

## **RADIO PLAYS: CONCEPTS AND CONTENTS**

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### **Özet**

Radyo program türlerinden biri olan Radyo Oyunları, ülkemizde, TRT Radyolarında 1965 yılından beri yayınlanmaktadır. “Radyo Tiyatrosu” adıyla yayımlanan bütünlüklü oyunların yanı sıra, hafta içi sabah kuşağında yayımlanan ve yetişkinlere seslenen “Arkası Yarı” ile çocuk kitleyi hedefleyen ve hafta içi akşamüstü çocuk kuşağında yayımlanan “Çocuk Bahçesi” birkaç bölümlük dizi şeklindedir. Bu araştırma için, TRT İstanbul Radyosu arşivlerinde, yayımlanmaya başlandığı günden itibaren radyo oyunları aranmış ancak bulunamamıştır. 1980 yılında tutulmaya başlanan Oyun Kimlikleri adı altındaki muhasebe kayıtlarından derlenen verilerden yararlanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın amacı TRT İstanbul Radyosu’nda yayımlanan Radyo Oyunları’nın hedef kitleleri ile bu kitleye iletilen başat temaları saptamak ve izleyicilere iletilen mesajları değerlendirmeye çalışmaktır.

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**Anahtar sözcükler:** Radyo, Radyo Programı, Program Türleri, Radyo Tiyatrosu, Radyoda Tiyatro, TRT.

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## **Introduction**

If 'television' is excluded, radio is the most important institutionalized mass media. Despite the fact that the "mass" is mostly interested in entertaining and simple programs, radio is the most effective mass media due to the extensiveness of the masses who it addresses to.

The functions of the radio are generally not different from the functions of the other mass media. It broadcasts the news, educates, illuminates, informs the people; advertises the goods and services, entertains people, makes them believe, makes them move, provides the cultural transition from one generation to another etc. It performs these functions by various programs.

Especially after the emergence of the television changes and increases in the types of the radio programs have become apparent –to attract audience-.

Generally, the types of the radio programs can be observed in three ways:

- By their concepts
- By their presentations (forms)

- By their target audience (the masses who they address to)

The types of programs concerning their concepts are news, entertaining programs, cultural programs, music programs, advertorial programs, educational programs.

The types of the programs concerning their forms are music programs and oral programs. Oral programs are plain programs, discussion programs, theatrical programs (dramatizations), mutual talks, competitions, fairy tales, documentaries, periodic programs.

Among all these programs, dramatization type is used different programs and broadcasted on Turkish radios, beside entertaining, educating and informing, and it is an easy method.

The basic aim of this research is to find out the mass of the listener of the dramatization programs broadcast on TRT Radios and to evaluate of the messages given by them.

Therefore, at the archives of the Theatre Department of TRT Istanbul Radio, the texts of the plays, which have been broadcasted since 1965, were searched but they could not be found. Since 1980, at the Theatre Department of TRT Istanbul Radio, some bookkeeping documents are regularly being prepared under the name of "the identity of the play" in which the title of the plays, their authors, the actors and the payments that they receive are shown. These documents also encompass the plot of the plays briefly. Although the documents of the TRT are taken

as the main sources of this research, some acquired play texts and interviews with some playwrights also contributed to this study. Therefore, the research is limited to the period from 1980 to 2002.

The examination and interpretation of the 630 radio plays (Radyo Tiyatrosu ve Arkası Yarım) –that were only produced and broadcasted by the Theatre Department of the Istanbul Radio- were successfully made. The child plays ( The Kinder Garden) which are target of the children are made excepted in this study.

At the last part of the research, the main themes of the plays are evaluated. This commentary is based on information from various sources.

## **The Radio Theatre or Radio Plays**

### **Concept**

One of the radio program types is dramatized or theatrical programs. Sometimes the entire program and sometimes the various parts of the program can be dramatized. The whole program's dramatized presentation is named as "The Radio Theatre" or "Radio Plays".

In the constitutions of the Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir Radios, which are among the regional radio stations that are dependent on the Turkish National Radio-Television Institution (TRT), the department responsible of Radio Theatre was established and entrusted with the production and the presentation of the "Radio Plays".

### **The Similarities and differences of the Radio and Theatre Plays**

The word of “Radio Theatre” or “Radio Plays” does not mean that a theatre play is to be performed on a Radio program exactly the same way as it is performed on a theatre stage. The Radio Theatre is far more different and original. A theatre play has its own rules and opportunities. The basic of the Radio is voice or microphone. Therefore, the exact presentation of a theatre play as it is performed on a stage is impossible. The radio theatre is a play that reaches its audiences only via voices. (Günyaz, 1990) Radio play is an original play type that is written and performed by the usage of the radio. As it can be seen, there are differences between radio plays and theatre plays:

1. The main point of a theatre play is “the act of seeing”, in other words “visual materials” are dominant. According to English theatre theorist Richard Southern, “The best and strongest theatre is the one that is capable of attracting the attentions of the deaf people who are watching the play.” (And, 1990) Besides its visual basics words, voices and music are semantics of the theatre.

However, the Radio Plays have “an invisible theatre type” feature. Its main semantic is voice. For the presentations of the incidents or the theme, the dialogs (mutual talks) are a great important. To strengthen the theme elements such as music and effects are used.

