



TWITCH INTERVIEWS: TEACHING INNOVATION IN AUDIOVISUAL JOURNALISM

Interviews with Radio and TV Professionals

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ABSTRACT

The format of the live audiovisual interview, through the Twitch livestream platform, becomes an effective and invaluable tool for learning journalistic skills and deepening the informative task through professional experience, thanks to the testimonies of prominent radio and television communicators, who also show their human side. In addition, the content of the Audiovisual Journalism course at the University CEU San Pablo has been updated. A collaborative methodology in which students participate in writing and conducting interviews.

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1. Introduction

The live audiovisual interview format, through the Twitch livestream platform, has become an effective and valuable tool for learning journalistic skills and deepening the informative task through professional experience, thanks to the testimonies of prominent radio and television communicators who also show their human side. This teaching initiative will update the content of the Audiovisual Journalism section of the Journalism Degree Course at University CEU San Pablo. It is integrated in a collaborative methodology in which the students participate in the preparation of the questionnaires for these journalists, as well as encouraging the participation of other students of the faculty through the chat in real time, having the opportunity to get to know their professional and human side. The journalists who have participated in this project over three academic years include Eva Fernández (ÁBSIDE MEDIA Group correspondent in Rome), Sandra Golpe (Antena 3 Noticias), José Ribagorda and Carlos Franganillo (Informativos Telecinco) and Rocío Martínez and Edu Pidal (Onda Cero Radio). All of them are included as highlights in 'Twitch Interviews'. All of them can be seen on YouTube's channel Cortes y Totales (Cuts and Totals).

Since its origins, this genre has been essential, either to obtain testimonies that illustrate and thus enhance the value of different types of information (news, chronicles, reports, etc.), or as the basis for some spaces in the history of radio and television that focus on this genre. With the emergence of certain platforms, the interview has opened up the possibility of reaching new audiences, thus reaching new potential audiences and encouraging their interaction.

1.1. Objectives

Twitch is a platform where students can interact directly with journalism professionals, giving them access to relevant figures in the field.

Live interviews allow a two-way interaction between interviewee and interviewer, encouraging active participation and learning this format in real time. It is a professional training project that develops communication and journalistic skills in a very practical way.

The guidelines for experiential learning in this innovative teaching initiative, in order to achieve the objectives set, are as follows:

1. To provide a complementary and comprehensive training for future graduates in journalism.
2. Based on the application of teaching methods adapted to new technologies and communication platforms.
3. Humanistic training based on the values of community and teamwork.
4. Facilitates the future integration of the graduate into the labour market.
5. To promote the image of the University with global projection.

1.2. Methodology

With the aim of giving visibility to the journalistic work of the students of the Bachelor of Journalism, we have chosen a method of collaborative teaching innovation based on each journalistic project carried out. The innovation of this project is based on being able to show a practical teaching adapted to the changes and developments of the current moment, where audiovisual information is particularly relevant. The results are based on qualitative research, where the testimonies of the protagonists of the interviews serve as a reference for the theoretical and academic framework of the teaching of audiovisual journalism.

For each interview, in the selection process, we look for profiles of communicators who, through their professional and human trajectory, offer an experiential vision of the journalistic profession.

2. The Audiovisual Interview and the Value of Live Testimonies.

Since its inception, the interview has become one of the most versatile and effective tools of journalism. The genre finds its ideal adaptation in the audiovisual media, where it is a continuation of everyday conversation.

2.1. Approaching the Interview Concept

The interview is one of the dominant formats in audiovisual news. Its success is based on the intimacy of the conversation and the ease with which information and knowledge can be exchanged. From the press to radio, television and now digital media, it has proved to be a versatile genre.

The writer Milan Kundera (1990) refers to journalistic work in these terms, and in particular to the legitimate ability to ask questions:

Journalists are not those who ask questions, but those who have the sacred right to ask questions, to ask anyone (...) the power of the journalist is not based on the right to ask questions, but on the right to demand answers.

The interview, according to Sherwood (1976, p.139), is the cornerstone of journalism. This author expressed that if the staff of a newsroom had to make the newspaper with only the facts that the reporters themselves had witnessed, and could not "seek the opinions of people, great or small, journalism would become much less interesting, important or influential than it is today". Cotten and Tello (Gómez Infante, 2017, pp. 44-45) refer to this genre as the main journalistic resource for accessing information, extending any news story and giving voice to a character. Warren (1975, p.215) adds that conversations between journalists and other people account for two-thirds of all published journalistic content, and that they also form part of the remaining third.

