A genre approach to goals and their implementation applied to a TV programme for the Virginia Farming Community

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Abstract

In this article we have analysed a television programme, *Down Home Virginia*, addressed to farmers and the general public in the state of Virginia, USA from a genre studies perspective. *Down Home Virginia* constitutes a mixed or hybrid genre (Bhatia, 2002) which combines news, entertainment and the promotion of agricultural products. We have centred on the diverse goals pursued in the programme and how they are implemented. We have divided the concept of goal into several separate but related notions: overt/covert and strategic/tactical. We have focused our analysis on the implementation of the goals of the programme through music and images, voices and accents, stereotypical images, and popularized specialist discourse (Calsamiglia & van Dijk, 2004; Myers, 2003, *inter alia*). Through our analysis we hope to have contributed to genre studies, especially to discovering some of the differences between specialized and popularized genres.

Key words: discourse analysis, genre studies, overt/covert goals and strategic/tactical goals, popularization of discourse, media discourse

Resumen

Una aproximación a la implementación de objetivos en un programa de televisión para la Comunidad Agrícola de Virginia desde la perspectiva de los estudios de género

En este artículo hemos analizado un programa de televisión, *Down Home Virginia,* dirigido a agricultores y al público en general en el estado de Virginia, EEUU, desde la perspectiva de los estudios de género. *Down Home Virginia* constituye un género mixto o híbrido (Bhatia, 2002) con un espacio informativo sobre noticias relevantes para la comunidad

agrícola, secciones de entretenimiento y todo ello mientras se promueven productos agrícolas del estado de Virginia. En este artículo nos hemos centrado en identificar los distintos objetivos perseguidos en el programa y en cómo se implementan a través de música e imágenes, voces y acentos, imágenes estereotipadas, así como en la popularización del discurso especializado (Calsamiglia & van Dijk, 2004; Myers, 2003, *inter alia*). Para ello diferenciamos entre objetivos encubiertos y/o explícitos y entre objetivos tácticos y/o estratégicos. Por medio de nuestro análisis esperamos haber contribuido a los estudios de género, especialmente en la tarea de descubrir algunas de las diferencias entre géneros especializados y divulgativos.

Palabras clave: análisis del discurso, estudios de género, objetivos encubiertos/explícitos, objetivos tácticos/estratégicos, popularización del discurso, discurso en los medios de comunicación

1. Introduction

In this article we have carried out the analysis of a television programme aimed at farmers and the general public, *Down Home Virginia* [henceforth DHV], which combines news on agriculture and related subjects, entertainment, education and the promotion of products from the state of Virginia in the United States. We believe that the analysis of a programme like DHV, aimed at non-specialist viewers, is a necessary contribution to genre studies not only because it sheds light on this genre's essential characteristics, i.e., what makes it distinct from all other genres, but also because it brings up the question of exactly what separates it and other genres designed for a lay audience from the specialized genres they bear a tenuous resemble to at the level of content matter. Our basic view of genre is informed by Hasan (1978) and later work by Martin (1992); Downing (1996); Johns (1997) without forgetting the work of, among others, Biber (1988, 1995) and Swales (1990). We see at least three different levels operating in a genre. The first is extra-linguistic, i.e., the purpose or goal of the activity. The second is context which offers, simultaneously, ready-made language and constraints on the kind of language to be used. The third is the actual language used. Although we will be looking at other levels, in this article we have concentrated our efforts on goals and their implementation.

We believe that goals (Pennock Speck, 2000: 12) are an essential prerequisite of any genre and exist before the instantiation of a text or discourse: "[c]arrying out a goal means that the language producer must focus on those plans or courses of action, verbal or otherwise, that are needed to carry out his or her purpose." Furthermore, we hypothesize that "we often map our goals onto particular rhetorical and verbal strategies" (Pennock Speck, 2000: 12) and these strategies are what we are interested

in here, or as Johns (1997: 25) puts it, "[…] purpose interacts with features of text at every discourse level." Our initial premise is that specialist and non-specialist genres, as is the case with other levels, will differ with respect to goals.

