

Transmitting Identity: Radio in Barcelona

NANCY MORRIS

Temple University

This examination of radio broadcasting in Barcelona, Spain explores how the characteristics of radio and its embeddedness in daily life may contribute to the maintenance of collective identity. Three months of monitoring Barcelona radio stations for markers of neighborhood, regional (Catalonian), Spanish and European identity revealed that Barcelona radio listeners hear little reinforcement of themselves as Europeans, continuous reminders that they are part of Spain, frequent allusions to the Catalonia region, and varied references to their town or neighborhood. The study indicates that radio, as a background medium, is suited to conveying the everyday messages that underpin collective identity.

Introduction[◊]

Radio broadcasting is a ubiquitous social presence. Collective identity is a powerful force in society. Despite their pervasiveness, both radio and identity tend to be taken for granted—radio as aural backdrop and identity as psychological and social underpinning of everyday existence. This article examines the intersection of radio and identity in one location—Barcelona, Spain—to see how the characteristics of radio and its embeddedness in daily life may contribute to the ongoing internalizing of collective identity. Along the way, it describes the structure of Spanish broadcasting, sketches relevant Spanish history and outlines pertinent aspects of collective identity.

Nancy Morris: nancy.morris@temple.edu

Date submitted: 2007-10-12

[◊] I am grateful to David Fernández and Sandy Kyrish for invaluable feedback on this article, and to everyone at InCom for their support.

Identity—individuals' ideas of who they are and their perceptions of themselves as members of groups—is so fundamental a part of human existence that it has been described as “people’s source of meaning and experience” (Castells, 1997, p. 6). One key category of collective identity is national identity—the feeling of membership in and allegiance to one’s country. Although some argue that globalization and new technologies, especially the Internet, have reduced the force of geographically-based identities (Mohammadi, 1997), national identity remains a salient category for most people in the developed world most of the time (Billig, 1995; Schlesinger, 2001, p. 95; Waisbord, 1998). This form of self-categorization is exemplified by spectator behavior at international sporting events and other competitions, and introductions when strangers from different countries meet.

While countries are the dominant unit of geographically-based identity, they are not the only one; people often identify with their neighborhood, town, or region. In some parts of the world, regions within or across borders maintain recognized historical roots as populations that share a sense of selfhood, even though these regions do not have—and in many cases do not seek—political sovereignty. Quebec, Scotland, and the Spanish region of Catalonia are classic examples of such “stateless nations,” which have been described by sociologist David McCrone as “territories in which identification with the nation is greater than that with the state of which they are currently a part” (McCrone, 1998, p. 128).

Geographically-based collective identity is so ingrained that few question its scope or legitimacy. The widespread essentializing of a socially-constructed phenomenon, and the contribution of broadcast media to this substantial strand of the social fabric, merit examination.

National identities—whether pertaining to states or stateless nations—are created and maintained through civic activities, such as official celebrations and formal education. But people’s sense of identification with their nation does not exist due solely to deliberate top-down practices. As Manuel Castells has pointed out, “Although . . . identities can be originated from dominant institutions, they become identities only when and if social actors internalize them” (1997, p. 7). Michael Billig’s concept of “banal nationalism” helps explain how this process of internalizing takes place. Billig suggests that for a person to take on a sense of national identity, to feel part of his or her country, there must be continual mundane reminders of that membership: “It seems strange to suppose that occasional events, bracketed off from ordinary life, are sufficient to sustain a continually remembered national identity. It would seem more likely that the identity is part of a more banal way of life” (Billig, 1995, p. 46). Billig posits that national identity is maintained through language use and repeated exposure to common symbols, and that much of this language and symbol propagation occurs in the media. Through the ongoing interactions and the ever-present mass media that form the backdrop of daily life, people assimilate and perpetuate symbols, languages, vocabulary and other references that reinforce their identities.

As part of his analysis of banal nationalism, Billig examined one day’s newspapers in Great Britain. He found numerous indicators of nationality. But to be exposed to nationality indicators in print media requires selection and reading. Conversely, many people are exposed to radio broadcasting without actively choosing to listen or without actively listening. Radio, therefore, must be considered a different type of message channel. To consider the role that radio might play in the reinforcement of identity, I monitored and categorized 123 hours of radio programming in Barcelona, Spain. Barcelona is the second-largest city in Spain after the capital, Madrid. It is also the main population center of the

stateless nation of Catalonia, which has its own language and a clearcut identity separate from Spain. In 1986, Spain became a member of the European Union, which is itself trying to create a pan-European identity (Schlesinger, 1992; European Union, 2007). Thus, Barcelona provides a complex and layered identity panorama. This study examines the output of numerous radio broadcasts for content that expresses collective identity at four geographic levels: Europe, Spain, Catalonia, and local town or neighborhood.

