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DYNAMICS OF A PERIPHERY TV INDUSTRY:

BIRTH AND EVOLUTION OF KOREAN REALITY SHOW FORMATS

by

SOOKEUNG JUNG

Under the Direction of Ethan Tussey and Sharon Shahaf, PhD

ABSTRACT

Television format, a tradable program package, has allowed Korean television the new opportunity to be recognized globally. The booming transnational production of Korean reality formats have transformed the production culture, aesthetics and structure of the local television. This study, using a historical and practical approach to the evolution of the Korean reality formats, examines the dynamic relations between producer, industry and text in the context of cultural globalization and suggests a new perspective of television studies challenging the center-periphery model.

INDEX WORDS: TV format, Korean reality show, Genealogy, Cultural globalization, Global television flow, Television production

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SOOKEUNG JUNG

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College of the Arts

Georgia State University

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to

my mother in heaven

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 How Reality Formats Have Changed Korean Television?

The day after the first episode of *The Masked Singer* was broadcast, American entertainment news predicted the success of the program by announcing that it scored the highest viewership ratings of any unscripted debut on any network in the past seven years after *The X factor* in 2011, excluding post-NFL premieres (Mitovich, 2019; Porter, 2019; Rosa, 2019). *The Masked Singer* is a remake of a Korean musical game show format that has already become a great hit in other Asian countries, such as China, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The show format has been sold to more than 20 countries including the UK and France. It has a unique premise and format: there is a celebrity singing behind a mask and costume and the host, panelists, audiences and other contestants have to guess are who it may be. The originality of the show highlights the celebrities' voice and talent rather than their appearance. Producers and participants had high expectations that this innovative format would be successful in the television field (Birnbaum, 2018; Piester, 2018). The enthusiastic responses of American audiences led Fox to order a second season of the hit series (Otterson, 2019).

This is not the only case in which a Korean reality show format was exported to the US market. *Better Late Than Never*, the NBC's adaptation of *Grandpas Over Flowers*, marked the first Korean reality show format exported into the US market in 2016. The reality-travel show in which four aging male celebrities take backpacking trips to different parts of the world became so popular among the American audiences that season 2 was also produced in 2018. *Project Dad*, a remake of the Korean reality-parenting show *Return of Superman,* premiered on Discovery Life in November 2016. The executive producer of *The Masked Singer* Graig Plestis says that the key to the success of the Korean reality shows is family-friendly elements which

everyone can enjoy (Kim Y. J., 2018; Starr, 2019). He points out that most of today's reality television shows are targeted at a specific audience group which limits the scope of success, whereas Korean reality shows like *The Masked Singer* is family-friendly and has a wide variety of audiences which bodes well for future success.

The booming outcomes of the Korean reality formats have drawn the Hollywood executives and producers' attention to other foreign markets to find next big hit. Network executives expect that the "fresh and different" foreign formats can bring a renaissance of reality shows again to the US television market. ITV Studios America CEO David George says that "when something like 'The Masked Singer' comes along, it should signal to the marketplace that outside of the box is something good. We're hopeful the pendulum is swinging back toward unscripted a little bit" (Schneider, 2019).

Although Korean television content has received a great welcome from many Asian countries, such as China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippine, Turkey, etc., the US market has remained one of the most unapproachable television markets for Korean content until recently. The successful entry of Korean television shows into the US market in recent years is largely due to format trading. As Albert Moran defines, a television format is "a set of experiences and skills that make it easier to copy and remake a television program from one time to another and from one place to another" (2014, p. 75). The flexibility and adaptability of television formats has opened new opportunities not only for the global to form worldwide franchising but also for the local to go global. South Korea, a periphery country with a small locally focused television industry, has emerged as one of the biggest beneficiaries of the worldwide format craze.

1.1.1   Why television format? Why reality format in particular?

The sudden and explosive trade of television formats from the 1990s has become a notable topic in discussing contemporary television culture because the cultural commodity functions as "an interconnected parcel of particular knowledges that are activated in the production, financing, marketing, broadcasting, circulation and consumption of a TV programme" (Aveyard, Moran, & Jensen, 2016, p. 3). The growing exchange of television formats is strongly associated with several megatrends in the field of television – globalization, digitalization, and commercialization. From the turn of the 21st century, television has experienced a media revolution: the decline of the network system, the advent of cable and satellite transmission, deregulation of ownership, commercialization and privatization of public television system, and the innovation of digital television technology. The rise of multichannel and multiplatform television system has led to the rapid fragmentation of audiences which has inevitably caused the industrial demands for a low-cost and high-efficiency model in developing television content. Responding the new industrial demands over the world, the television industry extended discussions around television formats into a global one to bring in fresh ideas.

Television scholars have paid attention to the potential of television formats to undermine the existing order and dominance of global cultural flow. Initially, the flow of television content was described as unilateral, moving from the US and UK to the Global South. Global forces of the super production groups merged with Hollywood are transforming the format business into a trading system as "a singular transnational space structured by networks of interdependent economic agents, firms, institutions, and places" (Chalaby, 2015, p. 460). However, the binary concept of "center-periphery" or "dominance-subordination" has been intensively challenged through the language-free trades of local television formats created by previously marginalized

or isolated industries that are emerging as new players in the transnational television format trading system (Shahaf, 2016). Moreover, the cross-border adaptation of television format creates questions about the essential feature of television as being rooted in the national system, as a primary medium that addresses citizenship and national identity, offering common experiences with familiar broadcast schedules (Edensor, 2002; Schlesinger,1991; Silverstone, 1994). As a tradable program package which is globally distributed and locally translated, the licensing and adaptation of television formats provides a focal point for investigating the contradictory dynamics between the logic of television and the duality of glocalization.

While television format is an invention suitable for the globalized television industry, it is also rapidly adapting and evolving into an ever-changing media technology and market. With media convergence and new marketing strategies, the television format industries are constantly interacting with audiences and generating fresh content from the interactions. Reality television has emerged as a notable genre due to the flexibility, hybridity and salability of the format. As Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette define, reality television is "an unabashedly commercial" form intermingling the traditions of factual-based genres and more populist and entertaining formats (2004, p. 3). The hyper-commercial and crossover mode of reality television represents the prominent trends of recent television industry. According to Ted Magder (2009), the explosive growth of reality television has been accompanied by several changes in television production: the growing trade of a format package; the expansion of product placement or brand integration; the development of a more lucrative subscription model across multiple platforms; and the increasing power of European program franchising. These tendencies indicate that no matter how reality television is attractive to audiences, it is an ultimately effective business model to maximize audiences and profits.

Therefore, reality television format is regarded as a bellwether for the central shifts in television industry. Not only does reality television lie at the center of transnational media flows, it also demonstrates the social, cultural, political, and economic logic of television programming. Delving into the reality television formats developed by a marginalized industry can be an intensive study that reveals the practices and strategies of all players across multiple channels and platforms as well as a comprehensive study that covers the dynamics of the television industry on a global as well as local scale. As a set of discursive negotiations among television institutions, producers, texts, technologies and audiences, tracing the development of reality formats in a periphery industry can help navigate a "new path through a very different historically structured culture of national and regional broadcast" (Shahaf, 2016, p. 253) and illuminates key intricates of format creation, circulation and adaptation in a wider context of globalization, digitalization and commercialization.

1.1.2 Characteristics and strategies of Korean reality formats

As the newest trend in the global television industry, reality television formats have drawn the most viewers and the highest unit costs of advertisement in the domestic market of South Korea and gained international attentions beyond East Asian markets. Although Korean reality television formats were initially developed as a local version of global formats by cable networks, major terrestrial national networks entered the race for competitive advantage in producing the new type of television content from the mid of 2000s. The neoliberal reform of the local media industry and the long-running stagnation of the domestic advertising market since Asian financial crisis in 1997 led the Korean producers and broadcasters to develop reality formats as a new business model to diversify and enlarge their source of revenue.

Compared to global reality formats, the Korean reality shows produced by the national terrestrial networks have several distinctions: a hybrid format that mixes a variety show formula with several genres such as game show, talk show, documentary, etc.; celebrity-centered casting that focuses on entertainment in reality; unscripted and unfixed formulae; spectacular images that often use national and worldwide events; and narratives that promote public interest and national awareness (Cha C. & Park J., 2012; Kim J. S. & Park J., 2012; Park J. & Bae J.., 2010). These characteristics resulted from diverse conditions for production of the Korean national television networks: media regulations, local audiences' expectations, financial restrictions and production culture.

Ironically, the conventions of Korean reality television formats that combine amusing elements aimed at commercial success and public agenda promoting communal and benevolent spirits have been welcomed in many foreign countries. The image and narrative strategies emphasizing spectacular scenery and emotional drama for public campaigns has drawn enthusiastic responses and support from Chinese broadcasters and press. Under the banner of "a public interest entertainment show for the Chinese modern society," some Korean shows have been a great hit and profitable in China. Through 2014, three Korean shows were ranked among the top five highest watched entertainment television shows in China (KOCCA, 2015a). The rapid expansion and success of the Korean formats in Chinese market have been attributed to the efforts of Korean producers. Many Korean format packages were sold together with a field trip study or extended lessons for production skills to China. By actively engaging in producing Chinese versions rather than merely offering the format bibles and flying producers to the importers, Korean producers presented a new model of television format trades in person and helped to cultivate the roots of the formats in China.

The success in China with the world's largest consumer market changed the content and formula of Korean reality shows and the production culture and structure of the local television industry. The booming demands of China for adaptation and co-production of the Korean television formats attracted many Korean producers, entertainers, and engineers to China. Korea's major television stations and independent production firms and entertainment management agencies have actively joined in Chinese television production. The perpetual interactions resulted in the creation of custom-made formats to the Chinese audiences' tastes. The broad range of adaptation and co-production practices trained Korean producers to learn and experience transnational storytelling and marketing strategies.

In terms of format exportation, the Korean television industry has several advantages. First, Korean television content penetrates deep into East Asian audiences because it contains common themes of intimacy, reality, morality and common memories and spirits, based on cultural proximity and shared historical experiences (Straubhaar, 1991; Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008). Talented and well-trained idol stars and entertainers introduced through *Korean Wave* (or Hallyu), are also a key factor in appealing to East Asian audiences. Along with transnational and cross-cultural reception of Korean television culture, digitalization of broadcasting technology has helped the local television format go global. The rapid growth of online video streaming sites, such as DramaFever, Viki, Hulu, Netflix, iQiYi, etc. has been essential in distributing Korean television content beyond audiences in East Asia to Asian immigrants over the world. The online streaming sites enable global viewers to easily access Korean television shows in almost real time and local television broadcasters have increased purchasing more copyrights of original programs.

However, the atmosphere over the format trade in the region has not been always favorable for the Korean television industry. Since television is based on a national system and domestic audience and plays a pivotal role in forming national identity, producers and policy makers have tended to consider that the local or national television industries should be protected from other foreign industries (Straubhaar, 2001; Schlesinger, 1997). Specifically, the Chinese government has continuously enhanced regulations on the import of foreign television with an annual quota and censorship. Since 2014, Chinese satellite TV channels have been limited to purchase only one foreign format per year and the imported format has not been able to air during primetime. China has also often used diplomatic issues as a deterrent to the import of Korean formats. After South Korea agreed to host the US's Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system against potential threats from North Korea in 2016, the Chinese government banned performances of Korean popular artists and trades of Korean television formats and cultural commodities.

To escape the high dependence on East Asian and Chinese market, Korean broadcasters are now trying to enter into the North and South America and European markets. It is remarkable that CJ E&M, a media conglomerate engaging in all aspects of cable TV, film, animation, performing arts, and music business, is leading the initiative to diversify export markets. CJ E&M is targeting major television markets in other countries, using their foreign influence to import global television formats and distribute its movies abroad (KOCCA, 2016b). The rapidly growing power of the private cable networks in format business reflects the changing hegemony in the Korean television industry away from the major national terrestrial networks that had previously dominated the industry.

Meanwhile, the rise of digital technology and fragmenting audiences compelled Korean producers to seek for a new format for niche markets and adjusting production strategies and practices to fit new media platforms. Diverse reality formats have applied interactive information technology and multi-channel and multi-use strategies to production. For example, most Korean audition shows have recruited international applicants through preliminary examination using web videos. Original and traditional television programs now add diverse online paratexts, such as non-aired scenes, highlight video and special edition with supplementary storylines, to increase audiences' participation in disseminating the shows. In order to offset the diminishing ratings and profits from traditional television programs, Korean broadcasters also have paid attention to new forms of television content such as web TV and audience-generated content. Running their own multi-channel networks (MCN), major television networks have tried to develop a new format and genre that reflects the non-traditional styles of the content. These changes show that the emergence of new media and networked audiences have forced the local producers to adapt, negotiate, and modify their activities. In accordance with media convergence, the Korean television industry has enhanced interactivity, reality formatting, and multi-windowing of their programs (Jung S. K., 2017).

The Korean television format industry is one of the battlefields of political, economic, cultural, and technological hegemony among the local, regional, and global agencies. Production practices and strategies of Korean reality formats are essential areas to demonstrate the contradictory and intertwined relations of cultural globalization and the dynamics of power relations in and around the local industry. With industrial reform, technological innovation, and cultural needs for new entertainment programs, Korean reality formats have evolved as a fascinating commodity in the regional and global television market. Now, Korean reality formats

have played a leading role as an area for new development of the local and regional industry,

thus challenging the traditional patterns in global television production and circulation.

Therefore, the Korean reality format business suggests that traditional conceptualization of

globalization through the unilateral center-periphery model no longer works. Rather, it

symbolizes the growing disjuncture and interruptions between capital, humanity, media,

technology, and ideology (Appadurai, 1990) in the increasingly complex connectivity and

networks of interconnections on the local, regional and global scale (Tomlinson, 1991). The

rapid transnationalization of the Korean reality format production gives us a few pointers on how

format trades reorganize and transform the industrial structures, production practices, textual

aesthetics and consumption geographies of a periphery industry. It also shows how the growth of

the local format industry influences the regional and global television production, thereby

forming a reversal flow to the dominant television flows.

1.2   Significance of the Study

This dissertation examines the development process of Korean reality television formats

and the features and patterns of the format production in the broader context of cultural

globalization. Since reality television has swept the Korean primetime television spots as a new

entertainment format with much success, local scholars have paid attention to the remarkable

phenomenon of the reality genre and format. Broadly speaking, four types of research involving

the Korean reality television formats have been conducted. The early studies focused on the

theoretical overview of global reality television genre with the analysis on its definition,

characteristics, types, and practices (Hong S., 2004; Kim J. S. & Park, 2006; Kim S. J., 2010;

Lee J. S., 2005). The second line of research explored the distinctions of Korean reality

entertainment shows, comparing them to the global reality formats, in terms of narratives,

images, characters, and expressive techniques (Chang & Roh, 2010; Hong J., 2009; Jung S. Y.,

2009; Kim B.Y., Kang, & Kim, 2008; Kim M. R., 2008; Kim N. I., 2008; Lee H., 2011; Lee K.

S. & Cho. 2010). In the same vein, a few researchers attempted to capture the changes in

storytelling and characters in the Korean entertainment shows after the introduction of reality

television formats with longitudinal data collection (Cha & Park, 2012; Roh, 2015). The third

line of research is concerned with the politics of identity and the representation of Korean reality

shows in relation to audience and gender studies (Hong J. & Jeong, 2018; Kim S. J. & Kim.,

2013; Oh E. & Kim, 2016). The social and political implications of Korean reality television

shows are also investigated in light of neoliberal capitalist ideology and commercialism (Kim S.

J., 2010, 2011). More recently, transnational production and consumption of Korean reality

shows, particularly in Asian areas, is increasingly examined in the local industrial, cultural and

political context (He, Kim, & Jang, 2016; Moon H. J., 2018; Oh K. & Yu, 2015; Sim & Jiang,

2015; Wang & Kim, 2017). Although some globalization studies researchers have recently taken

notice of the transnational production of Korean reality television as a new phenomenon of

cultural regionalization and globalization (Chung, 2013; Keane, 2015; Keane & Ma, 2016), these

studies largely overlook the significance of the producers' activities and strategies as a key

player in creating the traveling cultural commodities.

Despite the explosive scholarly interest in Korean reality television format for the last

decade, few researchers pay attention to the dynamic relations between producers, industrial

organizations and texts in a broader context of cultural globalization. To figure out the

transnational production and consumption of Korean reality formats, a wider range of study

including both historical and practical research is needed. Tracing the emergence and growth of

the Korean television format business, this study offers an opportunity to rethink the established

globalization theories and suggests new perspectives of television production and consumption as a cultural shift in the global television industry.

This study contributes to delineate the real position and dynamic transformation of Korean reality show formats from the perspective of television producers. Focusing on the roles of the Korean television producers in the innovation process of the formats, it investigates the complex conditions and dynamics of power relations in the transnational production and adaptation. Through the empirical and field-centered research of the transnational production, distribution, and consumption of locally formatted television content, this study reveals how the local producers, the regional and global distributors, and audiences interact with one another, how local identity and socio-cultural sentiment infused in the local formats are created, adapted, and shared beyond the boundaries, and how these values make the local formats remarkable in global markets due to the originality of the formats. Also, it is expected to allow us to see the duality of globalization, which empowers local producers to create new values and innovate global television culture, but at the same time, keep them rooted in regional and global capital.

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand how Korean television formats, specifically reality television shows, are traded and adapted across the world, how the Korean media professionals perceive the global format business and counteract the new trend with their production practices and strategies and what values and meanings of Korean reality television penetrate the local, regional, and global television markets. This study uses multiple research methods to analyze the Korean format industry, focusing on negotiations among the local, regional, and global agencies. The first method is a chronological analysis of the birth and development of Korean reality television formats. Based on the analysis of the political, economic, and social changes surrounding the local television industry and the confrontational

strategies of the Korean television companies, this project traces the historical transformation of the Korean reality format and formulates guidelines for the generic development of the locally formatted shows. Another method of research is to explore the characteristics and innovations of Korean reality show formats as an outcome of the interrelationships among the stakeholders of the market. To achieve this, the study conducts in-depth interviews with Korean entertainment television show producers who have worked at the major television networks including KBS, MBC, SBS (national terrestrial networks), tvN, and M-net (cable networks affiliated with CJ E&M). Additionally, specific reality television shows are investigated as case studies to describe the processes and milestones of each step in their developmental phase. Such micro- and macro-level approaches uncover the periodic characteristics of the Korean reality formats and the intricate contextual implications of globalization of local television culture.

1.3   Outline of the Study

This study consists of nine chapters. Chapter one is an introduction that describes a broad overview of the study. The background, purpose and value of the study are discussed. Additionally, the research objectives and outline of the study are listed.

Chapter two is a literature review of relevant theoretical arguments. This chapter sets up the analytical frame for examining the production and adaptation of Korean television formats across the world. The theoretical concepts are discussed with an interdisciplinary approach overviewing the present media landscapes of technological innovation and global exchange. Concepts will be explored that come from cultural production discourses, globalization theories, and television genre theories which are actively discussed in media industry studies, television production studies and television format studies. Specifically, this chapter will focus on the studies on reality television formats in relation to the economic, technological and cultural

changes in global television industries. These concepts provide a substantial framework to integrate historical trajectories, theoretical traditions and critical discourses that define the local television format industry.

Chapter three gives explanation and justification for the research methodology of this study. First, periodic characteristics of interaction between the political, economic, and sociocultural changes and the local producers' production practices and strategies are examined through chronological analysis. This will be done through analyzing archival data, such as existing interviews of prominent local producers published in books, magazines and newspapers, industrial reports and journals, and the Korean entertainment television programming, especially weekend primetime television formats. Second, in-depth interviews with Korean entertainment television producers are conducted. The interview protocols, participants, and procedures are addressed. With regard to the interview, popular Korean television shows are briefly presented as examples of the developmental phases of Korean reality television.

In chapter four, an introduction of the historical and industrial background of Korean entertainment television show business is explored. First, the foundational features of Korean television system are discussed in relation to the Korean political system. The way in which the national television system has been transformed due to political and economic events is discussed. Next, historical changes of Korean entertainment television shows are reviewed in the relationship between the structure of Korean broadcasting system and the role of television entertainment. Depending on the industrial reform and economic and cultural changes, chronological transformations of the Korean entertainment show programming are presented with specific genres, styles, storytelling, and marketing strategies characterizing each time period. This chapter illustrates the overall characteristics of Korean entertainment television

shows and the specific conditions in which the local format business was beginning to become a major player in the television industry.

Chapter five contains an analysis on the time-periodic characteristics of Korean reality show production. The formation and evolution process of the Korean format industry are classified into three large phases (or aspects): the formation of Korea reality television; collaboration and co-production with the regional industries; and innovations and renovation of the industry for global adaptation. The divisions of the time periods and how they are classified are discussed. Then, the three phases are briefly introduced with attention to the overall trend and information about the periodic environment of the local television format production.

Chapter six explains the formation process of Korean reality shows by analyzing the genealogical development of Korean variety shows. The formation process is presented with two subchapters, the incubation of Korean format industry and the birth of locally formatted reality shows. Each subchapter explores situational understanding with a variety of industrial data and statistics and primary formats of the period. Additionally, each stage presents a sample case study to describe the characteristics and implications of the representative format. First, in the incubation stage, *!:Exclamation Mark* is analyzed as the emergence of the public interest entertainment program combining the generic styles of variety shows, documentary, and campaign shows in a reality television manner. This subchapter discusses the succession and rupture of the conventions of the Korean variety show genre by investigating the aesthetics and narratives of the Korean public interest entertainment show. Second, the subchapter about the birth of locally formatted reality shows deals with the advent of the Korean real-variety shows developed by national terrestrial networks such as *Infinite Challenge, 2 Days and 1 Night,* and

Family Outing. How these locally developed television shows are different from the global

reality formats and previous local primetime shows is discussed.

In chapter seven, the regionalization of the Korean reality formats is examined based on

the export to and co-production with China. This chapter is also divided into two subchapters:

the period in which the local reality format began to be exported to China and the stage of full-

scale collaboration and co-production with China. First, the start of reality format exports

illustrates the local producers' strategies and efforts for the export to China, the interactions

between the two countries and the impact of the trades on the local industry. *I Am Singer*, the

first reality format package exported to China, is investigated as a case study. The next

subchapter portrays explosive trades of television formats with China as an evolved system to

meet the requirements and regulations of the Chinese government. A case study of *Super Idol* is

examined to describe the co-production process, practices and relationship between Korean

producers and Chinese producers and the different representation of the two nations' identity.

Chapter eight deals with the innovation and renovation of the local reality formats for

global adaptation. This phase describes the current Korean television format business as the

consequences of massive job transfer of the local producers. It addresses how the job movement

of public terrestrial television producers to commercial cable networks has influenced the

innovation of their programs. This is explained with discussions about the emergence of big

cable networks and hegemonic change in the local television industry. As an example of the

innovated reality shows, *Grandpas Over Flowers* is analyzed. Additionally, media convergence

and empowered audiences are appropriated by the local television format production and

development are discussed in relation to the local producers' pursuit of new markets and sources.

Finally, chapter nine contains a summary of the theoretical and empirical findings concerning the transnational production and adaptation of Korean reality television formats, the Korean producers' practices and strategies, the analysis discussed in previous chapters, and implications of television format business in a peripheral television industry. This chapter establishes strong support for the notion that current Korean reality format is transformed as a new cultural commodity attracting global distributors and transnational audiences which forms an alternative model of cultural globalization.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of key theories and literature pertaining to television production in the context of globalization and digitalization from three different theoretical directions. First, this dissertation approaches the questions of cultural production in media industries, focusing on media workers' status, roles, and relationships in creating cultural texts and aesthetics in the organizational and institutional structures and diverse constraints and tensions. This involves an analysis of the sociology of culture, political economy, and cultural and media studies. Looking at a set of the theories on the production of cultural and media industries, this study highlights the work and culture of creative practitioners as a central site to explore the structures and dynamics of the economic and institutional media ecology and the tensions and conflicts between creativity and commerce.

The second point of theoretical engagement is a core concept of television studies, 'flow.' Here, the notion is reviewed in two directions. One group considers the idea of flow as an entry point to examine the nature of television encompassing technological, institutional and aesthetic aspects of the medium, which intersect with production, reception, regulation, and representation. Through the lens of flow and its alternative notion, convergence, this study introduces the current discussion on the paradigmatic shifts of television culture and the cultural, economic, and political implications of the digitalization of television. The concept of flow also serves as a major frame of reference in globalization discourses of television culture. This study reviews how globalization intervenes in and reconstructs a local and regional television industry through the theories on the international and transnational media flow. The two-pronged approach to the concept of flow gives a comprehensive understanding of how the paradigmatic

changes of digitalization and globalization influence not only production of television content but also the power relationship of a local television industry.

The final pillar of the theoretical framework is to review diverse interpretations on television format phenomenon with a focus on the development of reality television as a new business model of global television industry. Looking at the competing arguments on global format trades and adaptations, this study provides an analytical focal point for the highly contextualized television studies across various national systems, cultural identities, and production conventions. Finally, connecting the three theoretical pillars to the Korean television industry, it proposes an integrative approach to explain the development of reality television show formats in a periphery industry in the context of globalized television culture.

2.1   Production in Cultural and Media Industry Studies

Cultural and media production inevitably implies a duality as an economic system of production and creative subjectivity of texts (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). Studying cultural and media production is therefore an understanding of the subtle, flexible and complex politics that penetrate the double-sided sphere of economy and culture. Cultural and media production studies, which began with emergence of mass media culture after WWI, have become distinct and important academic fields along with the rise of neoliberal economic policy, the dominance of multinational corporates, the growth of global middle-class audiences, and dramatic digital convergence. Because of the extraordinary range of research objects, ranging from text itself to policies and regulations, and the interrelations with external issues such as global immigration and local/regional tensions, it inescapably requires interdisciplinary and multidimensional research frameworks across diverse academic fields. Also, it needs an elaborated and articulated methodology over various case studies. In this section, the author overviews major streams of

theoretical arguments in cultural and media industry studies with a focus on production research to understand the position and condition of media practitioners.

2.1.1 *Political economist approaches to cultural production*

The critical questions on the relation between cultural work and commercial system were initially raised by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's thesis of 'culture industry' (2007). Adorno and Horkheimer explained that the modern capitalist industry tends to commodify and standardize culture, and culture loses its creative potential for a better life through the way in which the commercial pressure to dissolve culture in a certain formula and pattern for easier cultural production, promotion and distribution. Consequently, the standardization of cultural production and consumption that incorporate producers and consumers into the commodified products makes the subjects feel hard to resist to the commodities. With the concern about modern mass culture, they criticized that the industrialized media culture as a force that paralyzes and depoliticizes people, thereby forcing them to accept dominant ideology.

The Frankfurt School theorists' idea of culture industry has given great insights into later researchers, especially to the political economists in the US and UK. The early study of North American scholars like Robert W. McChesney and Herbert I. Schiller began with the concern for the corporate and institutional structures and system and how the power of media organizations influences society (McChesney, 1992; 2004; 2008; Schiller 1992). They are highly critical of the power of mass media owners to control what the media companies produce. McChesney asserts that the commercial media owners "hire, fire, set budgets and determine the overarching aims of the enterprise" and their executive employees, including journalists, editors and media professionals, tend to "internalize the values, both commercial and political, of media owners" (2004, p. 100). They are strongly skeptical of the rhetoric of public democracy and free

market presented as a new political and cultural idea by the mass media, which is viewed as liberal and beneficial to the people, but actually contribute to the enhancement of the profits of the large private corporations. They warn that the concentrated and centralized power structure of commercial media threatens democracy and public spaces by degrading politics and culture with the profit-maximizing strategies.

The strong critique of the industrial and capitalist commodification of culture is similar to the concern of the UK-based media scholars like Graham Murdock, Peter Golding, Nicholas Garnham, etc. However, the UK political economists have been primarily interested in the structural and institutional aspects of cultural industries rather than the media ownership itself. This slight difference is because the traditions of the UK media industry as an institutional sector distinguished from the commercial market-based industry of the US. As the governing role of marketing and promoting cultural goods became more essential in cultural work, they consider the economic dynamics as a key feature of the general process of cultural production and distribution in which meanings and values are made (Golding & Murdock, 2000; Garnham, 1990; Murdock & Golding, 1974). From his professional experience and understanding as a former film and television director, Garnham (1979; 1990) explains that the mode of production is shaped through the dynamics among the patterns of the work, social relations and norms, and the structure of laws and policies. He asserts that although media work is always mediated by material considerations that determine the ways in which who produces what and for whom, cultural creators who pursuit profits also have various cultural interests for different cultural markets in more complex and heterogenous socio-institutional systems.

Garnham's comprehension on the cultural industries was influenced by French sociologists and policymakers. These scholars reject the economic determinism of Adorno and

Horkheimer, arguing that new technologies introduced by industrial methods not only commodify culture but also create innovations (Huet, Ion, Lefèbvre, Miège, & Peron, 1978; Miège, 1979). Miège and his colleagues (1978; 1979) consider cultural industries as complex entities where creative process and technical reproduction and distribution take place together and emphasize the editorial functions which combine both creative and technical sides through industiral methods. By recognizing much broader and complex characteristics of production of cultural industries, the plural and descriptive concept of cultural industries differentiates itself from a singular and unified notion of the culture industry presented by Adorno and Horkheimer (Hartley, et al., 2013).

2.1.2   *Sociological approaches to cultural industries*

The cultural industries approach focuses on the specific conditions of cultural production rather than other forms of industiral production (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). That is, how the industrial stuructures affect the organization of the cltural production and the workers' creation of cultural texts and how to see the connections and tensions between proudction and consumption are the biggest issues for the researchers. Such an approach has been attributed to a certain convention of the sociology of culture. In terms of creative work in organizations, Howard S. Becker (1982) views art not as an act of individual genius but as a collaborative product by cooperative networks including suppliers, dealers, critics and consmers as well as artists. For him, the dynamics of circulation label a creative work as art. In the same vein, a number of studies present "production of culture" framework that condisers cultural production as a multistep process weaving the codes and values of organizations into products (DiMaggio, 1977; Hirsch, 1972; Peterson, 1976). For example, Paul M. Hirsch's research on the gatekeeping

process in news making highlights the filtering functions of the editorial selection of specific stories and events as the linkage between production and consumption (1972).

However, the organizational and management studies are criticized for failing to explain the issues of power within the organizations as a social system (Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Negus, 2002). Some critical media sociologists such as Gaye Tuchman (1978) and Herbert Gans (1979) offer a valuable complement to the limitation of the "production of culture" framework, by focusing on the imperatives of the companies. With participant observation and ethnographic analysis on newsrooms, Gans (1979) and Tuchman (1978) reveal that news organizations do not simply reflect but construct social reality through the institutionalized and routinized work of news makers. In the case of television studies, Muriel G. Cantor (1971)'s and Todd Gitlin (1983)'s interview-based research is remarkable. Through a number of interviews with Hollywood television producers, Cantor (1971) classifies them into three types: filmmakers as self-centered creators toward art and personal idea, writer-producers as the public-centered producers thinking highly of meaningful content, and old-line producers as executive producers being creative but chiefly focusing on a financial success. She notices that high-rankers seeking for profits are more powerful over the decision-making and hiring processes, whereas individual producers tend to think more of creative ideas and social messages. Gitlin's study of the prime-time American television production (1983) discloses how television practitioners treat social issues and how the power relationships in the television influence the content from the perspective of cultural hegemony.

While the American media sociologists shed light on the habits and routines of media workers as internal impetus of media organizations, a French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu contributes to analysis on the complex relations between creation as an autonomous drive for

cultural production and commerce as a structural power of the economic and political fields (Hesmondhalgh, 2006, 2012; Negus, 2006). Bourdieu, like Becker, conceives of creative work as a set of integrated activities within a network of cultural production, but emphasizes the power struggle of the individuals and groups in the network rather than collaboration and cooperation of the workers (Negus, 2006). In other words, Bourdieu presents that creative practitioners are compete with each other to obtain a better position and power that ensures more recognition, reputation and reward.

With regard to the role of creators, Bourdieu (1984) suggests a concept of "cultural intermediaries," who connect production and consumption of cultural artifacts and services. Investigating the patterns of cultural consumption, he notes that cultural tastes are legitimated by a new social class, which has particular type of occupations with distinctive cultural tastes and practices. He defines the cultural intermediaries as "all the occupations involving presentation and representation (sales, marketing, advertising, public fashion, decoration and so on) and in all the institutions providing symbolic goods and services" (1984, p. 359). That is, those who are working in and with media as a mediator to promote cultural consumption are included in the category (Maguire & Matthews, 2010). Although his argument privileges a specific professional group and narrows down the notion of culture as representation and symbolic creation rather than as a 'whole way of life' and overlooks the rise of large-scale media enterprises and deregulation of media sectors, it gives later researchers an insight to think of the interconnectedness between production and consumption where values are created, and who perform the connecting role in-between creation and commerce (Hesmondhalgh, 2006; Negus, 2002; Maguire & Matthews, 2010).

2.1.3   *Cultural economy studies in the circuit of culture*

Notably, Bourdieu's notion of cultural intermediaries assumes the shift from production-to consumption-centered societies, in which the distinctions of production and consumption are blurred and culture becomes more central to the economy. As Bourdieu indicates the emergence of new economy demanding "a social world which judges people by their capacity for consumption, their 'standard living,' their life-style, as much as by their capacity for production" (1984, p. 310), contemporary economic and social life has become increasingly culturalized and aestheticized (Featherstone, 1991; Lash & Urry, 1994; Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999). Paying attention to the fusion and hybridization of culture and economy, a number of researchers in economic and cultural geography and cultural studies suggest the concept of 'cultural economy' with similar phrases 'creative economy' and 'creative industries' together (Amin & Thrift, 2008; Cunningham, 2002; Du Gay, 1997; Du Gay & Pryke, 2002; Gibson & Kong, 2005; Scott, 2000).

As founders of the new concept, Du Gay and Pryke has insisted that "before we can seek to manage something called an 'economy,' it is first necessary to conceptualize or represent a set of processes and relations as an 'economy' which are amenable to management" (2002, p. 2) and thus defining "doing clutural econonmy" as "acting on the assumption that economics are performed and enacted by the very discourses of which they are supposedly the cause" (2002, p. 6). That is, they reconceptualize economy as a representation which is conjecturally and culturally installed, articulated and deliberated by diverse elements, practices and technologies. They propose two ways of articulating cultural economy, 'production of culture' and 'culture of production,' which is presented by Du Gay's previous book *Production of Culture/ Cultures of Production*. The former deals with cultural products, knowledge and services guided by an economic logic, and the latter includes the installation process of culture through the economic

practices within the world of business and organizations. Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift emphasize that the central concern of the cultural economy researchers is to identify "the varied impulses and articulations through which value is formed, added, and circulated" (2008, p. xv). For them, it has been essential to understand the economic performativity in which cultural values and meaning are created, maintained, and transformed through various sites, moments, and practice.

In terms of the representational processes of values in cultural economy, Du Gay and his colleagues (1997) develop the model of 'circuit of culture' integrating its previous models presented by Stuart Hall (1980) and Richard Johnson (1986). According to this model, cultural products and practices obtain and circulate values at totally interconnected five spheres including representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation. Although the elements in each part of the circuit are considered as a specific object in cultural studies, they overlap and intertwine with complex and contingent ways in the real world and the meaning-making consistently processes through the interactions in the circuit. Thus, the actors in each sphere plays a crucial role as cultural intermediaries in creating meanings and values and connecting with other stages.

2.1.4 Integrative research in media production studies

While the cultural economy perspective raises questions about the dichotomy of political economists and critical sociologist, who tend to separate cultural production into the economic and cultural spheres, it leaves the politics and power within the dynamic relations of cultural industries out of account (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). In fact, the issue of power in cultural production is eagerly raised by political economists and critical sociologists. These scholars are interested mainly in inequality of power within the hierarchical structure and system of cultural production and whose interests the cultural products represent. However, it cannot be said that

cultural studies researchers neglect the issue of power. Rather, they are concerned with the problem in different ways. Although the central concern of cultural studies group is aesthetic experiences and interpretations on the properties and identities of cultural texts, the researchers seek for understanding the politics of identity represented by the texts and who is speaking and who has symbolic power in the aesthetic value system.

With an effort to incorporate the two perspectives of political economy and cultural studies, many media scholars have attempted to yield a productive analysis of cultural industries, which aims to reflect the reality of contemporary cultural production with diverse and interdisciplinary methodologies (Havens, Lotz, & Tinic, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Holt & Perren, 2011; White & Schwoch, 2008). The integrative scholarly work on cultural producers and culture of production can be roughly classified into two groups: one focuses on cultural labor and working conditions, and the other is interested in the actual functions of media workers with their sources and products within the industries.

Mobile production and cultural labor

As one of the early studies on the issue of cultural labor, the collection of Andrew Beck (2003) explicitly examines the conditions of cultural production, in a wide range of industrial arena, particularly in Britain. His collection recognizes that the most significant change in contemporary cultural industries is the increasing role of commercialization and privatization dynamics that undermine the existed public sectors. As a result, not only the labor of television and film but also that of radio and music industry becomes profit-seeking activities and the higher pressure on financially successful outcomes exacerbates insecurity of the jobs. Angela McRobbie (1998) captures the flow of the insecure employment and inferior working conditions with the in-depth observation on graduate design students and fashion industry. Through many

years of research, she finds that the dual supports of educational and commercial sectors that combines training and production practices of the young laborers persist in the precarious working conditions. Her research on the self-expressive work of youthful and talented individuals in cultural industries uncovers how the industrial system exploits cultural laborers and generates inequality. In their comparative work with three different cultural industries, David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) are also conscious of the permanent oversupply of creative labor in the cultural industries, which entails low wages, long working hours, and insecure employments. They explore the tensions between creativity and commerce and the autonomy, self-exploitation, and alienation of the emotional and affective labor, thus undertaking an extensive analysis on cultural production in accordance with the social and economic changes.

Focusing more on television production, a number of researchers have investigated the changed conditions of television professionals (Curtin & Sanson, 2016, 2017; Hesmondhalgh & Sarah, 2008; Mann, 2013; Ursell, 2000). Gillian Ursell (2000) examines the working positions and conditions of television freelancers, reflecting the substantial decline of unionized and permanent staffs and the casualization of the labor force. She discovers that the risk-minimizing and profit-maximizing tendency of television industry that divides its labor market into highly reputed and better paid workers and the rest compels the freelancer workers to have their own strategies – self-organization, self-exploitation and self-reference – to survive in their workplace. In this hyper-competitive labor market, the more successful television professionals commodify their personalities as well as their labor power as a source of audiences' consumption, whereas low or unpaid workers and newcomers remain in the pool of reserve labor, deepening inequality and insecurity of the labor market. In the same vein, Denis Mann (2013) looks at the production practices of television, particularly connecting with convergence media culture. He asserts that

contemporary television production in which the boundaries of production and consumption are blurring with new digital technology does not ease the burden of workers but rather gives more work and less rewards to them, and thereby bringing more benefits to media companies.

With their two successive publications, Michael Curtin and Kevin Sanson (2016, 2017) expands the problem of screen labor from the perspective of globalization. Their first book "Precarious Creativity: Global Media, Local Labor" navigates creative labor not only with the frame of new media technologies and practices but also with the context of globalization. While this book approach the increasingly precarious creative work in relation to the complex dynamics among the occupational and industrial organizations and governmental policies, the following book "Voices of Labor: Creativity, Craft, and Conflict in Global Hollywood" deals with the nature and orientation of screen labor in the two controversial trends of corporate conglomeration and globalization, which requires logistical mobilization of human and production resources and excessive labor. Based on the concept of new international division of labor as the extension strategy of global Hollywood (Miller, Govil, McMurria, Maxwell, & Wang, 2004), Curtin and Sanson present a more specific investigation on the hypermobile mode of production across different sites and countries, in which media workers should negotiate, contest, or accord with the high demand of relocation and resocialization that make their everyday life and work more vulnerable.

Identity and representation of cultural production

Another integrative studies group on cultural production is by and large identified with scholarship coming from North America, which generally pay attention to television and film industry because of the vastness of Hollywood. This group is often alternatively named "media industry studies" (Holt & Perren, 2009), "critical media industry studies" (Havens, Lotz, &

Tinic, 2009), or "critical industry studies" (Mayer, Banks, & Caldwell, 2009). Deploying interviews, participant observation and archival methodologies, these researchers have been keeping an eye on the production practices, networks and culture of media workers in relation to the issue of identity and representation and how the practice, network and culture of the producers affect the text.

This academic tradition is rooted in the pioneering interview-based research of Horace Newcomb and Robert Alley (1983) and Todd Gitlin (1983). Analyzing the role of producers in television companies, Newcomb and Alley (1983) discover that the television producers are assigned creative, financial, and legal responsibilities for their products and these multiple pressures make them social (in the authors' word, "choric") rather than subjective ("lyric"). That is, as "self-conscious, creative producer" (1983, xiii), television producers working within the complex system must consider not only creative expressions beyond content, technologies and forms, but also effective managements of budget, schedule and casting. While Newcomb and Alley's study offers an understanding of the creative nature of the commercial American television producers' work and the vastly complex process of their production, Gitlin's ethnographic analysis uncovers the influences of television networks on their producers' creating process. He notes that the imperative for the networks is low-risk investments with the highest returns. The economic logic forces producers to develop a successful series and genre.

The two prominent studies which apply a critical framework to the study of television production cultures have led to a lot of studies that involve a direct engagement with media professionals. For example, Julie D'Acci's study on the production of a US cop TV show *Cagney and Lacey* from the feminist perspective (1994) uncovers the circuit of representation by conducting both extensive interviews and observation on television producers and in-depth

analysis on audience letters to the network. With the same methods and perspective, Jane Shattuc (1997) looks at the construction of femininity in daytime talk show genre of the 1990s. In terms of race, ethnicity, and nationality, a few scholars further develop the interviewing methods integrating with theoretical and textual readings. These studies include Herman Gray's industrial approach to racial construction as programming strategy (1995), Jostein Gripsrud's transnational study with the interviews of both American primetime drama producers and Norwegian television professionals (1995), Arlene Dávila's analysis of ethnic marketing and programming strategies of the US television media targeting Hispanic audiences (2001), and so on. Taking note of the potential of the producers' ways of living and their industrial subcultures, which may define and represent the culture of production, Mimi White and James Schwoch (2008) argue that an integrated analysis encompassing a wide range of data, lived-experience and field knowledge, and industrial rituals and tools can help prevent researchers from being trapped in restrictive forms of textualism and ethnography.

More recently, television production studies have a tendency to focus on the activities and interpretive practices of production practitioners, including not only executive producers and writer-producers but also below-the-line workers and local producers, and thus trying to capture the local cultures of these workers and the industrial context where the texts are produced (Caldwell, 2008; Curtin & Sanson, 2017; Mayer, Banks, & Caldwell, 2009; Mayer, 2011). In their collection of "Production Studies," Vicki Mayer, Miranda J. Banks and John Thornton Caldwell (2009) discuss the identities, roles and spaces of television practitioners, dealing with a wide range of academic disciplines and levels of professional experiences. Focusing on the rituals, habits and conventions of producers in Los Angeles, Caldwell (2008) attempts to cross-check the observational and textual analysis of below-the-line workers and artefacts and the self-

analysis of the above-the-line producers and presents a clear picture of the contemporary television production. Particularly, the work of Caldwell (2008), Mayer (2011) and then Curtin and Sanson (2017) about the working conditions and culture of below-the-line workers in the hierarchies of the industrial structure expand the range of television production studies to invisible and emotional labors in their relationships and work allocation. What they emphasize in common is that the nomadic nature of labor and ever-changing business practice reflects the hypercompetitive television industry.

As these researchers argue, the rise of digital media and globalized market has transformed production cultures and industrial practices. Given the inherently contextual and interrelated nature of media production studies, the focus of the researchers moves to a wider menu of the related issues, such as how convergence transforms television aesthetics and practices and occurs at the level of the national, local, regional and global. Now it is almost impossible to talk of industrial, cultural or aesthetic practices without thinking of the politics and economics in marketing, employment, distribution, and consumption, and vice versa. In the next section, the nature of television as a technological and institutional text is discussed in the relation to the changed working conditions and practices of producers across different locations and countries.

2.2 Flow, a Dual Entry Point of Television Studies: Continuity and Mobility

With the electronic, visual, and mass/domestic character, television has been considered one of the most powerful media installed in an economic and institutional ecology, which entails an anxiety about its political and cultural influence during the last century (Abercrombie, 1996; Allen & Hill, 2004; Corner, 1999; Featherstone, 1991; Mittell, 2010; Newcomb, 2000). Its significance for public and private life and popular culture inevitably attracted a growing number

of studies on various aspects of the medium, such as its technology, production, reception, regulation, and representation, in relation to other social and cultural issues. Although there are many features that scholars have attempted to define the medium, it is an essential feature of television, distinguished from those of other mass media like press, radio, and cinema, which engages viewers in the spaces and time of the home, thereby developing not only a strong domestic aesthetic for programs but also an institutional structure which monetizes everyday life and culture (Browne, 1984; Gitlin, 1983; Spigel, 1992; Williams, 1974).

However, it is also true that digitalization and globalization has dismantle the conventions of the traditional television as domestic and national institution (Parks & Kumar, 2003; Spigel & Olsson, 2004; Tryon, 2012; Turner & Tay, 2009). Focusing on the key concept of television studies "flow," this subchapter discusses how television determines the medium's textuality and producers' practices, how the technological and institutional characters of television routinize and represent everyday life and culture, and how the conventions of television are applicable in the new media environment. In addition, how the globalization phenomenon has transformed local, regional, and global television industries is reviewed.

2.2.1   *TV flow as continuity: Inherent nature of television*

Mike Featherstone claims that one of the remarkable features of modern world is "the rapid flow of signs and images which saturate the fabric of everyday life in contemporary society" (1991, p. 67). As an important source of modern images and information, television is central to the processes of media saturation. The term "flow" describes such a cultural phenomenon of television that highlights the continuity of television texts as an aesthetic and cultural set of practices and differentiates television from the cinematic apparatus.

Raymond Williams (1974) defines that television consists not of a single narrative but of a flow of narratives, which is interrupted by commercial breaks, announcements, and trailers. It means that television is located within the system of a channel schedule, which aims to maximize audience continuity on a particular channel, programing against other channels to draw a large audience share and the intertextual proliferation of product tie-ins. Thus, the "planned flow" represents the mediations among television technology as the broadcasting signal, institutional programing, television textuality and viewer experience.

Flow as television textuality

The constant flow of television raises a variety of questions about the nature of television's textual and transmission system, because television uniquely not only broadcasts across space, but also creates a relationship in time between what is being broadcast and those who are watching the broadcast (Allen & Hill, 2004; Corner, 1999). The live and continuous audio-visual transmission constructs a primary building block in a medium-specific conceptualization of televisuality, for it affects both the way in which television texts are characterized and viewers engage with the television texts (Caldwell, 1995; Ellis, 1982; Feuer, 1983; Fiske, 1987).

At a textual level, John Ellis (1982) offers an initial revision of William's sense of flow. Proposing textual system of television with the concept of "segmentation" that organizes small segments into groups like a serial or series, he says that segmentation functions not only as television's typical mode of studio production and cost efficiency, but also as a requirement of the medium's need to hold the viewers with a particular mixture of change and continuity. Supporting Ellis's notion of segmentation, Jane Feuer (1983) criticizes that Williams's notion of flow is a kind of illusion because a discrete program and episode is legible, and then redefines

flow as "segmentation without closure" (p.15). Expanding the nature of television to viewing experience, she insists that the continuity of television texts is a distinct logic of commercial television, which retains constant viewership, and at the same time, interrupts viewing experience intermittently.

Although the idea of distracted viewing experience in television textual and transmission system has had high currency in television studies, John Thornton Caldwell (1995) raises a question to the relationship between the notion of flow and glance theory, which allegedly encourages a pervasive distraction of viewing experience. He asserts that since television texts are intentionally and elaborately created by producers and programmers, they should be also analyzed with aural/visual images, narrative strategies, and signal densities that are as likely to promote intensive attention as to lead the graze.

As advanced television technologies like VCR, cable, and satellite television emerged in the mid of 1980s, many scholars tried to seek for an appropriate model to account for the changed media environment of network television era. Accepting the notion of flow, Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsh (2000) suggest a concept of "viewing strips." This notion combines the concept of flow as a commercial system of television and the awareness that viewers can surf more than one program or episode at a time with remote control devices. It means that viewers have a limited choice over multiple television texts. Their attention lies neither communication effects nor aesthetic objects of television. Rather, they are interested in symbolic thoughts, communications, and actions that television reflects and recreates. The scholars consider that the most significant role and function of television is the social construction of a public thinking, not as a monolithic and dominant idea but multiple meanings. Based on this conceptualization of television, Newcomb and Hirsh (2000) define television as a "cultural forum," where prevalent

political, social, and cultural issues are discussed, negotiated, and constructed. In other words, television is a public site where different, controversial, or contradictory ideas, values, and ideologies are negotiating with one another. Borrowing the concept of "ritual" from anthropology, they conceive television as cultural ritual, not as a product but as a process. Thus, they suggest that the best method of analyzing television is to examine the whole body of the week over multiple channels rather than analysis on a single program or episode.

The concept of "cultural forum" is associated with Stuart Hall's idea of encoding/decoding in television structure. Hall (1980) insists that television's meaning making occurs both in encoding as a production process and in decoding as a reception process. Particularly focusing more on decoding, he classifies three categories of television decoding – dominant, oppositional, and alternative – depending on viewer's interpretation. That is, audiences have an ability to interpret television texts, by following the dominant ideology embedded in the original texts, opposing against the dominant meanings, or create an alternative and synthetic meanings.

In this conception, John Fiske (1987) defines television textuality as "intertextuality," which is the interrelationship among texts, audiences, and social symbolic system. By presenting two dimensions of intertextuality – the horizontal (between primary texts based on genre, character, and content) and the vertical (between a primary text and other texts such as journalism features, criticism, or fan products), he argues that meanings in television system are not created by producers and programmers, but by audiences' active interpretation. For Fiske, how a text is recognized and how its meanings are provoked and circulated is more important than the problem of what meanings the text has. He believes that the multitude of intertextual

relations increases the polysemic potential of a text and diversity of subordinate social groups in a power relationship of the society.

In contrast to Fiske, Jim Collins (1993) views intertextuality from the perspective of producers. Considering the logic of postmodern culture, which replicates, reproduces and reinforces the consumer capitalism through perpetual circulation and recirculation of texts, technologies and signs, he insists that intertextuality, as an inherent to some texts, is an identifiable stylistic device that the producers strategically employ to attract audiences. In the cultural production, authors array and appropriate intertextuality at the level of character adventures and text's adventures.

Although the two perspectives – i.e., audiences' unconscious interpretive practice and producers' conscious textual strategy to invite audience – describe intertextuality in the opposite direction facing each other, both perspectives basically assume the interactions between audiences and producers. The dual legacy of intertextuality represents both the interpretive practice of decoding and a specific strategy of encoding. As a theoretical approach of how television messages are produced, distributed, and consumed, Hall's encoding/decoding model elucidates the role of audiences' active interpretation and social contexts in television discourses.

However, criticizing the academic tendency focusing on individual programs, Williams asserts that television critics should pay more attention to the cumulative succession of television materials including programs, previews and ads, because the flow is "the defining characteristic of broadcasting, simultaneously as technology and as a cultural form" (1974, p.80). Connecting the concept of flow to industrial practices and strategies, Nick Browne (1984) suggests that television text provided by daily-base programing and scheduling consists of "supertext" as the political and economic ideologies that manage the temporal organizing strategies. The notions of

flow and supertext allow television scholars to consider political economy of television industry as a whole text of programs.

