Communication
& Methods

Participant Observation as an Analysis Methodology of a Videoscenic Play
La observación participante como metodología de análisis de una obra videoescénica

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Abstract:
The object of this research is the staging process of a hybrid artistic product, the video scenic play *Nosotros, hijos de la guerra*. Its objective is to determine the modifications that the use of audiovisual technology entails both in the constitutive elements of the drama and in its construction process and the methodological claim to show the validity of the participant observation technique, used mainly in anthropological and sociological studies, in research in the Communication area, particularly those focused on the construction process. It is found that the introduction of a projection screen on the stage affects the enlargement of the configuration of characters, the expansion of space and the flexibility of time. In the same way, it alters the construction phases of the drama, since the participants in the process are subject to audiovisual techniques and procedures that determine the stage director's decision-making.

Keywords:
Hybridization; Participant Observation; Video scene; Theater; Audiovisual

Resumen:
Esta investigación tiene como objeto de estudio el proceso de escenificación de un producto artístico híbrido, la obra videoescénica Nosotros, hijos de la guerra. Tiene como objetivo determinar las modificaciones que conlleva el uso de la tecnología audiovisual tanto en los elementos constitutivos del drama como en su proceso de construcción y la pretensión metodológica de mostrar la validez de la técnica de observación participante, utilizada fundamentalmente en estudios antropológicos y sociológicos, en las investigaciones del área de Comunicación, particularmente aquellas enfocadas hacia el proceso de construcción. Se constata que la introducción

de una pantalla en el escenario incide en la ampliación de la configuración de personajes, en la expansión del espacio y en la flexibilidad del tiempo. Del mismo modo, altera las fases de construcción del drama, puesto que los participantes en el proceso están sujetos a técnicas audiovisuales que determinan la toma de decisiones del director de escena.

Palabras clave:
Hibridación; Observación Participante; Videoescena; Teatro; Audiovisual

1. Introduction

Undertaking a research study on stage art first involves deciding between at least three research approaches: the classical research, the creation research, and the practice as research (Grass, 2011). The latter two provide the creation process as the object of study, "where the approach itself consists in providing an unedited solution to an artistic problem and therefore is a process that must tolerate a high degree of uncertainty, that is typical of experimental search" (p. 91). This study examines the process of creating the video scenic artistic drama *Nosotros, hijos de la guerra,* that is carried out by the members of the theatrical company Simbiontes under the direction of Raúl del Aguila in Cuarta Pared theater in Madrid. It is important to note that this performance departs from the conventional staging process, since it also uses audio visual enunciation as a mode of narrative representation. When researching the creative process of a hybrid performances such as this one, theory is tested and practice is linked to search for new scientific investigation, given that artistic creation develops through new expressive forms, generates something unedited that contributes to the development of new methodologies, and points to discoveries that were previously difficult to reach, as Milena Grass recalls:

The advantage of working from this concept is that it identifies the legitimization of unique findings, where the importance of the specific contexts from which creative and research work arises is enhanced (...) This possibility of exploring the subjectivity of the artist, allows one to make room for the artist's vision in the field of knowledge and allow them to participate, in turn, in the construction of this global knowledge, but also that believes in other knowledge, a practical knowledge, informed, from their own experience" (Grass, 2011, p.93)

Milena Grass emphasizes the virtues of studying the creative process, but also implicitly points to the challenge of developing an appropriate and valid methodological design to carry out such research. This study uses participate observation as its methodological tool. It affirms the validity of this research technique, used mainly in anthropological and sociological studies, in communication research, particularly those focused on the process of building a cultural product, like that of *Nosotros, hijos de la guerra.*

The application of participate observation in the field of communications is rare. Some important examples of participant observation in communication research are seen in the work of Carlos Elías (2003) on the observation of the press cabinet of the CSIC, the research by Mar Iglesias García (2010), on the process of digital writing for VilaWeb, and, more recently, the work of Sánchez Duarte and Dafne Calvo (2018) on

communication at the PSOE and Podemos congresses. These studies intended to observe journalistic communication by linking the construction of information discourse and the deontological behavior of journalists to eventual political pressure.