Media and Collective Identity

The relationship between media and collective identity has been examined in various contexts. Numerous analysts have considered the effects of imported media products on local identities (Katz, 1977; Garnham, 1993; Schlesinger, 1991). Such analyses have primarily focused on film and television programs, centering on concerns that consumption of a preponderance of audiovisual material from outside a culture could damage local cultures and weaken or destroy national or cultural identities (Starowicz, 1993; Hoskins et al., 1997). The implicit corollary—that media products originating in a country would reinforce national identity or that local media could reinforce local identities—has been perceptible between the lines, but not as widely considered. Examples of recognitions of this notion are the European Broadcasting Union's assertion in 1993 that "broadcasting plays a decisive role" in the affirmation of collective identity in the newly-formed Central and Eastern European democracies (Luce, 1993), and Meech and Kilborn's case study of Scottish media, which concluded that the media—particularly the press—contribute "to Scotland's self-perception as a nation" (1992, p. 258).

Feted among those who have undertaken conceptual analyses of traditional media and identity are Karl Deutsch and Benedict Anderson. Deutsch proposed that the "range and effectiveness" of internal communications was an important factor in differentiating one country from another (1966, p. 99). Anderson (1983) suggested that the spread of print media and the consequent standardization of languages in the 18th century caused national consciousnesses to form or consolidate. Exposure to print media led people to understand that they were part of a large group made of many other people whom they would never meet. Thus, in Anderson's famous coinage, a person's sense of identity is a feeling of membership in an "imagined community."

Although radio is one medium of such imagining, it has been largely overlooked in the literature on media and identity. Anderson's thesis was based on early print media, and particularly on the role of shared language in creating a sense of community. Many analyses of contemporary broadcast media and identity have focused not on language—TV programs and films are often dubbed, after all—but rather on the images of foreign values and lifestyles carried by these media as potentially damaging to a people's sense of community and identity (Schiller, 1976; McPhail, 1987).

As a purveyor of identity messages, radio presents a complex picture. Radio stations throughout the world play music that originates in other countries, with songs sung in languages that are not local. But this imported programming content is embedded in a local context, with announcing typically done in local languages by local voices and local accents. Radio programs are not routinely sold in the international audiovisual market the way films and TV programs are, and in this sense, radio is often more

local than TV. Perhaps for these reasons radio has been omitted from many examinations of media and identity (and, some say, of media in general. See, for example, Lewis & Booth, 1989; Pease & Dennis, 1994). There does exist a body of work on the use of radio as a tool for social change, particularly in the developing world, which often considers radio as a tool for reinforcing community identity (Huesca, 1996; Gumucio Dagrón, 2001). But the programming characteristics and prevalence of radio invite broader examination.

This study asks what identity messages radio listeners in Barcelona may be exposed to. The term "identity messages" does not necessarily refer to bombastic government pronouncements, although these would certainly qualify, but rather to the banal, unexamined content of everyday radio broadcasting. Radio presents an interesting window into the question of how identity is reinforced. As a medium, radio could itself be considered "banal"—it is a common background to other activities, requiring less attention than visual or text-based media (Crisell, 1994, pp. 11-13; Dennis, 1995, p. xi). This secondary position makes it a particularly apt carrier of the continual unnoticed messages that contribute to people's internalizing of their collective identities.

The Spanish Radio Industry: Structure and Formats

Evaluating the contribution of radio broadcasting in Barcelona to identity maintenance requires an overview of the organization of Spanish broadcasting. There are radio stations at each level of Spanish geographical administration. Several private commercial networks broadcast to the entire country, as do four networks belonging to the national public broadcasting service, Spanish National Radio (Radio Nacional de España, or RNE). Each of the four countrywide RNE networks has a different format: one is news- and talk-oriented, another plays classical music, a third features folkloric and alternative music, and the fourth is a 24-hour news network.

In Catalonia, the Spanish state broadcaster RNE has a fifth network, which broadcasts only in the region. The regional government operates a regional public entity, Catalonia Radio, with four networks whose purpose is "to promote and disseminate Catalan language and culture." Its flagship broadcaster consistently garners the highest ratings in the region (Generalitat de Catalunya, CCRTV, 2007). The Consortium of Local Communication operates COM Radio, linking many regional municipal stations. In addition, numerous private commercial networks serve Catalonia, including Ona FM and RAC1, which have affiliates throughout the region. Several other networks serve all or part of the region.

On the local level, there are public municipal stations affiliated with local governments. Towns or neighborhoods are also served by private stations, which may be independent or, more commonly, affiliates of national commercial networks (Corominas, Bonet, Guimerà i Orts and Fernández, 2006, p. 120). National network affiliates account for more than two-thirds of Spanish radio listening (Barbeito, 1998, p. 3; AIMC 2007). Some smaller unaffiliated stations—approximating U.S. microradio -- provide alternative programming for very small areas, as do unlicensed "pirate" stations.

Spanish radio is not as tightly formatted as United States radio is (Bonet, 1996-97, p. 19), and the audience is less segmented. Several broadcasters—mostly national networks—feature talk-only programming, based on news reports and commentaries, sports, and studio or telephone discussions. SER, consistently the highest-rated national network, employs this format (AIMC, 2007; AIMC, 2002).

Other stations broadcast defined specialized content. This may be cultural affairs or news, but in most cases, it is music.