Flow as television aesthetics: Genre and format

Meanwhile, the debates about the concept of flow, which move television studies from text-based analysis to context-based research, stimulate the discussions of television genre and format. Both genre and format are considered as a fundamental tool to analyze television aesthetics, economics, and culture (Edgerton, 2008; Mittell, 2004). Early studies of genre and format borrows the methodological conventions from literature studies (Altman, 1999; Edgerton, 2008; Feuer, 1992; Fowler, 1999; Neale, 2000). As an initial scholar of television genre studies, Newcomb (1974) conceptualizes television form from the perspective of genre. He organizes principle formulae of television with types of conflicts, settings, characters, and social values, and defined the notion of formula as an original nature of television's durability and repeated evolution.

The influx of critical cultural theories in the mid of 1980s enables television scholars to rethink distinctive aesthetic qualities of television with a critical lens. From the perspective of ideology, Williams (1981) begins to differentiate television form with three categories such as dominant, alternative, and oppositional form, and additionally suggests two alternative forms – the residual as a declining form and the emergent as a rising form. Following the notion of Williams, Gitlin (1983) distinguishes format/ formula from genre. Through the analysis of prime-time programming, he defines television as an influential institution that produces, reproduces, and packages ideological hegemony of commercial culture. He considers both format/formula and genre are devices to bring ideological values into the cultural system of television, along with setting/character, slant, etc. According to his definition, format/formula is

an outcome of industrial needs to regularize and standardize time slots, duration, and character in the assembly-line production of television. Likewise, genre is standardized to attract the largest audience, thus being sensitive to popular tastes. In this way, format and genre is harmonized to audiences' and industrial time sensibility as hegemonic ideology by organizing audiences' leisure time and cultural tastes into interchangeable units.

Gitlin's elaborate work that distinguishes format and genre gives a great insight to later researchers in analyzing the relationship between television texts, producers' practices and industrial conventions. Diana Crane presents that "the television industry purveys a kind of recombinant culture in which new products are designed to imitate products that were successful in the past, by combining features from several such products or by using products that have been successful in other media" (1992, p. 62). For example, in her study on the economic logic in television drama production, Dina Berkeley (2003) uncovers that the creative work of television drama producers is perceived as a commodity, which forces the workers to think of both popularity and profitability at a time when producing a drama, thus compelling them to seek for conservative and safe formats towards innovation. That is, insecurity and uncertainty to success and popularity of television texts drives producers to cling to tested formulae. With regard to this tendency, Gitlin (1983) points out that executives are likely to consider imitation as the safest and easiest way to get a hit even though it has nothing to do with success. He also unearths that "the logic of maximizing the quick payoff has produced the very Hollywood hybrid, the recombinant form, which assumes that selected features of recent hits can be spliced together to make a eugenic success" (p. 64).

Based on his concept of intertextuality, Fiske (1987) also attempts to define the nature of television as "formula art." According to Fiske, the industrial mechanism of television

production necessarily entails a conventional form that "suit both the audience with their need for familiarity and routinization and producers, for established conventions not only keep the costs of production down, they also minimize the risk in the marketplace" (p.37-38). In this regard, he distinguishes between conventions as genre, which is "a primary way of both understanding and constructing the triangular relationship between products, texts, and audiences," and a formula as format, which is "an industrial and economic translation of conventions" (Fiske, 1987, p 110-111, cited in Shahaf, 2016, p. 249-250). Aggregating these theories, Glen Creeber (2015) defines that format is "a production category with relatively rigid boundaries that are difficult to transgress without coming up a new format," whereas genre is "a product of text- and audience-based negotiation activated by the viewer's expectation" (p.9).

The discussions about television conventions and formula emphasizing the multiplicity of television texts have led the genre studies scholars to feel the need to go "beyond genre." For genre critics, television is not just texts, but frameworks between texts, producers, and audiences. Steve Neale (2000) presents that genre is a multidimensional phenomenon of the medium's system encompassing texts, brands, categories, audience's expectations, discourses, and conventions that govern the all. He positions genre within a dynamic interaction between differences and repetitions. Feuer (1992) also insists that television industry creates the most desirable target audience considering changes of media environment and demographic composition. To attract the target audience, producers develop new characters reflecting ever-changing social and cultural lifestyles. Conversely, the changed elements influence generic features and forms. Hence, genre studies should be considered with the aesthetic, ritual, and ideological aspects (Feuer, 1992). Paying attention to the complicate and plural aspects of

television genre, Jason Mittell (2001) defines that television genre is within "complex interrelations among texts, industries, audiences, and historical contexts" (p. 7).

While genre is useful to figure out not only brands, characters, schedules and audiences, but also social and economic values and ideologies surrounding texts, its classification and identification is so difficult because of its abstractness. Since genre is often classified by style, formula, mode, technique, theme, etc., a genre can be a subgenre or supergenre of another. In practice, pure generic forms do not exist in television genre, because television is constantly modified, mixed, and transformed to attract audiences. The tendency of multiplicity and hybridity of television genre makes it more difficult to identify and classify a specific genre. Moreover, the emergence of new media technology which blurs the boundaries of media and nation, and between production and consumption, intensifies the complexity of genre composition (Edgerton, 2008; Iosifidis, 2007; Lotz, 2009). The technological development and the internationalization of the television industry requires producers and broadcasters to rethink their production practices, organizational structures, and programming policy and scheduling.

Convergence, the logic of post-network TV

As digital media technology has increased the ubiquity and mobility of television content on the heels of the remote control device, the one-dimensional notion of flow based on the old television model has been threatened and disrupted (Kackman, Binfield, Payne, Perlman, & Sebok, 2010; Lotz, 2014; Spigel & Olsson, 2004; Turner & Tay, 2009). Video-on-demand and online streaming services through mobile phones, tablets, and laptops allow audiences to have diverse watching experiences and construct their own flow. Unlike the network-era television audiences, digital users not only re-watch selective episodes and specific scenes but also share those videos through social media. The networked audiences also react to the content that they

watched and re-create new values with those online video sources (Benkler, 2003; Jenkins, 2006; Levy, 1999). William Uricchio (2004) defines the post-network television flow as the shift from the program-centered flows controlled by the broadcasters to the new set of flows dominated by the digital viewers' choices and actions. Even though streaming television encourages particular pathway through the personalized menu and recommendations in its programming library, as a computerized and curated flow, it is undeniable that the new technology empowers audiences to construct their own sequences of flow and create new channels of flow over the limitation of national boundaries (Jenner, 2018; Johnson , 2018).

In this environment, new digital media intersect and remediate established media modes, codes, and payloads on the computer-driven technological processes and products (Bolter & Grusin, 1996). To account for the interactive protocols, aesthetic features, transmedia interfaces, and end-user subject positions of digital technology, Anna Everett (2003) suggests a new terminology "digitextuality," distinguished from the notion of intertextuality in literature and television studies. Interpreting intertextuality as the transposition of existing cultural sign systems into a field of new articulations, she defines digitextuality as "a meta-signifying system of discursive absorption whereby different signifying systems and materials are translated and often transformed into zeros and ones for infinite recombinant signifiers" (p.7). That is, new media technologies not only create a new text by absorbing and transforming other texts but also embed other analogue and digital texts in entirety seamlessly, thus making new meanings.

The notion of digitextuality enables us to explore the remediation of digital media across different sign systems and analyze their aesthetics, ethics and rhetoric in the cultural context of global convergence media. Particularly, it is effective to analyze the post-TV technology embracing the production and consumption modes of both Internet and television and the

practices of its main users familiar with multiple media usage in a "hyperattentive" consumption. The users experience digitextuality with the click action of the body, which opens up infinite narrative possibilities through hyperlinks. Hence, digital media technology is not merely instrumental, but rather "incorporated and lived by the human beings who engage it within a structure of meanings and metaphors in which subject-object relations are cooperative, co-constitutive, dynamic, and reversible" (Sobchcak, 2000, p. 138, referred in Everett, 2003, p. 21).

Through the participation at the interface, the audience is also commodified and reconfigured as marketing content. Caldwell (2003) criticizes that the digitalized and augmented televisual texts not only call users to click and purchase commodities in reciprocal and circular protocols, but also provide them attractive narrations that assimilate themselves into. Since the disperse flow of post-TV texts and audience fragments revenues, media corporations try to utilize incorporative managing strategies targeted to the scattered audiences – aggregating, tiering, and branding (Andrejevic, 2007; Enli & Syvertsen, 2016; Strangelove, 2015). By involving management of ancillary digital sites linked to original texts, the shifted television aesthetics towards audience flows become more complex and complicated, thereby increasing the number of clicking.

In addition, digitalization of television also transforms the form of final products. Watching experience of the network-TV era, generally defined by its ontological nature of "liveness," is basically considered as a distracted form of looking – "glance" (Altman, 1986; Ellis, 1982; Caldwell, 1995). However, online television services and digital platforms have changed the fleetingness of the television broadcasting into two directions. On one hand, the aggregating function of online streaming services extends the retention period of television content. On the other hand, the burgeoning "snack culture" forces the original television content

to be abridged or fractionated to fit the mobile and internet-based platforms (Grainge, 2011; Newman, 2010). Thus, post-network television is "less ephemeral in the evanescence of program content but much more ephemeral in the brevity of the promotional and paratextual forms that surround, mobilize, and give meaning to that content" (Grainge, 2011, p. 7)

The proliferation of short-form content resulted from the flexible business models of contemporary television industry (Dawson, 2011; Kelly, 2011). Competing for more consumers' attention, television networks have adopted heterochronic multiplatform programming and promotional strategies. The ephemeral forms of post-network television range from the "unbundled" network content such as TV idents, abridged episodes, hypercast advertising, etc. to emergent forms of mobisodes, webisodes and worker- and user-generated videos. These short-form audiovisual materials are organized on the interface where viewers can browse through icons and links and unbundled for "going viral" easily.

The pervasive phenomena of ephemeral media content entail inevitably the increase of precarious labor in television industry (Caldwell, 2011; Mann, 2013). Since post-network television programs construct diverse layers of audience engagement, viewers are enmeshed with the layers at all stages of production, consumption, and distribution. Producers are also mobilized to build the layers by creating the "remnant," "debris," and "derivative" paratexts. This industrial imperative imposes free or low-cost labor on audiences and producers. The rise of viral marketing and fan-focused narrative strategies triggering media producing fandoms threatens the conditions of media labor (Caldwell, 2011).

In addition to the audience's participation in media working, emergent labor strategies including production outsourcing, non-unionization, and transnational co-production externalize risk and cultivate flexibility of media practitioners' labor. As digital marketing campaigns

require a delicate balance and collaboration between fans, brands and content, big media corporates prefer non-unionized and low-level laborers who are familiar with DIY-style amateur aesthetics to high-level skilled professionals who create scripted original content. Thus, growing digital marketing campaigns of the contemporary entertainment industry tend to divide professional laborers into the high-level and low-level groups and increase their reliance on low-cost digital labor (Mann, 2013).

In sum, ranging from textual aesthetics and watching experience to production labor and industrial strategies, digital television technologies shift the cultural paradigm of television from liner broadcasting flow to the navigational database (Bennett, 2008). Television wired with the Internet becomes more contradictory and paradoxical media sphere that is more dispersive, but at the same time, aggregative, and more ephemeral, but simultaneously, perpetual.

2.2.2   TV flow as mobility: Globalization of television

As White (2003) states, the concept of flow represents not only the distinctive textuality, programming, scheduling, viewing experience of network television, which is commercially planned, but also implicates the mobility of television content, which travels on a global scale as well as on a domestic scale. Although television is basically regulated by the nation-state because of its political and economic impacts and social and cultural functions which maintain social order and constitute of citizenship and public sphere, it is also strongly international because of its cross-border production, distribution, and consumption by new media technologies (Allen & Hill, 2004; Brunsdon, 2000; Corner, 1999). It means that television studies is inevitably premised on the distinctions between "us" and "others" (White, 2003).

Configuring the inherent nature of television, Chris Barker (1997) defines that television is an institution of capitalist modernity involving both national systems and the development of

transnational television system, which contributes to globalization of postmodern culture. Thus, he contends that television culture should be understand through a global flow of culture with multiple, shifting and hybrid identities. Ulf Hannerz (2002) also argues that, in an ever-more interconnected world, the notion of the local, community, and nation as conceptualization of the national context is complemented by the implications of boundary-crossing and long-distance cultural flows.

In this context, this section explores previous scholarship of globalization, particularly focusing on the discussion about global media flow. And then, new trends and possibilities of peripheral or semi-peripheral television industries as ruptures and changes in cultural globalization, which are reconstructing global geography and cultural layers, are reviewed.

Global media flow

Globalization is one of the key concepts in international communication research and global cultural studies. Globalization theories have focused mainly on the ways in which political and industrial powers engage in new patterns, practices and flows of transnational culture, migration, and identities around the globe and the uneven and unequal nature of the unprecedented global movements. Early studies on cultural globalization identifies transcultural media flow as dominance of western or American media industries over non-western, underdeveloped countries (Conversi, 2010; Hamelink, 1983; Schiller, 1991, 1996; Tomlinson, 1991). From the perspective of political economy, these scholars are concerned with the cultural homogenization, synchronization, and westernization of global media system dominated by commercial multinational media corporates. Taking note of the power of transnational corporations as the primary agents of cultural synchronization, Cees J. Hamelink points out that American popular culture replaces local culture with global investment and marketing strategy of

the US media industry. Herbert Schiller (1991) explains the cultural imperialism with the shift of global forces, from "Hard Power" relying on military power to "Soft Power" using ideological and cultural hegemony. He notes that the world is heading not towards pluralism, but actually towards homogeneity through this transnational media domination. Even recently, Conversi (2010) asserts that the US industry exerts overwhelming influence in shaping cultural globalization, thus leading to Americanization of world cultures. From the cultural imperialist perspective, local cultures are assimilated into the US or Western commercial culture, and therefore, the global diffusion of culture directs from the center to the periphery (Tomlinson, 1991).

Despite its powerful application, the 'one-way dominant flow' thesis has been criticized for being too simplistic and superficial account of cultural globalization. Many scholars have pointed out that media imperialist researchers neglect the frequently observed intra-regional or counter-hegemonic media flow phenomena apart from the US-centric hegemony and the interdependence of the local and regional media culture (Appadurai, 1996; Boyd-Barrett, 1998; Martin-Babero, 1993; Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 1996; Straubhaar, 1991; Thussu, 2007). Rather than cultural imperialism, these scholars argue that globalization opens up new space for imaginations, identity buildings, and cross-cultural communication practices when different players continuously negotiate with complex relationships of power (Appadurai, 1990; Kraidy, 2002; Morley & Robins, 1996).

Challenging against the unilateral view of cultural production and distribution, Oliver Boyd-Barret and Daya Kishan Thussu (1992) suggest the notion of "contra-flows" as counter-hegemony circulations of information, which contrasts dominant flow of the U.S. global industry. Analyzing the mechanism of regional news exchange, they argue that 'glocalization'

strategy of global media, which involves geocultural media and linguistic groups in order to maintain their cultural domination in local and regional markets, can help local cultural media to form reverse flows against the global media industry hegemony. John Sinclair, Liz Jacka, and Stuart Cunningham (1996) also insists that the real world cannot be divided through binary concepts such as "center-periphery," "dominance-subordination," or "the West-the rest" intranational cultural flows because some metropolitan cities in each geolinguistic region function as a powerful cultural center of audiovisual productions rather than the US global media center. Thus, the peripheries have their own internal and regional dynamics as well as global ties. With regard to the complexity of global cultural flow, Joseph D. Straubhaar (1991) suggest the concept of "asymmetrical interdependence." According to Straubhaar, even though the relationships between the West and the rest remain highly unequal, local media systems autonomously work to some degree in cultural production and distribution. The industrial and technological advancement of the national and local media market have made transnational media circulation patterns more complex and multidirectional.

Considering human agency as an active player of globalization, post-colonialist approach has also enriched the discussion of cultural globalization. Conceptualizing the disjunctures or interruptions in global cultural flow as five scapes including ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes, Arjun Appadurai asserts that each of the five factors such as population, media, technology, finance and ideology, which travel across the national boundaries, makes a different flow, and thus blurring the line between the global and the local. He concludes that "globalization is itself a deeply historical, uneven, and even localizing process" (1996, p 17). Some scholars interpret the nature of cultural globalization with the notion of 'hybridity' (Kraidy, 2002; Papastergiadis, 2005; Tomlinson, 1999). For example, Homi

Bhabha (1990) considers that a nation is a narrative strategy to standardize and institutionalize identity, power structure and political rationality, and produce counter-narratives with the hybridization strategy to resist imperial domination. Thus, nation and national identity reflect the ambivalence of the people's psyche, us and others, as a transitional social reality. Focusing on the dialectic relationship between cultural structure and agency, Marwan M. Kraidy (2002) confirms that hybridity is a global existential cultural condition "to characterize the dual forces of globalization and localization, cohesion and dispersion, and disjuncture and mixture, that capture transnational and transcultural dialectics" (2002, p. 327). The concept of hybridity, however, encounters criticism for the conceptual ambiguity and structural vulnerability for anti-progressive appropriation. The critics refute that hybridity overlooks or justifies the commercial and capital nature of the global expansion process (van der Veer, 1997), and overstates cultural dimensions, especially the unequal and asymmetrical relationships among countries, cultures, regions and audiences, thus leading to a neglect of the dynamic impact of structure (Golding, 1997)

Another explanation to the multilateral and multilayered cultural flow is focusing on the reception of audience. The cultural studies approach to the global media consumption more boldly interprets the autonomy of local audience (Ang, 1985; Stratton & Ang, 1994; Morley, 2006). Jon Stratton and Ien Ang (1994) argue that a homogeneous culture at a global level has never existed since transnational contents have to be reproduced within local contexts. Based on the framework of Hall's encoding-decoding and of Bourdieu's popular pleasure, Ang insists that the fun of popular culture comes from the process of audiences' interpretation of the media text, saying that "popular pleasure is first and foremost a pleasure of recognition" (1985, p.20).

Televion scholars have been largely interested in how local audiences receive foreign media content focusing on their interpretation and preference. A number of scholars have investigated the transnational media consumption in relation to the cultural geography (Chadha & Kavoori, 2000; Iwabuchi, 2002, 2004; Hoskins & Mirus, 1988; Morley, 2006; Straubhaar, 1997). Colin Hokins and Rolf Mirus's theory of "cultural discount" (1988) proposes that imported television programs have a diminished appeal elsewhere because of the different language styles, values, beliefs and institutions from those of the local ones. With notion of "cultural proximity," Straubhaar (1997) insists that local audiences are likely to prefer more geographically or geoculturally adjacent programs. As an evidence of cultural proximity, Kalyani Chadha and Anandam Kavoori (2000) assert that local audience's preference, along with the national gatekeeping policy and competitiveness of local media content, is one of the major elements to undermine the dominance of the Western media content in developing Asian countries.

The increasing transnational television flow based on satellite technology has raised the academic concern on the physical and imagined mobility of migrant audiences (Appadurai, 1991, 1996; Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 1996). Since the diasporic communities exist as ethnic minority staying in the host country and simultaneously connecting with families and friends in the home country, they deterritorialize national boundaries and reconstruct "the larger map of linguistic and cultural affinities between civilizations" along with "the vast transmission 'footprint' of satellite broadcasts" (Athique, 2016, p.118). Thus, the geolinguistic and geocultural public sphere can be interpreted neither a national lens nor cosmopolitan perspective (Appadurai, 1991, 1996; Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 1996). Rather, it can be understood as plural and multifaceted links across-between "sophisticated cosmopolitanism" and "long-distance

nationalism" (Cunningham, 2001). In this regard, Adrian Athique indicates that the hybridity

approach is more proper to account for the transnational cultural consumption of the diasporic

communities as "the process of cultural fusion and the instances of code-switching that arise

when people inhabit and interpret multiple cultures" (2016, p.16).

In the case of Asian audiences' consumption, however, these ideas should be more

carefully applied (Chua, 2004; Iwabuchi, 2002, 2004; Yang, 2006). Koichi Iwabuchi's collection

(2004) discovers that historical experience and social connection with neighboring countries

have impact on the Asian audiences' cultural reception. Many East Asian researchers by and

large agree that the regional audiences feel more emotional ties with the programs containing

contemporary modern culture than those with a specific nationality, because they have common

experience for modern and urban revolution, but at the same time, for the previous Japanese

colonial occupation (Chang, 2003; Ching, 2000; Iwabuchi, 2002;). The historical and political

context urge the regional producers to develop more nuanced and sophisticated strategies to

create standardized appeals and sensitive representation to the regional audiences (Yoshino,

1999). Therefore, in Appadurai's words, it is necessary to consider that "globalization is itself a

deeply historical, uneven, and even localizing process" (1996:17).

New geography of global media flows

As stated above, cultural globalization has been often understood through a spatial lens,

which reconfigures and reconstructs the national, local and regional boundaries as the material

basis of the dynamics of globalization. As Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham (1996) suggest, the

rapid growth of mega cities outside the West leads to the intensified urbanization as a form of

globalization. Taking note of the spatial dynamics of accumulation and concentration, Saskia

Sassen (1991) proposes a network of global cities led by New York, London and Tokyo as a new

sites of major production and finances that is central to global economy involving decentralization of production and labor and centralization of control and capital. She identifies four key functions of the global cities: reorganization of the world economy as command posts; attraction of personnel, finances, services for the leading global firms as key locations; command of production and innovation as headquarters; and sales of the products and innovations as marketplaces. With the four functions, the network of global cities, which connects with other production posts, complicates and fragments global production system. In so doing, "the spatial and social reorganization of production associated with dispersion makes a possible access to peripheralized labor markets, whether abroad or at home, without undermining that peripheral condition" (Sassen, 1991, p. 31).

Michael Curtin (2003, 2007, 2012) further suggest the concept of "media capital" as a central space of mediations for global cultural exchanges and interactions. First, he explores the increasing velocity and volume of multi-directional media flows from the regional hubs such as Bombay, Cairo, and Hong Kong, against the hegemonic flow of Hollywood. And then he expands his concern to the remarkable cities encompassing the global Chinese market, such as Taiwan, Singapore, Vancouver, London, and Kuala Lumpur. Similarly to Sassen's notion, Curtin defines media capital as "a geographic center within a field of interconnected locales" and as "a concentration of resources, reputation, and talent" (2012, p. 180). Through a centripetal tendency in production and a centrifugal tendency in distribution, media capitals attract creative talents as a core resource of cultural productions and form a cluster that facilitates innovations and cultural reproductions. In the locale of centralization and accumulation, national and local institutions play a significant role in fostering domestic talents and nurturing their distinctive cultural attributes, thus confronting dominant global culture (Curtin, 2007, 2012). However, Curtin

(2012) emphasizes that media capital should be conceived in a dynamic and historicized context because the status of a media capital is not static but fluid and flexible. As seen in the case of Hong Kong, its reputation and distinction in film and television has constantly changed in the cultural and political relations with neighboring cities like Shanghai, Singapore, and Taiwan, as well as faraway cities such as London and Hollywood. Media capital is therefore an ongoing site where the local, regional and global forces negotiate, collaborate and compete with each other in order to create and circulate new cultural products.

The remarkable growth of media capitals over the world has been driven in part by the national and regional policies that want to foster a creative industry (Cunningham, 2002; Hartley, 2005). In most national cases, policy makers who try to promote job market and economic development have developed a creative industry centered on the core locations by taking the emergence of new media technology and knowledge economy as a new opportunity to drive both wealth creation and social and cultural innovation (Hartley, 2005). As one of the development strategies, creative industrial clusters have been actively adopted to globalize national or regional cultures (Keane, 2007). Since these clusters tend to provide cultural products and services for the global market rather than the domestic market, they become hubs that direct and organize transnational flows of media contents, thus glocalizing the local/regional cultures. As a more balanced approach to the transnational patterns of the regional popular culture, Keane (2007) suggests a five-part framework: deterritorialization (low-cost production and outsourcing), mimetic isomorphism (cloning culture), cultural technology transfer (co-production and franchises), niche breakthrough markets (multiple channels), and the creative/industrial cluster (media capitals).

Collaboration in East Asia and cultural regionalization

The robust cultural productions, distributions and consumptions around the industrial clusters have led to increasing transnational flow across the borders. While various national media markets have been integrated by the global Hollywood companies, the active development of East Asian media production and inter-Asian connection, as de-Westernized patterns of cultural globalization, cannot be ignored (Iwabuchi, 2010; Jin & Otmazgin, 2014). Particularly, the East Asian mega cities, as a hub of the local and regional cultural industry, have helped greatly to set new cultural trends among the regional audiences across the world, which share the similar cultural traditions (Chu, 2011; Curtin, 2007; Keane, 2007; Kenny, 2001). Aiming the disperse audiences, the local industries have extended their operations within and sometimes beyond the region as a "geocultural media caterer" (Thussu, 2007). Indeed, the Chinese television industry, which should meet profitability goals with political interests of the state, has eagerly sought for the international audiences, particularly to Chinese diasporic communities over the world (Keane, 2015). Under the governmental policy of reforming the cultural system, the Chinese television industry has found a way to incorporate creative and modern elements in their production.

Collaboration and co-production with international companies and experts has been one of the primary strategies for the cultural innovation. The vastness of the Chinese market with more than 1.3 billion viewers has drawn cultural products and resources of foreign countries, particularly of its neighbors such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea. From films and television dramas to popular music and online games, the local cultural industries and producers have started to pool financial, cultural, and technological resources to compete with other regional products (Chua, 2012; Jin & Lee, 2012; Otmazgin, 2013). For the producers,

pooling of funds is a solution to create blockbuster television series that require large budgets. Foreign stars and entertainers are also a useful tool to attract audiences and funding sources from abroad (Beals, 2001). In fact, many Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korean actors and actresses including idol stars have been appointed as key performers drawing regional audiences as well as domestic viewers. Due to these various advantages, numerous East Asian producers not only in Mainland China but also in other neighboring countries, have run co-production projects (Chua, 2012; Jin & Lee, 2012; Otmazgin, 2013).

In the field of television, however, South Korea was initially less likely to participate in the transnational co-production, compared to *Great China* including mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, which have the common language, history, and culture. Although cross-national collaboration was active in the field of movies and online games, Korean television producers and policy makers tended to consider the local or national cultural industry as a particular area that must be protected and maintained as "the body of values, practices, and identities… different from others" (Schlesinger, 1997, p. 372). Because of the primary function of network television for nation building and national identity formation, television co-production with foreign partners was shunned at least in South Korea by the early 2000s. However, the Asian economic crisis and the neoliberal reform of the domestic media industry oriented Korean producers and broadcasters to pay attention to neighboring markets and transnational co-production as a way to adopt globalization (Kim S., 2011; Lee, J. W. & Won, 2005). Coincidently, the huge popularity of Korean entertainment content, so-called *Korean Wave*, has helped them to be welcomed by the regional investors (Shim, 2006; Jang, 2012; Jeon et al., 2012). The idol culture pervaded in East Asia has made it easier for Korean producers to enter the neighboring markets.

Another motivation for the regional collaboration and co-production is the protectionist policy of the Chinese government (Curtin 2016; Keane, Yecies, & Flew, 2018). As Aihwa Ong (2006) identifies the "socialist market economy" of China, the industrialization of the Chinese media system has been driven by "the twin modalities of the neoliberal governmentality," both with "neoliberalism as exception," which stimulates business activities in the Chinese cultural market and facilitates interactions with the global cultural market, and with "exceptions to neoliberalism," which protects Chinese national culture, the public interest, and political stability (Zhao, 2008, p. 6). Accordingly, the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) have continuously enhanced the annual quota and censorship on foreign drama and entertainment content along with the "government-initiated marketization" of the local media industry. For foreign producers and distributors, collaboration and co-production with Chinese partners became the best solution to avoid the rule of the protectionist policy as well as manage the uncertainties in the local market (Chua, 2012, Curtin, 2016; Keane, 2015; Keane, Yecies, & Flew, 2018).

Moreover, Chinese online streaming sites such as YouKu-Tudou, Sohu, IQiyi, etc., which have been supplying the Korean television content with almost real time, have enabled the Korean television industry to be actively engaged in the regional market. They have not just uploaded the foreign content but invested in transnational co-production projects as an influential player (Curtin & Li, 2018; Keane, 2015). Diversifying their services and connecting with traditional broadcasters and international partners, the Chinese streaming media companies have played a crucial role in catalyzing cultural synchronization among the regional audiences (Curtin & Li, 2018; Keane, 2015; Gilardi, et al., 2018). Based on the digital media, transnational cultural production and consumption has been prevalent in the region. As Athique (2016) stresses, the

audiences with border-crossing experiences and activities in physical or imagined spaces provide a real foundation for transnational cultural markets. In particular, the popularity of the Korean Wave among the Southeast Asian audiences has led to the development of the local industries. Adopting the Korean Wave content, the local producers standardize and innovate their local popular music, film, and television, thus mediating and narrowing the gaps between East and Southeast Asian industries (Chung, 2013).

The increasing collaboration and co-production practices in the region are often understood as a comprehensive and multidimensional process for cultural regionalization (Chua, 2012; Jin & Lee, 2012; Otmazgin, 2005; Xu M., 2015). According to Michael Schulz, Fredrik Söderbaum and Joakim Öjendal, cultural regionalization is defined as "a process of change from relative heterogeneity and lack of cooperation towards increased cooperation, integration, convergence, coherence and identity in culture within a given geographical space" (2001, p. 304). It means that cultural regionalization involves regional cooperation and integration in social and cultural areas, as well as economy and politics. Although the nation-states have played an important role in connecting and circulating transnational flows in the region (Thussu, 2007), the cultural regionalization in East Asia has been primarily driven by private players rather than by the local governments (Katzenstein & Shiraishi 2006; Otmazgin & Ben-Ari, 2013; and Pempel 2005). The market-driven regionalization has been attributed to the growth of the region's economy and the emergence of an affluent middle class with increasing purchasing power and leisure time in the last two decades (Katzenstein & Shiarishi, 2006). In addition, the technological affordance of the regional audiences has reduced the real-life interactions to "a remarkable 'cultural convergence' between populations across the world" (Athique, 2016, p.150). Such profound micro- and macro-level shifts have shaped the pan-Asian cultural

regionalization, which encompasses the dialectics of continuity and change, the national and transnational, and traditional and new practices and strategies.

Now, popular culture in East Asia, more attuned to local tastes, routinely crosses national boundaries, despite the increasing operations of global media firms in the region (Beals & Platt, 2001; Jin & Lee, 2012; Keane, Fung, & Moran, 2007). However, the increasing inter-Asian connections do not guarantee the autonomous, democratic and dialogic collaboration and cooperation because the market-driven globalization inevitably entails unevenness, inequality and marginalization in the networks of the industrial production (Iwabuchi, 2010). Moreover, transnational co-production driven by an economic logic imposes the risk that talented people and techniques in small-sized local industries can be absorbed by big nations, as seen in the entertainment television business of Taiwan (Zhao, 2016). As Curtin (2016) asserts, it should be noted that the collaboration and co-production among the local, regional and global players in Asia is not a recent and temporary phenomenon but part of the long tradition of globally networked production infrastructures which was initially propelled by Global Hollywood. Therefore, the cross-national and cross-regional collaboration in East Asia should be understood as dynamic interactions between the local and regional agencies on a global scale as well as a regional scale.

2.3   Reality Television Format as a Global Television Package

As one of the active co-production projects between Korea and China, the recent boom of entertainment television format production has been creating a new trend in the regional television industry. Since around 2014, not only have major Korean television networks but also many cable stations and independent production firms participated in co-production with Chinese partners to make the Chinese versions of Korean entertainment shows. In light of the

language barrier between the two countries and the general mode of television format adaptation which is conducted by an importer to the local market, such a transnational co-production phenomenon is unusual in global television format trades. Moreover, Korean television format is going global beyond the regional market. To better understand a new pattern and trajectory of the transnational television flow, it is necessary to look at the discussions on television format in global television studies. In addition, the development of reality television and its social, cultural, economic and political implications is discussed in this subchapter.

2.3.1 *Format in global television studies*

Television format trade is one of the most notable cultural phenomena in global television industry for the last decade (Aveyard, Moran, & Jensen, 2016; Chalaby, 2016; Esser, 2013; Moran & Malbon, 2006; Oren & Shahaf, 2012). The explosive rise of television format business in the 21th century is based on the paradigmatic changes in global media industry such as digitalization, globalization, and commercialization (Aveyard, Moran, & Jensen, 2016; Moran & Malbon, 2006). The advent of multi-channel and multi-service television platforms, which have fragmented audiences, has caused an increasing demand for cheaper and more attractive types of content. The format business which materializes and commercializes a program idea has developed with several advantages for the local and global television industry: the cost savings in the research and development of a new program; the built-in guarantee of success approved by television executives and viewers in one or more countries; the adaptation in the local context and language; and the minimization of cultural discount (Jensen, 2007). As formatted show programs have emerged as a new commodity in global television industry due to these advantages, media scholars have tried to engage in and theorize about the cultural work and global trends.

A television format is considered as the sum of the elements characterizing a program. From the industrial perspective, television format consists of two basic elements: the licensing agreement and the Bible including production notes, history, schedule, ratings, etc. (Moran, 1998). The former represents the characteristics of a cultural commodity exchanged in an international television market. The latter means a booklet that contains all the information necessary to produce a particular television program, such as audio-visual materials, technical requirements, audience organization, schedule, lessons learned, crew list, budget sample, etc. Focusing on the tradability of a program package, Jean K. Chalaby (2016) presents four characteristics of a television format: as a licensed remake; a recipe combining immutable rules and principles and adaptable elements; a proof of concept with a potential of a solid program structure and viewership ratings; and a method of production. Thus, he defines the formatting process as the structuration of a show with "a distinctive narrative and its licensed outside its country of origin in order to be adapted to local audiences" (Chalaby, 2016, p. 13).

With more concerns on the adaptability, Moran (1998) defines that format is an economic and cultural technology to govern the flow of program ideas as well as a service to promote a certain televisual possibility. Format is not a furnished or canned product, but an easily adaptable or replicable framework licensed through international trades for local adaptation. In terms of the adaptability, Shahaf (2016) connects the cultural and industrial mechanism of television format with Fiske's concept of television's formula art and intertextuality. She argues that formatting itself implies industrial efficiency and predictability in television production as a process of intertextuality, thus defining that format is "the process through the creative industries introduce and implement predictability into the complicated and costly process of cultural production" (p. 251). Similarly, Pia Majbritt Jensen (2007) points out that the distinct structure of television,

which composes a number of segments and belongs to a schedule and a series, has an impact on format trade and adaptation because a format is an individual program designed as part of a series and schedule (Ellis, 1982; Jensen, 2007). That is, television format should include similar components such as storyline, characters, set design, game rules, etc. for continuity, and simultaneously, unique elements as an original commodity for tradability. She also emphasizes that television format is produced locally, but at the same time, reproduced globally, thus defining television adaptation as an embodiment process of the global-versus-local paradox. In the dialectic relationships of format adaptation, between segment and flow and between the local and global, hybridization, destruction, and creation of genres normally happen as a creative and experimental element. That is why television formats are basically hybrid and mutable.

The formatting process of innovation within repetition and imitation has initially empowered the US and the Western television industry with the well-established conventional forms of televisual texts and advanced technologies. From the industrial aspect, internationalization, engines and tradability are key elements for the success of a format (Keane & Moran, 2008). That is, whether or not global franchising is available determines the success of a format. The tradability across national boundaries allows television formats to get not only diversity but also flexibility for local adaptation. In this respect, the US and the Western television industry that have accumulated the experiences of international television trade have had an advantage in format business. Chasing the trade patterns of super production groups, Chalaby (2015) insists that global format trades contribute to the enhancement of unequal and dominant power structures of former capitalist world-system and its one-way flow. Since the increasing competition in television format industry has forced the super production groups to

network, merge, and franchise local production firms, broadcasters and distributors, he argues that the strategies of power agencies decrease global cultural diversity.

However, the format firms find it necessary to decentralize and localize the roles of their global creative offices in order to secure intellectual properties and maximize profits, because ideas and expertise flow in different fashions depending on their geocultural characteristics (Ferrari, 2012; Oren & Shahaf, 2012; Waisbord, 2004). Establishing the local (production)-global (circulation)-local (adaptation and consumption) routes, transnational production groups make local format global and adapt the super formats in a specific market, thus gaining international resonance. From the perspective of cultural identity, Silvio Waisbord (2004) and Chiara Ferrari (2012) emphasize the influence of national culture and identity and the interrelations between the global and the local in the process of local adaptation, because television is basically rooted in a national system. The global flow of local television formats based on various national systems shows complicated and multifaceted circulation of current transnational television content.

The alternative flow from marginalized industries and local adaptation highlights the tensions between globalization and localization and between cultural homogenization and heterogenization. Obviously, the dominance of American television formula has provided the producers in the Rest countries industrial standards and norms to imitate and catch up (Bourdon, 2012; Ferrari, 2012; Shahaf, 2007). Nevertheless, the dramatic shifts of digitalization, globalization, and commercialization have triggered the industrial standardization and integration across the world, and eventually have led to the rise of periphery industries with the increasing transnational format business (Shahaf, 2016). In particular, it is remarkable for the non-English speaking countries to actively participate in the global format business with the language-free

cultural commodities. Taking note of the cultural role of hyper-local formats with national ideologies and sentiment, Shahaf (2014) asserts that a locally formatted program is no less important than the big-name reality franchises because they play as a "cultural glue" in spreading contemporary formats. Given the genuine manifestations of local, regional identities in global formats and vice versa, television format is understood "as a perfect synthesis of global, national, and local scenarios" (Oren & Shahaf, 2012). Thus, television format business not only suggests the multi-direction of globalization and localization but also the increasing significance of new global players such as Korea, Israel, Netherland and Denmark, which are supported by the diaspora and online communities. Enabling the previously isolated industries in the finished program trades to work with the elements and conventions of a distant culture, television formats, therefore, create multilateral flow across the world.

As an emerging field of study, television format studies is expanding to encompass reception processes of global audiences, localization strategies of production professionals, and regulatory practices of policy makers (Aveyard, Albert, & Jensen, 2016; Esser, 2013). With diverse methodologies drawn from genre studies on different local versions, format studies is raising again the questions about: how the patterns and flows of transnational programming trades are transformed (Chalaby 2016; Esser, 2013; Moran 1998; Oren & Shahaf, 2012); how the local finds expressions (Holt & Sanson, 2013; Jensen, 2007, 2013 King, 2010; Moran & Malbon, 2006); how the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts impact on television formats and vice versa protection (Bielby & Harrington, 2008; Esser, 2010; Moran & Keane, 2003; Waisbord, 2004); and how local adaptations are evaluated (Cooper-Chen, 2005; Jensen, 2007; Lewis, 2013; McCabe & Akass, 2012).

2.3.2   Reality television in global market

Notably, format studies often deal with reality television programs as a major research object. This tendency results from the global boom of reality television production for the last decade (Deery, 2015; Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016). Although the concept that audiences see people's everyday life and reaction through candid camera were often adopted in previous television programs, reality television, which combines factually focused formats and commercially designed entertainment, has become a major entertainment genre suitable for the digitized, deregulated, and commercialized media environment (Brunsdon, Johnson, Moseley, & Wheatley, 2001; Dovey, 2000; Hill, 2005; Humm, 1998; McMurria, 2009; Spigel & Olsson, 2004). Particularly, the flexibility of reality genre, which easily embraces commercial strategies such as product placement, brand integration, franchising, lucrative subscription model etc., has developed itself as a new entertainment genre reflecting a highly commercial and globalizing television industry (Magder, 2009; Raphael, 2004).

The flexibility of reality television which is often packaged in a format, however, makes it difficult to define and demarcate the genre. From the perspective of genre, Misha Kavka (2102) attempts to suggest the historical development of reality with four genealogical steps: historical precursors; camcorder generation; competition generation; and celebrity generation. Focusing on the generic evolution in waves, she chronologically unpacks the cultural, political, and economic attributes of reality television. On the other hand, Daniel Biltereyst and Lennart Soberon (2016) pay more attention to the malleability of the genre, as an ambiguous character including both generic innovation and format development. Exploring the intrinsic association between format and reality genre, they present three different levels of reality television as a genre, meta-genre and a format in relation to the vibrant recent history of television industry.

Initially, reality television was shaped based on the three areas' conventions: tabloid journalism, documentary, and popular entertainment (Hill, 2005). Conceptualizing the essential chacteristics from these areas - actions and emotions of real people (non-actors); recording authetic images (police or surveillance); and dramatization (fictionalized reality and post-factum interview), Richard Kilborn suggests that reality television contains "real-life events through various forms of dramatized reconstruction" (1994, p. 423). The widespread economization strategies and technological advancement such as digital camcorder and nonlinear editing software facilitated a new wave in creative television-making (Raphael, 2004). Jon Dovey asserts that reality television is part of "first person media," as the "subjective autobiographical and confessional modes of expression which have proliferated during the 1990s" (2000, p. 1).

From the end of the 1990s, however, the subjective and confessional modes of reality television, which was often judged as trash TV, were leveled up into "high concept" primetime television, by integrating with two significant factors – celebrities and real-time interaction (Moran, 1998; Navaro, 2012). The monumental ratings on the new type of television led to the expansion of reality genre with a large number of subgenres and matching format. The concept of reality television has slowly shifted into a broader term of television format containing dramatic reconstruction of real-life events (Holmes & Jermyn, 2004). Integrated with commercial strategies, reality television was developed into a meta-genre with more specified and niche variations such as dating shows, cooking shows, talent shows, renovation shows, makeover shows, mocumentaries, docusoaps, etc. (Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016).

Moreover, the international trends of deregulation and commercialization led to the explosive production of reality television as a low-cost and high-return commodity which can be tradable over the world. Closely entangled with entertainment formula, reality television now

become a dominant commercial and hybrid genre in global television industry (Langer, 1998; Murray & Ouellette, 2004). With new marketing strategies and cross-platform synergies, reality television keeps evolving with diverse subgenres and formats and succeeding in adapting in new television markets across the world (Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016).

Since reality television format is not usually restricted by a set of rules, it is likely to allude to local media systems and cultural differences. Actually, reality television is often considered as one of the main sites of constructing nationhood, due to the notion of "everydayness" and the claim of "the real" (Billig, 1995; Edensor, 2002; Moran, 1998). Reality television shows present constantly habitual performances and cultural conventions of ordinary people, thereby building arbitrary nationhood and reinforcing it as normal. The everydayness of television is enhanced by the powerful reality that the medium delivers (Silverstone, 1994). Dovey (2000) says that reality television genre, particularly confession camera, makes audiences believe the performance of identity with direct utterances and thus, being "real." It is common sense that the reality in a reality television should be supported by the judgment of authenticity based on shared norms and values. If the performance does not conform to the judgment of "appropriate" behavior, it might be "otherized." Othering is an effective way to delineate and construct the nation. Therefore, the performance of the self can remind of the boundaries of the nation. Through the everydayness and sense of reality in television, which addresses 'citizens' directly in their living room and provides common experiences with familiar broadcast schedules, the nation is made real and normalized (Edensor, 2002; Schlesinger, 1991).

Regarding the nature of reality television, Biswarup Sen (2014) presents that the global trend of reality shows comes from "difference." Through the analysis on Indian versions of global reality shows, he uncovers that the global television shows make the differences of the

local culture and identity more noticeable, not as an assimilated feature to one side but as hybrid one. It means that the difference in a local reality television is adapted and consumed as an innovative element in transnational format markets. In the same vein, Marwan Kraidy (2011) argues that global reality television shows present modernity in the process of adaptation in which the Western model is tested and negotiated at the social, institutional, and individual levels. As a result, modernity is involved in creating a hybrid form as a brand-new program that changes the existing local production practices as well as the content. Conversely, locally created reality shows make the US and the Western television industry more colorful. The success of local reality shows has opened the US market that has been usually closed to peripheral television content. The fierce competition among the US television networks has forced the executives and producers to seek for something novel in the local programs, which can be adaptable in the major market (Edgerton & Rose, 2005).

As an emerging trader in the television format business, the Korean format industry refreshes the regional and global television markets with the hybrid genres and hyped-episodes mixing the local cultural sensibilities and globally standardized conventions. In addition, as a leading player in the region, the Korean television industry transfers the cultural practices and values of the locally developed formats to the regional television industry (Keane, 2015; Keane & Ma, 2016; Cho & Zhu, 2017). The dynamic interactions of the local, regional, and global agencies within the East Asian television market have formed a remarkable path in global television circulation. The Korean reality television formats have been in the middle of the cultural flow. In order to understand the transnational cultural production and consumption of Korean reality television formats, it is necessary to look closer at the reality of the emerging,

converging and hybrid culture of contemporary television and the dynamic relationships in the production, adaptation, and consumption of the television formats.

This study aims to examine the patterns and features of the Korean reality television production and distribution through historical and practical approach to the producers' practices and strategies. With the analysis on the development of the Korean reality formats, how producers negotiate with international partners, audiences, advertisers, and regulators, and successfully create a new commodity is focused on. The study addresses the following questions:

1) How do the local producers perceive the contemporary industrial, social, political, and cultural changes in their television production?

2) How do the local creative labor and production system influence and counteract the transnational production and consumption of the Korean reality television?

3) How are the Korean reality television shows different from the global reality formats as well as previous local primetime shows?

4) How is local identity and socio-cultural sentiment infused in the local formats created, adapted, and shared beyond the boundaries?

5) How do the tensions between institutional constraints (public or commercial/ terrestrial or cable network/ domestic or foreign regulation policies) affect the production practices and strategies?

6) How do the local producers, the regional and global distributors, and audiences interact with one another in the transnational production and consumption?

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This project adopts an integrated television studies approach combining archival analysis on newspapers, industrial journals and reports, and existing interview collections and autobiographical essays; production studies with interviews and observation; and textual analysis on individual programs to analyze the development strategies and practices of Korean reality television formats. First is a chronological exploration of the progression of Korean reality television. Through archival analysis on existing research materials, this study provides a classification that breaks Korean reality television down into several *phases* when (or *aspects* where) a specific factor is dominant, in relation to a particular social, industrial, and conceptual context. Also, audience and critics' discourses in press and archival materials documenting production and distribution processes are investigated for the chronological classification of Korean format industry.

Second it draws on ethnographic interviews with current and former executives and producers of major Korean television networks and independent production companies. Autobiographical essays and interview collections of renowned Korean television producers are examined to provide practical details of the procedures and outcomes in the format production and business. Additionally, observations on the set of the contemporary shows are included. Throughout these different endeavors, this study focuses more on the complex conditions and dynamics of power relations in the transnational production and distribution of the local television formats and the roles of the Korean television producers in the innovation process of the formats.

Third, this study conducts textual analysis of five sample television formats to provide the generic nature and evolution of Korean reality television formats. Classifying the history of

Korean reality shows into three large phases – formation, going-regional, and going-global phases, this project chooses specific programs as representative examples of each phase: *!:Exclamation Mark* and *Infinite Challenge* in the formation phase of locally formatted reality shows; *I Am a Singer* and *Super Idol* in the going-regional phase as the export to and co-production with China; and *Grandpa Over Flowers* in the going-global phase seeking for new markets and resources.

These multiple approaches enable this study to comprehend the production system of the Korean entertainment television from a broad perspective and to conduct both an empirical and theoretical analysis on the transnational flow of the local television formats.

3.1   Archival Research

To explore the historical development of Korean reality television shows, it was necessary to look into the generic pedigree of the genre and format. Given the abstractness and complexity of television genre classification, Jason Mittell (2004) suggests Michel Foucault's discursive analysis that decenter texts and examine various forms of cultural work as a research methodology of television genre history. While Foucault analyzed conceptual categories like sexuality and criminality defined by a centralized power structure, Mittell's discursive analysis shows bottom-up formation with seemingly trivial and discrete practices. Applying the concept of a generic "dominant" as the prevailing incarnation of a genre at a certain time, Mittell tries to find generic stems from innovative instances rather than a simplistic plot formula. He investigates micro-histories of specific instances to set up larger generic patterns through the particular moments, by exploring trade press coverage, popular press coverage, critical reviews, promotional materials, corporate and personal documents, production manuals, legal and governmental documents, audience remnants, and so on.

3.1.1   Analysis of existing interview collections and autobiographical essays

Adopting discursive analysis, this study investigated existing interviews of the key

figures published on Korean newspapers, magazines and books as a primary source to figure out

the overall history of Korean reality television formats. A Korean professor and former KBS

producer Kyoung-Soo Hong's book series *Dialogues with Korean TV producers* and *Dialogues*

with Korean entertainment TV producers are also utilized as important research materials. This

study gathered autobiographical essays of several famous Korean producers as critical apparatus

to understand their creative motivations and the production culture of Korean television

entertainment.

According to Jerome Bruner (1995), autobiography is constructed as a narrative created

within a culture that the author interacted with. He insists that autobiography as a form of

interpretation should be grounded in reality in order to reflect the time and space of specific

culture and events. Following Bruner's concept of autobiography, this project regards the

published interviews and autobiographical essays as reconfiguration of the events through "a

narrative expressing inner dynamics" between the interviewees and the production culture in

which he/she is involved.

3.1.2   Chronological analysis on primary sources

In addition to the analysis on preceding interviews and autobiographies, this study

examined news coverage, interview articles, audiences' and critics' reviews, and television

program listings and the ratings using Korea Integrated News Database System, a full-text

archive for Korean news generated from 1990, and the online homepages of the individual

programs. Additionally, *Chosun Daily* archive and *Donga Daily* archive, which provide full-

image reproduction of the two newspapers from 1920 in pdf format are used.

This study also attempted to offer an historical account of the large-scale transformations of Korean entertainment television show genre. At the same time, it tried to explore the breadth of texts classified by a genre at the given time. Main archives for exploring a broad change of a genre include professional monthly magazines, *Newspaper and Broadcasting* published by Korea Press Foundation and *Broadcasting Culture* published by Korean Broadcasters Association, professional weekly newspapers, *PD Journal* published by Korean Broadcasting Producers' Association and *Media Today* published by Korean National Union of Media Workers, and industrial and governmental reports and statistics created by Korea Creative Content Agency, Korea Communications Agency, Korea Communications Commission, the Foundation of Broadcasting Culture, Korea Overseas Investment Information System, etc.

3.2   Production Study

This section represents a set of field research activities including interview and observation. The author conducted several pre-dissertational research trips to South Korea from May 2015. Throughout the trips, the author collected a bunch of research materials such as news articles, professional magazines, periodicals, industrial reports and statistics, channels' on-air schedules, and audience and press reviews and interviewed with several producers to understand the overall trends of recent Korean television format business. Based on the preliminary research, this study chose the sample programs and contacted the producers of the shows and those people involved in the production of Korean entertainment programs.

3.2.1   Interview

Ethnographic interview is one of the main methods applied for collecting evidence on the production studies. Considering the purpose of the study, which is uncovering the development history of Korean reality television format and its characteristics, interviewees would be

naturally expected to be different and diverse professionals depending on each case and each stage. However, the range of interviewees for the project became narrow down to the current television producers who have been involved in producing the cases, because television producers in Korea have more information and better memory than people in any other occupation title, as the subject in charge of managing everything of production from idea development and shooting to budget execution and manpower operation. It was also seriously considered that they are still working on the production sites because of the short history of Korean format business. Even though some of the case programs have already ended, the producers are still actively engaging in television production of other television shows as an executive or senior producer. Thus, it is the television producers who know the most about the developing process of the television program as well as its related information.

