

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

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Abstract:

Media plays a prominent role in society. It duly registers the metamorphosis of socio, political and cultural climate. The paper widely discusses the theories of dialogism and dialectic process adopted in media interviews and debates today. Interviews and debates in media are formulated by the process of communication that includes encoding and decoding of messages. Great thinkers and researchers of humanities show keen interest to explore how the messages are encoded and decoded complementing the socio-cultural-political environment of the contemporary society. The paper refers to the popular authors who penned their views on Encoding and Decoding of messages in media. A theoretical approach to encoding and decoding pertinent to production, dissemination, and interpretation of messages that offered a base paving ways to the new dimension of study pertaining to communication and technology are illumined in the paper. The paper focuses on how the approach of visual media is diverse from print media and its stronger impact on the psyche of the audience.

Keywords: media, encoding, decoding, messages, society.

Encoding and decoding of messages in Media:

The process of communication is firmly embedded in encoding, decoding, and feedback of a message. In this process, verbal and nonverbal communication plays a major role. Print media is built on language excellence and visual media ineluctably combines verbal and non-verbal components. The sender and the receiver are the two major participants in communication. In the visual media like television, the processes of encoding and decoding messages are multi-layered. The debates are necessarily the byproduct of encoding and decoding. Debates connect people from varied backgrounds and tend to establish a communication link. Debates also illumines different perceptions sometimes kindles the intellectual and emotional quotient and avert the public from the parochial approach. But many a time debates become a verbal battle where the speakers fail to have an open-minded approach. Socio-cultural background of the people conditions encoding and decoding of messages. The process of encoding and decoding is not something new as communication is capsulated in the exchange of messages. Hence the components of communication are not autonomous; they are always closely associated with socio cultural-political environment. Visual Media uses different channels to communicate a message say, Interpersonal, group and mass communication.

Conducting Interviews with popular icons is one of the persuasive techniques of visual media to attract the viewers. The main objective of media is to establish a smooth communication link with the public and interview is one of the techniques of interpersonal communication as messages are exchanged between the two individuals. This technique of interpersonal communication is firmly anchored in the philosophical concepts of dialogism and dialectics. According to Kent and Taylor (1998), "dialogue is the product rather than process" (p.323) and observed the symmetrical model as a procedural way to listen and seek feedback. Thus the process of dialogism is the fundamental characteristic of interviews considering the communication link between two individuals exploring and discussing the nuances of a particular topic that may ignite interest among the viewers.

Richard Sennett, one of the distinguished sociologists affirms the significance of dialogism for better communication. In his book *Togetherness*, he suggests that dialogism is essential for a harmonious society. The dialogic process is more applicable than the dialectic process in media interviews as the former process is more conducive considering open-ended dialogue between two individuals would establish a congenial atmosphere for better communication.

The dialectic process presents two conflicting ideologies and tries to arrive at a logical conclusion through discussion, in other words, this method presents the unity of opposites.

This method is more applicable in debates where people argue and illumine conflicting perceptions to convince the other.

Media interviews are dialogic where the interviewer engages in informal conversation with the interviewee to pool out information that appeals to the dominant and hegemonic group. It is always a challenging task for both the interviewer and the interviewee as many a time messages are misinterpreted placing the sender and the receiver in a complex situation. This communication oscillates between the self and other. The dichotomy of self is more pronounced only in relation to the other. Hence, the consciousness of the otherness is dialogism that gives a lead to the interview. Interviewer takes cognizance of the other where messages travel from the center to the peripheral objects to evoke hidden emotions in the subconscious mind of the interviewee.

An interviewer in visual media attempts to elicit an expected response from the interviewee. The binary presentation of self and other is much ubiquitous in such interviews that provide a base for better communication. Apparently, interviews in media are projected as nothing but a formal dialogue between two individuals. But viewers with an analytical mind could easily detect the politics of communication that enshrouds the interview session. With the marvellous growth of science and technology, interviews in television, for instance, have become a ground of power struggles in other words, the viewers watch the program as they watch a tennis match where the messages are thrown at each other with vigor and anxiety striving to elicit sensational information that may attract the viewers. The power of self is much evidence that controls the other. Hence, the conscious of the self may dominate either the interviewer or the interviewee. It depends on the individual traits of the participants of the interview.

There exists a thin veil between self and ego. Inflated self-worth results in ego that make a person intoxicated with the term 'I' but this term is a key to open a conversation or a discourse that shifts to 'You'. Hence, the power politics between 'I' and 'You' can be easily decoded by the viewers.

