UNIT 2 : TELEVISION

UNIT STRUCTURE

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2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss Television as a medium
- outline the history of Television in India
- identify the different kinds of TV programmes
- explain the stages of Television Production

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units you were introduced to print media and radio. In this unit we will discuss another medium, i.e., Television.

Television is both a glamourous and very powerful medium. This unit will give you an insight into the nature of the television as an audio-visual medium, the history and growth of television in India and a basic understanding of Doordarshan, the country's public broadcaster. We will also discuss the different types of TV programmes with special reference to news and current affairs programmes. Next, we will discuss how TV production takes place in three basic stages.

So, let us begin the unit with an introduction to the television medium.

2.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE TELEVISION MEDIUM

All of you are familiar with Television as a tool for entertainment and information in your day-to-day life. However, as a student of Mass Communication you need to understand the essential nature of the medium which differentiates it from other media. Television possesses some distinguishing characteristics:

1. Television is an audio-visual medium. It favours simultaneity of visual and auditory images. Viewers can not only hear what someone is saying but can also see what is going on.
2. It is said that one picture is equal to a thousand words. You can then very well imagine the potential of pictures that can move! The elements of sound, colour and motion, lend television more credibility than other mass media.
3. Television has large, diversified, heterogeneous and anonymous viewers. People belonging to diverse backgrounds, age groups, culture, religion etc can watch television. Therefore, it is difficult though not impossible to measure the number of viewers of a particular programme at a particular time in a specific channel.
4. Television needs electricity to be functional. That is why it is beyond the reach of many people living in the underdeveloped or developing countries. Television, however, can also be operated with batteries.
5. Compared to other media like newspaper and radio, television is an expensive medium.
6. One need not be a literate person in order to watch television.
7. Television sets are normally bulky and, therefore, not portable like radio and newspapers.
8. Television is a glamorous medium. Visuals, colour, sound and motion make it a glamorous means of communication that entertain people.
9. Television has the potential to show viewers events and happenings in real time. We have to wait for a day to read the news in a newspaper, but television has the ability to give us what we call ‘live’ news.

10. Television is called a 'lean back' medium because unlike newspapers or the internet, we need not concentrate deeply when we watch television.

11. Television is a potent tool of disseminating information. Not just through news and current affairs, but also through various other formats of television programming, we get to know about things, people and places that we otherwise would never have known about.

12. Television also provides entertainment to its viewers. People can relax after a hard day's work by watching television.



ACTIVITY A

Make a list of all the features of the Television which you think are its merits and demerits. Justify your list with appropriate examples.

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2.Visit a slum area and find out how many people there watch television and how many households own television sets.

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2.4 BRIEF HISTORY OF TELEVISION IN INDIA

Television was started in India in 1959 as an educational project supported by the UNESCO, and it grew very slowly during the 1960s. The big leap towards the expansion of the television audience occurred in the mid-1970s with the **Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE),** which

broadcast to 2400 villages in six states of India. An American satellite ATS-6 was used to transmit educational programmes for the development of rural India and it helped Indian technologists gain television broadcasting expertise prior to the launching of the national satellite, **INSAT**, eight years later.

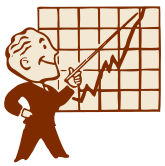
Regular daily transmissions by Doordarshan began in 1965, still a part of All India Radio. The television service was extended to Mumbai (then Bombay) and Amritsar in 1972. For a long time Doordarshan remained the only television channel in India providing television service to its seven cities. Television services were separated from radio in 1976. The offices of All India Radio and Doordarshan were placed under the management of two separate Director Generals in New Delhi with Doordarshan finally emerging as a national broadcaster.