Participants and procedure

One of the main challenges presented by production studies is the question of accessibility. Fortunately, there are several factors that enabled the author to obtain high accessibility to the necessary individual producers. First, South Korean television industry is relatively small and most of the major television companies are clustered in one area, so-called "Sangam Digital Media City" in western Seoul, as a high-tech complex of digital media and entertainment industry. Moreover, Korean television professionals are closely connected with one another through occupational organizations and communities, such as the Korea Broadcasting Producers' Association, Korean TV and Radio Writers' Association, the Korean National Union of Media Workers and so on. Once you connect with a key person, you can have conversation with his/her colleagues. Another useful aspect is the author's past career as TV writer and executive manager of an independent production firm in South Korea for over 17

years. The author still has a membership of the Korean professional organizations. The author's

personal relationships in the local television industry are invaluable in the research.

For this research project, 15 Korean television producers were recruited. The

interviewees include directors, chief producers or executives of the sample television formats

and other Korean entertainment producers who were able to give testimony to process of the

program development and the practices of the local television format business. Those producers

have been working at diverse television organizations from major terrestrial television stations

(KBS, MBC, and SBS), cable networks (tvN, M-net, TV Chosun, MBC plus), and independent

production companies (SM C&C, B&R, etc.). Additionally, several other producers like three

former and current chairmen of Korean Broadcasting Producers' Association, who have

conducted annual conferences and cultural exchange programs in which Korean, Chinese, and

Japanese producers have participated.

Table 1 Profiles of Interviewees

Name	Gender/ Age	Occupation / Career length	Position
HK	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 22 years	Executive producer of an MBC subsidiary
HS	M/ 60s	TV producer/ 33 years	CEO of an MBC subsidiary, former MBC producer
IK	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 19 years	MBC producer
JH	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 22 years	Executive producer of an independent production company, former SBS producer (Moved in 2015)
KM	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 16 years	Executive producer of tvN former KBS producer (Moved in 2014)
KS	M/ 50s	TV producer/ 23 years	Executive producer of MBC

KY	M/ 50s	TV producer/ 30 years	Executive producer of an independent production company Former MBC producer (moved in 2015)
LH	M/ 50s	TV producer/ 25 years	CEO of an independent production company, Former KBS producer (Moved in 2007)
LJ	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 15 years	MBC producer
LT	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 11 years	KBS producer
OK	M/ 50s	TV producer/ 27 years	SBS producer
OY	F/ 40s	TV producer/ 22 years	A cable television producer Former MBC writer (Moved in 2013)
SJ	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 23 years	Executive producer of M-net Former MBC producer (Moved in 2016)
YC	M/ 40s	TV producer/ 15 years	Producer of an MBC subsidiary, Former M-net producer (moved in 2013)
YJ	M/ 50s	TV producer/ 25 years	KBS producer

Note: The professional career lengths and positions of the interviewees are recorded as of August 2018

Interview procedures

This study accomplished individual face-to-face in-depth interviews from June 2017 to August 2018 in South Korea. Online conversations via email and telephone with the interviewees were also conducted intermittently over the same period. Individual interviews were conducted within the range of 40 minutes to 2 hours. Most interviews were held in restaurants or lounges near participants' workplaces. The interview sites were typically decided by the participants.

All interviews were audiotaped with the respondent's permission and the author's field note-taking. The participants were interviewed in Korean by the author. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the author. Each interviewee was assigned a pseudonym.

Interview questions

The interviews were conducted in a manner following Denzin's discussion of the reflective interview so that necessary information would be given through the interactions between the interviewer and the respondent (Denzin, 1989). Based on the data collected through preliminary research, the author conducted informal interviews, asking open-ended questions in a conversational manner. Because of the author's past career, the interviews skipped the process of sharing the knowledge and information that the respondents and the author already know. Instead, the author emphasized rich and vivid details in the interviewee's experience and understanding regarding the topic of this research (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

The central questions focused on the five categories: (1) the producers' perception of the industrial, social, political, and cultural changes in Korean entertainment production after the neoliberal reform of Korean TV industry from the late 1990s; (2) the difficulties and obstacles in developing the program format and the correspondence strategies; (3) the export and adaptation procedure of each show format in the regional/ global market; (4) the responses of the domestic and foreign audiences, producers, advertisers, and policy makers; and (5) the producers' self-evaluation on their show programs and prospects on the local television format industry. The sets of questions were applied flexibly and sensitively depending on the individual producers' careers and experiences. Another issue the author was interested in is the tension between institutional constraints (public or commercial/ terrestrial or cable network/ domestic or foreign regulation policies) and how they conflict or reside together with the producers.

Data analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed first, and then the transcripts were classified into specific themes including transformation of the local media system and its impacts on the

production of Korean reality television formats, introduction of global reality television show formats and their responses and strategies to the challenge, development processes and characteristics of particular formats, trading and adapting processes of the formats, co-production with China, comparison of production and consumption culture in the local, regional, and global market, the roles of producers, the producers' self-evaluation and prospects on the global competitiveness of the Korean formats and the local television industry. Through the initial coding process, the author conducted open-coding of the data, focusing on generating categories and finding the relationships among the diverse categories. And then, the author rearranged the data as a selective coding step integrating and refining the initially coded categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The coded data were interpreted aiming at understanding the transnational production and consumption of Korean reality television formats theoretically and practically.

3.2.2   Observation

Ideally, participatory observation is needed to analyze the ways in which the production team constructs a local reality television format in the production process and how and what they discuss and make decisions in the construction of the formulae, including writing, casting, styling, designing, directing, editing, etc. In this project, however, the observation method is limited to a specific case *Super Idol*, the first-ever joint audition show with Chinese producers, because it offers a unique opportunity to watch a co-production process with foreign producers, which other cases can never provide.

The author observed the production practices of *Super Idol* in a studio floor and the studio control booth, dressing room, and meeting room where Korean and Chinese producers and staffs, contestants, judges, translators were communicating with one another. The observation helped to explore how the Korean producers interact with Chinese producers and negotiate with

the two countries' regulations, advertisers' demands, and audiences' tastes, how they implement and improvise the format in the co-production process, and what conditions facilitate or interrupt the co-production project. It was also useful to understand the adaptation of the local TV format to the regional market.

3.3 Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is a useful method to analyze aesthetic, ritual, and ideological issues that television presents and represents. Discrete programs have a routinized formula as part of a series or serial. The form of the television text represents the target audiences' preferences as well as their daily routines. The style of television is often associated with an imaginary average family and their everyday life (Spigel, 1992). Also, since television is a mass media sphere where producers, texts, and audiences interact in a particular historical and social context, it has a great tendency to reflect social, political, and cultural practices and meanings in the process of production, reproduction, and adaptation. Thus, the analysis on television texts gives an opportunity to comprehend social, cultural, and ideological discourses projected on the detailed production practices and expressions.

The author collected some episodes of each case and figured out details of its temporal and spatial structure, characters, images on screen, narratives, sounds, and subtitles. Considering the hybrid features of reality television genre, each case was assessed by the similarities and differences among subgenres and then classified into a particular formula. The identification and classification of the cases enabled the author to understand how a specific show has been developed and innovated, what aspects of the program are appealing, and what is the cultural, social, and ideological implications of the television text. The analysis is also drawn on the previous research regarding the reality television genre/format (Holmes & Jermyn, 2004; Kavka,

2012; Murray & Ouellette, 2004). The generic analysis helped to explain the features of the locally formatted shows in relation to the global format franchise.

In sum, through the macro- and micro-analysis of the media coverages, interviews, and textual materials, this study traces how the key generic conventions of the previous local entertainment TV shows were canonized, how the cultural dominants of the shows were transmitted and internalized in Korean reality shows, and what kinds of economic, social, and political events influenced on the formation and transformation of the genre.

4   HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF KOREAN TELEVISION INDUSTRY

This chapter presents historical formation and transformation of the Korean television industry. Since television production is changed in relation to the sociohistorical conditions in which the medium is placed, understanding the historical trajectory of the local industry is crucial to identify the characteristics of the locally produced television content. Particularly, it focuses on how Korean entertainment television industry has been emerged and developed as the industrial and commercial consequences of the local television system.

This chapter consists of three sections. First, it traces the formation of the Korean television industry in the relationship between government and broadcasting system and the transformation of the industrial structure depending on historically important political, economic, and socio-cultural events. Next, this chapter uncovers how these historical distinctions influenced in establishing the characteristics of the local entertainment television shows. And then, how the transformation of the industrial structure and transnational circulation of Korean popular culture since the end of 1990s led into a highly export-oriented media industry is discussed in the final subchapter. It also discusses what facets of the local production culture

have resulted from the structural and hegemonic transformations of the Korean television industry.

4.1 History of Korean Television System

It is undeniable that Korean television is founded basically on public service broadcasting system (Cho H., 2014; Choi, Y. M., et al., 2012). However, the Korean public television system is quite different from those adopted by European countries, because it has different historical backgrounds and organizational structure, ownership, financial resources, production culture, and audiences' expectation. Looking at the historical development of Korean public service television system helps identify and understand the distinctions of Korean television culture as well as the political, economic, and cultural relationships surrounding Korean television industry.

4.1.1 Periodic division of Korean television history

Throughout the history of Korean television, political power has been one of the most influential factors defining and changing the local television system and industry (Cho H. & Park, 2011; Choi C. & Kang, 2001; Jeong S. & Jang., 2000; Kim Y. H., 2011). The political upheavals including long-term military dictatorship and civil uprisings against the governments have had a decisive effect on the formation and transformation of the local television system. Most turning points in the local television history have been deeply associated with enactments or disposals of media law or outlawed policies, led by the governments. Hence, many Korean media historians have discriminated the historical periods of the local television depending on the shifts of the governments and changes in laws, institutions or policies (Kim Y. H., 2011).

Although the state has played as the most important determinant in constructing Korean television system with legal or extralegal actions, the market and civil society also have worked as a potential player particularly after the democratization and liberalization of the 1980s (Cho

H. & Park, 2011; Ma, 2011). Hang-je Cho and Hong-won Park (2011) indicate that while Korean television is a controlled market guided by the government, it is also a very dynamic space where television stations fiercely compete for limited advertising time and audiences. Unlike the state power, the logic of market – i.e., economic efficiency, profitability, ratings supremacy, etc. – intervenes internally in the local television production culture. The changes in the power relations surrounding Korean television are also affected by the movement of civil society. For example, the nationwide movement for refusal to pay the mandatory TV viewing fee through which Korean citizens urged the television stations to stop their biased reports awakened the conscience of the television workers, and finally led the television labor unions and professional organizations to come on the stage of the local television history after the democratic uprising in June 1987. Therefore, in consideration with the power relationships among the state, the market, and civil society, this paper attempts to periodize the local television history with the following table below. With reference to previous studies on the classification of Korean television history (Cho H., 2012; Cho H. & Park, 2011; Choi C. & Kang, 2001; Jeong S. & Jang, 2000; Kim Y. H., 2011), changes of political power, economic conditions and legal basis around the Korean television are considered as the criteria for the table.

Table 2 Legal Institutional Changes of Korean Television Broadcasting

Division (Time period)	Politics	Economic events	Media industry/ Media law	Television system
Experimental introduction of television business (1948-1961)	Establishment of South Korean government	Economic aid of the US	- Introduction of American broadcasting system - HLKZ-TV (the first and commercial Korean TV: 1956-1961)	Emergence of commercial TV system
Settlement of television era (1961-1973)	Military government of Chung-hee Park	- Introduction of international loans	- Launch of a state-run TV, KBS (1961) - Act on Provisional Measures and Special Account for the State-run TV Business (1962)	State-run TV system

		- State-led economic development plan	- Korean Broadcasting Act (1963) - Launch of a private commercial TV, TBC (1964) - Launch of a semi-public TV, MBC (1969, start of triangular competition)	Coexistence of state-run, semi-public, and private TV
Popularization of television led by the military government (1973-1979)	Reinforcement of General Park's dictatorship via October 1972 restoration	- New economic development plan fostering heavy industry - Oil Shock	- Turning KBS into a public TV (1973), according to Korean Broadcasting System Act (1972) - Revision of Korean Broadcasting Act (Establishment of Broadcasting Ethics and Standards Commission, 1973)	Start of public TV system
Public service broadcasting controlled by the oppressive government (1980-1987)	Military government of Doo-hwan Chun	- Economic boom due to low oil prices, low interest rate, and dollar depreciation	- Forced dissolution of TBC and its merge into KBS and 65% of MBC shares vested in KBS, according to the Media Integration Plan and Basic Press Act (1980) - Introduction of color television (1980) - Korea Broadcasting Advertising Corporation Act (1980) - Citizen's denial campaign on television license fee (1985)	Public TV system under control of government
Opening of multichannel TV era (1987-1997)	Civilian government: Democratization & liberalization after civil uprising in 1987		- Disposal of the Basic Press Act, New Broadcasting Act (1987) - Establishment of broadcasting labor unions and strike (1988) - Launch of SBS (1991) - Composite Cable Broadcasting Act (1991) - Outsourcing quota policy (1992) - Start of commercial cable TV and provincial TV business (1995)	Coexistence of multiple public TV and private TV

Competitive media market (1998-present)		- Asian financial crisis and IMF bailout program - Declining rate of ads growth	- Revision of Broadcasting Act to integrate separate media laws (2000) - Assurance on viewers' rights (2002) - Launch of digital satellite TV (2002) - Launch of DMB & IPTV (2005) - Revision of the Integrated Broadcasting Act allowing TV ownership to major newspapers (2008) - Launch of four new general-programming TV channels (2011)	Hegemonic decline of public TV through media convergence & commercial-ism

Note: This table is made up with reference to *Historical development and identity of Korean public service broadcasting* by Cho H., 2012 and *50 years of Korean television broadcasting* by Kim B. H., et al., 2011.

4.1.2   *Introduction and settlement of television business in Korea*

Korean television broadcasting began from the needs of political regime rather than voluntary demands of the people because of lower socio-economic environment and political upheavals (Cho H., 2012; Kim B. H., et al., 2011; Ma., 2011). While the first Korean television company HLKZ TV was set up by a joint business between Korea and the US in a commercial manner after Korean War, it hit several snags, such as too low television penetration, too small advertisement market, lack of advertising demands, and lack of legal and institutional infrastructures supported by the government. The cash-strapped television broadcaster shutdown soon after.

The military junta of the General Chung-hee Park who seized power in a coup in 1961, took over the first commercial television and launched a national television network KBS in the same year. For the military leaders, opening a television station was one of the urgent political agendas of the coup government. Without consideration for its financial plan, management

methods as well as its purposes, roles and structure, they carried out their plan like a military operation within only four months after announcing the establishment of the national television station (Cho H., 2012; Kim Y. H., 2011). According to Jae-kyoung Oh (1973), the then Minister of Public Affairs, the purpose of establishing a national television station was "to first correct the sick minds of the citizen who makes public opinion, secondly, to suggest people the future vision of the newly developed nation with tangible images, and finally, to make it a Christmas present. Creating the television station for 50 days of nights was a sort of revolution" (p. 163). That is, the first national television station was founded under the explicit intent of the military government to enlighten the people and promote their policies (Ma, 2011). Jong-soo Lim (2011) asserts that KBS started as an essential institution to lead nation building and inspire "we-feeling" to the people under the banner of 'national modernization' that the General Park presented.

Despite being a state-run television, KBS did not receive sufficient funding from the government. To fill the budgetary deficit, the military government decided to impose a mandatory TV subscription fee on people and allow the station to sell TV commercials from 1963 (Jeong S. & Jang, 2000). The advertising revenue occupied two-third of the total financial revenue of KBS that year. Since then, Korean audiences were endowed with the triple roles: as a public citizen who is a payer for the benefits from the public television; as a consumer for the commercials; and as the people who are mobilized to national agendas (Ma, 2011). Such revenue structure is a very significant point in defining the characteristics of the Korean public service television system. In other words, the initial Korean television station had distinctions of the three types of television system – a state-run, public service, and commercial – together, which conflict with one another. The unique financial structure of KBS, which the military government

arbitrarily selected, has long affected the historical development of Korean public service television system.

With the enactment of the first Korean Broadcasting Act in 1963, Korean television industry set a foundational framework for a national television system backed by a strong government power (Cho H. & Park, 2011; Lim, 20004; Ma, 2011). The Act clarified the public responsibilities and duties of broadcasting, by stating "to promote the protection of the rights and interests of the audiences, the formation of the democratic public opinion and the improvement of national culture, and to contribute to the development of broadcasting and advancement of public welfare" in the article 1. Also, the first Broadcasting Act provided a logical basis for ensuring the industrial development of broadcasting, without undermining the existing framework of governmental control over broadcasting. Based on the Act, TBC and MBC, private commercial television companies were launched in the 1960s. The two networks made a lot of efforts in drama and entertainment show production to attract viewers. For the audiences who had not gotten any means of popular culture, except movies, television was a very attractive medium with which to enjoy leisure time. The great popularity of the entertainment programs contributed to increasing television penetration. The number of TV sets in Korea was just around 34,000, 0.7% of the total households, in 1963, but it exceeded 1,280,000 in 1973, which occupied more than 20% of the total households (Cho H., 2014). The success of the two private stations signaled the beginning of a triangular competition system that has aroused keen competition for ratings, and thus ultimately helping improve program quality and diversity.

4.1.3   *Popularization of public service television*

The 1970s was truly the time of television in Korea where television stations played a crucial role as a machinery to modernize the south of the peninsula divided after Korean War, to

combine nationalism and anti-communism, and to build it into national identity (Lim, 2011). The military regime of General Park who had more centralized power with an indefinite presidential term after the enactment of the Revitalizing Reforms constitution in 1972 turned the state-run station KBS over to a public television the following year. But, this was not an attempt to ensure the autonomy of the broadcaster and producers, but a conciliatory gesture to facilitate government public campaigns to the people through the improvement of the state-run broadcaster as a media outlet, which entailed corporatization of the broadcaster and professionalization of the workers (Lim, 2011). The corporatization of KBS triggered competition for advertisers among the three networks. The tripartite competition system became more fiercer, which eventually caused intense external intervention.

In 1980, Korean television industry faced an important watershed moment that brought a strong engagement of the government for reconstructing the national media system in an outlawed manner. The new military regime of Doo-hwan Chun, a successor of the former President Chung-hee Park, attempted to place media under its centralized control and surveillance through so-called 'the Media Integration Plan.' The government forcibly absorbed independent news agencies into a single state-run agency, closed numerous provincial newspapers, and merged the two commercial television companies TBC and MBC into KBS. Accordingly, TBC was then replaced by KBS 2 TV and MBC was compelled to vest 65% of its shares in KBS. In addition, the military regime tightened the censorship by revising the Basic Press Act of 1980, which included the enhancement of publicness of broadcasting, establishment of Broadcasting Commission and Broadcasting Adversary Commission, prohibition of the cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcasters, etc. (Hong D., 1997; Jeong S. & Jang, 2000).

While the coercive closure and merger of the media resulted in massive layoffs of journalists, the government also provided economic privileges to the monopolistic media companies with the public funding created through Broadcasting Advertising Corporation and significantly raised the media workers' wages. With the carrot and stick scheme, the new military government tried to tame the media and workers. KBS and MBC, which secured monopolistic structures from the state power, performed faithfully their duties to create an ideology justifying the state control over the country. In return, the broadcasters were able to expand, reproduce and accumulate capital and profit through the backing of the state (Cho H., 2012; Kim Y. H., 2011).

The advancement of media technology like color television broadcasting was another factor to promote the financial growth of the broadcasters (Yim, 2012). Beyond transforming the monochrome screen to colorful screen, color television broadcasting made a big change in the consumption of viewers (Kim B., 2011). Since the two television stations broadcast all programs including commercials in color from March 1, 1981, television ads exploded. The leading products advertised on television shifted from pharmaceuticals to daily necessaries such as electronics, food, beverages, confectionary, detergents. The new trend of colorization throughout the national life changed both production and consumption of the Korean society. The increasing importance of color and design as a key element of products made product quality more advanced and made consumption patterns more diversified.

The activation of television commercials led to the expansion of the local advertising market. Big conglomerates rushed to open their subsidiary advertising firms. The international sporting events such as the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul enlarged the market size of television advertisement in Korea. The Korean advertising spending of the

years increased to more than 1% of the GNP. Meanwhile, the new military regime established

Korea Broadcast Advertising Corporation (KOBACO), as the only public agency representing all

Korean terrestrial broadcasting companies for their advertising sales. Under the pretext of

securing the publicness of television broadcasting and returning the airwave revenue to the

society, the state kept maintaining its grip on television broadcasters through the agency (Kim

B., 2011). Owing to the growth of television industry, the number of households with a TV set

rose from 4 million in 1979 to nearly 6 million by 1989 and the number of television

programming hours per week increased from 56 to 88.5 in the same period. Thus, the

commercial success of the television companies under the strongly oppressive government

control was a key feature of the Korean television industry in the first half of the 1980s.

The Korean television system in which oppressive control and commercial competition

coexisted contradictorily encountered the emergence of a new power from the mid-1980s (Cho

H. & Park, 2011; Kim D., 2018). As the television broadcasters publicly supported the military

government with distortions of facts and interference in political matters, Korean citizens began

to resist to the back-scratching alliance of the government and the press. The unprecedented

nationwide movement to refuse paying the television license fee to KBS served as a form of

resistance against the collusion. The civil society criticized that KBS became the government's

PR agency to peddle pro-government propaganda and brainwash the people by promoting the

overconsumption of sports broadcasts and low-quality entertainment shows. The citizens linked

the refusal campaign on the license fee payment to the issue of freedom of speech and extended

it to a civil disobedience movement that later spread throughout the country. The national

campaign soon became a trigger for the democratic movement in June 1987, one of the historical

turning points of the Korean society (Kim D., 2018). Reflecting the zeitgeist, Korean media

workers and journalists established a labor union in their workplaces. Both civil society and media workers came on the stage of the television industry as a main group, albeit relatively weaker than the state and corporations, from the second half of the 1980s.

4.1.4 Democratization and deregulation

After the national wide civil uprising in 1987, the Korean television industry is characterized by two main trends – democratization and deregulation. The National Assembly abolished the Basic Press Act and enacted a new broadcasting law removing coercive broadcasting regulations and allowing private television broadcasting. With the enactment of the Foundation for Broadcast Culture Act, the National Assembly helped insulate MBC from political power and KBS and reinforced public functions of MBC as a public broadcaster. CBS (Christian Broadcasting System) closed by the Media Integration Plan in 1980 resumed broadcasting again. Several religious broadcasting stations were newly opened. In 1991, SBS, a private terrestrial broadcasting company, was established. The new television station then became a nationwide television network, allied with private provincial television broadcasters that were allowed since 1995. As a result, Korean television industry was reformed again as the triangular composition in which three national terrestrial networks – KBS, MBC, and SBS – took the initiative as major stations in the television market.

Although SBS was founded as a private station, the new Broadcasting Act of 1990 imposed the same public responsibilities on the broadcaster just as did to other public stations. Besides, in order to prevent privatization of the newly created station by a large conglomerate, stakeholders of the broadcaster in a special relationship prescribed by the President was limited to 30% of the total. Thus, the Act did not allow SBS to alter the basic framework of the Korean public television system (Ahn J. A., 2016). However, the initiation of a commercial terrestrial

broadcaster triggered audience movements again (Kim Y. H., 2001). They denounced the government's intervention in broadcasting and fought against excessive commercialization of television. Alerting to the dereliction of public service and malfunctions of commercial television, the civil society organized several watchdog bodies that aimed to protect the public sphere from private and commercial broadcasting and maintain a healthy public service broadcasting. These audience groups raised their voices through diverse activities, such as the publication of television monitoring reports, the operation of media literacy education programs and best program awards, demonstration and campaign like "No Television Day," etc.

In 1995, cable television service started. While its capital and production infrastructure was not mature enough compared to the three terrestrial broadcasters in the early days, cable television channels were expected to diversify television content in the local market. By such a series of changes, the national television system entered the multichannel and multimedia era, when public service and private stations, and terrestrial and cable networks are competing with each other. The television advertising market, which was steadily divided by KBS and MBC, turned into a fierce battlefield. Furthermore, the East Asian financial crisis in 1997, followed by the introduction of the IMF bailout program, accelerated the competition in the limited advertising market. Capitalist and corporate management of broadcasting has become a more important and perpetual factor than political power since so-called "the IMF management system" (Cho H. & Park, 2011; Kim Y. H., 2011).

In the 2000s, the tendency of democratization and deregulation in the television industry accelerated with internal broadcasting policies and external economic environmental changes. First, the enactment of the Integrated Broadcasting Act of 2000, which stipulated the rights of viewers and institutionalized the independence of broadcasting for the first time, enabled citizens

and civil society to participate in monitoring and programming of the major television networks and ensured that the broadcasting regulatory agency is an independent public entity free from political power (Ahn J. A., 2016). The Integrated Broadcasting Act, however, contained measures to revitalize the television market through industrial logics, which alleviated regulations on private cable television ownership to some degree; mitigated licensing rules and regulations for program providers; and allowed large corporations, media conglomerates and foreign capital to participate in broadcasting companies as a stakeholder at a certain rate. The introduction of new media technology further facilitated the deregulation and integration of the television market. From the early 2000s, satellite broadcasting, DMB and IPTV business have been successfully launched in accordance with the global trends of privatization, commercialization and digitalization in media industries. As the regulations on broadcasting ownership, which prohibited cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcasting, were lifted by the modification of the Integrated Broadcasting Act in 2008, the overall policy stance of competition and deregulation has been maintained until now.

4.1.5 *Disintegration of in-house production system*

Meanwhile, the multichannel and multimedia television system not only increased the number of television channels but also transformed the internal structure of the local television production (Roh, 2015b). In accordance with the Broadcasting Act of 1990, the government imposed the outsourcing quota on broadcasters from 1992. The production outsourcing policy was adopted as a concrete tactic to achieve the government's goal that promote the professionalism of producers and create a flexible production system, thus improving the national broadcasting industry. The mandatory outsourcing rate, which was differently applied to KBS and the rest, was initially 3% of the entire broadcasting time of each broadcaster in 1992.

The outsourcing quota increased by about 2 to 3 % every year and reached 18% of the total broadcasting hour in 1999. By specifying the subcontracting obligation rate, the upper limit of the outsourcing rate for the specially related parties, and the outsourcing rate of primetime zone, the integrated Broadcasting Act of 2000 further increased the outsourcing quota by 2% each year up to 40% of the total hour, the upper limit stipulated by the Act. (Cho J., et al., 2013).

The outsourcing quota resulted in the vertical disintegration of the Korean broadcasting production system (Chang & Roh, 2008). Prior to the introduction of the outsourcing quota, the three Korean television broadcasters had an in-house television production system as vertically integrated structure from production to distribution like the old Hollywood studio model. As the number of television channel and the scale of the industry was growing, it was necessary to build a flexible production system to adapt quickly to ever-changing needs and tastes of audiences and provide diverse television contents (Piore & Sabel, 1984). Since television industry is a highly specialized knowledge industry whose core element is tacit knowledge based on the experience capital owned by the human resources such as producer, writer, performer, etc., it is effective to move the workers who have the core knowledge freely in order to develop the entire television industry. That is, for the Korean policy makers, it was crucial to transfer the talented laborers from the existing broadcasters to new broadcasters or independent production companies for improving and diversifying the national television industry and culture.

At the beginning of the outsourcing quota, the major terrestrial broadcasters were lukewarm to the dissolution of the vertically integrated production system that could weaken their control over the workers. However, they gradually adopted the outsourcing policies to minimize production and transaction costs. Analyzing the evolutionary organizational changes of the Korean television drama production, Yong-ho Chang and Dong-ryul Roh (2008) uncover that

the vertical disintegration of Korean television industry enabled directors and writers to move to independent production firms and actors to entertainment management agencies. The free movement of the human resources speeded up the disintegration process with the expansion of the local industry, the inflow of foreign investment capital on the Korean Wave, and the diversification of revenue and incentives such as intellectual property right, sponsorship, product placement, etc. As a result, new players including new broadcasters, independent production firms and the management agencies that can deploy A-list stars have been empowered with fundraising abilities, thus being able to confront and resist the three major terrestrial networks. Korean television industry in which only three terrestrial networks existed in early 1900s has now evolved into a complex structure consisting of the three terrestrial networks, four commercial general programming channels, hundreds of cable networks, independent production firms and entertainment agencies. The intensified competitive atmosphere surrounding these players drives the scale of television contents larger and diversified.

In sum, Korean television system has followed the historical trajectory of the overlapped contradictions, such as modernization and nationalization, public service broadcasting and commercialism, and democratization and marketization (Cho H., 2012; Kim Y. H., 2011; Ma, 2011). The contradictions have been internalized not as opposite to each other, but as two sides of the same coin in the local television industry, which is commonly called by public service broadcasting, through the dynamic interactions among the agencies, institutions and technologies. The complex duality of the Korean television system has characterized not only the financial structure and programming strategies, but also the identities of producers, audiences and the television content. Now, let's look at how these historical contexts have affected in shaping the characteristics of the local entertainment show programs.

4.2   Historical Characteristics of Korean Television Entertainment

The current Korean Broadcasting Act classifies television programs into three categories: news reporting, culture, and entertainment (prescribed by Article 69(3)). The term of "entertainment" on domestic Korean television is used as a relative concept to "news and current affairs" and "culture and education" (Jeon & Park, 2003). According to Article 50 of the Enforcement Decree of the Broadcasting Act, news reporting means "the broadcasts related to coverage and report, review, commentaries, etc. for current events with respect to overall domestic and foreign politics, economy, society, culture, etc."; cultural programs refer to "the broadcasts to enhance the culture and education of people, children and juveniles"; and entertainment is "the broadcasts to cultivate national sentiments and diversify leisure life." Kyu-chan Jeon and Geun-seo Park (2003) point out that compared to the detailed and clear definition of news reporting and cultural program, the very simple and ambiguous definition of entertainment programs reflects the long-lasting negative perception of entertainment programs on Korean television.

4.2.1   Perceptions of television entertainment in Korea

Since the beginning of television broadcasting in Korea, the basic purposes of broadcasting were obviously defined to provide the people three types of services: news coverage, public education, and entertainment (Bae J., 1973; Choi Y., 1972). It means that even the military leaders recognized that entertainment was one of the essential functions of television broadcasting. However, the regime proclaimed that television entertainment should meet the public interest, as a public property using air waves (Choi Y., 1972). This point of view which emphasized the public benefit was the same for the public opinion at that time. *Dong-A Daily*,

one of the major Korean newspapers, ran a front-page editorial to celebrate the opening day of

KBS, advising that the first Korean television station should be sound, sincere, and a good

companion for the intellectual people (Donga-Daily, 1962) According to the survey conducted

by the Minister of Culture and Public Information in 1963, television viewers were motivated to

purchase TV sets because of: information acquisition (36.6%); having fun and entertainment

(31.0%); and educational needs (1.0%) (Hwang, 1963). Thus, Korean television entertainment

was charged with a dual goal of being both amusing and informing the local viewers from the

outset.

For the military government which considered broadcasting as an ideological device for

creating "sound consciousness of the people" and "national integration" (Jeon & Park, 2003; Ma,

2011), cultural programs were prior to entertainment shows to educate and mobilize

unenlightened people as patriotic citizens. The tendency emphasizing cultural programs is more

evident in the guideline of television programming. In the Broadcasting Act of 1963, the ratio of

news coverage was determined to be more than 10% of the total and cultural and entertainment

programs to be over 20% respectively. The revised Act of 1973, the proportion of cultural

programs increased to 30% of the total. This was a measure to control the rapidly increasing

daily soap operas (Han J., 2011).

In 1976, the military government even designated directly television program formulae

and schedules to increase the hours of cultural programs (Hong D., 1997). On January 12th, the

three television stations KBS, TBC, and MBC simultaneously carried out a partial reorganization

according to the recommendation of the government. They set the time zone of government

policy promotion for 20 minutes from 8:00 pm every weekday. The themes were also uniformly

set for an anti-communist propaganda on Monday, a proper guidance of youth on Tuesday, an

issue related to the Saemaul (i.e., 'new village' in Korean) Movement on Wednesday, a national security matter on Thursday, and an economic issue on Friday. Although the program was created by each broadcaster itself, the time zone was fixed for a cultural program on every channel. In addition, the broadcasters were obliged to organize family time slots in prime time and reduce the number of daily soap opera to less than two. They also reorganized the primetime zone on weekdays as follows: 6 pm slot for children programs; 7 pm slot for family programs such as news show or family-friendly wholesome entertainment shows; 8 pm slot for home drama promoting national integration, social education campaign, cultural documentary depicting heroes who overcame a national crisis, etc.; 9 pm slot for a main news show; and slots after 9:30 pm for entertainment shows (Ahn J. I., 1995).

Contrary to the positive view on cultural programs, entertainment shows were regarded as detrimental content to undermine "healthy national awareness" and "social discipline" (Jeon & Park, 2003). Various guidelines issued by the government on entertainment programs reveal the bias of the television programming. After October 1972 self-coup of Park's regime, stricter regulations were placed on entertainment television shows. Contrived actions, childish behavior, and vulgar conversation, which provoke an affected laugh, were prohibited. Hemp smoking celebrities were banned from appearing on television shows. The military government also pre-censored unethical contents such as violence, sexual expression, extravagant and full of vanity as well as anti-government and anti-national speeches and behaviors. The Broadcasting Ethics Committee of 1977 announced television content regulations on immoral expressions like deep affection and attraction, regional prejudice and class struggle, decadent foreign culture, etc.

The negative attitude towards commercial and foreign culture was attributed to the cultural tastes of the military regime, based on stoicism, rigorism and pragmatism (Oh M. ,

1998). In response to the hippie culture and the Japanese pop culture that were popular among Korean youth at that time, the government tried to promote political royalty, filial piety, diligence, cooperation, compliance with social order, etc. through television content. In this policy framework, the regime even attempted to abolish comedy programs on television in 1977. While this plan was eventually abandoned by the opposition of viewers, the number of comedy shows were reduced to just once a week. The content was limited to a moral crusade or didactic story (Han J., 2011). The tendency to put cultural programs above entertainment shows were maintained in the new military regime. The Basic Press Act of 1980 strengthened the proportion of cultural programs up to more than 40% and kept those of news reporting and entertainment shows intact. The attitude emphasizing cultural programs over entertainment persisted unchanged even after the military dictatorship ended.

Ok-kyung Lee (1984) argues that there was a tension between bureaucratic authoritarianism and commercialism of popular culture in the Korean society of the 1970s. For the military governments, although escapist and nonpolitical nature of popular culture helped to maintain the authoritarian regime, its prevalence might produce adverse effects paralyzing and hindering the construction of national solidarity that the authoritarian regime wanted. The paradoxical situation of the Korean television entertainment makes it clear what Stuart Hall talked about the dual characteristics of television texts – encoding and decoding. The inherent tension in the socio-political context of the Korean television entertainment has been revealed through the interactions between the pleasure-seeking desire from the bottom up and the top-down control on it (Jeon & Park, 2003).

4.2.2   Major genres of Korean television entertainment: Comedy and variety

The Korean television entertainment started in a full-scale along with the beginning of the tripartite competition system of KBS, TBC and MBC. As the last mover of the three, MBC made a humble start due to lack of production facilities and the high ratings of the two competitors. However, it soon came to prominence in entertainment shows, particularly in comedy programs, by recruiting a number of mid-level entertainment show producers from TBC (Han J., 2011). *Laughter Brings Good Luck* which premiered simultaneously with the opening of MBC made a huge hit and became the most popular and long-standing comedy show in the Korean television history.

Actually, the first comedy program was *Comedy Go-Stop* produced by KBS in 1961, which borrowed the legacy of the American slapstick comedy and vaudeville shows. However, it pulled down its curtain in less than a month because of the domestic viewers' criticism and neglect. The reason why the viewers turned their face away from the show was lack of planning and creative storytelling suitable to television formulae (Kim K. , 1971). Kyoung-tae Kim (1971), the producer of *Laughter Brings Good Luck,* pointed out that the old-fashioned vaudeville format of *Comedy Go-Stop*, which was not controlled and elaborated by directors and writers, could not attract the attentions of the viewers in the top 1% of the Korean society, who could afford to purchase TV sets in those days.

Unlike the previous works, *Laughter Brings Good Luck* employed the best comedians and writers of the day and tried to present the high-level television audiences a new comedy format focusing on sketch comedy and vignette rather than singing. The producers also set up a principle that they would not imitate any of the traditional comedy shows. Given the great success of *Laughter Brings Good Luck*, the three broadcasters developed new comedy shows,

such as *Panorama of Laughter, Comedy Theater, Comedy Lucky, Cheerful Theater*, etc. throughout 1971 and 1972. The comedians expanded their stages to music programs by appearing as an MC or guest on the shows (Jeon & Park, 2003; Kang & Yun, 2002).

Another key genre of the early Korean entertainment programs was variety shows. While American variety shows were developed as a form of comedy shows mixing musical performances based on a series of short comedy scenes, the early Korean variety shows included sketch comedy and small talks based on musical performances (Jeon & Park, 2003). The music-centered variety shows started along with the advent of Korean television broadcasting. HLKZ TV, the first Korean television channel, organized *Song Party* in 1956, followed by *KBS Grand Show* in 1961. However, it was only after TBC's *Show Show Show* that the variety show was established as a major genre of the Korean entertainment television (Kang & Yun, 2002).

Show Show Show created in 1964 took over weekend viewer ratings by mobilizing all the members of the station's orchestra, dance troupe, and singers. The show used dynamic and colorful screen composition and various repertoires, thereby making itself a great name for the television shows of the day. The show not only produced many super stars who led the popular culture of the day, but also contributed to the development of television entertainment show production techniques and skills. A survey of the viewer preference on the Korean television programs in 1970 demonstrated that the viewer ratings of *Show Show Show* exceeded 48% of the total households (Joongang-Daily, 1985). In terms of format and repertoire, the show attracted a wide range of viewers, setting goals as a family-friendly program (Park Y. , 2014). The show, which had been popular for nearly 17 years, had its ratings plummeting as it moved to midnight time zone after being absorbed into KBS. It eventually ended in July 1983, failing to compete with the rival's big and luxurious weekend variety shows (Park Y. , 2014).

As an epitome of Korean entertainment television, *Show Show Show* is highly regarded to pave the way for television to lead the national music industry (Kang & Yun, 2002). Singers had no choice but appear on the popular television musical variety shows like *Show Show Show* in order to raise their profiles nationwide at that time. Television companies had a great influence on the small and immature Korean music market. Since variety show programs with catchall formats contributed greatly to the introduction of promising actors and comedians as well as singers and dancers, many talented performers signed exclusive contracts with the broadcaster. The entertainment workers' lives depended on the broadcasters.

In addition, the length and content of popular music was adapted to the television shows. The increase of visual-oriented performances rather than music-based performances was attributed to the influence of television whose primary purpose is to show something with audiovisual images. With regard to the changes of popular music on television, Yong-jin Won (2011) calls it "televisionization" of popular music. That is, television mediatizes popular music through the formation of televisuality. In this way, television became a medium of mass entertainment through the process of securing its own place in the society, despite its dependency on political power. Both the comedy show *Laughter Brings Good Luck* and the variety program *Show Show Show* played a decisive role in establishing the early television as a medium of pleasant in the local television history. Even after they were over, the two shows remained the prototype models to mold new and diverse television entertainment programs.

Owing to the success of the two entertainment programs, television penetration rates were dramatically increased up to nearly 70% of the total households in 1979. During the 1970s, KBS and MBC completed to form a nationwide network. By reinforcing the output of each transmitting station, the two television companies secured the physical base in which television

became the center of mass media. Especially, the opening of satellite relay stations further expanded influence of television. Despite political repression on television entertainment, the popularity of television entertainment programs led to the growth and expansion of the local advertising market (Jeon & Park, 2003). The annual average growth rate of the television advertising market was over 40% during the decade. In 1975, the annual television advertising revenue began surpassing that of newspaper.

4.2.3   Impacts of color television on entertainment programming

The introduction of color television broadcasting, which started on December 1, 1980, was a new momentum to change the formula and content of Korean television entertainment programs. Indeed, the introduction of color television transmission in Korea was quite late. At that time, Korean consumer electronics companies were already producing and exporting color TV sets. Although the electronics industry and television industry were preparing fully to start color television broadcasting from early 1970s, Park's regime was constantly opposed to the project because the military leaders intended to maintain their control over broadcasters from commercial capital and worried about that the increase of the television licensing fee and expensive price of color TV sets would delay the distribution of TV sets as a public media. In particular, President Park continued to hold a negative stance toward the early adoption of color television, considering that it would encourage excessive consumption and cause conflicts between social classes (Yun, 2011). The successive military forces, however, regarded color television as an attractive tool to promote the cultivation of the people and political mobilization as the former military group did (Lim, 2011).

In addition to the intention of the regime, the rising living standard and the social demand for new consumption culture, as a result of urbanization and industrialization, corresponded to

the emergence of color television broadcasting (Won, 2011). In the 1980s, the middle-class baby boomers baptized by popular culture emerged as a new consumer group. The national life time survey of 1981 found that television viewing was one of the most popular leisure activities for middle and high schoolers and college students (Kim K. , 1981). 91.6% of the student respondents reported to watch television on Saturday and 94.1% of those on Sunday. Teenagers watched television on weekends more than any other group. Responding to the cultural needs of the younger generation, equipped with Walkman and familiar with the commercial consumer culture, the local television tried to develop a new type of entertainment show program. KBS and MBC launched respectively a new weekend variety show with a live audience, *Youthful March* and *Young 11* in early 1980s. By increasing the airtime and colorizing the screen, these large-scale variety shows became a typical weekend entertainment show in Korea. Targeting young generations, the variety shows transformed the songs and materials for comedy from family-based content to youth-oriented ones (Park Y. , 2014).

The colorization of television programs and a new trend of large-scale show programs generated a new aesthetics and rhetoric appealing to the public within the criteria and limitations of public broadcasting ideology (Park Y. , 2017). KBS produced so-called a "literary drama" which used the artistry of great Korean novels and movie-like spectacles to present sound contents suitable to the public interest ideology in the drama sector. MBC organized a popular song contest, such as *College Song Festival* and *Riverside Song Festival,* which selected and debuted young amateur singers. These big events broadcast by the television channel accommodated and moderated the cultural desires of young generations who enjoyed new popular culture. Furthermore, the two broadcasters developed a weekly Korean pop music chart show like *Pop Music Top Ten* (KBS) and an end-of-year music award such as *Top Ten Singers*

Song Festival (MBC), thus maintaining their power advantages over the local pop music market. In so doing, Korean entertainment television producers played actively their roles not only as a gate keeper but also as a creator of pop culture (Won, 2011).

4.2.4   Television entertainment in the multichannel and multimedia era

As the new Broadcasting Act of 1990 paved the way for opening a multichannel television environment, a commercial terrestrial television company SBS began its business from 1991. Cable television broadcasting soon follow up with more than 30 channels from 1995. Particularly, the establishment of SBS, which allowed the coexistence of private and public broadcasting system in Korea, accelerated the competition between the public and private terrestrial television service. After the initiation of SBS, KBS reformed KBS 1TV as a public channel without commercials, focusing on news and cultural programs, and KBS 2TV as a family-oriented entertainment channel, extending advertising hours. From then on, KBS 2TV went into the competitions with MBC and SBS for creating high-rated entertainment programs.

Increasing the portion of entertainment programs, SBS revealed its substance as a commercial television. The entertainment-oriented strategy of SBS intensified viewership competition with the existing broadcasters. Since the finances of both KBS and MBC relied heavily on advertising revenue – i.e., 61% of KBS's income and 98% of MBC's income came from advertising earnings, they could not avoid the pressure of audience maximization (Kim S. , 1995). In response to the new competitor's tactic, both KBS and MBC reduced the portion of cultural programs and created a host of highly entertaining programs (Kang J. , 2007). The rising competition among the broadcasters resulted in the increase of the scale of entertainment-oriented programs and the reorganization of their programming schedules (Cho S. , 2000). According to a survey of the Korean Broadcast Producers' Association in 1998, more than 78%

of producers were feeling the pressure to raise their programs' ratings (Kim Y. , 2001). As the

table 3 and 4 shows, the portion of entertainment programs overall increased during the 1990s.

Table 3 The Number and Ratio of Programs of Each Terrestrial Television Station by

Category During the 1990s

Classification	KBS1	KBS2 (Formerly TBC)	MBC	SBS	Total
News reporting	249 (19.3%)	184 (9.6%)	241 (14.1%)	131 (10.0%)	805 (12.9%)
Cultural programs	621 (48.1%)	473 (24.6%)	531 (31.0%)	230 (17.6%)	1855 (29.7%)
Entertainment programs	420 (32.6%)	1269 (65.9%)	943 (55.0%)	946 (72.4%)	3578 (57.4%)
Total	1290 (100%)	1926 (100%)	1715 (100%)	1307 (100%)	6238 (100%)

Note: Summed up the numbers of programs presented in each seasonal programming
reorganization plan, from "Analysis of programming strategies of television broadcasting
networks: Focused on rescheduled programs, 1990-1999", *Korean Journal of Broadcasting and
Telecommunication Studies, 14(1)*, p. 410, by Cho, S., 2000.

Table 4 The Average Number of Programs Newly Created in Each Seasonal

Programming Reorganization Plan During the 1990s

Classifi-cation	Average number of '90 to '91				Average of All	Average number of '92 to '97				Average of All	Average number of '98 to '99				Average of All
	K1	K2	M	S		K1	K2	M	S		K1	K2	M	S	
News	6	3	2	-	3.6 (8.6%)	5	3	10	4	5.5 (9.2%)	7	4	6	2	5 (9.3%)
Culture	20	8	14	-	14 (33.4%)	19	15	22	12	17 (28.6%)	22	17	19	7	16 (29.6%)
Entertain-ment	16	28	29	-	24.3 (58.0%)	16	44	40	47	37 (62.2%)	15	42	30	43	33 (61.1%)
Total	41	39	45	-	41.9 (100%)	40	62	72	63	59.5 (100%)	44	63	55	52	54 (100%)

Note: Divided into three periodic sections, from "Analysis of programming strategies of television broadcasting networks: Focused on rescheduled programs, 1990-1999", *Korean Journal of Broadcasting and Telecommunication Studies, 14(1)*, p. 416, by Cho, S., 2000. Although Korean broadcasters have been limited to organize entertainment programs only up to 50% of the total broadcasting time according to the Broadcasting Acts, they have avoided the regulation by categorizing a hybrid entertainment show combing informational and educational elements as a cultural program. This table was coded by the judgment of the researcher.

The fiercer competition for viewership ratings changed the forms and contents of entertainment programs. The large-scale weekend variety shows shifted towards a smaller studio recording form with the destruction of genres, mixing gag shows, musical performance and talk. The authentic comedy shows were replaced with sitcoms. SBS whose financial strength was relatively weak led the new trend of mixing genres and creating sitcoms. However, SBS was often criticized for creating sensational contents aiming at young generations and promoting consumption culture in order to put its business on track quickly (Cho H. , 2014). The tactics of SBS affected the decline of publicness in the entertainment programs of other broadcasters. The overall deterioration of entertainment programs caused a great backlash from audiences, such as the 'No Television Day' campaign (Kim Y. , 2001). The controversies surrounding the lowbrow contents of entertainment programs were raised continually at every programming reorganization even after the end of the military dictatorship.

In terms of ethical judgement on television entertainment, Jeon and Park (2003) assert that the underestimation of television entertainment resulted from the instrumentalist and functionalist perspectives of the elites of the Korean society, including the civil society and the government. Pointing out that the local television entertainment industry already became a market where producers, broadcasters, agencies, performers, and advertisers were desperately competing to survive under the law of jungle, they insist that Korean television entertainment has

been placed "under the double pressures of capitalism requiring maximum effect for minimum cost and demanding moralism for ethical stability" (p. 129).

The ethical criticism of television entertainment became more prominent in the 1990s as a number of musical shows targeting teenagers were actively produced. For the older generation and elite groups, television entertainment was perceived as a pathway to spread American popular culture. Particularly, music chart shows tried to improve the performance of Korean pop music into a style of American pop music that was recognized as global music, introducing the singers and bands playing new music genres such as hip-hop, electronic, rhythm and blues, etc. This tendency of the music chart shows was because existing styles and genres of Korean pop music could no longer appeal to young audiences (Won, 2011). Moreover, the advent of cable TV music channels, such as Mnet and KMTV which were Korean versions of MTV, facilitated Americanization of Korean pop music. Indeed, pop music was one of the most attractive sources for producers to fill the increasing number of entertainment shows. The Americanized Korean pop songs were constantly released on television shows in diverse manners, including live performances, music videos, clips from concert, original soundtrack of drama series, etc. Television was the most effective and irreplaceable marketing tool and stage for the singers and agencies.

The entertainment-oriented television programming, however, underwent drastic changes shortly after the Asian financial crisis in 1997. The economic crisis swept the established television programming. The deeply stagnated atmosphere made the broadcasters reluctant to organize entertainment programs making people laugh and joke around on TV. For example, KBS abolished many entertainment shows including *Pop Music Top Ten*, which had been renowned as the best Korean pop music chart show in Korea for 17 years. Other broadcasters

also rushed to plan special programs that inspired the hope for reinvigorating the national

economy. Documentaries, magazine programs, and special lecture series intensively dealt with

hardship-overcoming cases, success stories of small business, the spirits of self-sacrifice, etc.

During this time period, hybrid genres such as "infotainment," "edutainment," "docu-soap" and

"solution" programs started to be actively generated. Comedy dramas were likely to focus on

reality (Kim, Kang, & Kim, 2008).

The social depression influenced the program preference of the viewers (Lee J. , 2005).

The popularity of trendy dramas and entertainment shows, which previously occupied most of

the top 30 rating programs, temporarily stopped in 1998 when the IMF demanded tough

economic reforms for a bailout package. Instead, the dramas treating a warm family story

attracted the attention of the Korean viewers. Also, the ratings of non-fiction genres such as news

reporting, current affairs, and living information programs increased. These changes in

viewership revealed again the social sentiment of the Korean society, which emphasizes the role

of television as a national medium to integrate the people in the national crisis.

The sharp decline of advertising revenue led by the financial crisis, which decreased by

36% from the previous year, prompted the restructuring of the local television industry. The

emergence of convergence media environment and the domestic policy of media deregulation

further stimulated the structuration of survival competition in the local media industry. In

addition, the emergence of large-scale agencies that grew through the outsourcing policy,

followed by the vertical disintegration of the television production system, intensified the

competition in the entertainment industry as a whole.

4.3   Korean Wave, A New Opportunity of Korean Television

The financial crisis, however, gave Korean broadcasters an unexpected opportunity to
survive. It was the Korean Wave (or Hallyu) which refers to the sudden growth of Korean
popular culture including dramas, films, pop-music, online games, cosmetics, and food. The
phenomenal popularity of Korean popular culture emerged in many Asian countries from the late
1990s. The serious economic depression across Asia allowed many Asian television content
suppliers to purchase foreign television programs within a very limited budget. Korean programs
were exactly right for the Asian buyers looking for inexpensive but attractive television contents.
It was also a great opportunity for the Korean broadcasters to make up for the lost profits in the
domestic market. Since Korean broadcasters could no longer rely solely on the relatively small
domestic market, they had no choice but to go abroad. The sudden craze for Korean pop culture
enabled the Korean broadcasters and the government to implement international marketing
efforts and export-driven policies to reinvigorate the local television industry.

4.3.1   An unexpected cultural phenomenon, the Korean Wave

The Korean Wave phenomenon first started in China. The national China Central
Television Station (CCTV) aired a Korean family drama series *What Is Love All About?,* which
consists of fifty 60-minute-long episodes, for the first time in 1997. Despite being the first
television program exported to China, the Korean drama surprisingly received a great deal of
acclaim and popularity from Chinese viewers, which led CCTV to rerun and shift the series into
a primetime slot in the following year (Shim, 2006). The mega-hit of *What Is Love All About?*
and its subsequent dramas such as *A Wish Upon a Star* broadcast by Phenix TV in 1998 made
other Korean dramas easily exported to the Chinese culture bloc including Taiwan, Hong Kong,

Singapore, Malaysia, etc. beyond China. The Korean Wave moved quickly Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam (Chua, 2004; Kim J. , 2007).