With few exceptions, music stations play a mixture of contemporary and recent popular music, mostly Anglo-American, with a salting of Spanish and Latin American songs. The exceptions are several classical music stations, and several stations or networks that have narrower formats, such as Top 40, dance, Latin-American, or Spanish-language popular music. Some broadcasters play uninterrupted sets of music lasting as long as an hour, while others pause between every selection to announce the song, run advertisements, take listeners' phone calls, or identify the station. Stations identify themselves principally with names (not call letters), sometimes with slogans, and occasionally with frequencies. All of these characteristics—structure, formats, languages, and manner of station identification—have implications for the reinforcement of listeners' identities that occurs routinely in radio fare.

Study-Background

Barcelona has a population of about 1.5 million and is the capital of the Spanish region of Catalonia. Catalonia was independent until the late 15th century, and its language, Catalan, has been a marker of Catalonia's separate identity since the 13th century (Castells, 1997, pp. 44, 48).

The significance of the Catalan language to the region's identity is a notable element of broadcasting (Prado & Fernández, 2006, pp. 54-56). Once an ordinary part of daily life, the language took on increased importance as an indicator of identity in the late 20th century (Castells, 1997, p. 48) for two principal reasons: resentment of the repressive policies of General Francisco Franco's dictatorship, and awareness of the growing population of non-Catalan speakers in the area. The 1939-1975 Franco regime's emphasis on political and administrative centralization included the official suppression of Spain's regional languages and cultures. This pressure on symbols of identity failed to have the desired effect; allegiance to the culture of Catalonia did not disappear but rather strengthened, bubbling under as a form of protest when Franco was in power and bursting forth when the dictatorship fell.

The restoration of Catalan from a language prohibited outside of the home to the normal language of public discourse was achieved through a decades-long "normalization" campaign. The term expressed the notion that the generalized use of Catalan was a return to the pre-Franco status quo, not the imposition of something new. It "meant that a project should be promoted so that in an increasing number of social, political, and economic domains it would seem 'normal' that Catalan be the medium of communication" (Laitin, 1987, p. 129). In the 1980s, workplace posters declared "Catalan is spoken here." By the early 21st century, such proclamations were unnecessary as Catalan had reclaimed its position (alongside Spanish) as an official language of Catalonia.

However, the Catalan language is now facing a different sort of pressure from economic migration: an influx of Spanish speakers from other parts of the country and from Latin America has diluted the pool of native Catalan speakers (Edwards, 1985, pp. 188-189; McRoberts, 2001, p. 140). Catalan is heard on the street and on the media, and has been re-established as the primary language of education, commerce, and government, but the actual situation is one of "de facto bilingualism" (Parés i

Maicas, 1988, p. 264) that defaults to Spanish in ambiguous situations (McRoberts, 2001, p. 148-150). This has implications for radio, and for identity.

The linguistic normalization campaign was one of a series of changes prompted by the newly-democratized Spanish state's redistribution of power after Franco's death. Increased regional autonomy included control over broadcasting. Broadcasting reforms from the 1970s through the 1990s led to an increase in available radio frequencies, and numerous stations were established. The first local unaffiliated post-Franco radio station in Spain was set up in Catalonia in 1978, followed the next year by municipal radio stations supported by local authorities (Guimerà i Orts, 2004, p. 5). The increase in radio stations fed into the language normalization policies, which called not only for the use of Catalan in everyday public life, but also for local media to be used to protect and promote Catalan language and identity. A 1998 regulation required that 50% of the overall broadcast and at least 25% of the music played by radio stations licensed by the regional government be in Catalan¹ (Generalitat de Catalunya. Direcció General de Radiodifusió i Televisió, 1998, p. 5).

Catalonia's radio dial is now quite saturated; more than 300 radio stations serve the region (Bonet, 2007, p. 199). Depending on how Barcelona's boundaries are defined, the city has 30-55 FM radio stations (*La Vanguardia*, 2002; *Guía de la Radio*, 2007), including affiliates of national and regional networks, citywide stations, and low-power neighborhood broadcasters.

Method

This study is based on an examination of the content of Barcelona's FM radio broadcasting for the period of January through March 2002. The sample comprises a census of every FM broadcaster whose signal could be received in a central area of the city, a total of 46 stations. (See *Figure 1*.)

Figure 1. Stations included in analysis:

Name	Frequency (FM)
RAC 1	87.7
Radio Union	88.0
RNE Radio 1	88.3
Radio RM	88.7
Ràdio Salut-Europa FM	89.1
Onda Rambla	89.8
M-80	90.5

¹ The decree excludes from the music requirement "music broadcasters specializing in classical or folkloric music." Besides Catalán, the 25% rule includes songs in Aranés, another language of the region.