If we take scientific articles found in scholarly journals we can see that they are relatively homogenous in that they have a series of closely interrelated goals such as "the dissemination of knowledge, the publicisation of claims, and their ratification" (Koutsantoni, 2004: 164). They are also clearly directed at a small, select public of scientists and researchers. DHV, on the other hand, is a "[m]ixed or hybrid" genre (Bhatia, 2002: 11) with several quite distinct goals. It is our main purpose to lay bare DHV's goals or "communicative purposes" (Bhatia, 2002: 11) and to delve into the way it achieves them by looking not just at content but at how the content is delivered. In this sense we agree with Martin (1985) that genre should be concerned primarily with how things get done through language (cf. Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1997).

2. The structure of DHV

To understand fully the diverse goals of DHV we need to look at the segments that it is made up of, which can be roughly described as informative, educational and promotional. DHV is broadcast monthly and has a fairly rigid structure allowing for little variation from programme to programme. Taking the December 2004 programme as an example, the goal of the first segment, brought by "Farm Bureau Virginia/The voice of Virginia's Agricultural Producers," is to inform the viewers on agricultural or issues related to agriculture. The main topics are: "Shortage of Rural Doctors," "Century Farm Honors Programme," the "Adam Harvest Fund for the Hungry," and the report on "The Capitol Holiday Tree."

The following segments the "Health Minute," and "the ABC of Agriculture with 'J is for Juice,'" addressed to the children on the farm, combine education and the promotion of farming produce. Next comes another news slot, the "Virginia Climate Advisory" section with Doctor Patrick Michaels and his concern for cold winters and the cost of heating the house. The programme continues with an entertainment oriented segment: "Chef Maxwell's Kitchen," featuring a pumpkin recipe for the holiday season sponsored by the Department of Agriculture. This is followed by a commercial break starting with an ad brought by "Green Top Sporting Goods," where donations for Hungry People are encouraged by a group called "Hunters for the Hungry." Another commercial sponsored by "homefood.safety.org" offers health and fitness tips such as "Take a small step to get healthy" and "5-a-day, the color day."

After this, follows another segment whose main goal is to entertain the audience with tips on decorating holiday trees and the house in a section called "In the Garden" presented by Andre Viette sponsored by Health Care Consultants who offer health insurance. Finally, the programme is rounded up with a news report on Hanoverian Horses raised on Virginia farms, combining a short history of these animals, their market value and their relationship to the state of Virginia. Overall, the programme is skewed towards the entertainment end of the information-entertainment continuum. Every DHV programme, judging from the ten we have analyzed from November 2004 to September 2005, has the same basic structure and, in the case of the TV commercials that appear on DHV, they are repeated month after month.

3. Goals: Covert and overt/tactical and strategic

On analyzing DHV we became aware that the concept of "goal" needed to be refined to explicate the relationship between the producers' goals and their implementation. We therefore divided the notion of goal along two axes: overt and covert goals, on the one hand, and tactical and strategic, on the other. We distinguish between overt and covert goals based on whether they are made explicit to an audience or are left implicit or concealed from them. The overt goals of DHV are clearly stated by Bruce L. Hiatt, President of Virginia Farm Bureau [henceforth VFB]:

> On 'Down Home Virginia,' our 30-minute monthly television program, we are striving to bring to viewers important agricultural perspectives, education and entertainment. (www.vafb.com/opinions/2003/op_7_03.htm)

Covert goals, on the other hand, are not set out quite so clearly; more often than not they are hidden from readers, listeners or viewers or else require a large amount of processing effort to be uncovered. Our principal premise is that VFB, like all other organizations, has one overarching goal that is never mentioned: self-perpetuation.

To justify its existence VFB needs not only to do what it was designed for, but has to be seen to be doing it. In this sense DHV is the perfect tool to carry out the task of legitimizing the VFB. After all, it was created and is financed by the VFB itself. As its mouthpiece, DHV becomes the instrument of VFB's covert goal of self-justification. Barry and Elmes (1997: 8) give a clear example of how organizations such as NGOs invest a lot of time and effort in justifying their existence:

> Legitimacy refers to the extent to which an organization searches for justification for its existence from its environment, whereas accountability refers to the extent to

> which an organization is publicly required to justify its actions to its environment. In general, legitimacy has taken priority over accountability because NGOs, in order to survive, are selective about the constituents to whom they justify their work: Consequently, they spend more time and energy justifying their work to transnational funding networks, ignoring larger questions of their relevance to, and the needs and priorities of, their local constituents.