The purpose of our research is different because it will not determine any kind of political or ethical influence. Given that the process of building an artistic piece relies on the limits derived from the creativity of its participants and the means used, it is oriented to the theoretical interpretation of poetic activity through the elaboration of a cultural product. There is not much research in Spain that analyzes the process of creating an artistic work using participant observation. This article gives an account of its methodological design and its results and points to its use in other cases of research of creative processes, whether audiovisual or performance art, in the communications field.

The play, *Nosotros, hijos de la guerra,* is primarily based on the textual play written by Eva Guillamón. It also includes material from other written and visual journalistic texts, which were tested out during the rehearsals. The play itself tells the story of a marriage between an American army officer stationed in Iraq during the Iraq War and a middle-class woman waiting for his fateful return in her New York apartment. Through a fragmented structure composed of forty-four scenes, the play illustrates the internal deterioration of a relationship and the reality of a war that, by its very nature, unveils a loss of human values and exposes the petty interests that generated it. The conflict between the protagonists is not only emotional, but also moral. The characters communicate through video chat while he is in Iraq and she is in New York, demonstrating both the physical distance between them as well as the metaphorical and moral distance that makes their relationship appear incompatible.

The choice of this video scenic play is motivated by the objectives set for the scientific observation of a drama[1]. Through audiovisual enunciation the staging is thus considered a means of theatrical representation and a form of narrative representation.

The research begins from this initial hypothesis: *The use of audiovisual enunciation in theatrical discourse requires a modification of the basic elements of the performance as well as a modification of its construction process, creating a new poetic art.* This proposition establishes the research objectives relative to the character (and action), space and time, and fundamental components of performance and audiovisual narrative. These research objectives are employed to investigate the degree of representation of the character in the video scenic drama particularly through the interaction, duplication, overlap and integration between the stage character and the audiovisual character; to determine the function of the focus in the play and the introduction of elements of subjectivity in the staging; to explain the expansion of the obvious space, effectively represented, in the video scenic drama of latent space and absent space; to bring attention to the easing of the temporal order of the drama through audiovisual representation of timelessness via analepsis and prolepsis, and to assess the changing length of theatrical representation with the appearance of new audiovisual scenes not that were not initially present in the written play.

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1 Video scenic: Translated from videoescenica

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The video scenic display

The video scenic play displays, through a screen – or a similar projection medium – located on the stage, audiovisual expression in the form of theatrical expression. The screen is shown as an interface between two worlds that are reflected through two representative modes of staging.

From a technological standpoint, the interface is understood as the physical connection between two systems or devices that allow for different levels of communication. However, this concept provides varying senses depending on the context in which it is used, as Carlos Alberto Scolari (2004) points out. This research, however, underscores the screen exclusively as a spatial interface: the place where the interaction occurs between the stage actor who embodies the character (the man) and the screen that is used as a vehicle to produce audiovisual content (the object).

2.2. Video-technical character and action

If the character of a play is defined as "the incarnation of the fictional character by a staged person, or, an actor playing a role" (García Barrientos, 2001, p.155), the character of the video scenic play is represented as the fictional character embodied by the video scenic performer, or an actor who plays a role in the scene and who is also presented through audiovisual technology. This video embodiment gives the character the ability to relate to other characters and, in turn, be recorded audio visually and then projected on through a video format. The actor who carries out his task in the video scenic drama will therefore be presented on the stage and on screen to interact with other actors who play characters that only appear on the audiovisual platform.

In a video scenic play there is a quantitative and qualitative variation in the degrees of representation of the character that affects the visibility of the characters (even absent and latent characters can be exposed to the viewer's gaze) and the relationships between stage character and audiovisual character, when both present (Montes, 2015). The decision-making process of the stage manager will therefore be contingent not only on the specifics of theatrical staging, but also on those of audiovisual representation, taking into account the three levels of audiovisual representation, i.e. staging of the scene, staging of the frame and ongoing staging (Casetti and Di Chio, 1996).

2.3. Video space

The video scenic performance does not reflect the space through just the signs and codes of conventional theater productions. It uses the projection of audiovisual sequences that are an essential part of the performance, which, in turn, requires necessary cooperation between both platforms to produce significant meanings.