2. Theatre plays are limited to time and space. They are performed in a specific time at a specific location.

Radio plays are not limited to time and space. They are not limited to time because only with the help of the music and an effect, they can skip onto whenever period wanted. By the usage of the music and effects, time can easily be turned from present to past, past to present, summer to winter, winter to summer... They are not limited to the space because by the music and the effects can be created. The space depends on the perception of the listener. According to the definition of the communication theorist Marshall McLuhan, "Radio is a hot mass medium because of forcing the consumers to participate." (McLuhan, 1965) Because of the radio being an auditory medium, the designs of spaces are generated by the dialogues, music and effect. The usage of the sounds provides the creation of mise-en-scenes. The participation of the listeners are necessary and they (the listeners) create the spaces on their minds depending on their own culture, their backgrounds and their codes (encoding) that are formerly generated on purpose. Therefore, the works that are not able to be staged can be very easily broadcasted as "Radio Plays".

3. In theatre, the audience is in the same atmosphere with the actors. Actors establish direct relation with the viewers. The tension

(energy) exists in the body and in the voice of the actor passes directly on the viewer. The moves are a great meaning and importance as well as the words. The viewers and the actors influence each other. Due to the fact that it is acted to a large crowd, theatre can drag the masses behind itself. Feedback is received immediately.

As for the listeners of radio, they are only influenced by the tones of the actors' voice, not by their bodies' moves. They establish a relationship with the actor through the radio. But this does not affect the actor or the play. The feedback of the listeners to the "Radio Plays" is not to be understood immediately.

4. Theatre plays can last for a long time like one or two years. However, Radio plays are performed only once. But they may be re-broadcasted after several years.
5. A theatre play can be never repeated. Although it is performed for a long time, exactly the same performance of the former play can never be acted. It has to be repeated every time. There is no possibility of correction in front of the listener. Radio plays are made in the studio. In other words, their sounds are recorded and then (if there is necessary) the flaws and the disapproved parts can be corrected repeatedly. By the addition of effects and music they are edited. Although after this process it is impossible to

alter the play, it is possible re-broadcasted it as many times as wanted.

6. To watch a theatre play, it is essential to buy a ticket and go to a specific location (to theatres) –the places where the play are stayed.

However, the performing locations of the radio plays are unrestricted. They are to be watched at any place that has radio receiver. It is as if the play is performed where the listener is. At their homes, at their working places, in the cars, in the kitchens... So the plays can reach a very broad mass comprising many groups from all ages and from all cultural and educational backgrounds.

7. Theatre is born together with mankind. Its roots date back to Ancient Greek times. (Karaaliolu, 1969)

The first radio play ever written is a play named “Danger” which was written for radio in 1924 by an English playwright several years later from the commencement of the regular radio broadcasts (in 1921 in USA).

On the radio, the length of play is simultaneous with the length of the broadcast time.

8. In radio plays the dialogues are short. Long tirades can not be allowed.



In spite of their all differences, we must also state by giving radio and theatre plays have some similar features:

- First of all, they both make the audience relieve of human life in an aesthetic way,
- they both are fields of art and outputs of literature,
- they both have writers, directors, players etc.,
- the characters of the both plays must include some features similar to real life,
- they both play types provide dramatic action in specific ways. They must encompass these: introduction, preparation, twist, conflict, crisis, climax and result. The plays can begin at any point, however they have to include these elements,
- they are not to be played without audience,
- the most important common feature of the radio and theatre plays is that they both aim at illuminating, educating the audience and providing the cultural prosperity.

### **Radio Plays from the Past to the Present**

The first regular radio broadcasts in Turkey began in May 1927. Since then, all broadcasts that are related to culture and art are theatre programs.

These programs are performances that are prepared by the artists of **Darülbeday** for microphone or for the live performed plays in City

Theatre like the ones being performed live since the January of 1933. (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 101) Despite being different from its present structure, the radio theatre was to be seen in the first period of the radio broadcasts.

Between the years of 1936 – 1940, the radio theatre –it was named as “performances” then – became one of the vital elements of the radio programs. Because there was not a theatre department in the organization of the Istanbul Radio, the radio theatres were performed by the live shows of the performance departments of Halkevleri\* (generally by City Theatre and mostly by Eminönü Halkevi) (\*Halkevleri are local state institutions aiming to educate the public.)

After the new receiver and the new radio station were put into service at Ankara Radio, “a chief department of performances of the Ankara Radio lived their golden age, especially after 1940s (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 171)

After that date, the Radio Plays were prepared and broadcasted by the radio’s own employees working under the chief department of performances. Also beginning from these years “the Radio Plays” became the most inspected program type. The beginning of the multi-party system in political life in 1946 caused mandatory changes (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 256) in the organization of the media and in the constitution of the radio and its effects on the programs showed itself with the heavy pressures of the auto-censorship. Especially the words, which were criticizing the

society or the organizations, were removed from the programs. They were found “avoidable” because they were likely to offend some people. (Kocabaşođlu, 1980: 319)

With the enactment of “the General Management of the Press and Tourism” in 1949 –numbered 5392 – some new regulations in the management of the radio were made. By this law, “the management department of the programs” was constituted and the service responsible for the oral programs and performances was connected to this department. Since that date, due to the censorship and the lowness of the writers’ payments, a recession has been seen in the quality of the Radio Theatre.