Strictly speaking, the goals we have mentioned above, both overt and covert, are extra-linguistic, that is, they are not linguistically encoded; however they do make up the context within which other goals, which *are* linguistically coded, are carried out. Evered (1983), Deetz and Mumby (1984), Wetherell and Maybin (1996), and Musson and Tietze (2004: 1308), among others, hold the view that reality is a social construction which is built to a large extent through discourse.

This brings us to tactical and strategic goals. By tactical we mean goals that seek to facilitate DHV's real or strategic purposes. For example, it needs to be entertaining or, to put it bluntly, no-one will watch it. However, in a programme such as DHV, entertainment is a means to an end not an end in itself. The producers of the programme want to reach as large an audience as possible to satisfy the overt goals expressed in the presidential manifesto above and, at the same time, to participate in keeping the VFB viable. These are the strategic goals.

Another tactical goal which pursues the same strategic goals as the ones above appeals to the audience on an ideological level in van Dijk's (1995: 115) sense in which "ideologies are conceived of as the basis of the social representations shared by (the members of) a group." DHV has to connect with the social representations shared by the viewing public, the farmers and their families, i.e., to identify with and reflect the values of the farming community. These values are embodied in a certain lifestyle, which is felt by farmers to be unique and worthy of preservation: the central role of the family and the need to make a living while remaining independent.

This modern day view of the farming community is still based largely on the American agrarian myth initiated by Thomas Jefferson in which "the yeoman farmer is characterized by the small independent farmer who works the land with his family and who enjoys a wholesome lifestyle in harmony with nature" (Brown, 2004: 279). Although this is a simplified and even erroneous view of farming (cf. Hurt, 1994) it is one that has become rooted in the American psyche. Moreover, as we will see, it is a myth which is exploited at length in the programme.

The description of DHV on the Farm Bureau (VFB) web page clearly reflects these values which can be seen in the focus on the economy and the family, two of the main concerns in this sector:

> Look for the new Virginia Farm Bureau program, *Down Home Virginia*. The half-hour cable program is geared toward consumers and families in Virginia and focuses on both agriculture news and family-oriented stories. The show also offers cooking and gardening segments that feature products from Virginia.

More recently, the desire to conserve the environment (Maybery et al., 2005: 69) has been assimilated into the value system of the farming community to promote a positive self-image (Tajfel, 1982). The segments in DHV reflect this tendency by highlighting farmers' more environment friendly approach (cf. DHV Feb. 2005: cleaning up Chesapeake Bay). By foregrounding what is positive, farmers offset their rather negative image among the general public, which includes the maintenance of traditions such as hunting.

So the tactical goals described above contribute to attaining the strategic goal of strengthening what is positive in the farming community, fostering a sense of belonging to the State of Virginia and the promotion and purchase of local farming produce among the farming community –and of course, ultimately, making a positive contribution to the public face of the VFB.

We believe that most tactical goals, although not explicitly stated, are not covert in the sense that they can be readily inferred by the audience. Thus, most of the viewers will be aware that making the programme entertaining is to get them to watch it. We also think that some strategic goals are overt like the promotion of Virginia products (i.e. sections sponsored by *Virginia Grown*), or are easily inferred, such as the goal of improving the farmers' self-image implemented in many sections of every programme while others are covert, or, at least, not so obvious. In other words tactical and strategic goals and covert and overt goals are not completely co-extensive.

In any genre, tactical and strategic goals are often intertwined, i.e., connecting with the farming community through idyllic images of beautiful centennial farms, healthy farm animals and ripe crops is a tactical goal which at the same time strengthens the community's positive self-image and self-esteem, which is a strategic goal. We will be looking at ways in which both the tactical and strategic goals are achieved in the sections that follow.

3.1. Implementation of goals through images, music and familiar voices

DHV uses a whole range of tools to carry out the goals, both tactical and strategic, mentioned above. In this section we will consider images, music and voices. It is impossible to really separate these as what the programme's producers attempt to do is build up what might be called an atmosphere. We will start with images and music as,

although voices are like music from a physical perspective, they do have a paralinguistic and linguistic dimension.

Music, images and the sound of voices appeal to the emotions on a sub-conscious level and create a certain state of mind which predisposes viewers favourably to the information they are being presented with. Freedman et al. (2004: 35) affirm that music and images provoke diverse responses in an indirect way while Hung (2001) found that changes in the music in TV ads caused different perceptions of meanings.

