Unit 12: GENRES OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

UNIT STRUCTURE

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12.1 LEARNING OBJECTICES

In this unit, you will be able to learn:-

- discuss the different Television programmes and formats,
- examine the types of interviews, documentaries, education, entertainment programmes and different other kind of programs that are telecasted catering to a wide array of audience.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed about the various stages of production, camera and its different angles and movements, editing techniques, electronic field production and news gathering. In this unit, you will get to learn and familiarise about the different types of Television News including bulletins, breaking news etc. The different types of documentaries films, different types of interviews, panel discussion, current

affairs, education programmes and its importance would constitute this unit.

12.3 NEWS

Current eventsthat are disseminated via the medium of television are known as the Television News.When a war, disaster or any significant incident occurs then the television news does not only give you the firsthand information but also enable one to witness the event as it happens. During the 26/11 terrorist attack in Mumbai, many national and international television channels gave live coverage which brought the nation and the world together to express their sorrow and outrages.News Bulletins or Newscast aired the stories which may last for few seconds or hours.The news channels may broadcast news bulletin on its daily scheduled timing providing information from local, regional, national or international events. They are presented either in studio, by pre-recorded footage, live broadcasted or outsourced from the news agencies. There may be timewhen television shows may get disrupted by the breaking news, which is required for immediate broadcast.The top rated news channel airs 'prime time' in the evening and sometimes during breakfast hourthat would be presented for few hours. News that is presented in local channels may present with the aid of their own studio setup and which is affiliated to national networks. The channel also may have different timeslot for news programme of different audiences, depending on age, socio-economic group or demographic profile.

Types of Television News

There are different types of news reporting and coverage: They are

Breaking news: Breaking news refers to events or incidents that are currently developing and which required for immediate broadcast for the viewers. Breaking news usually refers to events that are unexpected and sudden such as earthquake, accidents, plane crash etc.Breaking news stories does not occur every day, they are rare and typically the most chaotic

and confusing to cover. Most often reporter/journalist is always in a rush to be the first to get the information about the story development.Most often the news that is been recorded in a hasten turn out to be wrong or incomplete.

Planned major events: Before the event, the news reporter and journalist can planahead for the news coverage. As the media outlets are aware of the upcoming events and programmes in and around the city, the reporters get enough time in advance to plan their news coverage. In such situation, he can able to prepare and sketchthe basic guideline as what aspect of the stories they could cover, which camera angles to take and what questions to asked to the delegates etc.

Live Reporting: Almost all news channels provided with live reporting around the country. With the support of technological development the news stories can be aired live from the venue of the event. For transmitting the video signal, a professional video camera and microphone signals is the first requirementfor recording and possibly transmission. The mobile production control room (PCR) is known as a “production truck”, “mobile unit”, “remote truck”, “live truck”, “OB van” or “live eye” is consist of all the equipments and gadgets for the broadcasting of the event directly from the field. In the United States an “OB van” is smaller in size than a production truck and generally requires two or three people in the field to manage.The vehicle known as DSNG (Digital Satellite News Gathering) is used for fitting the electronic equipments for sending the video signals to the studio or for direct telecast.

Taped stories: Stories are shot, reported and produced by a team for use in newscasts. Stories can be produced the same day they air or they can be produced for a future date. The range of topics for pre-produced stories is wide and can include ones that are any combination of urgent, important, interesting, informative or just plain amusing. They often will include a reporter’s introduction and/or live tag at the end. News stories can take

minutes, hours, days or weeks to produce, depending on their complexity and the time allotted.

Besides the different types of news, there arealso few news providers which include:

Cable Network : Star Net, CNN, FOX News etc broadcast news and news-related programs around the clock. The cable news network can provide extended coverage of news events that require lots of time like economic and political debates or an ongoing disaster or talk within countries. The cable network also produce prime-time documentaries or feature stories on important news subjects.

Broadcast networks : ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX produce a combination of evening news broadcasts, morning news programs and magazine shows that air across the nation. In India, the broadcast of free-to-air television is governed through state-owned PrasarBharati Corporation, with the Doordarshan group of channels being the only broadcaster. As such, cable television is the primary source of TV programming in India and then private channels were started since about 1995.

Local stations: It focused primarily on events of interest including local sports, music, weather and markets. The local stations affiliated with or owned by a broadcast network also carry their network's news programs, the local and network programs are produced by totally separate newsrooms. The news is broadcasts either in the early morning, early evening or late evening containing the local flavour and stories that is close to the people of the region.