Ràdio Sant Boi	90.7
COM Ràdio	91.0
Radio Contrabando	91.4
Catalunya Informació	92.0
Catalunya Cultura	92.5
RNE Radio 2	93.0
Radio Intereconomía	93.5
Onda Cero	94.9
Club 25	95.6
Ona Música	96.0
Ràdio L'Hospitalet	96.3
Gladys Palmera	96.6
Radio Pica	96.6
Radio Barcelona- Cadena SER	96.9
RKM	97.2
Radio Teletaxi	97.7
Ona de Sants-Montjuïc	98.2
RNE Radio 3	98.7
Radio Bronka	99.0
Cadena Dial	99.4
Radio Llefià	99.7
Cadena 100	100.0
Radio Ciutat Vella	100.4
RNE Radio 4	100.8
Catalunya Música	101.5
Cadena Cope	102.0
Catalunya Ràdio	102.2
Ona Catalana	103.5
Sinfo Radio/Máxima FM	104.2
Rac 105	105.0
Flaix FM	105.7
Flaixbac	106.1
Ràdio Estel	106.6
Santa Coloma Radio	106.9
? (unknown — pirate?)	107.1?
Sants Ràdio	107.3
Ràdio Gràcia	107.6
Radio Amistad	107.9

One to three hours of programming of each station was logged, for a total systematic listening time of 123 hours, concentrated in times of peak listenership: 7 a.m. to noon, and 6-8 p.m. (Martí and Bonet, 2000, p. 55). AM broadcasting was omitted from the study, because FM accounts for more than

90% of the total radio listening in Catalonia, and many AM transmissions are simply rebroadcasts of FM transmissions (Martí & Bonet , 2000, pp. 46, 57).

For the analysis, the following aspects of each station's output were logged: the dates and inclusive times of listening; and the station's name, frequency, format, and broadcast language. This was followed by the categorization of announcing styles and programming content, including the types of identification announcements, slogans, advertisements, public service announcements, time announcements, music and news. This categorization sought to identify programming that alluded in any way to various levels of geographic identity, specifically European, Spanish, Catalan, and local (city, town or neighborhood). Any features that seemed pertinent to an analysis of identity on radio were logged. Sample excerpts from the logs:

- Station name: RAC 105. Listening time: 1 hr., 50 min. Language: Catalan. Slogan: "just good music." Ads: History magazine, home products, Kentucky Bourbon, Barcelona local government. News: top of the hour, in Catalan. Music: English-language pop, plus one Sarah Vaughan jazz song, plus one African, one French, one Spanish song.
- Station name: Sants Radio. Listening time: 1 hr., 40 min. Language: Catalan. Music: 19 songs—13 in English, 1 in Brazilian Portuguese, 1 in Catalan, 3 in Spanish, 1 in Latin American Spanish.
- Station name: Ona Musica. Listening time: 3 hrs. Language: Catalan. Slogan: "information you need . . . from our country."
- Station name: Cope (national network). Listening time: 3 hrs. Language: Spanish. Identification announcements: Spanish with some Catalan cut-ins. Ads in both Spanish and Catalan.

Samples of all stations were tape recorded. The resulting log sheets and tape recordings form the basis of the following analysis, which provides a broad overview of Barcelona's radio programming. The method and analysis were reviewed by a specialist in Spanish media from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, who made suggestions for clarification of several aspects of the study.

Collective Identity on Spanish Radio

European identity

The European Union has made a deliberate attempt to create a European identity through mass media (Schlesinger, 1992) and analysts have noted that "European integration is beginning to have an unevenly distributed impact . . . on conceptions of . . . collective belonging" which "may, in time, produce another form of collective identity —'Europeanness'—for the citizens of member states" (Schlesinger, Miller & Dinan, 2001, p. 4).

Spain is a member of the European Union. It participated along with eleven other EU countries in one of the most overt "Europeanization" steps—the early 2002 conversion to a single currency. It held the rotating presidency of the European Union during the time of this study. Yet despite these prominent indicators of Spain's participation in Europe, little acknowledgment of Europe was perceptible across Barcelona's radio spectrum.

There is no Europe-wide FM radio broadcasting. Only one radio station in Barcelona, called "Europe FM," demonstrated overtly European leanings. This Spanish national commercial network played a mix of contemporary Anglo-American pop music, with occasional songs in Spanish, and infrequent Europop. Keeping to its theme, Europe FM broadcast periodic news bulletins from the EU seat of Brussels concerning European Union activities. In keeping with its format of young adult popular music, these bulletins were brief. The station also featured periodic linkups with similarly formatted stations elsewhere in Europe, in which the linked station's identification announcement was played followed by an announcer from that station introducing a song (invariably Anglo-American pop) in the language of the station. Europe FM did not itself have any Euro-friendly slogan, nor indeed any slogan at all; its identification announcements contained solely the station's name. These pre-recorded identifications were, however, multilingual, being broadcast in Spanish, Catalan (presumably only on its regional affiliates), and occasionally in English.

Besides Europe FM, only two other overt allusions to Spain as part of Europe were logged during the three-month listening period. The first was heard on the news and public affairs station of the Spanish national radio chain RNE. In February, when Spain had just assumed the EU presidency, this network aired an announcement over a bed of solemn music that proclaimed, "day by day we are moving toward the union of all Europeans For more than 40 years we have been building Europe. The year 2002: Spanish presidency of the European Union." In contraposition to this self-congratulatory tone, the other allusion to Europe came on an unaffiliated neighborhood station in a conversation between an announcer and a local musician, who referred sarcastically and denigratingly to the notion of Spain as a member of the European Union.