We do not have the space here to analyze the whole programme but we think the following brief analysis of the opening credits will suffice to exemplify how images, combined with music, achieve the effects desired by DHV's producers. The title of the programme itself contains a colloquial Southern phrase *down home* which resonates with images of family, home and regional allegiance. The country and western theme music heard in the background is also a characteristic of the folklore of this state and the whole of the South. The song, *Virginia,* a patriotic eulogy, is played by Page Wilson, a country and western artist: "Home will always be Virginia between the Blue Ridge and the Chesapeake Bay. I will always be Virginian, born free to live out my days." The title is shown over a patchwork quilt which is a quintessential piece of rural americana.

Figure 1. Opening Credits.

After the title we are shown the amiable and stereotypical image of John Chef Maxwell, in charge of the *Down Home Virginia Kitchen* section, an image of the resident gardener, and an ABC that stands for the *ABC of Agriculture* slot, introduced by "Professor" Brad Lowery. All in all, the very beginning of the show sets the style for the rest of the programme by promoting a feeling of belonging to the rural way of life in the state of Virginia. It is a style which could be described as "laid back," which is also stereotypically Southern. The familiar images of the countryside, which evoke life in the state of Virginia right at the very beginning of the programme also serve the purpose of connecting with its target viewers.

Like the music and images throughout the programme, the voices of the participants on DHV are part and parcel of the colloquial, friendly delivery of information which fit in with its goals. Voice, that is, the physical substance of verbal communication, as opposed to the actual content, has rarely been analyzed in oral genres as if one's accent, tone of voice and intonational patterns were not part of the process of communication and did not supply the listener with any information whatsoever. Lyons (1979: 33 vol. 1) distinguishes between information that is deliberately conveyed, which he calls "communicative" and information conveyed unintentionally which he terms "informative." It has often been remarked upon (cf. Quirk, 1968; Giles & Powesland, 1975; Honey, 1989) that information is supplied to listeners unintentionally through people's accents, especially regionally and class information, and this is true of the voices in DHV. However, we believe that the accents in the programme are "communicative" in the sense espoused by Lyons (1979) in that just like a choice of set or lighting, the producers of the programme undoubtedly picked the programme's anchors and other regulars based on their voices, which is a case of deliberate manipulation. So, although the anchors and other speakers on the programme do not deliberately manipulate their voices in any significant way during the programme, the choice of voices and accents on the DHV is planned beforehand as part of the design of the programme.

Both the anchors in DHV, Sherri McKinney and Norm Hyde have fairly standard accents. Sherri is from southern West Virginia while Norm is from Philadelphia. Standard accents have been predominant in news programmes both in the UK and the USA up to very recently and are known to inspire in listeners a sense of institutionalized authority and other favourable characteristics (Labov, 1972; Lambert, 1972; Tsalikis et al., 1991). Another thing that sets the anchors apart from the rest of the participants in the programme is that they have "air" voices [personal communication], that is, voices trained over years of presenting radio and television. Part of this training is not only to rid the speakers of too much of a regional accent, but also to help perfect their delivery. The clues as to the anchors' geographical

accent are thus outweighed by those of education and professional training. That is, the overall impression of the presenters' voices is that they belong to people who are college educated, middle class and articulate.

We believe that there is enough evidence in the programme to suggest that the diverse palette of accents, both geographical and social, of all of those who appear in DHV is in no way arbitrary. The inclusion of a wide range of accents that go from standard to non-standard seems to be a deliberate tactic on the part of the producers. Sherri [personal communication] informed us that the regulars on the show are a "mixed bag" and this can be heard in their accents. Andre Viette, the gardening expert, has an easily recognizable Long Island accent signaled by lack of post-vocalic 'r' as in *large* /laːdʒ/ and *store* /stɔə/. Chef Maxwell is the only native of Virginia itself, to be exact, from Richmond, and this is quite noticeable in his pronunciation, while Doctor Pat Michaels hails from a rural area near Chicago but describes his voice as mid-west [i.e., standard American] with "a strong mix of the softer Virginia inflections" [personal communication]. We do not know "Professor" Brad Lowery's geographical origin. However, in contrast with the other regulars on the show, he has a very broad accent. With regard to suprasegmental features, the southern drawl is noticeable throughout his segment "'N' is for Nuts" and his pronunciation is more colloquial than Norm's or Sherri's. For example, he pronounces *county* with a long "n" (alveolar nasal) instead of 'n' followed by a flapped 't' and he also pronounces words with the MOUTH diphthong (Wells, 1982) as /əʊ/ in the words *about* and *south*. Lowery may be a speaker of Tidewater English, an archaic dialect found in a coastal area of Virginia. This would fit the image of an amiable old gentleman "who provides light-but-educational lessons" (www.vafb.com/opinions/2003/op_7_03.htm).