The audiovisual space, which is "built and presented on the screen" (Casetti and Di Chio, 1996, p.139), is presented as fragmentary, incomplete, framed by the edges of the screen (Aumont and Marie, 2006), and defined by the opposition between what is

present in the image and what remains outside the framing of it. The audiovisual space does not have its own entity in the video scenic drama but is fully related to the scenic space and inserted in the development of theatrical representation, since the audiovisual representation is performed in and for the scene. The video scenic space is formed through the relationships between succession and concurrency that are established between audiovisual representation and stage representation. Therefore, a new element is incorporated into the traditional spatial structure: the fragmented space of the screen.

The technical video space is a multi-centered space that is directed by the spatial perception of the different characters. The actor in space inhabits and experiences it, the point at which these performances meet –as Anne Uberfelds (1998) states regarding her relationship with traditional theatrical categories– in principle independent, belonging to two different modes of representation. The actor is transmuted into a character that is placed in spatial and temporal presence with the viewer, offering the viewer a syntactic and performative note of theatrical performance.

2.4. Video scenic performance and Timing

If the dialog of a play is characterized by the presence of actor and audience in a temporary overlap, a shared present, and spatial contingency of both subjects, then the video scenic work alters this communicative situation by including the projection of audiovisual images that have been recorded in another time and another place.

In the video scenic play, the temporal and spatial concurrency of theatrical performance is weakened by the influence of the rules of the possible world that constructs the video-staged play. Here the stage character, the real and effective presence of an actor, and audiovisual character, who is recorded in the past of an absent and now projected actor, coexist, and relate in a timed continuous motion, "an absolute succession of presents" (Szondi,1994, p. 21), that is dynamic despite their differing nature. This is because the dialectical structure that relates them, no longer comes exclusively from the interpersonal relationship between stage characters, but also from the relationship between the human corporeity of the acted character on stage and the incorporation of the actor who has been audio-visually registered and is projected in interaction with the former.

In the audiovisual presentation the technique of assembly allows different variations in the ordering of scenes and sequences. The Audiovisual Narrative is so important that the order, duration, and frequency are considered their own properties of discourse (García Jiménez, 2003), since the flexibility of the time of the audiovisual narrative is born from the very characteristics of the nature of audiovisual texts (García García, 2006). On the other hand, timing of theatrical performance is less flexible than the narrative order (García Barrientos, 1991). While theatrical performance may use regressions and anticipations that can be performed dramatically, this can be confusing for the viewer when digesting the work (Pavis, 2002). The audiovisual image, in the presence of the scenic elements, instead, establishes specific reading instructions, which link the projection to the character's internal narrative or to actions placed unequivocally in the past or the future. When a play is presented audio visually it allows the production to

differentiate between presence of the characters in a present time, that of staging, with a new time, that of the trace, in the terminology of Bazin (2006).

3. Methodology

3.1. Justification and effectiveness of the method

Participant observation meets all scientific conditions of qualitative methodology. This is a qualitatively oriented observation which focuses on specific research objectives, formulated in advance, and systematically planned in phases, aspects, locations, and subjects. It is controlled and related to scientific propositions and theories and subject to controls of truthfulness, objectivity, reliability, and accuracy. The design of the method –as proposed by Taylor and Bogdan (2006)– is aimed to achieve an in-depth understanding of the specific scenario by combining it with general theoretical objectives to go beyond the specific understanding of this scenario. This qualitative approach occurs in a natural context where facts and discourses happen, among actors who naturally participate in the interaction, and follows the natural course of the event, allowing the scientific observer to witness connections, correlations and causes as they unfold, without bindings in default categories of measurement or response to "facilitate the search for concepts or categories that have significance for subjects" (Valles, 2007, p. 148).

3.2. Method Limitations

Campbell and Stanley (cited in Valles, 2007) warn of distorting effects that may occur in during observation participant and could affect the internal validity of the investigation. The authors point to several problems: relevant factors that have occurred before or during the initiation of observation that the researcher does not know and that may lead to misinterpretations; changes that may occur in the subjects studied after the relationship with the observer; and the changes made to the observer as they become known and involved in the observation process.

