

An Appraisal of the Applicability of Development Journalism in the Context of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB)¹

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1.0 Introduction

The concept of 'development journalism' has, over time, become possessed by demons of all sorts of confusion. If we want to wrest any useful principles from the concept, it is important that we exorcise the demons it has come to be associated with, not least the demon of the postcolonial state's blatant interference in the practice of journalism (Wong 2004). This 'demonisation' of the concept is partly suggested by Shah's observation that 'development journalism', central to many discussions of mass communication and development in the Third World, needs to be reconceptualised because deliberations about its validity and usefulness have been bogged down in arguments structured by Western notions of press freedom. The debate has diverted attention from important questions about how journalism can contribute to participatory democracy, security, peace, and other humanistic values (Shah 1996: 143).

In this paper, therefore, I will, firstly, discuss the conceptual basis of development journalism. I will rely heavily on development communication theorising, which informs most of the discussions about development journalism. I want to demonstrate the historical 'moments' through which the concept has passed and, by so doing, point out the more redeemable features of the concept. Secondly, I will discuss the relevance of the development journalism paradigm to public service broadcasting. In conclusion, I will draw out some principles of development journalism and demonstrate how these can be implemented within the context of public service broadcasting.

2.0 The conceptual basis of development journalism

The concept of development journalism in Africa is caught up in the historical evolution of the theory of development communication. This theory can be postulated in three historical moments, each with its own basic assumptions.

The first such moment was the 'modernisation' paradigm. It dominated the period from about 1945 to 1965. It stressed the transfer of the technology and socio-political culture of modernity from the developed North to the Third World. It found its coherent articulation in Everett M Rogers' 'diffusion of innovations' perspective (in Banda 2003). The 'modernisation' approach to

¹This paper was presented during the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)'s 'News Content Planning' workshop on the 21st of October, 2006, held at the Birchwood Executive Hotel, Boksburg. It was attended by over 80 regional heads of the SABC.

development, described as the 'dominant paradigm' by Rogers (in Shah 1996: 147), is represented by such scholars as Walt W Rostow (1960), Everett M Rogers (1962) and Daniel Lerner (1958), who posit development communication as an engine of change from the 'traditional' to the 'modern' society. According to Fjes (in Melkote 1991:38), "it was generally assumed that a nation became truly modern and developed when it arrived at the point where it closely resembled Western industrial nations in terms of political and economic behaviour and institutional attitudes towards technology and innovation, and social and psychic mobility."

The model is characterised by three mechanisms for 'modernising' the 'traditional society': psycho-sociological, institutional and technological. The 'psycho-sociological' mechanism entails 'empathy', or the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation, which is an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings. According to Lerner (1958), there is a correlation between the expansion of economic activity being equated with 'development' and a set of 'modernising' variables, chief among which are urbanisation, literacy, mass media use, and democratic participation. Recognisable within this view is the belief that the interaction between literacy and mass media can make people in Third World countries break out of the bonds of traditionalism and adopt modernising values and practices (Melkote 1991: 24-29). Thus, the role of the mass media would be to create awareness of, and interest in, the innovations espoused by change agents. It is clear that this mechanism was influenced to a large extent by the two-step flow model of media influence, with the notion of 'opinion leaders' playing a key role in bringing about modernising practices among their fellow citizens.

Secondly, the diffusion approach looks to the mass media as an 'institutional' nexus of modernising practices and institutions in society, functioning as 'watchdogs', 'policymakers' and 'teachers for change and modernisation' (Shramm 1964). This approach further holds that traditional societies would have to go through a five-stage model of transition from a traditional economy to a modern industrial complex: the traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take-off, drive to maturity, and the age of high mass consumption (Rostow 1960).

Thirdly, 'technological' advances would, according to this model, assist the shift towards the modern society. Technology, in and of itself, is thus treated as another driving force for development. Technology was seen as pivotal to the growth of productive agricultural and industrial sectors and therefore the transfer of technical know-how from the developed North was seen as extremely crucial for development in the Third World nations (Melkote 1991: 24-29).