For Cantavella (1996, p.6), the interview is "based on conversation, on the questions that the pupil asks his teacher, on literary dialogues and on the fictional ones that are disseminated by the press..."; he also stresses the undeniable atmosphere of intimacy that is inherent to the interview and that places it in a special category.

This genre has been a reality as long as conversation has existed, and it is transferred to the journalistic profession with the same naturalness with which it occurs in everyday life.

This is reflected in the following definition:

The dialogue between two or more interlocutors in which one of them - the interviewer - seeks answers to certain questions from the others. The first task of the interviewer is to elicit answers from the interlocutor. Secondly, the interviewer has to make them not only understandable but also interesting for the audience. It is the genre that allows the connection between the audience and the interviewee - without any mediation other than the purely technical. (Merayo, 2000, 198).

Prado (1985, p.57) recognises that the interview is one of the most agile ways of providing information or deepening knowledge of facts and their consequences. He also emphasises that the interview is one of the most agile ways of providing information or gaining a deeper knowledge of the facts and their consequences.

For his part, Cantavella (1996, p.26) states that it is "the conversation between the journalist and one or more people for information purposes (their knowledge, opinions or the revelation of their personality are important) and that it is transmitted to the readers as such a dialogue, in a direct or indirect style".

In the same vein, Roderó (2011) stresses that it is the conversation between the journalist or communicator and a relevant person because of their knowledge, opinions or personality, with the aim of interpreting reality for the listener. The radio interview consists of two levels of interest: the content and its expression.

2.2. Production, Documentation and Execution

Balsebre et al. (1998, p.7) assert that "the interview is the most challenging genre in journalism" because it requires special documentation and preparation, which often cannot be carried out due to the immediacy needs of the media, especially in audiovisual formats. Maintaining professional rigor is one of the most difficult aspects of an interview.

The interview, unlike the press, finds its full potential in the audiovisual medium. However, the inherent characteristics of radio and television (proximity, immediacy and intimacy) have also brought certain disadvantages to the practice of the interview, due to the uncertainty of the spoken language, the

lack of time or the impossibility of editing in the case of live interviews. It also offers two streams of communication: one unidirectional and the other bidirectional.

In an interview, as in any dialogue or conversation, the human factor is the backbone of the profession. Qualities such as empathy, emotional intelligence, understanding, initiative and confidence-building make a conversation more or less successful, more or less interesting and more or less fluid. For this reason, the interviewer must develop a set of skills that allow him or her to get close to the emotions of the interviewee. Knowing how to interpret these emotional signals is the key to conducting a conversation in which both parties feel comfortable. Both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are involved.

But the emotional skills that the professional must acquire are not the only ones that come into play in the interview. Cebrián Herreros (1994) points out that the interviewee also tries to show his or her skills:

The radio interview, in short, carries the warmth of the human being, with all the emotions expressed in laughter, tears or sadness. It is the person on display. As with television, the radio interview brings the interviewee closer, gives an image of the interviewee. On the other hand, it demystifies the interviewee by making him or her more accessible, by allowing him or her to express himself or herself with his or her own means, with the acoustic and visual image that he or she evokes.

Non-verbal communication also plays an essential role, in this case conveyed through tone, volume and silence. If the interview is an exercise in seduction, a struggle to achieve one's goals, emotional intelligence and personal conversation and listening skills play a fundamental role. The extension of these qualities is implicit, but the success of the interview also depends on their subtlety.

One of the key elements for the interviewer before sitting down with the interviewee is the preparation phase. And within this, documentation plays an essential role, essential for a successful interview.