While most stations broadcast popular music most of the time, music from other European countries—with the exception of Great Britain—was notably absent. In logs of more than 100 hours of listening to stations that featured pop music formats, just twelve songs appear in European languages other than Spanish, English, or Portuguese. This represents well under 1% of the overall listening time. The songs included eight in French, three in Italian, and one in German—not a single song in Greek, Danish, or any other European language. The occasional selection in Portuguese was usually from Brazil, not from Portugal, Spain's Iberian neighbor.

Thus, during the period of this study, overt acknowledgment of Spain as part of Europe—of Spaniards as Europeans—was scarce, and banal commonplace markers of Europeanness were rare. This indicates a gap between the official government position and the identity messages available to be internalized by the citizenry.

Spanish identity

In contrast to the sparse expression of European identity, Spanish identity was expressed in numerous ways. As is the case with Europe FM, station names can reflect geographic identity. Nonetheless, only one nationwide broadcaster identified itself as Spanish through its name: the primary network of the Spanish National Radio. Its flagship network uses "Radio Nacional de España" as its primary identification. The names of the other RNE stations—"Classical Radio," "Radio Three," "Radio Four," and "All-News Radio Five"—did not indicate their affiliation with the state broadcaster. The leading commercial national chains are called Dial network, SER network, and "Top 40"—names that neither evoke the country nor indicate their status as national broadcasters².

One way that stations evoke a sense of Spanishness is through references to the country as a whole. This is done not just by routine reporting of news from various regions of the country, but also, for example, in weather reports. As Billig notes about Great Britain, "Even 'the weather,' so familiar and so concrete a concept, is routinely nationalized" (1995, p. 174). On Spanish radio, national weather is broadcast by several networks that cover the entire country. Each follows the same format: a series of announcers in different cities read, one by one, a brief forecast for their areas. Listening to these cities named one after another evokes in the listener an image of the country as a whole, bounded entity. Of course, it may seem logical to carry Spanish weather on Spanish national radio, but Spain is larger than California, so information about the entire country's weather is not pertinent to most listeners' lives. The unquestioned assumption of the "naturalness" of carrying national weather is another indicator of ways that media remind consumers of, in Billig's words, "their national place in a world of nations" (Billig, 1995, p. 8. See also pp. 116-117).

Time announcements also evoked a sense of the entirety of the country with their frequent mention of the Canary Islands, a distant archipelago off the coast of Africa that is part of Spain. Because of its location, the island chain is in a different time zone from the rest of Spain. All time announcements on national broadcasters acknowledged this, either through a two part announcement—"it's three o'clock; two o'clock in the Canaries"—or through a statement of the time followed by the phrase "one hour earlier in the Canaries." The repetition of this pattern reinforces in listeners' minds the idea that the faraway islands are part of their country.

The most notable expression of Spanish identity on radio in Barcelona was through language. This may seem obvious, but it merits mention in Spain's complex linguistic environment. As the Catalan people have long recognized, language can serve as a symbol of a group, defining who is an insider and who is not (Gumperz, 1982, p. 7; Edwards, 1985). Announcers on the Spanish national networks speak

² The derivation of the name Radio SER alludes to Spain, as SER stands for "Sociedad Española de Radio" (Spanish Radio Company) but it is unlikely that listeners are aware of this as the word "ser" in Spanish means "to be," and no allusion is made to the meaning of the acronym on the air or on the network's web site. Similarly, the COPE network name stands for "Cadena de Ondas Populares Españoles" (loosely "Spanish Popular Radiowave Network"), but the meaning of this abbreviation is not mentioned on air or on the Web site.

Spanish. These networks have brief cut-ins for local programming. In Barcelona, the announcing in these local breaks is usually in Catalan³.

The language of the songs played is also noteworthy. While much of the music played on national networks' pop stations is in English, drawn from the Anglo-American charts, the vocal music from Spain was exclusively in the Spanish language. With the exception of one program dedicated to folk music on the alternative national channel, more than 100 listening hours produced not a single song in the regional languages of Basque, Galician, or Catalan on any national station. Thus, through their announcing language and their music choices, these networks are implicitly defining Spain as Spanish-speaking, rather than as an amalgam of regions, some of which have different languages. The routine nature of this assumption may be a byproduct of the decades of suppression of regional languages under Franco. Whatever its origin, it serves as a generally unremarked reinforcement of the dominant idea of a Spanish-speaking Spain, and of Spanish-speakers' shared group membership. However, this situation is not straightforward, particularly in Catalonia.

Regional (Catalan) identity

All of Spain's regions have local media outlets. When the native language of the region is not Castilian Spanish, as is the case in Galicia, the Basque Country, Catalonia, and elsewhere, there exist local print and broadcast media in local languages.

Regional radio stations licensed by the government of Catalonia are required to use the Catalan language for at least 50% of their programming. The regional stations logged in this study varied from nearly 100% of the broadcast in Catalan to dominant use of Spanish. A 1998 study found that some stations used both Catalan and Spanish, sometimes in an unpredictably mixed way, a finding that was borne out by this study (Barbeito Veloso and Crespo Haro, 1998, p. 4). In 2001, an observer noted that Spanish "remains the predominant language" in radio and other media in Catalonia (McRoberts, 2001, p. 148. See also Hobsbawm, 1996, p. 96). Regardless of the language employed, the names of some broadcasters reflected their regional location: Catalonia Radio, Music Catalonia, Information Catalonia, Catalonia Wavelength.