Between the years of 1960 – 1964, half of the programs that were related to art and culture were Radio Theatre plays. The Radio Theatre plays which were broadcasted under the names such as *Perde Arkası* (Behind the Curtain), *Pazar Temsili-Mikrofon I* (Sunday Performance-Microphone I), *Sahneden Mikrofonta* (from the Stage to the Microphone), *Devamı Yarın Sabah* (To Be Continued Tomorrow Morning), *Devamı Yarın Akşam* (To Be Continued Tomorrow Evening), *Mikrofon 13* (Microphone 13), *Tatil Tiyatrosu* (Holiday Theatre) (Kocabaşođlu, 1980: 403) went on having importance in the period of TRT –Turkish Radio and Television Institution—which was founded in 1<sup>st</sup> May 1964.

After the alteration of 1971 Constitution, the regression in the quality of the radio theatres went on. The removal of the autonomy section

from the Constitution, affected Radio Theatre as well as all other oral programs.

After 1980, the radio plays that went on leading their lives under such names as *Arkası Yarın* (To Be Continued Tomorrow), *Radyo Tiyatrosu* (Radio Theatre), *Çocuk Bahçesi* (The Kinder Garden) constituted the 1/3 of the entire verbally programs.

### **Radio Plays Today**

As (it is) mentioned above, radio plays or radio theatres are still being broadcasted today. The radio plays that are presented under the names of *Radyo Tiyatrosu* (Radio Theatre), *Arkası Yarın* (To Be Continued Tomorrow) and *Çocuk Bahçesi* (The Kinder Garden) constituted approximately half of the cultural programs.

These programs, which are broadcasted by the First channel of the TRT Radios, have some diverse features from each other.

**Radio Theatre's:** are the radio plays that are adapted for the radio from various narratives and stories or they are the plays that are written directly for the radio including a single section that lasts 30 or 60 minutes. Radio Theatre is the general name of the program types in Turkish radios which show a specific integrity from the beginning to the end and which have dramatic action elements.

**To Be Continued Tomorrow's (Arkası Yarın):** are also the programs having a specific integrity and dramatic action elements from

the beginning to the end. They are the radio plays which have at least five, at most 12 episodes each lasting for about 20 minutes and which include the elements of climax and conflict dominantly in each episode.

**Kinder Garden's:** They are the programs that are adapted for the radio from the narratives and stories addressing to children of the programs that are prepared within the forms of radio plays that are directly written for the children listener. The Kinder Garden includes at least five or at most 15 episodes each lasting 15 minutes.

Broadcast days and hours these programs are shown below:

The Radio Theatres	Wednesday	21.00/	Sunday	12.00
To Be Continued Tomorrow	Everyday in Week			09.40
The Kinder Garden	Everyday in Week			17.45

The Radio plays are thought to be important and this is not meaningless: It is known that British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) recorded its own formerly broadcasted radio plays on cassettes and by selling these make big profits. The similar happens in Italy and France.

As for radio play writing, it is accepted as a branch of art in many European countries and various schools aim at educating artists who could be productive in this field. (Günyaz, 1990)

**The aim of the “Radio Theatre” and “To Be Continued Tomorrow”:** are stated in “The institutions of production and application in Turkish radio’s as:

*“Improving the perception and the invitation of the listener by adapting the various narratives and the stories which are written differently for the radio or adapted from various narratives or stories and which are carrying a literal value and attracting attention when it is written, after it is written and today for the radio in a clear comprehensive way and keeping the main features of the original work, contributing to the improvement of the world of emotions and thoughts.*

*Making programs by the plays that are directly written for the radio and having influence on the view, aspect and intellectual background of the listener, contributing positively to the lives of the society and the individuals, increasing the inclination and decisiveness of the listener towards reading and increasing their interest in theatre and literal works. Warning and illuminating the listener about the thoughts and national goals regarding Atatürk. (TRT 1990: 341, 343)*

In the “Instructions of Production and Application in Turkish Radios” the aims of the Kinder Garden program are explained as;

*“Improving the minds, social behavior and emotional and intellectual worlds of children by various radio plays that are adapted for radio from various narratives and stories written for children or that are directly written for children, creating a passion for reading and searching in*

*children. Making children learn the concepts of the goodness, correctness and honesty from the models in plays; warning them through the thoughts and national goals of Atatürk and illuminate them. (TRT 1990: 345)*

Based on these rules we can say that Radio Theatres and Soup Operas are especially addressing to the people who do not have chance to watch plays in theatres and who mostly belong to lower and middle classes of the society. Except for the shows that were performed in the three big cities and by the state theatres in various cities of Anatolia, the people living in different parts of our country know “theatre” only from the radio shows.

### **Theatre on Radio**

These programs can not be separated from the radio broadcasts targeting all listeners existing in the various parts of Turkey. Therefore, they are general theme in public agenda. (TRT 2002: 55).

Theatre on Radio or radio plays have features directly related to the changes in the economic, political and social structures of Turkey. Dominant elements in the broadcasted radio play change in relation to these. However the point that must be added here is that: Running parallel with the change in Turkey, Turkish people and the structure of radio listener change too.

It would be more convenient to indicate the condition of the radio listener in Turkey generally, before determining what kind of a structure the radio listener is made up of.

### **The Properties of Radio Listener**

The public polls manifest the properties and characteristics of the mass that listens to the radio. The polls that were made for TRT, especially after 1980s, clearly show the type of the programs which radio listeners ask and the kind of topics they want in these programs.

The researches indicate that the state of listening to the radio, changes depending on gender, age, educational status, work position and location of residence.

