



A2

SEMINAR 4 News & Media

Task 1 – Read the quotes, discuss your views with a partner, and present them to the class.

- 1 "By the end of the millennium, five men controlled the world's media, and the people rejoiced¹, because their TVs told them to." – **Michael Moore** (b.1954), American documentary filmmaker
- 2 "Propaganda is to a democracy what violence is to a dictatorship." – **William Blum** (b.1933), American author of *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*
- 3 "By giving us the opinions of the uneducated, journalism keeps us in touch with the ignorance of the community." – **Oscar Wilde** (1854-1900), Irish writer

Task 2 – Match the words with the definitions.

Print Media*Mass Media***Broadsheet***Tabloid**
Circulation*Readership***Editors***Columnists*** Journalists***Viewers*** Audience Figures*****
Infotainment*Broadcast***Newsreaders***Anchorperson***Peak Time**

1. News programmes that are a mixture of information and entertainment.
2. People writing for newspapers.
3. The total number of people reading newspapers/magazines.
4. Quality press.
5. People watching TV.
6. People in charge of newspaper content.
7. People reading the news in more traditional news programmes.
8. A format of newspapers usually associated with scandalous news and gossip.
9. People writing articles that appear regularly and often with powerfully expressed ideas.
10. The number of newspapers/magazines sold.
11. The size of the audience of TV and radio networks.
12. Programmes and reports that are transmitted.
13. The time of day when most people watch TV.
14. A person hosting news programmes.
15. Newspapers and magazines that come out in the printed form.
16. All different kinds of media that have big readerships or reach large audiences.

Adopted from Key Words in the Media, HarperCollins Publishers, 1998



Task 3 – Discussion Questions

1. What are your preferred sources of information? Do you trust one source over another? Why?
2. How would you compare and rate¹³ different media in this country?
3. How do they compare with foreign media?
4. Do you know who owns or controls the mass media in this country?
5. How serious is the issue of media ownership concentration? What problems could arise?
6. What do you think is the “societal purpose” of the media?

What are the mass media? They're huge corporations, massive corporations, linked up with even bigger corporations. They sell audiences to other businesses, namely advertisers. So when you turn on the television set, CBS doesn't make any money from you; they make money from the advertisers. *You're the product* that they're selling, and the same is true of the daily newspapers. They're huge corporations, selling audiences, potential consumers, to other businesses, all linked up closely to the government, especially the big media. What picture of the world do you expect them to present?

By Noam Chomsky, American writer, linguist, and dissident (1928 -), in *Sparrow Talks with Noam Chomsky*.

From <http://www.newspeakdictionary.com/ot-quotes.html#QMedia>, viewed on April 15, 2003; and <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com>

Reading – TV Ignores the Real World

Britons grow dull on trivia as TV ignores developing world
by John Vidal

The British are becoming increasingly ignorant of how more than 80% of the world lives, thinks and acts because television has abandoned serious examination of developing countries, according to a comprehensive analysis of last year's programming. The research, which covers the year to September 2001, was conducted by the Third World and Environment Broadcasting Trust, 3WE, which is funded by Oxfam and other leading development charities. During that period it found there were only four programmes on the politics of developing countries. The report also found that the international documentary was not virtually dead and that “reality” TV, holiday “challenges” and docusoaps dominated television coverage of poor countries.

“Eighty-five per cent of us get our primary information about the world from television, but the space for programmes covering the lives, cultures and politics of the rest of the world is now almost completely closed,” said Don Redding of Oxfam. More hours, says the report, were devoted to filming British celebrities and games players in exotic locations than to showing the reality of life for the 5 billion people in developing countries. Although factual programming about developing countries rose by 20% in the year, the number of programmes looking at the society, development and environment of developing countries fell dramatically. There were just 10 programmes in the whole year about conflicts and disasters, and programmes on development, human rights and the environment fell to unprecedentedly low levels, representing just 6% of all factual international programmes. Even programmes made in developing countries failed largely to show the world from the point of view of people who lived there. Consumer-oriented travel programmes increased to one-third of all foreign factual programming in 2000-2001, and reality TV programmes such as *Survivor* grew to more than 10% of all factual international coverage on commercial channels.