The year 1982 was marked by two major events, the introduction of national programme and colour transmissions accompanied by the sale of colour television sets in the Indian market. Further, Indians also witnessed the live telecast of the Independence Day speech by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 15 August 1982 which was followed by the coverage of the 1982 Asian Games being held in Delhi. 1980s were remarkable as an era of soaps in Doordarshan. Soaps like *Hum Log* (1984), *Buniyaad* (1986-87), comedy shows like *Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi* (1984) and mythological dramas like *Ramayan* (1987-88) and *Mahabharata* (1988-89) glued millions to Doordarshan. Other popular programs included Hindi film song based programs like *Chitrahaar* and *Rangoli* and crime thrillers like *Karamchand*, *Byomkesh Bakshi* and *Janki Jasoos*.

International satellite television made its entry into India in 1991 with CNN bringing the first Gulf War to Indian households. By early 1992, nearly five lakh Indian households were receiving STAR TV telecast. A year later, the figure was close to twenty lakh and by the end of 1994, an estimated one crore twenty lakh households (a little less than one-fourth of all television households) were receiving satellite channels. This increasing viewership was made possible by the sixty thousand or so small cable operators who mushroomed across the country.

The number of TV sets increased from five lakh in 1976 to ninety lakh in early 1987 and to around four crore seventy lakh in 1994; increases are expected to continue at around sixty lakh sets per year. By 2000, about 50 per cent of India's population was watching television regularly.

In summary, we can say that the increasing reach of television in India was due to the investments made in creating an infrastructure of about 1000 ground-based transmitters, which carry the satellite signals to the surrounding areas. And the growth of television audience was due to some of the television programmes that became hugely popular and appealed to Indian audiences, beginning with *Hum Log* (1984-85) and subsequently *Buniyaad, Ramayana, Mahabharata* etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : A

1. When did television come to India?

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2. Name the American Satellite used in SITE?

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3. The regular daily transmission of Doordarshan started in 1965 as a part of .....
4. 1980s were called an era of ..... in Doordarshan.
5. Which was the first International satellite television channel to make its entry into India?

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2.5 DOORDARSHAN

Doordarshan which literally means Tele-Vision, is the public broadcaster of India under the Prasar Bharati, a public service broadcaster nominated by the Government of India. Doordarshan is one of the largest broadcasting

organizations in the world in terms of the infrastructure of studios and transmitters.

At present more than 90 percent of the Indian population can receive Doordarshan (DD National) programmes through a network of nearly 1400 terrestrial transmitters with about 46 Doordarshan studios producing TV programs everyday.

Doordarshan operates 19 channels among which two are All India channels, 11 Regional languages Satellite Channels (RLSC), four State Networks (SN), an International channel, a Sports Channel and two channels (DD-RS & DD-LS) for live broadcast of parliamentary proceedings.

On Doordarshan's National channel, regional programmes and local programmes are carried on a time-sharing basis. To meet the demand of a 24 hour news channel, Doordarshan launched its DD-News channel on 3rd November 2003 replacing its DD-Metro Entertainment channel. The Regional Languages Satellite channels have two components – The Regional service for the particular state relayed by all terrestrial transmitters in the state and additional programmes in the Regional Language in prime time and non-prime time available only through cable operators. Sports Channel is exclusively devoted to the broadcasting of sporting events of national and international importance. Doordarshan's DD Sports is the only sports channel which telecasts rural sports like Kho-Kho, Kabbadi etc., something which private broadcasters avoid telecasting as they do not attract revenues.

DD-India is being broadcast internationally through satellite. It is available in 146 countries worldwide; however, the information on picking up this channel in other countries is not easily available. In the UK, for instance, DD-India is available through the Eurobird Satellite on the Sky system on Channel 833 (the logo is shown as Rayat TV). The timing and programming of DD-India international is different from that of India.

All the regional Doordarshan Kendras generate programmes in their respective regional languages to cater to its regional audience. Both the Regional Language Satellite Services and the Regional State Networks broadcast a wide spectrum of programmes covering developmental news, serials, documentaries, news and current affairs programmes to

communicate with the people in their own language. The respective states receive their own vernacular programmes in two ways. The programmes are telecast through terrestrial transmission during the regional window of DD National and round the clock on the Regional Language Satellite Channels across the country.