Apart from the regular contributors to the programme, the scientists and other experts who appear in several sections of the programme generally have mainstream accents while other participants tend towards broader regional varieties.

To shed light on why the programme features several accents Holmes's (1992: 347) distinction between *overt* and *covert* prestige is a useful one. She asserts that overt prestige is found in an accent which is "overtly admired and accepted as a model of good/correct speech by the speech community as a whole" while covert prestige entails "[...] positive attitudes towards vernacular or non-standard speech varieties" (Holmes, 1992: 348). Using this distinction it is fairly obvious that the educated mid-western accent of the anchors and most of the experts carry with them overt prestige, an aspect that backs up the news they are presenting, or the scientific content of some segments of the programme, and makes it more credible; while the more rural accents of most of the semi-laypersons (Ciapuscio, 2003) and laypersons

carry with them covert prestige, that is, trustworthiness, honesty, and plain talking which brings news content and specialized discourse closer to the farming community and makes its applicability to their everyday life more obvious.

The use of several voices that go from authoritative to familiar is not an accident but a way of conveying specialized information in a more comprehensible way. Thus polyphony makes the delivery of the information in the programme easier to digest and its didactic and promotional goals less obvious by involving a wide range of members of the community.

Aside from accent, delivery of information is also an important factor to consider in the way information is conveyed. The pseudo-conversational "routines" (in the show business sense of a calculated performance) that Sherri and Norm go through also have a purpose. Obviously what they say is scripted and probably carefully rehearsed but is designed to look like spontaneous conversation (cf. Gregori-Signes, 2000a). The following exchange is similar to the kind found in many sections of every programme, i.e., in the introduction, before the cookery and the garden sections, and in the round-up at the end of each programme:

> Sherri: You know Norm even though it is so cold outside this is a great time to have warm thoughts about your summer garden.
>
> Norm: That's right and as Mark Viette explains now is the perfect time to be planning when you're inside with a hot cup of coffee and a nice warm fire.

The difference between the exchanges above and naturally occurring ones is that Norm and Sherri's banter is delivered word-perfect, which does not happen very often in real conversation. There is no hesitation, back-tracking or any other features of imperfect conversation. The inclusion of this kind of scripted conversation within a context of "semi-institutionalized" (Ilie, 2001: 224) or "quasi-conversational" discourse (Gregori-Signes, 2000b) seems to be a general tendency in news programmes throughout the world. Djerf-Pierre (2000: 249) notes in Swedish news programmes that there has been a move from the "voice of authority" style to what they call "vernacular discourse." Fairclough (1994) states that television programmes are deliberately manipulative and that the increase of conversational style discourse is an attempt to maintain the skewed power structures between social groups (cf. Gregori-Signes, 2002).

Giles and Powesland's (1975) accommodation theory puts forward the idea that the primary factor in the style that speakers adopt is the influence of their audience. This would explain "Professor" Brad Lowery's delivery in the educational segment. In other words, his tone of voice and swoopy intonational patterns are clearly moulded to meet the perceived needs of younger viewers.

Accommodation theory may also account for the use of regional accents in the TV ads on the programme. For example, the stereotypical characters we focus on more closely in section 3.2 have a noticeable accent that can be easily recognized as typically Southern, and more precisely, Virginian. It is well known that accents constitute an important part of many stereotypes (cf. Wells, 1982: 29) and since accent may affect listeners' impressions and appraisal of the speaker (cf. Giles & Powesland, 1975; Giles et al., 1987) it seems to us that the decision of using easily recognizable and familiar southern accents is one which triggers in the audience a favourable predisposition to the information in the ads themselves and also presents Virginians in the best possible light. Featuring articulate speakers in positions of responsibility with accents from the region (i.e. Bruce Stone VFB Safety Manager DHV March 2005) may also be aimed at dispelling the negative self-image of having a "hillbilly" accent, an impression that is held by outsiders.[1]

