

Television and audience ethnography assignment



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Gender identity separates audience choice into specific interest groups.

Stabber (2007) observed gender was central factor not only represented from tealeaves text, but also shaped the cultural capital and other positions used by audience to choose their own interests. He also mentioned norms and attitudes between gender roles were totally different in the community, which may be the reason that male and female interest in different areas of television programs.

Ellen (2002) concluded the arguments from feminist scholars about gender roles usually are produced, played out and challenged in family television. The attitude and behaviors in the way of watching television were closely connected to family hierarchies and gender roles. Morley research (1986) mentioned that women focus on a taste of soaps and movies, men preferred crime show or soaps and sports. The reason was that men believed the true things or real things more than fictional viewing, it was based on their perception through different evaluations of television in social distinctions.

Audience choice of television is effected by cultural proximity. Charlotte and Estimate (2007) observed the influence of cultural proximity base on East Asian TV dramas in Indonesia. They defined cultural proximity as the reason of audience choose similar cultural products from other countries based on shared culture elements with their own culture. The audience choice may influence and relate to their identity, language, value, appearance, religion, lifestyle and ethnicity in global television.

This is the reason why some Australian audience love to watch America TV shows. Culture proximity gives audience a feeling of nature and real as their

own life. Sometime dramas give audiences hope and wish image for their bright future. Culture proximity relates to regional media market as well. Generation asses different interests of television viewing and generation gap cause misunderstanding in family relationship. Ruth et al. (2013) explain the generation Y format and the influence of social media in generation Y.

Generation Y has advantages and disadvantages in cognitive, emotional and social outcomes such as enjoy technology for entertainment, not only represent on the computer game or mobile game, but also represent with friends or communication with others in emotional position. Each generation have their own history events and shares a common perspective. It develops disposition, work values, imitativeness values, attitudes and motivations which different from previous generations such as narcissism, self-centered. Christina and Ephemera (2013) observed all the generation with social media.

The distinction of generation such as social location, actuality and unit. Social location is the life experience during being born and growing up. Actuality is the self- interpretation about people's self-history in the same generation such as history events, fashion, and lifestyle. Units of generation are age groups of separate people into same age and same generation. They have similar situation and response reactions with their opportunities and problems. The research method is very simple. The sample of this study was five adults from family members and friends.

The age of participants was 20 years old, 44 years old, 54 years old, 68 years old and 72 years old. There was only one male and the others was

female. All the participants agreed to do this research, and they just watched television with normally activities as daily life, did the things which they usually did. This research focus on the activities, participant comments, the choices of channels and TV programs and the types of TV programs during the television viewing. The times of research was three and a half hours and twice a week which was totally 21 hours of six days in three weeks.

Following the participants and recorded their activities, conversations, the nature of the contents in TV program, some comments from other person who shared or participated in this events and the timing of viewing. The most special method of this research was the technology part, half of the participants was recorded by computer camera from both sides of China and Australia through internet. This made the researcher real existed with the participants in the same place to take the information and did the research. As the results, there were some main themes found in the research.

The first main theme was gender identity issue from the research. All the female participants chose reality and emotional type of TV programs such as soap of family relationship, the reality TV show of the relationship between father and child and the dating show, except the youngest one. But the male participant chose the TV program more political, historical and less emotional content. The news focusing from the older couple supported this issue as well. Mrs. Human focused on food inspection in a social news, Mr. Human focused on political news of new government policies.

The generation was the second theme. The age groups separated into three groups, one was the oldest group 72 years old and 68 years old, the middle

group 44 years old and 54 years old, and the youngest group was 20 years old. Certainly there were generation gaps existed between these groups. There were three generations silent generation, generation X and generation Y. According to the research, silent generation liked to watch soaps which had deeply thoughts or historical events. Generation X liked to watch reality TV show or film.

Generation Y liked to watch popular star entertainment. The idea of fashion, culture and value were totally changed and different in these three generation. So the generation gap surely can be one of effects on audience choice. The third theme was cultural proximity. From the research, there were two TV program based to other countries, one is a film from Japan and the other is a TV show which copy from Korea. The entertainment show always invite Korea pop stars as well. The culture was similar and usually influent each other between Japan, Korea and China.

The Japanese film got a highly booking rates in China market and Korea stars were super popular in China before, the influence still exist now. Cultural proximity was an important influence elements force on audience choice. Migrant issue and language identity also represented in this research, but not really clearly. Kitty was Australia migrant, but not really misunderstanding or lost the Chinese background. She mixed the culture between China thoughts and Western style thinking, which caused the misunderstanding about the value of Chinese girl in the TV program.

But she couldn't thatch up or update the culture changes, because the information was huge. All the participants chose TV programs base on their

language or watched other language TV program with subtitles. It was the first thing for audience choose their favorites, because they should choose a TV program which they can understand the contents. It could be a factor which cause the cultural proximity. From the results above, it shows cultural identities shape and influence people's television viewing. The research focus on the gender identity, cultural proximity and generation issues.

The arms and attitudes between gender roles change their values, interests and behaviors. The values of male may shaped from their work and education environment which make a framework on their viewing. Female got much free choice on the television viewing and just watch the content they interested. Generally there is an image of male which is rational and responsible, they need to take response and protect the whole family. The position shape their behaviors and attitude as well (Stabber, 2007). For example, the older couple participant, the male was captain of ship and the female was teacher before their retirement.

Male chose to watch political, historical content and female chose to watch educational and emotional content, it is based on their different experience and family positions. When they watch the same television together, gender identity also represent at their activities. Male control the television viewing and make comments about it, his wife just echoed with his opinions. This is an example of family hierarchies and gender roles (Ellen, 2002). Audience usually chose TV programs base on their culture background, whatever it is a local television program or an international show such s language, lifestyle, value, identity and religion.

Children usually look after by their mother, father always focus on their works and lost the chance to communicate with their child or look after them. The purpose of the show is to let children know about their father and understand their father also loves them. The Japanese film share their experience as well. The purpose of the movie is to let audience know the guide dog training process, and share experience with all the audience who had guide dog or person who loved dog effect global influence. The fashion style, lifestyle, ethnicity, value and language of Japan is more close to China ether than western style films.

It is easy to let Chinese people understand and relate to their own culture. Generation is the final issue which influence the audience choices in the research. Each generation have their own cultural experience and common thoughts such as history events. There are three factors explain the difference of generation, social location, actuality and units. Social location is the experience which people must learned through growing up in the same generation. Actuality is self-position and self- interpretation for people in the same generation.