The development of TV services in the North East is being given priority by Doordarshan. The hilly terrain in this part of the country makes it necessary to have a very large number of transmitters. At present there are 12 programme production Centres with 132 transmitters of Doordarshan in the North-East.

Doordarshan has taken adequate steps to focus on the accurate presentation of the diverse culture of North Eastern states. DD North East Channel is a composite satellite television service for the North Eastern states broadcasting programmes in Assamese, English and other languages and dialects of the North East. The programme mix includes entertainment serials, informative programmes, social programmes, news and current affairs, art and culture.

Doordarshan has tried to set up television studios in the capital cities of all the North Eastern states. There are studios in the capital cities of all the eight states of Meghalaya, Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Additional TV centres have also been set up to meet the need of coverage at Tura in the Garo Hills of Meghalaya and also at Dibrugarh & Silchar in Assam.

With the exception of DDK Guwahati, all these TV centres originate programmes in the various dialects for a duration of 120 minutes on week days. In addition, all the transmitters in the North East relay a composite programme originating from Guwahati which includes a news bulletin in English and a composite programme of interest for the people of all the North Eastern states. Satellite up-linking facilities have also been provided in all the capital stations of the North East. These facilities help feeding of news and other topical programmes to Guwahati and Delhi.

List of DDKs in Northeast India

Kendra	Inauguration	Language	Duration of Telecast
Itanagar	5/2/1996	Hindi	6 pm – 8 pm
Guwahati	24/3/1985	Assamese	3 pm -8 pm
Dibrugarh	31/5/1993	Assamese	6 pm – 8 pm
Silchar	30/4/1993	Assamese and Bengali	6 pm – 8 pm
Imphal	30/4/1993	Manipur	6 pm - 8 pm
Shillong	30/41993	Khasi and Jantia	6 pm - 8 pm
Tura	31/5/1993	Garo	6 pm - 8 pm
Aizawl	12/6/1995	Mizo	6 pm - 8 pm
Kohima	30/3/1993	English	6 pm - 8 pm
Gangtok	1/11/2004		
Agartala	20/11/1992	Bengali and Kokbork	6 pm - 8 pm

Source: www.ddindia.gov.in



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : B

1. Name the public broadcaster of India.

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2. Which is the only sports channel to telecast rural sports like Kabaddi and Kho-Kho?

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3. In the UK, DD-India is available through the ..... Satellite on the Sky system on Channel 833.

2.6 TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

If we consider the different kinds of Television programmes in today's context, then probably the best way to categorise would be to say that there are two broad categories of TV programmes – **news and non-news.** Under news

we have news bulletins and other news-based and current affairs based programmes, say for instance, news magazines, interviews, talks, panel discussions on current topics, news features etc. The non-news category is a much larger category which covers a whole gamut of programmes – fiction, non-fiction, musical programmes, film-based programmes, comedy shows, sports programmes, and of course the most popular reality shows. Fiction will mainly consist of drama – soaps and serials, telefilms, teleplays etc. With new age programming, the gap between fiction and non-fiction is fast blurring and many programmes are blends between fiction and non-fiction.

It is not possible to discuss at length each type of TV programme in detail in a single unit. So, here we will discuss in detail only one type of programme, i.e., news and news-based programmes.

2.6.1 News Items

News items can generally be divided into three genres:

- News
- Reports
- Features

(a) News

News can be categorised in several types based on different criteria. If we take location into account, we can say that news can be either **foreign news** or **home news**. Foreign news is any event that is happening abroad while home news involves something going on in the country from where the news is telecast.

If we consider the differences in participation of verbal and visual modes, then news can be categorised as **verbal news or read news, audiovisual news and combined news.** Verbal news is read by the news reader, no visuals are present apart from studio setting. Audiovisual news is read by Voice Over. Here dynamic elements of visual mode are in operation. Combined news is a combination of different elements like news reader plus still picture, or Voice Over and map, scheme, diagram covering the whole screen.