The male voiceovers in the VFB ads feature speakers with a Standard accent rather than people with a regional one but the reason they have been used may have more to do with gender than geography. In the first commercial the voiceover highlights the link between VFB and farmers "Virginia Farm Bureau and farmers; working for all the working day heroes –just like you" while in the second it focuses on the VFB's role as a protector of farmers and their families: "For seventy-five years Farm Bureau has supported laws to protect farmland, cut insurance rates and reduce taxes." Male voiceovers may be employed to reinforce a sense of authority as men's deeper voices are perceived as being more authoritative than women's (Ohala, 1983; Graddol & Swan, 1989: 34)

3.2. Implementation of goals through stereotypes

We have already hinted at the fact that the farm values promoted by DHV are based upon a myth and that involves the use of stereotypes. In this section we would like to concentrate on the utilization of stereotypes in the commercials within the programme as a way of implementing DHV's goals. The use of stereotypical imagery is a pervasive strategy in television, especially in TV commercials (cf. del Saz, 2005) and advertisements may be employed as "aestheticized articulations of the core values of a society" (Hogan, 1999: 747). Moreover, ads on TV are *informative* but above all *persuasive* (Crystal & Davy, 1969; Packard, 1981; Pearson & Turner, 1966; Vestergaard & Schrøeder, 1985). In other words, they do not only reflect and activate the values, norms and stereotypes that are deeply rooted in our culture; they also help create new meanings and values that viewers receive, learn and reproduce oftentimes without questioning their social construction.[2] The word "stereotypes" conjures up

the idea of a pejorative view of a group of people (Allport, 1954) but they can also be positive, helping to reinforce and strengthen the values shared by members of the same community or ethnic group. Obviously these are characteristics of stereotypes that can be used to the benefit of the VFB.

Stereotypes constitute a kind of shorthand that advertisers employ to reach the public and thus establish a first and necessary connection with the audience and contribute to a smoother delivery of their message. Lippman (1922) views them as: (i) an ordering process, (ii) a "short-cut" to get an idea across, (iii) a way of referring to "the world," and (iv) a way of expressing our "values and beliefs." In other words, stereotypes help people make sense of society and the world through generalizations, patternings and typifications (Lippman, 1922: 12; Gregori-Signes, 2002). This ties in with the tactical goals –connecting with the viewers– and strategic goals –strengthening positive self-image– we outlined above. Although as researchers we are aware of the presence of stereotypes, many viewers might not be; so we are inclined to think that their use here is covert.

Most of the ads on DHV are *non-commercial advertising* (Leech, 1966), which includes campaigns to inform the public, promotional campaigns or appeals normally financed by government agencies, NGOs, and other societies and organizations. The ads feature positive stereotypical characters to reinforce and preserve Virginian farmers' preserve *self-esteem* and create a favourable *self-image* (cf. Tajfel, 1982; Breakwell, 1992).

In the ads we examine the "group-shared" stereotypes (Hewstone & Giles, 1997: 272), that is, the mother, the farmer and "everyday heroes" promote an image of family and patriotism and foster a sense of community and of belonging to the group (Liebert & Sprafkin, 1988). They also help strengthen *the individual's value system* and thus enhance positively valued differentiations between the in-group and the relevant out- groups (Hewstone & Giles, 1997: 279).

The first ad features a mother who takes care of her children, husband, and her house, touching on what constitutes the fabric of the American family. Like any good mother, she is devoted to her children and makes sure they have a good breakfast: "[a]s a mom, my kids expect me to take care of them." But, at the same time, she is also committed to consuming Virginia products because that way hers and other farming families will make a living: "I like knowing the fresh food I give my family comes from Virginia farms." In a sense she is protecting her immediate family and the extended family of the farming community.

Figure 2. Mom.

The second stereotype, the farmer as the breadwinner, is an in-group stereotype that categorizes all farmers as men who are devoted and committed to the preservation of their heritage: "Some day I'll pass this all down to my own son [...]." The feeling of belonging to a community that has existed since the beginning of the century is reinforced by the images of father and son and the black and white footage of a farmer on a tractor. The farmer is presented as a hero to his family and kids, a link to their heritage, and a living reminder of the value of their work as the basis of the economy.

Figure 3. Dad.

