of variations in pace, tone and intensity that allow clear decoding of the communicative intent of the sender (Rodríguez Bravo, 1998: 196 -197). The mediation of the spoken word implies an accurate use of intonation as a basis for effective communication between the radio actor and the radio listener.

Intonation plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of any communicative act. This prosodic element acts as a guide to the interpretation of complex texts. In addition to grammatical and syntactic structures, decoding is based on paralinguistic elements, such as attitudes, emotions and intentions (House 2006). The importance of intonation in discourse construction has been approached from a range of perspectives. These include orality parameters that connote emotionality (Rodero 2011; Scherer et al 2003); intonation functions and how they help build contexts for the proper decoding of speech (House 2006); the effectiveness and credibility of news broadcasters in terms of speech melody (Swerts and Marsim 2012; Rodero 2001, 2002, 2004); and intonation in the interpretation of political speeches (Mendoza-Denton et al 2011).

From the perspective of pragmatics, intonation adds nuance to the literal meaning of words and provides information about the identity of speakers and their discursive intentions. Intonation also gives speech great communicative precision by generating subtexts that transcend and may even contradict literal content (House 2006). The detection of irony is one example of the contrast between a literal text and its oral intonation (Wilson 2013).

Our approach to using orality in radio framing analysis shares the same starting premise as House (2006):

We are interested not only in the words themselves, but in everything the speaker intended to communicate in the context of utterance, whether this is explicitly expressed, or implicit, derived by making inferences based on adding what is explicitly expressed to background assumptions constituting the context (House 2006: 1546).

In analysing the capacity of intonation to detect ‘contextual’ information (such as emotionality), some authors emphasize two basic parameters what is sometimes referred to as “speech melody:” pitch accents and their distribution in text and speech pauses. Rodero (2011: e25) suggests that speech melody imbues discourse with meaning beyond the semantic that, in the distribution of pitch accents, is a key element in detecting emotion in speech, even though it refers to tonal construction. House (2006) indicates that the main parameters of intonation in oral discourse include:

Cues to prosodic phrase boundaries; the distribution of pitch accents (salient turning points in the pitch contour assigned to rhythmically prominent syllables) across the text; the actual pitch values and movements observed on the accents and at boundaries... (House 2006: 1543).

Despite pitch accents and pauses being central to an analysis of the main functions of intonation, not every instance will offer evidence of intentionality from a framing device perspective. For this reason, our radio frame analysis model utilises the pragmatic element *stress*—sometimes referred to as ‘contrastive stress’ (Traugott 1982; Ward and Hirschberg 1985). Stress is understood as an emphasis in the form of prominent relative loudness of a syllable or a word as a result of a special effort in utterance (García 1992). In other words, stress is an expressive and intentional pitch accent. We understand that if intonation offers clues about speaker context and intentionality, stress can have a clear pragmatic meaning when used as a frame device. Similarly, although pauses in intonation help to articulate and make comprehensible a text, not all are relevant as a framing device. It is deliberate pauses or silences used to dramatize and focus the listener’s attention on a certain word or expression that offer contextual information we can decode as a framing device.

We are aware that intonation analysis can be much more complex than our stress and pause model, incorporating high and low pitch accents, and tonal and rhythmic discourse construction. However, we believe deliberate pauses and stress offer enough information about ‘subtext’ to indicate the presence of a frame. In the context of our proposed frame analysis for radio, focusing on these two parameters also helps to simplify the methodology and so obtain relevant results. In terms of notation, our model draws on existing linguistic conventions (cf Balsebre 1996: 72-73; House 2006: 1544). We indicate a deliberate speech pause with a /p/ and stress by capitalizing the pitch-accented word or word fragment.

TESTING THE MODEL

We applied the stress and deliberate pause model of intonation to a corpus from a research project previously conducted by the author (2012a). This corpus included 1,046

recorded phonic fragments with transcriptions from four primetime morning (6.00am - 10.00 am) radio shows in Catalonia, amounting to 16 hours of radio. The corpus was compiled to analyse the political interpretative frameworks deployed by Catalan morning radio shows in covering the Spanish Constitutional Court's (SCC) 2010 judgment on the constitutionality of articles within the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia (hereafter, Catalan Statute). Content analysis of these fragments located the main lexical and rhetorical features of each frame (Montagut 2012b), as well as the deliberate use of oral resources that determine meaning. In conducting this analysis, we identified how intonation may be deployed as a framing device, a mechanism for frame reinforcement, and as a counterpoint to coincident content framing to generate a dual frame.

FRAMING DEVICE

In radio news, framing devices are not always evident in the vocabulary or arguments associated with the frames explored. In a purely textual analysis the conclusion would be that the journalist reproduces information without a frame or aseptically reproduces the source frame. This is where it is relevant to consider orality as a constituent part of an interpretive framework—when oral expressive resources, linked to intonation, are framing devices themselves. In the following examples, the strictly textual content of the interventions is articulated by a distribution of stress and deliberate speech pauses that add nuance to the text and enable us to determine the position of the journalist.

