

# Future Trends in Multi-Voice Films for International Television

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The world availability of magnetic sound equipped projectors in TV stations opens up new markets for internationally minded producers. The tools are presently available for producing bilingual films for this market. These tools and the pre-planning necessary to make such films most effective are here presented.

THE purpose of this paper is to look at the international television field through the eyes of a commercial film producer.

It seems crystal clear from the preceding papers that international television has created a market for multi-voice films throughout the world and that the tools and techniques are now available to the commercial producer to meet the demands of this market.

In looking at this new field, there are two basic questions which a commercial film producer will ask: (a) what tools and techniques will be available to him, and (b) what new problems must he consider in entering this field.

The tools required for multi-voice films are based on recent developments in the magnetic field presented to Conventions of the Society and published in the *Journal*. Briefly, they can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Single-system magnetic camera, such as the Auricon.
- (2) Sync Shifter by Ellis W. D'Arcy, to move the single-system magnetic track to editorial position and then back to normal position after cutting the negative.
- (3) Magnetic striping of all types of 16mm film either before or after developing.
- (4) Magnetic printing.
- (5) Projection equipment in television stations which will reproduce magnetic track on 16mm films.
- (6) Postsynchronization service by studios.

The paper by Kosarin, earlier in this issue of the *Journal*, ably outlines the techniques involved in producing multi-voice films from a standpoint of translation and postsynchronizing. The film presented by Kosarin with the cooperation of George Lewin proves the practicability of postsynchronizing a second language of lip-sync scenes and projecting the two languages simultaneously, in synchronism from one 16mm

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print. In this connection, it should be mentioned that Lewin's development of infrared transparency of magnetic tracks opens up interesting new horizons for commercial producers. For example: this development coupled with Halstead's Multiplex System will make it possible to telecast two languages simultaneously from 16mm film in bilingual countries such as Canada. There are members of our Society who believe that Lewin's development will make it possible to place four tracks with four language versions on one 16mm print.

## Basic Problems

In looking at the new problems facing a film producer entering this field we must place at the top of the list the fact that he must condition all his thinking to the international scene. In other words, in addition to being a film producer, he must now learn to be an international diplomat. He must realize that he is entering a large area of compromise and, as in the field of diplomacy, he must learn to compromise while there is still time to do so.

Since one of the major objectives of a good commercial producer is to obtain a high degree of acceptance of his film in the markets in which it will be shown, it would seem advisable for the producer to send the original story to the foreign countries involved for checking before writing the scenario. A story which is acceptable in the United States or Canada might even be offensive in another country.

By the same token, the scenario should also be checked in the foreign countries involved before shooting the original version. For example, idioms and colloquialisms should be used in the original scenario only if they mean the same thing in the subsequent foreign versions. A symbol in one country might mean an entirely different thing in another country. The dove is a symbol of peace to us, whereas in China it is a symbol of death.

All scenarios should be checked against the laws of the countries involved. Some countries even have laws protecting the

purity of their language, and scenarios must be considered in the light of these laws.

## Special Procedures

If narration is to be used in the film, adequate footage should be allowed in each sequence so that the translators and narrators of the foreign versions can complete their work within the footage limits of each sequence.

In sequences involving lip-sync, the translators of the foreign versions should be given an opportunity to make suggestions for dialogue of the original version before shooting.

At the time of shooting the original scenario, the Director should be conscious of the problems involved in producing subsequent foreign versions of the film. If it is possible to have the Director for the post-synchronizing on the set with the Director of the original version, it will insure optimum results in subsequent foreign versions. For example, close-ups of dialogue should only be shot on scenes where it will be relatively easy to do post-syncing of the foreign versions.

In sequences where it will be difficult to do the post-syncing of foreign versions, the sequences in the original version should be filmed as long shots or with the faces at an angle to the camera which will make it difficult for the audience to follow the movement of the lips.

Actions of the cast must be carefully supervised by the Director, because a certain action which might be funny on this continent, could be offensive in another country.

Inserts required for the foreign versions should be shot at the time of shooting the original version and the negative of these inserts put in the vault until the foreign versions are made.

The above are examples of the continual battle of compromise facing the film producer if he is to achieve his objective of a high degree of acceptance of the film in the various foreign countries. While this undoubtedly presents the film producer with a new set of problems in addition to the problems he is already familiar with, multi-voice films in international television open up a new exciting field with an unlimited horizon. The feeling of accomplishment in playing a part in better world understanding and world peace will more than offset the additional problems involved.