Despite the requirement that regionally-licensed radio stations play at least 25% Catalan musical content, no station was dedicated solely or even mostly to the region's music. Occasionally, a rock song or contemporary ballad sung in Catalan was aired. Traditional Catalan folkloric musical forms such as *sardanas* were almost absent in peak listening hours on these stations, even on Catalonia Radio, the four-network group affiliated with the regional government. Its music network, Catalonia Music, focuses on classical music. In general, the music played on the networks such as Ona Catalana, which has stations throughout the region, was the characteristic combination of mostly Anglo-American pop sprinkled with a bit of Spanish pop.

³ This represents a change from 1998, when a study showed both Spanish and Catalán used in local breaks of national broadcasters, with Spanish favored (Barbeito Veloso and Crespo Haro 1998, pp. 4-5).

Local(town/neighborhood) identity

Some Barcelona stations serve the city as a whole, but dependence on ad revenue based on audience numbers means that "strictly local private radio is increasingly scarce" (Corominas et al., 2006, p.124). Most local stations tend to be either repeaters of national networks with brief local inserts, or regional entities whose broadcast areas encompass more than the city. One station is called "Radio Barcelona," but it is not local in origin; it is an affiliate of the ratings-leading SER network.

At the micro level, smaller than citywide, low-power FM broadcasting flourishes. In this context, station names more commonly reflect the geographic area. Radio Santa Coloma and Radio Castelldefels, for example, serve these suburban Barcelona towns. Ràdio Gràcia, Ràdio Ciutat Vella, and Ona de Sants-Montjuic serve the Barcelona neighborhoods they name.

Apart from names, the amount of local material aired varied from station to station. Ràdio L'Hospitalet, located in the major Barcelona suburb of the same name, focused unstintingly on that area, with news discussions featuring local officials, and most advertisements specifying that the business or product advertised was located in the town. The name of L'Hospitalet was heard often in all the station's broadcasting, creating a coherent sense of identity. In contrast, other stations' identification with their geographic area did not extend beyond the station name. Radio Ciutat Vella, for example, a station of a central neighborhood of the city, played continuous music with infrequent interruptions to announce the station's name.

Other identities

Several radio stations in Barcelona carry programming targeted at listeners from elsewhere in Spain. The Southern region of Andalucía—a major source of migration to the more prosperous region of Catalonia—was prominently represented on the Barcelona radio dial, with one station, Radio RM, devoting large amounts of air time to music styles from the area. On-air conversations with listeners often included mention of callers' home towns in Andalucía, and the announcers seemed to be from the area, also reinforcing the station's Andalusian sound. This was the only region to be represented by full-time radio programming. The Spanish regions of Extremadura and Galicia were represented on Catalan stations by weekly programs, usually one to two hours in length, apparently catering to migrants from those regions who could tune in to hear their languages and music, and familiar references.

Listeners from other countries fared less well. The Latin American community in the Barcelona area is served by Radio Gladys Palmera, which has been on the air since 1999 (Guimerà i Orts 2004, p. 14). It is not surprising to find a station focused on the Latin American audience; this is a large immigrant group whose principal language is Spanish, and whose musical styles are popular internationally, making the station accessible to a public beyond its expatriate listening base. At the time of this study, other immigrant groups—such as Pakistanis, Arabs, and Chinese, whose presence is quite visible in Barcelona—had no representation on the radio during peak listening hours.

Conclusion

Radio listeners in Spain's second city are exposed to various types of identity messages. These range from declarations concerning the European Union to the mention of a neighborhood in a local merchant's advertisement to ordinary occurrences with no evident deliberateness, such as weather forecasts. These messages correspond to different levels of geographic identification. Listeners surveying Barcelona's radio offerings would hear very little reinforcement of themselves as members of an "imagined community" called Europe, subtle but continuous reminders that they are part of Spain, frequent allusion to the region of Catalonia, and expressions of identity of their town or neighborhood varying from frequent to occasional to nonexistent.

In a sense, the radio audience is fragmented by level of geographic identification. But these identities—these "imagined communities"—are not mutually exclusive. Since each geographic level encompasses the smaller ones, these identities can be experienced simultaneously in a hierarchical way (Feldman, 1979). Most Barcelona listeners probably feel themselves to be members of each of the four geographic communities highlighted in this study: Europe, Spain, Catalonia, and their local area. Castells posits that the primary identification of the Catalan people is the regional Catalan identity, "yet, at the same time, most declare themselves Spanish, and even 'European,' as well" (1997, p. 51). The identity that dominates a person's consciousness in any given moment would depend on the context, and could, of course, be sparked by radio content. In this way, radio listening may contribute to the maintenance of various identities found in Barcelona. (Internet radio listening may also contribute to identity maintenance inside and outside of the region, as RAC1, COM Radio and others can be accessed online. Catalonia Radio has an extensive Internet menu including streaming audio, podcasts, and several channels of Internet-only content, one of which is devoted to music in Catalan. These wide-ranging Internet radio offerings did not exist at the time of this study.)