Following September 11, beyond the period of the research in the report, the authors recorded “many searching examinations” of the state of the world and the division between cultures, but a snapshot survey of February this year found that British TV had reverted to shallow formula entertainment and “brochure” shows. One BBC programme was a desert adventure with the former footballer Ian Wright, challenged to survive in the

2 Tento projekt je spolufinancován Evropským sociálním fondem a státním rozpočtem České republiky.



Kalahari. It made no mention of the K'Wa, or bushmen, being evicted from their ancestral areas in what observers term a human rights disaster. The researchers fall just short of accusing the broadcasters of failing to carry out their responsibilities to cover the wider world, but charge them with being obsessed with trivia, culture and celebrities.

From The Guardian Weekly 18-7-2002, page 27.

Task 4 – Find numbers in the text to match these statements.

1. The percentage of British people who rely on the TV to hear about the world events.
2. The number of programmes about conflicts and disasters.
3. The percentage of people living in the developing world.
4. The number of the people living in the developing world.
5. The percentage of factual programming made up by 'reality' TV programmes.
6. The percentage by which the amount of factual programming about the developing world on British TV went up in 2001.
7. The amount of factual programming filmed abroad which is made up by travel programmes.
8. The number of programmes about Third World politics.

From the culture section in www.onestopenish.com, viewed on 1 May 2002

Task 5 – Look at these different types of programmes. Can you think of an example of each type of programme from TV in your own country? Which ones do you enjoy watching? Why?

- a soap opera
- a docussoap
- a 'reality' TV programme
- a holiday 'challenge' programme
- an investigative documentary
- a travel programme
- a current affairs programme
- a documentary about the developing world

Reading and Completing Gaps – Newspapers

Task 6 – Fill the twelve gaps in the text with the correct words from the list below. There are four words that you will not need to use.

It is probably true to say that the majority of literate people around the world receive (1) _____ from newspapers almost every day of their lives. As well as the hundreds of millions who buy a daily paper, there must be at least as many who get the chance to read a paper (2) _____ by someone else. Of course there are many different (3) _____ of newspaper, from those that only contain 'serious' news to those that fill their pages with scandals and gossip, often involving the personal (4) _____ of celebrities. However, most of them contain some political and economic views, along with a section giving opinions on recent events. Of course, the (5) _____ between fact and opinion is not always clear, as the choice of which stories to include and how to report them often reflects the (6) _____ perspective of the newspaper in question. Most historians agree that the first newspapers that looked similar to today's versions (7) _____ in Europe in the early 17th century. However not many people read them; the majority of the population was (8) _____, and in any case the technology to print a large number of copies per day did not yet exist. One of the first papers to become available to a mass audience by using a printing machine capable of printing more than a thousand sheets of paper per hour, was Britain's *The Times* in 1814.



In many countries there is a lot of (9) _____ between different newspapers, and their editors constantly try to come up with new ideas that will increase their readership. One of the world's biggest selling national newspapers is Yomiuri Shimbun in Japan, with a circulation of well over ten million copies a day. The most (10) _____ daily newspaper in Europe is reported to be Bild in Germany, which sells almost four million copies a day. With competition from the internet as well as from television and radio, some media experts say newspapers face a difficult future. It is certainly true that the circulation of many major national newspapers has been falling, and that there are now some newspapers that only (11) _____ online. There is no sign, however, that newspapers are going to disappear from our lives in the near future, and perhaps they never will. After all, reading a paper is a different physical experience from using a computer. Even if everyone were able to receive news from the internet, it is quite easy to imagine that many people would still prefer to have physical (12) _____ with the printed page rather than look at a screen.

Popular	Illiterate	Circulation	Exist
Line	Information	Appeared	Bought
Paper	Reading	Contact	Buy
Types	Competition	Lives	Political

From www.insideout.net, viewed on December 12, 2007.

Task 7 – Answer and discuss the following questions with your partner.

1. Do you buy or subscribe to a newspaper? If so, which one?
2. What is the best selling paper in your country? Why do you think it sells so well? What is its readership?
3. Do you prefer reading online news to reading a printed paper? If you do, why?
4. What are the advantages to reading a printed paper to reading online news?
5. Do you believe that printed newspapers will disappear in the future?