The aim of the interview is to kindle emotions and interest of the viewers. Here the interviewer becomes the producer of the message projecting collective consciousness to elicit the expected response from the interviewee. An interview session is loaded with an exchange of messages between two personalities oscillating between 'I' and 'You'. The interviewer begins his/her interview with 'I' duly registering the motive of the program. Here, but the message slowly shifts from 'I', to 'You' to establish a comfortable atmosphere to allow the communication to flow smoothly and reach the viewers effectively.

The below-cited points are some of the tactics adopted by the interviewer, Studying the interviewee closely to gauge his/her strength and weakness.

Focusing on three P's that is Planning, Presentation, and Preference for the effective preamble to lead the audience to watch the show.

Surreptitiously registering the motif the program paving to the verbal battle between the self and other to make the program interesting.

Bombarding the interviewee with a series of questions many a time placing the interviewee at disadvantage.

Both the interviewer and interviewee constantly try to protect their self-image. Here only the strong-willed with commendable communication skills could encode the message effectively. When the interviewer asks questions he/she becomes the encoder and when the interviewee answers he/she first decodes the message and then gives proper feedback. While giving feedback the interviewee becomes the encoder of the message.

Verbal and nonverbal communication:

Both verbal and nonverbal communication dictates an interview or debate sessions. Body language gives a key to a personality; hence the viewers could surmise the personality of the interviewer and interviewee through their body language.

Training sessions and programs are conducted to give cues on body language to the aspirant media trainees before facing the camera. An appropriate eye contact, a confident handshake, and posture impress the viewers. Grant Ainsley, who writes a weekly blog on the news media and communication, observes that many a time people do not know what to do with their hands when they speak to media. Especially while answering questions. The media experts educate the trainees on the techniques of controlling body language during interviews and presentations.

Language is one of the most essential tools to be honed by a media aspirant. On many occasion, politics of language is more vibrant to make news sensational. Aamir Khan's interview on Intolerance triggered debates on media registering for and against his views. Mr. Shashi Tharoor's Hindu Pakistan phrase has ignited sensational debates in media. Nirmala Seetharaman's, Defense Minister of India registers her views by coining a term, Muslim-dhari in media to raise an objection to Tharoor's remarks. Media has become a ground for the verbal battle to entice the public. This lucidly reveals the political climate of India today. Language is one of the powerful weapons of Public Persona to capture the attention of the people.

The language used in media complements the situation. For example, the word deluge was widely used during floods in Mumbai in 2005, where even people with minimum language proficiency were able to understand the term. Contextualization of language is one of the

major factors of media. The news published/ telecasted in media captures the zeitgeist of the modern era.

Zeitgeist: The term Zeitgeist ('zartgaist) refers to the spirit and or identity of a particular time period. Zeitgeist is a concept or trend that reflects on the mindset of the people of a particular time. It is a concept from 18th to 19th century German Philosophy that indicates the spirit of the time. This term is derived from the German language, Zeit means time and Geist means spirit or ghost. Media communication grasps the zeitgeist of popular culture to reach the public in other words the media is adept at reading the pulse of the public interest. A thorough perusal of the history of media communication illumines the general set of ideas, beliefs, feelings duly reflecting the cultural environment of a particular period.

The news published after India attained Independence evinces the zeitgeist of the freedom struggle. The headlines in The Hindustan Times weekly, on 17th August 1947 thus read, "Scenes of splendor in the Capital", this vividly portrays the cultural environment of the period. The readers from later ages can easily construe the spirit of the time. Newspaper headlines omit articles like a, an or the but the aforementioned headlines do have an article the that lucidly depict the linguistic behavior of the period in 1947.

Conclusion: Converging public less than one canopy is the main objective of media and the massive growth of science and technology has provided a firm base to create awareness of various issues that affect society. Media communication plays a significant role in registering the major events of the contemporary period. Communication is an ongoing process paving the way for the evolution of language and media communication is a knowledge bank where the aspiring scholars can capture the pulse of the historical past by going through records. Media duly registers the capricious elements of communication process over the period of time. However, the communication link is the pillar of every society and media endeavors to cater to the expectations of the public through feasible dialogue. Media ineluctably engages in dialogue with the other by eliciting the consciousness of the others where a message travels from individual consciousness to collective consciousness.

But when it comes to ethics in media, the viewers are dubious owing to the commercial environment. Modern society is bombarded with the colossal growth of modern technology where the politics of communication is very prevalent. Every event is politicized in media but at the same time, media plays a vital role in sensitizing the public with relevant information.

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