Quesada (Cantavella, 1996, p.101) says that "the well-documented journalist is in a better position to direct the interview towards the subjects that interest him or her and to avoid the subjects that have already been published about the interviewee". Knowing the character and being able to delve into his biographical data, what he has said in previous interviews and what he has said but never explored, will be essential for the journalist to be able to produce an agile, original and fresh interview, both for the character and for the listener. Muñoz (1994, p.142) states that "when the reporter has the time to personally arrange the interview, to research the protagonist(s) and the issues that concern him or her, the most convenient thing to do is to prepare a questionnaire". A questionnaire which, of course, should never be a closed script, but rather a guide, an outline, which reminds the interviewer of the topics to be covered, but which is flexible enough to be able to leave it aside and follow the rhythm of the conversation, because, as Prado (1985, p.65) states, "it is radiophonic to follow a rigid and unchangeable questionnaire". After all, the interview is a conversation, it must give the impression of being a relaxed, fluid and 'improvised' chat. But the best improvisation comes from preparation. It will be impossible for the journalist to conduct an interview properly and spontaneously if he or she does not know all the peculiarities of the interviewee and the topics to be covered.

Warren (1975, p.216) recognises that no matter how much the professional prepares for an interview, he or she will never be able to control it completely because it depends on the other person.

Balsebre, Mateu and Vidal (1998, p.43) refer to documentation, especially in the informative interview, on which our experience is based: "In the informative interview, the journalist must work very well in the previous phase of documenting the news event in order to identify the most suitable person to interview".

Knowing facts about the protagonist, seeing his or her previous media appearances, reading what others say about him or her or what he or she writes himself or herself is fundamental to the documentation. In the age of social networks, these are added to the interview preparation exercise. Usually the subject will have several profiles that need to be consulted. Exploring them has become a key task in the documentation phase, because sometimes they will not only provide information that can be interesting to discuss during the interview.

The elements that make up the audiovisual message are also included in the interview format. The journalist's task will be to look for resources, relevant testimonies, music, etc. to make it brilliant.

3. Twitch: a Platform Adapted to Audiovisual Interviews

Twitch is a platform that enables live streaming of entertainment content and, increasingly, news and journalistic content. The live streaming platform is growing in popularity, not only among gamers, but also among an increasingly heterogeneous audience seeking entertainment, information and the ability to participate in real-time broadcasts.

3.1. Origins

Twitch, a platform originally designed for live streaming of video games, is gaining popularity as a space for diverse content creation, including interactive journalism. It combines audiovisual streaming with open IRC (Internet Relay Chat) chat channels (Hamilton et al., 2014). It is based on the convergence of two communication channels: video broadcasting and the textual communication of live chat. Its origins date back to 2007, when Justin Kan, Emmett Shear, Michael Seibel and Kyle Vogt created Justin.tv to show Kan's life 24 hours a day (Ramis, 2021; Rice, 2012). In 2014, Amazon acquired the platform for \$970 million (Zhang & Liu, 2015), cementing it as the fourth largest source of internet traffic in the United States (Pires & Simon, 2015).

In Spain, we can highlight the figures of Ibai Llanos (who, in February 2021, launched the Charlando Tranquilamente (Chatting Peacefully) project that began with Gerard Piqué), the journalist from La Sexta, correspondent in the United States, Emilio Doménech, who became popular for his coverage of the American elections, or the comedian Ángel Martín, responsible for the Escaleta Matinal (Morning Outline) on Twitter and Instagram, who created Charlamos (Chatting) on Twitch, where he interviews personalities from the musical, cultural and social panorama.

Throughout its evolution, Twitch has integrated several tools to improve the experience of streamers and viewers, making their browsing more enriching (Valero, 2023). First of all, it offers the possibility of subscribing to channels through a three-tier payment system, which makes it possible to support streamers financially and obtain rewards mainly related to the chat (Ramis, 2021). Chat is a fundamental aspect, as it becomes a space where users can exchange impressions in real time (Ramis, 2021). This interaction highlights the creation of communities. Live streaming platforms that incorporate interactive features create a "unique atmosphere" between viewers and content creators (Buitrago et al., 2022, p.62).

In the case described in this article, this innovative teaching experience, with direct interaction between the student and the protagonist, allows the possibility of asking questions live during the broadcast. By streaming the content and being able to follow the lecture from any mobile device, student participation is facilitated and increased.

3.2. A Journalistic Tool

In the current digital context, as mentioned above, twitch is a valuable tool that promotes interactive journalism. This platform offers the opportunity to conduct live interviews with relevant journalistic figures. In this way, students can work on their journalistic skills while promoting learning, making it an enriching educational experience. It has also become a communication and information dissemination platform for communicators and media journalists who have taken on the role of streamers.