According to a public poll which was made for TRT in 1985 (TRT 1985: 92), the ratio of the people who listen to the radio every day or who never listen to radio is related to their educational status. University graduates listen to the radio more than others.

According to the survey that was prepared by the Arat Company of Research and Consultancy for TRT in 1990 about the listener shares of Radio Istanbul, there is not an important change in the conditions of the radio listeners and non listeners. In 1991, the commercial radio channels have been started to broadcast. So, until that year, the listeners who listened to TRT radio channels have shared to others channels and TRT listeners are decreasing.



The below table are shown that the general radio listeners according to educational conditions in years.

Education (%)	1985		1990		2002	
	<u>listener</u>	<u>non-listener</u>	<u>listener</u>	<u>non-listener</u>	<u>listener</u>	<u>non-listener</u>
Elementary						
School	30.3	31.0	28.07	38.87	17.2	30.1
High School	29.4	23.3	24.61	35.51	32.6	21.0
Graduate	32.8	18.9	36.94	29.94	17.6	12.2

In our country listening or not listening to the radio has a direct relation with the educational status. According to surveys, university graduates listen to the radio more than others. The second most listening mass is elementary school graduates. But the recent years, the high school graduates have been increasing about listening to the radio.

From the general results of the surveys we can conclude that as the educational status gets higher, the ratio of listening to the radio also increases. However the point that must be considered alternatively is that the ratio of radio listeners is less than the non-listeners mention that contrary to the general belief, they do not listen to the radio because of not having time and radio receiver; not because of the television being adequate for them (TRT 1985: 98).

The surveys that are made among the radio listener reveal the importance of the location of residence and gender. According to the

surveys held in 1985 and 2002 the number of the female listener is more than the ratio of males. The 58.2% (1985) and 45.5% (2002) of females listen to the radio everyday, while 41.8% (1985) and 36.7% (2002) of male listener listens daily (TRT 1985: 94, TRT 2002: 238). According to the result of the survey held in 1987, the people residing in rural areas listen to the radio more than the people living in cities. The ratio of listening to the radio in rural areas is 36.4% while 30.1 % of the people living in cities listen to the radio everyday. (TRT 1987: 222) But according to the result of the survey held in 2002, the people of living in cities listen to the radio (52.4%) more than the people living in rural areas (14.9%) (TRT 2002: 162)

Referring to these results it is possible to state that the radio listeners in our country have rather general properties. The radio has a mass of listeners which is made up of very young and middle aged groups who are chiefly women and from rural areas. Within the preparation of the programs these general properties are thought to be important and the “target listener” is kept broad to include “every kind of person.”

### **The properties of the Radio Theatre Listener**

The theatre broadcasts on our radios are the base of this study. After stating the properties of the radio listeners generally, it is also essential to mention the studies concerning the listener’s shares of the broadcasted radio theatre programs because the properties of the radio

plays listeners – who are among the radio listeners – shape the structures and the content of the plays.

The surveys after 1990s' that TRT has been made to held (almost every year) to different public polls company are insufficient that do not show the properties of the specific radio programs listeners. These surveys only show the ratio of listening music programs and news but they do not show any ratio of listening the verbal programs include theatre programs. But, in general belief is that these programs are still one of the most listened programs. In my opinion, new surveys should be held to put forward the properties of the radio theatre listener.

According to the surveys before 1990s', among the entire programs the radio theatre programs were at the top of the most listened programs list.

According to the public poll made in 1985 (TRT 1985: 123), *To Be Continued Tomorrow* is the 5<sup>th</sup>, *Radio Theatre* is the 8<sup>th</sup> on the list. With the same poll the relation of these programs with the age and the working condition are also indicated. According to this, the listeners of *To Be Continued Tomorrows* and *radio theatres* are intensively women (TRT 1985: 123-129).

*To Be Continued Tomorrow* and *Radio Theatre* listeners are intensive between the age groups of 12 – 15 and 15 – 24. However, looking at the working condition, it is seen that they attract the attentions of the non-working middle-aged people, especially the housewives.

As it can be seen from the table below, the 77.5% of the housewives who are listening to the radio say “yes” to the question “Are you listening to the to be continued tomorrows and radio theatres (TRT 1985: 127).

<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><u>Groups</u></b>	<b><u>(%)</u></b>	<b><u>(%)</u></b>	<b><u>(%)</u></b>	<b><u>(%)</u></b>
Housewives	77.5	60.3	52.3	68.6
Retired	5.0	6.9	12.1	7.0
Student (Secondary Edu)	8.6	16.0	12.1	10.6
Student (Higher Edu)	0.8	3.7	2.9	1.8
Unemployed	4.3	6.2	7.9	5.5
Unemployable	0.5	1.0	3.5	1.3
<u>Others</u>	<u>3.3</u>	<u>4.9</u>	<u>9.2</u>	<u>5.2</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

As it is seen, more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the housewives who are listening to the radio follow these programs. Since the radio listener is made up of the people residing in rural areas and the radio attracts the housewives' attention, it can be said that To Be Continued Tomorrow and Radio Theatre also aim at the mass of low or middle class culture/social-economic level as “target listener” and they fulfill their aim. However it would be useful to state that there is a direct relation between the changes and prosperities of Turkey and radio plays and radio theatres and being parallel to this, the structure of the listener also changes. Because the

political, social and economic changes in the country's structure bring about changes in the dominant elements of the broadcasted plays in time.