To mitigate possible biases in this type of research, the use of prior documents and interviews were used to compensate for potential limitations and reactive effects of observation, to keep track of what the researcher perceived as a possible distortion for evaluation, to maintain intellectual distance and perspective, and to sufficiently contextualize observations using documents and interviews with potential informants. Following the same purpose, the observation takes into account a number of prior stipulated observer purposes: the involvement of the observer in the activity concerning the situation studied and the in-depth observation of that situation; the increased attention to the events in the observed situation that is encouraged by an increase to their state of alertness; the multi-faceted observation of participants' performance and speeches; the attention from inside and outside the object, as a member and as a foreign entity; the introspection applied which is used as an instrument of research; and the systematic recording of activities, discourses and observations.

Prior to undertaking the observation process, a protocol of action was established to objectively assess the characteristics of the situation and the tactics used. These protocols are outlined below.

3.3. Protocol and features of observation

Regarding the objectives of this investigation, it was decided that both the type of participation and the strategy of the observer would be passive, meaning that there would be minimal interaction with the situation as a spectator, no active participation in the observed event, and no personal involvement, even if requested by the participants. The role of the researcher is therefore positioned as a complete observer. The research calls for studying the process of a phenomenon that is carried out by the participants and not intervening in it, because, as Valles recalls (2007), the more that is known of a situation as an ordinary participant, the more complicated it is to study it as a researcher.

The protocol of action also entails the design and organization of the fieldnotes that organize the systematization, evaluation and analysis of the data collected. First, the research will distinguish in the remarks used by participants in the situation and scientific language used by the researcher. A record will be available for the participants for further evaluation. Similarly, the researcher adopts a concrete and descriptive language of facts and discourses that would subsequently enable the use of a more abstract language for generalization. Second, this protocol establishes the use of three types of annotations to organize observation: condensed notes, taken at the time of the observation of the sessions, which include all kinds of notes on what the observer sees and hears with little detail; expanded notes, that build upon the notes from the above and that gather as many details as possible; and finally, interpretation notes, where what is observed in the field is merged with the theoretical perspectives used and the general training of the researcher.

Annotations are collected in a notebook. Each session of the observation includes a heading providing the number of the observed session. During the session, the research will record the time and type of annotation: observation (NO), theoretical (NT) or methodological (NM). All annotations are collected by hand. Finally, three notebooks are used, which are numbered and classified. The researcher used a flashlight like the one used by sound technician during sessions that were rehearsed in the darkened theater.

Prior to starting the participant observation of *Nosotros, hijos de la guerra,* texts and documents submitted by the company were studied. These were fundamental to the preparation period. They outline the work of the stage manager in the orientation of the construction process. One can see the selection of several scenes from the dramatic text, the rejection of others, and the proposal to include journalistic texts on the Iraq war, both written and audiovisual. This selection was modified according to the demands of the staging process and the creative decisions of the stage manager. The documents explicitly outline the directional instructions that indict the use of audiovisual and scenic scenes. They identify specifications of work and organization of the sessions according to the exploration of the expressive possibilities of concurrency and complementation of both projections, like the closed-circuit video and live audiovisual projection. They

explore the use of different projection media, including the human body, the training of the actor according to audiovisual resources such as the camera, the recording equipment, audiovisual assembly and projection, and the coexistence of the stage action and audiovisual action.

Similarly, the documents also include a schedule for rehearsal sessions which outlines the objectives and contents of each of them. The content and structure of this schedule served as a direct reference for the organization of the participant observation process. Through its study and evaluation, the various observation sessions could be systematically established, previously having an outline of the itinerary.

3.4. The observation situation and the observed subjects

The participant observation took place in the main theater space of Cuarta Pared in Madrid, and in a smaller surrounding rehearsal room for three sessions, where the construction of the play *Nosotros, Hijos de la Guerra*, took place. The participant observation occurred from the start to the conclusion of the process, in a period of seventeen days, in five-hour days (from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.), except three of them, nine hours (from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.) established for logistical reasons in the organization.

The group of subjects observed are composed of ten members, seven of whom are members of the theatrical company Symbionts (a director-filmmaker-editor, a lead actor, a lead actress, an actor-singer, an actor-dancer, an actor-camera operator, and a lighting and sound technician) and three are professionals who have been incorporated exclusively to carry out the staging for different reasons. Two of them (an actress-dancer and an assistant director) at the suggestion of the organization of Espacio de Teatro Contemporáneo of Cuarta Pared, and the third, a cartoonist and digital animator, to meet specific expressive needs decided by the stage director. The ten subjects were present in every session, apart from the digital cartoonist and animator, who only appeared for six sessions, doing most of their work outside the observation area.