Public Television: The Public Broadcasting System produces a nightly news program which is broadcasted on local public television stations. Many of those stations also produce local public affairs programs.

12.4CURRENT AFFAIRS

In 1953, Britain produced the current affairs programme, 'Panorama' which did not had good review in the beginning. When it was re-launched, it became one of the core programmes in British Broadcasting. In 1951, the Public affairs television in the United States and the first programme was called *See It Now*. The main purpose of the current affairs programme is to gain the in-depth knowledge about the news item or stories. Elections, accidents, economics, political activities, militants, social events etc are covered under the current affairs. These programmes sometimes take weeks and months to study and for the research work. They are also an important information source for the public and regarded as a vital interface between broadcasting and politics. Discovery Channel, History Channel, Animal Planet, TLC and from India channels like Rajya Sabha TV, Loka Sabha TV and many more always feed the people with latest discovery of science and technology, people and cultural heritage, unknown places, political scenario, archaeology discoveries, story features of great personality from around the world.

12.5 PANEL DISCUSSION

A panel discussion is a well designed platform where group of knowledgeable people discusses and present their personal opinion on a chosen topic. In the panel discussion besides the panellist, there would also be a moderator who would chair the discussion. The panel discussion helps the audience to clarify the issues or topics being discussed and increase their understanding of the subject.

To conduct a panel discussion, first of all you need to identify an issue or topic that may based on current issues, situation or on event that concerned most and which may called for immediate attention from the public or administration. The panellist for the discussion has to be well informed about the topic and should able to present specific points of view regarding the issue and discussion. Three to four panel members is the ideal number for any discussion.

The production team may schedule the time and date for the recording of the program, which gives time for the panellist and the moderator to prepare themselves before the final recording is done. However, sometime news channels come up with the panel discussion within a short period of time depending upon the stories or news which required instant broadcast. There are basically different ways of conducting panel discussion. In one situation, the moderator would introduce the topic and the panellistswould present their views and opinions regarding the issue or topic. Secondly, the panellist themselves ask questions or react to panel members views and opinion. Thirdly, the moderator or the chairperson would close the discussion and provides a summary of panel presentations and discussion. Lastly, the moderator would calls for interaction with the audience where one may participate by addressing questions to various panel members or by voicing their views and opinion.

Few of the recent topics of panel discussions in India are *'Is it important for India to enter* NSG?' featuring Bharat Karnad in Times Now, Panel Discussion on 7th Pay Commission recommendations in Zee TV. Race ToRaisina: Nitish Kumar's Blow To Opposition Unity?in NDTV and many more.

12.6 INTERVIEWS

An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by an interviewer to obtain information from the interviewee. Interview may have different purpose and in journalism it is conduct for reporting the story. Often the interviewee is a public figure and his/her views, activities etc are elicited for broadcasting. This can either be recorded in studio or outside and if face to face interview is not possible then with the aid of video conference an interview can also be conducted.

Interview can be used as a news clip, as a news bulletin, news interview for two to three minutes for longer programmes, as a taster which is a extract of a longer interview used as a part of a illustrative menu at the start of a programme, as a wrap which is a short clip of the original interview made for describing the story in 30 seconds to a minuteduration. Then the

package which is again the same way of presenting the story as wrap, but interview is extracted from one of more recording for two to five minutes. Vox pop, feature, montage are the documentary format that uses only interviewee voices to tell the story.

There are three basic types of interviews. They are:

i. The informational interview
ii. The interpretative interview
iii. The emotional interview

The informational interview: The main purpose of this interview is to impart information to the listener. To get the detail information, there may be considerable talk and discussion in order to extract information and to check any statistics. For conducting the interview, the topic of the discussion may be informed to the interviewee in advance, so that he can prepare himself before the actual interview takes place.

The interpretative interview: This interview is conducted to get the facts and asking the interviewee to comment on the topic or to explain. The interviewee would give his views and reasoning on the issue that would give a broad perspectives for further discussion. The interviewer must be well versed on the subject, should be alert and attentive to pick up the point and challenge the opinions expressed by the interviewee if required. The main point is not just to get the facts and information correctly but rather to find out how the interviewee would react and interpret to these facts.

Emotional interview: This interview involves capturing the emotional impact and to understand the state of mind of the interviewee. It is the strength of feeling present rather than its rationality which is important and the interviewer needs to be at his most sensitive in handling such situations. It is also asking right questions at the right time in order to apprehend the public interest. The correct approach is the other factor which an interviewer should understand and follow in order to extract correct information from

the interviewee. The difficult task which the interviewer faces on this kind of interview is to remain impartial observer.