The second historical moment is the dependency-dissociation paradigm. This approach to development communication (and therefore development journalism) is associated with the elevation of the aspirations of the newly independent nations of the Third World for political, economic and cultural self-determination and an ideological distancing from Western forms of modernisation (Servaes 2004: 56; Servaes 1991; Servaes 2002). This

orientation was a reflection of a broader political agenda of 'non-alignment' espoused by the new states in Africa and Asia. These nations shared the idea of independence from the superpowers and formed the Non-Aligned Nations. This movement, whose philosophy was to keep out of the Cold War between the West and the then Soviet Union, played an important role in the debate on a new world information and communication order (NWICO) (Servaes 2004: 56).

The debate about the role of African media systems in the flow of information between and among nations assumed a crescendo in the promulgation of a New Information and Communication Order (NWICO) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Africans had long been dissatisfied with what they saw as a negative image of them projected in the major news agencies of the world. This was behind their cry for a NWICO in the late 1970s. The NWICO was the information counterpart of the arguments put forth by Third World nations in the 1970s for a New World Economic Order (Bourgault 1994: 175).

In the late 1970s, UNESCO took up the debate on behalf of the Third World. Within the heated political context of the time, the Pan-African News Agency (PANA) was created by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)² in 1979. PANA's aims were 'to rectify the distorted image of Africa created by the international news agencies and to let the voice of Africa be heard on the international news scene' (in Bourgault 1994: 175).

In the tradition of dependency-dissociation, Nkrumah of Ghana, Nyerere of Tanzania and Kaunda of Zambia espoused the 'revolutionary theory' of the press, as Ainslie calls it (Ainslie 1966: 19-20; Wilcox 1975: 19-21). Nkrumah articulated this theory in 1963 during the Second Conference of African Journalists. He told them that 'the truly African revolutionary Press' existed in order to 'present and carry forward our revolutionary purpose' and 'establish a progressive political and economic system upon our continent that will free men from want and every form of injustice' (in Ainslie 1966: 19).

This 'theory' entailed greater state control of the media, a departure from the private ownership of media evident in the colonial period. Some nationalist leaders went so far as to articulate 'philosophies' to justify state ownership of media (Wilcox 1975: 21). For example, the then Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda propounded the philosophy of 'humanism' which subjected all major societal institutions, including the media, to the custody of the state (Banda 2003).

Within the context of the 'revolutionary press' ideology, journalists and politicians alike saw the media as forging national and continental unity, encouraging economic development, and serving formal and social education, including adult literacy. Radio and television sets were thus installed in schools and community centres, rather than in private homes (Ainslie 1966:

²The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) had its name changed to the African Union (AU) in July 2002. It consists of 54 independent African states and now has an African Parliament headquartered in South Africa.

18). Wilcox (1975: 24) adds another dimension to the role of the postcolonial media: the need for 'constructive criticism'. The postcolonial state broadcasting systems thus became instruments of this 'revolutionary' ideology. It is largely from this ideology, and its institutional manifestations, that many media freedom activists would like to extricate the modern-day equivalent of state broadcasting.

Viewed in Nkrumah's 'revolutionary' terms, it is easy to see why development journalism has become so 'demonised' over time, attracting the disdain of some Western scholars and human rights activists. Clearly, though, one cannot throw the baby out with the bath water. As Shah (1996: 143) notes, the idea of development journalism was in the early 1960s associated with 'independent journalism that provided constructive criticism of government and its agencies, informed readers how the development process was affecting them, and highlighted local self-help projects.'