4. Results

4.1. The use of audiovisual

The construction of the play takes place on the stage of the Cuarta Pared and some sessions are in a rehearsal room adjacent to the main stage. Both have projection screens. By the main stage there is a large screen at the back of the room. In the smaller rehearsal room, the wall itself serves as a display. At the beginning of each session the same technical elements are installed: a table of lights and sound, a video player, a sound player, a mixer, two video projectors, which were placed on the floor, and two video cameras on two tripods. The process is always carried out in the presence of the projection screen, even when activities do not require the use of audiovisual projections, such as relaxation and concentration exercises for the actors. On many occasions, after training, the exercises are carried out with images projected, both in the shadow of the actors themselves, as well as audiovisual images, so that the actors can incorporate the audiovisual element into their work from beginning of rehearsal.

The constant presence of audiovisual technology emphasizes its importance in the construction of the video performance. It is also noted that the training carried out is aimed to integrate stage work into the audiovisual projection. This shows the need for all members of the team to be integrated into the construction of the play from the start of the rehearsal process. The content of the projection varies between different rehearsal sessions, according to the guidelines of the stage manager. Live action images and non-literal symbolic images are used in the projections. In live action projections there are recorded images of real-life news and television reports as well as images of the actors simulating a conversation through video chat. Non-literal images are drawings previously made by the graphic animator and projected onto the screen, in the first phase they are still images and, subsequently, as the sessions progress.

4.2. The play, dramaturgy, and audiovisual work

The staging of the play, *Nosotros, hijos de la Guerra* by Eva Guillamón, undergoes several modifications during the dramaturgical work carried out by the stage director. The stage direction also works the position of video stage manager since they take care of the audiovisual content. There is a careful selection of scenes that will be represented, while others are discarded. The stage manager also incorporates a selection of audiovisual scenes from television news, as proposed in the drama itself, and other scenes, of dance and songs that were not collected for the play. All of them are incorporated into the staging during rehearsals that considers the audiovisual element in the dramaturgical work. The play is therefore susceptible to any changes from new applications of audiovisual projection to the combination of audiovisual enunciation with the theatrical media.

4.3. Staging and audiovisual

The team does not have a set designer. The slightest scenery change falls on the shoulders of the stage manager. Two stage spaces are recreated: Alice's apartment in New York, which features a real window and chair, and Stanley's station in Iraq, through a single chair. The actors' costumes help to situate the viewer spatially. Alice is sometimes in a dress and sometimes in comfortable clothes to be at home. Stanley is always in military clothes.

The absence of stage elements takes focus away from the stage, lighting design, and audiovisual projection and places emphasis on the actor as the center of the theatrical event. This includes when the actors occupy the stage, and when they are projected on the screen simultaneously as a simulation of conversations through video chat.

However, it is important to note that the introduction of the audiovisual projections generated some problems when adapting the lighting design. The design uses spotlights positioned on the ground to illuminate the actors while they are recorded by the two cameras and provide an alternative to the bright light beams of conventional spotlights that tend to be positioned on rods above the stage.

The use of audiovisual images therefore requires innovative procedures that adapt its presence to conventional theatrical elements such as lighting. It also requires a modification of work routines, since actors must hold still in fixed positions due to the presence of direct and low-angle lighting bulbs and be aware of the framing of the video cameras, positioned on tripods on stage. Similarly, in scenes carried by the entire cast in the presence of projected images, actors must accompany their movements so that their shadows are integrated with the projected images. To carry out the work accurately, the actors are subjected to rigorous training based on repetition, which takes place in most sessions.

It should be noted that the stage manager's aesthetic proposal seeks deliberately to recognize the audiovisual frontality. This audiovisual frontality is indicated by the large screen, or projection median, and its central location as the background of the stage. It is about the formation of moving images where the presence of the actors promotes fixed artistic compositions which then take into account the projection of their shadows, both when projecting images of television programs and when graphic animations occupy the screen. The audiovisual representation does not try to escape from this frontality, often typical of the audiovisual narrative, but deliberately seeks it out.