Task 8 – Television News

*Is there anything that shouldn't be shown on the TV news? What are the limits? Who sets them?
Look at the two opinions on television news. What is your reaction to their ideas?*

1 "The public has a right to know what's happening. I think they should not cut out anything. People are mature³¹ enough to take in the reality of what happens in the world every day."

2 "TV news sometimes seems more like a show. They want a bigger audience so they show shocking or provocative images. TV news should report the news, not try to shock people."

1. Can you think of an example of something sensational appearing on the news? How did you feel?
2. How is this type of censorship harmful³² or beneficial³³?

Task 9 – Discussion questions

1. Is censorship a "necessary evil"³⁴?
2. Are there any forms of censorship that most societies consider to be necessary, and even beneficial?
3. What do you know about censorship in your own country?
4. Is systematic under-reporting³⁵ of news a form of censorship?
5. How and why does this happen? Do you know what "compassion³⁶ fatigue"³⁷ could mean?
6. Why do you think that the following stories are considered under-reported³⁵ by the Nobel Peace Prize-winning international relief agency Doctors Without Borders? What do many of them have in common?



The 10 Most Underreported Humanitarian Crises of 2001

1. Burundi: Devastating Malaria Epidemic
2. Chechnya: Displaced³⁸ Chechens Living in Horrible Conditions in Ingushetia
3. China: North Korean Refugees³⁹ Face Persecution
4. Colombia: Rural Violence and Urban Marginalization
5. Democratic Republic of Congo: Complete Breakdown in Healthcare
6. Neglected Diseases: Death Toll on the Rise
7. Refugees and Displaced: Protection Increasingly Violated
8. Somalia: Enduring Needs in War-Ravaged Country
9. Sri Lanka: Chronic Conflict Impacts Health and Mental Well-Being
10. West Africa: Massive Crisis of Displaced People

Task 10 – Listening – Infotainment – Listen to *Infotainment*, a TV news programme. What are the topics of the four news items? Listen again and decide whether the statements below are true or false according to this programme.

Item 1

1. According to research, children who play a lot of computer and video games often do better in their adult studies and jobs.
2. Playing computer and video games that are aggressive and violent makes the children aggressive and violent as well.

Item 2

3. A pop star has been given a one-year prison sentence for drink-driving.
4. The family of the minicab driver feels that celebrities are not punished fairly.

Item 3

5. Three-quarters of the illegal copying of DVDs and videos takes place in Asia.
6. Illegal copies become available as soon as a major film is released.

Item 4

7. A footballer has been banned for one year for using drugs.
8. It is difficult to tell the difference between illegal drugs and ordinary supplements.

From International Express, Oxford University Press, 2009

Task 11 – Grammar – Correcting Mistakes

There is one mistake in each of the sentences below. Find and correct it.

1. What are the latest news?
2. I hardly ever listen the radio.
3. I watched the programme in TV last night.
4. The documentary is just broadcasting on Channel Four.
5. Do you have the newest information?
6. The figures provided by the reporter were unaccurate.
7. This TV programme is said that it has very good ratings.
8. A good reporter needs to have a lot of work experiences.



Task 12 – Reporting – Read the following news article and report it to the class.

Germany Central Banker Condemned for “Racist” Book

The German government has condemned an official with the country’s central bank on the publication of his book on immigration issues.

Bundesbank member Thilo Sarrazin’s book, *Germany Abolishes Itself*, states that Muslim immigrants refuse to integrate and are a drain on society. In a newspaper interview about the book, he said that “all Jews share a particular gene.” The Bundesbank board was to make a decision on his future later on Monday.

“Completely unacceptable”

“The government views the reputation of the Bundesbank as definitely harmed, domestically and abroad, by Mr Sarrazin’s comments,” said Chancellor Angela Merkel’s spokesman Steffen Seibert. “The Bundesbank must be concerned about this.” On Sunday, Mrs Merkel said that Mr Sarrazin’s remarks were “completely unacceptable” and urged the Bundesbank to act. The Social Democratic Party, of which Mr Sarrazin is a long-standing member, said it was taking action to expel Mr Sarrazin.

Mr Sarrazin has defended his comments and his writing, saying: “I can’t imagine the chancellor has had the time to read my book. It’s very balanced,” he said. In the book he writes: “I don’t want us to end up as strangers in our own land, not even on a regional basis.” He also writes that “most of the cultural and economic problems are concentrated in a group of the five to six million immigrants from Muslim countries.”

