
CHAPTER - I I

BROADCAST INTERVIEWS IN INDIA

CHAPTER II

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2.1 Radio and Television : Media of Mass Communication

Because of the vast amount of mass communication research since World War II a great attention has been paid to the systematic analysis of what communication is. It seems to be primarily about viz. texts (message, discourse etc.). Indeed, most of the works deal with various sociological or socio-psychological theories of mass media institutions, of audiences or effects, or the relations between media on the one hand and society and culture on the other. The study of the mass mediated messages themselves is usually related to a predominantly methodological approach - the so-called 'content analysis'. However, there are historical, practical, methodological and theoretical reasons for the lack of systematic discourse analysis in media research.

Mass media discourse reflects policies of media institutions and enters into the cultivation of conceptions in ways that can be investigated.

2.2 Broadcasting in India

Broadcasting in India had an early beginning. A group of enterprising amateurs formed the Radio Club of Bengal and started radio transmissions in 1923. Similar clubs were also set up in Bombay (Mumbai) and Madras (Chennai) in 1924. But all these had to be closed down on account of financial problems. Lord Irwin inaugurated the Calcutta Station in August 1927. In 1930, the Government took over the stations and radio was placed under the Department of Industries and Labour of the then British Government. However, the credit of setting radio broadcasting on a firm footing in India goes to the first Controller of Broadcasting, Mr. Lionel Fielden. Today the radio broadcasting

system in India is the largest in the world. It has 86 stations and 160 transmitters broadcasting nearly 700 hours every day in 26 languages and 136 dialects. The authorities claim that radio can reach 90 per cent of the Indian population and 80 per cent of the area of the country has been covered. The external services of A.I.R. now broadcasts over 15 short wave transmitter programmes in 18 foreign languages and has a round-the-clock service. In spite of the fact that the country can boast of the world's largest broadcasting system, the fact remains that for a population of more than 960 million there are only 30 million radio sets in the country. In other words only one radio for every 32 persons. And most of these sets are to be found in urban areas. The introduction of cheap transistor sets on which no licence fee has to be paid has not really done much to remove the ambivalence between urban and rural areas. There is no doubt that of all the mass media of communication, radio can be the most effective in a country like India. It has the potential of becoming a powerful instrument of Education, development and social change. The literacy rate in India is low and the only way to educate the rural folk in improved agricultural techniques and teach them a better way of life is by radio. Television, being audio-visual, would be better but it is expensive. Radio is cheaper and transistor sets are especially small in size and light in weight and are portable. Radio, if properly used, can instruct and entertain people all over the country and in the most remote areas. Unfortunately the scope and potential of radio is not being exploited to the full extent in spite of the large number of radio stations. A UNESCO document has noted the scope of broadcasting in underdeveloped Asian countries. The report states: "Broad-casting has great potentialities to transmit knowledge, to disseminate information and to influence public opinion in positive and constructive directions and these potentialities should be applied to create the social climate and to communicate the skills required for building modern society."

2.3 Television

Experiments to produce images with the help of light and shade effects had started as early as the nineteenth century. The first break through came in 1926 when John Logie Baird showed images of moving human faces at the Royal Institute in London. Further experiments with television were interrupted by the great war of 1939-45 and only to be resumed in 1946. By the end of the 40's television stations were in operation in U.S.A., U.K., France and most of the principal cities of Europe. The first colour TV programme was telecast in the U.S.A. in 1953. By the end of 1955 most European countries were linked to each other by a television network. Europe and the U.S.A. began to exchange telecasts with the help of ~~satellites~~ in 1962. Television became extremely popular all over the world in a very short period of time on account of the fact that it combined sight with sound. It had all the advantages of the radio and the cinema combined and could be viewed in the comfort and privacy of one's own home. Television programmes are telecast in the industrial countries over several channels throughout the day and night. People have become addicted to TV and in a kind of reaction to this addiction some people started calling the TV the "idiot box". In the U.S.A. there are more than 500 commercial stations and near about 100 non-commercial stations owned by the Universities. TV has become one of the significant mass media throughout the world.

2.3.1 Television in India

It was when Philips (India) offered a transmitter at a reduced rate and the UNESCO offered a grant of money that the government decided to start telecasts in Delhi on an experimental basis in 1956. Programmes were telecast just twice a week for one hour and were received by 21 community sets. The attraction of the medium was too powerful to be resisted and in a short time the duration of the programmes was increased

along with the number of sets. Soon the purely educational programmes of the first TV transmitter were complemented by entertainment programmes. By 1965 a regular daily TV transmission from Delhi was available. Thirteen years after the first TV station was operational in Delhi, the Mumbai (at that time Bombay) centre was opened in 1972. In 1973 the Mumbai station began relaying programmes to Pune and the TV stations of Srinagar and Amritsar were started. In 1974 stations in Calcutta, Chennai (at that time Madras) and Lucknow went into operation. In 1975 the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was undertaken for a period of one year to cover 2400 villages in six states. Commercial TV commenced in 1976 and in the same year TV was separated from A.I.R. and became an independent media unit under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (Doordarshan). India's space effort passed another milestone on 9th June 1981 as its satellite APPLE went into orbit taking the country to the doorsteps of an independent satellite system. At present the INSAT 1B system links the whole country in its network.