In Japan, the Korean Wave began in 2003, as a Korean television drama *Winter Sonata* was first broadcast through NHK. Actually, Japan has tended to fill most of the air time with domestic programs. Foreign television programs, most of which are American contents, have been broadcast in non-primetime slots (Iwabuchi, 2002). Thus, it was very rare for Korean dramas to be air on the Japanese national public television channel. The great success of *Winter Sonata*, which created a boom of "Winter Sonata syndrome" among Japanese middle-aged women, led to the rising demand for Korean dramas in Japan. The popularity of so-called trendy drama, which started with the emotional drama *Winter Sonata*, drove the success of Korean historical dramas such as *Jewel in the Palace, Lee San: Wind of the Palace, The Legend,* etc. and family dramas including *Fighting! Geumsoon.*

The exportation of Korean dramas resulted from the improvement of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Japan. Since Korean people have had deep-rooted anti-Japanese sentiment that was long caused by the former Japanese colonial occupation of Korea and the constant controversial postcolonial issues such as the territorial disputes about the islet Dokdo, the import of Japanese media contents was officially banned until the cultural exchange agreement between the two countries in 1998. Declaring the open-door policy toward Japanese popular culture, the Dae-jung Kim administration lifted gradually the strict regulations on Japanese movies, cultural performances, animations, comics, computer games, and some television programs without a Japanese odor. This policy gave back an opportunity for Korean television contents to enter the Japanese market.

Owing to the Korean Wave, the total amount of Korean television program exports was dramatically increased almost by ten times from $11,206,000 in 2001 to $105,885,000 in 2006 (see Table 5). The exports to Asian countries occupied more than 80% of the total amount of the exports and the reliance on Asian area became more severe. Interestingly, the pattern of Korean television program exports to Asian countries shows a change from 2003 and 2004. The largest Asian importers changed from China and Taiwan to Japan.

Table 5 Amount of Korean Television Program Exports From 2001 to 2005

(Unit: $1000 USD)

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Japan	1,187 (10.6%)	2,450 (12.9%)	5,915 (21.2%)	35,181 (62.5%)	65,511 (61.9%)
China	2,720 (24.3%)	2,488 (13.1%)	4,791 (17.1%)	5,502 (9.8%)	9,313 (8.8%)
Hong Kong	1,146 (10.2%)	2,049 (10.8%)	1,007 (3.6%)	1,222 (2.2%)	3,509 (3.3%)
Taiwan	2,417 (21.6%)	6,582 (34.8%)	9,748 (34.9%)	8,490 (15.1%)	11,942 (11.3%)
Singapore	863 (7.7%)	711 (3.8%)	1,201 (4.3%)	725 (1.3%)	1,150 (1.1%)
Vietnam	318 (2.8%)	456 (2.4%)	468 (1.7%)	754 (1.3%)	962 (0.9%)
Other Asian countries	208 (1.9%)	2,126 (11.2%)	4,432 (15.9%)	2,833 (5.0%)	9,438 (8.9%)
North/South America	199 (1.8%)	1,083 (5.7%)	124 (0.4%)	448 (0.8%)	2,302 (2.2%)
Europe	1,142 (10.2%)	748 (4.0%)	181 (0.6%)	364 (0.6%)	201 (0.2%)
Oceania	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	44 (0.1%)	112 (0.1%)
Others	1,006 (9.0%)	231 (1.2%)	81 (0.3%)	740 (1.3%)	1,445 (1.4%)
Total	11,206	18,924	27,948	56,303	105,885

Note: Author's reconstruction from the *Annual Survey of Korean Broadcasting Industry*, by Korean Broadcasting Commission (2002 to 2006). Each revenue is the sum of both terrestrial networks' exports and cable networks' exports.

Table 6 Exported Genres of Korean Television Programs from 2001 to 2005

(Unit: $1,000 USD)

Category	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Drama	8,017 (71.5%)	15,168 (80.2%)	25,545 (91.4%)	53,030 (94.2%)	98,913 (93.4%)
Documentary	206 (1.8%)	330 (1.7%)	114 (0.4%)	213 (0.4%)	222 (0.2%)
Animation	1,198 (10.7%)	512 (2.7%)	451 (1.6%)	1,529 (2.7%)	121 (0.1%)
Music	48 (0.4%)	386 (2.0%)	214 (0.8%)	87 (0.2%)	37 (0.0%)
Entertainment	373 (3.3%)	1,548 (8.2%)	1,213 (4.3%)	537 (1.0%)	2,658 (2.5%)
Culture/ Education	0 (0.0%)	615 (3.2%)	24 (0.1)	808 (1.4%)	290 (0.3%)
Others	1,364 (12.2%)	365 (1.9%)	387 (1.4%)	99 (0.2%)	3,644 (3.4%)
Total	11,206	18,924	27,948	56,303	105,885

Note: Author's reconstruction from the *Annual Survey of Korean Broadcasting Industry*, by Korean Broadcasting Commission (2002 to 2006). Each revenue is the sum of both terrestrial networks' exports and cable networks' exports.

In terms of genre preference among Asian buyers, television dramas occupied over 90% of the television program exports in 2004 and 2005 (see Table 6). It reveals that Korean dramas were a key television genre that led to the Korean Wave in Asia. The drama-dominated television exports to Asian countries has not changed since the beginning of the Korean Wave.

4.3.2   K-pop, the second phase of the Korean Wave

The craze for Korean dramas influenced directly the transnational circulation of Korean popular music (its abbreviation K-pop). The massive success of Korean trendy dramas made the theme songs and other K-pop introduced to local radio programs, regional music television channels and satellite channels including Channel V and Star TV (Jang, 2012; KOCIS, 2011). In

particular, dance music groups like H.O.T, NRG, Baby V.O.X, TVXQ, Big Bang, Girl's Generation, etc. formed a huge fan base among Asian young generations. These idol bands with strong ticket-selling power over the border opened a new era of the Korean Wave.

Many Korean researchers recognize that modern K-pop started from the appearance of 'Seo Taiji & Boys' in the early1990s, which created a new type of Korean pop music integrating foreign music elements with midi sounds (Jeon, et al., 2012; Shim, 2006). As a forerunner of K-pop idol groups, 'Seo Taiji & Boys' attempted to resist against the existing hegemony of television in the local music industry. The idol group adjusted the time of their television appearance and had a certain break after the release of their new albums, which were previously decided by television producers as a star management strategy. The behaviors provided a tension to the K-pop industry. Based on the tremendous fandom, the boy band claimed the manipulability of music ranking shows and suggested to abolish the programs.

The cracks in the hegemony of the local television industry grew bigger as the leading entertainment management agencies like SM Entertainment, JYP and YG, which own popular idol groups, began to exert their power mobilizing young audiences. New media technologies enabled these agencies to expand the scope of fans beyond Asia to Europe, Latin America, and North America (Jeon, et al., 2012; KOCIS, 2011). For example, SM Entertainment, one of the largest K-pop management agencies, opened their accounts on YouTube in 2009 and uploaded music videos and other clips of their idol groups almost immediately after the release in the domestic market. Based on the video sharing site linked with other social network services, the propagation of the K-pop was much faster to the worldwide fanbases. Responding to the transnational fever of K-pop, YouTube created a K-pop section as an independent music genre. This was the first case where a specific country's music was categorized exclusively as a music

genre such as rock, folk, jazz, etc. on YouTube (Jeon, et al., 2012, p. 61). Disseminating K-pop and related contents over the world beyond Asia, online streaming sites like YouTube have played a big role in elevating the Korean Wave as a global popular content.

4.3.3 Neo Korean Wave led by K-pop evolution

The changes in the territory of the local music industry had a major impact on the Korean television entertainment programs that use pop music as a main source. As the major K-pop agencies began to use the online streaming sites as a main platform for their artists, mobile telecommunication companies entered the race with television networks and music companies to seize the initiative in the K-pop market. Since the entertainment agencies tried to create their own sound distribution system and sign a more lucrative sponsorship contract with the mobile telecommunication firms, the market position and power of the broadcasters were gradually weakened. However, it does not mean that television abandoned or lost its control on the local music industry. Korean television still uses a variety of techniques to keep up with the balance of power in the music industry (Won, 2011).

Television no longer creates stars by itself but makes use of the popular stars who are already made by the agencies. Television forms intertextuality of idol stars by exposing them not only within the television screen through dramas, advertisements, music programs and entertainment shows, but also outside the screen, such as concerts, newspapers, magazines, fan activities, etc. Based on the intertextuality, television creates and renews the symbol values of the singers. Those values become a new image or character of the singers, which is often irrelevant to music, and appear as a new content in various television genres. By creating or combining those renewed images and characters, television continuously produce a new form of television programs, such as audition program, survival game show, or variety show. Reality

television show is one of the most actively produced television entertainment genres in the early

21st century (Kim, Kang, & Kim, 2008). Releasing these entertainment programs on television

and online, the broadcasters preside over international and domestic markets. As part of Korean

Wave, Korean television entertainment shows are shared and watched globally as well. It gives

the Korean broadcasters a new chance to act as a key player in the cultural industry.

The popularity and economic effects of the Korean Wave have enabled Korean television

industry to sustain and expand its competitiveness in international television flow. As Table 7

and Figure 1 shows, Korean television industry was highly dependent on imports of foreign

contents until the 1990s. This pattern has turned to export-oriented structure from the early

2000s. The gap between exports and imports of Korean television programs has been

continuously growing except that cable networks imported a large number of foreign programs

in preparation for the launch of new channels in 2009 and 2011 (KOCCA, 2013). The importers

of Korean television programs have also diversified across the globe.

Table 7 Export and Import Trends of Korean Television Programs from 1997 to 2016

(Unit: $1,000 USD)

Year	Export	Import	Year	Export	Import
1997	8,318	57,278	2007	162,584	32,269
1998	10,017	27,036	2008	180,168	21,847
1999	12,736	28,733	2009	184,577	183,011
2000	13,111	29,093	2010	184,700	110,495
2001	18,920	20,442	2011	222,372	233,872
2002	28,813	25,111	2012	233,821	136,071
2003	42,135	28,062	2013	309,399	122,697
2004	71,641	31,096	2014	336,019	64,545
2005	123,493	36,975	2015	320,434	146,297
2006	147,743	31,657	2016	411,212	129,111

Note: Extracted from Korean Statistical Information Service, the national statistics portal run by Statistics Korea, as of September 30, 2018.
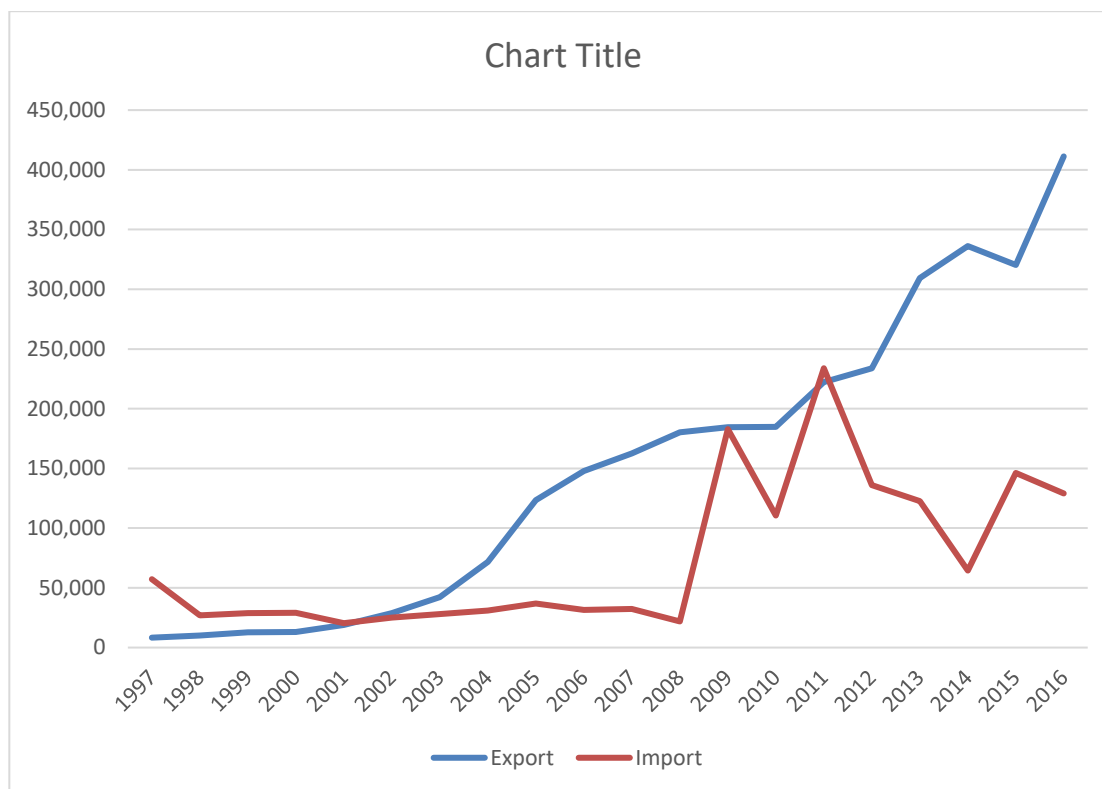
Figure 1 Export and Import Trends of Korean Television Programs from 1997 to 2016

In short, television was recognized as a medium of amusement for Korean people from the beginning. Although the early forms of television entertainment were borrowed from a theater stage, they have been constantly evolved through accepting endless social, political, economic, and technological changes. Despite the demanding task to provide "wholesome fun" to "all people" within a very limited budget, Korean television entertainment shows have faithfully performed the roles as a mass medium with its great adaptability and kaleidoscopic transformation. Utilizing the resources of the Korean Wave, Korean television entertainment has turned crisis into opportunity and set a trend of transnational cultural flow.

5 CLASSIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES OF KOREAN REALITY TELEVISION

This chapter provides the rationale and criteria for classification of the historical development patterns of Korean reality television formats for the last two decades. For the period division, how advanced research has traced the history of global reality television shows is first reviewed. And then, through the analysis of industrial reports, statistics, and preceding research data about Korean reality television, the dominant patterns of the Korean format production and distribution are extracted. The internal and external factors that affected the development of the local reality television are also discussed. Comparing the similarity and difference between the production and circulation patterns of global and the local reality television, the author attempts to classify the development process into three phases by a roughly chronological pattern and identify the key features of each phase.

5.1   Rationale and Criteria for the Classification

As many television scholars have confessed, reality television is too confusing to delimit its definition and boundary as a genre, format or any group because of its extreme hybridity and interconnectivity (Deery, 2015; Hill, 2015; Kavka, 2012). Although it is obvious that reality television is the most prominently and widely produced and circulated entertainment program in the contemporary television culture, researchers have found it difficult to organize its history into a singular story from beginning to end. Since television does not operate as a discrete text but as a serial or series form, it inherently follows a great tendency of horizontal recombination rather than the vertical development of genre as seen in the field of film (Feuer, 1992). Moreover, the production, circulation and consumption of television is situated in the interplay among producers, broadcasters, viewers and advertisers. Particularly, reality television has emerged as

an ongoing phenomenon that encompasses the rise of both format industry and reality television genre (Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016). Thus, it is necessary to apply a more discursive approach that integrates both the conventions of television genre study and those of format study.

While television scholars have presented different schemas to investigate the origins and history of reality television (Bignell, 2005; Biressi & Nunn, 2005; Holmes & Jermyn, 2004; Murray & Ouellette, 2004), this study follows by and large Misha Kavka's genealogical approach that traces "multiple origins, intersections and resemblances among reality TV formats" (2012, p. 4). In reference to Mittell's television genre study, Kavka adopts Foucault's genealogical method to delineate structural connections and conceptual shifts in the history of reality television. Highlighting remarkable trends in a wide range of the generic hybrids, she divides reality television into three generations after identification of the historical precursors: the camcorder generation ranging from 1989 to 1999; competition generation covering from 1999 to 2005; and celebrity generation since 2002. Her chronological sketch that embraces the cultural, industrial, and historical context surrounding reality television helps map the outline of the contemporary television industry.

However, Kavka's study has two issues to consider seriously. First, her attention is paid intensely on western television programing, only including American, British, European, and Australian and New Zealand reality shows. Considering the conditions of Korean television as a periphery industry, it is unreasonable and improper to apply her time division to the case of Korea intact. Furthermore, Korean reality television has been developed in a much shorter time. The distinguished features of each generation in her study tend to appear almost simultaneously in the Korean reality shows. Second, Kavka's approach regards baldly reality television as a genre. Although she emphasizes the concept of reality television not as a static genre but as

"generic clusters that emerge through discursive practices of definition, interpretation and evaluation" (Kavka, 2012, p. 7, originally stated in Mittell, 2004, p.196), her conceptualization does not fully reflect the fact that the generic clusters of reality television are part of the format package (Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016). Since Korean reality shows began to appear in earnest from the mid of 2000s, when global format trades were already active, it is more appropriate to trace the motivation and mechanism of format innovation than genre evolution in the case of Korea. This does not means, however, that this study only focuses on industrial approach. Stressing a more historical understanding and its reflection within television studies, this study tries to embrace the logic of the local television industry in relation to the explosive production, circulation and consumption of reality television over the world.

5.2   Periodic Classification into Three Phases

Since reality television was leveled up as a high concept television through the economic and technological impetus toward privatization, commercialization and globalization (Holmes & Jermyn, 2004), it is essential to look at how these shifts have affected the business of local reality television. Considering the broad trends in global television industry, the rules and requirements enabling reality television production and its business in the local conditions should be discussed. As mentioned above, this study reviewed diverse documents to draw a robust picture of the Korean reality television history. The preliminary analysis for the time division is aimed to clarify what kinds of production trends have been formed at the intersection of socio-cultural factors, the industrial changes, audience preferences and choices and how the production trends have temporal and spatial differences.

From the archival analysis, the author found that there are five significant factors which have influenced in the development of Korean reality television: the influx of global reality

television shows; technological and organizational innovations; changes in viewers' tastes and viewing habits; growth of the regional television markets; and the competitions between broadcasters in relation to the hegemonic changes in the national television industry. Considering the complex interrelated factors affecting the development of the local reality television, the author seeks to differentiate the development phases of the Korean reality shows by period.

The periodic characteristics of the three phases are briefly summarized as follows. The first phase is the formation of Korean reality television formats. This formation period is divided into two stages, the incubation and the birth stages. The incubation of Korean reality television formats is identified from 1998 to 2007. As a transitional period to seek for new entertainment television forms and contents, this phase shows the pre-history of the Korean reality format. During this period, terrestrial television networks actively conducted various experiments with "candid camera" to create a new type of variety shows under a large-scale reconstruction of the local media industry. The birth period of locally formatted reality shows corresponds from 2006 to 2012. In this stage, foreign reality shows were officially imported to the Korean television market. The major terrestrial broadcasters tried to localize the global formats, whereas cable networks tended to seek for the singularity of the original formats. Through many trials and errors, the local producers succeeded in creating a new type of real-variety show *Infinite Challenge*. The production techniques and tactics of *Infinite Challenge,* which mobilize numerous cameras and staffs, were transferred as a model case to other Korean producers, thereby bringing real-variety shows into fashion.

The second phase is the period that the Korean reality formats were exported to regional markets, especially to China. This period is also divided into two aspects, the exports to and co-production with China. Korean reality formats began to be exported to regional markets in

earnest from 2010. The most striking feature of this period was that Korean producers planned programs with a clear purpose of exporting their format to global market. Although they were not accustomed to and supported for making the bible, they were able to successfully sell their formats to China by offering field trips and guidance for the local adaptation. The export potential to China gave the Korean reality formats an opportunity for self-transformation. In this aspect, complex combination of diverse generic elements was implemented to generate new types of reality formats. The other aspect portrays the full-scale of collaboration with China through various forms of co-production between Korea and China from 2014 to 2016. The co-production took place in a wide range from major television stations to independent production companies. In addition, a number of Korean producers, writers, and engineers moved to China to develop and produce a new format customized to Chinese audiences. The co-produced reality shows contained different narratives and images from the Korean ones.

As the current phase, Korean reality shows are seeking new markets and sources. In response to the sudden shutdown of the Chinese market, Korean producers are trying to go global. Through the collaborative format development with global format creators, they find a way to create a killing format for global markets. At the same time, they are developing a new reality format suitable to new media platforms and niche audiences. The innovative outcomes have led by the big cable television networks. These cable companies have recruited a number of producers from the major terrestrial stations since the opening of their new channels in 2011. The transferred producers' skillful production abilities and ethical mindset giving considerable thoughts to public interest have changed the way in which the cable networks used to produce lowbrow or imported programs focusing on young generations. The components of television formats like themes, cast, location, scripts, subtitles have been more diversified and extended.

The start of the 'going-global' phase is regarded the export of *Grandpas Over Flowers* to European countries and the US beyond Asian countries from 2014.

Based on the chronological division, the author addresses in more detail how Korean reality formats have settled and developed themselves as a remarkable genre and as a tradable commodity in the local television industry. Each phase is explained in the following chapters (Chapter 6, 7, and 8), taking the five influencing factors inside and outside of the Korean format industry into account. Each of the three subsequent chapters presents overall information of the local television industry with major legal, financial, and organizational changes as well as political, economic, and social circumstances. Primary sources such as interviews, news articles, statistics, etc. are provided as an evidence of the time-periodic characteristics. Some examples of the local television programs that represent each period are listed. Among them, specific examples are analyzed in more detail in relation to the production strategies and practices, innovations and creativities, or aesthetics and narratives. With the analysis, the example programs provide the information about who led the development of the Korean reality show format in what manner at the time and what implications the programs have in the history of the Korean reality television format.

6   FORMATION OF KOREAN REALITY FORMAT

This chapter describes the transitional period of Korean television industry from national television to globalizing television. As the rapid diffusion of new media and neo-liberal media reform opened the domestic television market to the world, television format emerged as a new business model. While format trading was already active in global marketplaces, Korean broadcasters and producers were not fully aware of television format business. They were always seeking for something out of the common, but these attempts and experiments were carried out

within the local dominant culture because of the social and institutional nature of television production.

As Williams (1981) vaguely distinguished television forms into the dominant, the residual, and the emergent in the sense of hegemony, meanings, values, practices and relationships in the dominant culture cannot be clearly identified into the emergent or the residual. Since television production is placed in specific relationships, skills, and perceptions, it is interpreted in a certain social context. In other words, the residual elements which were effective in the past might be alternative or oppositional to the dominant. Likewise, the emergent might be elements in the new phase of the dominant or something alternative or oppositional to it. Moreover, the locally residual might work as the emergent on a global scale and vice versa. Therefore, a newly perceived form should be understood in the internal dynamic relations of the local television industry, particularly during a transition period.

In this regard, what forms and content were dominant in Korean entertainment show production, what values, meanings and practices were developed as new discoveries, and how the residual spawned new values for the local entertainment programs is discussed in the formation process of the locally formatted reality shows. Through the industrial data and statistics on imports and exports of the Korean television industry, it examines what internal changes the local television industry has undergone over the past decade from the end of 1990s and the end of 2000s.

This chapter is divided into two subchapters: the incubation stage of Korean reality shows and the birth stage of locally developed real-variety shows. The incubation stage encompasses the Korean primetime variety shows in the mid of 1990s, which attempted to capture televisual reality with a form of candid camera. What makes the Korean show different

from the foreign candid camera programs is that it combined public interest messages in celebrity-centered variety shows. The discussion of candid camera programs with public interest messages draws links with social responsibilities of public service television as well as social atmosphere of the national economic crisis in the late 1990s. The discussion of public-interest variety shows also extends beyond the series itself to follow its legacy through live campaign shows that have often mobilized the Korean people to overcome national disasters and promote social and political agendas.

The next stage is devoted to the birth of locally formatted reality television, real-variety shows that sprang up in the mid of 2000s. This subchapter combines the introduction of global television format to the local television industry, the application of multiple team production system with dozens of camera and non-linear editing to the weekly primetime variety shows, and the different conditions of the public terrestrial networks and commercial cable networks to make a claim for the basis of the new format type of the Korean real-variety shows. This chapter considers how internal and external constraints and conditions of the local public television system led to the creation of the real-variety shows that internalized the public interest messages within the framework of primetime entertainment shows.

6.1   Incubation Stage: Public Interest Variety Shows

This subchapter traces the historical precursors of Korean reality television shows. In the 1990s, the Korean broadcasting industry underwent drastic changes both internally and externally. It was under pressure to reform its industrial structure and to open its domestic market to foreign contents and capital. In response to the rapidly changing media environment, Korean broadcasters and producers had to develop new types of television entertainment. The national economic crisis under the IMF management system made them even more desperate. As a

precursor to the Korean-style reality format, public interest variety shows were born in such a situation.

6.1.1 Introduction of format business

As already mentioned in the chapter 4, there were two significant events surrounding the Korean television industry in the late 1990s. One is Asian financial crisis and the other is the outset of the Korean Wave. That is, crisis and opportunity came together. At that time, the Korean government needed a new growth driver to revive the national economy and repay the IMF bailout loan, and finally found the solution in the knowledge economy and culture industry. Just as Britain and other advanced nations have done, the Korean government have tried to foster and promote popular culture, which had been the object of surveillance and control in the past, as "the growth engine for the next generation" from the end of 1990s (Kim K. , 2013). The popularity of Korean Wave in East Asian countries from the late 1990s turned the government on the export potential of the Korean television contents. Raising the need to develop new types of television content suitable to media convergence and globalization, governmental research reports started to introduce the concept of format business to the domestic industry (Ha & Jeong, 2001). The format business was expected to be a new revenue model for the national television industry.

However, the reality of the local television industry was far from the government's expectation. The Korean entertainment shows were bent on copying Japanese programs until the opening the local market to the Japanese popular culture in 1998. At that time, Japanese broadcasting industry was estimated to be about 10 times larger than the Korean one (Kim M. , Kim, Kim, & Kim, 1998). Japan's five major commercial broadcasters (TV Asahi, Fuji TV, NTV, TBS and TV Tokyo) along with public networks NHK and Asahi Broadcasting Corp.,

already entered global format sales market from the mid-1980s. Particularly, the creative and solid formats of Japanese entertainment shows have been welcomed in international television content markets.

There was little awareness about format copyright among Korean producers at that time. Even the term 'television format' was not prevalent in the local television industry. Furthermore, since the Korean government officially banned the importation of Japanese media content except for the animations and documentaries without a Japanese odor, Korean broadcasters actively used the advanced and creative production techniques of Japanese entertainment shows by imitation and plagiarism. Yong-jin Won and Kyu-chan Jeon (1993) point out that Korean programs produced in the 1990s often imitated not only the storytelling and set designing but also screen compositions and cast members' gestures from Japanese television contents over almost every genre.

The plagiarism prevailing in Korean television, however, could no longer continue due to the open policy for foreign contents since the late 1990s. Japanese copyright holders often accused the Korean programs that used their formats without permission and signed a contract afterwards (Hong & Seong, 2007). With the introduction of satellite television, audience also could easily discern pirated formats from their watching experience. More directly, the amendment of the Korean Copyright Act, which reinforced the penalties of copyright infringement to fit into the new media era, forced the local producers to seek for a solution to avoid copyright violations (Choi, Lee, & Lee, 2000). As one of the solutions, Korean broadcasters started to import officially foreign entertainment formats from the early 2000s (See Table 8). While the format trades at this time was limited to the partial purchase of license and

the volume of trade was so small, the official international contracts themselves arouse Korean

broadcasters and producers to the potential of format business.

Table 8 Major Television Formats imported from 2002 to 2007

Year	Importer	Division	Title	Genre/ Format	Exporter
2002	MBC	Terrestrial	Brain Survivor	Game	Japan
2002	SBS	Terrestrial	Solomon's Choice (Original: Metrix Legal Counselor)	Info-tainment	Japan
2003	SBS	Terrestrial	Judge! Which Dish is Better? (Original: Dotch Cooking Show)	Info-tainment	Japan
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Super Viking (Original: Viking, The Ultimate Obstacle Course)	Variety (Game)	Japan
2006	tvN	Cable	Yes or No (Original: Deal or No Deal)	Game	Nether-lands
2007	SBS	Terrestrial	'Brain Wall (aka Human Tetris)' in Burst! Mental Concentration (Original: Thanks to the people from Tunnels)	Variety (Game)	Japan
2007	SBS	Terrestrial	Quiz on Your Hunch (Original: Quiz Hexagon)	Quiz	Japan
2007	KBS	Terrestrial	1:100	Quiz	Nether-lands

Note: Author's reconstruction from the *2011 Television Content Format Industry Survey* (2011), *A Study on Activation of Format Exports and Localization of Korean Television Format* (2014), and 2015 *Korean Television Format Import and Export Survey* (2015) by Korea Creative Content Agency.

6.1.2   *Variety as a highly receptive genre*

Korean television entertainment programs have developed mainly in the variety show

genre until 1990s. The long tradition of variety-centered entertainment programming originated

from Japanese television entertainment (Hong & Seong, 2007). The Korean entertainment

producers used to learn a lot of production skills by copying Japanese programs, because of the geocultural proximity and the advanced techniques of Japanese television. Since variety shows were scheduled on Saturday or Sunday primetime zone with the highest ratings in Korea, the genre was the battleground where most experiments were held. Imitating and adapting Japanese variety shows, Korean producers have tried to make constant changes in the variety genre with diverse forms, cast, topics, and locations. Diverse genres such as documentary, cultural programs, lectures, drama, quiz shows, talk shows, game shows, etc. often merged into the Korean variety shows. As the table 8 shows, the new trend of "infotainment" and "edutainment" in global television markets became a source for the variety show in Korea.

> Documentary, drama, and cultural programs cannot escape easily from the established forms. But, variety genre is different. It can accept everything. Particularly, Korean variety shows, which have evolved isolatedly from the western ones, have no fixed frame and format. The variety genre itself is the major impetus for genre expansion. Whenever encountering a problem or limitation, Korean variety shows just imitated something good from others so as to survive in the intense competition. It's like a monster – From interview of Jong-Min Park (Hong K. , 2016, pp. 126-127)

Particularly, the variety shows of the 1990s, unlike the large-scale music-oriented shows of the 1980s that displayed musical, dance, and sketch comedy on the same stage, mixed entirely different genres in a single variety show program. For example, MBC's Sunday variety show consisted of a movie-parody comedy, one-act play, comic quiz show, and comic-solution show under the title of *Sunday Night*. The group MC system that performed diverse characters and roles in one program was also a key tactic used in the 1990s' variety shows. KBS's *Super Sunday*, renamed with *Happy Sunday* in 2004, and SBS's *Good Sunday*, which competed

directly against MBC's *Sunday Night,* had the same compositions. Since the success or failure of these Sunday variety shows determined the status of broadcasters as well as the advertising costs, the three major terrestrial broadcasters invested big budgets and big stars into the production of their weekend variety shows.

> The battles of the Sunday variety shows were a matter of life and death for us. It directly affected the fate of the executive producers and advertising revenue. The three broadcasters had a head-to-head fight every Sunday evening. It can be said that all Korean entertainment programs have evolved from the variety shows. - KM

However, the primetime variety shows had been the most frequent target of criticism in the 1990s because of the repeated accusation on the offensive and suggestive content. They had been also criticized for popular celebrities' simultaneous appearance in separate variety shows, undistinguished performances of different shows, illegal copy of Japanese entertainment programs, loose organization of comedy, talk, and musical performance, and so on (Jeong C. , 1998; Lee G. , 1994; Oh K. , 1994). Even the corruption scandals involving celebrities and producers shocked and gave Korean audiences a negative impression on the variety shows (Han B. , 1990; Park S. , 1995).

6.1.3   Candid camera in Korean variety shows

As one of the experiments tried in the variety shows in the 1990s, *Candid Camera* provided a basis not only for escaping from the criticism but also for creating a Korean-style reality show. In fact, the first adaptation of the hidden camera was in MBC's variety show *Sunday Night* in 1991. *The Hidden Camera*, a section of *Sunday Night*, captured a realistic reaction of celebrities to ridiculous situations, like prank. However, the show was slightly different from *Candid Camera,* because it was not for the non-actors. The idea that invites

ordinary people before a hidden camera was borrowed by a single entertainment show *Video Champion* (KBS, 1997), which broadcast funny scenes in everyday life captured by ordinary people's home video cameras. It's following program *Show! Power Video* (KBS, 2001*)* went one step further and showed documentary experiments capturing 'real situation,' where a young child was going on an errand without a guardian.

It was *Sunday Night* of MBC again that the hidden camera for ordinary people was first applied to a variety show. In November 1996, *Here He Goes! Kyoung-kyu Lee*, a section of *Sunday Night*, secretly installed a camera to see if drivers would stop behind the limit line of a crosswalk well when the red light was turned on. The host Kyoung-kyu Lee was the person who host the hidden camera for celebrities previously in the same program from 1991 to 1992. In a talk show aired in July 2009, Lee recalled that he was complaining to the producer Young-hee Kim when filming the first episode, because the producer continued to film although there was no one who followed the traffic light rules well until dawn (Park J. , 2009). All of the staff also disagreed with the producer's idea. They argued that who would watch the program in which no celebrities, but only cars passed through on the night screen. In the same talk show, the producer confessed that he was under tremendous pressure because the ratings of *Sunday Night* were so low. Despite having lots of meetings and plans for three months, he was not able to decide what to make until ten days before the broadcast date of the upcoming program. He just thought there would be no odds if he could not create an entirely new story and new appearances.

In the first episode, the producers and hosts lay in wait for someone who would obey strictly traffic rules on an empty road during late hours when police officers did not need to check traffic violations. After a long wait, a driver who perfectly followed all regulations appeared around 4 a.m. Surprisingly, he turned out to be a disabled man with polio, who barely

kept his family's living by working from dawn to dusk. This unexpected story moved Korean audiences as well as the producers and hosts. It made headlines in many media and encouraged self-reflection among the Korean public about the violation of traffic rules and the prejudice against disabled people. The episode exceptionally rerun intact on the following Sunday on the back of booming demands from audiences. Due to the hot issue of public morality, the campaign was expanded with a new slogan "discovering hidden good citizens" in the setting of concealed cameras, under the new title *Conscience Refrigerator*, which was named from the refrigerator for gift given to the hidden heroes.

Since then, Korean producers and entertainers recognized that television entertainment can deal with public issues and problems, and thus being funny and impressive. The outcome of their experiments let them know how to take the long-standing criticism for tawdry entertainment off themselves. What was remarkable in the show was that they moved shooting places from a studio to outdoors. The advent of professional 6mm camcorders facilitated not only the outdoor shooting but also the use of multiple cameras in Korean variety shows. More importantly, the show proved a fact that ordinary peoples' stories can be a good source of amusement to the audience. Although it faced criticism for the infringement of someone's privacy and portrait right through candid cameras, the show contributed to development of social campaigns in entertainment programs.

6.1.4   Candid camera paired with campaign shows

The next program *Let's Give Praise,* following the basic concept of *Conscience Refrigerator,* was planned under the IMF management system on the Korean economy. The social mood during the financial crisis, in which warm-hearted family dramas and documentaries containing overcoming-hardship stories were welcomed by Korean viewers, provided Korean

entertainment producers an opportunity to rethink the social roles and functions of television entertainment. The precipitous drop in advertising profits caused by Asian financial crisis was an issue calling for serious consideration for the producers. That is, Korean entertainment producers were forced to create funny, and at the same time, touching contents at a low cost. Launching *Let's Give Praise* in April 1998, the producer of the show said that, "I designed it to comfort people with common people's moving story and laughter and encourage people to overcome the national crisis" (Bae K. , 1999).

The narrative structure of the series is to discover a hidden hero helping the poor and weak and introduce his/her impressive story, and then to have the selected hero recommend another good person as the hero of next episode like a relay race. The program promoted a social atmosphere that encourages good deeds through active praise and created a huge social sensation which led to the spread of "praise syndrome" in schools, companies and government offices. At first, the campaign started from a subsection of a variety show *The Committee of the 21st century* carrying the banner for informational entertainment, but soon gained great reputation and popularity, and thus eventually becoming a separate, independent show.

> At that time, the financial crisis dampened the social passion for industrialization. Koreans began to pay attention to the fair distribution of wealth and democratic management of national economy. Television programs were needed to penetrate the demands of the civil society. Actually, the producer initially sought for fun rather than social messages when planning the show. However, the empathetic producer saw through the actual feelings and demands of the Korean public, and after all, succeeded to comfort the people with the program. Embracing the social atmosphere, Korean entertainment shows could be more than just entertainment. - SJ

When *Let's Give Praise* was planned, a charitable campaign to collect gold was taking place nationwide in South Korea. The movement started to the effect that ordinary people could help reviving the national economy by collecting gold they possessed, because exchanging the collected gold into dollars would easily increase the nation's foreign currency reserves. Since the foreign exchange crisis was often described as "one of the toughest challenges in Korean history" in press, many Korean people with the historical experience and memory of Japanese colonization and Korean War voluntarily participated in the campaign. It was reported that 3.51 million people around the nation collected 227 tons of gold which was equivalent to $2.1 billion in value at that time and over 20 times the amounts of the existing nation's gold stock during the year-long campaign (Shim S. , 2017). The scene that numerous people lined up to present their gold was a great sight itself. In addition, lots of surprising stories were collected with gold during the special television campaign. The protagonists of the story include an Olympic gold medalist, old gentleman who donated a golden key as a retirement gift from his company, aunt who donated her treasured wedding band and necklace her bereaved husband gave, mothers who presented their kids' first-birthday rings, priests who gave gold crucifix, and so on. These stories were the key narrative of the campaign show.

Despite being a non-regular television program, a special live campaign show was a frequently seen genre in the 1980s and 1990s. A special live campaign show was an effective tool to mobilize massive human and financial resources for the purpose of national harmony and unity. By taking advantages of governmental authorities, television as a national medium deployed a large group of people and high equipment to national events like international sporting or great natural disasters caused by typhoon, earthquake, drought, etc. With striking

images and dramatic narratives, special campaign shows usually inspired people's patriotism and communal spirits and encouraged their active engagement in the national events or disasters.

As one of the most successful live campaign shows in Korea, the search campaign for families separated due to Korean War and division of territory broadcast through KBS in 1983 contributed to forming the narrative conventions of the genre. The live campaign show entitled *Looking for the Separated Family* was planned at first as a 2-hour night show on the end of June 1983 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. However, as soon as the show was aired, applications for searching lost family members on air poured during the airtime. KBS prolonged immediately the show time two more hours, and then over 30 families were dramatically reunited on that night. Since thousands of people visited directly the KBS studio to apply for their appearance on TV in the next morning, KBS resumed the live show from 10pm to the next morning 7am. During the second night, 71 families met again after over 30 years of separation. Afterward, the live show was broadcast over 450 hours for about four months by breaking the regular programing schedules from time to time. Throughout the campaign, over 10,000 people were reunited (Hong D. , 1997, p. 634).

It was narrative that led the live show for such a long period. Every story that the guests experienced when they were separated from the family while fleeing to avoid the war touched the heart of Korean people. The moment when those who were supposed to be in the same family identified each other through multiple relay transmission from various studios of the home and overseas excited people together all over the nation. Focusing on the greatest pain that Korean people had in mind, the show became an enormous outlet to vent people's emotional energy such as tears, resentment, sorrow, effervescence, delight, etc. Because the reality the show demonstrated was more dramatic and moving than fiction, the show itself was "the most

shocking and touching human drama" and "a monumental achievement in Korean television history," and suggested "the biggest goal that public service broadcasting should pursue" (Kim Y. , 1983).

The massive narrative and spectacles in special television campaigns were often adopted in television entertainment even after the end of the IMF management system for South Korea in 2001. Particularly, a touching story of the cast, regardless of celebrities or ordinary people, became an important source in Korean entertainment shows. This became one of the characteristics of Korean television entertainment with a long tradition of public television.

Heartwarming entertainment shows tend to gain influence in our country. Regardless of any particular format or compositional device, Korean viewers are likely to prefer the programs that make them feel touched and care about the stories and characters. In a western reality show, ordinary people with violent, shocking, or controversial story or personality are likely to be the center of the program. But Korean television does not allow such a story or personality. The moral standards of the medium are very strict in Korea. There are also many social taboos that dominate Korean television culture. Because Korean television is strongly tied to such morals, most of the ordinary people on television have touching stories. – LH

Korean variety shows target all age groups. The principle of including both subsections for teenagers and subsections aimed at the elderly together in one program has never changed since the beginning of weekend variety shows. This makes the contents of our variety shows sound and moral. - SJ

The combination of touching story and variety show generated a new subgenre so-called "public interest variety." Based on the successes of *Here He Goes, Kyoung-kyu Lee, Conscience*

Refrigerator, and *Let's Give Praise,* MBC launched many public interest entertainment programs with makeover formulae as a subsection of its weekend variety show, such as *Grand Opening* (2001) that helps remodeling failed small restaurants, *Love House* (2002) that repairs the old house of the poor, *Sweet Rain* (2009) that promotes overseas volunteering, etc. With the popular boom of public interest entertainment in the early 2000s, MBC created a variety show *!: Exclamation Mark* in which all sections were classified as public interest entertainment. Though not as popular as the MBC's shows, KBS and SBS also broadcast several public interest entertainment programs by inheriting the conventions of MBC's ones. The public interest programs include *Nocturnal Activity* (2010, KBS) that encourages those people who work late at night, *On Your Command, Sir!* (KBS, 2011) in which celebrities do the serve for the public's welfare, *Good Neighbors* (KBS, 2016) that helps improving the relations between neighbors, *Heartbeat* (SBS, 2013) where celebrities experience actual fire service.

6.1.5   Epitome of public interest variety: !: Exclamation Mark

The Korean public interest variety shows are unusually placed between two contradictory values of entertainment and public interest. The shows feature spectacular scenes and large-scale events as amusing elements and social responsibility and contributions as educational effects. In other words, they combine the primetime variety show format seeking for high ratings and profits in commercialized media market and public agenda promoting communal and benevolent spirits that are usually emphasized in educational programs. The appearance of ordinary people is a significant mediator connecting the two conflicting goals, entertainment and education, in the public interest variety shows.

!: Exclamation Mark is a paradigmatic model of the Korean public interest variety shows produced by MBC from November 2001 to November 2007 – season 1 from November 2001 to

May 2004 and season 2 from December 2004 to November 2007. Under the banner of "good civilian life and consciousness," the show handles two or three public service campaigns as subsections at the same time. Each subsection adopts the forms of humanistic documentary, news report, or lecture depending on its content. In the subsections, the show hosts of famous celebrities and entertainers visit various people and provoke discussions for their campaign, and consequently generate successful changes in real life of the guests. Some of the subsections include: *Let's Read Books* (building children libraries), *Let's Eat Breakfast* (improvement of youth's diets), *Street Lectures* (hardship-overcoming story)*, Open Your Eyes* (donation of cornea for the blind), *Up Hill And Cross Water* (free medical service for outbackers), *Asia Asia* (home visiting of foreign workers from underdeveloped countries), *Great Heritage 74434* (petition campaign for returning 74,434 Korean cultural properties plundered by invaders) and so forth.

Images and narratives of *!:Exclamation Mark*

As a single variety show claiming to advocate public values, *!: Exclamation Mark* contributed to setting a pattern of public entertainment programs in Korean television industry. First, by mobilizing lots of celebrities, high production equipment, and massive financial resources, it created spectacular sceneries with large-scale events including various locations overseas (Jeong E. , 2010). Actually, media researchers often criticize spectacularization of television as part of symbolic production of media industry corresponding to extreme commercialization (Kellner, 2003; McChesney, 1999; Stack, 2008). Kellner (2003) argues that television is a medium of spectacles in everyday life, programming with celebrities, events, and accidents to attract the attention of the public. The spectacles produced by television incorporate dominant symbols and models of consumer lifestyle and values and contemporary forms of entertainment such as films, sports, dramas, and other domains of new media culture. In

particular, television entertainment formats tend to create more like "spectacles as performance" than "spectacles as lens" which facilitate a rational discussion and persuasion-oriented message delivery (Stack, 2008). The image-based performances built in the current television entertainment are exposed outside of the historical knowledge and context, thus inducing emotional responses in viewers. The fantastic array of the television spectacle with a large number of entertainers and dramatic images and sounds of big events objectifies viewers rather than treats them as participants in the production process (Kellner, 2003).

Although the formula of a large-scale variety show can be seen as an example of media spectacularization, the case of *!: Exclamation Mark* is far from such a criticism in that the show generated a positive result that promoted public values in the national community. It adds amusement centering around the values of family love, neighborliness, nature conservation, human rights, welfare for the handicapped, support for developing countries, etc. based on humanism. In light of the role of public television that aims to provide good quality programs to the public, the show contributed to the public welfare reflecting the various information and cultural needs of the people rather than competing for ratings and profits. Thus, the Korean public interest variety show differs from the spectacles which concentrate on sensational scandals of celebrities and sensational reports of social events.

In terms of narrative, the show is characterized with realities created by collaboration between celebrities and ordinary people. Through a public campaign, the show presents that celebrities' talk can contain positive messages changing social attitudes and consciousness, not a shaggy-dog story or meaningless talk about their private life. The ordinary people involved in the show provide an impressive story as well as unexpected and unprocessed laughter and fun. However, as previous special live campaign shows demonstrate, *!: Exclamation Mark* also

emphasizes humanity as a solution for the campaigns and tries to appeal people's feelings and emotions rather than to illuminate the cause or context of the social issues. All the campaign themes of *! Exclamation Mark*, including encouragement of reading books, taking breakfast regularly, jumping rope for fitness, protection of wild animals, donation of cornea, etc. are nonpolitical and noncommercial. Appealing to the viewers' sensitivity and self-sacrifice, the show induces their voluntary participation and dedication to the campaign. Eui-cheol Jeong (2010) points out that such an unpolitical and uncritical approach without understanding and diagnosing the poverty and sufferings of the ordinary people poses a risk of typifying and representing them as objects of pity. Despite the risk to depoliticization of social reality, it is also true that the public interest variety show has potential for an alternative public sphere, because campaigning in the weekend primetime not only shares a public message with many audiences directly but also triggers interpersonal communication among audiences on the messages, thus setting the issue as a social agenda.

In addition, it is noteworthy that practical uses of subtitles in the show played a role in educating audiences and arousing their empathy. With the combination of funny subtitles and educational messages, the show *!: Exclamation Mark* was highly acclaimed for expanding the scope of comic materials to diverse social issues and opening a new horizon of television entertainment. By deliberately and sophisticatedly integrating educational content in the form of entertainment and contributing to positive social change, *! Exclamation Mark* realized what Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers (1999) call "entertainment-education" and established a unique subgenre in Korean entertainment television (Bae & Moon, 2006; Na & Choi, 2004).

Effects of the position of MBC, as a neither-private-nor-public station

Considering the generic history of Korean public interest entertainment shows, we should not overlook the roles and influences of producers and broadcasters as a key player in producing the shows. Interestingly, all the three conventional examples of Korean public interest entertainment shows, *Here he goes! Kyoung-kyu Lee, Let's Give Praise* and *!:Exclamation Mark,* were produced by MBC. The fact implies that these shows reflected the unique hybrid characteristics of the network MBC.

MBC runs as a private company but is in fact indirectly controlled by the government. It is also under the supervision of a government agency, Korean Communications Commission. As explained in the chapter 4, the company originally started as a commercial television broadcasting service in 1969. However, the properties of MBC were forcibly vested in the military regime and then controlled by the state-run KBS after the media consolidation in 1980. Since the democratic reform in 1987, MBC has been managed by a government-owned nonprofit organization, the Foundation of Broadcast Culture. In terms of management, it is a semi-public broadcasting service but gains primary profits from advertising. The concept of MBC is similar to Channel 4 in UK. Because of the uniqueness, MBC pursues public values and at the same time concerns commercial profits.

As a semi-public network, MBC's entertainment producers have been forced to handle the contradictory aspects of both public and commercial broadcasting service. Ironically, the contradictory situation compelled the producers to make more elaborated and sophisticated programs that satisfy both public and commercial values. According to a study on channel brands of Korean television (Rhee, Kim, & Shim, 2003), audiences perceived MBC with well-made drama series, many advertisement, and commercial nature. Nevertheless, it was also

recognized with the high quality of investigative documentaries and special shows. The audience received a self-assertive, critical, professional, and reliable impression from MBC. Thanks to the station images, MBC was often ranked as the most popular television channel among Korean audiences throughout the 1990s to 2000s.

The workers' union and occupational organizations like producers' association and journalist guild played a role in making the programs of MBC neither too commercial nor too political. Since MBC was often called a "masterless company" because of the unclear and complicated ownership, the organizations served as a guide for the workers to create programs in a balance between public and private broadcasting. They encouraged the workers to have professional approach to production, keeping their distance from the governmental authorities and advertisers.

However, the unstable combination of publicness and commerciality did not last long, confronting the increasing profit-centered production culture driven by neo-liberal media reform bills since 2009. Although many producers tried to establish new public entertainment shows after the show *!: Exclamation Mark*, the newly developed public entertainment shows didn't enjoy much popularity. Most shows that just highlighted public values and common good failed to catch audiences' attentions. It meant that viewers would be no longer fascinated only by good messages and images. Soon afterwards, the reality television genre replaced the functions of the public interest variety shows, containing moving stories and dramatic spectacles in a new formula. However, the conventions of the public interest entertainment show genre did not disappear, but rather permeated into real-variety genre, thus internalizing the thematic consciousness and messages of public interest in the shows.

Interestingly, the conventions of Korean public interest entertainment shows were transferred to China since the beginning of the explosive format trades to China in 2013 (this will be discussed in more detail in the chapter 7). Some of those producers who created the three conventional public interest entertainment shows in MBC moved to China in 2015 and then produced a new reality show *The Greatest Love* in China from 2016. The chief producer interviewed that "I've been asked to make the Chinese version of *Conscience Refrigerator* from many Chinese producers and broadcasters. I think that kinds of shows are needful for current Chinese society that is rapidly being transformed into capitalism" (Jang S. , 2014).

The theme of *The Greatest Love* is promoting family affection and parents' love. Under the banner of "a public interest entertainment show for the Chinese modern society," the show has drawn positive responses and supports for its contribution to national integrity and social harmony from Chinese investors and broadcasters as well as the government and press. The documentary-style setting that top celebrities visit their hometown and stay with their parents for 6 nights and 5 days at their childhood home that is exactly reconstructed is unusual in Chinese entertainment television shows, because most Chinese celebrities do not expose their private life and are often considered to be far from ordinary people's life. Breaking the conventional wisdom of Chinese television, the show delivers messages for public good to Chinese people.

Now, the tradition of the Korean public interest entertainment genre is blooming in a Chinese reality show. In other words, the transnational trades of television formats influence the innovation and evolution of a genre in local and regional television production. This is why we should look at newly emerging practices of transnational television formats along with the introduction of reality television as a historical moment of Korean entertainment television in the context of globalization.

In short, Korean public interest variety shows appeared as a prehistory of Korean-style reality television in the form of a variety show. Adopting emotional narratives and spectacular images from special live campaign shows, the shows tempted successfully Korean audiences. They combined big domestic and international occasions and public common citizenship, thereby building a hybrid and unique conventions distinguished from typical entertainment shows. In the historical context, the public interest variety shows emerged in a hiatus between political clout and capital power in the late 1990s and early 2000s during the foreign exchange crisis and the democratic regime in Korea. Particularly, the uniqueness of MBC, as a neither-public-nor private television station, provided an opportunity for the producers to develop a well-knit show program mixing public values with amusing elements. The conventions of the subgenre were transmitted to Korean real-variety shows along with the global craze of reality show genre, eventually introduced to Chinese market.