The exorcism of the above 'demons' of development communication, although they are by no means utterly banished into the wilderness, is more likely associated with the third historical moment of development communication – one which signals what Shah (1996: 144) describes as 'emancipatory journalism.' This third moment is variously referred to as the 'multiplicity' or 'another development' paradigm. Located within it is the notion of 'participatory communication' or 'another communication' (Servaes 1991: 51; Melkote 1991: 220). This model sets forth the importance of the cultural identity of local communities. It stresses the value of democratisation and participation at all levels. It points to a development strategy which is not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional receivers. Central to this model are the concepts of participation, cultural identity and empowerment as well as the Freirian notions of dialogical communication (Servaes [sa]).

Communication thus becomes more "concerned with process and context, that is on the exchange of 'meanings', and on the importance of this process, namely, the social relational patterns and social institutions that are the result of and are determined by the process" (Servaes [sa]). 'Another communication' thus favours what McQuail has referred to as 'multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, de-institutionalisation, interchange of sender-receiver roles and horizontality of communication links at all levels of society' (McQuail 1987: 97). In a sense, this is a shift from the positivist-instrumentalist approach of the modernisation paradigm to a model that is less quantitative, and more qualitative and normative (Melkote 1991: 234).

Seen as an extension of Paulo Freire's dialogical pedagogy, participatory communication becomes a process of 'conscientisation' in which dialogue is both more receiver-centred and more conscious of social structure. Freire (1996) argues that in the traditional pedagogical systems, the receivers were supposed to be uncritical and passive, ingesting the world view of the elites and then perceiving their problems and needs in terms of the elite-dominated rationality. He called for a new dialogical pedagogy in which the receiver would be liberated from his/her mental inertia, penetrate the ideological mist

imposed by the elites and perceive the realities of his/her existence. It is within the context of this conscientisation that theory can be appropriated as praxis for social and political transformation (Habermas 1974).

Development journalism defined

Following the participatory approach to development communication, Kunczik (in Wimmer & Wolf 2005) represents development journalism as an intellectual enterprise in which the journalist should form a kind of free intelligence and should critically examine the aims of national development and the applicable instruments in a rational discourse and solve them by reasonable criteria free of social constraints. Accordingly, development journalism has the following tasks: (i) to motivate the audience to actively cooperate in development; and (ii) to defend the interests of those concerned. The credibility of journalism is crucial for the success of this project. Journalism thus needs to be decentrally and participatively structured to counteract the metropolis-trend in the various social processes (in Wimmer & Wolf 2005: 2-3).

This view of a journalism that is socially and intellectually engaged is supported by Shah (1996: 146) who represents it as 'emancipatory journalism', which he claims offers a 'more complete and complex' perspective on the relationship between mass media and society in the context of the Third World. It is more complete because it provides a theoretical link between citizen access to mass media and social change and because it articulates a specific mechanism by which journalists can participate in social change. It is more complex because it incorporates principles of diversity and fluidity in the process of building cultural identities and communities and because it challenges journalistic practice by abandoning the idea of objectivity.

The foregoing notion of development journalism actually resonates with other forms of journalism invoked in academic literature. For example, one can readily detect the notion of a subjective journalistic engagement in the emergence of the so-called 'public' or 'civic' journalism movement in the early 1990s. This was in response to the widening gaps between government and citizens, and between news organisations and their audiences. Declines in voter participation in political elections, and in civic participation in local community affairs, were cited as evidence of widespread withdrawal by citizens from democratic processes. Those scholars and journalists who were critical of news organisations' horse-race approach to political campaigns saw this trend as proving widespread public disaffection with mass-mediated political discourse. In response, many news organisations began to experiment with ways to enhance civic commitment and participation in democratic processes and to think of their audiences not as 'consumers' but as 'citizens' (Haas & Steiner 2006: 238-239).

In fact, some scholars are keen to explicate the philosophical similarity between development journalism and public journalism. For example, Gunaratne (1996) argues that there is a conceptual synergy between

development journalism as championed by the International Commission on the Study of Communication Problems (the McBride Commission) and public journalism. He contends that the apparent silence on the connection between the two concepts might be due to the unwillingness by public journalism proponents to revive the debate on the NWICO which so incensed the US and Britain as to make them leave UNESCO. The point to underscore is that there is a clear conceptual harmony between the two approaches.