News can be categorised as **flash news, extended news, commented or personified news,** and **reportage news.** Flash news is very short, usually read by one voice. No commentary is present here. In extended news there is one institutional and one accessed voice. Institutional voice is usually that of the news reader or news reporter and accessed voice is that of witness). Commented or personified news is the kind in which the reporter comments on the issue from the location) and reportage news is the kind of news which is very dynamic. Investigative camera and reporter are present on location.

(b) Report

The difference between news and report is that compared to news, the length of a report is more extensive and also broader in coverage of the event. Usually after the news reader's abstract of the main information, the reporter reports from the scene, then a third party is interviewed and the reporter provides further insight. The report is always audiovisual.

(c) Feature

The third identified genre is feature. It is generally audio-visual and can be of four types: **critical, portrait, occasional, and reflective**. In its content, specific event, important personal matters or issues are analysed, assessed and generalised. Different from news or report, a feature reconstructs and interprets some known significant event.

(ii) Graber's categories of new items :

Graber (1994) offers another categorisation of news items into four main genres combining **duration and content criteria**.

- High drama stories
- Routine stories
- Feature essays
- Story snippet

The first genre of **high drama story** focuses on conflicts and accident of larger scale (for instance, terrorist bombing, floods, major accidents). **Routine stories** with deficiency of obvious high drama elements cover issues of politics and diplomacy, social and legal matters, economic and

political problems, and symbolic activities. They sometimes cover conflict or accidents but their impacts lack the scale of that of high drama stories and are usually without dramatic consequences. **Feature essays** are considerably longer with content dedicated to social issues, and cultural events, sports and some may be of conflict nature. The last in **Graber**'s genre is the **story snippet** of usually less than 20 seconds in length. It provides a very short account of the event with either a routine story content or a high drama story character.

2.6.2 Current Affairs Programme

A programme which contains an explanation and analysis of current events and ideas, including the matters dealing with political or industrial controversy or with public policy is called a current affairs programme. It also includes investigative programmes with contemporary significance.
A current affairs programme could be one of the following:

a) *News magazine* - These are programmes whose aim is to take it beyond where the news was left. Such programmes not only report but also analyze the events.

b) *Debates* - Debates are also used to discuss a current event. Generally, the major events are debated by important people. NDTV, for instance, has a programme by the name of Big Fight where an issue of immediate relevance is debated on screen by a set of people who are familiar with the issue.

c) *Panel Discussion* - If an issue is too complex for one person to handle, a panel may be convened so that a group of specialists on the subject matter can speak. Or, perhaps, it is used when the audience needs to be introduced or exposed to various people or viewpoints at the session.

Technically, a panel discussion consists of questions and answers. The compere monitors the time and manage questions and also ensure that the discussion does not turn into a fight or an unruly argument. If each participant is making a speech for a set period of time, she signals the speakers at the one minute to go mark and at the stop mark. If a speaker

goes on for more than one or two minutes the compere normally stops him/her to ensure that others in the panel are not deprived of their time. The compere is, under normal circumstances, neither in favour nor against the topic. At the end, the compere summarizes the discussion and thanks the panel members.

One of the main advantages of panel discussion is that it offers multiple perspectives on a single issue. The issue at hand is looked at and scrutinized by all the members present in the panel. It is very often a rule, in panel discussions, to include people from conflicting schools of thought so as to offer different dimensions to one idea, issue, event or phenomenon. The viewer is left to decide for himself which dimension is the most acceptable. Panel discussions are nowadays being increasingly used by news channels especially when political issues are to be debated. For example: During the recent debate on the Indo-US nuclear deal, most news channels aired panel discussions where political leaders from various parties, experts, etc., voiced their opinions and tried to convince the viewers on their respective standpoints. As a matter of principle, the compere or the anchor of the show does not take sides with any party but summarizes the viewpoints nonetheless. *The Big Fight* on NDTV is an example of a panel discussion.

d) *Television Interviews -* The word 'interview' comes from French and means, roughly, 'to see one another.' Interviews fill a great many hours of every broadcast day. Some are brief, such as 10-second news broadcast actuality and are called soundbites. Others are longer and make up the substance of hour-long talk programmes. Interviewing eye-witnesses at the scene of a fire, an airplane crash or similar event for news broadcast is only one aspect of news-gathering by reporters. Some interviews are essentially question and answer sessions, often with controversial guests. Many are single-subject interviews on topics such as health care or illegal migration.