6.2   Birth of Locally Formatted Reality Television: Real-Variety Shows

From the early 2000s, Korean television broadcasters have officially imported foreign television formats. While Korean broadcasters recognized the significance of format business through attending global television content markets and fairs like MIPTV, NATPE, Shanghai TV festival, etc., they did not figure out the specific trading methods and processes of television format. Even Korean producers did not understand exactly how to make a format bible and what the contents should be in a bible. However, the worldwide popularity of reality television formats led the local producers to put the elements of reality television into their shows. The growing popularity of *Infinite Challenge* from 2006, which is evaluated as the pioneer in Korean real-variety shows, not only derived its spin-off programs but also contributed to the production of

hybrid formats with a mingling of reality television. The introduction period when reality

television was settled in Korean television industry ranges approximately between 2006 to 2012.

6.2.1   *Introduction of global television formats to Korea*

The increasing competition in developing new programs and the decreasing advertising

revenue in the domestic television market gave a tremendous pressure to Korean broadcasters

and producers. Particularly, in the weekend primetime, programs with lower ratings were

replaced immediately and new attempts continued. The entertainment producers had to bring

successful outcomes with a newly developed program aiming at the time slots in which popular

programs were already in place. Accordingly, they had to create a new program that would pay

off in a very short period of time. The global craze of format business that ensure cheap

production costs and stable viewership ratings gave the local broadcasters and producers a hint to

plan a new entertainment program (Hong & Seong, 2007).

As Table 9 demonstrates, diverse entertainment television formats were imported from

abroad from 2008 to 2012. These global television formats were brought mainly into the local

cable and satellite channels. As a latecomer in the Korean television industry, they actively

imported popular television programs in order to build a greater audience. From voyeuristic

reality shows (e.g. *Big Brother, Paradise Hotel*) and audition shows (e.g. *Got Talent, The Voice*),

to makeover shows (e.g. *The Block*) and dating game shows (e.g. *For Love or Money*), a wide

variety of foreign entertainment programs was aired during this period. The supply strategy

focusing on import of foreign entertainment shows resulted from lack of production manpower

and revenue of the stations. While cable television system was introduced in 1995, it took a long

time to realize the early promise of a multichannel and multi-platform system in Korea.

Depending on the production capacity, some cable channels have adapted the foreign formats

into the local versions and others have broadcast them with the form of a finished product either

dubbed or subtitled in Korean.

Table 9 Major Television Formats Imported from 2008 to 2012

Year	Importer	Division	Title	Genre/Format	Exporter
2008	MBC	Terrestrial	Brain Battle (Original: Nep League)	Quiz	Japan
2008	OnStyle	Cable	Project Runway Korea	Reality	US
2009	MBC Every1	Cable	Perfect Bride Korea	Game	Turkey
2009	QTV	Cable	Moment of Truth Korea (Original: Nothing But the Truth)	Game	Colombia
2009	QTV	Cable	Mom vs. Mom, Change Your Mom (Original: Wife Swap)	Reality	UK
2009	QTV	Cable	Love Taxi Korea	Reality date	UK
2009	QTV	Cable	Ranking Women (Original: London Hearts)	Variety	Japan
2010	tvN	Cable	Love Switch (Original: Take Me Out)	Date game	Australia
2010	tvN	Cable	'Silent Library' section in Neverland (Original: Silent Library in Downtown's This Is No Task for Kids!)	Variety	Japan
2010	tvN	Cable	'A Happy Life' in Neverland (Original: Benidorm Bastards)	Variety	Belgium
2010	tvN	Cable	Triangle (Original: Divided)	Quiz	Nether-lands
2010	OnStyle	Cable	Korea's Next Top Model	Reality	US
2011	MBC	Terrestrial	Dancing with the Star (Original: Strictly Come Dancing)	Celebrity dancing competition	UK
2011	MBC	Terrestrial	Minor Challenge in 60 sec (Original: Minute to Win It)	Quiz	US
2011	MBC Every1	Cable	Dancing Story (Original: Spin-off of Strictly Come Dancing)	Game	UK

2011	MBC Every1	Cable	My Man Can Korea	Reality Game	Germany
2011	tvN	Cable	Korea Got Talent (Original: Got Talent)	Talent	UK
2011	tvN	Cable	Opera Star 2011 (Original: Pop Star to Opera Star)	Talent	UK
2011	tvN	Cable	Saturday Night Live Korea	variety	US
2011	XTM	Cable	Top Gear Korea	Docu-magazine	UK
2011	QTV	Cable	Super Nanny Korea	Reality Solution	UK
2012	QTV	Cable	Diamond Girl (Original: London Hearts)	Make-over Talk	Japan
2012	QTV	Cable	Ten Minute Box	Ranking game	
2012	M-net	Cable	The Voice of Korea	Talent	Nether-lands
2012	Olive	Cable	MasterChef Korea	Cooking competition	US

Note: Author's reconstruction from the *2011 Television Content Format Industry Survey* (2011), *A Report of Research on Export Activation and Localization of Television Format* (2014), and *A Report of Research on Import and Export of Television Formats* (2015) by Korea Creative Content Agency.

CJ E&M, a media conglomerates operating a number of business divisions throughout the entertainment industry including films, theaters, music, games and television, has been the most active importer of the foreign television formats. Given the fact that the international distribution of television formats has been closely related to the increase of the number of television channels worldwide, it is natural for CJ E&M owning a large number of subsidiary pay channels such as tvN, OnStyle, XTM, M-net, etc. to show the aggressive attitude toward format importation. After acquiring On Media group owning lots of cable television channels in 2009, CJ E&M rapidly increased the production of foreign formats through official format license contracts (KOCCA, 2011). The active adaptation of popular foreign entertainment

formats such as *Project Runway Korea, Korea's Next Top Model, Korea Got Talent, Top Gear Korea*, etc. has been a key strategy to build the brand images of the channels that the company possesses and challenge against the dominant entertainment programs produced by the major terrestrial stations.

As CJ E&M's purchase of television formats has increased, global format distributors have actively engaged in business activities against the company. CJ E&M has been importing most premium formats with a full-package contract after importing *Yes or No* in 2006. The initial contract has been based on a season of a television program, which consists of 12 to 13 episodes, and then extended to next seasons depending on viewers' reactions. According to the interviews with the format trade managers (KOCCA, 2011), the positive assessment of CJ E&M's executives on the results of the format adaptation has led the continuous import of prominent foreign formats in preparation for the opening of general programming channels in 2011, which are cable channels programing all genres including news, documentaries, dramas and entertainment show programs.

Despite being a medium-sized cable station, QTV was another active format importer during this period. QTV was owned by a multinational joint venture that Turner Broadcasting Asia Pacific possessing several television channels in Asian countries retained 49% of the company from 2009 to 2016. QTV took advantage of the ownership structure of the multinational joint venture in the format trading, not only by searching and selecting excellent global formats but also by making a good bargain in the form of joint contracts at cheaper licensing fees than a sole contract (KOCCA, 2011). It was Turner Broadcasting Asia Pacific that made it possible for a Colombian game show *Nothing But the Truth* (*Moment of Truth Korea* in Korean title) to be first launched and successful in Korea in 2009. Outsourcing local adaptations

of the foreign formats, QTV paid more attention to accumulating the know-how of format contracts rather than production and enabled the subcontractors to experience global entertainment formats.

While the ratings of the imported television formats were not high because of the lower awareness of cable channels, they obviously contributed to the improvement of the brand images of the channels. Particularly, the reality television formats like *Project Runway Korea* and *Korea's Next Top Model* helped in shaping the images of OnStyle as a cable channel for young women. They were also perceived as a novel entertainment program for the Korean young generations.

6.2.2   Global formats in the major terrestrial networks

Unlike the cable and satellite stations, the major national terrestrial television networks, KBS (state-run public), MBC (semi-public) and SBS (private corporate), have maintained a passive attitude for the import of foreign formats. While the three networks purchased and adapted foreign formats in the early and mid 2000s, they have no longer interested in format importation since then (See table 8 in the subchapter 6.1.1). KBS imported *1:100* in 2007, which is recorded as the only foreign format adapted by KBS. Since KBS had no department in charge of format trading, the license agreement of the format was made through an outsourcing agency. MBC imported some Japanese game shows like *Brain Survivor, Brain Battle*, and *Minor Challenge in 60 sec,* which were adapted as a section of the weekend variety show in the early and mid 2000s. Except for *Dancing with the Star* imported by a subsidiary cable station of MBC in 2011, the company has not purchased foreign formats any more. Starting with the license contract of *Solomon's Choice*, SBS also bought some Japanese game shows and infotainment shows. It has not signed any contract after the show *Quiz on Your Hunch* in 2007.

There are several reasons why the major broadcasters have not imported foreign formats actively compared to the cable channels. First, the European game shows and reality programs that were gaining popularity in the global television format markets did not fit well with the programming strategies of the major Korean networks focusing on dramas and variety shows. In particular, the genre image of reality shows like "voyeuristic and cheap entertainment" made it more difficult for the Korean public television producers to ensure about the success of the foreign formats on their television networks as a national major television station. Some reality programs aired on the cable channels, whose undue sensationalism often sparked social criticism, deepened the "tabloid" images (Lee J. , 2005; Lee R. , 2007).

> As the professional code of ethics for Korean producers requires, I've learned that I should maintain the dignity as a public television producer even though I seek for fun. I've often heard such an advice through apprenticeship lessons, viewers' feedback, newspaper reviews, or even get-together dinners with my colleagues. – LJ
>
> If you are a Korean public television producer, you can never use the words like CJ E&M's catch phrase "the fun is endless." Of course, you can say like that as an entertainment producer. No blame attaches to the pursuit of fun. But as a public television producer, you should fulfill your social roles and responsibilities, too. – SJ

The national terrestrial networks, unlike cable channels with distinct themes and target audiences, have a wide range of audiences embracing kids to elder generations. Since they have been forced to produce more universal and less suggestive programs aimed to unspecified audiences, the reality subgenres such as dating game shows, voyeuristic reality shows or fashion makeover shows have been considered as an improper content to the public channels. The difference of viewership between public terrestrial television and commercial cable television

has influenced in building the producers' shared awareness that foreign programs do not suit domestic audiences' tastes. Such a belief led the public television producers to keep trying to localize the foreign formats rather than exactly follow the bibles. The excessive deformation of the original formats resulted in unsuccessful adaptations (KOCCA, 2011).

> The target audience of the Korean terrestrial television networks is the local viewers, who are all aged and undifferentiated people. The producers should make their program suitable to the local audiences' tastes. Although foreign markets are becoming increasingly important because of format business, the domestic market is the first priority for the major television producers. Wouldn't it be possible to sell the program to foreign countries if it was successful in the Korean market? - JH

More directly, the legal regulation on television prevented the major television producers from importing and adapting foreign formats. According to the Enforcement Decree of the Broadcasting Act Article 57, national terrestrial networks have to organize domestically produced programs not less than 60% but no more than 80% of the total broadcasting time for every half year. The notification of Korean Communication Committee (KCC) more heavily requires the terrestrial broadcasting businesses to comply with organization of domestic programs over 80% of the total. Additionally, the Korea Communication Standards Commission restricts foreign-style broadcasting as part of "public responsibility of broadcasting" in the Broadcasting Review Regulations Article 7 clause 5, stating "broadcasting should contribute to the creation, inheritance, and development of the national culture and the nation's identity." In this way, visible and invisible rules such as lawful regulations, different viewership and production culture have made the producers in the national terrestrial television companies avoid directly importing the licenses of foreign formats (Park & Bae, 2010).

6.2.3   Emergence of Koreanized reality television: Real-variety genre

Instead, the national terrestrial networks have tried to develop a new hybrid genre, mixing elements of game shows, talk shows, and documentaries in the variety show format. That is so-called a real-variety show. The first real-variety show is *Infinite Challenge* produced by MBC. *Infinite Challenge* is considered as a canonical model to represent a locally formatted reality genre. The program combines survival game show format and celebrity featured variety show. In the program, celebrities engage in a battle of wits and brawn while performing specific tasks such as quizzes, farcical fights and races and games, and provoke fun and laughter through a misunderstanding or conflict among themselves. From its first airing in 2005 to its ending in 2018, the program has pioneered the real-variety genre with various attempts and experiments. It was successfully settled down in the local television culture. It transformed the local production system and practices as well as the textual characteristics and local reception of the Korean primetime variety shows (Chang & Roh, 2010; Kim M. , 2008; Lee H. , 2011; Lee & Cho, 2010; Lee K. , 2010; Park & Bae, 2010).

First of all, *infinite Challenge* introduced a new filming system with the advanced camera technology. The program followed each entertainer with 6mm digital camcorders and stationary closed-circuit television cameras operated by a remote controlled device. Additionally, a jimmy jib camera crane and helicam were used to take aerial landscapes over the actors. The multiple camera system allowed the producers to capture almost every moment with various angles, from facial expressions and gesture, and even murmured voices of the cast to vast sceneries. Finding out the reactions of the actors and happenings behind the scenes, which the staff members could not detect at the time of shooting, the producers were able to build up the story more abundantly.

It was *Infinite Challenge* that allocated one camera per person for the first time in Korea. The chief producer of the show recognized that a funny scene during shooting time turned into a boring scene when editing it. This was because the scene was not shot enough to describe all the interesting things. It was necessary to increase the number of cameras to capture every detail. The various shots captured by multiple cameras would be very useful to characterize the performers in editing. - IK

Digital editing technology was essential to enable the multiple camera system in the production of the real-variety show. The numerous shots taken by dozens of cameras, which were saved as digital data, could be edited by a computer, thus reducing the editing time dramatically. In the editing process, the actors were retouched and reinterpreted with a new role, character and story.

The multi-camera shooting and non-linear editing system inevitably led to the multiple-team production. Because the show was a weekly program, the production team should be basically divided into 2 to 3 groups to run multiple episodes at the same time. Each group was separated again by performers. A basic production unit following a performer consisted of at least one cameraman, sound recordist, lighting technician and scripter. Additionally, main producers, assistant directors, writers, and assistant crews were assigned. Since 30 to 40 cameras were usually mobilized on the shooting site, the total number of the staff members increased up to almost 100 people.

Because of the large-scale production system, editing work was done by division of labor. First, several assistant producers take the editing work separately. They collect the footage taken by each unit and create an assembly edit by time. Next, all the staffs gather in a conference room to review the roughly edited copy and discuss what scenes to put in or out and what stories

to be told in the episode. After such a group discussion, the assistant producers return to the editing room and wrap the editors' cuts. Main producers make the final copy with the editors' cuts in consultant with main writers. In this step, producers and writers compose subtitles that function as a narration script in the program. And then, dubbing, sound effects, and graphic work are done in the final editing room. From shooting to broadcasting, the whole process take place within a week or two. As a chief producer of *Infinite Challenge*, IK explained about the role of the producers:

> The production team is too large for producers to control everything. What the producers do is to decide how to divide the tasks and responsibilities into several production units. Once you've divided up the work, each team plays its part autonomously. Writers and directors take care of their own team. Cameramen take picture of their own part for themselves. It is really a sort of self-managed work based on the staffs' expertise. All the chief producers have to do is to decide which way they will lead the production team. – IK

The large-scale production system of *Infinite Challenge* soon became pervasive in the field of the local television entertainment production. As many spin-offs were generated, it became natural to adopt such a production system that secure the hybrid formats mixing elements of reality television genre in a weekly-based variety show.

6.2.4   *Characteristics of Korean real-variety shows*

Centered on the three terrestrial stations, the real-variety show format has rapidly occupied the majority of weekend primetime slots. The generic versions of *Infinite Challenge* have demonstrated different characteristics depending on each station's color (Cha & Park, 2012). KBS has launched *1 Night 2 Days* (a real-travel show, 2007), *Qualification of Men* (a

real-challenge show, 2009) as a section of its Sunday evening variety show, *Happy Sunday*. SBS has released *Family Outing* (a rural life experience, 2008) and *Gold Miss is Coming* (a real-dating show, 2008) under the variety show *Good Sunday*. Starting with *Infinite Challenge,* MBC also has developed a number of reality formats like *We Got Married* (a fake marriage show, 2008) and *Hot Brothers* (a comic dating show, 2010) in the variety show *Sunday Night*. These reality formats tied together in pairs as Sunday variety shows have competed fiercely for the largest market share at the same primetime zone. Because the gap between the ratings of these shows is within 1% of the households, it has been hard to distinguish superiority among the three evening programs. The extremely fierce competition has resulted in the expansion of the programs' broadcasting time. While the Sunday evening variety programs were originally broadcast around from 6pm to 8pm, the start time was getting ahead to 4pm. As criticism against the excessive expansion of the showing time was raised, the three major networks eventually agreed with the broadcasting time of the variety shows from 4:50pm to 7:55pm in August 2014 (Yoon, 2014).

Although there are diverse subgenres of the Korean real-variety shows, they have several things in common. First, they do not have a fixed format. Of course, they might be grouped into a particular subgenre depending on the subject matters that each program deals with. However, because their weekly locations, events, and guests vary, the formats of the shows change in a way that fits the structures and purposes of the given situations. For example, *1 Night and 2 Days* on KBS, which is a travel reality show featuring six or seven young male entertainers with special guests, goes on various trips throughout Korea biweekly. Since the happenings vary depending on the destinations and situations in each travel, the show is largely unscripted. Exceptionally, the show has only a regular game to struggle for a comfortable bed and meal, but

the game is done in a hit-and-miss manner. Instead of scripts, the producers and writers of the show deal with the various situations flexibly. Since the main producer frequently appeared in the show in order to develop the episode and story, he became a celebrity.

Next, the Korean real-variety shows are mostly celebrity-centered programs (Cha & Park, 2012; Kim & Park, 2012; Lee & Cho, 2010). From MC and panels to special guests, popular entertainers and celebrities advance through the programs. With an analysis on the primetime formats' diversity of the Korean terrestrial networks, Jeong-seob Kim and Joo-yeun Park (2012) present that the celebrity-centered formats occupied average 69.6% of the programs of the three research years, 2000, 2005 and 2010 and the rate of casting celebrities increased as years went by. According to Kyoung-sook Lee and Kyung-jin Cho (2010), the real-variety shows' producers prefer to use famous entertainers and celebrities as the leading cast because they more easily attract the audience's attention than ordinary people. With the stiff competition for audience ratings, the producers have no choice but to use favorite celebrities and entertainers in terms of drawing power of audience and performing ability.

The interviewees said that the frequent casting of entertainers and celebrities in Korean real-variety shows are deeply associated with the close relationship between television producers and those big names:

Show business managers are like business partners for our television producers. Television industry and K-pop music industry are inseparable in Korea. As they trade talented entertainers as a demander and supplier, they naturally get closer to each other. From my experience, I have been able to get to know almost all managers in the local entertainment industry just in three years. Whenever a producer plans a new program, we get to know who will be appearing in the program soon. That's as fast as it gets. Also,

since our programs are on a weekly basis, it is difficult for ordinary people to continue

working full-time for the programs. But, entertainers and celebrities are familiar with

such a television production environment, so it is easy for them to build their characters

in the television shows and put more expressions into the characters. -KM

One of the advantages of the Korean production system is the close relationship between

directors and performers. Korean directors and performers share a lot of private jokes and

their intimacy, and then the close relationship is transmitted to the program as well. - SJ

In addition, the Korean real-variety shows intend to make laughter through serendipitous

happenings. This tendency is attributed to the unfixed and unscripted formats that most Korean

real-variety shows adopt. Even though a reality show applies a survival game format, they do not

focus on who is a winner, but on who makes more laughter. In the show, reality is used as a

mechanism to generate diverse situations. Depending on the real situation, casts alter their

characters to give viewers fun. Thus, the Korean real-variety shows are all variations on the

"entertainment reality" where the casts make laughter (Lee & Cho, 2010).

In terms of narrative, the Korean real-variety shows have obviously different narratives

from those of foreign reality shows. While the western reality shows, such as *Survivor* and

Project Runway, adapt competition and survival narrative works through the selection and

elimination process, the Korean reality shows seek mutual growth and development through

shared team experience (Lee K. , 2010; Lee & Cho, 2010). Because of the comedic purposes, the

Korean shows tend to ridicule the system legitimizing and rationalizing competitions, thus often

making the competition meaningless. Although the competition for individualistic achievement

is caricatured, the shared experience as a team and achievement through teamwork and

collaboration is demonstrated as the performers' inner growth. Through the communal experience and achievement, the casts are bound by family membership (Lee K. , 2010).

The concept of family is often expanded to a broader public sphere. In the shows, the entertainers and celebrities include the audience as their family members and often involve the audience as guests in episodes of the shows. Practicing public campaigns with the public, such as building a public library, cheering at World Cup and Olympic games, or exploring national historic sites, the Korean real-variety shows arouse national identity and collective sentiment.

6.2.5   From absurd challenge to the nation's real-variety: Infinite Challenge

The alteration of reality television into Korean style has gone through many trials and errors. At first, *Infinite Challenge* started as an absurd challenge show with six or more comedians and entertainers, who look silly and sloppy. However, such a program has transformed itself through constant communications with viewers for the last 13 years and finally became "the nation's real-variety show." As one of the most successful cases in the localization and transformation of reality genre, the program has not only built up its brand with diverse national events but also extended the brand with popular recurring segments. It is no exaggeration to say that the path *Infinite Challenge* has trailblazed is the history of Korean real-variety shows. After the last episode aired on March 31, 2018, the program continued to broadcast three more episodes that look back and recap the history of the show. In the recap special, the chief producer and cast interviewed about what they have confronted and overcome and how they successfully managed their way. Through the analysis on the three recap special episodes, how the program has found its identity and color as the first Korean real-variety show and what implications it has in the Korean television industry is discussed.

Discovery of characters

      Infinite Challenge began with the title of *Rash Challenge* at first from May 2005. The

producers planned an outdoor game show with "not-best" entertainers who represent young

generations in the age of limitless competition, often called "the 880-thousand-won generation

(i.e., the $800-monthly-income generation)" (Hong K. , 2016, p. 169) As soaring performance

fee made it difficult to cast popular entertainers, the producers were forced to cast unappreciated

and undervalued comedians and entertainers. Led by Jae-suk Yoo, known as one of the best MC

in Korea, six and more entertainers tried to complete absurd or impossible mission in outdoor

locations, such as tug-of-war with a bull, running race 100 meters against a train, racing in a

foot-powered paddle boat against a motor boat, and so on. Because of the ridiculous missions,

the producer and cast often made fun of themselves calling the show as a 3D (Dirty, Dangerous,

and Difficult) comedy in the early episodes.

      The season 2 entitled as *Excessive Challenge* were broadcast from October 2005 to April

2006. Although the second season had similar themes and topics to the first season, the cast

members started to find their characters. For example, Jun-ha Jeong, who was famous for acting

as a fool in a previous comedy show, ate a bowl of hot noodles just in 12 seconds and made a

strong impression of "the god of cookery" to the viewers. With the new character, he joined the

season 3 of the show. The chief producer interviewed that *Excessive Challenge* showed the

possibility of a character-oriented program and awakened him the potentials of the undervalued

entertainers (Kim T. , 2018). Eventually, he decided to change the whole concept and format of

the show.

      From May 2006, *Infinite Challenge* began its third season that has included the elements

of reality television and maintained its format and title to the end. In the episode of July 8, 2006,

the producer started to shoot the cast members from the moment they were arriving at the filming site. Although they were asked to come to the set on time or would be penalized, several members were late as usual on the day. Those who were late realized that the filming was in progress, panicked and made excuses. The episode that revealed the cast's appearances and behaviors as usual, which would not have gone out on the air before, received great acclaim from the viewers. Since then, the show has created challenges in relation to real life without a well-planned plot. Combining elements of both reality television and variety genre, the show began to be called a real-variety show by viewers and critics. The leading cast Jae-suk Yoo said, "at some point, people called *Infinite Challenge* the first Korea real-variety show. However, this was not what we intended from the beginning. When we showed the scene as it was, it became such a show" (Kim T. , 2018).

 As the cast members began performing their missions in impromptu settings, they have acquired their persona integrating with their real-life personalities. For example, Hyeong-don Jeong was often teased by the other cast members because he was an all-rounder except being funny. In the episode of "Let's move, Hyeong-don!" filming his moving day, Hyeong-don began to demonstrate his real personality. As the other members bothered him pretending to help him move, he told them to "get out of here" but soon ordered some food for them. This behavior showed the members as well as the viewers that he is cold outside but warm inside. The episode made his gag feel warm. Besides, Myeong-su Park's love affair and Jae-suk Yoo's marriage in their real life were used as a topic of the show. As the episodes mixing the cast's real life and acting cumulated, the cast members earned their characters and nicknames. Jae-suk Yoo was nicknamed "Yoo-Chief" as a host-in-chief; Myeong-su Park, "Giant Star or Father" due to his elderly look and his position as the oldest member; Jun-ha Jeong, "the God of Cookery" with his

big body size and appetite; Haha, "Shorty" because of his short height; Hong-chul Noh, "Dol+I"

meaning an extremely crazy boy in Korean; and Hyeong-don Jeong, "Tough But Nice Guy" with

his personality.

The process by which they acquire nicknames and characters demonstrates the

characteristics of television. As Fiske (1987) asserts with his notion of intertextuality, it is

possible for an entertainer to form a character in a television entertainment program because a

television program is regularly scheduled and broadcast as a series or serial. Television creates

regularly predictable viewing habits to viewers, in which leading characters are built up and

strengthened by the continuation of a story and characteristic figures that the viewers share.

The growth and variation of the characters in *Infinite Challenge* made it possible to create

a new story and segment. Once the members' characters and their relationship are established, it

is not difficult to develop another narrative and laughter even if the plot of the story is a little

loose (Kim Y. , 2013). "Infinite Corporation" is one of the best recurring segments using the

characters established in the show. The segment satirizes the contemporary people's working

lives. In the segment, the members have their own titles. These titles are based on the actual

personalities and relationships of the members, which have been built up and developed in the

show. The segment adopts a form of sitcom. However, the viewers can easily understand and

empathize with the characters of the sitcom because they are already familiar with the characters

of the members. Young-sung Kim (2013) points out that the narrative strategy of "Infinite

Corporation," which condenses the long-established characters of the members into each role in

the sitcom, makes the entire narrative of *Infinite Challenge* rich and enables it to escape from the

repetition as a limitation of television aesthetics. Since television entertainment is very sensitive

to the fast-changing trends of the society, its life span is inevitably short. Nevertheless, *Infinite*

Challenge had a long run of 13 years because the characters of the cast were settled well and continued to evolve in accordance with the social trends.

Challenges as a process of assimilation

As the title suggests, *Infinite Challenge* basically portrays competition and compensation through challenges that are seemingly impossible for the members to achieve. Critics point out that the system of competition and compensation, which is the main fun-inducing mechanism of reality television, strongly implies the characteristics of neo-liberalism that demands infinite competition and justifies the survival of the fittest (Kim S. J., 2011; Lee & Cho, 2010; Moon-Kang, 2007). However, *Infinite Challenge* does not simply follow the logic of neoliberalism. Rather, it gives viewers a fresh stimulation and pleasure through the competition and challenge. This is because the program focuses on the process and progress of the members' challenge, rather than emphasizing on the competition and accomplishment itself (Kim Y. , 2013; Lee H. , 2011).

The program has implemented a wide range of challenges including professional catwalk, dance sports, bobsleigh, professional wrestling, rowing, and so on. In the process of the challenges, the cast members experience various failures, such as falling behind, getting injured, and receiving a punishment. By sharing such experience of failure, the members feel homogeneity, comfort each other, and secure teamwork, friendship and loyalty. Particularly, sports challenges are frequently used as an event for the cast members to experience such a process and progress. For the episodes of professional wrestling, the members practiced high-level wrestling skills for over a year. The process of the members in their 30s and 40s showing successful performance on the professional wrestling stage with a great deal of efforts gave a big impression to viewers.

In an analysis on the local viewers' reception of *Infinite Challenge*, Hee-seung Lee (2011) uncovers that Korean viewers tend to identify themselves with the cast members and feel vicarious satisfaction through the members' experience. Unlike a standard variety show conducted under strict planning and scripts, the program puts a certain amount of contingency and unpredictability in the challenge missions. Combining silly and odd characters, the cast members demonstrate a complex dynamic system that maximizes creativity in the self-organizing process. The viewers sympathize with the stars maintaining the characters given in the show, and at the same time have fun with the active interactions of the stars with high freedom and interdependence in the challenge events. Thus, the viewers are able to be immersed in the various missions, games and challenges of the members, even though they fully understand that these situations are a fictional reality different from their real life.

The assimilation of the local viewers with the performers is maximized through big events such as the Olympic games, general elections, the strike of MBC, etc. The Olympic games were favorite subjects of the show. In the episodes of Beijing Olympics, the members were dispatched to the matches that Korean mass media didn't pay attention to. Showing the athletes who had been out of the spotlights, the program drew the public attention to the players of minor sports. In the episodes for the PyeongChang Olympics, the cast members further tried to challenge the bobsleigh to induce viewers' interest in the unpopular sport. Through the performance of the members, the local viewers are sympathetic to the compassion, efforts, and will of the players that represent their nation. In the episodes called "Decision 2014" as a parody of the general election in 2014, the cast members entered an election to select a new leader of the program, asking the viewers to vote at the 11 voting booths over the nation. The total number of votes were over 450,000. This number is similar to a big city's number of voters in the

nationwide local elections. The voting campaign of the show was praised for contributing to increasing the turnout of the 2014 general election by 10 percent from the previous election.

Such nationwide events often encourage national sentiments among viewers. The episode called "Delivery of Infinite Challenge" is one of the representative examples to promote national sentiments and communal spirits to the local viewers. The members visited and served some Korean food to several Korean immigrants who have stayed foreign countries for a long time. The guests include a Korean guard of the Gabonese President, Korean adoptees in America, Korean nurses dispatched to Germany in the 1960s, and ethnic Koreans in Japan's Utoro village, who have been fighting for a plot of Japanese land their parents cultivated out of wild trees. The list of the guests shows what the program seeks for. Showing the poverty, separation, and discrimination that the guests suffered from, the program tried to arouse the viewers' sympathy and goodwill as a family and citizen of the same nation.

The increasing sense of kinship and solidarity that the cast members shared with the local viewers often redefined and constrained the nature and identity of the program. For example, *Infinite Challenge* started "calendar project" from winter, 2007 to make and distribute the brand's calendar to the viewers. All proceeds from the calendar sales would be donated to the disadvantaged. Like some other recurring segments in the show, the calendar project became an annual national event as it led to a large purchase of the local viewers by broadcasting the calendar making process and shooting scenes into an episode. However, there was a controversy that the photos of Hong-chul Noh and Gil, who got off the program by their drinking-driving issue, were included in the calendar of 2015 (Son J. , 2014). This dispute clearly shows that as viewers' expectations for the program grew, so did the members' and staffs' burden of social responsibility and morality.

The assimilation process in which the cast and viewers converge into "the same" is rarely seen in western reality television programs that differentiate "the others" from the viewers through the process of difference, exclusion and elimination. The mechanism of assimilation of *Infinite Challenge* makes games and missions a sort of play in which the cast and viewers share an amusement and pleasure. Through the play, they also share communal values and national identity rather than individual achievement, thereby internalizing and enhancing the public interest ideology in the real-variety show. The development process of *Infinite Challenge* as a nation's real-variety show reminds us that proliferation of a particular television genre relies more on social recognition, network's strategic investment and cultural discourse on the genre rather than the text of the genre itself. The social perception of a television genre can be always changed by contextual and historical situations.

7 GOING REGIONAL: EXPORTS TO AND CO-PRODUCTION WITH CHINA

Thanks to the booming production of real-variety shows, Korean producers have accumulated the know-how of reality television formats. Applying the multiple team production system and advanced production technologies to the weekend primetime show production, the local producers have developed a Koreanized reality television optimized to the local television programming and scheduling system. In this process, the public interest ideology and national identity has been internalized in the real-variety shows. As the Korean real-variety programs featuring Korean idol stars and entertainers have reached foreign fans on the Korean Wave, the demands of Korean formats have increased particularly in Asian countries. Accordingly, Korean producers have started to develop a new format to enter the regional and global television markets.

This chapter traces the development of Korean reality television through format trades and collaboration with the regional industries, particularly Chinese television industry. Since China has already begun actively adapting global television formats, particularly talent formats, the Korean formats exported to China largely follow the legacy of documenting a living situation of the cast within the framework of competition. The advanced techniques of television music show production and the popularity of the Korean Wave gave the Korean formats distinct advantages over other foreign formats in Chinese markets. In addition, the celebrity-centered real-variety shows containing family-friendly entertainment were greatly welcomed by the Chinese opinion leaders who have sought for social integration as well as by the Chinese audiences who have formed a huge fan base consuming Korean television programs via online streaming sites in real time. Accordingly, the direct legacies of the Korean reality formats became adjusted to the local surroundings of Chinese television industry through intensive and wide-ranging co-production projects, and thereby serving as another form of nationalistic culture for the Chinese market.

This chapter describes the exportation processes of the Korean reality shows to China and the increased co-production projects with the Chinese producers in two subchapters. In the first subchapter, how Korean reality formats were explosively exported to China, what efforts the Korean producers and broadcasters made to carve out the big market, and how the Korean reality formats have been leading content in the regional market is discussed. The second subchapter focuses on the Korea-China joint production projects as a new adaptation strategy towards the Chinese market. It pays attention to how the joint production with China has affected the Korean television industry and the contents. As the examples of the two stages, *I Am a Singer* which is

the first full-package Korean format exported to China and *Super Idol* which is the first joint-production audition show with China is analyzed.

7.1   Format Exports: From License Sales to Full-Package Deals

The craze of the Korean Wave in Asian countries encouraged the local producers and broadcasters to pay more attention to the potential of format business as a new model to diversify and extend the industrial revenue. Despite lack of business experience and industrial support, the local producers have made inroad to international markets, by providing field trip lessons and voluntary guidance. Especially, the applause of China with the world's biggest television market gave an opportunity for the local producers not only to develop new types of reality formats, but also to adjust their production strategies and practices to the Chinese market. In this stage, major television networks have established a department specializing format trading and have accelerated the development of new entertainment formats.

7.1.1   Development of reality programming

The popularity of real-variety genre has continued with the creation of new programs in the end of 2000s. These new programs combining reality television elements in the form of a talk show, game show, and quiz show have encroached on the weekday night slots as well as weekend primetime slots. The two features of Korean real-variety shows, character-centered storytelling and reliance on situational happenings, have been actively applied in almost every local entertainment show. Even the topics and questions of the newly developed talk shows such as *The Knee-Drop Guru* (MBC, 2007) and *Happy Together* (KBS, reorganized in 2007) have become more straightforward under the influence of the real-variety shows. MCs throw out unwritten questions that often fluster the quests. The elements of reality television render the talk shows more truthful and friendlier for viewers than traditional talk shows.

The strength of reality programs has been further enhanced by the success of the audition program. M-net, a pop music cable channel owned by CJ E&M launched an audition show *Super Star K* in 2009. The large-scale audition program with a huge amount of prize money and a wide range of preliminaries both at home and abroad gained tremendous attention and popularity. Since the audition show provided a great opportunity for aspiring singers and musicians, over 1.3 million people auditioned for the season 1 of the program. Not only did the outstanding talents of the participants but also their rags-to-riches story made the viewers feel empathy and root for them (Choi & Kang, 2012; Kim & Kang, 2012). Following the season 1 recording a 7% rating that was unprecedented in the history of Korean cable broadcasting, the season 2 broadcast in 2010 received a 19% rating, renewed the highest ratings in Korean cable television. Banking on the popularity of *Super Star K*, similar audition programs have sprung up. The generic versions of *Super Star K* include *Star Audition: The Great Birth* (MBC, 2010), *Miracle Audition* (SBS, 2011), *K-Pop Star* (SBS, 2011), and *Super Diva* (tvN, 2012). In addition, the craze of audition shows led to the adaptation of popular foreign audition formats such as *Korea Got Talent* (tvN, 2011) and *The Voice of Korea* (Mnet, 2012). As a result, the audition show has been established as a popular subgenre of the local reality television.

The explosive creation of the reality-style entertainment programs raised the hopes of format exports among the policy makers and the local television industry. The government has started to calculate the amount of television format exports and imports separately from the statistics of total television program exports since 2009 (See Table 10).

Table 10 Format Trades of Korean Television Industry from 2009 to 2016

(Unit: $1,000 USD)

Year	Export		Import	
	Terrestrial	**Cable & Indie**	**Terrestrial**	**Cable & Indie**
2009	651	0	0	83
2010	425	587	0	266
2011	1,079	0	0	2
2012	1,298	0	0	2
2013	3,099	327	0	36
2014	7,290	1,361	0	0
2015	35,818	3,327	0	525
2016	52,202	3,729	0	930

Note: Author's reconstruction based on *the Annual Survey of Korean Broadcasting Industry* published by Korean Communications Commission from 2010 to 2017. The amount of format trades has been calculated separately from the statistics of television program exports and imports since 2009.

However, the volume of exports was insignificant until 2013, because it was only recently that Korean producers and broadcasters began to pay attention to the format sales. They had little experience and access to the overseas format business networks. It was also true that many domestic entertainment programs have not shown originality enough to sell their own formats (KOCCA, 2011). As a producer who has participated in the exports of his formats since the early days, SJ explained:

> It's not long ago that we thought we could do business with television formats. It's not long since we started not to copy Japanese ones. I remember that it was around 2010 in which we began to recognize the dissemination power of the Internet and the concept of intellectual property rights, and television format is a type of intellectual property. – SJ

While full-package format exports are low, license sales of Korean drama formats were gradually increasing. Since 2008, the sales of scenarios and remake licenses of Korean drama have been actively carried out, replacing the sales of the finished programs (KOCCA, 2011).

7.1.2   Start of exports: Korean formats to overseas markets in the 2000s

As Table 11 demonstrates, the first case in which a Korean entertainment television format was sold to a foreign country was KBS's quiz show *The Golden Bell Challenge* to the CCTV of China in 2003. The deal that was made before the concept of format trade settled in Korea was a spontaneous transaction based on the reputation of the program rather than the broadcaster's sales activity. Although MBC and SBS also made a license agreement of their entertainment formats such as *Match Made in Heaven* (MBC) and *Truth or Dare!* (SBS) in the mid of 2000s, these contracts were generated not by their active endeavor for sales, but by foreign buyers' interests (KOCCA, 2012b). These format deals were simple license sales that did not include a production guidance package such as a format bible and flying producer. Thus, the format prices were so low and the contracts did not include any requirements such as maintaining the identity of the original formats (KOCCA, 2012b).

Table 11 Major Television Formats Exported from 2003 to 2013

Year	Exporter	Division	Title	Genre/Format	Importer (year)
2003	KBS	Terrestrial	The Golden Bell Challenge	Quiz	China, Vietnam ('05, '08)
2004	MBC	Terrestrial	Love House	Renovation reality	China
2006	MBC	Terrestrial	Match Made in Heaven	Dating variety	China
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Truth or Dare!	Game	Indonesia
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Match, Reverse Drama in Good Sunday	Two mini-drama's competition	China, Indonesia ('07)

2009	KBS	Terrestrial	Global Talk Show: Beauties' Chatterbox	Talk	China, Vietnam
2009	KBS	Terrestrial	Vitamin	Health infotainment	China, Vietnam
2009	KBS	Terrestrial	'Friends' in Happy Together	Game	Japan, Taiwan
2009	M-net	Cable	Love Fighter	Reality	UK
2009	M-net	Cable	Trace, X-boyfriend	Reality	US
2010	MBC	Terrestrial	We Got Married	Real variety	Turkey ('10,'11) China ('13)
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	'Dangerous Invitation' in Super TV Funny Suday	Horror Talk	China
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	Fly Away! Shootdori	Reality	Vietnam
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	Emergency Escape Number 1	Infotainment	China
2012	KBS	Terrestrial	Youth Singo	Reality	Vietnam
2012	TvN	Cable	Super Diva	Singing competition	China, Columbia('13), Argentina('13), Mexico ('13)
2013	KBS	Terrestrial	2 Nights 1 Day in Happy Sunday	Real variety	China
2013	KBS	Terrestrial	Immortal Song	Singing competition	China
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	I Am a Singer	Singing competition	China
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	Daddy, Where Are We Going?	Real traveling	China ('13, '15, '17)
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	Perfect Combo	Quiz	Turkey
2013	SBS	Terrestrial	Star Beauty Show	Infotainment	Cambodia
2013	SBS	Terrestrial	Miracle Audition	Talent	China
2013	TvN	Cable	The Genius	Game	Netherland, France ('14), UK ('14)
2013	TvN	Cable	The Romantic	Dating variety	China
2013	TvN	Cable	Three Idiots	Variety	Netherland
2013	JTBC	Cable	Great In-Laws	Real experience	China

Note: Author's reconstruction from the *2011 Television Content Format Industry Survey* (2011), *A Report of Research on Export Activation and Localization of Television Format* (2014), and *A Report of Research on Import and Export of Television Formats* (2015), by Korea Creative Content Agency.

The hope of original Korean format exports began from 2010 when *We Got Married* (MBC) was exported to Turkey with the government support. Since 2007, the Korean government has been supporting the format business and trades by organizing a budget of about $1million annually to assist the local television industry to run the pilot program production project, format bible production project, and format development training project (KOCCA, 2014). These projects allowed the local producers and broadcasters to recognize the significance of original formats and overseas format distribution networks in order to generate royalties from their formats continuously.

The form and volume of format exports, which were sold only for partial license sales before, has started to change rapidly since 2013. The pioneer of such a change was *I Am a Singer* (MBC) which was exported to China with a full-package contract. Subsequently, many other entertainment formats were sold to China in the same manner. As these programs were successfully adapted and localized to Chinese market, the format contracts have been renewed for season 2 and 3 and the prices have increased surprisingly. The success of Korean television formats in China began to draw attention in overseas markets. For the Korean producers, however, it was unexpected:

> I didn't think that our programs hit the jackpot in China. When Chinese producers contacted us to import our programs, I did neither know what their production capacity was nor did I know how big the Chinese market was. I think Korea seemed to have been able to succeed in China because of its geographical proximity as well as its strong foundation of human and technological resources, which could make it easy to dominate in advance the Chinese market that everyone has wanted to entry. – SJ.

7.1.3 New structure and features of Chinese television industry

In order to understand why the Korean television formats have achieved remarkable results in the Chinese market, it is necessary to look at the recent trends and structure of the Chinese media industry. In accordance with the splendid economic development since the reform and open-policy of the national economy in the 1980s, the Chinese cultural industry has made a tremendous progress which has activated reconstruction of the cultural system and creation of diverse cultural content. The soaring advertising revenue has led to several changes in the Chinese media system: market-oriented improvisations; the dramatic increase of media outlets; diversification of media business; and change of the ethos of the Chinese media (Bai, 2005). In particular, the Chinese television industry has pioneered the marketization of the national media because it is a major advertising medium which has 98.2% penetration rate among national audiences (Wang, 2008, p. 27).

As a result of the business expansion, media outlets became too numerous to effectively control and a few of them achieved scale of economy. The state decided to nurture a few state media conglomerates for forming a strong media industry. Under the government-sponsored consolidation, many terrestrial, cable and educational stations in the same province were merged during the campaign. Eventually, the number of television stations decreased by 357 television stations in the central/ the provincial/ the regional level by the end of 2002. Widening their niche in the domestic cultural industry such as movie, television production and distribution, advertising, real estate etc., Chinese media conglomerates have grown bigger as well as stronger (Bai, 2005).

Commercialization and industrialization

The reform of the national television industry was originally designed to foster itself as a competitive player in the global cultural market (Keane, 2007). Joining the WTO, the Chinese government has paid attention to the potential of media industry as a new growth engine for Chinese national economy in the context of globalization. Since the party-state has recognized and shared the significance of cultural industry and the state's role on it through the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the 15th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 2000, it has improved various laws and policies supporting domestic cultural industry (Sun, 2011).

In 2009, the Chinese state presented "Cultural Industry Promotion Program," a foundation of full-scaled implementation of Chinese cultural industry fostering policy. The gist of the promotion program is the following: marketization of cultural business units; continuous expansion of public-interest cultural work; incentive fosterage of big cultural companies; promotion of capitalistic cultural market focusing on cultural industrial clusters; and reform of the administrative system and enhancement of international competitiveness. This ground plan has crystallized with the "12th Five-Year Period Cultural Industry Doubling Plan" in 2012, which aims at four major long-term goals: maintaining the average annual increasing rate of the added values created from cultural industry over 20%; promoting abundant cultural life of the people by enhancing cultural creativity and enriching cultural commodities and services; creating more jobs through the development of cultural industry; and expanding domestic consumption by increasing cultural consumption rapidly. With this long-term action plan, the state has once again demonstrated its firm intention of fostering cultural industry, which satisfies the spiritual cultural demand of the people and gives tremendous variety to their way of life in a mode of economic development (Oh H. , 2012)

According to these series of the national plan promoting media industry, the Chinese government has intensively fostered over ten mega-cities as cultural industry clusters. In order to nurture these clusters, the government has provided not only financial support including expansion of the development budget, promotion of capital influx and formation of the investment fund, but also institutional and social support such as nurturing of highly qualified professionals, supplementing the legal system for content trading and establishing a consultative body for the cultural companies (Sun, 2011; Oh, 2012).

Changsha, the hometown of Hunan TV which is the second biggest television network in China, is one of the most representative media industry clusters. Hunan Satellite TV, the biggest importer of Korean television formats, is well known as the first entertainment television company in China with a high advertising revenue and national notoriety. Based on the remarkable growth of the television network, Changsha has boosted its economy into a TV filming center. As a result, despite being an inland city distant from the coastal industrial complex, Changsha recorded nearly twice the national economic growth in 2011 (Larson, 2012). As the example demonstrates, the characteristics of the reform of the Chinese media can be summed up in a word, government-initiated marketization (Zhao, 2008).

Entertainization and depoliticization

According to the dual strategy of the media reform, the Chinese television industry has been concentrated, commercialized, and privatized (Bai, 2005). After the government ended the favorable revenue tax policy for broadcast outlets, the investment of transnational capital as well as the participation of the Chinese domestic investors have been gradually expanded. Advertisers and many of the commercial media groups have begun to target young and middle-aged urbanites who are well-educated and affluent consumers (Huang & Green, 2000). In order to

attract the audiences, the Chinese media conglomerates have concentrated heavily on entertainment programs, because entertainment is one of the most compelling contents which stimulate mass consumption of young and middle-aged audiences in the metropolitan area of China. In addition, the television players' intention not to get involved in any political issues has resulted in depoliticization of their programs (Chan, 2009, p. 27).

The entertainment strategies of the Chinese media conglomerates have several features: heavy dependence on television drama; strategic scheduling and promotion of television programs; involvement of advertising managers in program purchase decision; alliances and joint-ventures for competition; and depoliticized content (Bai, 2005). These strategies are not applied only to domestic corporations. For transnational media corporations, entertainment is the best venue through which to enter the Chinese media market in that it is less sensitive content for the Party. Moreover, these transnational entertainment programs including drama, reality television shows, and documentaries have played a role in filling up a deficiency of domestic television content in a multi-channel environment. As a result, 134 entertainment programs were aired by thirty-four satellite TV networks during the primetime in 2011. Every evening, eighteen entertainment show programs were broadcast at the same time in China (KOCCA, 2012c).

The fierce competition among the commercial television networks inevitably resulted in the dominance of entertainment programs as well as the prosperity of diverse foreign television formats. According to a report of Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), imported formats aired by Chinese TV channels were more common in 2000s (Han C. , 2013). Since China Central TV (CCTV) imported a British program *Go Bing* and broadcast its Chinese version *Good Luck 52* in 1999, the number of foreign formats broadcast on Chinese TV gradually increased. During 2011, many local versions of foreign formats such as *The Sing Off,*

101 Ways to Leave A Game Show, The More She Dances The Prettier She Is, etc. were aired in China. Notably, the majority of these foreign formats were made by purchasing officially the copyrights of overseas television companies (Han C. , 2013). In particular, the great success of the audition program *Super Girl,* which originated from *American Idol*, triggered the official contracts of audition show formats. Thereby, China became one of the biggest importers of foreign television formats.

7.1.4   A front-runner of the format exports to China: I Am a Singer

The Korean television show *I Am a Singer*, whose first season was broadcast from March 2011 to February 2012 and the second season was from April to December 2012, is a survival reality program to audition not amateurs but professional singers. The fact that first class singers compete for the best singer and have to be judged not by critics but by the general audience drew a keen attention from domestic viewers. With this unique formula, the show gained tremendous popularity, at the same time, its effects rippled across the Korean society. The cultural syndrome of *I Am a Singer* generated a variety of parodies; reproduced the forgotten pop songs from the show as a new cultural commodity in the online music market; and revealed the accumulated conflicts among power agencies in the Korean music industry (Yeo & Oh, 2012).

The cultural impact of *I Am a Singer* reverberated beyond Korea. The Chinese version of the television format became one of the biggest hit programs in the 2013 Chinese TV industry. Similar to what happened in Korea, a longtime singer but unknown to younger generations sprang into fame since appearing in the show. The program had consistently ranked No. 1 on the chart of viewing rates in China, and the advertising unit cost of the program nearly doubled. In addition, the program triggered social discussion about the Chinese music market and

entertainment television content production. The success of the television format facilitated the exportation of many other Korean entertainment formats to China (Oh S. , 2013).

I Am a Singer generated diverse cultural impacts and discourses in both Korea and China. In Korea, *I Am a Singer* played a leading role in promoting exports of Korean formats in a large quantity to the Chinese market. In China, the local version raised a number of social, cultural, economic and political issues throughout the process of introduction, adaptation and negotiation. Thus, the analysis on the adaptation of *I Am a Singer* in China can uncover not only the capacities of the Chinese cultural industry and legal and social system for foreign television formats, but also various cultural discourses around production and consumption of imported content. Based on the in-depth interviews with the chief producer of *I Am a Singer*, this subchapter delineates the dynamic interactions between domestic and foreign television professionals, between producers and consumers, and between the local/regional industry and the state.

Creation of an original format to export

When the producer planned the program, audition programs such as "Got Talent" were all the craze in the global television market. Even in Korea, not only were several imported audition formats including *Korea's Got Talent, Voice of Korea, America's Next Top Model, Project Runway, Dancing with the Stars, Pop Star to Opera Star* etc. broadcast, but also domestically developed audition programs such as *Super Star K, Miracle Audition, the Great Birth* etc. were aired. As these audition programs dominated the local entertainment television programming, diverse variations were considered. The chief producer of *I Am a Singer* took note of advantages and disadvantages of the audition formats:

I wanted to make the best audition show which could be broadcast in primetime. To

achieve this, I considered two points. One is the best performance. Despite the high

viewer ratings, many audition programs showing the amazing talents of ordinary people

have certainly limits in terms of quality of performance. Amateur singers cannot entirely

satisfy the expectations of the audience. I hoped to make people happy with the best

singing performances. The other point is the power of drawing audiences. The

performance is needed to give tension, with something like survival game formula which

eliminates one participant from the contest in regular order. Considering the two points, I

designed *I Am a Singer*. - KY

Like popular global audition shows, *I Am a Singer* also has a survival game format.

Seven professional singers sing a song in front of 500 audience evaluators selected among the

applicants on the program website. The evaluators are classified into five groups by age and each

group consists of 100 persons with a gender balance. After the participants compete twice (two

contests make one round), the singer with the lowest total score is left out of the contest. The

singer who does not drop off the consecutive seven rounds is given an honorary graduation

certification. Although the participants are known as professional singers with a powerful voice

and outstanding singing ability, they should demonstrate diverse features and images in order to

survive in the consecutive contests. In addition, superior interpretations of the music and

splendid stage manners are needed. That is, the audio-visually spectacular singers have a decided

advantage in the show (Kim M. , 2012). Because of such a pressure of having a great

performance, a considerable number of singers refused the proposal of the show (Lee H. , 2012).

