# RADIO DOCUMENTARY

A very prominent feature of radio programs is the production of Radio Documentaries. As radio features may be prepared again and again on a given subjects, the documentaries are generally produced only once. Usually these documentaries consume 10 to 15 minutes; the producers who are generally handling the current affairs program are assigned the task of making radio documentaries. But it is not a hard and fast rule, any producer who shows interest in accomplishing such programs may be asked to do it.

# Types of Documentaries Narrative

Here a talent will describe the subject matter with facts, figures and articulate the narration as to create interest about the topic. If the documentary is about the Texila ruins, it needs so many facts to be told to the listeners to keep their interest intact. Listeners would be keen in listening as when the Texila civilization came into existence, how the people lived there, and what type of artifacts have been recovered from that place. It would be very interesting to find in the documentary what language those people used to speak and if still there is any one in any part of the world who could understand that language.

# Musical

A type of documentaries which explains the topic in a script frequently, punctuated with musical insertions. This is done when a documentary is required on a personality closely linked with music; secondly it is on birds, rivers, nature and tourism. Your voice superimposed on musical notes enhances the value of script and enthralls the listeners better than a dry description for long spells of time.

Documentaries which are made about tourist resorts or fascinating places otherwise are frequently marked with musical notes to highlight the points not through words but by creating an atmosphere which makes the listeners understand about those places in a rather lighter way.

# Dramatized

At times an impression of drama is essential to elaborate the theme of a documentary, though this is done sparingly. Some documentaries on historical wars may carry some impressions in words or sound effects to create a sense of excitement and to make the audience understand the historical facts close as they might have happened. Over doing dramatic effects may remove some of the gloss of a radio documentary.

# Imagination

In documentary production, the producer has to show his/her imagination in giving treatment to the subject matter. It is not as ordinary an approach as writing down a script and reading it to impart information on the subject. But putting in imagination does not mean that a producer takes the documentary to an extent where the elements of objectivity are over shadowed by the subjectivity. In such a case a documentary may not be able to keep its essence as the piece of broadcasting.

# Insertions

A good radio documentary is punctuated with insertions from the relevant material. If there is a mention of some paintings, you may have quotations from the books, or talk to experts who know what it is all about. This trend is getting very popular lately. In fact interviews of a number of people concerning with the subject matter of the documentary are conducted. At first all the irrelevant matter is discarded from the interviews and then the answers are inserted in the documentary in a manner of inter-cutting. This means that instead of taking long talk with a person at one go, only a brief piece of answer from the interview is inserted at an appropriate point in the documentary. Obviously making a documentary in this style requires more application of mind and an elaborate post production. A very dedicated production team is required to complete the task of making a documentary of this type.

# Close to places

Like features, a producer is supposed to be visiting the place to get a real feel of the surroundings to involve the listeners in this type of radio production. It is always different if you are making a documentary on mighty River Chinab by walking along the river and stopping where it is necessary to mention some very particular thing about its surrounding. The producers who believe in sitting in a studio and making the documentary by having certain sound effects can’t reach even a shade of a documentary which is made by actually visiting the river.

Same is true if you are assigned to make a documentary on Minar-e-Pakistan. The feel of the beautiful sight of the Minar in its very picturesque surrounding of Lahore Fort, the Badshahi mosque and the River Ravi on the other side, would be available in the documentary only when one would go to that place. And it will be possible to talk to the people coming from all over the country to visit the Minar-e-Pakistan only when you are there. This is a task not possible to be accomplished by sitting inside a studio of a radio station.

The documentaries are about people, places and events of historic value.

# Post Production

They need more care in post production for they are usually placed in archives and kept there as a future reference as well. When a documentary is made, its various elements are recorded in a very lose form. Some one, while giving impression about a place, might have said things which you do not desire to include in the final cut of the program. Similarly there have been sounds in the background which are not making it possible to listen to the narrator’s voiceover. or some time when you are recording voices of certain elements, the voice level goes extremely down and does not remain worth broadcasting. All these flaws are removed during the process of post-production and it is also possible to include some voices and observations at this stage of production. There is hardly any program which does not go through the stage of post production for it is the last stage where a mistake is corrected, otherwise listeners would correct you, may be, the harder way.