4.4. Video-technical characteristics and action

The character of each scene is considered the center of staging. Audiovisual projection appears mainly in their presence, either to interrelate with them or simultaneously project the character itself. When, in rare cases, the projection occurs on its own, it is to introduce the presence of the character who generally enters immediately after the audiovisual projection.

The interaction between the stage character and audiovisual projection takes place in scenes with strong symbolism: dances on images of the Iraq war or anti-war demonstrations; the characters with war images in the background to open and close the scene; the experience of one of the characters (victim of torture) alongside projections of a weapon that follows him and coinciding with the projection of the shadow of the head, and showing the shot and bloodstain appearing on the screen; the characters of Alice and Stanley, respectively, appear interacting with graphic animations representing their dreams, desires and thoughts.

Interaction often occurs between the character and objects, drawings, and spaces. The interaction between the stage character and audiovisual character only appears in scenes showing video chat conversations between Alice and Stanley. This interaction is simultaneous. That is, the stage characters relate to each other while their images, recorded live by camera paths, are projected onto two halves of the large center screen. Different variations occur: the characters are on stage and screen at the same time and only one of the characters is on stage alongside the projection of the other, the stage character appears only on stage next to his own projection. Sometimes the stage character relates to the image of the other character distorted by editing effects performed live, highlighting the subjectivity of the stage character's gaze.

These variations demonstrate how the stage manager takes into account different ways of interaction between stage element and audiovisual element: duplication, which occurs when the stage character enters alongside their double audiovisual recorded by a camera and projected on the screen, like what is seen in video chat scenes; overlap, when the stage character enters into relation to the audiovisual content that is projected in their presence, seen in the dances, scenes of thoughts, dreams and desires of Alice and Stanley; integration, which takes place when the stage character establishes contact with images recorded in another time and another space in such a way that a specific place in the audiovisual space has been reserved to be occupied by the stage character, seen spot lights.

It is observed that different interactions that occur between the stage character and the projected audiovisual content affect the focus of the video scenic play. If theater is seen as the objective mode of representation par excellence, as García Barrientos (2001) states, the use of audiovisual projection then introduces the subjectivity of the characters. The viewer can attend the dreams, desires, memories, fears of Alice and Stanley through the audiovisual projection of them. Sometimes, it even stands out deliberately with projections of sandwiches, as comic relief, to demonstrate all possible dreams or thoughts in drawn images. Similarly, the subjectivity of the character is manifested when the projected images show the object of the character's thoughts, usually the other character seen through an imaginary computer screen, recorded referensally or deformed, to highlight the emotional subjectivity of the character.

4.5. Video scenic space

The near absence of scenery, as noted above, highlights the screen as the fundamental element when it comes to the construction of space in the video scenic performance. There is no integration of the screen into the space, since the first occupies a central function as a device in the construction of the space. The screen shows reference images of Madrid's outdoor spaces, where demonstrations occur, of Iraq's outer spaces where bombings take place or the escape of the victims of war. It also shows symbolic spaces made through graphic animation, such as streets in Iraq or New York or imaginary places, or the sea that transforms into hands that crush the character of the tortured.

The relationships of succession and concurrency between the audiovisual space and the scenic space or character performance, are enhanced using audiovisuals. They are fundamental in the transitions between spaces, especially those that are exclusively audiovisual or interacting between the characters and the scenic space. The interaction of audiovisual projection and the stage character places the latter in each spatial context where Alice and Stanley's live audiovisual record can simultaneously display the New York stage and an unknown place in Iraq, where the characters are located.

The screen, therefore, not only fulfills an expansive function of the scenic space but acquires an almost exclusive role in the spatial construction of the video scenic drama, either through the projection of reference spaces, symbolic spaces, or imaginary spaces.

4.6. Video scenic time

The staging places the viewer in a fragmentary and elliptical time, often deliberately ambiguous, representing the emotional and moral confusion in which Alice and Stanley's characters meet.

Despite this fragmentation, a timeline of the play can be clearly detected in the dramatic development of the action of the videochat scenes of the characters: first news of torture of prisoners in Iraq appearing in the media, Alice's suspicions that her husband is involved in such torture, denial of torture and justification of Stanley's war proceedings, assumption of the responsibility and condemnation of the military.