What differentiates *I Am a Singer* from other audition programs is that it does not make

the final survivor a hero. Instead, the title of "the real singer" and "the real song" sheds a new

light on the forgotten singers and songs and makes them new cultural commodities in the current

music market. According to an industrial report (Seo, 2011), the earning of *I Am a Singer* from

music download and streaming was estimated at roughly US$ 45 million in 2011. This is 7.7% of

the total amount of the annual earnings from music download in the Korean music market.

Above all, gaining the nationwide recognition as "You are a true singer" from the local audience

is the highest reward for the participants (Son & Kim, 2012).

While *I Am a Singer* borrowed the basic framework from the survival audition reality

shows, the program aptly mixed the competitive composition of the global format with Korean

sentiments. With the competitive system of global audition shows, the program follows the

general mechanism of a reality show, which "promotes audience pleasure based in the pursuit of

individual and materialistic goals," thus operating as the "secret theatre of neoliberalism"

(Brennan, 2012, p. 71). At the same time, the program aims to satisfy the cultural demands of

Korean audiences: replacement of the overused dance music of teen-idol groups with the favorite

Korean pop songs for middle-aged class; supply of family-friendly entertainment television

show; and most importantly, a hunger for 'listening to music' rather than 'watching music.'

Thus, *I Am a Singer* had a great appeal to the audiences alienated in the teen-oriented music

market.

The prominent achievement of *I Am a Singer* in the domestic market became soon known

to China. At that time, Chinese TV stations have gradually expanded production of audition

programs such as *Voice of China, Chinese Idol, The Most Beautiful Harmony,* etc. For the

Chinese TV networks, more competitive and creative audition formats were needed for

enhancing viewer ratings and advertising revenue. Indeed, Chinese television companies have

operated a task force searching compelling formats over the world. In the case of Hunan Satellite

TV, twenty-five members in the R&D center have tried to find competitive programs

(Chinatimes, 2013). This team has developed a sense of discernment in choosing good formats

for their domestic market based on the accumulated experience regarding foreign formats. *I Am a*

Singer was one of the best programs that they found. Hunan Satellite TV abandoned *New Year's*

Eve Concert with a national reputation, and instead chose the new program *I Am a Singer* to

seize the initiative in winning the net-war (Sina.com, 2013).

Collaboration and competition for advanced standardization

Despite China's high expectations and interest, the import of *I Am a Singer* was not

smooth sailing. Although Hunan TV, the importer, first contacted MBC, the copyright holder,

two months after the first program was released, the production of the Chinese version started

after one and one-half years. While Chinese newspapers reported that the delay was due to

casting problems and manufacturing difficulties, the Korean producer gave another reason:

> The decision-making process itself was very long. Chinese TV stations have to follow
>
> directions from the state. We received purchase commitment from the Chinese staffs
>
> early in the run. But, they had to wait over one year to get a permission from the state.
>
> There might be several reasons for the delay in the decision. One issue was the audience
>
> voting system. I was told later that the state was concerned about how the voting method
>
> would influence audiences. Coincidentally, the new leader was about to be inaugurated in
>
> China. The finalization, eventually, came out after the inauguration of the new leader. -
>
> KY

This episode obviously shows the dominance of the state in the Chinese television

production. The Chinese government has often engaged in media production and artificial

protection for the domestic cultural industry. In particular, the fever of audition programs forced

the state to regulate new imports of audition formats. Some critics accused the government of censorship after *Super Girl* was suddenly canceled despite its high ratings and popularity in 2011. A journalist reported that the "Western-style of voting was seen as subversive by some officials" (Hughes, 2011).

The SARFT sent "the notice regarding the selection for more advanced audition programs" to domestic TV stations on July 24, 2013 (Han C. , 2013). In the notice, the state required TV stations to give weight to domestic programs and to strictly control imported programs. Although the SARFT defended the notice saying that it was a bulwark against the sameness of audition programs, the policy was interpreted as an action intensifying competitiveness of domestic programs. Actually, the notice resulted in the instant decrease of audition programs. *Male Voice College* (Hunan Satellite TV) and *China Red Song* (Jianxi Satellite TV) were canceled a day after the notice was delivered. Qinghai TV also suddenly stopped the televising plan of *Flowers blossoming*, which was scheduled to be broadcast in November 2013. This episode clearly reveals the difference between the two countries. While both Korean and Chinese TV stations have one thing in common: to seek new entertainment formats which guarantee a box-office hit, the former leaves the choice up to the market – i.e., audiences, and the latter follows the guideline of the government. This is the difference between Korean and Chinese television production systems.

Television format contracts usually include the bible containing production knowhow and the consultation of the flying producer. However, when making a contract for the format trade, MBC signed on for offering on-the-spot study instead of the bible. The reason was simple, because Hunan TV contacted MBC too early to finish the bible production work. Although the

on-the-spot study would inevitably expose their core skills and specific techniques, MBC made a

tactical decision for the future:

> *I Am a Singer* was the first format export for us in the true sense of the term. Actually,
>
> format exports were considered as the exclusive property of the transnational media
>
> companies from UK, Netherlands, and the U.S. Now, we became able to sell our formats
>
> in earnest. Therefore, it was important to establish a good precedent for the future. The
>
> success of a format export must include the success of its local adaptation. It is no use if
>
> our format fails in the importing country. There must be a difference in production skills
>
> and capacities between the two countries. If I had left them alone, I could never have
>
> succeeded. - KY

The chief producer of *I Am a Singer* fully understood that the importer's skills and

abilities should be equivalent to those of exporter in order to achieve a successful adaptation.

MBC provided the Hunan satellite TV staffs a one-week field trip twice. The visitors consisted

of fifteen members including producers, writers, camera operators, and sound, lighting and

editing engineers. During the field trips, the Korean staffs of each part met and talked with the

Chinese visitors. In addition, the flying producer gave advice down to the smallest detail while

staying over one month in China. In order to supervise the first recording of the premiere, he

visited the studio of Hunan Satellite TV several times. He checked everything from the stage

design to the order of ranking announcement. Furthermore, the Korean music arrangers and

engineers were dispatched to the scene. Through this process, the skills and techniques of

producing *I Am a Singer* have been passed on to the Chinese staff members.

> It is important not only to transfer production skills but also to adjust the format to the
>
> local culture. But I didn't know how Chinese people are feeling and what things they

like. For example, the Chinese producers asked me to use primary-color lighting on the stage. I was awkward to use such a lighting. But, I eventually believed their decision, and the decision proved to be correct. Chinese audiences were enthusiastic about the lighting. The transfer of production skills must be based on trust and good communication between the exporter and importer. - KY

Despite the full-range of support from the copyright holder, it was difficult to keep the quality of the original program in the local situation. Specifically, *I Am a Singer* required top-of-the-range broadcasting equipment, musical instruments and engineers due to the distinctions of the program. The audiovisual effects and superior skills of the participant singers were the key to the success of the program. Adherence to live performance and new arrangements of the participant songs were also a pivotal point to spark a strong reaction from audiences:

The No.1 problem was sound. Typically, 90 % of the real sounds from the stage is delivered to the live audiences. Television viewers receive 70% of that, since the music sounds should be modified for broadcasting due to the microphone howling noise. *I Am a Singer* challenged this technological limitation. I had confidence that if we could move the live audience's hearts with the music sound, the television viewers would be affected by the sound and the screen. - KY

In order to fit to the high specification of the original format, Hunan Satellite TV input 350 staff members and 200 million Renminbi (US$ 32.8million) throughout the three-month production period (Chinatimes, 2013). In addition, the station installed 38 cameras and invited outside specialists even from South Korea and Japan for the lighting, video and sound engineering. In terms of the production cost, the chief producer said that it was worth the big investment:

The production cost of *I Am a Singer* is over three times the output expenses of general entertainment programs. The bigger the production cost, the higher the investment risk. However, once the program succeeds, its advertising revenue goes beyond imagination because advertising unit cost becomes steeper and steeper. Fortunately, *I Am a Singer* hit the jackpot in both Korea and China. - KY

As a result of the investment, the Chinese version generated 1.5 billion Renminbi (US$ 246 million) in the total amount of advertising revenue (Chinatimes, 2013). This bold investment implies that Chinese TV stations are capable of carrying out a first-class musical performance on TV and the producers have confidence of the success of their products.

However, the improved production ability of the Chinese television industry is definitely a threatening factor for Korean producers, because China is superior to Korea in terms of market size and funding power. The chief producer also had such a concern for the potential of China:

Actually, I feel frightened of the rapid growth of Chinese television production ability. They may catch up with us within four or five years. Their capital strength, consumer market, and human power is overwhelming. While staying in the Hunan Satellite TV station, I witnessed the Chinese staffs were working all night long. I guess they learned how Korean staff members were working during the field trips. If those people with money and market even work hard, it is only a matter of time before China has an influential position in global television industry as well as in Asia. Creativity is the only solution for us to compete with China. We should compete but also collaborate with Chinese companies with a huge market and capital power. That is why I've paid attention to China. - KY

Indeed, the strategic collaboration of *I Am a Singer* has built mutual trust, thereby leading to a series of format contracts. The chief producer as a front runner in the Korean format industry successfully arranged new contracts of his company's reality formats *Daddy, Where Are We Going* and *The True Man* with Hunan Satellite TV. Starting with the case of *I Am a Singer*, various Korean audition formats such as *Super Diva, Super Star K, Hidden Singer, Immortal Songs* etc. exported to Chinese TV stations in 2013 (KOCCA, 2013).

According to Curtin's concept of "media capital," both Korean and Chinese television clusters played a pivotal role in establishing a cultural flow in East Asia, by satisfying the three conditions of "media capital": the logic of accumulation, which particularly means concentration of production resources and geographical expansion of the cultural market; the trajectories of creative migration, which is a driving force attracting creative media experts; and the forces of socio-cultural variation, which involve legal, institutional and social supporting systems (Curtin, 2009, pp. 111-116). Furthermore, the collaboration and competition between the Korean and Chinese industry narrowed the quality gap between original programming and adapted programming thereby forming "spatial integrity of media circulation systems" and new "relations among locales and the directions of flow" (Curtin, 2007, p.286).

Tension or cooperation among audience, producer, industry and state

With regard to the export of Korean television formats to China, the role of Chinese online streaming sites cannot be overlooked. The Chinese video sharing sites such as Youku-Tudou, Sohu, IQiyi, etc. introduced 70% of entertainment show programs of the three major Korean television networks in 2013 (KOCCA, 2013). The Korean entertainment programs occupied a higher rank on the searching word list of Youku in the same year (Kim H. , 2013). Owing to the online streaming sites, *I Am a Singer* was immediately delivered to Chinese

audiences. As soon as the Korean program was broadcast, Chinese users uploaded the video clips online, made brief comments, and predicted the ranking of the next contest. On Baidu, a Chinese portal site, fan cafés of *I Am a Singer* emerged. These fans showed enthusiastic responses as Korean audiences did. Despite not understanding Korean lyrics, Chinese users said that they were moved by the songs (Kim J. , 2011). These real-time responses of the Chinese audiences influenced production of the local versions of Korean programs. The emergence of sophisticated audiences and media convergence has changed the local production environment.

Chinese TV stations started to purchase officially copyrights of Korean television formats with a full-package contract from 2011. Even the Chinese video sharing sites tried to expand making formal agreements with the copyholders (KOCCA, 2013). This change resulted from the copyright law revision of the Chinese government. The state made efforts to improve the copyright system in accordance with its WTO entry. Indeed, the Chinese tribunal ruled against the illegal music downloads of its domestic company Yahoo China in 2007. The enhancement of copyright protection in China was a part of its cultural industry promotion policy, which aimed to attract private capital and foster talented personnel (KOCCA, 2012a). It means that China has prepared for the transformation of itself from the top importer of transnational cultural content to the main exporter toward global markets (Han C. , 2013).

Another important effect of the online streaming sites on the local television production is expansion of audiences' participation. A number of Chinese reality television shows have been designed as audience participation programs such as call-in shows and audience decision systems. *I am a Singer* is one of such an audience participation program. In the reality shows, audiences are described as "an active inventor of a personal lifestyle, making individual choices and demonstrating individual aesthetic value and individual tastes" (Xu, 2009, p. 162). The

reality show format constantly inscribes and constructs individual human agencies as an active player, by using phrases such as 'You decide' or 'This is how you have voted.' In so doing, the format forms and enhances individualism (Keane, Fung, & Moran, 2007).

Although the viewers have begun to consume diverse content from multiplied channels and programs, the Chinese audiences' relations to global media culture have been mediated by local conditions (Xu, 2009). Specifically, self-presentation promoted in the reality shows has often caused the issue of vulgar tastes and low culture in China. The state's negative perception of the cultural quality and individualism of the reality television has led to the increasingly tightened restrictions on the programs, so called "Limited Entertainment Order" since 2011. In this situation, the social appraisal on *I Am a Singer* in China is remarkable:

> One reason that the Chinese government allowed the import of *I Am a Singer* was the high quality of the program. Television entertainment is typically considered as cheap and vulgar content for the ordinary people as well as the state. However, *I Am a Singer* provided a refined and high-end culture which the upper class could enjoy. In particular, the program was highly praised by the leading people of the Chinese society such as the Party officers, business men and educators. The program matched their interests. - KY

The success of *I Am a Singer* created a great sensation among the Chinese social elites. These peoples generated numerous discussions around the program in terms of various aspects including the style, production attitude and the cultural and spiritual values. In particular, media professionals paid attention to the ideological idea of the program (Tencent-Entertainment, 2013)

> "We lack good-looking, high quality, pure playing music shows. But *I Am a Singer* has filled the shortage. It allows us to explore the potential of a good singer and true values of music and performance."– CCTV news anchor, Xu Li.

"*I Am a Singer* not only subverted other television programs but also enabled all the

people to be equal before music, thus letting everyone share the real music."– The

manager of Dept. of variety programs in Harbin TV, Jin Song.

"While looking at *I Am a Singer*, I began to watch not how the singers sang, but how the

television program demonstrated the highest level of entertainment."– The program

director of *Social Visibility* in Phoenix Satellite TV, Guo Yang.

I Am a Singer presented the direction of television entertainment production in China. It

was the ideology of the state under the name of the "public interest." Anthony Fung (2008)

asserts that although the state has opened toward the capitalist market, the transnational culture

within which the state has allowed is not much different from the nationalistic culture. This point

is demonstrated well in a news report regarding *I Am a Singer*. By introducing the interview with

Hong Tao, the chief producer of the Chinese version, *Beijing Sina* (2013) reported:

Everyone has a dream and if they put it into action, eventually the dream that we share

can release enormous amounts of energy. The dream and practice that *I Am a Singer*

presented forces me to the conclusion as the keyword, "the Chinese dream." *I Am a*

Singer gives us a lesson: if each person achieves his/her dream and collects the achieved

energies, the Chinese dream will certainly be realized. - From the news article of "'I Am

a Singer' embracing the 'Chinese dream': Hong Tao talks about a dream"

The term "Chinese dream" was initially announced as the promising perspective of China

by Xi Jinping, the present leader of the People's Republic of China. The "Chinese dream" means

the great revivals of the Chinese people who have overcome the hardship of the Opium war in

1840 and have achieved economic and political growth (Wang Z. , 2014). This is not an abstract

slogan but concrete policy project. After the inauguration of the Xi Jinping government, the term

has appeared as a direction and policy of the state. The topics of "the Chinese dream" includes: establishment of constitutionalism for the modernization of China; transition from quantitative growth to qualitative development; improvement of people's livelihood; enhancement of soft power; construction of ecological civilization; and Chinese-characteristic foreign diplomacy.

In this manner, the multifaceted and transnational television culture of China reflects highly dynamic interactions among the state, the national media industry, television producers and audiences. The audience's growing power has forced the media producers to generate more fulfilling content; the media corporations associated with the state have created quasi-democracy to meet these needs and have earned high profits by utilizing the audience's participation; and the state conniving with private capital has formed state capitalism through proper controls on the audiences and media (Zhao Y. , 1998). Yuezhi Zhao (2008) claims that the polysemic and hybrid nature of Chinese television discourses should be interpreted with "dominant, residual, emergent, and different ideological fragments" derived from the economic, social, cultural and political situations which China has faced for the past few decades (p. 216).

In sum, throughout the format business and adaptation of *I Am a Singer*, the Korean producers who have sought for a new market played a crucial role in leading the successful localization of the format, by transferring the production technique to the Chinese producers. This cooperative attitude drew consecutive contracts of format trades between two nations. In addition, the transnational consumption of Korean formats in China opened a new space for the Chinese audiences, producers, and the state to negotiate with one another. The local audiences who consume transnational cultural contents has put pressure on the media professionals to produce more sophisticated contents; the producers have adjusted their content to the local market through the transnational adaptation and cooperation; and the state has applied the dual

mode of "socialist market economy" as the carrot and the stick to the domestic television industry. This dynamic interaction among the agencies has been forming the current Chinese television culture.

7.2   Full-Scale Co-production with China

With the great success of the first full-package format deal, there was a flood of request to purchase Korean television formats in China. The rapid expansion of Korean format imports caused the Chinese government to tighten the regulations on the foreign program imports. Co-production between the two countries was a solution to avoid the government regulations. The co-production of the Chinese versions took place in a wide range from major television stations to independent production companies. Naturally, the increasing co-production projects led a number of Korean producers, writers, and engineers to move to China. The reality shows customized to the Chinese market contained different narratives and images from the Korean ones.

This subchapter explores co-production strategies of the Chinese and Korean format industries through the analysis on the type and distinctions of the co-production projects. With the detailed analysis on the projects, it investigates why both countries use the co-production strategies for the local production, how the strategies are implemented, what conditions contribute to the cultural co-production, and what its cultural implication is. As a case study of the co-production stage, it examines the joint production practice of *Super Idol.* Analyzing the differences between the Korean and Chinese versions of the audition show, it compares the two countries' cultural values and national identity.

7.2.1   Changes in the export strategies toward China

The explosive demands of the Chinese market for the Korean reality formats was partially attributed to the collaborative attitudes and supports of Korean producers. At first, the primary goal of the Korean producers was to enter the Chinese market successfully rather than to gain high profits from their formats. As the chief producer of *I Am a Singer* said, the Korean producers wanted to renew and expand the format contracts with China based on the successful localization through the instruction of production skills. This positive attitude was effective for the Chinese producers who wanted to improve their production capacities and abilities.

Actually, the instruction of production technique and skills was unavoidable in the format business due to the characteristics of the Korean reality formats. Most Korean real-variety shows that the Chinese producers wanted to import had a loose composition rather than a well-structured and well-scripted formula. Due to the unfixed and unscripted formats in which performers are voluntarily acting depending on their characters, it was essential to have the process of reconstructing the story of every episode through group discussions and intensive editing work after shooting. Moreover, Korean programs have been made with a well-arranged division of labor within a very tight production period. This production manner has enabled the producers to reflect the real-time response of audiences to the program. Since the Chinese entertainment television producers had little experiences in this kind of shows, the Korean producers' intervention and instruction was necessary to achieve a successful adaptation. The field trip study and advices offered by the Korean producers was useful for the Chinese producers not only to raise the quality of the local versions but also to have confidence in the Korean formats.

The trust on the Korean television shows triggered lots of importation of Korean formats to China. Following *I Am a Singer*, *Daddy, Where Are We Going* was recorded on average 4.3% of ratings, the highest viewing rate on the same time slot. The consecutive success increased the price of Korean formats tenfold (KOCCA, 2015a). As Table 11 (in the subchapter 7.1.2) shows, the number of the Korean television formats exported to China remarkably increased from 2013. Not only did the three terrestrial networks but also cable stations sold their own formats to China. Some of them ranked on the top 5 highest ratings of the year in 2014 (See Table 12). As of January 2015, the portion of Korean formats in the total foreign television formats in China was ranked fourth place (14.3%), following the US (26.5%), UK (20.4%), and Netherland (16.3%) (Han & Choi, 2015, p. 8) (See Figure 2).

Table 12 Top 5 Most Watched Entertainment Television Shows in China, 2014

Ranking	Title	Copyright holder
1st	Voice of China	Netherlands
2nd	Daddy, Where Are We Going?	Korea
3rd	Hurry Up, Brother	Korea
4th	If You Are the One	China
5th	I Am a Singer	Korea

Note: Author's reconstruction based on the data from an industrial report titled "Media & game: The age of exploration toward China" by Han, I., & Choi, K. (2015, p. 8).
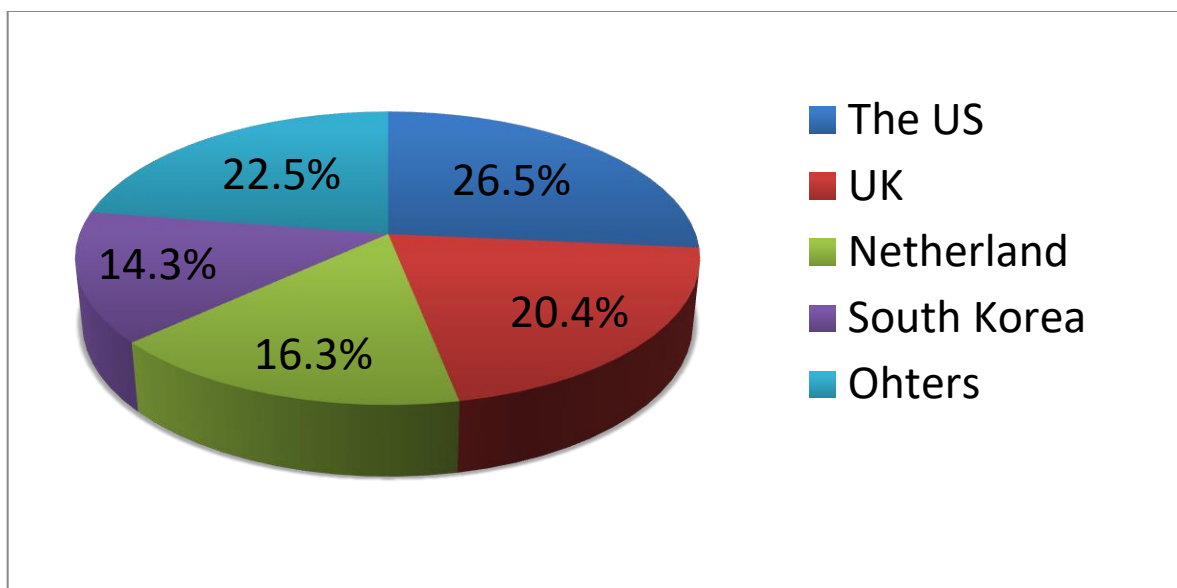
Figure 2 Korean Format Share among Overseas Formats in Chinese Market

(As of January 2015)

Note: Used the data from an industrial report titled "Media & game: The age of exploration toward China" by Han, I., & Choi, K. (2015, p. 8)

In 2015, China's Jiangsu TV bought the license of a new Korean format *King of Mask Singer* just after watching its pilot program. It is an exceptional case because television format is usually traded as a know-how package pretested on a market. This example means that Korean format has been recognized as the most reliable box-office guarantee in China.

One remarkable thing is that the trades of television formats between the two countries shifted from the full-package deal to the form of co-production for the local versions or new format developments from 2014. The new trend resulted from a few conditions. First of all, it was triggered by an updated regulation of the Chinese government. The SARFT announced that Chinese satellite TV channels should purchase only one foreign format per year from the beginning of 2014 (KOCCA, 2015b). The restriction, however, has brought an unexpected outcome. The import of Korean format that was initially concentrated on the leading TV stations

such as Hunan TV and Zhejiang TV were extended to other middle-upper level channels including Shandong TV, Anhui TV, Shenzhen TV, etc. (KOCCA, 2015b) Also, the successive megahit of the Korean television formats drew the attentions of the Chinese broadcasters to co-production with Korea (Sun F. , 2015). Since the import of Korean staffs and equipment was excluded from the SARFT's restriction, co-production emerged as an alternative to avoid the foreign format quota.

For Korean TV industry, co-production is much more profitable than the trade of format packages. In fact, Korean producers did not realize the profitability of television format until the great success of *Daddy, Where Are We Going?* in 2013, because the unit cost of a single format was low. Even in this case, the Chinese broadcaster made $24 million from the advertising sales for the Korean format, whereas MBC, the original copyright holder, was reported to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars from the royalties and its consultant fee (KOCCA, 2015a). By that time, it was true that Korean producers considered format trade as a troublesome work because of the low benefits from the format deals. They paid more attention to attracting domestic audiences and advertisers rather than developing a new format for foreign market (Eum, 2013). However, co-production that stakeholders share the copyrights and prosperities was more attractive for Korean producers and broadcasters. In addition, since Chinese investors bore all the production costs and personal expenses including celebrity salaries, the collaborative work could reduce capital risk of the Korean side (Han & Choi, 2015). For these reasons, Korean producers and broadcasters started to engage aggressively in co-production with China.

7.2.2   *Types and distinctions of the Korea-China co-production*

According to the report of Korean Creative Content Agency (KOCCA, 2015a), Korean TV channels have sold 34 non-drama entertainment TV formats around the world from 2013 to

2015. Among them, 21 formats including multiple sales were exported to China. The number

might be far higher if adding undetermined cases, such as the co-production projects by

independent production companies and online streaming sites. Among the exported formats to

China at this period, the author focuses on several notable formats traded in the co-production

manner. The co-produced formats are classified by the type of the media involved in the co-

production, because the ripple effect of the co-production varies depending on the level of the

media. The types of the Korean-China co-production projects are divided into four groups

including: tier 1 group – between major television networks in both Korea and china; tier 2 group

– between a Koran cable channel affiliated the big networks and a middle-upper-level Chinese

satellite channel; tier 3 group – between a Korean cable channel and a Chinese online streaming

company; and tier 4 group – between an independent or joint-venture production company and a

Chinese television channel.

Table 13 Major Korean-China Co-production Format Cases

Year	Program	Korean side	Partner	Types	Note
2013	Super Diva (Mamma Mia)	tvN	Shanghai Dragon TV, China	Tier 1	
2013	Super Star China	M-net	Hubei TV, China	Tier 2	
2013	A Date with K-pop Stars	M-net	Media Corp., Singapore	Tier 2	
2013	Boyfriend's Hello Baby	KBS Joy	KBS Japan, Japan	Tier 2	
2014	Brave Heart	MBC	Beijing TV	Tier 1	
2014	Running Man (Hurry Up, Brother)	SBS	Zhejiang TV	Tier 1	2015, 2016 Re-sign
2014	The Show	SBS MTV	Youku-Tudou, China	Tier 3	
2015	Let's Go, Dream Team	KBS	Channel 7, Thailand	Tier 1	
2015	Gag Concert	KBS	Shanghai Dragon TV, China	Tier 1	

2015	Infinite Challenge (The Great Challenge)	MBC	Starry Production (CCTV), China	Tier 1	2016 Re-sign
2015	We Got Married	MBC	Jiangsu TV, China	Tier 1	
2015	Hand in Love Village	SBS	Zhejiang TV, China	Tier 1	
2015	Fashion King: Secret of the Box	SBS Plus	Youku-Tudou, China	Tier 3	
2015	The Rule of Jungle	SBS	Anhui TV, China	Tier 1	
2015	I Can See Your Voice	SBS	Gold Finance Group, China	Tier 1	
2015	Super Idol (Star of Asia)	MBC Music	TV Zone (Anhui TV), China	Tier 2	2015 Re-sign
2015	The Greatest Love	BF&RH (a K-C joint company)	Hunan Satellite TV, China	Tier 4	
2015	Off to School	DH&JCH, (JTBC)	Shanghai Dragon TV, China	Tier 4	

Note 1: Types of co-production of Korean format
Tier 1: Co-production between major networks
Tier 2: Cable + Mid-level/ independent
Tier 3: Cable + OTT
Tier 4: Independent/ subsidiary production/ Joint company

Note 2: Author's reconstruction from the *Korean Broadcasting Industry Survey* by Korean Communications Commission (2014 to 2017) and *2017 Report of Research on the Status and Promotion Plan for Television Format Exports* by Korea Creative Content Agency (2018)

Tier-1 group

In 2014, four major Korean TV networks participated in co-production with China:

Running Man (*Hurry Up, Brother* in Chinese) - SBS (Korea, hereafter K) and Zhejiang TV

(China, hereafter C); *Brave Heart* – MBC (K) and Beijing TV (C); *Gag Concert* – KBS (K) and

Shanghai Dragon TV (C); and *Grandpas Over Flowers* – tvN (K) and Shanghai Dragon TV (C).

Among them, two cases are noteworthy. First, the co-produced *Running Man* recorded the

highest viewed shows in China in the second half of 2014 and in the first half of 2015. The show

that premiered in Korea from 2010 was already a well-known Korean program in China through

Chinese online streaming sites. Since the game-based variety show, where the cast members

complete missions at a landmark to win a race, requires sophisticated game rules and settings, Chinese audiences doubted whether the Chinese version would be successful (Seo B. , 2014). In addition, the Korean cast had built each unique character throughout the original show, whereas the Chinese cast who are all actor and actress had never experienced such a game-variety show (Kim Y. , 2014). The chief producer of *Running Man* said how they came to co-produce with China:

> The Chinese production staffs have done a lot of studio-based entertainment shows. But *Running Man* was not a type of the programs that they have produced. The program requires lots of cameras and storytelling work during the editing process. They really wanted us to come there, not just a flying producer but the entire production team. Even though there are a lot of detailed information, even about how many and what types of cameras are needed in the show, in the bible, we were not able to teach how to make a story and character for each episode without co-production. This kind of information cannot be the part of the bible – an interviewee from "A study on activation of format exports and localization of Korean television formats" published by KOCCA in 2014 (p. 69)

The Korean production staffs, including producers, writers, cameramen, lighting technicians, set designer, etc. who have produced the original version, were dispatched to pass on production skills to China for four months. The first five episodes of the season 1 were directed by the Korean chief producer. He focused on differentiating the Chinese version from the original version. Using the famous attractions and historical sites in China, the Korean team tried to localize the format (Kim Y. , 2014). One of the biggest challenges that the co-production team faced was a language barrier. Particularly, caption translation was the hardest task, because it

was essential to make the show vivid and amusing. Captioning and editing work took three or four times longer than normal. To communicate with each other, many Korean students studying in China were deployed as translators.

The Chinese version aired by Zhejiang satellite TV on Friday primetime from October 2014. Starting from 1.13% - as a guide, 1% audience rating means a big hit in China, its audience rating reached over 5% later. The unit cost of producing an episode of the Chinese version was reported as over half a million dollars and the cost of sponsorship for the season, as over $50 million. For the season 2, the total advertising revenue was noted as over $75 million (KOCCA, 2015a). Adding the profits from its film version, the total revenue that China earned from *Running Man* including the episode 1 and 2 was estimated to be about $430 million (Yoo J. , 2015).

Next, *Brave Heart* produced by MBC and Beijing satellite TV was a new developed format. Since MBC was well known as a leading Korean broadcaster that made the success of *I Am A Singer* and *Daddy, Where Are We Going?* in China, Beijing TV first asked MBC to make a new sport-variety show in which 20 Chinese boxers compete for survival with their star managers. MBC dispatched total 32 staffs including producers, writers, cameramen, and editors to China under the terms of the agreement that it would share the properties and copyrights for overseas sales from the newly developed format with Beijing TV (KOCCA, 2015a). Considering the fact that full-time producers are usually in charge of making a regular program that secure high ratings and profits, it was uncommon for the Korean broadcaster to send them directly to China. At that time, MBC set up a department specializing co-production with foreign partners, particularly with China and actively accepted the demands of Chinese broadcasters. It was intended to form a network with the Chinese partners and to develop co-production as part of

format business through the dispatch of manpower. As the chief producer of the Korean side for the production of *Brave Heart,* SJ explained the background in which the Korean broadcaster accepted the proposal:

> There is a Chinese proverb, "the government makes a policy and the civilian society comes up with a countermeasure." After the SARFT's regulation on foreign formats, it became not easy to export our formats to China. When the Chinese side suggested the project, our supervisor asked for a lot of salaries for the dispatched staff members. At that time, a lot of entertainment producers in MBC were assigned to non-production department affairs after failing in the general strike against the pro-government executives. For the executives, it was a more lucrative deal than wasting manpower - SJ.

His interview implies that the co-production with China was driven not merely by economic benefits but also by the political conflicts inside the local industry.

While the producers and writers resided in China until completing the entire co-production project, the cameramen and lighting engineers shuttled back and forth between Korea and China. Because the show, moreover, was a new format, the Korean staffs tried to reflect the opinions of the Chinese producers in the production. The first episode broadcast at 9pm on Saturday, October 5, 2014, recorded 0.94% viewer rating and the second episode was increased to 1.69%.

Besides, Shanghai Dragon TV made an agreement respectively with tvN and KBS for the co-production of *Grandpas Over Flowers* and *Gag Concert* in 2014. Although the two shows did not make a big hit, the audience ratings ranked in the upper class. Most of all, the Korean producers said that it was meaningful for them to have a great opportunity to experience the Chinese television production system and to build a relationship with the Chinese producers.

Tier-2 group

Korean cable channels typically tended to import popular foreign formats rather than export their own formats. They started to change their role as an exporter in earnest since the commencement of nationwide general programming cable networks and the growth of multiple program providers (MPP) from 2011. Through the relationship with foreign copyrighters based on the prior format imports, Korean cable channels sold their format license to various countries over the world. For them, the format exports came up as a solution not only to enlarge the revenue but also to set themselves above the competition with the major terrestrial networks.

Unlike the major terrestrial networks, Korean cable stations have been likely to sell their formats through the international television markets rather than direct contacts with the Chinese broadcasters. Although their format trades include the bible and production consultation, it has been rare to provide production skills through the instruction of a flying producer or co-production. The production consultation has been provided by emails or phone calls whenever the importers want (KOCCA, 2014).

The growing interests and demands of Chinese audiences on K-pop led the Korea music cable channels to participate in the co-production of music-related television programs, such as audition shows and music chart shows. In China, the tremendous success of *Super Girl* triggered the boom of audition shows, including Hunan TV's *Happy Boys,* Shanghai Dragon TV's *Go, My Hero*, and CCTV's *Dream of China.* Especially, *The Voice of China* was reviving the glory of the audition shows, recording as the highest viewed entertainment shows in China, 2014. In addition, *Super Star China* and *C-pop Star*, the local versions of the Korean audition programs *Super Star K* and *K-pop Star* also received high viewer ratings.

The popularity of audition formats in China was associated with the less-developed domestic music industry. According to *the Recording Industry in Numbers 2015* reported by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), China was ranked at No. 19 in the world music industry despite its world's biggest population. Since China's talent pool has not been big enough to meet the demands of domestic market, Korean singers and performers have played a crucial role as an alternative source in filling a hole in the Chinese music industry. China has been the most potential market to make a high profit. Its music market has grown constantly at an average annual growth rate of 8.6% from 2010 to 2015. Particularly, the increase of its digital music market based on the mobile platform is remarkable. As of 2015, 500 million Chinese people used online music services and the similar number of people enjoyed music through mobile devices. The amount of music exports of Korea to China reached $89 million in 2015 (KOCCA, 2017a).

In this industrial context, a Korean music cable channel actively began to co-produce an audition show with China. *Super Idol* (entitled as *Star of Asia* in Chinese) broadcast from July 2015 is the first-ever joint audition show produced by MBC Music a cable channel affiliated with MBC, and TV Zone, a Chinese TV production company backed by Changsha TV. This audition show was aired with two seasons. The season 1 was broadcast weekly through Anhui satellite TV in China and MBC Music in Korea from July to October 2015 and the season 2 was released from March to June 2016. The audition show focuses on the brutal training and competing progress of 30 trainees selected from China and Korea. The five final contestants would be supported and deemed to be true superstars in the two countries.

According to the interview with the chief producer of *Super Idol*, TV Zone first contacted a well-known Korean songwriter Hyung-suk Kim who is running K-note, a music academy.

Through the famous K-pop songwriter and trainer, the co-production project was suggested to MBC Music. The Chinese stakeholders were TV Zone, Haiyoung investment company, and Anhui satellite TV. The Korean partners include MBC Music, K-note and an independent production firm A9. The Chinese side decided to provide the entire cost and the Korean side agreed to take the responsibility of the production. As the total budget for the production of season 1, $5 million was allotted. Of that, $1.7 million was invested into the cost making the season 1 with 12 episodes. The unit cost doubled the average production cost of a one-hour single show program in MBC Music. The rest of the budget was paid for the training and managing cost, appearance fee of famous celebrities, promotional cost, etc. They also made an agreement to share the copyrights on a fifty-fifty basis. It means that the profits from their home market belong to their respective copyright owners.

In China, the first episode was aired at every Friday night primetime, whereas the Korean broadcaster MBC Music released it four days later. This was because the show was intended primarily for Chinese market. Since Korean television shows have been instantly uploaded on the Chinese streaming service sites, it was necessary to secure the viewership on the original air in China in order to get advertising effects.

For the co-production project, about 160-70 staff members were involved. Among them, more than 25 people were mobilized for translation and interpretation. To complete the large-scale co-production project successfully, the two countries' staffs had regular meetings three times a week:

> In terms of the planning and shooting of the show, the Chinese producers left almost all decisions up to us. They tended to restrain from interfering in the planning, scripting and composition work of each episode. They usually focused on observing how to weave a

powerful storytelling and how to arrange and operate the production crew such as camera

staffs, sound and lighting engineers, etc. However, in the editing stage, they tried to

discuss with us about the editing order and content. They seemed to be concerned about

the censorship and advertisement. During the production of the season 2, they were more

actively and closely involved in the production. – KY.

Although the running time for an episode of *Super Idol* was approximately 70 minutes,

the Korean editors made a 80-minute long master tape for the Chinese broadcaster. The 10-

minute extra in the Chinese edition contained the supplemental images that would be used when

the Chinese producers need to insert some product placement advertisements and to give more

detailed information to their audiences. In addition, the Korean side also handed out the Korean

edition with Korean subtitles to the Chinese side to show them how to use subtitles on the screen.

The episode 1 ended successfully, creating a new five-member boy group including four Chinese

and one Korean member as the winner of the audition show. Although the average ratings of the

season 1 was 0.6%, ranked in eighth or ninth place in the primetime programs, the show got the

great reviews from the Chinese side because the average ratings of Anhui TV was 0.24 (Eun,

2015). The success of the season 1 set more increased budget on the season 2. The results of the

season 2 were more successful with the third-highest ratings following *Running Man* and *I Am a*

Singer in China. While the both sides approved to extend the co-production agreement up to

season 4, it was suddenly cancelled due to the THADD backlash.

Tier-3 group

In the Chinese television industry, over-the-top (OTT) content service has been one of the

most important parts in distributing Korean television content (Yoon J., 2014). The leading

online streaming sites, such as IQiyi, Youku-Tudou, and Sohu, have contributed greatly to

promoting Korean entertainment formats in the Chinese market. By merging with the big 3

Chinese e-commerce and multimedia groups – i.e., Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent, they have been

expanding their realms to content production. Especially, the Korean Wave contents have been

one of their best-selling commodities. For example, the mega-seller Korean drama *My Love*

From The Star hit over 2.5 billion views only through IQiyi site (Yoon G. , 2014). On this

account, the Chinese online video sites invested Korean entertainment companies directly or

pushed for co-production projects with Korea (Kim S. O., 2015).

Among them, Youku-Tudou aggressively engaged in coproducing Korean television

content. Before the merger, Tudou had experience coproducing and broadcasting a K-pop

program *The Show* with SBS Plus, a subsidiary cable channel of SBS. Based on the experience,

Youku-Tudou made an agreement with SBS Plus to co-produce *Fashion King: Secret of the box,*

as an extra edition of the SBS's celebrity fashion survival show *Fashion King Korea*. The two

stakeholders agreed to go half and half on the production cost and share the copyrights at the

same rate.

The co-produced show was aired in both China and Korea simultaneously from the end

of April 2015 for ten weeks. In the program, the two nations' top fashion designers teamed up

with top celebrities and competed for costume planning, coordination, production, sales, and

marketing. The competition was recorded in real time every week. The cast used in-ear

headphone to listen to the simultaneous interpretation. Respectively 120 fashion specialists from

both countries monitored the whole fashion challenges and missions and voted online at the same

time. The costume that received a favorable evaluation could be sold by both nations' online

shopping sites.

Youku-Tudou also co-produced a K-pop music chart show with SBS MTV, a music cable

channel owned by SBS, from October 28, 2014. Unlike other co-production project, the music

program *The Show* was a weekly live program aired on every Tuesday at 8pm KST.

Interestingly, *The Show*'s music chart was decided by a combined score based on the music

sales, music video ratings, and SNS referrals in both Korea and China. Also, two nations' K-pop

fans could participate in online voting system in real time. However, the Korean viewers often

complained that the excessive voting participation of the Chinese fans influenced the music chart

(Lee Y. , 2016). This issue reveals that the Korea-China joint production projects which were

actually targeted to Chinese viewers were difficult to satisfy Korean audiences.

Tier-4 group

For the Korean independent production firms that usually have worked as a subcontractor

of the major broadcaster, it has been not easy to develop any television format on its own. They

have considered television format trade as a high-risk business requiring a huge financial cost

and accumulated experience for production, management and marketing. Moreover, as the

copyrights of most Korean television formats belong to the major broadcasters, it has been rare

for the independent production companies to participate directly in the co-production projects

with China.

However, the chief producer and staffs of *I Am a Singer*, who were already recognized in

China, established a joint-stock production company "Blue Frame & Rice House" in China and

created a reality show *The Greatest Love* that was broadcast on Hunan Satellite TV from January

2016. The production cost for the season 1 of the show was $40 million, equivalent to an annual

budget for the entertainment department of MBC. Some 600 staffs were mobilized from both

Korea and China to make the program. The gross revenue of Hunan Satellite TV that earned

from the show was over $80 million and the net profit was $20 million (Nam, J., 2016, 2018).

While the production cost of an episode of a Korean real-variety show used to be about $200,000 to $250,000, that of *The Greatest Love* was about $3 million. The production cost of the Chinese one was overall 10 times bigger than the Korean one. But, the case of *The Greatest Love* was not so big in China. The program had the highest rating on the primetime slot. It was well received in the Chinese intellectual class. *The People's Daily* published a good review on the program. In addition, it had the Chinese producers see how to make an "observation reality show." – SJ

Although the co-developed and co-produced reality show drew positive responses from the Chinese market, it could not avoid the SARFT's regulation that eliminated Korean formats from the local market after the deployment of the U.S. THAAD's radars in South Korea. Although a few joint production projects based on the Chinese capital were excluded from the SARFT regulations, the production team of The *Greatest Love* was too famous to escape from it.

In sum, co-production between China and Korea spread throughout the regional television industry until the sudden shutdown of the Chinese format market that resulted from the THAAD effect in 2016. Overall, in the joint production projects, the Korean sides provided talented human resources and advanced production skills and the Chinese sides bore the production costs. The full-scale co-production between the two nations allowed the participants to experience the integration of production, distribution and broadcasting of the transnational television formats as a profit maximization strategy of the two sides.

7.2.3   Implications of the co-production with China

Since 2013, the Korean television industry entered a new phase of television format trade, beyond the simple transaction of licensing and format package towards co-production of the format. The volume and scale of the co-production projects between Korea and China were

unprecedentedly growing. The co-development and co-production projects have significant implications for the local and regional cultural production and circulation. The transnational mobilizations of human, financial, and technological resources have blurred the cultural and economic boundaries between the two countries. Also, the perpetual interactions through the co-production have formed a distinct flow in global cultural circulation and enhancing regional integration.

The light side of the co-production with China

The co-production projects provided the local producers a great opportunity to experience and understand the Chinese market. The Korean producers who had been only conscious of the domestic market and viewers began to have confidence as they validated their production skills and creative ideas in the neighboring country. Particularly, the cable television producers could develop intensively their production ability and capacity through the co-production projects with a huge production budget and manpower they had never had before.

> The most attractive thing was that I was able to experience to produce a blockbuster-like television show. With enough money and manpower, our production capacities could be enhanced. Second, I was able to learn about the Chinese sentiment and Chinese production culture. The Chinese producers seem to stake their all on the first episode of a new show. Of course, we also tend to focus more on the beginning part of a series. But the Chinese side has such a tendency too much. Because there are so many channels and programs in China, we had to devote our all energy and materials into the first to third episode among the whole series. – YC

The management of the relationship with both Korean and Chinese entertainers also did matter for the local producers to consider carefully throughout the co-production process. The

difference of the market size and consuming power between the two countries led to different power relations in the two nations' television industry.

> The power of celebrities in China are much bigger than in Korea. Chinese celebrities are deified by their fans. Undoubtedly, the stars with a million fans differ from the stars with a ten-thousand fans in terms of the power of mobilizing audiences. The scale of the Chinese show business is different from ours. Therefore, the relationship between the entertainers and the producers in China is naturally different from ours. – LH

According to the interviewees of this study, Korean television producers still have power over their cast and staff even though some powerful entertainers can choose their favorite producers. Korean A-level entertainers and celebrities are likely to believe that producers and directors are better than themselves when it comes to production ability. It means that Korean television production system is thoroughly based on a meritocracy and professionalism. Once a person proves his or her skills and abilities, he/she is treated according to his/her achievement. This is a basic rule penetrating in the Korean television production culture. However, it was unclear whether this production culture would work in China.

> It is not easy for television producers to meet popular celebrities and entertainers in China. Because the performers have a wide sphere of action and are paid extremely well, television producers must follow the cast's schedule to handle liaison with them. Naturally, it is never easy for Korean producers to handle the Chinese popular entertainers. However, as some Korean television shows have gained great popularity in China and the reputation of the show producers has become known throughout the country, a few famous Korean producers have little problem in attracting big-name Chinese entertainers. - KS

In addition to dealing with performers, the relationship with the Chinese government was also a matter of great concern to the Korean producers. Since the party-state controls the national television market and even guides the direction of the local television production, the Korean producers cannot help but follow the government policy directions. In the Chinese television industry, the party's guidelines are as powerful as the logic of capital. For the Korean producers, the problem is that the government directions are often given unofficially and informally. Only insiders know the exact reason and background of the government's policy. The Chinese producers are very helpful in this situation. They act as the first filter for content censorship. In the communication process, translators play a big role in ensuring accurate and fast interactions between the two nations' producers. They are involved in the on-site interpretation as well as the translation of edited copies so that the program can be almost simultaneously broadcast in the two nations.

> Each producer was paired to an interpreter at the shooting sites. I was given more support than I expected in hiring the staff members in China. Since there were many ethnic Koreans in China, they played a crucial role in the joint production. They proudly said that they were doing what their father had not been able to do before. - SJ

The joint production between Korea and China was also a big benefit for the Chinese producers to learn about the advanced production techniques and skills from the Korean partners. Most interviewees who have experienced the Chinese television market tend to consider China not as a cultural and economic invader, but as an accessible and understandable business partner. They recognize that China is an immense learning space where the local, the regional, and the global agencies are competing, negotiating, collaborating, thus helping them experience the global trends of television formats and have relationships with the regional and the global agents.

As Hugo De Burgh, Zeng Rong, and Chen Siming (2012) point out, China already has well-connected agencies seeking advanced knowledge and technology to develop their creative industry from the early 2000s. The interviewees think that it is inevitable to accept the risks and demands of the Chinese market in order to overcome the limitations of the small domestic market and enter the overseas markets. The adventurous and future-oriented attitudes of the Korean producers contributed to the active co-production and collaboration between the two countries. Also, it is obvious that the co-production and collaboration have diversified and complicated the ways of format business in both countries in a very short time.

The dark side of the co-production with China

The Korea-China co-production of entertainment formats was a combination of the massive capital of China and the cutting-edge production technology of Korea. In other words, the co-production of the two countries was driven primarily by the economic motivation of the individual media companies. Particularly, China's purchasing power has played a crucial role in drawing cultural resources of the neighboring country into the co-production projects. The increasing human and financial trades between the two countries, however, has often encountered criticism for causing the outflow of Korean human resources into China and the loss of the cultural sovereignty of Korean television (Jang J. , 2015; Kang H. , 2015; Kim, Nam, & Ryu, 2017).

Apart from the movement of famous Korean producers and celebrities to China, Chinese investment companies and media groups were aggressively acquiring shares in Korean production companies. As Table 14 shows, the Korean television industry has actively embraced Chinese investment since 2014. With its massive capital, China has invested heavily in Korean entertainment companies. According to Yu-sin Jung, a professor in Sogang Business School,

Chinese investors have been likely to take over control of a company rather than the simple

equity participation. It is noticeable that Chinese possession of the management rights of Korean

media companies increased from 16.4% of the total cases of Chinese equity participation in 2010

to 47.1% in 2015 (Kang H. , 2015).

Table 14 Cases of Chinese Capital's Direct Investment in Korean Entertainment Firms

(Unit: $USD)

Time	Investor	Receiver	Amount	Share
Aug. 2014	Sohu.com	KeyEast Entertainment	$13M	6.4% (No.2 shareholder)
Oct. 2014	Huace Film & TV	New Film	$47M	15% (No.2)
Sep. 2015	Spearhead Group	Signal Entertainment	$19M	12.6% (No.1)
Nov. 2015	Suning Universal	FNC Entertainment	$30M	22.0% (No.2)
Nov. 2015	DMG Group	Chorokbaem Media	$22M	25% (No.1)
Feb. 2016	Alibaba	SM Entertainment	$31M	4.0%
Mar. 2016	Huayi Brothers	HB Entertainment	$37M	30.0%
Mar. 2016	Huayi Brothers	Sim Entertainment	$20M	30.4% (No.1)
May. 2016	Tencent	YG Entertainment	$31M	4.5% (No.4)
May. 2016	Weying Technology	YG Entertainment	$58M	8.2% (No.3)
Oct. 2016	JC Group	Fantagio Entertainment	$26M	27.6% (No.1)

Note: Author's reconstruction based on the table from *Hallyu after the deployment of THADD: Political economy of Hallyu*, by Kim, D., Nam, S., & Ryu, S. (2017, p. 37)

Many Korean media critics and policy makers have been strongly worried that labor

migration and capital dependency on China will eventually cause the decline of the

competitiveness of Korean content, and that Korean television industry might be degraded to an

OEM (original equipment manufacturing) provider for the Chinese market.(Kwon, 2015). Even

they have warned that Korean viewers can be confused with whether the drama they are

watching in their living room is indeed a Korean drama or a Chinese one, which will undermine

the brand image of the Korean Wave. In fact, some Korean formats produced by Korean cable

stations with Chinese capital were not welcomed by the Korean viewers, because the co-

production projects were primarily aiming at the Chinese audiences, not at the both countries'

markets. The content and narrative customized for the Chinese audiences' tastes and demands

did not satisfy the Korean viewers. There is a similar precedent for what the local media critics

fear. TVB and Asian TV, the free-to-air terrestrial TV stations of Hong Kong which drew

worldwide fan base among Chinese speakers in 1980s and 90s, have lost their vitality because of

the outflow of human resources into China. Taiwanese television industry has been in the same

boat (Zhao E. J., 2016).

In relation to the discourse on cultural identity, Moran (2009) emphasizes that the

expansion of television format business can be understood as the process to encroach local

identity and to integrate and incorporate local television industry into the global system. Some

media researchers indicate that regional bonds comprise the center-periphery structure of global

flow, but at the same time, enhance asymmetrical flow in the region (Leung, 2009; Otmazgin &

Ben-Ari, 2013). This is because the collaboration and co-production in the region are based on

the economic imbalances and inequality of power. Chalaby (2015) criticizes that transnational

television format is always traveling along specific routes where economic agents have

interdependent, multi-connected, and transactional relationships with one another. Hence,

"borders have not all become 'transparent' and the inequalities among territories… demonstrate

that nation-states are more than just 'historical fetishes'" (p. 476).