Interviews for News and Current Affairs can be classified into:

i) Interviews for Stories: These are interviews that are included in news stories. The entire interview is not used here but only those portions that are related or are directly relevant to the story.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS - C

1. What are the three basic genres of news items? What is the difference among them?

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2. What are the different kinds of news according to the differences in participation of verbal and visual modes?

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ii) Face to face interviews: These are interviews where there is an interviewer and an interviewee. Both are included in this type of interview. The questions that the interviewer asks are also included in this type of interview.

2.7 TELEVISION PRODUCTION

Television production is a complex, time-consuming process that demands coordination among a wide variety of people. It requires intensive planning and a whole lot of skills, time and effort to execute those plans. The aim of any television production is to translate an idea into a meaningful programme. Creative inputs, technical and personnel requirements, coordination, and finances are unique to each kind of television production. However, whatever the format or genre, planning is the fulcrum on which the success of the production stands. Once a decision is made to make a television programme, we need to prepare ourselves for the various stages of production. The procedures delineated in this unit will guide you from generation of the idea to the final programme.

Until recently, television production required the combined efforts of dozens of trained professionals, using extremely expensive and difficult-to-maintain equipment. Network-level TV programs still require many hands to produce

a single show, but technological advances now allow virtually anyone with a camcorder and a blank cassette to create a video.

Regardless of the size of a program's budget or intended audience, there are three production phases that all professional productions share. These phases are:

- *Pre-production*
- *Production*
- *Post-production*

(a) Pre-production phase

There is a saying in TV production: "The most important phase of production is pre-production". The basic ideas and approaches of the production are developed at this stage. It is in this phase that the production can either be set on a proper course or messed up to such an extent that no amount of time, talent, or editing expertise can save it. During pre-production, not only are the key talent and production members selected, but all the major elements are also planned. Research is done, the script is readied, and shooting locations selected. Since things such as scenic design, lighting, and audio are interrelated, they must be carefully coordinated in a series of production meetings.

(b) The Production Phase

The production phase is where everything comes together in a kind of final performance. It is the phase in which the actual shooting (recording or live broadcast) takes place and all the plans made during the pre-production are executed.

Post-production Phase

This is the final stage in which the rushes are refined and edited into a complete programme and made ready for telecasting and distribution. For projects like films or music albums or TV shows which need promotional activity, these activities also form part of the post-production process.

The following flow chart shows the various stages of production and also how to actualize them:

Idea to script	Collation of research material, treatment
Pre-production	Finalising technical and non-technical crew, cast, location, equipment, sets, properties, transport, special effects, make-up, etc. Storyboard and shooting schedule prepared.
Production	Shot break-up, actual shooting
Post-production	Logging tapes, editing, special effects, dubbing, graphics, promotion and distribution



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS D

1. What are the three stages of production?

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2. Which stage of production is most crucial? Why?

