

China's international television broadcasting and the Spanish speaking world

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- *‘Success depends not only on whose army wins, but also on whose story wins.’*

Joseph S. Nye

- *‘The soft and gentle overcome the hard and strong.’*

Laozi

Why?

- China's 'go out' policy for the media has been widely discussed
 - But mostly focused on projects in English and Chinese, not in other languages
- The realisation of a growing trend toward *television diplomacy* or state-sponsored television international broadcasting

What?

- The concept of public diplomacy and its multiple dimensions, including international broadcasting
- Overview of China's international broadcasting efforts
- Reaching Spanish speaking audiences: a case study of CCTV-E

How?

- In-depth interviews with CCTV-E current and former staff
- Quantitative research of CCTV's international programming
- Content analysis of CCTV-E main news bulletin

Public diplomacy

“a government’s process of communication with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies”

(Tuch 1990: 3)

Listening

Advocacy

Cultural Diplomacy

Exchange Diplomacy

International Broadcasting

International broadcasting (IBC)

- A tool for self-representation: nation branding
- A key instrument in framing events and issues on the global news and information stage

IBC= resources + credibility + audiences

IBC | Evolution

1930s | States start to operate international radio services

2006 | Al-Jazeera English is launched

1984 – CNNi launched

1980s – 1990s | First state-owned international TV broadcasting channels

2000s | It gets crowded: more states join in

IBC = resources + credibility + audiences

1920

(...)

1980

2011

Representing China

- Chinese leaders have repeatedly voiced their concern on what they perceive as a negatively biased media narrative on its development
- The highest point of 'hostility' occurs during the months leading to the Beijing Summer Olympic Games in 2008

Overcoming negativity

- Japan faced in the 1970s and 1980s a similarly negative situation to China when the discourse on 'Japan's threat' was strongest
- A carefully crafted public diplomacy strategy focused on cultural diplomacy, academic exchanges and advocacy was extremely successful

China 'goes out'

- Li Changchun's 2008 triple diagnostic:
 1. Efforts are needed to overcome China's lack of influence in international media;
 2. A 'go out' strategy, including television, radio, press and internet is needed;
 3. Professionalisation of the information and communication sectors is an urgent requirement

'CCTV News, Your Link To Asia'



2000



2004

2010



2004

2010



CCTV-E | Mission

“promoting the excellence of Chinese culture, communicating the achievements of China’s socialist construction, presenting China’s principles and positions, and establishing a good image of socialist China”

(Zhao & Zhu 2008: 61)

CCTV-E | Evolution

- Jan-2004 | 'Testing Lab' with CCTV-9
- Oct-2004 | CCTV-E&F
- Oct-2007 | CCTV-E
- Dec-2010 | Broadcasting center Brazil

CCTV-E | Staff

- It started with 48 employees, 20 of which were 'foreign experts'
- It currently has about 125 workers in the newsroom, with a ratio of approximately 4:1
- Clear 'division of labor' between Chinese and non-Chinese staff

CCTV-E | Production

- The newsroom of CCTV-E is not expected to produce its own content, but to reuse that of CCTV-News

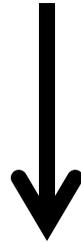


CCTV-E | Staff Background

- Academic background in Communication Studies or Journalism is not required for either 'foreign experts' or Chinese nationals
- Editors and content supervisors have experience in Latin American countries

CCTV-E | Audience

- 2008 | 2.2 milion (known) potential viewers
- 2010 | 15.5 milion (known) potential viewers



14 milion potential viewers are in the US

CCTV-E | Audiences

- ‘Global elites’ or opinion leaders are just one part of the target audience of China’s international broadcasting
- ‘General public’ needs to also be considered as a potential (and more realistic) audience given channel contents

CCTV-E | Content

CCTV-E

Documentaries
(39%)

Drama
(28%)

Arts
(11%)

News
(22%)

CCTV-Русский

CCTV-F

CCTV-العربية

Noticiero | Area representation



Final ideas

- China's IBC development is linked to three words:

Quantity Diversity 'Quality

Final ideas

- There is resource potential for China's international broadcasting efforts, not so much addressing 'global elites' but general public through 'cultural products'
- Lack of 'professionalism' and political constraints hamper any efforts to compete globally

Final ideas

- Time is needed for the full development and impact of China's IBC, but the high costs might cut short some of the projects
- China's perceived decreasing interest in Spanish speaking Latin America, in favour of Portuguese speaking (Brazil)