In the case of China, the power of the government is strong enough to be detected by the

Korean producers who participated in a co-production project:

On the surface, my counterpart producer was the decision maker of the Chinese side. However, there was a so-called "upper part" taking in charge the quality control of the co-produced program. I don't know to what extent it is up and who the final decision maker is. In Korea, the executive producer and a chief producer like me decide the contents unless it is specifically related to very sensitive political issues. In China, however, all television programs including non-political programs are reviewed by the SARFT. The criteria for the censorship are ambiguous and the duration of review is not set. In my experience, if we send a rough cut to the Chinese side, the answer will come at least two weeks later. But it depends on the situation. It is totally different from the typical monitoring level that we are doing. – LJ

The shutdown of the Chinese market for the Korean television format after the deployment of the U.S.'s THAAD in South Korea demonstrates more obviously the influence of the nation-state on the local and regional media industries. Many Chinese newspapers and online media sites informed that all Korean dramas, movies, entertainment programs and remake of Korean popular content, except the programs that already passed the government review, would be banned since around November 2016. While the Chinese ministry of Foreign Affairs officially denied the strong regulations on the Korean popular content, it was soon realized that not only Korean television programs but also all performances and commercials starring Korean stars were banned (Cho Y. , 2016). Since the Chinese broadcasting deliberation on most joint projects with Korea was postponed indefinitely without any reason, it became no longer easy for the two countries to cooperate with each other. Due to the delayed review in China, the Korean companies as well as the Chinese investors who have already participated in co-production projects suffered huge losses (Kim J. , 2017). What's worse, the Chinese government's

retaliation led to the Chinses boycotts of Korean products as well as of Korean cultural content. The political and military dispute kindled anti-Korean sentiment in the Chinese audiences. The clash between Korean soft power and Chinese hard power highlights the relational dynamics and tensions in the region (Jun, 2017).

The decline of the format imports and co-production in China has resulted in frequent plagiarism and copyright infringement on the Korean formats (Shin & Son, 2017). A Korean lawmaker asserts that there have been 29 suspected cases of the Chinese broadcasters plagiarizing the Korean formats as of October 2017 (Park S. , 2017). He points out that the plagiarism in China is not limited to simple following a part of the program structure, but up to very detailed expressions such as the style and design of subtitles, stage settings, locations, and storytelling as a whole. Beyond plagiarizing the newly developed programs, the Chinese broadcasters have not extended the existing co-production contracts any longer and produced the programs independently. For example, the co-production contract for the season 5 of *Running Man,* which have been co-produced by SBS and Zhejiang Satellite TV and recorded the highest ratings in China, was discontinued in 2016. Entering into the production of the season 5, Zhejiang TV changed the title of the program into "Keep Running." Hunan Satellite TV also changed the title of *I Am a Singer* into "The Singer" in the same reason. The Chinese broadcasters insist that they do not pay the royalties or distribute profits because they have removed the Korean elements from the new seasons (Kim, Nam, & Ryu, 2017).

Along with the beneath-the-surface regulation of the Chinese government on the Korean contents, the SARFT announced "notification for originality of television program format" on June 20, 2016 as part of its policy to strengthen the management of foreign television format imports (KOCCA, 2017b). According to the notice, the import of new television formats would

be limited to one program every year and the imported formats must not be aired at primetime during the first year of import from July 1, 2016. In addition, the notice urged the Chinese television stations to broadcast their own programs at primetime.

Indeed, Chinese broadcasters and online streaming sites have increased homegrown programming. Particularly, Chinese online streaming sites have remarkably developed and produced high-quality entertainment show programs since 2016 (KOCCA, 2019b). These companies created 162 homegrown entertainment programs throughout 2017. The investment amount of the Chinese online entertainment programs in the same year was more than $1 billion, increasing up to 58% from the same period of the previous year. Due to the enhanced government regulations, enormous budgets and upgraded production abilities, the quality of the Chinese online television shows are noticeably growing. Now, the Chinese video platforms attempt to combine artificial intelligence technology and entertainment content and utilize the advanced technologies in creating, editing and casting work (KOCCA, 2019a).

Apparently, the transnational transactions of the Korean television content which had been dramatically growing for the last two decades has been stalled from the backlash against the THAAD deployment. The unexpected phenomenon clearly demonstrates how vulnerable the cultural exchange with China is to political and diplomatic issues. The Chinese self-contradictory attitudes – that is, the government that has denied the regulations on Korean content and the broadcasters that has discontinued the co-production with Korea and plagiarized the Korean formats – have awakened the Korean producers and broadcasters that the skewed dependence on China is risky for the local industry and furthermore they have to find a solution to the new trend of protectionism and the rising skepticism on globalization (Kim, Nam, & Ryu, 2017; Jun, 2017).

7.2.4   The nation on a talent format customized for China: Super Idol

Co-production and collaboration between Korea and China for making a reality television show raise a question about how the two nations' television industries appropriate, negotiate, and collaborate with each other under the contradictory conditions of the local regulations and regional expansion. As a case study of the co-production projects, this section analyzes the differences between Korean and Chinese versions of an audition show *Super Idol*, in terms of content, composition, and narrative. A close look at the television text co-produced by the two nations reveals a distinct picture demonstrating how reality television plays a role in connecting the performance of the self and nationhood and constructing the "imagined" nation.

The textual analysis was conducted focusing on the 12 episodes of the season 1, which were weekly aired through Anhui Satellite TV in China from July 10, 2015 to October 9, 2015 and through MBC Music in Korea from July 14, 2015 to October 13, 2015. The four-day interval between China and Korea was set to prevent its rapid dissemination through Chinese online streaming sites. Although MBC Music took full charge of making the both versions except for subtitling and fine-tuning for the final version, there are some differences between the two copies. The running time of the Chinese editions was about 80 to 85 minutes whereas that of Korean editions was about 65 to 70 minutes. Unlike the Korean versions, the Chinese versions included some mid-program advertisements and product placement advertisements in each episode. The difference results from the different advertisement regulations between the two nations. In terms of subtitle, the Korean side handed out the Korean edition with Korean subtitles to the Chinese side, along with the master tape for the Chinese producers. It was to show them how to use subtitles on the screen.

Focusing on the external and internal differences between the two nations' editions, how the show represents Korean and Chinese national identity, what scene is added and deleted in each version and how the judges and contestants are represented are discussed.

Differences of the scenes

The audition show *Super Idol* combines documentary style and studio-based competition show format. Since there are some 15 minutes of the broadcasting time gap between the two versions, each one shows quite a different content. Overall, the Korean versions pursue a fast-moving plot, whereas the Chinese versions give more detailed information about everyday life of the participants to their local audiences. Actually, this type of format was a primitive model of current competition performance-centered Korean audition shows. But, for Chinese people, it was a new style at that time. The existing audition shows in China had mostly a studio-competition format. This fact demonstrates that its primary target audience was the Chinese young people.

The part of introduction of the episode 1 reveals evidently the different intentions of the co-production. The Korean version starts from a comparative overview of the Chinese pop music industry and the transnational success of K-pop in the Chinese market and then introduces the audition show's ambitious plan. It clarifies that the purpose of the program is educating and cultivating Chinese trainees with their advanced management skills, by showing up global success of K-pop. In the Chinese version, these images and narratives were eliminated. It starts with spectacular performances of some popular K-pop singers particularly in China and introduction of the audition project. It focuses on collaboration with Korea and expectations for the program. The Korean version demonstrates self-praise or self-superiority attitudes, whereas

the Chinese one emphasizes the collaboration and co-production with Korea. These tones of narration are maintained over the whole program.

In the scene of the Chinese contestants' first arrival in Korea, the Korean version displays a large-sized bus fully covered with promotional tinting that would carry the contestants during the competition and the contestants' looks of surprise. Subsequently, the contestants get to the building of MBC Music and see a video clip containing some famous K-pop singers' welcoming speech to them through a big monitor at the lobby. The contestants look at it in admiration and two of them interview, "I was so surprised and pleased with their greetings" and "what a well-planned video clip! Korean TV companies seem to make their shows creatively and delicately." The scene is also removed in the Chinese edition. It can be said that the Chinese producers do not want to show the advantages or superiority of the Korean side to their audiences.

The scenes introducing the contestants with their performance on stage to audiences are different from each other. The Korean one focuses on some more remarkable or talented contestants, while the Chinese one tries to show almost evenly the contestants. Even considering its longer broadcasting time, the Chinese version is likely to stress fairness and impartiality rather than encouragement of competition or inducement of audiences' interest.

Interestingly, according to the interview with the Korean producers, the Chinese broadcaster requested them to be careful use of words stimulating rivalry. For example, when a Chinese contestant failed the examination on his performance, the MC expressed it as "dropping out." Instead, the Chinese producers made a request to change the word with "coming back home." In addition, when a Chinese singer in a K-pop idol group visits the participants, the Chinese trainees and the singer start to sing the Chinese national anthem accidently. In response to the unexpected happening, the Korean contestants sing their national anthem, too. The scene

was also erased in the Chinese version. Given these points, the Chinese producers try to alleviate conflictive elements such as confrontation between the two nations as well as personal competition.

During the season 1, over 50 popular K-pop stars are introduced as a one-day tutor or special guest. They include a wide range of singers from Psy who gained global popularity with "Gangnam Style" music video on YouTube and first generation of K-pop idol stars such as Woo-hyuk Jang, Shinhwa, Infinite and Beast to the rising idol bands like EXO-M and GOT7. Each version exposes these guests differently depending on the level of awareness and popularity in both nations' versions. For example, Psy who is considered as a global star in Korea is introduced very briefly in the Chinese versions. Instead, Chinese audience-friendly singers are frequently exposed in the Chinese ones.

This tendency is also applied to choosing test pieces. Each episode contains more than one competition. Each contestant is given a test piece which is all Korean songs and performs in groups or individually on stage. When the test pieces are introduced on screen, the Chinese editions do not display the original songs but their Chinese adaptations. That is, most test pieces are introduced by Chinese singers. It means that the Chinese producers try to eliminate Koreaness or Korean atmosphere even from the test pieces.

In this way, the Korean version is likely to emphasize its superiority to China in terms of music industry and the mood of competition, supremacy, and discrimination. On the contrary, the Chinese version tends to stress cooperation with the Korean partners and the atmosphere of fairness and individual contestants' singularity. The Korean side highlights the competition between the two nations as well as that of individuals, whereas the Chinese version try to efface or mitigate the conflicts and competitions.

Differences of judges

The show organizes the judge panel with four members. The panel includes each two Korean and Chinese entertainers. To gain higher ratings, the judge members must be well-known celebrities, particularly in China. Jong-kook Kim, a very popular South Korean singer who became a famous television personality in China through the transnational real-variety show *Running Man*, and The Won, a South Korean singer who drew enthusiastic applause from Chinese audiences through the Chinese version of *I am Singer*, are invited as the main Korean judges. Some Korean singers participate in the show as guest judges. The Chinese judges include a Taiwanese singer-songwriter David Tao, a Hong Kong-born American entertainer Coco Lee, a Beijing born model and talent Sean Zhang, the champion of the third season of the Chinese audition show *Super Girl* in 2011 Shang Wenjie, a Hong Kong actor and Cantonese pop singer Leon Laiming, etc., who are a very big star over *Great China*. Chinese judges are invited irregularly because of their schedules in China.

The commentary of the judges differs by nationality. The Korean judges very frequently emphasize the harsh competition and hard training of the Korean music management system. They identify themselves as a strict teacher with scathing comments. For example, The Won reveals his intention with the statement, "I will treat them much more scarily and coldly." Jong-kook Kim clarifies his role as "I'm serving as a guide for the trainees." They also require the trainees to have strong mentality and moderate attitudes. When a Chinese contestant stops his performance on stage because of forgetting the lyrics, The Won scolds his unprepared state. He often stops the participants' unsatisfactory performances even during the contest, saying, "I don't need to see your performance any longer. It's disappointing." Korean judges tend to emphasize not only performance skills but also mental ability and readiness. When evaluating artistic

values, the Korean judges set a premium on emotional appeal rather than techniques. They often say, "Show me your sincerity," or "I can't believe that your heart is the right place."

On the other hand, the Chinese judges often ask the contestants to have professional skills and attitudes. Although they also require them to survive in the fierce competition, they tend to give practical and rational feedback. For example, they give an advice like this, "Don't bow your head. Don't look at the floor," or "When you sing, you move the body too much." Even though some participants make a mistake, the Chinese judges are likely to encourage them rather than point out the flaw. When they offer a special lesson for the contestants, the judges often chant "Go!" together with the trainees. This is in contrast to the Korean judges. Throughout the program, the Korean judges, instead of the Chinese panelists, play the villainous characters

One interesting thing is that the Chinese female panelists are described to be more outgoing and brighter than the Korean female special judges. While the Chinese female judges express their opinion actively and break a jest to the contestants, the Korean side mostly shows passive attitudes and just takes a joke. For example, one of the Chinese female judges, He Jie tells a contestant with a pretty boy image, "You are so cute. You have so sweet voice. You fascinated me," with her facial expression as if she is possessed with his look. The direct expression is rarely seen in the Korean female panel. It can be considered to reflect different portrayals of female in the two nations.

In sum, the Korean judges emphasize mentality and emotional expressions, whereas the Chinese side stresses professional attitudes. The Korean panel shows authoritative and hierarchical attitudes to the contestants. They intend to set their role as a severe tutor. On the contrary, the Chinese judges provide a friendly atmosphere and more intimate relationship with the contestants than the Korean judges.

Differences of contestants

The show mostly represents the Korean contestants as well-trained and experienced participants, whereas the Chinese contestants as passionate and talented but untapped ones. Even though some Chinese contestants have award winning career in China, they do not give a well-developed impression. Because of these characteristics, the Korean contestants play a role in leading practices as a proficient model in the show. The Chinese group is focused on their internal and external growth by showing the scenes that they fix their mistakes and misunderstanding about the Korean culture.

The different characteristics of the two sides are related to the recruit process of the contestants. Unlike Korean audition programs, Chinese audition shows cannot advertise openly for the recruitment. Since the mega-hit audition show *Super Girl* received a fierce criticism on its side effects in Chinese youth culture in 2006, the Chinese government has reinforced bans against audition shows as follows: participants must be over 18 years old; the candidates should be selected by individual contacts; and the shows are required to get approvals from the censorship body to prevent vulgar content. These prohibitive provisions had a negative impact on the quality of the Chinese contestants. The unexpected appearance of a musical genius is essential for audition shows to arouse the audience's interest. However, it was initially ruled out in this case because of the restrictions on the recruitment. Moreover, most aspirants already belonged to the local entertainment agencies. The Chinese producers had to travel to various groups, schools, and communities around major cities to find talented contestants. As a result, 25 Chinese candidates were selected. In contrast, the five Korean candidates were those who had been being trained in the K-note Academy that the head of the judge group runs.

While the Korean participants display temperate and courteous attitudes, the Chinese group reveals candid, vivid, and unfettered aspects. The difference results from the two nations' cultural atmosphere. To illustrate, in the second episode, a Chinese contestant practices singing with his hands in his pockets. A Korean tutor shows his displeasure pointing out the contestant's manner. In Korea, trainees should straighten their posture when they are taught by a teacher. Such a behavior is usually considered courteous or respectful toward a teacher. The Chinese participants often demonstrate some kind of rude attitudes or behaviors from Korean's perspective, like lying down on their back at the practice room floor and breaking the ban on cellphone use. The freewheeling style is also seen on the competition stage. The Chinese participants often speak to the judges first without any constraint. It is rarely seen in the Korean contestants because most Korean people consider such a behavior is plucky. Thus, none of the Korean trainees is pointed out insincere or carefree attitudes in the audition program.

For the Chinese contestants, a three-month competition in a foreign country is a painful process. Surrounded by the unfamiliar language, culture and food, they are easily exhausted and lose their grip, as the competition is heating up. The unique culture of Korean entertainment industry, such as pressing them to show a courteous manner and decent behavior in the hierarchic relationships, is another difficulty that they suffer from. However, all the Chinese participants try to accept the harsh training processes of the K-pop management system and adjust themselves to the training culture. Although some of them confess the problems about the competition in the early stage, they succeed in overcoming the difficulties eventually.

The final episode wraps up the audition show with collaborative and harmonious mood. The Chinese participants who were immature in the performance skills and training attitudes at the beginning demonstrate the refined performances and sophisticated behaviors. Their

surprising growth in a united team alludes to endurance, cooperation, and ultimately, to

integration.

Co-production of reality television in the circuit of culture

The joint audition show of Korea and China presents many distinctions of both Korean

and Chinese national identity. First, the Korean version highlights competitions and conflicts by

comparing each member's prosperity as well as national distinctions constantly. On the other

hand, the Chinese version mitigates those competitive and conflictive elements. Next, the Korean

judges urge the trainees to pour out everything they have at the contest in an authoritative

atmosphere. They ask the contestants to show emotional impression and strong mentality as well

as developed performance skills. In contrast, the Chinese panel gives practical and professional

advice to them. In addition, the Korean participants demonstrate well-trained and well-organized

performances with moderate and courteous attitudes from the outset. On the contrary, the

Chinese trainees display passionate but unrefined aspects at the beginning, and then gradually

improve their attitudes and behaviors as well as performance technique to meet the requirements

of the Korean training system. Overall, the Korean side seeks competitions and emotional

assimilations, while the Chinese side pursues practical and cooperative relationship.

However, it is hasty to conclude that these different distinctions between the two nations

correspond to each national identity. There might be a gap of asymmetric power among the

government, producers, and audiences. In other words, the representation of national identity

might be seriously affected by a power agency. Particularly, in the case of China, the producers

should follow strictly the governmental regulations. Although Chinese monitoring members said

that most Chinese audiences would want to watch competitive and conflicting scenes and the

opinion was reflected to the program setting, the Chinese producers rather attempted to erase

such scenes. Considering Chinese production culture, it can be said that the producers followed the governmental regulations rather than audiences' demands.

At this point, we need to consider the dynamic relationship among production, representation, and identity. As du Gay et al. (1997) present that the cultural spheres of representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation is interconnected and reciprocal, this case study shows the complex and intertwined cultural circuit of both Korea and China. Despite the collaboration and co-production of the two nations, each version reflects each side's own cultural values, tastes and restrictions. These outcomes result from the constant negotiations of each part of the cultural circuit. As the co-production project of the two nations increases, the relations in the circuit of culture in the area becomes more complicated, expanded, and deepened. The cultural content produced by the regional collaboration is a hybrid and transnational commodity mixed with the local identity, regional complementarity and global universality. In the asymmetrical space where the local, regional, and global agencies meet and compete with one another, imitations, innovations and evolutions of local television formats are going on. The transnational and hybrid formats are shaping much more complex and global television flow.

8   GOING GLOBAL: SEEKING NEW MARKETS AND SOURCES

The explosion of reality television formats in Korea has been driven largely through two tracks. One is large-scale format trades and co-production with China, led by major terrestrial networks and their subsidiaries, and the other is the breakthrough of big cable channels. These two simultaneous phenomena have been a key factor driving the development of the local format industry over the past decade. While the co-production with China has been carried out mainly by the terrestrial networks and their affiliate music cable channels, the big general programming

cable stations and independent production firms have expanded their business areas in overseas markets through strategic alliance with foreign media companies and investors and establishing exclusive TV channels for providing their television content in the countries. In addition, content exports through new media platforms have been actively promoted.

Particularly, the media giants that have multiple entertainment companies and television channels have played a leading role in diversifying the entertainment formats by age, gender and viewing time, which the major terrestrial broadcasters have not explored. Accordingly, the plots, locations, cast, and topics of Korean reality television have been varied. The successful changes and innovations in Korean reality television have been led by the producers who moved their workplace from the major terrestrial networks to the big cable channels. Their abundant production experience and well-trained mindset transformed the strategies and practices of the cable networks which had stuck to make more sensational and narrowcasting programs aimed at younger viewers to differentiate themselves from terrestrial broadcasters. The outstanding programs that the producers newly launched in their new job not only placed the new channels in the ranks of the major broadcasters, but also contributed to the diversification of their export markets.

The new strategies of the media giants, which eliminated the lines of demarcation between genres in production organization and broadcasting schedules, have triggered hybridization of the Korean reality formats. Singing competition shows have been mixed with game and talk show formats. The virtues of food and cooking have been often mingled into travel reality or challenge reality formats. The producers from public television networks have also tried to extend the boundaries of their family reality shows by inviting celebrities' family members as new cast of their programs. Exposing the real relationship between the celebrities

and their family, the newly developed shows reiterate the emotional assimilation among the cast, but at the same time, represent their relationships with more nuanced perspective towards individualism.

This chapter addresses how and what the big cable networks and multiple program providers (MPPs) improved in the local format industry. It pays attention to the innovations and reorganizations of the television networks in relation to the hegemonic changes of the local industry. Through the case study of *Grandpas Over Flowers*, it discusses what implications the newly developed reality programs have in the local television industry.

8.1 Advent of Media Giants: Hegemonic Change in Korean Television

The remarkable growth of the cable television networks in the early 2010s resulted from the complex changes in the local media industry, which is a combination of the commercialization and deregulation policies, new media convergence, and expansion of cultural and economic exchange with overseas media industries. Although Korean cable channels embarked on their business with the high expectations as "a goose that lays golden eggs" two decades ago, the expectations were not realized because of the East Asian financial crisis (Nam S. , 2008). In order to revitalize the cable television industry, the Korean government revised the Broadcasting Act that allows conglomerates to hold up to 33 percent equity ratio in cable and satellite TV in 2000. The measure has resulted in the heavy concentration of the cable channels' ownership structure and over-commercialization of the Korean cable television (Nam S. , 2008). Furthermore, as general programming channels which are allowed to provide all genres including news programs were launched in 2011, media conglomerates possessing leading newspapers started to join the local television industry.

Riding on the waves of globalization and digitalization, these big media companies with strong financial power have extended their business, buying the entertainment agencies and new media companies as well as the existing broadcasting channels (Kwon S. , 2016; Kim & Kim, 2015). The emergence of media conglomerates is a logical consequence of the fundamental changes in global media industries. The media conglomerates, also known as media giants such as Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, News Corporation, Sony, NBC Universal etc. have built on "economies of scale" through acquisitions and mergers to create sustainable profits and market expansion over the world (Hermann & McChesney, 2001). To maintain the cross-selling and cross-promotional benefits from the diversified media affiliates, the expansion of media conglomerates does not end with one-off mergers but continues with constant acquisitions. McChesney (2004) asserts that media concentration is essential to survive in the media industries, which ensures economies of scale and scope for the survival. On this basis, the media giants have continued to pursue vertical and horizontal integration to expand the scale and scope of their business and secure their competitiveness in the media market.

The strides of CJ E&M (Entertainment & Media) have been most noticeable among the media conglomerates in Korea. CJ E&M, one of the two divisions of CJ ENM (Entertainment and Merchandising), has run 7 entertainment business divisions across television, film, music, convention, theatre, animation, and media marketing from 2011. The television business of CJ E&M, which started in 1993 as a music channel M-net, has grown along with the history of the local cable television. Through the launch of new channels as well as mergers with KMTV and On Media group, the television division of CJ E&M formed the nation's largest entertainment network with 18 channels available on cable, satellite and IPTV platforms. In addition to the domestic television business, it has launched overseas channels covering Japan, Southeast Asian

countries and the U.S. to spread the Korean Wave content. By securing a variety of content pools that span the entire spectrum of popular culture and multiple media platforms, the television network has been rapidly gaining the initiative in the local television industry which had high barriers to entry.

Apart from the changes in the government policy and technological environment, the resources and capabilities that a media company possesses is the key variable affecting the growth of the company (Kim & Kim, 2015). The organizational capacity, research and development capacity, investment value and brand image compose the competencies of the media corporation. As a leading television channel of CJ E&M, tvN has benefited not only from the diverse content pool and multimedia platforms of the media giant, but also the potential of its human resources. Unlike typical Korean cable television channels that have relied more on imports of foreign content, tvN has pursued to provide homegrown programs since its inception in 2006. While it aimed at a "Total Variety Network" at first, the station did not show viewers its production power and creativity to compete with the powerful terrestrial networks. During the first five years, the network did not receive favorable attentions from the local viewers as well as many entertainers, producers and advertisers, due to the lack of experienced producers, poor ability of television programming, and sensational program content. However, the introduction of the general programming cable television provided a new chance for the cable station to improve its production ability and capacity.

In December 2011, four new general programming cable broadcasters started their business. These channels including JTBC, Channel A, TV Chosun, and MBN were allowed to serve a variety of programs in a similar manner to the existing three terrestrial broadcasters. Since a massive job transfer began due to the opening of the four new channels, tvN also has

competed to hire a large number of prominent entertainment producers working for the major terrestrial broadcasters. The large-scale job change of the producers has resulted not only in the reshuffle of the local television industry but also in the innovation of the local entertainment television programming.

8.2   Reshuffle and Innovation: Consequences of a Massive Job Transfer

Television workers' job movement has been commonly occurred whenever a new station opened in Korean television history. However, the turnover of the local television producers from 2011 has been unprecedented in scale and scope. Since the media conglomerates have been expected to offer much higher payment and more comfortable production environment, a significant number of entertainment producers who had worked in the public terrestrial networks have switched to the commercial television stations. The executive director of tvN, Myung-han Lee, who moved from KBS in 2011, said about the reason why he moved his job:

Actually, when I was first offered the job, I didn't really care. But, I ended up coming to tvN because it is a content-centered company. Now I am the executive director of tvN, but if I really want and prepare to produce a musical and theatrical performance, I can do that because there is a performing art division in CJ E&M. Producer Won-ho Shin in my division has a dream to be a film director. Wouldn't I let him make a film, even though there is a film division in my company? The most attractive thing for the entertainment producers like me is that this is a content company not a television company. If a company provides creators good treatment and a wide choice, it is the best company. That's why I came here. – Interview from *Dialogue with Korean entertainment producers*, by Hong, K. (2016, p. 240)

As Myung-han Lee points out, the most important criterion for Korean television producers to choose a job is to give them more opportunities to create a program. The prominent producer's departure led to the collective turnover of fellow producers who worked together with him. Some popular entertainment producers have followed him to tvN and others have transferred to other big cable channels like JTBC. On the whole, KBS producers have moved to tvN and MBC producers have tended to move to JTBC and other big entertainment agencies. One of the biggest strengths of their new job is the production environment that guarantees producers' autonomy. The massive turnover of these producers reveals ironically the stifling reality of their old workplace. KM said about the real reason to decide to move from KBS to tvN:

> I actually had no major complaints about my previous job. As a public broadcaster, it gave me a good sense of security. It was a totally satisfying life for me. But, since the Myung-Bak Lee administration took power in 2008, KBS began to be influenced by the political power. The elder producers who had no talent and no confidence became the head of the production part. On the other hand, those sincere and talented producers were pushed to the edge. Although the broadcasting strike against the President Lee's attempts to control media kept going on and even major entertainment programs were cancelled for several months, there was no sign of resolution. I couldn't stand there any longer, because the organizational atmosphere were getting worse for years. – KM

IK said that MBC did not differ from KBS:

> If it were our company in the past, many of the producers who moved to new workplaces wouldn't have gone out. In the past ten years, the corporate culture that guaranteed autonomy of production and independence of individual producers was greatly damaged.

In addition, because many media platforms have been competitively attracting

entertainment producers with a huge amount of salary, many of my colleagues are

increasingly considering relocating more than before. -IK

Actually, television producers working at major public television stations have been

highly recognized and respected in South Korea. However, the governance structure of the

Korean public television, in which the government president appoints the CEO of the

broadcasting company, has been one of the biggest factors undermining television workers'

creativity and motivation. What's worse, the succession of the two authoritarian regimes that

directly influenced on the production organizations of the public television companies kept

discouraging the producers and staffs.

Most of the producers who moved to big cable networks including tvN and JTBC were

middle-grade producers with 10 to 15 years of production experience in both KBS and MBC.

According to LT and IK, those producers who started their career from the end of 1990s and the

early 2000s intensively left the public stations. In the case of MBC, 24 entertainment producers

left the company from 2011 to 2017. Since MBC has usually employed just three newbies a year

in the entertainment production division, those middle-grade producers' departure was a huge

blow to the company. Most of all, the producers who started their career in the early 2000s are

the first generation that has seldom imitated the Japanese entertainment programs. That is, they

have created original and innovative programs proven in the local television market.

Another bigger problem was that the job changes of the chief producers caused a series of

job transfer of directors, writers and other staff members:

Korean entertainment programs have a specialized production system. All staff members

work together as one team under the control of the chief producers. In such a production

system, the role of assistant producers is very essential because they work as hands and

feet of the chief producers. Unless they change their production system, the chief

producers have no choice but to take most of the staffs with them when they move their

jobs. – IK

Television is an industry that reflects the needs and concerns of viewers most sensitively

and quickly. Since there is no industrial standard in television production, human capital – i.e.,

skilled and experienced workers with technical know-how – is the most significant production

factor in the industry. Television producers generate innovative content by using their creativity

in a flexible working environment that ensures the laborers' autonomy and independence. Such

accumulated production skills and knowledge that a producer has are passed on to the junior

colleagues who have worked with him/her together in the same team. In other words, television

industry is not a labor-intensive industry, but knowledge-intensive industry (Kwon S. , 2016; Lee

& Kwon, 2017).

8.2.1   *Introduction of seasonal production system*

tvN is the company that best understood the basic nature of the television production

system. The television station which suffered from the criticism about their lowbrow content and

a chronic deficit for several years after its inception found out that it would be the quickest and

easiest solution of the problems to recruit outstanding producers from major television networks

and transfer their production know-how to their employees. The company has empowered the

qualified producers recruited from outside to break away from existing practices and customs

that impeded new innovations.

I don't think the innovative production system is particularly unique. If there was

something different, it would be the introduction of seasonal production system. In the

past, a successful pilot program became a regular program on a weekly basis, or just discarded. But now, we are able to do any experiment through the seasonal program production system. I only have to make 10 or more episodes for a new seasonal show. If it does not work, I can pull out the series. If it goes well, I can continue to the next season. – KM

The introduction of the seasonal production system has freed the producers from the burden of planning a new program as well as from the tight schedule of weekly broadcasts. In fact, most popular global formats have been produced and adapted as a seasonal program. Accordingly, Korean producers have demanded the seasonal production system to their broadcasters. However, it has been almost impossible for the public terrestrial broadcasters to adopt the seasonal production system, because they have to take a risk of huge losses. LT, a KBS producer, fully understood why his station does not adopt the globally standardized system.

We, producers want a season-based production system. But our company does not want it. The main viewers of the public television are habitually watching television on a daily and weekly basis. Once a primetime show is broadcast irregularly and its rating begins to fall, it is never easy to regain the viewership of that time. The weekend primetime show earns about $1 million in advertising revenue per episode. If it goes wrong, a million dollars fly away. In addition, writers and staffs receive wages per episode. The seasonal production system is disadvantageous for them because they cannot earn any income after the end of the season. If the production costs and wages are paid during the preparation period, and if fresh content is constantly supplied in a fully preproduced manner before airing, it is possible to carry out the seasonal production system. But if not, we will lose both good ratings and good staff members. – LT

The form of seasonal shows is advantageous to the viewing habits of young generations who watch television shows with online and mobile devices, such as binge viewing and snack culture. The production of seasonal shows fitting well with the changed watching pattern has allowed the cable producers to differentiate their programming and scheduling strategies from those of the terrestrial networks. Beyond the constraints of broadcasting time and viewership, the cable television producers have conducted various experiments across genres and topics, which were not attempted in their previous jobs.

8.2.2 *Reshuffle of the production line across genres*

As another strategy to enhance the production abilities and capacities of the whole organization, the big cable networks have formed production teams centering on chief producers. That is, each team is not grouped by genre but by the production propensity of the chief producers who supervise several production teams in a group. These production groups are identified by number, instead of being classified into genres. Such a classification scheme reflects the increasing hybridity and complexity of program genres and formats.

> Basically, each producer is deployed into a group by his production inclination. There are seven production groups in total, from Group 1 to 5 for entertainment production and Group 6 to 7 for cultural programs. Although *No Way I'm an Adult* is actually created by an entertainment producer, it belongs to the cultural program group to collaborate with documentary producers. The affiliation of each producer varies depending on how the director of tvN organizes the producers' portfolio. – KM

Accordingly, tvN's producers have created programs that are not limited to their major genres. For example, *Reply,* a drama series which dramatically increased tvN's channel

awareness, was made by an entertainment show producer who moved from KBS. The chief

producer Won-ho Shin commented on the success of the drama:

> The reason our drama did well was not because we made it well but because we created it
>
> differently. I do not know how drama producers make their dramas. From the first script
>
> work and composition to the editing, filming, and the final cutting, I directed the drama in
>
> my own way, just like the way I used to create an entertainment show. - Interview from
>
> "The success of "Reply" is not because we made it well…" published by *Media Today*,
>
> February 23, 2014 (Jeong C. , 2014).

The successful model of *Reply* series soon spread to other broadcasters. KBS reorganized

the production division integrating the entertainment department and culture & documentary

department in the name of "dissolving the borders between entertainment and cultural television

genres" (Jeong D. , 2015). Like the case of tvN, the production division of KBS consists of 8

groups classified by number. Besides, with the success of a drama *The Producers*, which a drama

writer and entertainment producer made together, KBS achieved good results from the

experiment breaking the boundaries of drama and entertainment.

Furthermore, KBS established a subsidiary production company "Monster Union" to

enhance the scale and scope of the production and marketing and attract stable overseas

investment in Summer 2016 (Cho H. , 2016). Prior to this, launching an affiliate production

company "Studio Dragon" which encompasses film, drama, and entertainment production in

Spring 2016, CJ E&M began to secure its content competitiveness through the vertical

integration. Studio Dragon, which has tried to enter the global market in cooperation with

Netflix, has emerged as a new model of a large production company that has not existed in the

Korean broadcasting industry (Cho Y. , 2018). In this way, CJ E&M has started to establish vertically and horizontally integrated production system.

8.2.3   *Innovations mixing familiarity and novelty*

After recruiting and reorganizing the producers, the big cable stations entrusted the producers with full powers from planning to producing. However, the producers from terrestrial broadcasters had more pressure than anyone to be successful in their new job. The pressure led them to seek for something different from their previous work. Although they tried to make a "niche content" aimed at young women who are often believed as the main audience of cable television, the programs failed to attract viewers' attention.

> When I first came to this cable station, I had a really hard time. Putting the rating issue aside, I even thought, "there can be no solution. No one can succeed here." Fortunately, with the subsequent successes of Won-ho Shin's *Reply* series and Young-seok Na's *Grandpas Over Flowers* series, we finally found the answer… In order for a program to succeed in cable terrain, it should be basically universal and on top of that, add some novelty that illuminates the universality. This is not just a strategy for cable channel programs, but the solution for all television programs. – Interview of Myung-han Lee from *Dialogue with Korean entertainment producers*, by Hong, K. (2016, p. 243)

The newcomers' programs that gained great popularity after moving to the new job were ones that modified and supplemented their previous works. This was not because they tried to achieve a stable success, but because they wanted to make the station's brand more like a public terrestrial television so that all aged viewers could enjoy their programs (Lee & Kwon, 2017). By reorganizing materials and content into a season-based format and replacing cast members, they

achieved a huge success. Familiar shows and familiar production methods brought comfort to producers as well as viewers.

> The best talking point in the field of entertainment television in these days is to melt the theme of empathy and cross-generational dialogue adequately into a storytelling. So, I make some points with which the viewers can empathize in my program so that they can feel like "this is my story" or "this is my folks' story." Most of the big hits have been loved by the viewers all ages together. I don't think I'm a great creator, but I have my own style. I have a country-boy sentiment. I try to add a new trend of the public on my analogue sentiment. Trends are like seasonal clothes. So, we have to keep changing. But my basic sentiment does not change. That means it's my style. – Interview of Young-seok Na from *The creatives who make a trend*, by Shin, H., Kim, Y., Lee, M. & Na, Y. (2015, pp. 165-166).

As the chief producer of *Grandpas Over Flowers* Young-seok Na confessed, the producers from public television have sought a program to communicate with and evoke sympathy from the viewers of all generations, which has been the most familiar way to them. A former KBS and current tvN producer KM said that this tendency was acquired from their previous job:

> I'm definitely in the tone and mood for public service broadcasting. It seems to be imprinted in my genes. When I meet my co-workers who started their career in a cable network, I feel more stronger that there is something different from them inside me. This is not because of the generation gap but because of the different training ways. Elder producers from cable stations are different from me. But when I talk with the producers from MBC, I feel like they have the same mindset as I do. In the end, it seems that the

cultural climate of the workplace where a producer has been primarily involved

determines the producer's perspective. – KM

Considering the fact that a program is planned and created by producers, the style, color

and identity of an entertainment show is determined by what values the producer wants to bring

to the show. For the producers grown and trained in public television stations, the cable

companies' production atmosphere emphasizing experimental mind and creative ideas has acted

as a stimulant to the creation of new formats mixing publicness and commerciality.

8.2.4   Reorganization of scheduling, audience and advertising

Through the exploration across various genres, topics and themes, the producers who

moved into tvN and JTBC specializing entertainment programs have achieved tangible results

from 2013. Their products, such as *Grandpas Over Flowers* (reality travel), *Three Meals a Day*

(reality cooking), *Youn's Kitchen* (reality travel and cooking), *The Dictionary of Useless*

Knowledge (reality travel and intelligent talk, hitherto tvN), *Witch-Hunt* (dating and relationship

talk variety)*, Hidden Singer* (singing competition), *Non-Summit* (multinational talk variety),

Hyori's Homestay (reality homestay, hitherto JTBC), etc. have been forming a new trend in

Korean reality television.

Particularly, these programs pioneered a new primetime zone by concentrating not on the

weekend evening primetime zone where the terrestrial broadcasters have been fiercely

competing, but on weekday late night time zone (11pm to 12:30am) and the night death slot of

Friday and Saturday (9pm to 11pm). These time zones are a time of relaxation of the young

workers and students who return home after work in Korea. Thus, the viewers aged 20 to 49 are

the main audiences for these programs. The reason for targeting viewers between the ages of 20

and 49 is that they have the greatest purchasing power and influence on the headline index, which is a major indicator of the television advertising price.

Compared to those of the terrestrial networks, the cable television programs have advantages in raising profitability. For example, while the terrestrial networks are not allowed to send out in-program advertising, insert product placement without permission, and run flexible time schedule, the cable channels are relatively free from these regulations. The in-program commercial system is more appropriated for the global market standards. Also, the rerun rate of the cable stations is usually two to three times higher than that of the terrestrial broadcasters, which can make profits without incurring production costs (Kim I. , 2016; Moon, 2016). In the case of *Grandpas Over Flowers*, headphone, mineral water, smart phone etc. were frequently exposed as production placement advertisements to the viewers. The locations that the cast visited were developed as a tour package. The occupancy rates for flights to the cities that appeared in the show also notably rose after the release of the show. Due to the advertising effect, many tourist attractions offered convenience for the staff. Even the national museum of Taiwan allowed the producers to film the national treasures by specially lifting the ban of taking pictures in the museum (Ha J. , 2013).

As Keane and Moran (2008) predict, the values of the formats reside in ancillaries, such as the performers' fashion, location, background music, etc. Sometimes, only the revenue from download and streaming services offsets the production costs (Eom, 2015). The cross-platform distribution has become routinized in Korean cable television business. In doing so, the leading commercial cable channels have been eroding the industrial hegemony as well as the advertising revenue that the big three terrestrial networks have possessed dominantly.

The change is evident in recent statistics (See Table 15, Figure 3). In the Korean broadcasting advertising market, which is almost divided between terrestrial broadcasters and cable television program providers, the sales trends of the two kinds of operators are in contrast with each other. While the overall domestic television commercial market has been gradually shrinking, terrestrial broadcasters' ad sales have decreased significantly. On the other hand, ad sales by cable television program providers have been rising moderately.

Table 15 Advertisement Sales Trends of Terrestrial and Cable Networks

(Unit: $ 1 million USD)

Division	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Terrestrial TV	2,135	1,960	1,859	1,706	1,718	1,459
Program Provider	1,098	1,139	1,136	1,102	1,215	1,213

Note: Authors reconstruction from *2017 White paper of Korean broadcasting industry,* by Korea Creative Content Agency (2018a, p. 125)
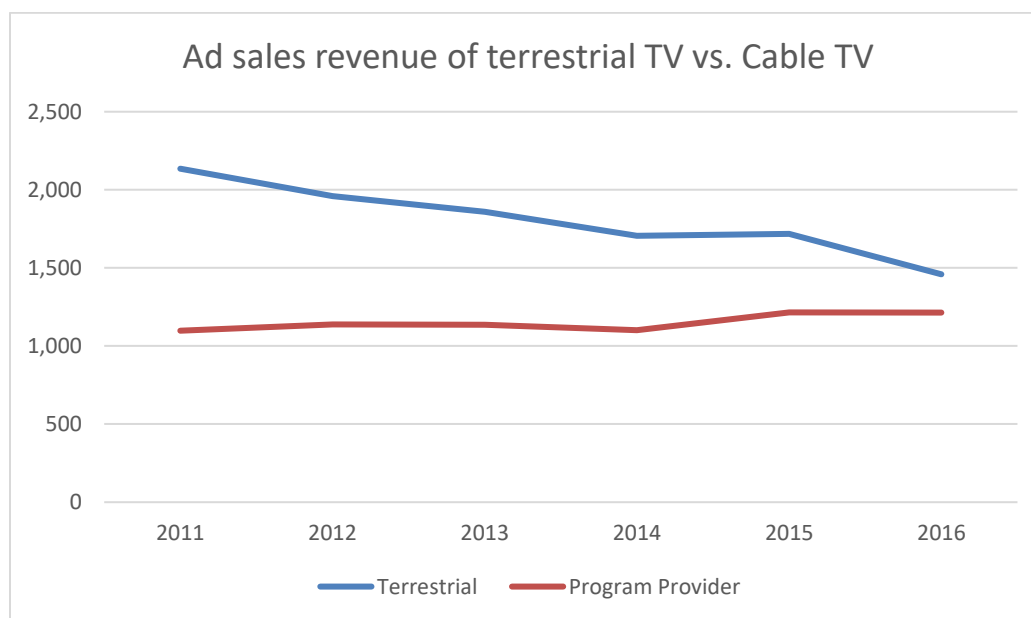
Figure 3 Advertisement Sales Trends of Terrestrial and Cable Networks

(Unit: $ 1 million USD)

The changes in advertising sales are closely related to the changing trends of viewership ratings. Looking at the viewership shares of the terrestrial networks and cable program providers including CJ E&M and JTBC, the viewership shares demonstrate continuous changes over the past five years since 2011. The viewership share figures in Table 16 demonstrate how the social influence of each broadcasting company has changed. KBS dropped 8.4% from 36.0% in 2011 to 27.6% in 2016, the largest drop among the major broadcasters. MBC decreased from 18.4% to 15.0% and SBS saw a decrease of 2.5% from 11.2% to 8.7%. Unlike the terrestrial broadcasters whose share of viewership is steadily declining, those of the cable program providers JTBC and CJ E&M increased. JTBC rose slightly from 7.4% to 7.7%. It is noteworthy that CJ E&M's viewership share rose from 8.3% in 2011 to 11.0% in 2016. In just five years, CJ E&M ranked third in viewership shares, beating SBS, one of the three terrestrial broadcasters.

Table 16 Changes in Viewership Shares of Major Broadcasters from 2011 to 2016

(Unit: %)

Division		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Terrestrial TV	KBS 1 & 2 TV	36	36.2	32	31.2	27.8	27.6
	MBC	18.4	16	16.8	15.7	16.6	15
	SBS	11.2	11.4	9.7	9.1	9.1	8.7
Program Provider	JTBC	7.4	7.9	7.8	7.5	7.3	7.7
	CJ E&M	8.3	8.7	7.9	7.7	9.3	11

Note: Authors reconstruction from *2017 White paper of Korean broadcasting industry*, by Korea Creative Content Agency (2018a, p. 47)

8.2.5   *Development of new types of reality format*

The work of the media giants is also notable in entertainment format production. According to the report published by Korea Creative Content Agency in 2017, a total of 483 entertainment formats were newly created during the period, after analyzing the entertainment programs produced and broadcast by the major terrestrial and cable stations from January 2015 to August 2017 (See Table 17, Figure 4).

Looking at the yearly production figures, 168 new programs were produced in 2015, 187 in 2016, and 128 in August 2017. As the company that has developed the new format the most, CJ E&M has produced 168 programs out of a total of 483 formats during the period. It has been followed by MBC and its affiliates with 78 programs, KBS and its affiliates with 68 programs, and SBS and its affiliates with 62 programs. Among the general programming cable channels, JTBC has developed 38 entertainment formats, and 29 programs of TV Chosun, 21 of Channel A, and 19 of MBN have been newly produced.

Table 17 Number of Newly Developed Entertainment Shows by Major Korean Broadcasters from January 2015 to August 2017

Division	KBS	MBC	SBS	CJ E&M	JTBC	TV Chosun	Channel A	MBN	Total
2015	28	26	16	57	12	15	8	6	168
2016	25	33	23	65	19	5	9	8	187
2017	15	19	23	46	7	9	4	5	128
Total	68	78	62	168	38	29	21	19	483

Note: Author's reconstruction based on the data from *2017 Korean television format import and export survey and a study on fostering the format industry*, by Korea Creative Content Agency (2017b, pp. 5-6)
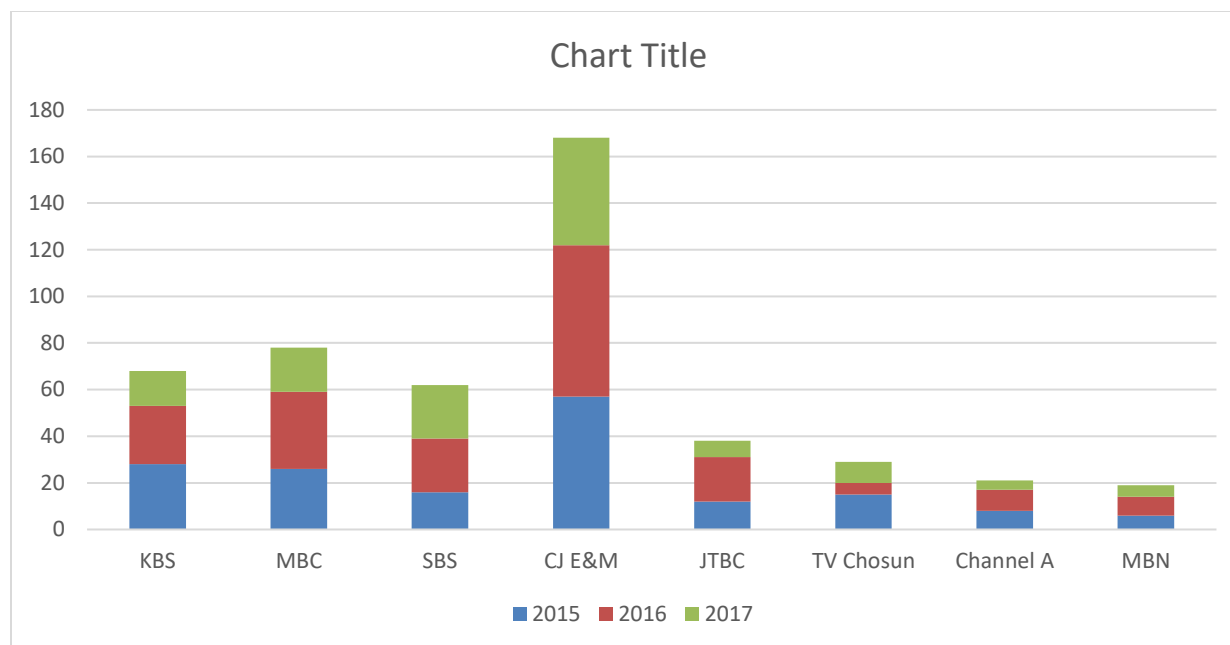
Figure 4 Number of Newly Developed Entertainment Shows by Major Korean Broadcasters from January 2015 to August 2017

The trend of format production in Korea demonstrates that the export markets as well as the contents and genres of the newly developed formats have been diversified since 2015. In the past, celebrity-oriented real-variety shows were a leading format in Korea. However, as CJ E&M and JTBC have led to diversify their formats, food reality formats such as *Please Take Care Of My Refrigerator* (JTBC), *Mr. Baek: The Homemade Food Master* (CJ E&M), and *Three Meals A Day* (CJ E&M), musical game shows including *I Can See Your Voice* (CJ E&M), *Hidden Singers* (JTBC), *Produce 101* (CJ E&M), etc. and a new type of talk show and game show, like *Non-Summit* (JTBC) starring elite foreign men and *The Genius* (CJ E&M) in which players representing various career groups play a brain game have been produced.

These new types of formats have reflected the cultural trends of the current Korean society (KOCCA, 2017b; 2018a). First, food reality shows have created a new trend so-called "eating broadcasting" and "cooking broadcasting" in Korean entertainment television, allowing

popular chefs and celebrities to visit restaurants or taste and evaluate their own food made in studios. In addition, a number of new reality programs have contained famous celebrities' everyday life as the consuming culture of "myself generations" has emerged as a remarkable social phenomenon in the current Korean society. These newly developed reality shows based on the "home-alone" celebrities and their family members, including *I Live Alone* (MBC), *My Little Old Boy* (SBS), *Jagiya* (SBS), *Mr. House Husband* (KBS), etc. have illuminated various social and cultural lives, portraying the relationships with parent generations and youth generations within the concept of family. Focusing on the conflict, understanding and reconciliation between the cast and their family members, the reality shows have tried to replace constantly topics, actors and formulae. Although the new reality shows inherit the ultimate theme of the Korean real-variety shows in terms of empathy and mutual understanding within the framework of family, the programs demonstrate a clear difference from the large-scale real-variety shows in that they focus more on individual lives and choices (Ahn J. A., 2017)

Second, the two main formats of Korean musical entertainment shows, audition and singing competition, have been also developed in various formulae integrating music competition, game and talk. *Produce 101* of CJ E&M has attracted the audiences' great interest and participation with its format in which 11 contestants who viewers selected from 101 trainees would compose an idol group. The singing competition shows, which started from *I Am a Singer*, have competitively presented different formats depending on the style and color of each broadcaster: *Hidden Singer* (JTBC), *I Can See Your Voice* (CJ E&M), *Fantastic Duo* (SBS), *Vocal War: Voice of God* (SBS), and *Duet Song Festival* (MBC). These programs have shifted from a competition for only professional singers to a contestation in which a professional singer and amateur applicants are singing together. This evolution has enabled the programs to attract

middle-aged and elderly viewers by introducing many middle-aged singers and old stars in various forms of contention, thus contributing to recommercialization of the forgotten singers and their songs.