With the multiplicity of radio stations, Barcelona listeners have choices. It is likely that the relationship between identity and radio listening is a two-way process: identity may be maintained by radio listening but it probably also affects radio listening choices. Listeners who have roots in southern Spain might choose to listen to the station that features principally Andalusian music and announcers as a way to hear familiar music and accents and to feel connected to a community they feel part of. Those whose identity as Catalans encompasses a preference for the Catalan language (whether due to linguistic militancy or to comfort) might select broadcasting in their language, which carries between the lines its own identity message (Edwards, 1985). In this way, radio listening choices may reinforce existing identities.

Some expressions of collective identity broadcast on radio stations in Barcelona are deliberate, such as the state broadcaster's promotional announcements for the European Union presidency. Most of them, however, are implicit expressions of collective identity, which by their existence and through repetition suffuse culture and consciousness. Such expressions range from station names to the language used by announcers, to local references in on-air discussions, to the music played. Radio stations' names, formats, and contents reflect the patterns of identification found in the society as a whole and form part of the mosaic of prosaic reminders that contribute to identity maintenance.

Barcelona residents are exposed to radio in public places—restaurants, shops, taxis—and most of them also listen at home (AIMC, 2002. p. 24). A listener can be exposed to identity messages that reinforce his or her own self-concept—that is, his or her identity—or the contrary, as would be the case of someone from Catalonia listening to a station featuring music from the region of Andalucía or vice versa. The amount and proportion of these messages any individual is exposed to depends on two factors. The first is the amount of listening time that is under his or her control—that is, listening time at home or in the car compared to hearing radio in public. The second is the selection of stations that an individual makes when tuning the radio dial (whether that dial is on an actual radio or on the Internet, where many radio stations—from Catalonia and elsewhere—are now available).

A further important factor is whether a person absorbs the messages to which he or she is exposed, and if these messages have some effect. These questions could be addressed by studying the radio audience, perhaps in ways similar to research that has been conducted on the reception of imported TV shows (Liebes & Katz, 1990). The fact that most radio broadcasting is local or national in origin would constitute an important difference from the study of imported television programming.

This study of radio content has shown that radio stations in Barcelona carry different identity messages, but that all of them carry some sort of identity messages, most often tacit rather than explicit, subtle rather than conspicuous. The study follows Castells' claim that social actors must internalize notions of identity for identity to be sustained, and illustrates Billig's concept of "banal nationalism," which "possesses a low key, understated tone. In routine practices and everyday discourses, especially those in the mass media, the idea of nationhood is regularly flagged" (1995, p. 154). Such signaling of nationhood, unplanned and unexamined for the most part, can fortify existing identities or counter them.

Collective identity in Barcelona is a more complicated and more prominent matter than is often the case elsewhere, but the notion of media purveying taken-for-granted reminders of identity is widely applicable. Radio, as a medium that is often in the background, an accompaniment rather than the center of attention, is well suited to conveying the kind of everyday content that contributes to identity maintenance. Its very characteristic as a secondary medium makes it particularly effective as a fortifier of identity messages. These messages do not command center stage, but rather they subtly and continuously reinforce listeners' sense of place and sense of membership in a community that is defined by belonging to that place.

Note:

A 3000-word summary of the central findings of this study appears in the Catalan language on the web site of the Portal de la Comunicació of the Autonomous University of Barcelona www.portalcomunicacion.com/catunesco/ESP/3/down/morris/radio.pdf

References

- AIMC. (Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación). (2007). EGM. Retrieved December 10, 2007 from http://www.aimc.es/aimc.php?izq=egm.swf&pag_html=si&op=cuatro&dch=02egm/24.html
- AIMC. (Asociación para la investigación de medios de comunicación). (2002). Marco general de los medios en España 2002. Madrid: AIMC.
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities*. London: Verso.
- Barbeito Veloso, M. & Crespo Haro, E. (1998). Políticas radiofónicas de comunicación local: El caso de Catalunya. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* 5. Retrieved July 8, 2004 from <http://www.ull.es/publicaciones/latina/a/99radio.htm>
- Billig, M. (1995). *Banal nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Bonet, M. (2007). La ràdio local: només ràdio pública?. In *Informe de la comunicació a Catalunya 2005-2006* (pp. 199-201). Barcelona: Institut de la Comunicació, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- Bonet, M. (1996-7). La neo-regulación radiofónica en España: un proceso de transformación abierto al futuro. *Telos* 48 Dec. 96-Feb. 97, 13-22.
- Castells, M. (1997). *The information age: Economics, society and culture. Volume II: The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Corominas, M., Bonet, M., Guimerà i Orts, J. & Fernández, I. (2006). Digitalization and the concept of "local": The case of radio in Spain. *Journal of Radio Studies* 13(1), 116-128.
- Crisell, A. (1994). *Understanding radio* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Deutsch, K. (1966). *Nationalism and social communication: An inquiry into the foundation of nationality* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Edwards, J. (1985). *Language, society and identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell in association with André Deutsch.
- European Union. Delegation of the European Commission to the United States. (2007, November). EU Focus. Special EU Advertising Supplement to *Foreign Policy* Nov/Dec. 2007. Available online: <http://www.eurunion.org/news/eunewsletters/EUFocus/2007/EUFocus-Identity2007.pdf>
- Feldman, S. D. (1979). Nested identities. *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 2, 399-418.