These three present a broad picture of the art of the interview which can be further develop into twelve different types of interview with special functions. They are:

a. Hard news interview: It is usually short, to the point and to illustrate news bulletin or news items. The important of facts, comments or reaction are some of the main elements of hard news interview.
b. Informative interview: It is similar to hard news interview but it is not always restricted to the major stories. For this kind of interview, any stories that may interest you or event that is happening around your city can be the informative interview.
c. Investigative interview: This is to get in depth to the facts and information in order to discover the actual cause of the incident.
d. Adversarial interview: This kind of interview tries to get the other to admit the things that he/she really does not want to speak. Adversarial interview may run the greatest risk of a libel suit.
e. Interpretative interview: It has two prongs to the interpretative interview where reaction and explanation of the event is counted.
f. Personal interview: This kind of interview is conducted with someone well known about him/her, intentionally revealing personality profile from different walks of life.
g. Emotional interview: Its attempt is to expose interviewee's feeling to enable the audience to share in a personal tragedy or achievements.
h. Entertainment interview: This kind of interview usually brings smile in the face of the audience. The story content are basically carried the lights side of life which entertain.
i. Actuality interview: In this interview, the voice of the interviewer is removed keeping only the interviewee. This kind of techniques is usually seen in documentary ors feature films.
j. Telephone/remote interview: By the name suggest that the interview is carried out on the phone or speaking from the remote studio.

This kind of interview is used when the subject is not available on the location for the recording.

k. Vox pop/multiple interview: This interview mean taking opinion of the people from cross section of public on given subjects. In the United States, it is popularly known as 'person in the street interview'.

l. Grabbed interview: This is another interview when people do not wanted to take part but the interviewer is determined to take. This interview is usually short and may contain two or more comments.

12.7 DOCUMENTARIES

"Documentaries are all methods of recording on celluloid any aspect of reality interpreted either by sincere and justifiable reconstruction, so as to appeal either to reason or emotion, for the purpose of stimulating the desire for, and the widening of human knowledge and understanding, and of truthfully posing problems and their solutions in the spheres of economics, culture, and human relations", defined by the World Union of Documentary in 1948.

Documentary films are the non-fiction stories that representation the real life situations or incidents. John Grierson, a key figure in the British documentary school has coined the term "documentary value".He is considered to be the first to use the term to describe a film by Robert Flaherty in 1926. The film which Grierson regarded was *Moana* as "documentary value" for its recreation of the daily life of a Polynesian boy.

There are six different types of documentaries films. They are as follows:

1. Poetic Documentaries: In 1920's the first poetic documentaries appeared. The poetic documentaries create a specific mood and tone rather than to provide the viewer with information. It follow a different approach of organizing images of the material world by means of associations and patterns, both in terms of time and space rather than following continuity editing format of film making. The films are linked to the emergence of artistic avant-gardes in cinema; uses many of the devices typical of other arts such as fragmentary, impressionistic and lyrical.

2. Expository Documentaries: Expository Documentaries is associated with the classic documentary and based on illustrating an argument using images. With the authoritative commentary employing voiceover or titles it usually speaks directly to the audience proposing a strong argument and point of view.The voiceover often sound objectives and the images are there to advance the argument presented.

3. Observational Documentaries: This allowed the director to record the real life situation without being involved in the subject. Those who work in this area find the poetic documentaries as too abstract and expository documentaries to be too informative. Observational documentaries aimed for the immediacy, intimacy, and revelation of individual human character in ordinary life situations.

4. Participatory Documentaries: Participatory Documentaries presents the relationship between the filmmaker and the filmed subject.The director becomes an investigator and enters unknown territory, participates in the lives of others, and gains direct and in-depth experience and reflection from the film. It is also the designing of storytelling process which engages communities to carrying out the collection and dissemination of their own story.

5. Reflexive Documentaries: This kind of documentary films draw attention to their own construction or representation rather considered to be as a window on the world. The authenticity of the documentary is often question and challenged.

6. Performative Documentaries: The Performative Documentaries depicts the subjective experience and emotional response. It focuses on expressiveness, poetry and rhetoric, rather than on the desire for realistic representation. It often link up personal accounts or experiences with larger political or historical realities.