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3. Define the following:

a. Pre-production

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b. Production

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c. Post-Production

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2.8 LET US SUM UP

1) The term audio-visual media refer to works with both a sound and visual component.
2) Television was introduced in India on an experimental basis on September 15, 1959 from a makeshift studio at Akashvani Bhavan in New Delhi as part of All India Radio.
3) In 1975, the government carried out the first test of the possibilities of satellite based television through the SITE program. SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment) was designed to test whether satellite based television services could play a role in socio-economic development.
4) 1976 witnessed a significant event in the history of Indian television, the separation of Doordarshan from All India Radio
5) 1976 also saw the advent of advertising on Doordarshan.
6) Colour television came to India in 1982
7) The first indigenous soap opera *Hum Log* was shown on television in 1984.
8) International satellite television was introduced in India by CNN through its coverage of the Gulf War in 1991.
9) Television news can be of the following types: foreign and home news, verbal news or read news, audiovisual news, combined news, flash news, extended news, commented or personified news, routine stories, reportage news, feature essays, story snippet
10) A television news bulletin or newscast is a regularly scheduled television program that reports current events.
11) Television production is a complex, time-consuming process that demands coordination among a wide variety of people. It requires intensive planning and a whole lot of skills, time and effort to execute those plans.
12) There are three production phases that all professional productions share. These phases are
    a. *Pre-production*
    b. *Production and*
    c. *Post-production*



2.9 FURTHER READINGS

- Video Production—Vasuki Belavadi, Oxford University Press
- Basic Audio Visual Media– Shipra Kundra
- Broadcast Management in India- Angela Wadia
- Television and Radio Announcing-Stuart W Hyde
- The Magic Window - Sevanti Ninan
- Indian Broadcasting- H R Luthra



2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : A

1. 1959
2. ATS-6--
3. All India Radio
4. Soaps
5. CNN

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : B

1. Doordarshan
2. DD Sports
3. Eurobird

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : C

1) The three basic genres of news items are:

- News
- Report
- Feature

The difference between news and report is that compared to news, report is more extensive in terms of its length and also broader in coverage of the event. Usually after a news reader's abstract of the main information, the reporter reports from the scene, then a third party is interviewed or talks follows and reporter provides further insight. The report is always audiovisual. The feature is found in four

modifications — critical, portrait, occasional and reflective. It carries elements of feature as a genre in film and press journalism. In its content, specific event, important personal matters or issues are analysed, assessed and generalised. Different from news or report, feature reconstructs and interprets some known significant event.

2) According to the differences in participation of verbal and visual modes news can be represented in three ways –

- **Verbal news or read news** – It is read by news reader. No visuals present apart from studio setting.
- **Audiovisual news** – Mostly read by Voice Over, and dynamic elements of visual mode are in operation
- **Combined news** – Several elements like news reader plus still picture, or Voice Over and map, scheme, diagram covering whole screen.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : D

1) The three stages of production are:

- Pre-production stage
- Production stage
- Post-production stage

2) The pre-production stage is the most crucial stage of production. This is because the outcome of the final programme hinges upon the planning which is done in the pre-production stage. If everything is planned out well in this stage, then hassles during the shooting and editing can be avoided and the project can be smoothly concluded.

3) **a. Pre-production:** It is the stage in which the basic ideas and approaches of the production are developed and set in motion. During pre-production, not only are key talent and production members selected, but all the major elements are planned. All things beginning from scenic design, lighting, and audio are carefully coordinated in a series of production meetings in this stage. Research is done, the script is readied and shooting locations selected.

b. Production stage: It is the stage where everything comes together in a kind of final performance. It is the phase in which the actual shooting (recording or live broadcast) takes place and all the plans made during the pre-production are executed.

c. Post-production stage: This is the final stage in which the rushes are refined and edited into a complete programme and made ready for telecasting and distribution. For projects like films or music albums or TV shows which need promotional activity, these activities also form part of the post-production process.



2.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

i. Write a comprehensive note on the main characteristics of the audio-visual medium
ii. Discuss the growth of private satellite channels in India.
iii. What do you think has been the impact of private satellite channels on Doordarshan?
iv. What factors came together to promote the development of television in India?
v. How has foreign satellite TV channels revolutionized the media scenario in India?
vi. What are the different types of television news?
vii. What are the three stages of production? What is the importance of each stage?
viii. “The most important phase of production is pre-production”. Do you agree with this statement? Why?
ix. The production phase is where everything comes together in a kind of final performance. Explain.