Development news defined

Shah, following his 'emancipatory journalism' perspective, sees development journalism as consisting in 'news' that:

should examine critically, evaluate and interpret the relevance of development plans, projects, policies, problems, and issues. It should indicate the disparities between plans and actual accomplishments, and include comparisons with how development is progressing in other countries and regions. It also should provide contextual and background information about the development process, discuss the impact of plans, projects, policies, problems, and issues on people, and speculate about the future of development. And development news should refer to the needs of people, which may vary from country to country or from region to region, but generally include primary needs, such as food, housing, employment; secondary needs such as transportation, energy sources and electricity; and tertiary needs such as cultural diversity, recognition and dignity (in Wimmer & Wolf 2005: 3).

This hierarchical conceptualisation of 'development news' by Shah seems to relegate some societal needs to the 'tertiary' level, in contradistinction to what is an increasingly less econometric view of development. For example, Amartya Sen sees the expansion of freedom both as the primary end and primary means of development. He calls for 'social development' - enhanced literacy, accessible and affordable health care, the empowerment of women, and the *free flow of information* (my emphasis) - as necessary precursors of the kind of development most economists are concerned about, namely: increase in gross national product, rise in personal incomes, industrialisation, and technological advance (in Human Rights Watch 2006).

It can be argued, therefore, that development journalism, following Sen's observation, should also focus on the extent to which 'freedom' (of conscience, expression, assembly, media, etc.) is actualised in the lives of citizens. This will clearly be a departure from the kind of development journalism envisaged by postcolonial political elites in the Third World. But it is a fuller expression of development journalism. This holistic approach to development seems consistent with the ten proposals of development journalism posited by Galtung and Vincent (in Gunaratne 1996: 7-8):

- Whenever there is a reference to development, the development journalists should try to make it concrete in terms of human beings.

They should report people as subjects, actors and agents rather than as objects or victims with needs deficit.

- Development journalism should focus on more than economics because all other factors – military power, political power, cultural power, etc. – have to do with development in some way or other.
- Mere economic growth data will never do without accompanying dispersion data. In other words: development journalists must look at the income of the bottom 50 percent or 10 percent, as well as of the top 10 percent or 1 percent.
- Development journalism should focus on both differences and relations within and between countries. For example, journalists should substantiate the relationship between the rich and the poor. How, for example, does a wage freeze affect wage earners in relation to business people?
- Development journalism should focus on the totality of concrete life situations – the rich, the middle class, the working class, the poor, the dirty poor, etc. In other words, human life is rarely captured in black and white; there are always shades of gray.
- Development journalism should dwell on the dimension of democracy. Investigative journalism, for example, can serve as an aspect of the developmental role of the media.
- Development journalism should sometimes engage in ‘constructive’ criticism, highlighting success stories, where necessary.
- Development journalism should allow for people to talk. A useful approach is for journalists to sit down with people from high to low discussing the meaning of development thereby generating an enormous range of visions as well as how-to insights.
- Development journalism should sometimes let the people, more or less, run the media. This means giving people some media control, by, perhaps, enabling them to produce their own programmes. An example of this on the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) Radio I, and to some extent on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)’s Ukhozi FM in Kwazulu Natal, was the radio listening clubs project, which enabled women to record their voices and have them transmitted on public radio.
- Development journalism lets people run more of society, and then reports on what happens. In other words, development journalists should report on people’s movements and organisations, on people’s struggles to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct social meanings for themselves. In a sense, development journalism becomes a recording of human existence, in all its manifestations.

Can we, then, detect elements of public service broadcasting (PSB) in the discourse of development journalism? In attempting to answer this question, let us, firstly, discuss the conceptual basis of PSB. Secondly, let us draw out the philosophical commonalities between the two concepts.