Detailed surveys about the listener shares of Istanbul Radio were not made after the 1985's. As for the detailed surveys regarding The Kinder Garden; nothing was acquired despite all efforts. In my opinion, new surveys about these topics would be beneficial for clearly indicating the ratio of change in the target mass.

Another public poll held in 1984 (TRT 1984:72-73) shows that these programs are the most listened ones after music programs. However, they carry on being the most listened programs of the women listener.

The table below shows the first three most listened programs in 1984 by genders:

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Music Program</u>	<u>To Be Continued Tomorrow</u>	<u>News</u>
Male	21.3	8.0	17.0
Female	19.0	24.0	5.2
Total	20.1	16.7	10.6

To see the structure of the audience and the dominant elements presented to the audience and the changes in them, it is necessary to determine the themes that are used dominantly.

Therefore, by examining the plays one by one which exist in the Istanbul Radio Theatre and Entertainment Broadcasts Management and in

the archives of the radio and which were broadcasted between 1980–2002, we tried to indicate the main themes and dominant elements.

### **The Main(Dominant) Themes of The Radio Plays**

The 22-year period between 1980 and 2002, 630 Radio Theatre's and To Be Continued Tomorrows; were produced and broadcasted by the Theatre Management of TRT Istanbul Radio (Oyun Kimlikleri, 1980-2002). But, the plays of 1991 could not be available because they were lost in TRT archive. So, this study has to be limited to the plays of 21-year period.

The table below shows the number of productions and broadcasts in years

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	
To Be Cont.												
Tomorrow	11	16	14	15	11	15	6	10	11	11	11	=131
Radio												
Theatre	24	30	26	35	25	25	7	17	25	31	46	=291
Total	35	46	40	50	36	40	13	27	36	42	57	=422
	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	
To Be Cont.												
Tomorrow	11	9	13	12	5	2	4	2	2	1	2	=63
Radio												
Theatre	24	29	18	34	12	5	10	3	4	2	4	=148
Total	35	38	31	46	17	7	14	5	6	3	6	=208
Total To Be Cont. Tomorrow = 194												
Total Radio Theatre = 439												
Total = 630												

A short plays which are labeled as “can not be broadcasted” after the inspection and which are broadcast between the periodic programs are not included in these numbers.

The main themes used in the plays are: love, murder, forbidden affair, marriage, financial problems (household economy problems), running away from home, alienation, accident-illness, immigration to the cities/towns from villages. For supporting these main themes, other small themes are also made up. The general structure of the plays is directly related to the expectations of the target audience.

However, it is necessary to open these closed themes and to determine the main things which are really wanted to be shown around these. The structure of communication is symbolic-linguistic and coded (encoding). Considering this reality makes it necessary to keep away from the closed and formative structure of the messages.

Especially, the mutual influence of style with the codes causes the meanings to chance their frames and therefore it also causes the suppressed contents of a culture to come out to the surface with closed forms. (Hall 1974, B ker 1981: 326)

It is stated that the most extensively/commonly used themes in Radio Plays are taken from ‘life’. The reason why these themes are used frequently is that the listeners are supposed to identify themselves with some characters. So, the psychological satisfaction of the listeners in

various ways is aimed. The problems that they come across and do not know how to tackle with in daily life are relieved and the results related to the protection of the established system are presented to the listener. The listeners learn the result of the actions that they would do by identifying themselves with the characters in the play. Because there are characters in the plays to be identified by almost everyone who listens to it.

It is possible to see the condition of the mass by looking at these broadcasts. They are pleasing and strengthening the standard judgments of the majority and goes no beyond than that. (Arnheim, Katz, Cartwright, Çev: Oskay)

Especially in *To Be Continued Tomorrow's* episodic expression is evident. They are set up on the repetitive structure of the 'empirical perception' which is not convenient for development. By other words, they have a non –semantic structure.

### **The Examinations About The Main Themes of The Plays**

#### **Love**

In the 22.9% of these programs (*To Be Continued Tomorrows* and *Radio Theatres*) "love" is used as the theme. Looking at the years, "love" is the most used theme with the rates of 66.6% in

2001 and 60% in 1999. Mostly, love is taken in a good and pure way; however there might be problems between the lovers or another third



person interfering with their affair and trying to spoil their love; however the incidents mostly end the way the lovers want.

The frequent usage of the love theme is because of the aim of addressing to the common point of the entire listener. The common beauty that everyone can accept is love. Making the listener forget their problems, distracting their attentions, pleasing their emotions are possible with the commonly accepted beauty, love.

### **Forbidden Love-Affair**

Forbidden loves or affairs are the relationships which are not approved of by the society or by the laws. Within the entire plays, they are one of the most used themes with the ratio of 14.6%. In the 40% of the plays that were broadcasted in 1999 and 29.6% in 1987, "forbidden affair" theme was used. The social/social economical structure in which we live is the reason of the frequent usage of the forbidden love or affair in these programs. Because, some time the system dulls the real love with some side-factors.