- Garnham, N. (1993). The mass media, cultural identity, and the public sphere in the modern world. *Public Culture* 5, 251-65.
- Generalitat de Catalunya. CCRTV. (2007). Catalunya Ràdio. Retrieved April 11, 2007 from http://www.ccrtv.cat/entitats/entitat_catalunya_radio_cat.htm.
- Generalitat de Catalunya. Direcció General de Radiodifusió i Televisió. (1998). Decreto 269/1998 (DOGC 2756 de 2.11.1998). Retrieved April 20, 2007 from <http://www3.gencat.net:81/dgrtv/ftp/ed269.pdf>. Available in English from <http://www6.gencat.net/llengcat/legis/en/lpl.htm>
- Guía de la Radio. (2007). Emisoras de la provincia de Barcelona. Retrieved April 20, 2007 from <http://www.guiadelaradio.com/P/barcelona.html>
- Guimerà i Orts, J. A. (2004). La comunicació local com a escenari de la diversitat cultural: el cas de Catalunya. Observatori de la Comunicació Local, Portal de la Comunicació InCom UAB. Retrieved July 6, 2004 from http://www.portalcomunicacion.com/ocl/docs/esp/obs.asp?id_items=1
- Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Language and social identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gumucio Dagrón, A. (2001). *Making waves: Stories of participatory communication for social change*. New York: The Rockefeller Foundation.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. (1996). Are all Tongues Equal? Language, Culture and National Identity. In Barker, Paul (Ed.), *Living as Equals* (pp. 85-98). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hoskins, C., McFadyean, S & Finn, A. (1997). *Global television and film*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Huesca, R. (1996). Participation for development in radio: An ethnography of the reporteros populares of Bolivia. *Gazette* 57, 29-52.
- Katz, E. (1977). Can authentic cultures survive new media? *Journal of Communication* 27, 113-21.
- Laitin, D. D. (1987). Linguistic conflict in Catalonia. *Language Problems and Language Planning* 11, 129-47.
- Lewis, P. M. & Booth, J. (1989). *The invisible medium: Public, commercial and community radio*. London: Macmillan.
- Liebes, T. & Katz, E. (1990). *The Export of Meaning: Cross-Cultural Readings of Dallas*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Luce, E. (1993). Broadcasters speak out against free trade in TV shows. *The Guardian* October 8, 17.

- Martí, J. M. & Bonet, M. (2000). La radio. In *Informe de la comunicació a Catalunya 2000*. Barcelona: Institut de la Comunicació, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- McCrone, D. (1998). *The sociology of nationalism*. London: Routledge.
- McPhail, T. L. (1987). *Electronic colonialism*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McRoberts, K. (2001). *Catalonia: Nation building without a state*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Meech, P. & Kilborn, R. (1992). Media and identity in a stateless nation: the case of Scotland. *Media, Culture and Society* 14, 245-59.
- Mohammadi, A. (Ed.) (1997). *International communication and globalization*. London: Sage.
- Parés i Maicas, M. (1988). Política cultural i política de comunicació a Catalunya. In Parés i Maicas, M. & Tremblay, G. (Eds.), *Catalunya, Quebec: Dues nacions, dos models culturals* (pp. 263-290). Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya Entitat Autònoma del Diari Oficial i de Publicacions.
- Pease, E. C. & Dennis, E. E. (Eds.). (1995). *Radio — The forgotten medium*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Prado, E. & Fernández, D. (2006). The role of public service broadcasting in the era of convergence: A case study of Televisió de Catalunya. *Communications and Strategies* 62, pp. 49-69.
- Schiller, H. I. (1976). *Communication and cultural domination*. White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Schlesinger, P. (1991). *Media, state and nation: political violence and collective identities*. London: Sage.
- Schlesinger, P. (1992). "Europeanness"—a new cultural battlefield? *Innovation in Social Sciences Research* I, 11-23.
- Schlesinger, P. (2001). Tensions in the construction of European media policies. In Morris, N. & Waisbord, S. (Eds.). *Media and globalization: Why the state matters* (pp. 95-115). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Schlesinger, P., Miller, D. & Dinan, W. (2001). *Open Scotland? Journalists, spin doctors and lobbyists*. Edinburgh: Polygon.
- Starowicz, M. (1993). Citizens of video-America: What happened to Canadian television in the satellite age. In de la Garde, Roger, Gilsdorf, William, & Wechselmann, Ilja (Eds.). *Small nations, big neighbour: Denmark and Quebec/Canada compare notes on American popular culture* (pp. 83-102). London: John Libbey.

La Vanguardia. (2002). FM/OM. July 22, Vivir en Verano section, p. 10.

Waisbord, S. (1998). The ties that still bind: Media and national cultures in Latin America. *The Communication Review* 1, 201-226.