Germany has more than four million Muslims, most of them of Turkish origin. Members of Germany’s Jewish and Turkish communities have condemned the book as racist. Based on advanced orders, it has shot the top of Germany’s sales chart.

From <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11131937>

Vocabulary

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. to rejoice | radovat se |
| 2. indication (sign) | znamení, náznak |
| 3. oppressive | potlačující |
| 4. dissent | nesouhlas |
| 5. concern for viability | zájem o schopnost růstu |
| 6. *consumption | spotřeba |
| 7. self-sustaining facility | samostatné, nezávislé, soběstačné zařízení |
| 8. *to target | zaměřit se na |
| 9. lifespan | životnost |
| 10. *command | ovládání |
| 11. *coverage | pokrytí, zpravodajství, reportáže |
| 12. cross-reference | odkaz, opatřit odkazy |
| 13. to rate | zařadit, ohodnotit |
| 14. *consent | souhlas |
| 15. framing of issues | sestavení otázek |
| 16. *unconsciously | nevědomě |
| 17. *to avoid | vyhnout se |
| 18. evasion | vytáčka, výmluva |
| 19. *persuasive | přesvědčivý |
| 20. *to reduce popular control | snížit kontrolu veřejnosti |
| 21. compliance | shoda |
| 22. bias | zaujatost, předsudky |
| 23. to rob of | okrást o |
| 24. *failing to meet the needs of... | nevyjít vstříc potřebám něčeho |
| 25. to induce obedience | přimět k poslušnosti |
| 26. *to deny | zamítnout, odmítnout |
| 27. to compel adherence | přinutit k věrnosti |



28. to face a defamation apparatus	čelit právnímu systému ohledně hanobení a pomluvy
29. to induce conformity	vynutit souhlas
30. *assumption	domněnka, předpoklad
31. *mature	dospělý
32. *harmful	škodlivý
33. *beneficial	prospěšný
34. *evil	zlo
35. to under-report	nedostatečně informovat
36. compassion	soucit
37. fatigue	únava, vyčerpanost
38. displaced people	lidé vyhnání z domova, z vlasti
39. refugee	uprchlík
40. *survey	průzkum
41. an endangered species	ohrožený druh
42. to dispatch	poslat
43. dire circumstances	strašné podmínky
44. *to accomplish	dosáhnout, splnit
45. plight	situace
46. the gravity of these stories	závažnost těchto příběhů
47. to be trapped in a vicious cycle/circle	uvíznout v začarovaném kruhu
48. a wake-up call, warning	výzva, varování
49. troops, soldiers	vojsko
50. military efforts	vojenské úsilí
51. to "grab" people	chytit, přilákat lidi
52. *to tend to look for	mít sklon, tendenci hledat
53. *superficial	povrchní
54. impunity	beztrestnost
55. *to ban	zakázat
56. to launch a programme	zahájit program

Word bank

1. print media / mass media	tištěná média / masmédia
2. electronic media	elektronická média
3. media attention	pozornost médií
4. broadcast on the radio/on TV	vysílat v rádiu/televizi
5. TV channel	televizní stanice
6. radio station	rozhlasová stanice
7. TV programme	televizní pořad
8. distorted news	zkreslené zprávy
9. news bulletin	přehled zpráv
10. the latest news	nejnovější zprávy
11. live broadcast	živé vysílání
12. TV presenter	televizní konferenciér
13. newsreader	televizní hlasatel (ve zprávách)
14. editor-in-chief	šéfredaktor
15. column/ columnist	sloupek/ sloupkař
16. editorial	úvodník
17. tabloid press	bulvární tisk
18. broadsheet/quality paper	seriózní noviny
19. to retouch photographs	retušovat fotografie
20. reliable source of information	spolehlivý zdroj informací
21. TV documentary	dokumentární pořad v televizi
22. ratings figures	sledovanost
23. prime/peak time	hlavní vysílací doba
24. TV viewers	televizní diváci
25. invasion of privacy / breach of privacy	vpád do soukromí / narušení soukromí
26. to sue for libel	žalovat pro urážku na cti
27. freedom of the press	svoboda tisku