In a vast, overpopulated and illiterate country like India, TV being audio-visual, has a great potential for national development. It is used as a powerful instrument of social change and reform as it has a great effect on growing minds and is also habit forming. Television can be used to show the people a better way of life through planned entertainment programmes and it can be used for direct education. Apart from social change and education TV can introduce among the people a growing sophistication which will make them less vulnerable to manipulation by politicians and demagogues. With the help of TV they can be made aware of what is happening in the country and the world. In a country with cultural diversity TV can be used to create better inter regional and better inter communal understanding.

There is no doubt that TV has made some inroads into the listening public of the radio, especially if both are of limited range and belong to the same region. A person, given the choice of watching TV or listening to the radio, might prefer the first for he can feast his eyes as well as to listen. Along with Doordarshan programmes, the TV viewers of India can enjoy more channels like Star, Zee, Discovery, Home TV, ESPN etc. Now a days it is also made possible through cable network.

2.4 Interviews : Types and Techniques

2.4.1 What is an Interview?

Modern society has many devices to exchange information speedily and accurately among its members. An interview is one of them. It is a medium of communication between people, an oral interchange in a face-to-face confrontation. It is an instrument or tool. This implies that it is nothing more than a means to an end and is not an end in itself. The interview is a tool of communication process and vehicle for transmitting information from one person to another. Thus an interview, unlike a conversation, focuses attention upon the specific subject matter that is relevant to its situation, occasion and purpose. An interview requires the participation of atleast two persons who interact freely with one another.

Interviewing is a social process

Neither reliability nor depth can be achieved unless it is clearly recognised that interviewing is fundamentally a process of social interaction. Its primary purpose may be research, but this is aimed at when making an investigation. The process of social interaction in interview is complicated by the fact that the interviewee also has insight. The interviewer must, therefore, be alert to what he brings to the interview situation. A state of rapport exists between interviewer and respondent, when the later accepts the

research goals of the interviewer and actively seeks to help in obtaining the necessary information. Although the best way to achieve this result may usually be a warm and sympathetic approach, mere friendliness between respondent and interviewer is not sufficient in all cases. The interviewer must attempt to establish three elements in the interview situation:

1. his own friendliness and interest,
2. the worth of the research,
3. his own competence.

The interview which is developed in an easy, natural fashion approximating a conversation in its effect on both participants stimulates the interviewer himself to a better effort. The interviewer's goal is to obtain information from the respondent and he must concentrate on the respondent.

2.4.2 Techniques of an Interview

A formal interview is initiated to achieve one or several objectives. It takes place in a particular physical and social setting. It occurs as a part of a procedural sequence of events and focuses attention on specifics in the present, past and future behaviour, beliefs, opinions, attitudes or convictions of the interviewee of the interviewer is a fairly well versed he prepares a standard set of questions, establishes a practise time schedule and adopts polished pattern of behaviour during interview. The interviews are face to face conversations with a definite purpose. The fact is these are conversations and not discussion, should suggest the informal environment in which they ought to be conducted. To be fruitful, interviews must remain conversations at a fairly informal level. The participants learn from the experience, rather than being embittered by it. But there is the danger of the interviews turning out to be too informal and therefore loosing a sense of direction. This should be guarded against.

Process of Interview :

1. Preparation
2. Establishing rapport
3. Seeking and giving information
4. Controlling the interview
5. Closing

Natu and Shetty in their book *Business Communication* (1982) describe the process as WASP to mean

- W = Wel come
- A = Acquire the information
- S = Supply the information (if necessary)
- P = Parting.

The traits of an Effective interviewer

The interviewer should :

1. have a good understanding of the psychology of human motivation and personal adjustment,
2. have up-to-date knowledge of current affairs, so that, within the interview he can communicate properly and serve as a useful resource person,
3. know the principles and components of the interview as an interactional, communicational process.
4. realise the importance of listening. One of the interviewer's special talents is his ability to listen. He listens to what interviewee says, to get at which he does not say, and what he apparently cannot say.
5. read the questions as they are worded in the questionnaire
6. ask every question that applies to the respondent
7. use prompt cards and other instruments when required.
8. only probe in directly.