3.3. Interacting with Audiences in Real Time

The rise of citizen journalism in recent years has shifted significantly to live content broadcasting platforms such as Twitch. This social network is an important tool for journalists and viewers who want to express their opinions and concerns about a current issue. It is no longer just a channel to develop gaming skills or to entertain, but a means of informing, analysing and allowing the follower to ask questions and express their opinions about the content being broadcast in real time. The follower is no longer a passive recipient. This characteristic is an advantage when it comes to connecting with a young audience, such as the students of the subject.

4. Twitch Interviews: An Innovative Teaching Initiative

This teaching initiative has been developed to complement the Cortes y Totales project during the 2021-2022 academic year and as a result of the professional work carried out in the media during the pandemic, in many cases with limited personal access to sources. The aim is to update the content of the courses and seek a more attractive and closer vision for journalism students of the experiences of audiovisual information professionals and to update the teaching of journalistic practice.

4.1. Original Idea

The teaching project is an original and novel idea that aims to connect with the new generations of communicators and promote a vocation for journalism through relevant, exclusive testimonies with a profile that is not only academic but also human. The main attraction of this innovative teaching experience is the possibility for the student to be part of its development from beginning to end, encouraging participation in the classroom and also promoting the journalistic vocation of future communicators, who become an active part of the live development of each interview.

4.2. Development and Production

The production involves prior documentation by the students and the development of appropriate questions that promote knowledge and learning. Teachers closely monitor the production and elaboration of the questionnaires as well as the live interviews, providing constructive feedback to help students improve their journalistic and communicative skills in front of the camera and in live oral communication. In addition, these interviews are promoted and disseminated on the subject's social networks prior to broadcast. Once they are broadcast live, the highlights will be added to the Twitch channel to keep them on air and then uploaded to YouTube.

4.3. Interviewees

Table 1. Episodes and experts invited.

Episode/ Protagonist	Theoretical input	Date	Production
1. Eva Fernández, Cadena COPE	Information production	2021	Online
Sandra Golpe, A3 Noticias	Content editing	2021	Online
3. José Ribagorda, Informativos T5	Infotainment	2022	Online
4. Carlos Franganillo, TVE	Documentary and interviews	2022	On-site
5. Rocío Martínez and Edu Pidal, Onda Cero	Sports information	2023	On-site

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

In the first 'Twitch Interviews' interview, held on 7 October 2021, Eva Fernández, ÁBSIDE MEDIA Group's correspondent for Italy and the Vatican, was asked about her journalistic work from a professional and humanistic point of view. Her work as Vatican correspondent was praised by Pope Francis to the rest of the media during a return flight from the papal trip to Budapest and Slovakia. She was responsible for the culmination of almost eight years of production work to obtain an interview with the Pope on Cadena COPE, which was conducted by Carlos Herrera at the beginning of the 2021/22 radio season. Eva Fernández pointed out that in the art of interviewing "it is always important to ask questions with respect". When it comes to preparing the questionnaire, she stresses that it is essential not to ask just any question and assures us that "if you have a passion for your work, for the interview and you are enthusiastic about the person, you can ask questions that engage by being very honest with the interviewee and with the audience that will listen or read the interview" (Cortes y Totales, 2021). In the second experience (broadcast live on 21 October 2021), the protagonist was Sandra Golpe, director, editor and presenter of Noticias 1 on Antena 3. In the live conversation, she highlighted the teamwork of her news programme and the commitment to show different professional faces when it comes to

reporting the daily news. Regarding the editing of the content of a news programme, he said that "it's about making a rigorous product, one that has quality and that really tells you the news"; in his speech, he also stressed the importance of making the news "edible" so that everyone "understands" it, recalling how in his news programme they use "augmented reality", because when it comes to reporting information on television, thanks to new technologies, there is also an increasing emphasis on creativity. (Cortes y Totales, 2021) The third protagonist was José Ribagorda, a Mediaset journalist (presenter and editor of Informativos Telecinco Fin de Semana), who spoke about his work as head of information in this news programme and his vision and approach to soft news, especially issues related to gastronomy. The interview took place on the 8th of April. Ribagorda advocated the use of social networks as an everyday journalistic tool in the production of news, recalling the need to "know how to choose well the profiles - accounts - that you follow, that are reliable and contrasting, because many images and news are disseminated that are false and then very difficult to dismantle because they damage your prestige" (Cortes y Totales, 2022).