The frequent usage of this theme, which the listener mostly do not have opportunity to try personally, activates the sub-conscious instincts and makes them feel that they can take revenge from the unhappy parts of their lives. (Their unhappy life at home with their spouse's burden brought about by the responsibility that life brought to them). The radio

The table below shows main themes and the rates of themes in plays that produced and broadcasted

Themes	Total	%	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
	630	100	35	46	40	50	36	40	13	27	36	42	57
Love	144	22,9	4 11,4	6 13	7 17,5	5 10	5 13,8	3 7,5	5 38,5	9 33,3	4 11,1	11 26,2	17 29,8
Forbidden Affair/Love	92	14,6	6	2	3	4	6	7	1	8	-	6	3
Death	87	13,8	8	1	3	5	4	2	-	4	3	8	10
Murder	85	13,5	8	3	7	7	6	7	1	3	4	6	5
Marriage	81	12,9	2	6	4	6	2	9	-	4	6	5	10
Accident/ Illness	78	12,4	2	4	2	3	2	4	1	6	3	5	10
Swindling/ Money ambition	62	9,8	10	4	1	3	1	9	5	7	8	7	2
Helpfulness	61	9,7	5	1	1	2	-	7	6	6	2	2	3
Unhappiness	52	8,3	6	4	1	3	6	1	1	7	1	-	1
Financial Problems	41	6,5	3	-	1	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	7
Divorce/ Separation	40	6,5	3	2	1	3	1	-	-	6	1	3	7
Suspicion	39	6,2	2	3	3	1	5	1	-	-	-	3	1
Re-unite	35	5,6	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	1	3	5
Criminal	30	4,8	3	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	2	2
Run away from home	30	4,8	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	2	7	2	1
Self-sacrifice	28	4,4	1	-	-	4	2	-	-	1	1	2	3
Envy	25	4,0	3	1	1	2	2	2	-	-	1	2	2
Divine Justice/ Cyclical History	25	4,0	-	-	1	1	4	1	-	-	-	-	1
Alcohol/ Drug Problems	23	3,6	1	-	3	2	3	-	1	-	1	2	3
Psychological Problems	20	3,2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	2

*İLETİŞİM FAKÜLTESİ DERGİSİ/Radio Plays: Concepts and Contents*

by TRT Radio of Istanbul between 1980-2002.

1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Themes
35	38	31	46	17	7	14	5	6	3	6	
13	14	7	13	6	1	4	3	2	2	2	Love
37,1	36,8	22,6	28,3	35,3	14,2	28,5	60	33,3	66,6	33,3	
4	2	4	1	1	-	-	2	1	-	1	Forbidden Affair/Love
7	4	4	9	2	1	6	2	2	1	1	Death
11	6	3	5	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	Murder
4	2	5	7	5	-	-	2	1	-	1	Marriage
7	2	7	7	2	-	5	2	2	1	1	Accident/ Illness
2	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	Swindling/ Money ambition
4	3	4	7	3	1	-	-	1	2	1	Helpfulness
8	2	3	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	Unhappiness
5	1	2	5	2	1	-	1	-	2	2	Financial Problems
3	-	3	3	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	Divorce/ Separation
6	5	1	6	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	Suspicion
4	2	3	4	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	Re-unite
6	3	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	Criminal
3	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Run away from home
3	3	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	Self-sacrifice
-	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Envy
5	2	4	3	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	Divine Justice/ Cyclical History
3	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	Alcohol/ Drug Problems
3	2	-	7	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	Psychological Problems

plays provide the opportunity of realization of the forbidden loves which are not approved of by the society and by the law.

The listener reaches to satisfaction with that kind of relation that the characters in the play experience. However, the forbidden love, which ends negatively almost every time, emphasizes that the system goes on and the listener must close themselves to this way, which they see as a convenient way to revenge.

The plays let the listeners for a while to identify themselves with the character in the play and to say, "I can also be happy if I have an affair or fall in love with someone else", providing a temporary satisfaction. However as a result, by finishing the affair negatively and giving the unhappiness of the character in the play the listeners are given the message that their thoughts are wrong and it will be better if the system in which they live goes on.

### **Marriage**

The theme of marriage is used in the 12.9% of the plays. In the year of 1999, it reaches its highest level with the ratio of 40%. The theme of marriage is used as "being married to someone" or "the preparation for marriage.

The preparation for marriage includes in some conditions. For example, the girl's family wants her to marry a richer man whom they find

convenient for her instead of the man she loves, so this condition causes problems in the family. In addition, the incidents happen between the bride and her prospective husband and their families; the presents are given to each other in pre-marriage etc...

This topic is also parallel to the reality of Turkey because in our society the daughters are expected to marry the son of a wealthy family, not to the man she loves if he does not have a lot of money. In Turkey, the money given by the bridegroom to the bride's family, called 'başlık', is widespread. (Tayanç and Tayanç 1977: 160) According to a survey, 53% of the women in Turkey got married in this way (başlık). This ratio reaches to 63.3% in villages while it declines to 10% in three big cities including Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. (Timur 1972: 82)

Despite the fact that the "başlık" money taken before the marriage is generally used for the wedding expenses, making their daughter marry a son of a wealthy family who can pay more "başlık money" provides their family a different status. In other words, by making their daughter marry a wealthy man, family members think themselves, not their daughter. So the family can have power and respect in the community they live. Furthermore, they can benefit from their daughter's marriage for solving any financial problem that might happen in the future.

The data concerning the rural structure of Turkey are made known by the area surveys held in the rural regions.(\*) These surveys acknowledge the stated opinions above.

## **Murder**

Among the entire broadcasted plays, the number of the plays in which murders are committed is 85; its ratio to the entire plays is 13.5%. In the year 1992, it is at its highest ratio with 31,4%. The theme of "murder" is also at the tops of the most used themes list.