Among the articles to be reinterpreted include those related to language.

The Court will REINterpret articles dealing with self-government,

historical rights, national SYMBols, the flag, the national holiday /P/ and

the ANTHem and those defining vegueries [territorial demarcations],

immigration powers and legislation on popular consultations (ID80).

The stress in ‘REinterpret’ attaches importance to the verb, indicating the informational importance given to the Catalan Statute articles and precepts pending interpretation. The strategic distribution of stresses on key aspects of the news, ‘SYMBOLS’ and ‘ANTHEM’, contrasts with the lack of emphasis on more pragmatic issues. Especially relevant is the pause preceding the stress on ‘ANTHEM’, as it gives a perceptibly negative undertone to the subtext. In a similar vein, we find a journalist reporting from Madrid on the SCC judgment. Although the textual information is neutral, the intonation connotes a subtext of outrage, with strategic importance assigned to certain elements through stress. Noteworthy in this example is the rhythmic use of speech pauses and the distribution of stress connoting negativity in the interpretation of the text.

*The judgment annuls ANY possibility that Catalan will be the /p/
PREFERENTIAL language of government. As the Statute puts it, it
ONLY /p/ CAN /p/ aspire to REMAINING on the same level as Spanish.
We need to see in parallel WHAT arguments will now QUESTION the
language policy (ID 578).*

The cases identified in which intonation acts as a framing device or as an essential constituent of interpretation of the text are interventions that are strictly informative and broadcast in the early morning (6.00 am - 7.30 am). The news genre in this case is neutral and rigid in terms of its dynamics and the margin for editorial action is reduced to intonation. In other words, only the oral dramatization of the text through stresses and pauses gives the journalist freedom to build a particular frame.

In the professional routines of the radio programmes which constitute the corpus, newsreaders for the early morning time-slots are replaced later in the day by journalists who form the core of the writing and editorial team. The interpretative frame accordingly becomes more evident and intonation plays a larger role in reinforcing frames, rather than constituting them.

FRAME REINFORCEMENT

We find clear examples of the deliberate use of intonation to reinforce the general interpretative frame for each station in the interventions reproduced below. Although the news items are repeated during the morning, use of contrastive or emphatic elements of intonation by the editor reinforces the interpretation of the frame and adds an emotional component to the information. Below we compare interventions by a reporter from the programme team (1) and the programme manager-editor (2):

- (1) *These are some of the FOURTEEN articles that the 10 judges have offloaded. /p/ And note, they also reinterpret a further TWENTY-SEVEN points but we don't know how they will turn out yet, but affecting financing, investments, vegueries, referenda, railway transfers and even SYMBOLS such as the flag or Els Segadors [anthem]. All with a very clear idea in mind: the indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation, a concept repeated up to EIGHT times in the text (ID 539).*
- (2) *These are SOME of the FOURTEEN articles that the 10 judges have OFFloaded and /p/ NOTE, they also REINterpret some THIRTY points but we don't know how they will turn out yet, but affecting financing, investments, vegueries, referenda, /p/ [an audible intake of breath] railway transfers and EVEN SYMBOLS such as the flag or Els Segadors [anthem]. All with a VERY clear idea in mind: the IN /p/ DIS /p/ SO /p/ LU /p/ BLE unity of the Spanish nation, a /p/ CONSTITUTIONAL concept repeated up to EIGHT times in the text (ID 679).*

Intervention (1) was in a report issued at 6:06 am, with the text stressed very little. Intervention (2) is marked by a higher overall intensity, as indicated by the fact that it was much more stressed and more marked by pauses (note especially the word 'indissoluble').

The role of intonation in reinforcing the frame also appears in opinion interventions, such as editorial items, broadcast at the beginning of a programme to mark the editorial line and as commentary by show participants. Again, intonation not only helps to correctly decode the meaning but also adds ‘drama’. In this case, we can clearly detect dramatization in the distribution of stress and strategic pauses.

NOISE, lots of noise, not surprising, it’s been a wait of four years.

NOISE in the public arena on days like today on account of the

Constitutional Court judgment on the Statute of Catalonia. AND NOISE

corrected and enhanced because it’s a PRE-election period, there /p/ in

Catalonia. And that affects EVERYTHING in the politics of that region,

like anything, but in particular THERE /p/ NOW. The news today is that

/p/ the Court by a majority ENDORSES the Statute (ID 418).

Stress on the word ‘NOISE’, the interpretation of the Catalan political response as being affected by pre-electoral dynamics, and accentuation of the verb ‘ENDORSES’ all show how a use of intonation builds and strengthens the interpretive frame. This would indicate that radio journalists are active builders of frames who use dramatic intonation in a deliberate way.