These video chat scenes put together the temporal development of staging, interspersed dreams and imaginations, staged television reports, scenes of torture through dance, rap and plastic compositions, where the scenic elements always interact with audiovisual ones. Some of them are easily recognizable as a chronological scene, whether regressions and, to a lesser extent, anticipations, but others stand out for their subjective timelessness that links them to the minds of the characters.

The manipulation of the time brought on by using the audiovisuals is fundamental in this staging: it fragments and expands, causing the viewer to identify with the state of emotional and moral confusion in which the characters are located. However, there is no confusion in the viewers. The introduction of projected spatial and temporal subtitles in relation to the scene sets clear reading instructions for the interpretation of staging by bringing meaning to the time fragmentation.

5. Theoretical conclusions

The analysis of data collected through the participant observation confirms the modification of the fundamental elements of theatrical performance that results in changes in character representation and action, space, and time. The use of a screen or any other projection (or broadcast) support on the stage expands the character settings, space, and the flexibility of time. Likewise, it modifies the phases of construction of the drama since the participants in it are subject to the audiovisual techniques and procedures that are determine the stage manager's decisions in the dramaturgy and the development of the scene that is subject to the introduction of the projection. The literary work is susceptible to any modification in the dramaturgy phase with the appearance of new scenes not written but are represented audio-visually in the play. In addition, the audiovisual element introduces modifications in the staging phase because it is considered necessary to adapt the work routines of the actors and the other members of the team in the unification of audiovisual enunciation with the specifically theatrical expressive performance. However, the introduction of audiovisual creates practical problems in the staging process, especially in scenery, lighting design or in the work of actors who are subjected to rigid positions before the camera and projection. They find solutions through cooperation, negotiation, dialogue, and careful training of the actors with cameras and audiovisual projection.

It should be noted that there is an important relationship between the stage character, who performs on stage, and the projected character, who is pre-recorded or recorded live. This relationship, which can occur simultaneously or successively, allows the stage character to interact with the image in several ways: with themselves changed by audiovisual technology, with other characters projected on the screen, overlaying their corporeity on the image and casting shadows that also relate to it, or integrated in a space reserved for their presence in the projection itself. The interaction, duplication, overlap and integration also allow any character that as absent in a scene of the literary play to be audio-visually represented and related to the stage character, which, in turn, increases their degree of representation. Therefore, from the screen there is a figurative expansion regarding the characters and their actions, and an expansion of space and scene time, due to the fragmentation and flexibility of the audiovisual image.

Audiovisual enunciation also introduces elements of subjectivity into the objective focus, in principle, of staging, allowing dreams, desires, thoughts or the object of the character's gaze to be projected on stage simultaneously or successively with the presence of the character, placing them unequivocally in their mind and allowing the viewer to access that subjective point of view. Internal eyewitnesses are therefore a feature of the video scenic drama that differentiates it from conventional drama.

6. Evaluation of the use of participant observation in the process of building an artistic work

Participant observation has shown to be a valid and relevant technique of understanding the fundamental changes that audiovisual enunciation introduces into the configuration of the character, action, space, and time, as well as in the dramaturgy and staging phases of theatrical performance, to give access to relevant information and to carry out the purpose of the investigation.

This research provides important contributions in two distinct areas that converge to identify a complementary relationship between them. One contribution is the expansion of the field of scientific knowledge related to theatrical and audiovisual studies, and the second is a contribution to creative activity where one can make use of scientific knowledge that is extracted from the research process and apply it to the theatrical or audiovisual production process. Therefore, the results of the research can respond to conceptual demands of critics and researchers who work in the field of theoretical elaboration, like meeting the expectations of participants in the construction of theatrical representation, from stage directors to actors, lighting designers, set designers or video designers.

Researchers are offered reliable and specified knowledge to better understand the video scenic drama through participant observation which can, in turn, be applied to other studies of communication research, particularly those focused on the process of building a cultural product, such as feature films or film short films, documentaries, television series, video games, entertainment formats or any other work whose elaboration occurs through the collaborative interaction of its participants. In addition, creators are given a broader perspective on their work, which integrates general characteristics of theatrical performance with those specific to the use of audiovisual projection.

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