3.0 Public service broadcasting (PSB) in the context of development journalism

Like development journalism, the concept of public service broadcasting (PSB) is caught up in historical baggage. Clearly, both development journalism and PSB are implicated in state-political manoeuvring. Both, however, can be cleansed from this murky situation, especially in countries where there is a clear commitment to democratising civic and political participation.

Conceptualising PSB

Although PSB is inherited from the BBC model, it is increasingly being reinterpreted to accommodate national specificities. In South Africa, it is associated with the task of national unity and reconciliation (cf. Fourie [Sa]). In Malawi, PSB is seen as representing Malawi 'to the World and to observe the principles and norms of a democratic society' (Ministry of Information 1998: 18). In Ghana, it seems to echo the state's concern about 'shaping national identity' (Financing a public good... 2005). PSB is thus shaped by the political circumstances within which it has evolved, mostly finding itself performing the nationalist functions of the transitional postcolonial states.

This 'functionalist' approach has had several consequences for media production on the continent. For one thing, the pre-determined 'functions' seemed to dislocate the media from their social, political and cultural context made up of different interest groups and the potential among these groups for differentiated appropriations of the roles of the media. Indeed, by overemphasising the functionalism of the media, the nationalist leaders have assumed that postcolonial societies would evolve un-problematically in an integrated, harmonious and cohesive manner, disregarding the notion that the media do not necessarily have the same functions for the same group of people or groups in society (in Fourie 2001: 266). This essentialist insistence on 'national building' has worked against, for example, ethnic and racial diversity and difference. This 'dogmatic' approach to a uniformity of media functions has also generally resulted in intolerance on the part of the nationalist leaders. As noted above, it is all too easy to dismiss any genuine criticism of their performance as 'destructive' to the national project of unity and reconstruction (cf. Bourquait 1995: 153-179).

It is interesting to note that this functionalist approach was reminiscent of the original conceptualisation of PSB in the colonisers' own countries. For example, following from the Reithian conception (John Reith was the first Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC]), the functions of PSB have become associated with producing 'quality programming' aimed at:

- providing citizens (as opposed to consumers in the market approach) with information that will allow them to participate fully in their societies;
- fostering their development, curiosity and education;

- tapping the best of a nation's cultural resources in literature, art, drama, science, history, et cetera; and
- expressing national and regional cultural diversity (in Fourie [Sa]).

The above formulation of PSB is, in fact, located in the classic definition of PSB formulated by the now defunct UK Broadcasting Research Unit (BRU). According to the BRU, PSB is broadcasting that specifies the following elements:

- universal accessibility (geographicality);
- universal appeal (general tastes and interests);
- particular attention to minorities;
- contribution to a sense of national identity and community;
- distance from vested interests;
- direct funding and universality of payment;
- competition in good programming rather than for numbers; and
- guidelines that liberate rather than restrict programme makers (in Raboy 1996: 28-29).

Of course, these principles enunciated in the BRU document can be problematised. For instance, what constitutes 'a sense of national identity'? In many states, the question of nationhood itself is not fully resolved. Whose 'vested interests' are we talking about? Public broadcasters may have 'vested interests' of their own. 'Vested interests' may also manifest themselves in the way the executive officers of public broadcasting institutions are appointed. Who determines 'universal appeal'? Whose 'general tastes and interests' are being represented and served? Elitist ones? Populist ones? 'Good programming', according to whom? (Raboy 1996: 29).

Clearly, using these BRU definitional standards, one can criticise the practice of 'PSB' by the postcolonial ruling elites in most of Africa. For example, the functions of the postcolonial media, as seen by the nationalists, did not brook any suggestion of 'expressing national and regional cultural diversity' as this was perceived to be inimical to national integration. For example, Kaunda's slogan of 'One Zambia, One Nation' defined the functionality of Zambia's state broadcasting system as a nation builder.