9. make sure that he/she has correctly understood the question and answers and that it is adequate.
10. not answer for the respondent.
11. not give direct information.
12. not seek or give unrelated information.
13. repeat a question or other action when requested by the respondent
14. give clarification when asked.

Two main Interview styles :

There has been a number of attempts to categorise approaches to interviewing, e.g. 'structured' and 'unstructured'; 'focused' and 'unfocused'; 'limited' and 'in-depth' interviews. But all these interview styles one can broadly categorise into two:

1. respondent interviews
2. informant interviews

The major distinction between these two approaches is in the focus of control for and what happens throughout the whole process. That is, in what happens both before, during and after the actual interviewing sessions. In case of respondent interview, the interviewer has the control over the process throughout. It is structured primarily by the intentions of the researcher or the interviewer. A tightly structured interview commonly refers to the type of interview which follows a fairly clear and well maintained schedule or pre-organised plan. A loosely structured interview, on the other hand, implies a general set of ideas to which the interviewer would like some responses at some point in session, though the order and exact wordings are not specified. In case of informant interview, the goal being information oriented through the perceptions of a particular person (or persons) within a situation. Again the agenda might be tightly or loosely structured, but in this case it is primarily the interviewee who imposes it. This kind of interviewing is sometimes called 'unstructured', when what is actually meant is that it is unstructured from the interviewer's point of view. Who controls the interviewing itself

is, of course, only one part of the whole process. The important feature of respondent interviews is in their purpose and procedural organisation. That is the interviewee is present in order to satisfy the interviewer who asks questions, or explores the possibility regarding the issues, and receives responses even to very open and facilitative questions.

Methods of Recording Interviews

The two most common methods of recording interviews are by field notes and by audio tape recording. Again both have their advantages and disadvantages. Full note taking is difficult at the speed of normal discourse, it can intrude upon the interviewer's concentration and upon the flow of an interviewee's responses and- perhaps more seriously - leads to the collection of only a small fraction of data possible to procure from an interaction. A person in authority may reject the notion of tape recorded and may readily accept conventional note taking in an interview. Video taping interviews is gaining popularity as the technology is easily available, portable and could be used effortlessly. Although the participants are aware of the cameras and microphones, these are operated remotely by technicians in sitting in viewing gallery above the participants. The room is sizeable and cameras could focus both upon the interviewee and the interviewer. Now a days the interviewees are interested in getting their interviews video recorded.

2.4.3 The Features of Broadcast Interviews are as following :

1. The broadcast interviews are goal directed.
2. The broadcast interviews are well planned.
3. The broadcast interviews are properly conducted.
4. In broadcast interviews there is no simultaneous speech.
5. In broadcast interviews there are no digressions and asides.
6. The dominating acts in broadcast interviews are informs and replies.

2.5 Discourse and Media Influence

The special properties of media discourse are related to the structure and ideologies of mass communication systems. In recent years, this type of critical analysis has received an impetus from several closely related technical and theoretical developments. This is especially true of the broadcast media, which have long been an object of critical research. The first of the developments is a technical one, namely the relative ease of recording the largely ephemeral verbal and visual output of the electronic media. This is a prerequisite for detailed analytical work. It is less costly and technically more simple than ever before to capture televisual messages and isolate their component elements for analysis. Until the means of cheap and reliable recording became available, analysis of the characteristics of broadcast discourse was cumbersome business and one which was highly dependent on ideas, methods and techniques borrowed from the print media and, to a lesser extent, film. Possibility now exists for an independently derived set of analytical practices which do not impose prejudicial concepts and categories on the subject matter.

The theoretical developments are related to the increasing technical sophistication and cultural pervasiveness of the electronic media. Broadcasting has developed its own pattern and structures of discourse so that it is no longer appropriate to treat broadcasting as an analog of the printed word, 'with pictures'. Therefore, one cannot simply translate categories of content, units of measurement, criteria of relevance, etc. from one medium to another. In broadcasting, the relations of programme production, the media of transmission and the receptivity of audiences have evolved in quite novel ways which create special problems of analysis. Critical research has confronted these problems in part at least.

The significance of media discourse is located in the often implicit explanatory frameworks and ground rules of interpretation which must be 'read out' rather than simply 'read from' the discourse. There are three sets of questions which may be asked in an analysis of both the superficial and deeper aspects of media discourse. They are :

- who is speaking (especially when the 'speaker' is a news reader, official spokesperson, teacher or any one speaking as an agent for an institution)?
- what are they saying (i.e. what does the speech manifestly denote and connote)?
- what do they mean (or what must we assume for their talk to be intelligible in its context)?

These questions will be used to situate the discussion of recent developments in the analysis of broadcast media discourse.