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• Some surveys on this subject are:

- İbrahim Yasa, *Sindel Köyü, Türkiye ve orta Doğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü (TODAİE), Ankara, 1960; Türkiye'de Kız Kaçırma Gelenekleri ve Bununla İlgili Bazı İdari Meseleler, TODAİE, Ankara, 1962; Yirmibeş Yıl Sonra Hasanoğlan Köyü, Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, Ankara, 1969. Ankara'da Gecekondu Aileleri, Sağlık ve Sosyal Yardım Bakanlığı Sosyal Hizmetler Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 1966.*
- DPT, *Türk Köylünde Modernleşme Eğilimi Araştırması, Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Ankara, 1970; Orman Köylerinin Sosyo-Ekonomik Durumu, DPT, Ankara, 1971; Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu İleri Sosyal Yapı Araştırması, DPT, Ankara, 1974.*
- Cevat Geray, *Planlı Dönemde Köy Yönelik Çalışmalar, TODAİE, Ankara, 1974.*
- Mübeccel B.Kıray, *Ereğli: Ağır Sanayiden Önce Bir Sahil Kasabası, DPT, Ankara, 1964.*
- Charles W., M. Hart, *Zeytinburnu Gecekondu Bölgesi, İstanbul Ticaret Odası, İstanbul, 1969.*
- Emre Kongar, *"Altındağ Gecekondu bölgesi", Amme İdaresi Dergisi, Cilt:VI, No:3, 1973; "Altındağ'da Kentle Bütünleşme", Amme İdaresi Dergisi, Cilt:VI, No:4, 1973.*
- Birsen Gökçe, *Gecekondu Gençliği, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Yayınları, Ankara, 1971.*

In our society, like almost every society, people can get angry with others and they sometimes even think of killing them. Generally in the relations of subordinates and superiors, subordinates feel like that towards their superiors. But in the societies which are based on 'parity', people solve their problems by talking each other. As for the societies which are not based on 'parity', the usage of violence can be a frequently coincided way for solutions to the problems. In Turkey, usually the second way is chosen. The reason why "murder" is used frequently in the plays is suppression and satisfaction of that kind of feelings of the listener. So the characters in the play kill on behalf of the listeners, the people that they want to kill. By this method, the listeners become happy and satisfied by the action performed on behalf of them, as if they did it. However, the person who committed the murder in the play is penalized in the possible heaviest way and generally; his/her end is death. The listeners who are listening to this end see that the desire that they started to feel for killing is not legitimate according to the rules that are thought as normative by the society. However, in the plays they are presented as if they were legitimate, for a while. The listeners one more time understand that the system must go on as it is, when the murderer is penalized harshly in the end. In other words, to make people listen to the social-system program, the plays seem as if they think that the listeners are right; however they make themselves right in the end.

## **Divorce**

The “divorce” theme, which has a ratio of 6.5% among the entire plays, reached its highest usage in 1987 with the ratio of 22.2%. In the following years it was used more than its usage before 1987.

The increase in the usage of the “divorce” theme is not because of the increase of the people in the society who want to divorce but because of its being discussed more in the political arena. Especially since 1987 in our country, the alterations that want to be done in the code of civil law (Medeni Kanun) have been debated more densely and various women organizations have made some studies about women rights. The coalition government which was founded after the elections in October 1990 provided political security about this matter by making up a ministry about the problems of the women.

While we were explaining the properties of the Radio Play listeners, we mentioned that the plays attract the attentions of the women and the people living in rural area more intensively.

A survey showing whether the case of divorce is more dense cities or in rural area was not acquired. However, it is believed to be more in cities, because the education level is higher. I believe that a survey about this matter would be beneficial for making this theme clear.

Divorce is thought as a “woman problem” in Turkey due to its results. Therefore radio not only informs its main listener mass, women



about this matter; but it also tries to educate the male listeners by stating that divorce is not the problem of the women only.

### **Suspicion**

The “suspicion” theme also frequently appears in the plays. This theme is developed as the characters suspect each other or other incidents. In 1992, the ratio of the plays including “suspicion” is 17.1%. Among the entire plays its ratio 6.2%. Suspicion being used frequently as a theme in the plays is because of the lack of trust and the artificialness of the relations in life.

Because in real life, the incidents shaping our lives occur beyond our wish, it is impossible for us to prevent them for they are far away from us. It is not possible to know whether the things we see of live are real or not. Especially the “political resolutions” which affect many parts of our lives are decided and applied beyond us. Due to the fact that we can not shape many of the cases and we can not predict their outcomes, we don’t know whether they’re true or not.

In the real life, according to the effects of the mass culture and its technology, the relations are not permanent. Because of being a theme of the mass culture, a person doesn’t have an opportunity to realize his/her own conditions (Kazancı 1982:423). In our times, people have to approach everything with suspicion. As we formerly mentioned, it is not possible for them to be sure of everything. For broadcasted plays to go

parallel with life and especially for creating excitement to provide suspense, the “suspicion” theme is used in the plays. So, the listeners are going to wait the end of the play with curiosity.

### **Divine Justice (Cyclical History)**

In some parts of the plays, the people doing harm always experience bad things after some time. Even if the good characters are accused unfairly, they are proven innocent in the end. The meaning of that kind of messages is that the listeners should keep themselves good and clean; the established system will definitely award them.