12.8 EDUCATION TELEVISION

Television has proven to be also the medium of imparting knowledge and information to the masses. Many children's television series are educational, ranging from dedicated learning programs to those that indirectly teach the viewers. Some series are written to have a specific moral behind every episode, often explained at the end by the character that learned the lesson.

The Educational Television programmes are meant to supplement the old and formal process of education. It promotes the interest of students in seeking knowledge outside the formal education. Education Programmes that can be included are : The open and distance education, health and science, agriculture, health, literacy campaigns, rural development programme, family welfare and planning, literature, arts, cultural heritage, dance, music etc.

In 1961 Educational Television (ETV)launched from Delhi. It was started with the motive ofproviding educational programme for science teachers and students of Delhi Schools. Slowly, it was broadcasted towider areas with many othersimilar subjects.

Later Education programme was also extended to Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Srinagar. The service was also made available to higher secondary schools. In 1984, University Grants Commission also started programme for higher education by setting up ISAT Cell at JamiaMilliaIslamia, New Delhi which help them to co-ordinate programmes prepared at different universities. The UGC transmission for higher education was called Countrywide Classroom. Several Audio - VisuaJ Research Centres (AVRCs) and Educational Media Research Centres (EMRCs) were set up in different parts of India to produce programmes.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1:What do you mean by Current Affairs ?

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Q.2: Cite few examples of panel discussion in Indian Television News Channel?

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Q.3: What are the three basic types of interviews?

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Q.4 :What do you mean Expository Documentary?

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ACTIVITY 12.1

1) Prepare a short documentary film proposal which would contain any one of the documentary film formats.

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12.9 ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment programs primarily consists of those which are not restricted for information and gaining knowledge rather these are those television programme that does not required much attention to understand its contents. These programs include celebrityprofiles that may use promotional footage, talk or interview shows, award shows, musical shows and tributes. Besides, there are also entertainmentoriented magazine shows;reality programme, fundraisingshows which include entertainers;

Human interest programs consisting of live or livetotape footage which does not have much significant portions that is devoted to indepthanalysis or interpretation; andthe programme also consist of coverage of community events such as carnivals,festivals, parades, musical concert and fashion shows.



12.10 LET SUM UP

- The different types of news reporting are breaking news, planned major events, live reporting and taped stories.
- A panel discussion is platform where three to four knowledgeable people discusses and present their personal opinion on a topic.
- Interpretative interview is not just to get the facts and information correct but also to find out how the interviewee would react and interpret to the question being asked.
- The six different types of documentaries films are Poetic, Expository, Observational, Participatory, Reflexive and Performative.
- University Grants Commission in 1984 initiated programme for higher education by setting up ISAT Cell at JamiaMilliaIslamia, New Delhi which help them to co-ordinate programmes prepared at different universities.
- Production Control Room (PCR) is also known as a “production truck”, “mobile unit”, “remote truck”, “live truck”, “OB van” or “live eye”.



12.10 FURTHER READING

- Aufderheide, Patricia, (2010), ‘Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction’, Published by Oxford University Press, USA.
- Yorke, Ivor, (2003), ‘Television News’, Published by Taylor & Francis.
- Hilliard, Robert L., (2008), ‘Writing for Television, Radio, and New Media’, Published by Cengage Learning, USA.

- Creeber, Glen, (2015), 'The Television Genre Book', Published by Palgrave, London.



12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1. Current affairs television programmes look more in-depth at stories than was possible in news programmes. The programmes built on news items and were to provide depth, context and breadth.

Answer to Q2. Examples of Panel Discussion in Indian Television News Channels are *'Is it important for India to enter* NSG?' featuring Bharat Karnad in Times Now, Panel Discussion on 7th Pay Commission recommendations in Zee TV. Race ToRaisina: Nitish Kumar's Blow To Opposition Unity?**i**n NDTV.

Answer to Q3. The three basic types of interviews. They are:

i. The informational interview,
ii. The interpretative interview and
iii. The emotional interview

Answer to Q4. Expository Documentaries contain the authoritative commentary employing voiceover and it usually speaks directly to the audience proposing a strong argument and point of view. The voiceover often sound objectives and the images are there to advance the argument presented.



12.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q1. What do you mean by breaking news?
Q2. What is live reporting?
Q3. Which is the first current affairs programme of Britain?

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1. What do you mean by informative interview?

Q2. Explain the poetic documentary film with a suitable example?

Q3. What are the different methods of conducting panel discussion?

C. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1. Elaborate the different types of interviews for television.

Q2. Explain the different types of documentary films