Depending on the choice of vocabulary and the rhetorical devices that mark the genre (the rigidity of the news versus the liberty of an editorial), intonation is more autonomous (framing) or less autonomous (frame reinforcing). The triple link between journalistic genre, professional routine and intentional use of intonation yields contextual data that adds to an analysis of the role of intonation in the effectiveness of communication processes in the media.

THE DUAL FRAME

A final function of intonation in news radio is when it helps resolve ambiguities in the text by adding a complex meaning to what is heard. In media framing terms, this is the dual frame (Montagut 2012a). What happens when radio journalists work with frames that already

exist in the source? When journalists or commentators superimpose their own frame via intonation in the information source frame, the result is a dual frame. When the frames coincide, we speak of frame reinforcement. When frames do not coincide, the outcome is a critical subtext that contradicts the textual content and so generates a dual frame; this kind of mismatch occurs particularly in programmes whose editorial line systematically rejects a particular political frame. The following example is an intervention of a manager-editor.

Even the disCREET reaction of the Popular Party, discreet OF NECESSITY, because they challenged MORE than a hundred articles /p/ although of course /p/ the fact that they do NOT agree is because they do NOT want to (ID 995).

The way the text is stressed and the use of pauses to focus on the last part of the intervention indicate this frame mismatch between sender and the original information source. Among experts and opinion makers, we find more extreme examples of how intonation is used in a much more ‘theatrical’ way to reinforce frames and apply an ironic dual frame. This is therefore a suitable context for a much less restrained use of intonation in the construction of interpretative frames.

What strikes me most, from last night, is this, that CERTAIN newspaper front pages and CERTAIN statements from both the government and the opposition in SPAIN and from some political forces here saying NOOOOO, WELLLL, that’s NOTHING, it could have been MUCH worse. I mean, SO /p/, it’s clear /p/ I mean, maybe it all forms part of some kind of psychological warfare TACTIC, the fact of FILTERING and SPREADING the word that there had been many previous drafts, proposals before the sentence that were, EFFECTIVELY, even

MMORRE devastating, right? /p/ But one thing's clear, that doesn't make things any better (ID 268).

This dramatization is also evident in other interventions where intonation plays a key role in strengthening the frame and in the use of exaggerated metaphors.

We have to get it out of our head for once and for all that we are a sovereign people, /p/ because we are NOT that. /p/ And so in this context we canNOT advance more AND-AND /p/ and when a husband humiliates his wife repeatedly, let's say the woman asks to go out with friends on Friday and the husband says NO, NO, you canNOT go, it's ME who makes the laws, it's ME who's the judge, it's ME who decides for you, /p/ then the woman is left with no choice but to GO /p/. I think that ALL that could be DONE within Spain has been done and the ONLY /p/ only way is independence (ID 874).

This commentator compares Catalonia with a domestic abuse situation, adding further intensity by strategically using stress and speech pauses. Especially significant is the strategic use of rhythmic stress on the negations and claims ('NO, you canNOT go, it's ME who makes the laws, it's ME who's the judge') and also the last pause in the intervention, slightly longer, to strengthen the commentator's frame.

CONCLUSIONS

Strategic distribution of stresses and speech pauses are not only artifices of the construction of intonation rhythms, but are also two key elements in the dramatization of oral discourse. Consequently, they enable us to detect interpretive frames in the emphatic deployment of intonation on the radio. Stress and speech pauses provide paralinguistic information which, from the perspective of pragmatics, makes communicative acts more

effective. Information on sender identity, attitude and context obtained through a more or less complex process of lexical selection is incomplete if we ignore how ‘staging’ occurs, which in the case of radio is the broadcast discourse. Intonation acts by providing emotional and attitudinal information. But in radio, stress and deliberate pauses (understood as dramatizing intonation) may indicate the presence of, or reinforce, a frame; or may generate complex readings where irony is present resulting in a dual frame. We can draw two conclusions: from the point of view of frame analysis, the strategic distribution of stress and pause analysis and of intonation in general enriches the research as it provides specific information on radio orality without the need to develop a complex and micro-level methodology. Moreover, intonation takes analysis beyond purely textual content to provide valuable information on the process of frame building, which may expose new elements of the production routines of journalists who use intonation as a valuable tool to maintain control over their own frames on air.

From the point of view of pragmatics, a broader context is depicted that takes into account the mediatic nature of the communicative act. Furthermore, if intonation is emphasized as a supplement and not as a mere complement to the decoding of public discourse, this offers a more holistic view of communicative processes and of the intentional use of intonation in the media. In fact, emphatic intonation plays a central role in the construction of frames in informative radio programmes. From the perspective of pragmatics, House (2006: 1543-1544) raises two questions that we share here as parallel to framing concepts: Does intonation ‘pack’ the message in a certain way? Is intonation an effective way to structure discourse and communicative interaction? From our point of view, the answer to both questions is yes and, as such, establishes bridges between pragmatics and frame analysis. This article provides one methodological model that uses pragmatics to ensure intonation receives the focus it merits in studies of effective communication.

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