In these first three episodes of the Twitch interviews, all of which were carried out via online connection due to the pandemic, the live broadcast had the help of a student of the Bachelor of Journalism, Jesús Tobarra, who participated in the dissemination of this experience, not only by asking questions to the guests, but also by reading other questions asked by the viewers, many of them students of Audiovisual Journalism, via the broadcast's chat room.

The fourth interview took place in person, on the set of the Audiovisual Centre of the Faculty of Humanities and Communication Sciences of the University CEU San Pablo, on 24 March, with the journalist Carlos Franganillo (at that time at Televisión Española and now at Informativos Telecinco). He explained the work of a documentary series such as 10,000 days, which shows how society will change as a result of technological progress by 2050. On this occasion, it was the student Inés Muñoz (Bachelor of Journalism), with the help and advice of the teachers, who carried out the pre-interview questionnaire. As well as asking the communicator specific questions, she intervened by passing on the questions and comments from the chat. Franganillo recalled his work as a correspondent for Televisión Española and compared it to that of a local journalist because of the versatility he had to have in terms of the topics he had to cover in a correspondent's office. As for the future of Telediario, he assured that "the traditional live format of about an hour will be maintained, but the reports will be fragmented, broadcast on Tik Tok, X, Instagram, etc., and some specific products will be created and adapted for these channels, with their own language" (Cortes y Totales, 2023).

The interviews are then uploaded to the Cortes y Totales YouTube channel, in a different playlist from the episodes, and distributed on the Teaching Innovation Project and subject social networks (X, Instagram), as well as on the teachers' professional profiles on LinkedIn and on their own profile on this professional social network, under the name Cortes y Totales, Proyecto de Innovación Docente (Cuts and Totals, Teaching Innovation Project). These channels will be used to promote the initiative even before it is disseminated. The audiovisual, journalistic and educational content became part of the assessable subject of the Audiovisual Journalism course and was broadcast (through some outstanding fragments of these conversations) in successive episodes. The last interview took place during the current academic year -2023/24- on 4 December. On this occasion, and for the first time, there were two protagonists: Rocío Martínez and Edu Pidal, presenters of the sports programme Radioestadio Noche on Onda Cero. They reflected on the beginning of their programmes and what it was like to work together as the first couple to present a radio programme with these characteristics (sports and night-time), and which had never been presented by a woman. Eduardo Barrero and Paula García, journalism students, carried out the previous questionnaire and were responsible for asking the interviewees the chat questions in real time. During the live broadcast, the students were also able to ask questions live. On this occasion, an audiovisual piece produced by student Marcos Gómez-Díaz was included at the beginning of the chat, asking what they liked most about the programme. It was also broadcast with a live production of audiovisual content. Student Blanca Serrano was responsible of the production, with the help and supervision of technicians Lucas Marugán and Paula Díaz. Both Edu Pidal and Rocío Martínez described the new programme as a challenge to continue the work of "rigour and plurality", including in the choice of commentators, in line with the Atresmedia Group's policy (Cortes y Totales, ep.5).

5. Conclusions

The reality is that journalism is evolving every day, with new ways of communicating and different platforms that can serve as tools or channels for disseminating information. For this reason, the commitment to a more experiential and practical training in the university environment of the bachelor's degree in journalism has become essential. A need that arises from the adaptation of the audiovisual medium to current information. For this reason, the aim must be to provide the future professional with a more complete and comprehensive training in all areas of the profession in order to be able to practise it and adapt to the needs of a constantly evolving communication society.

In conclusion, the students' interest in this project has been positively assessed in terms of their participation in it and the objective learning acquired:

1. Professional training of the students. Increased acquisition of skills adapted to the current professional situation and promotion of audiovisual and multimedia journalism.
2. Theoretical-practical learning in the classroom and its link with the professional world.
3. Media dissemination through social networks and episodes of YouTube channel Cuts and Totals that are part of the course subject.
4. Project adapted to situations linked to social reality. The initiative, born during the pandemic, originally demonstrated the possibility of developing this format without the physical presence of the interviewee.
5. Twitch becomes an ideal channel for students to develop and improve their journalistic skills through live interviews with relevant figures in journalism. In this way, this platform is adapted to learning in the current digital journalism scenario.

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