The bad characters being punished every time reflects the look of the sub-culture and being unable to do anything disturb the sub-culture. These plays try to lessen that disturbance with the element of the “cyclical history” for keeping the expectations of the mediocre listeners alive and for making them not to say “nothing can be done”, that kind of Divine Justice (Cyclical History) examples are given and the listeners are told that they must be patient “Divine Justice is to happen sooner or later.”

### **Financial Problems (Household Economy Problems)**

In the 14.2% of the plays that were broadcasted in 1992, there are characters who had financial problems. The financial problem theme is used with a ratio of 6.5% in total average. Usually the retired people and the people who immigrated to the cities from small villages have

financial difficulties. The retired people live with comfort for some time after they get their bonus. However, when they consume their bonus and begin to live with their salaries, the problems arise.

As for the people who immigrated to the cities, they have adaptation and alienation problems in addition to the financial ones.

However, in our country, in the period of 1980 – 2002 more people from different part suffered from financial bottlenecks. In the broadcasted plays, this problem is taken up in a narrow way. Some of these different parts are ignored.

The playwrights are usually city-originated people, living in big cities. So, being parallel to this fact, the theme of turning back to village/town, tries to give the message: “There is every thing in your village. You can live happier there than living in big cities. Furthermore, your financial difficulties will never end in cities.”

Especially the yearning, the nostalgia for the old Istanbul, expresses the beauty of the period in which the real native Istanbul people lived. Old Istanbul is being showed in most parts of the nostalgia theme. The writers’ advice the people who immigrated to the cities turn back to their villages/towns. This is the sensitivity of the city-originated people.

### **Other Themes**

Some other themes that are used in the plays are also directly related to the social-economic structures of Turkey. It is also being shown that some customs are now anachronistic and the children can come into conflict with their parents/grandparents (despite the respect they feel for them).

In the broadcasted plays, the theme of becoming rich from a poor status, reaching a higher class is also used. Reaching a higher class is either achieved by having a change in status by going to a big city for education and having a job that is accepted as prestigious by the society (doctor, lawyer, officer, teacher and etc.) or by earning money from different sources such as inheritance, building an apartment instead of an old little house. However, in none of the plays, people get rich by their labor. Apart from these, by making the middle class people establish a friendship with the rich and status having characters and in favor of these relations, it is possible to reach a higher class. To keep the expectations of the listeners alive, the message "someday, someone might help you, too. Do not lose your hope" is given.

Especially in the inheritance incidents, there are conflicts and even fight between the characters. Most of the time the younger generation want the old house or the ramshackle mansion to be destroyed and to have an apartment complex built instead; while the elderly (mother-father/grandmother-grandfather) object to this idea because of their

nostalgic dedications. So, a clash of generations occurs. In that kind of situations, usually the opposing old people die of heart attacks and the young people do the things they want after that.

The protection of the family unity according to our traditional structure is also included in the plays. Running away from home, which is caused by the clash of generation usually, ends up returning back to home. So the forgiveness of the family is emphasized. The short-lived break-ups of the couples lead to the happy re-unions. The message that the conflicts of inheritance harm the unity of the family is also conveyed. Because, the family's unity is an important factor in getting over the problems. This kind of themes show that the traditional structure is must be protected.

The problems in the plays are generally solved in a way by which the mediocre listeners are not disturbed and which do not clash with the dominant standards of the society. This is called the traditionally accepted, morally unanimous (conventional, ethical standards) conclusion (Arnheim, Katz, Cartwright, Çev: Oskay).

## **Conclusion**

Considering the dominant themes used in the radio plays, it is seen that the incidents happen individually or between little groups. There is not any situation which was taken up in a broader and social way. For instance, the themes such as the problems of a working family or an event concerning labor union, collective contracts, and strikes never exist. This

shows that TRT broadcasts as a “state institution” approaches the situations from the view of the present government and the social matters are not broadcasted because of their being thought as “avoidable” (we do not know why!)

The Target Mass of the radio plays is very broad. They aim almost all of the radio listening people that the radio broadcasts can reach (broadcasts exceed the borders of Turkey with the technical structure today).

However, the public polls show that the people that listens these programs are mostly from lower or middle social-cultural levels. Therefore, the themes that may affect, activate and make the masses go behind them are not used or broadcasted. (As in our country lower/middle cultural level is common). However, as an upper constitution, TRT is responsible for the education and illumination of the lower/middle leveled masses, and for the presentation of this, it is essential for TRT to broadcast from the real perspective of “social responsibility. As in real life, more problems exist other than individual problems, TRT keeps away from real life by closing their broadcast to some parts of the social problems and by acting as if they do not exist.

When we look at the themes of the plays, we see that they keep away from “avoidable” themes, make the emotional expectations of the masses alive, have no effect of activation and contrary to this they advise them to be patient.

The theatre programs on radio reflect the manner of the mass culture, which wants to escape from reality. Sometimes the people are kept away from the important problems while sometimes the problems of the individuals are postponed to the future regardless of time and atmosphere. This is the most important pressures of the power (of the powers) who establishes hegemony on the dominant social system.

The listeners of the radio plays are the themes of the mass culture. They see that in the plays their own problems are being explained, however the solution of these problems are forwarded to an unknown date and unknown atmosphere. However, this atmosphere will almost never become real. As long as this attitude of TRT continues, the radio plays that connect the realization of the individual expectations to the occurrence of abstract conditions will have to use different topics that make the idols of the masses concrete. In realty, the change of the expectations and the structure of the mass are directly relevant to the changes of the political, economical and social structure of Turkey.

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