Another feature of the recently developed Korean entertainment formats is that the convergence of media combining the Internet, smart phones, and games with television broadcasting has been actively reflected in television entertainment. This is evident in *My Little Television* (MBC), *Fantastic Duo* (SBS), *Produce 101* (CJ E&M), and *New Journey to The West* (CJ E&M). As multi-channel networks (MCN) have emerged as a new earning source, major Korean broadcasters have started to turn their attention to the personal content creations based on P2P technology-based video streaming services. IK recalls the time when the new format combining new media platforms *My Little Television* was planned in 2015:

> The *My Little Television* project was based on the fear about new media. It was a fear that television is dying. We began to think that entertainment programs should be tailored for smartphone usage and web-based content consumption. When our junior producers proposed *My Little Television,* senior producers thought that it was the right content for this time. There were many innovative and amusing elements such as gaming structure, online subculture, and B-class humor in the program. However, it also gave viewers a sense of stability as if they were watching a traditional entertainment show program – IK

Reflecting the media convergence culture, *My Little Television* combined the form of web TV and traditional TV production as its format. In the show, five or six famous celebrities perform their own online live shows at separated rooms in a television studio to compete for the highest rating. The live web TV shows released on a local Internet portal site are edited and packaged into a traditional TV version and air through MBC every Saturday night. With the new

concept of the format, *My Little Television* garnered a massive attention as soon as it premiered. At the beginning of the show, the number of viewers on the live webcasting was over 1.3 million and the television show version recorded over 7 to 8% viewer ratings, which means great ratings on Saturday night time slot (Choi Y. , 2015).

CJ E&M's hybrid travel-reality show *New Journey to The West* drew more attentions because it was made with full-fledged web content. By approaching over-the-top (OTT) media services as a primary market, the company has broadcast the original series exclusively on an online streaming site. This programming strategy reveals the corporate goal of CJ E&M, which aims to be a multiplatform content company competing not only with the major local broadcasters but also with the Chinese streaming sites, YouKu-Tudou and IQiyi, and global new media platforms, Netflix, Amazon and Google TV.

With regard to the new media strategies of the local broadcasters, SJ who transferred from a terrestrial broadcaster to CJ E&M's affiliate cable station said:

> The biggest change in the media market is the platform issue. Depending on the
>
> platforms delivering television contents, people's viewing behaviors shift, and then the
>
> target audiences of television contents consequentially change. So, CJ E&M seems to be
>
> more concerned about how to respond to the changes of television platforms than about
>
> television content itself. We are carefully watching how Naver – Korea's largest portal
>
> site – provides television contents and considering how we will differentiate ourselves.
>
> My former colleagues in the public terrestrial network are not likely to have such a
>
> concern. Perhaps, the difference between me and them is because we belong to different
>
> broadcasters. CJ E&M has a wealth of funds and resources to develop content than the

terrestrial broadcasters. In any case, I think the basic roles of television producers as a creator will not change even though the platform changes - SJ.

With the new practices and strategies, the newly developed entertainment formats have expanded their export markets to the U.S. and European countries beyond the geographical limits of East Asia. The proportion of Korean format exports to Asian markets has decreased from 71% in 2015 and 70% in 2016 to 55% in 2017 due to the restrictions on the imports of Korean programs in China. On the other hand, the exports to European countries accounted for 24% of the sales in 2017 and the US market occupied 10% of the total in 2017 (KOCCA, 2017b). Especially, CJ E&M's *Grandpas Over Flowers* was reproduced by NBC in the title of *Better Late Than Never*, which topped the ratings during the same time zone in the U.S. in 2016, and was also exported to European countries, such as Germany, France, Denmark, Finland, Australia and Italy. M-net's *I Can See Your Voice* has been exported not only to China, but also to Bulgaria, Vietnam, Thailand, etc. JTBC's *Non-Summit* been sold to Turkey and the foreign cast members got a great response and became a local star.

Despite the strong regulations in the Chinese market, the Korean format industry is continuing its journey to find new ideas and routes for its format business around the world. In order to develop efficient and creative formats, the local industry is trying to develop entertainment formats in collaboration with various types of overseas partners. The types of the collaboration work include the co-development of program ideas, pilot program production, and joint ownership of the overseas sales and intellectual property copyrights.

Table 18 Co-development and Co-production of Entertainment Formats after the

Shutdown of the Chinese Market

Year	Program	Korean side	Partner	Note
2016	Oh My Baby	SBS	Lime Entertainment, Vietnam	Repackage from the library list
2016	Kids in Power	tvN	Gil Formats, Israel	Co-development from the library list
2016	Society Game	tvN	Endemol-Shine Group, USA	Full package (format + pilot)
2016	The Game with No Name	SM C&C (MBC)	NBC Universal Media Studio, USA	Full package
2017	The Line-Up	tvN	ITV Studio, UK	Paper format

Note: Author's construction based on the data from *2017 Korean Television Format Import and Export Survey* and *A Study on Fostering the Format Industry*, by Korea Creative Content Agency (2017, p. 144-152).

In Table 18, *Oh My Baby* co-produced by SBS and Lime Entertainment in Vietnam and *Kids in Power* created jointed by tvN and Gil Formats of Israel are rediscoveries of existing formats. Both programs present children as the main cast and target all aged viewers, which is one of the most popular formats in global markets. In particular, *Oh My Baby* has been able to make high profits through co-production as well as format sales. CJ E&M and ITV, Britain's largest commercial television company have developed a studio game show *The Line-Up* as a form of a paper format, which refers to the detailed plan including all of the information for the format production such as the set design, the structure and order of the program, and tips for casting, budgeting and advertising. By skipping the difficult process of joint production, the co-development of the paper format enabled the producers to reduce energy wastes, to collect and

share creative ideas, and to distribute the format efficiently to both Asia and Europe, where the two companies can focus on respectively. *The Game With No Game*, which was jointly developed by CJ E&M and Endemol Shine Group, and *Society Game* co-produced by SM C&C of Korea and NBC Universal of the U.S., are the cases including format development as well as pilot program production. While the full-package co-production requires continuous communication with the partners and economic costs during at least one-year production period, it gives the participants the advantages of understanding global format markets through learning about the production and distribution system of foreign countries and utilizing the networks with the partners. In addition, it helps preventing copycats by developing more robust and structured formats.

To sum up, the rapid growth of the two media conglomerates CJ E&M and JTBC has influenced not only the development of Korean entertainment formats but also the reorganization of audiences, advertisements, and television programming and scheduling. As the competition between the major terrestrial networks and the leading cable channels has spread across all areas of the local television industry, the practices and strategies of their entertainment format production and development have been much diversified. Accordingly, Korean reality formats have been developed and produced with novel designs, subjects and performers, aiming at new markets.

8.2.6   *Evolution from real-variety shows: Grandpas Over Flowers*

As the first Korean reality show format exported to the U.S., *Grandpas Over Flowers* set a milestone in the history of Korean format industry not only in diversifying export markets but also in claiming its originality in the major global market. While the program has inherited the conventions of the locally formatted real-variety shows created by the major terrestrial

broadcasters, it has been aired on a commercial cable network. In other words, it contains

"Korean" sentiments required for public broadcasting, but at the same time, the commercial

elements commonly found in cable broadcasting. This hybrid nature is by and large due to the

creators, who moved from KBS, the state-run national terrestrial network, to CJ E&M, one of the

largest media entertainment groups in Korea. The producers have customized and innovated the

self-developed reality format under the new production circumstance. Thus, *Grandpas Over*

Flowers can demonstrate how the localized reality format has been tailored to the U.S. market

beyond Asian countries as well as the domestic market.

This case study attempts to examine the characteristics of the innovative reality show

format and its engines creating new values and features. Based on the textual and industrial

analysis on the style and narrative of the program, how different the program is from the Korean

real-variety shows, how and what values are generated in the more evolved reality show, and

what is the implication of the new reality format in the global format study are investigated.

Rediscovery of senior actors

Grandpas Over Flowers is a travel-reality show that was broadcast on tvN, a subsidiary

cable station of CJ E&M. The show features four veteran actors who go on a backpack trips to

diverse countries with a young porter. The first season with seven episodes was released from

July 5 to August 16, 2013. Its locations include Paris, Strasbourg, Bern, and Lucerne in Western

Europe. The following seasons have been filmed in Taiwan, Spain, Dubai, Greece, Germany,

Czech Republic and Austria. Its spin-offs *Sisters Over Flowers* and *Youth Over Flowers* have

been consecutively aired through tvN.

Compared to the typical locally formatted real-variety shows, *Grandpas Over Flowers*

have several differences. First, the program's main characters are old actors. Although the cast

members are actively performing in various Korean drama series and movies, casting the elderly as main characters is a big challenge to the production conventions of the existing Korean entertainment shows that usually work with young actors. The four Korean veteran actors, Soon-jae Lee (Age 85 as of 2019), Gu Shin (83), Geun-hyung Park (79), and Il-seop Baek (75), are considered as national actors and grandfathers of South Korea. They have lived as famous actors over 50 years, by touching every Korean audience's heart. The average age of these actors is 80.5. They were not fluent in English and were not able to walk for a long time. Thus, Seo-jin Lee, who is also well known as an intellectual actor in Korea, has participated in the travel as a porter and travel guide.

The four actors who don't worry about their looks and other people's opinions demonstrate their real personalities hidden behind the dramas, films and plays in which they have appeared. Their honest and humanistic qualities attracted younger viewers in their twenties and thirties as well as senior citizens (Park J. , 2013). Given the cable channel's tradition of producing young-centered programs, it was difficult to predict the success of the programs. Even the main producer was half in doubt about its success because a backpack trip has been always associated with the young generations (Park J. , 2013). However, the show flipped the fixed idea. Putting the graying stars in a foreign setting, the never-done-yet format hit the target. Thanks to the surprising casting, the show recorded 6 to 7 percent average viewership ratings that was rarely found on cable television before.

The producer's strategy casting the old actors, however, is associated with the fragmentation of audiences in the current Korean television market. Actually, the Korean audiences were divided into the terrestrial TV audience and cable TV audience until the introduction of the general programming cable channels. In other words, elderly people have

mainly watched terrestrial television, whereas young viewers have enjoyed watching cable

television with a certain genre and theme such as pop music, food, fashion, movies, leisure, etc.

However, as the general programming channels, in which conservative newspapers and media

conglomerates engaged as stakeholders and content providers, started their business, Korean old

people with a conservative inclination began to pay attention to the programs produced by the

cable channels (KOCCA, 2016b). Capturing well the changing watching habits of the old

generations, *Grandpas Over Flowers* created new audiences as well as new performing

characters of Korean reality shows, which no one had paid attention to before.

The producer not only cast the old actors but also presented them as very attractive

characters (Kim M. , 2016). Soon-jae Lee, the greatest brother of the four old actors, has been

described as a person with "straight-ahead" personality. He has been also portrayed as "a friend

of the forest" who loves animals and "the most intelligent 80-year old man in the world" who is

always interested in cultural properties. Unlike his usual strict image in his dramas, his character

has been formed as a person who conforms to the circumstances of the destinations. The second

brother, Gu Shin has the nickname "Guya-hyeong (Guya bro)" who is always taking care of the

members. He likes to drink and sometimes looks tough, thus forming a double character in the

show. The third, Geun-hyung Park has appeared as a president of a big company or an ambitious

politician in his dramas. In this program, however, he is a romanticist who often talks to his wife.

He also acts as a mood maker between other members. Although the youngest member Il-seop

Baek has an image of an incompetent but innocent father in his dramas, the program draws him

as a trouble maker with irascible personality. His character is shaped as a person who does not

know how to enjoy the trips because of his weak physical strength. Seo-jin Lee faithfully

performs all kinds of roles such as a tour guide, interpreter, navigator, cook, secretary, and so on.

While he is deceived by the chief producer and joins the trips to serve as a porter of the grandfathers, he plays a great role in bringing human rapport with the senior actors in the journey.

The successful characterization of the show, which transformed the stiff and stubborn grandfathers into cute and friendly images, sparked a trend of reality programs with older celebrities in leading roles. Copying the concept of *Grandpas Over Flowers*, KBS launched the reality show *Mamado* featuring four veteran actresses traveling with a younger actor, and TV Chosun, one of the four general programming cable networks, also started the show *Yes Yes*, in which veteran entertainers go on two-day trips with their grandchildren. These programs renewed popularity and name recognition of the old cast, thus giving them more acting and commercial projects.

Rediscovery of subtitle and background music

In terms of the program text and technique, *Grandpas Over Flowers* maximizes the role of subtitles. In the program, subtitles play diverse roles in informing itinerary, episodes behind scenes, emotion and feelings of the cast members, and narration (Kang & Kang, 2014). Actually, the various use of captions is a legacy from the Korean real-variety shows. Until a new technique of captions was introduced to Korean entertainment programs from Japan in the middle of 1990s, subtitles had played only an auxiliary role on Korean television programs. However, the adaptation of kinetic typography, an animation technique mixing motion and text to express ideas using video animation, has expanded the functions of subtitles, from textual information to visual and artistic language. Through the moving typography with diverse color, font and location, subtitles of Korean real-variety shows can display internal meanings that the producers want to express (Kang & Kang, 2014; Kim & Bang, 2013)

In the case of *Grandpas Over Flowers*, there is no voice-over narration. Instead, captions are used along with screen segmentations, graphic insertions, and various sound effects and background music. Along with various screen images shot by helicam, closed-circuit television camera and one-on-one close up camera, the kinetic subtitles supplement the storytelling of the show. Myung-seok Kim (2016) explains the narrative functions using these various images as "multimedia narrative." While the screen shows the members' journeys with 24-hour cameras from the perspective of a third person, the subtitles tell viewers the editor's intention and interpretation. Since the program has non-fixed and non-scripted format, the story drawn by the subtitles becomes a non-linear narrative that encompass various schedules and locations according to the performers' choices. Thus, subtitles in the show is a tool that the producers participate in audience's reading of the program, by explaining situations behind scenes, guessing mental states of the characters, and speaking for audience's response. Visualizing the metaphor and metonymy in describing characters and events, the subtitles of the show intensify the reality and visual pleasure (Kang & Kang, 2014).

In addition to the captions, the wide-ranged pop songs have been inserted to describe the situation behind the scenes. Particularly, the lyrics of the background music (BGM) match well with the emotions of the characters. Along with the subtitles, the BGM songs replace voice-over narrations. The songs cover a wide variety of genres from trot, which is the oldest form of Korean pop song formulated during the Japanese colonial era, to the newest indie music. Approximately 20 to 30 pop songs have been used in a single episode. Because of the audiences' demands, the songs used in the show have been released as OST songs (Im, 2013). The program's online homepage has provided the lists of BGM songs every week. Korean portal sites and music streaming sites have offered the BGM songs as a package.

The wider usage of subtitles and BGM shows the shift of labor relations. As Keane and Moran (2008) indicate, the reality formats have greatly enhanced the role of producers and writers as editors. Furthermore, they actively engage in the program. The producers and writers are not behind the scenes. They appear as a member of the trip. Sometimes, they change a travel itinerary and suggest alternative events in the show. Through traveling with the old actors, they give the numbers nicknames, interpret the members' emotions and feelings and properly reveal the humanistic features of the members. This type of engagement is deeply connected to the program format. The show has no fixed format and script and just sets the situation of four old actors' backpacking trip. The staff are forced to carry out the shooting circumstantially, following the actors' trips. This situation requires careful observation and the ability to weave a story with the anecdotes from the travel.

Actually, the staff themselves are the most notable point in the show. The main director and writer, Young-seok Na and Woo-jeong Lee, had worked originally at KBS for more than 10 years. Before moving to the new company, they had a hit real-variety show *1 Night 2 Days* on KBS. This travel reality show brought so-called "Bok-bul-bok" (hit or miss) games, the method used to determine who would sleep outside and who would get food in the show, into vogue and was prized the best TV entertainment program at the Korean Producers & Directors Award in 2009. However, starting from the chief producer's turnover, the whole team moved into tvN. The abundant production experience and teamwork moved to the new company.

In this sense, it can be said that *Grandpas Over Flowers* has been evolved from *1 Night 2 Days*. The show features six young entertainers going on a 1 night-2 day trip throughout South Korea. Under the motto of "real wild road variety," the six members often met and got along with old countrymen in the remote countryside. The landscapes, traditions, and rural way of life

inspired the audience who were tired of modern and urban life. With accumulated experience

through the show, the producers and writers have been able to obtain knowledge about how to

deal with old people and rural environments in their show. Another new reality show *Three

Meals A Day* that the same staffs are now producing is an outdoor cooking reality show

displaying the self-sufficient organic lifestyle of young celebrities. It also originated from *1

Night 2 Days* and demonstrates a more advanced type of rural experience. By utilizing the

characteristics of the real-variety show embracing a wide range of audiences and their abundant

production know-how accumulated from their previous workplace, the team has created a new

reality show format and set a new record in Korean television entertainment industry. Especially,

in contrast to the existing real-variety shows, which have been based on the challenges and

experiences of young popular entertainers and their competition and rewards, it is a more

advanced reality show centered on senior celebrities who have challenges but no competition.

Integration between publicness and commerciality and between the local and the global

The success of *Grandpas Over Flowers* has significant meanings in Korean television

industry. In terms of the viewership ratings, production system and format itself, the innovative

reality show hinted at a prelude for the structural upheaval of the Korean television market. Most

of all, the revenue earned by the program made the terrestrial networks nervous. Presenting the

fact that the rates of their advertising sales were less than half of the total, the three terrestrial

networks have lobbied for the in-program ads and the gross cap regulation of advertising time

(Park J. , 2014). This issue has been discussed as one of the most controversial agendas

surrounding the hegemonic struggles between the terrestrial and cable broadcasters in Korea.

The demands of the terrestrial networks are not limited to the placement of

advertisements. They have been trying not only to mimic the successful programs that tvN and

JTBC aired, but also to cast the entertainers and celebrities that the cable channels discovered. In addition, as the two cable channels have developed the Friday night time zone as a new primetime for a niche market such as single households and young workers, the terrestrial networks that typically focused on weekend and Sunday evenings have even gotten on the race (Lee E. , 2014). From program formula to schedule, the competition between the terrestrial networks and the leading cable channels is spreading across all areas of the broadcasting business.

In this situation, the dichotomous framework of "global" and "local" or of "commerciality" and "publicness" – i.e., the leading cable channels as the global and the commerciality, and the terrestrial TV networks as the local and the publicness – might no longer be useful. In terms of format and narratives, the reality shows produced by tvN and JTBC, are trying to include the concept of "publicness." For example, *Grandpas Over Flowers* shows the pseudo family membership as well as the affection between teachers and students by describing the relationship between the old actors and the young actor. Of course, it mostly depends on the producers' practice. However, as the channels are given more power and initiatives in the Korean television market, the audience's expectation and social requirements on the channels will be greater. On the contrary, the terrestrial channels are trying to drive their ratings rather than to maintain "publicness," "fairness" or "universality." Placing Korean version of an Israeli drama format on Friday night, KBS made its bid for victory on the battle with the cable channels. It is accused of not developing one-act drama, which can maintain cultural diversity and foster potential writers, but concentrating on commercial drama series (Lee E. , 2014).

Nowadays, Korean television industry is going through a transition period. No one can predict the future, but it is quite obvious that the global and the local are being integrated in the

basic trend of deregulation and commercialization. Dynamic interactions among production, consumption, and regulation of the Korean television industry have had influences on the types and process of television formats. The complex interplay among media system, producers, audiences and regulators in the social and cultural contexts has led Korean reality television formats to have different characteristics, positing themselves on the multidimensional layers between the global and local. Thus, as Chadha and Kavoori (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005) assert, television formats in a country, regardless of either domestic creation or adaptation of foreign ones, should be considered as the products of negotiation and articulation of the global and the local in the social and cultural context of the nation.

9   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the formation and transformation process of Korean reality television formats in relation to the production and distribution. The complex conditions and structural distinctions of the Korean format industry have been discussed in the context of cultural regionalization and globalization. Responding to the globalizing television markets, Korean reality television has exhibited a set of developmental patterns and characteristics. Particularly, the local television producers have played an essential role in creating locally consumable and globally adaptable television commodities, and thereby mediating the local, regional, and global television markets. The development and diffusion of the Korean reality formats eventually contributes to the diversification and complexification of global television flows.

Reflecting the findings of this study, this final chapter extends the discussions of global television studies in a broader context, theoretically and historically, and therefore draw some valuable implications in the changing global television industry. In addition, this chapter

identifies the limitations of the case studies of Korean reality shows and suggests a future research agenda.

9.1   Developmental Pathway of Korean Reality Television

In terms of genre development, Korean reality television began with a form of candid camera as a section of a weekend variety show in the middle of 1990s. Initially, the candid camera was applied to capture a surprised look of popular entertainers and celebrities in order to entertain the local viewers. After putting the touching stories of ordinary people into the candid camera, the early Korean reality shows had a great resonance with Korean people. The Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s which swept the local advertising market led the creation of a new type of variety shows, which combine candid camera and public interest messages. The emergence of public interest variety shows based on humanism was a response to the social demands for the responsibility of the Korean public television broadcasters to build a sound social ethos and culture.

While cable television networks imported and adapted global reality television hits from the late 2000s, major terrestrial broadcasters showed a lukewarm attitude towards adapting the global reality shows, but rather developed a new style of reality television suitable to the local audiences and production environments. Particularly, the versatile scalability of variety shows that accept almost every genre enabled the local producers to make various attempts to develop a new type of reality television program. With advanced production technologies and multi-team production systems, the Korean major terrestrial public networks intensively produced celebrity-focused real-variety shows adopting unscripted and unfixed formulae. The craze of real-variety shows led to the diversification and hybridization of reality television genre. Mixing quiz, game, competition formats with diverse topics such as music, tour, experience, food and cooking,

reality television has become a major genre in the local primetime entertainment programs. In addition, the major performers have been expanded to include not only the B-list celebrities and their family members but also forgotten old stars and, more recently, ordinary people (See Figure 5).

Also noteworthy is the scheduling strategies of the reality television shows. Conventionally, the weekend evening time zone as family-watching time has been considered as the most competitive broadcast time slots for the local entertainment television shows. While the major terrestrial networks have concentrated on the competition for the highest ratings on the weekend primetime, cable networks have more focused on creating a new primetime zone to weekday late night and Friday and Saturday night death slots. This means that the cable networks have developed new styles of reality television, targeting younger generations with a high buying power.
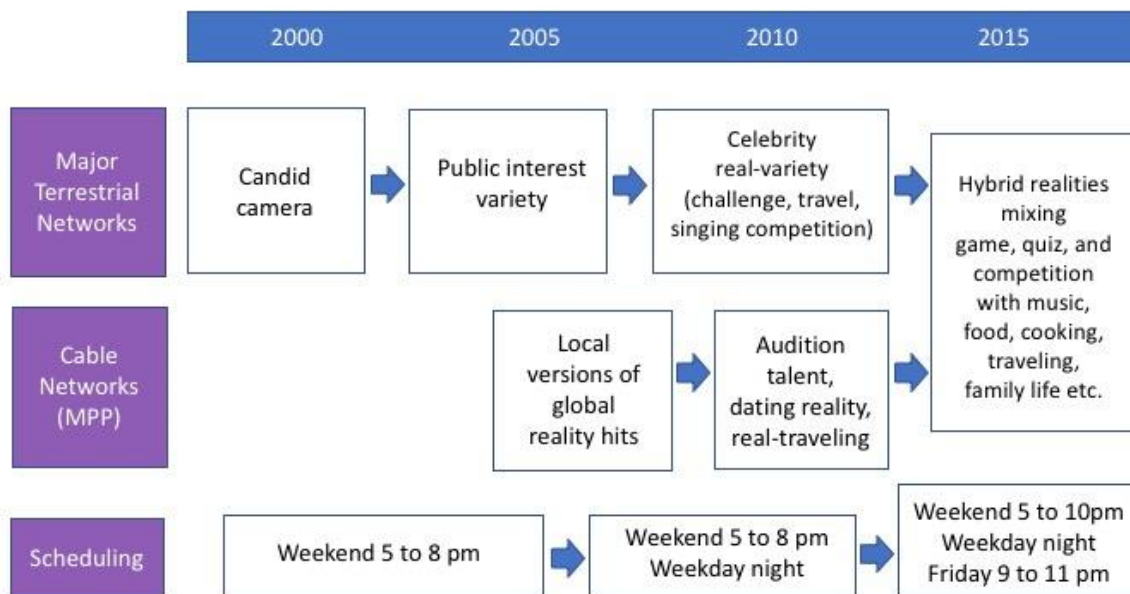
Figure 5 Evolution of Korean Reality Television

Note: Author's construction

As Figure 5 shows, Korean reality television has developed through a unique pathway under the specific conditions and structures of the local television industry. The development aspects of the Korean reality television, which has evolved intensively in a very short period of time, is quite different from the patterns of changes in the Western reality television, which Kavka presents in a broader chronological manner. While Kavka (2012) distinguishes the developmental history of reality television genre in the order of historical precursors, camcorder generation, competition generation, and celebrity generation, these historical distinctions have been blurred and overlapped in the case of Korea. Moreover, the terrestrial networks and cable networks, which have been fighting for hegemony over the local industry, have tried almost all possible attempts to make a new combination with diverse subgenres simultaneously from the late of 2000s. Korean reality television has widened considerably the spectrum of the genre in less than a decade. With a wide range of subgenres and various topics, reality television has played a constant role in bringing innovations and renovations to the dominant celebrity-focused family entertainment shows in the Korean television market.

In the aspect of format development, the interactions with the regional and global television markets have stimulated the format business in the local television industry. At first, Korean broadcasters had little interest and confidence in international format trades. It was not until the early 2000s that Korean television producers recognized the importance of copyrights and no longer imitated Japanese programs. The major networks' official imports of foreign formats were rare and only partial licensing purchases. As a cost-effective strategy, cable channels began to import and adapt global reality television hits from the mid of 2000s. However, the local versions of the global formats have helped the low-profile broadcasters not

only to develop their own production capabilities but also to form an international trading network.

For the major terrestrial networks, the regional market, particularly China, provided a foothold in the international format trades. The Chinese television market, where global formats have been already competing, was one of the best places in which Korean producers learn the global standards of format business and develop innovative reality formats as an emerging player. The format business with China, which began with simple game and quiz show formats, rose phenomenally through reality format trades, and thereby leading to the evolution to the various hybrid formats reflecting the cultural tastes and modernized everyday life of the transnational audiences (See Figure 6).

In addition, the massive transactions with China diversified not only the format trading methods of the local industry, from simple license sales to full-package sales and joint-production contracts, but also the participants of the format trades, from the major terrestrial networks to cable broadcasters and independent production companies. Although the active co-production has resulted in the outflows of talent to China and the government's restrictions on Korean formats, it is undeniable that the co-production projects became a decisive opportunity to develop the capacity and ability of the Korean format industry. The popularity of Korean reality formats in China has attracted the attentions of the foreign broadcasters in Europe, South America and the U.S., as well as East and Southeast Asia. Now, Korean reality formats are being actively developed, produced, and adapted with diverse global partners including the mainstream broadcasters in the U.S. and Europe.
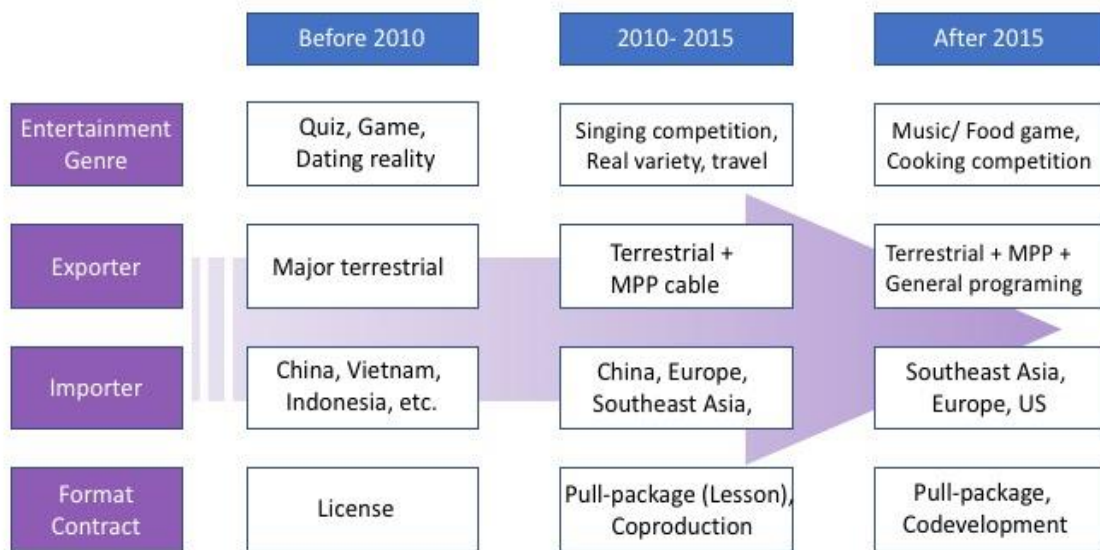
	Before 2010	2010-2015	After 2015
Entertainment Genre	Quiz, Game, Dating reality	Singing competition, Real variety, travel	Music/ Food game, Cooking competition
Exporter	Major terrestrial	Terrestrial + MPP cable	Terrestrial + MPP + General programing
Importer	China, Vietnam, Indonesia, etc.	China, Europe, Southeast Asia,	Southeast Asia, Europe, US
Format Contract	License	Pull-package (Lesson), Coproduction	Pull-package, Codevelopment

Figure 6 Changing Patterns of Korean Entertainment Show Format Exports

Note. Author's construction based on the data from the *2011 Television Content Format Industry Survey* (2011), *A Study on Activation of Format Exports and Localization of Korean Television Format* (2014), *2015 Korean Television Format Import and Export Survey* (2015), *2017 Korean Television Format Import and Export Survey and a Study on Fostering the Format Industry* (2017), *A Study on the Status and Promotion Plan for Television Format Exports* (2018) by Korea Creative Content Agency and *Korean Broadcasting Industry Survey* (2014 to 2017) by Korean Communications Commission

9.2   Rethinking Glocalization: Dynamics of the Local, Regional, and Global

The formation and transformation of the Korean reality television has been progressed with the industrial, social, political and cultural changes in the local, regional, and global television production. The intrinsic association of the local reality television, matching television formats and generic innovations, can be better understood through a broader comprehension of the extrinsic motivations of the local production. As Korean television has been transformed from a periphery to semi-periphery replacing its position in the global television industry, it is also necessary to understand the dynamics between the national, regional and global markets. In

this regard, this study examined the changes in production practices and strategies of the local reality television with various factors and levels. The horizontal and vertical relations and arrangement surrounding the local reality television production gives us the possibility of understanding the inner and outer logic of cultural globalization and vital clues to approach the story of the growth of a periphery industry in the logics.

On the local level, the increasing mobility of television producers was a key to the successful outcomes of the local television content. The introduction of outsourcing policy that the government designed to enhance the competitiveness of the entire local television industry in the 1990s led to the flexible production system which allowed talented personnel dominated by major stations to move freely to new firms. The job movement of the talented and competent television professionals that entailed the transfer of their creative prowess, skills and experiences to other production organizations resulted in the vertical disintegration of the major local networks' production system. The long-term change within the local industry eventually dismantled the hegemony of the major terrestrial networks and contributed to the rapid expansion of new media giants, along with the deregulation and commercialization policies.

With a more microscopic lens, who moved when and where and why is crucial to understand the local context in which the Korean reality shows are produced and transformed. Television producers as cultural intermediaries perform institutionalized and routinized production work that maintains existing social and cultural hierarchies, but at the same time, challenge the aesthetic conventions exerted by the commercial and corporate system with their creative and progressive nature (Negus, 2002, 2006). Thus, eliciting why and how the routines, habits and codes of the local production have been changed and what consequences the changes

have left in the local production culture gives an insight into the relationships between producers, organizations and texts.

Those producers who have moved from the major terrestrial networks to cable networks affiliated to big media conglomerates are mostly middle-level producers and directors with 10- to 15-year production experiences. Since these producers who are in charge of allocating human, material and financial resources are central to the multi-team production system, their movements are inevitably accompanied by a series of the job transfer of the below-the-line workers as well as of writers, directors and cameramen. Notably, these producers, unlike the previous generations, have seldom copied informally or illegally foreign television formats like Japanese shows. They are the first generation to have the confidence in their creative and original shows which have proved to be popular enough in the local and regional market. For these producers, the organizational culture ensuring autonomy for creativity was an important motivation to move to the big cable networks, as much as the high salary. Due to the political intervention of the authoritarian government into television production, the major public stations, which have guaranteed the producers job security and good social reputations has been no longer an attractive workplace. In their new companies, the qualified and skillful producers have realized innovations and renovations not only in their products but also in their working organizations, by introducing season-based production system, hybrid organization of the production teams, and new scheduling strategies. These subtle and unseen changes have operated as a key engine of the constant innovations in the Korean reality television.

On the regional level, the Korean reality television has grown together in the dynamic interplay with the regional partners. As a leading format importer in the Chinese television market, Hunan Satellite TV has opened a door for Korean broadcasters and producers to enter

the Chinese market. The Chinese television company, which impressed the local industry the value of formats by importing copyrights of Taiwanese and Japanese shows for the first time, triggered massive format adaptation and co-production with foreign counterparts (Keane, 2015; Keane & Ma, 2016). Korea became one of the partners, along with the other global format exporters such as the Netherland, UK, the US and Spain. The two Korean reality formats, *I Am Singer* and *Daddy, Where Are We Going?* epitomize the transnational format production and consumption in the Chinese market. The phenomenal success of the two Korean formats set off a trend to localize Korean reality television shows in China.

In addition, the geographic proximity enabled the Korean producers to co-develop and co-produce customized formats to the Chinese market. The strong restrictions of the Chinese government on the excessive reliance on foreign formats also served as a catalyst to further promote collaboration and co-production with Korean partners. The tremendous popularity of the Korean formats in the huge Chinese market validates the success of the local adaptation. Many Korean formats licensed to the regional countries, such as Taiwan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, etc. have helped the local television industries to develop their production capacities and abilities. Along with the prevalent consumption of the Korean Wave, the Korean reality formats have also enriched the wave's impact toward the regional markets.

The enormous Chinese market has presented its neighbors new collaboration opportunities, but at the same time, engulfed the neighbors' human and knowledge capital, thus increasing tensions between the two sides. As the THAAD backlash shows, political issues have the potential to be a deterrent to the transnational collaboration and co-production. Even audiences' nationalist interpretation on apolitical entertainment programs can escalate the tensions in the cross-local collaborations. The fragmented reception of the cross-local audiences

in online streaming television which can reach a much larger audience can work as a detonator for a political controversy.

Thus, the transnational production of Korean reality television should be understood in dynamic relations in the region, where creative talents, advanced technology, and accumulated capital gather together to collaborate and compete for the attentions of "the world's biggest audiences" under the national regulations. The practices and strategies of Korean reality television formats can be a mediator to understand the industrial trajectory of the regional, but globally connected market. As the collection of Keane, Yecies and Flew (2018) point out, the collaboration of regional and global partners in the Chinese media industry resides within a "long game" of the cross-local and cross-regional production in which China plays a key role in driving the globally networked production infrastructure. Therefore, the regional alignment with China is not just cultural regionalization, but indeed a landscape of globalization.

Finally, on the global level, the transnational production and consumption of the Korean reality television is a representative example of the current state of cultural globalization, which is not the process of homogenization and westernization towards hegemonic culture, but rather, glocalization and hybridization going with multidirectional and interactive flows of ideas, talents and capital across the world. Korean television, which used to be a periphery and marginalized industry, have emerged as a newcomer in the global television market in less than a decade through the format business. Its national industrial power and reputation has been built and extended with the formatting practices integrating indigenous cultural conventions and global standards. The regional counterparts and global networks have helped the transnational distribution of the Korean reality formats.

Television format itself has inherent mobility and transnationality as a traveling commodity. Since it moves across national borders and different organizational and professional settings, it is designed as a cultural container that can be differently translated according to the adapting and receiving end. Thus, television formats have a hybrid nature that dissolves the original source into various streams of practices, organizational settings and markets. Although the concept of television format was initially developed as a new business for the global trades of the intellectual property of the major media conglomerates, the global trading system has involved the local broadcasters as a player creating hybrid cultures drawn from different locales. Through global format business, many previous isolated industries such as Denmark, Sweden, Turkey, Israel, Colombia and South Korea have distributed their formats regionally and globally. The current diverging and decentralizing process of global television markets led by the newly developed industries rooted in a traditionally non-central media sphere complicates the center-periphery model of global cultural flows (Shahaf, 2016).

From the economic perspective, however, it is also evident that the complexity of format production operates within asymmetrical and unequal power structures of the global trading system. As Chalaby (2015) points out, in the whole process of television format production – i.e., locally created, globally circulated, and again locally adapted process, local producers and independent firms have a certain degree of independence, whereas a small number of big buyers like super-indie groups affiliated to Hollywood studios ultimately controls and benefits most from their transactions with their purchasing power. The unequal structure often generates vertical integration among local producers, indie production firms, broadcasters, and global media giants. The global format commodity chain represents the converging and centralizing dimension of hegemonic media industries.

Therefore, the process of global format production should be considered in the dual tendency of glocalization – centripetal forces (localization or nationalization) and centrifugal forces (globalization or regionalization) operate simultaneously – as the dynamics in the local, regional, and global television industry. The cultural hybridity and transnationality of television formats are neither confined to local/ national nor to regional/global, but rather occur at the numerous points and moments in which each agent contact with each other in the circuit of culture. Exploring the contradictory and intertwined relations between geocultural and geolinguistic conditions and political structures across the local, regional, and global is the key to understanding the implications of particular cultural modes of television industries.

9.3   Significance and Limitation

This dissertation has discussed transnational production process of Korean reality television shows in the globally connected production networks. While the existing studies of television formats usually concentrate on diverse practices in the localization of globally circulated formats in terms of production, adaptation and consumption, they fail to explain how and why a previously marginalized television industry has emerged as a new player in the global television markets beyond the local and regional borders. Specifically, the remarkable transnational practices of the Korean format industry challenge the global dominant flow of American-Euro-centric television industry. Rather than understanding the relationship between the local and the global and between producers and the power structure of television industry in the opposite composition of 'center-periphery' and 'control-resist,' this study stressed more on the diversity and dynamics of each agent, which operates in the confrontation.

In order to discuss the growing hybridization of the local television formats, this study explored cultural globalization theories, media industry studies, and television format and genre

studies. Focusing on the interrelationship between the local, regional and global television industry and between production practices, organization and television genre, this study historically and empirically examined the development of Korean reality television formats and its cultural and industrial implications. Through in-depth interviews with the local producers and historical approach on the long-term transformation of Korean entertainment show genre, this dissertation provides more detailed and comprehensive analysis of globalization of the Korean reality television formats and a rich and holistic account of complex and dynamic global television production.

Since this study contains a variety of topics and examples across the local television history, it was a challenging task to find a systemic way to synthesize research on the formation and transformation of the Korean reality shows in relation to the global television format phenomena. Moreover, television itself is a linkage of technology, institution, industry, text, and audience as a whole. The complicate and interrelated dimensions of television inevitably led to the distractions in this study. Further limitations involve research methodology. Like the general limitations of interview-centered research, this study relied on the interpretations of the interviewees on their production practices, relations and meanings because of the limited access to the production sites. Although the author tried to objectify the actual state of the production with statistics and industrial data, there is possibility of biased data collection and interpretation that might misrepresent the unseen field of television production. The lack of previous study was also one of the limitations this study encountered. Since there has been little academic research and argument about the genre and format of the Korean reality television, this research partly depended on news articles and industrial reports regarding the local television programs. To minimize these limitations, the study was obliged to choose a discursive and descriptive narrative

style. However, the discursive and descriptive approach, hopefully and probably, better reveals the position and condition at which the Korean reality television is located in the local, regional and global context.

The globalization of Korean reality television is an ongoing process. Accordingly, this dissertation is a beginning, not an end of study about the cultural trend. Further research will be more focused on the increasing mobility of the production sites, in which more vulnerable television workers bear a growing burden of the risk, such as self-employment, project-based organizational culture, and subcontracting structure. Particularly, in the geographically and geoculturally marginalized industry, how the workers are minimizing the risk of labor flexibility and mobility and establishing their relationships with other players across the local and reginal industries is required to understand the invisible cultural economy of the global television production. Additionally, future research projects on Korean reality formats should take into consideration textual attractions in the digital era. It can include how the audience with different cultural background and identity feel and share the cultural sentiment of Korean reality television and what implications the transnational consumption generates in the global television flows. In relation to the reality genre and style, how the specific forms and content produced by the local industry impact on global television aesthetics will help unearth the interrelationships between cultural economic activities and aesthetic production and between global ideology and cultural tastes in everyday life in this more closely connected world.

On behalf of a concluding remark, the author hope that this dissertation contributes to understanding theoretically, historically and practically the relationships among producers, texts, technology, industry, and politics in the transnational production of Korean reality television formats. As Anna Cristina Pertierra and Greame Turner claim that "there is no 'text' of television

without a context, and it has no meaning to be defined without understanding the social

circumstance in which television exists" (2012, p. 5), television should be analyzed from diverse

angles and approaches encompassing historical and locational contexts. This is a key sentence

that account for an essential logic of locally formatted and globally adapted television formats.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Format Trades of Korean Television Industry from 2000

Appendix A.1 Foreign Television Formats Imported to Korea from 2000

Year	Importer	Division	Title	Genre/ Format	Exporter
2002	MBC	Terrestrial	Brain Survivor	Game	Japan
2002	SBS	Terrestrial	Solomon's Choice (Original: Metrix Legal Counselor)	Info-tainment	Japan
2003	SBS	Terrestrial	Judge! Which Dish is Better? (Original: Dotch Cooking Show)	Info-tainment	Japan
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Super Viking (Original: Viking, The Ultimate Obstacle Course)	Variety (Game)	Japan
2006	tvN	Cable	Yes or No (Original: Deal or No Deal)	Game	Netherlands
2007	SBS	Terrestrial	'Brain Wall' in Burst! Mental Concentration (Original: Thanks to the people from Tunnels)	Variety (Game)	Japan
2007	SBS	Terrestrial	Quiz on Your Hunch (Original: Quiz Hexagon)	Quiz	Japan
2007	KBS	Terrestrial	1:100	Quiz	Netherlands
2008	MBC	Terrestrial	Brain Battle (Original: Nep League)	Quiz	Japan
2008	OnStyle	Cable	Project Runway Korea	Reality	US
2009	MBC Every1	Cable	Perfect Bride Korea	Game	Turkey
2009	QTV	Cable	Moment of Truth Korea (Original: Nothing More Than Truth)	Game	Columbia
2009	QTV	Cable	Mom vs. Mom, Change Your Mom (Original: Wife Swap)	Reality	UK
2009	QTV	Cable	Love Taxi Korea	Reality date	UK
2009	QTV	Cable	Ranking Women (Original: London Hearts)	Variety	Japan
2010	tvN	Cable	Love Switch (Original: Take Me Out)	Date game	Australia
2010	tvN	Cable	'Silent Library' section in Neverland	Variety	Japan

			(Original: Silent Library in Downtown's This Is No Task for Kids!)		
2010	tvN	Cable	'A Happy Life' in Neverland (Original: Benidorm Bastards)	Variety	Belgium
2010	tvN	Cable	Triangle (Original: Divided)	Quiz	Netherlands
2010	OnStyle	Cable	Korea's Next Top Model	Reality	US
2011	MBC	Terrestrial	Dancing with the Star (Original: Strictly Come Dancing)	Celebrity dancing competition	UK
2011	MBC	Terrestrial	'Minor Challenge' in 60 sec (Original: Minute to Win It)	Quiz	US
2011	MBC Every1	Cable	Dancing Story (Original: Spin-off of Strictly Come Dancing)	Game	UK
2011	MBC Every1	Cable	My Man Can Korea	Reality Game	Germany
2011	tvN	Cable	Korea Got Talent (Original: Got Talent)	Talent	UK
2011	tvN	Cable	Opera Star 2011 (Original: Pop Star to Opera Star)	Talent	UK
2011	tvN	Cable	Saturday Night Live Korea	variety	US
2011	XTM	Cable	Top Gear Korea	Docu-magazine	UK
2011	QTV	Cable	Super Nanny Korea	Reality Solution	UK
2012	QTV	Cable	Diamond Girl (Original: London Hearts)	Make-over Talk	Japan
2012	QTV	Cable	Ten Minute Box	Ranking game	
2012	M-net	Cable	The Voice of Korea	Talent	Nether-lands
2012	Olive	Cable	MasterChef Korea	Cooking competition	US
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	Star Diving Show, Splash (Original: Splash!)	Talent	UK
2013	tvN	Cable	The Phone Korea	Reality	Nether-lands
2013	tvN	Cable	Quiz Show, Millionaire (Original: Who Wants to be a Millionaire?)	Quiz	UK
2014	tvN	Cable	Come on Baby (Original: Bet on Your Baby)	Game	US
2014	JTBC	Cable	Big Star's Little Star	Game	UK

Appendix A.2 Korean Television Formats exported to Overseas from 2000

Year	Exporter	Division	Title	Genre/Format	Importer (year)
2003	KBS	Terrestrial	The Golden Bell Challenge	Quiz	China, Vietnam ('05, '08)
2004	MBC	Terrestrial	Love House	Renovation reality	China
2006	MBC	Terrestrial	Match Made in Heaven	Dating variety	China
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Truth or Dare!	Game	Indonesia
2006	SBS	Terrestrial	Match, Reverse Drama in Good Sunday	Two mini-drama's competition	China, Indonesia ('07)
2009	KBS	Terrestrial	Global Talk Show: Beauties' Chatterbox	Talk	China, Vietnam
2009	KBS	Terrestrial	Vitamin	Health infotainment	China, Vietnam
2009	KBS	Terrestrial	'Friends' in Happy Together	Game	Japan, Taiwan
2009	M-net	Cable	Love Fighter	Reality	UK
2009	M-net	Cable	Trace, X-boyfriend	Reality	US
2010	MBC	Terrestrial	We Got Married	Real variety	Turkey ('10,'11) China ('13)
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	'Dangerous Invitation' in Super TV Funny Suday	Horror Talk	China
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	Fly Away! Shootdori	Reality	Vietnam
2011	KBS	Terrestrial	Emergency Escape Number 1	Infotainment	China
2012	KBS	Terrestrial	Youth Singo	Reality	Vietnam
2012	TvN	Cable	Super Diva	Singing competition	China, Columbia('13), Argentina('13), Mexico ('13)
2013	KBS	Terrestrial	2 Nights 1 Day in Happy Sunday	Real variety	China
2013	KBS	Terrestrial	Immortal Song	Singing competition	China
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	I Am a Singer	Singing competition	China
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	Dad, Where Are We Going?	Real traveling	China ('13, '15, '17)
2013	MBC	Terrestrial	Perfect Combo	Quiz	Turkey
2013	SBS	Terrestrial	Star Beauty Show	Infotainment	Cambodia

2013	SBS	Terrestrial	Miracle Audition	Talent	China
2013	TvN	Cable	The Genius	Game	Netherland, France ('14), UK ('14)
2013	TvN	Cable	The Romantic	Dating variety	China
2013	TvN	Cable	Three Idiots	Variety	Netherland
2013	JTBC	Cable	Great In-Laws	Real experience	China
2014	KBS	Terrestrial	The Return of Superman	Real variety	China US ('16) Thailand ('17)
2014	KBS	Terrestrial	Gag Concert	Standing comedy	China, Turkey ('15)
2014	MBC	Terrestrial	Real Men	Real military experience	China
2014	SBS	Terrestrial	K-Pop Star	Talent	China
2014	SBS	Terrestrial	Running Man	Urban action variety	China
2014	TvN	Cable	Grandpas Over Flowers	Real traveling	China, US, Germany ('14), France, Italia Finland, Denmark, Australia, ('15) Turkey('15, '16) Ukraine ('17)
2014	JTBC	Cable	Hidden Singer	Music game	China, Turkey ('14), Thailand ('15), Vietnam ('16), Italia ('17)
2014	JTBC	Cable	Off to School	Real variety	China
2014	MBC every1	Cable	A Celebrity Lives in Our House	Reality	China
2014	Olive	Cable	Crazy Market	Food quiz	US, Italia
2015	KBS	Terrestrial	The King of Food	Food quiz	Vietnam ('15, '16)
2015	KBS	Terrestrial	Let's Go, Dream Team	Variety	China, Thailand
2015	MBC	Terrestrial	Infinite Challenge	Real variety	China ('15, '16)
2015	MBC	Terrestrial	King of Mask Singer	Singing competition	China ('15) Thailand, Cambodia, Philippine, Italia, India ('16), Indonesia,

					US, Vietnam, ('17)
2015	TvN	Cable	Sisters Over Flowers	Real traveling	China
2015	TvN	Cable	Whales War	Cooking competition	US, Canada
2015	TvN	Cable	Let's Go, Time Expedition	History reality	China, France
2015	JTBC	Cable	Non Summit	Talk	China ('15), Turkey('17)
2015	JTBC	Cable	Please Take Care of My Refrigerator	Cooking competition	China ('15, '16, '17)
2015	M-net	Cable	Super Star K	Talent	China
2015	M-net	Cable	I Can See Your Voice	Music game	China ('15), Bulgaria, Vietnam, Thailand ('16), Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippine, Cambodia ('17)
2015	XTM	Cable	The Bunker	Car infotainment	US
2016	SBS	Terrestrial	Fantastic Duo	Singing competition	Spain
2016	JTBC	Cable	Crime Scene	Game	China ('16, '17)
2016	M-net	Cable	Produce 101	Talent	China
2016	StoryOn O-tvN	Cable	Let Me Beautiful	Makeover	Thailand ('16, '17)
2017	MBC	Terrestrial	My Little Television	Variety	Thailand
2017	MBC	Terrestrial	The Game with No Name	Game	US
2017	JTBC	Cable	Solo Wars	Variety	China
2017	M-net	Cable	We Kid	Singing competition	Thailand
2017	Coen	Independent production firm	Who's Your Mom?	Date game	Thailand

Appendix B Questions for Korean Television Entertainment Producers

1. Would you briefly explain about your job in the TV station?

2. How long have you worked in this job?

3. What are your representative programs?

4. What program are you now involved in directing, producing, or managing?

5. Would you explain about a normal production procedure of your program?

6. How much are you pressured by program ratings?

7. Do you agree that audiences' power has increased recently? If so, when and how do you perceive about it?

8. Does your station adopt incentive programs for the highest-viewed program? If so, would you introduce the incentive programs?

9. Do you agree that the Korean Wave phenomenon have grown since the mid-1990s? In what aspects has the cultural phenomenon impacted your programs?

10. I'm sure that you must be familiar with the global popularity of "reality television." Do you think that the craze of "reality television" has influenced your program production? In what ways?

11. In recent years, many Korean entertainment TV formats have been exported to overseas markets. Comparing to your past production experience, what changed the most?

12. When you design a new program, what point do you focus on?

13. When you develop a new program, do you consult foreign programs or formats? How do you access the programs?

14. Have you ever involved in importation or exportation of television formats? Can you explain what things you have experienced in the process?

15. Have you ever involved in adaptation or co-production of your program with Chinese or foreign producers? Can you explain what thing you have experienced in the process?

16. There are many online video sharing sites such as YouTube, Youku, Tudou, Dramafever etc. Do you agree that these sites influence your production? If so, in what way?

17. Do you tend to involve audiences' activities in your program? If so, why and how do you design the program promoting audiences' participation (directly, indirectly)?

18. In your station, do you have a specific strategy targeted global audiences? Do you discuss with sales managers to promote your programs in overseas markets? If so, what do you focus on?

19. Is the Korean language or specific Korean daily culture in your TV programs an obstacle to trade them to the overseas market or not?

20. Media platforms have been diversified. I knew your station also run terrestrial, satellite, and cable channels and internet and mobile platforms. Do you adopt a production strategy for developing 'one-source-multi-use' content?

21. Do you think that Korean TV programs or formats are competitive enough to sell in the global market compared to Western counterparts? If so, what are critical success factors?

22. If you should evaluate the competitiveness of Korean entertainment television format based on your working experience, is the exportation of Korean formats a success, a timely event, or not significant at all? Why?

23. What do you expect is the future of Korean television format industry?

- End of Questions -

Your age? (i.e., 30's):

Your company and department?: