



Activity n°19: Parody yourself!

Production
European encounter

Key words: *Production / Humour / Stereotypes*



Target groups:

- Journalism students
- Professional journalists
- Other media professionals
- Media literacy trainers

Duration: 5 to 6 hours
spread over several sessions.

Context: The challenge of parody is to mimic what someone says or how they say it in a way that makes fun of them. Participants in this fun production activity are challenged to apply parody to their own stereotypes or to those of a group to which they belong.

Objectives:

- **To work on stereotypes and clichés**
- **To develop self-criticism and shift opinions**
- **To acquire or rediscover the art of parody**

Equipment:

- Flipchart or similar sheets and marker pens.
- Production equipment as required (cameras, camcorders, mobile phones, computers with Internet access, etc).
- Projection equipment (e.g. computer and projector).

Media Resources: A selected parody of an advertisement or a series which highlights the characteristic features of this media genre (perhaps from a website hosting on-line videos).

Observations: To develop the editorial and technical aspects and the production phase, this activity may be divided into several sessions over a period of time. Clear guidelines on the expected outcome (duration, context, etc) will facilitate the production phase.

Organisation:

| Class configuration | Time in minutes | Sequence of activities |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| GR | 15' | Introduce the activity by distributing the selected parody and inviting participants to observe the major mechanisms of the parody genre. |
| GR | 15' | Collectively identify the key elements observed (e.g. inversion, exaggeration, accentuation, multiplication, anachronism, spatio-temporal transfers, contrasts, jokes, puns, etc) and define the genre and what it seeks to achieve. |
| PRS | 10' | In sub-groups, select a feature common to the participants which will be the focus of stereotyped verbal treatment (nationality, gender, physique, etc). |
| PRS | 3 hours | Perform a parody, instructing participants to highlight the most frequently-used stereotypes relating to the chosen aspect of diversity. |
| GR | 1h | Disseminate the outcomes. |
| GR | 30' | Organise a discussion of the roles and uses of stereotypes in the representation of different groups and cultures, etc. |
| GR | 15' | Conclude and debrief about the “decentring” process that may have been necessary for the self-criticism of participants’ and the group’s own representations. |

Variants: Participants’ productions could also be considered in comparison to professional media outputs produced on the same theme. The aim would then be to analyse how stereotypes related to diversity issues are either parodied or not. For media education purposes, this activity could be organised with groups who do not feature much in the media, such as youngsters, immigrants, etc. This would enable them to express their own views about others’ representations of them.

Suggested follow-up activities:

This is the final activity of the **Stereotypes and representations** Unit.

Using games and humour Unit: Activity n°17. *Let's play like in a newsroom!*