Needless to say, in an effort to exorcise PSB from its dark past and present of postcolonial state interventionism, there is now an intense debate about how one can characterise or define the broadcasting systems inherited by most nationalist regimes from the colonial period. Article 19 (2006) identifies four types of broadcasting in this regard:

- *state broadcasting* is controlled by the state and represents state interests. It is funded (at least in part) out of public money.
- *Government broadcasting* is controlled by the government of the day and represents the viewpoint of the executive. It too is at least partly funded out of public money.
- *Public broadcasting* is owned by the public and is accountable to it. It is also funded, at least partly, out of public money.

- *Public service broadcasting* has a specific remit to broadcast material in the public interest. A public service broadcaster need not be publicly owned – privately owned broadcasters may have such a role – but a public broadcaster should *always* have a public service remit (Article 19 2006: 37; cf. Rumphorst 2003:1-3).

The last point allows for PSB to be viewed as a *genre* of ‘public interest’ content that any tier of broadcasting can aspire to – this accords with some PSB revisionists who call for the *de-institutionalisation* of PSB (Fourie [Sa]). Most of sub-Saharan Africa answers to *state* or *government* broadcasting. Marc Raboy observes that PSB in Africa is a ‘distant ideal, not a working reality’ (in Heath 2001). While there are efforts towards transforming state/government broadcasting into public/public service broadcasting, the reality is something else. In Zambia, Parliament enacted the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) (Amendment) Act in 2002 to turn the hitherto state broadcaster into a proper PSB operator. That law is being partially fulfilled, as the state has blocked its full implementation through the courts of law. An exception is perhaps the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) which has seen some radical transformation from the apartheid state broadcaster to a public broadcaster.

Development journalism and PSB: towards a philosophical synergy

What common elements, then, can we draw out between development journalism and PSB? The very definition of development journalism, in the tradition of participatory communication, chimes with the philosophical foundations of PSB. To recall: PSB, following the framework developed by the UK defunct Broadcasting Research Unit (BRU), aspires to achieve the following: (i) universal accessibility (geographicality); (ii) universal appeal (general tastes and interests); (iii) particular attention to minorities; (iv) contribution to a sense of national identity and community; (v) distance from vested interests; (vi) direct funding and universality of payment; (vii) competition in good programming rather than for numbers; and (viii) guidelines that liberate rather than restrict programme makers (in Raboy 1996: 28-29).

These principles, problematic though they may be, seem to chime with the basic premises of development journalism, as described above within the context of the participatory communication model of development communication. In fact, one could argue that PSB seems to offer the best possible medium for development journalism. This is particularly so, given the near impossibility for privatised and commercialised media to accommodate these principles in so significant a way as to substantially affect citizens.

From the above analysis, we can isolate some elements to demonstrate the philosophical similarity between development journalism and PSB. Firstly, development journalism lays stress on the ‘free will’ of the journalist. This resonates with the requirement of PSB to be independent from vested interests i.e. political, commercial, etc. by placing faith in the ‘professionalism’ of the journalist to act in the public interest. This is also explicitly supported by

public journalism's view of a socially active journalist, engaged in constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing social reality.

Secondly, PSB's notion of 'universality' is implied in development journalism's concern with providing access to marginalised members of society and enhancing their participation. PSB, like development journalism, values the inclusion of all, including minorities, in having their voices heard on a range of issues.

Thirdly, the very structuring of PSB proper, accountable to a people's representative body, assumes that it is there to service the needs of the population, and not of a particular political elite. Kunczik's notion of development journalism requiring to be 'structured decentrally and participatively' (in Wimmer & Wolf 2005: 3) seems to chime with the PSB structure of regional broadcasting houses. This is certainly true of the SABC and the BBC.

Fourthly, both development journalism and PSB value cultural and community identity in the sense of a counter-hegemonic force against any local or foreign hegemonic cultural encroachment.

Lastly, both concepts seem to be infused with a concern for the development of societies in their entirety (see the definition of 'development news' offered by Shah [1996] above).

An expanded comparison of the two concepts is presented at Table 1 below:

Table 1: Comparing PSB and development journalism

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB)	Development Journalism (DJ)
Universal accessibility	Focus on rural (remotest) areas
Universal appeal	Views 'development' holistically, as 'appealing' to all
Attention to minorities	Inclusive of hitherto unheard voices
National identity & community	Cultural identity and community
Distance from vested interests	Journalistic 'agency' or 'free will'
Direct funding & universality of payment	Distant from the influence of the market and of the state
Good programming	Values 'quality' content, by infusing grassroots voices as well
Independent programme-making	Values independent & democratic participation

4.0 Implementing development journalism in the context of PSB

In view of the analysis I have undertaken, it seems reasonable to suggest some practical lines of action for implementing a 'development journalism' strategy within the context of PSB.³ Austin (2002) suggests five strategies for implementing public journalism. I appropriate these for the purpose of practising development journalism.

The ethnography of journalism: framing audiences as citizens

A significant part of implementing development journalism is recognising that people are not consumers of media products. They are, first and foremost, citizens, whose voices must be heard. They are the subject of development, hence Amartya Sen's emphasis on 'social development' rather than just econometrics or measures of economic growth (national income, gross domestic product, gross national product, etc.).

Framing audiences as 'citizens' places a responsibility on the PSB operator to see people as actively involved in their destinies – politics, economics, education, health, culture, etc. They cease to be merely the objects of mediation; they become the subjects of mediation and are active in constructing their social worlds and finding solutions to problems within those worlds.

The technological apparatus of the PSB operator is reconfigured to invite more participation from the people. That might mean more telephone lines opened up for citizen participation; more cameras made available for outside broadcasting; more reporters assigned to attend to people's issues and problems; greater use of *vox populi* (voice of the people) in news stories; and less use of 'expert' sources of information.

The art of public listening

Learning to listen to citizens in new ways is the most transformative step in the practice of (development) journalism, because it is ultimately humbling. The journalist who drops all preconceived notions of news and instead listens for how citizens see things learns something new. Such a process of listening will almost invariably result in a deeper connection with the people and compel the journalist to initial changes in reporting techniques. Alternative coverage is likely to emerge, encompassing news sources, group interviews or broad source base such as an interview pool of poll respondents. Out of listening, the journalist might step out of the world of official/governmental communications, and enter into organic relationships with real people, whose language is more often different from that of the official/governmental sources

³I will rely on the techniques suggested for implementing public journalism in the newsroom (Austin 2002). I have already demonstrated the conceptual similarities that exist among 'development journalism', 'public service broadcasting' and 'public journalism'. I believe that such techniques are not necessarily mutually exclusive. So, although Austin (2002) presents these techniques within the context of public journalism, I freely appropriate them for development journalism.

of information. Their language tends to be 'sanitised', less reflective of the complexities of human development. Official language sometimes tends to be lost in the jargon of public administration, disconnected from the real problems, needs and aspirations of the people.

Learning to listen helps the development journalist to make the important connections between the complexity of 'macroeconomics' and the simplicity of 'microeconomics'. People are interested in, for example, how the technical language of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) will translate into genuine 'shared' economic growth. How, anyway, will AsgiSA undo a decade of the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme? As noted by Shah (1996), development news would thus focus on how AsgiSA would meet the primary, secondary and tertiary needs of the people.

Promoting a deliberative citizenry

A third important aspect of implementing development journalism is to promote deliberation – serious dialogue – among the people, and between the people and their governors at different levels. Dialogue emerges as the journalist facilitates conversation among communities of people. In so doing, the reporter discovers that people have a good understanding of issues that directly affect them. Their understandings and perspectives are an outcome of personal experience and emotion.

The process of deliberation involves sustained coverage of the people, documenting how they are wrestling with their problems, and how solutions are emerging out of the people's conversations. This kind of coverage would go beyond 'development' events, such as the construction of low-cost housing, and look at the 'ethnographic' aspects of those events, such as people's views on such low-cost housing. In other words: where are the people in events? What is their view-point? What would be their solution?

Citizen-based framing of development

Journalists who have engaged in deliberative conversations come slowly to recognise that the basic cut or 'frame' citizens put around issues is a different way of looking at a problem than the lens through which journalists or policy makers see things. Consequently, they often drop the claim that their everyday choices about coverage are neutral. They recognise that issue-framing itself is an act charged with consequences for public life. Fairness and even-handed treatment remain as essentials in reporting and editing, but the work is done with an awareness of journalist's power, informed by the conscious understanding that only citizens can name and frame their problems effectively. This resonates with Freire's notion of participatory communication as a form of dialogical pedagogy in which the receiver would be liberated from his/her mental inertia, penetrate the ideological mist imposed by the elites, and perceive the realities of his/her existence (Freire 1996).

In trying to enable citizens to 'frame' the issues, the development journalist admits that he/she is part of the political power structure and must thus take a stand on behalf of the people. This amounts to declaring professional solidarity with the citizens, because the journalist is, first and foremost, a citizen. This should be a humbling experience, because the very definition of 'development' begins to be 'framed' by ordinary people. This does not mean that the 'experts' do not matter. On the contrary, as Haas and Steiner caution, journalists should engage citizens and experts in genuine dialogue. One mechanism for enhancing citizen-expert interaction are so-called 'consensus conferences', whereby a sample of citizens charged with examining a contentious problem receives background information about the problem, spends time deliberating, poses questions to experts, assesses the experts' responses, and then generates the recommendations (Haas & Steiner 2006: 249).

Towards an engaged and engaging journalism

Finally, development journalism must embolden its practitioners to actively seek the engagement of citizens in the process of developmental problem-solving. Austin (2002: 4) put it aptly: 'When public journalism is effective, it leaves something behind – a conversational effect, at the least, and, at best, an ongoing structure for citizen engagement.' Likewise, when development journalism is effective, it should leave something behind.

Alan Chalkley, the man who coined the term 'development journalist', argues that the development journalist has the task of not only giving the facts of economic life and to interpret those facts, but also to promote them and bring them home to the readers. The development journalist must get the readers to realise how serious the development problem is, to think about the problem, to open their eyes to the possible solutions (in Gunaratne 1996: 6).

Engaging citizens in this way reinvigorates Shah's idea of emancipatory journalism which recognises a role for journalists as participants in a process of social change. Emancipatory journalism requires not only provision of socially relevant information but also journalistic activism in challenging and changing oppressive structures. It gives individuals in communities marginalised by modernisation a means of voicing critique and articulating alternative visions of society (Gunaratne 1996: 6; Shah 1996: 150-160).

5.0 Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed the conceptual basis of development journalism, and attempted to cleanse it from its 'demonised' past by highlighting the fact that development journalism goes beyond 'modernisation' and 'dependency-dissociation' paradigms of development communication and embraces elements of participatory communication.

I have also discussed the concept of public service broadcasting (PSB) and demonstrated its philosophical synergy with development journalism,

concluding, in the process, that the former can serve as a vehicle for the latter.

I have, following the public journalism model, focused on five practical suggestions for implementing a development journalism agenda within the context of PSB. These steps include: treating audiences as citizens; cultivating the art of public listening; promoting a deliberative/dialogical culture among citizens; supporting citizens' framing of the development agenda; and cultivating an engaged and engaging development journalism.

An important point to highlight is that while the concepts of 'development journalism', 'public journalism' and 'public service broadcasting' can be analysed individually, my paper has shown that there is an underlying, and even historical harmony, among them. This harmony must be acknowledged, as Gunaratne (1996) suggests. To acknowledge this point is to admit that the core principles underlying these approaches to mass communication and development have essentially remained the same – from the immediate post-independent period, through the debates about NWICO, to today. The variations in the practice of these approaches are more to do with cultural exigencies than anything else (Gunaratne 1996: 3).

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