The portrayal of farmers in these commercials is far from the sometimes demeaning views of farmers as "rustic simpletons" or "uncouth rednecks:"

> […] The small farmers and the people of small towns are understood as occupying the bottom step of the economic stairway and deservedly falling from it because they are rural, which is to say not metropolitan or cosmopolitan, which is to say socially, intellectually, and culturally inferior to "us." (cf. Berry, 2002)

The other two public service ads are paid for by "Farm Bureau Insurance." The first features a school bus driver and a policeman, "everyday heroes," who help and protect other citizens. This is followed by a scene in which a mother with a baby confesses to being happy to know that "there's someone there watching out for us."

Figure 4. Everyday Heroes 1.

The second ad features a father and his daughter: "[t]he future's not so scary when it's built around people you can trust;" elderly American war veterans: "[s]ome of us wouldn't even be here if we hadn't had a little help over the years" and a mechanic who's phrase: "[w]hen it's your family's security that's on the line," is finished off by a male insurance agent: "you need someone who'll get the job done." These two commercials are aimed at people from the community, not only farmers, and implicitly urge the audience to take out some kind of insurance.

Illustration 5. Everyday Heroes 2.

Overall, the "everyday heroes" ads include a varied group with regard to gender, age and ethnicity: father and son, father and daughter, mother and baby; a white bus-driver and a black policeman, probably in an attempt to reach every single member of the community. The insurance ads are pitched more as a service to the community than selling insurance: "Helping you is what we do best."

Other ads in the programme are also of the public service type and ostensibly attempt to make the audience aware of the need to lead a healthy life by consuming fruit and vegetables from Virginia, or provide useful tips to avoid food poisoning, while others offer advice on careful driving. The friendly, altruistic, atmosphere created throughout DHV necessarily rubs off on the sponsors. A positive evaluation of the programme and the commercials contributes to the sponsor's image which ultimately aids the main strategic aim of justifying the existence of the VFB.

An important aspect of the ads in DHV is the way the power relationship between the advertiser and the audience is played down. Far from the hard sell of mainstream advertisements, the viewer is presented with something akin to friendly advice given by someone he/she trusts. This image is of key importance for commercials in DHV where everything seems to be done on behalf of the wide community of farmers, their families and land. From our analysis it is clear that no directives are used to urge the viewer to take out insurance or buy Virginia produce.

3.3. Implementation of goals through discourse designed for a lay audience

The content or information presented to the audience in DHV is as important as delivery in setting the tone of the programme and in fulfilling its goals. DHV offers lots of information to farmers, whether it be about their crops, heavy equipment, tips on safety, diseases or pests, etc. The laid back and friendly way in which specialized information is conveyed, coupled with the avoidance of technical jargon, a characteristic of any kind of discourse aimed at the lay public, would appeal to yet another stereotypical trait of the South, i.e., the avoidance of sounding too erudite or pedantic. To give just one example, the more overtly educational sections of DHV involve the translation of specialized discourse into discourse that can be understood by the general public, which Calsamiglia and van Dijk (2004), Myers (2003) and others have labeled popularisation, which is:

> […] a vast class of various types of communicative events or genres that involve the transformation of specialized knowledge into 'everyday' or 'lay' knowledge, as well as a recontextualization of scientific discourse, for instance, in the realm of the public discourses of the mass media or other institutions. (Calsamiglia & van Dijk, 2004: 370)

Typical of the popularized scientific discourse in DHV is the report on spending cuts on agricultural research in Virginia (DHV Feb 2005) which is couched in easily understandable language. Norm introduces the subject, and it is interesting to note how the script he presents links farmers request for more money for agricultural research to the common good: "the money would help all Virginians." This strategy of popularized discourses is intended to bring science and society, in particular, the viewers of the programme in Virginia, closer. This is followed by an interview with an expert, Laurie Fox, at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research Station which is introduced by the anchor: "Fox has spent the past four years studying whether water hyacinths could be used effectively to remove excess nitrogen and phosphorus from local irrigation ponds." The sequence continues with further explanation from the anchor including quotes from Fox using indirect speech: "… Fox says, 'Water hyacinths are an aquatic plant …'." This is followed once again by a segment, albeit a short one, featuring the expert: "We've had calls from all over the country on this project […]" and extra comments from the anchor. A semi-layperson, Scott Sink, a farmer, links the results of the research with its impact on farming:

> Protecting the environment, protecting and cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay; something that initiative would help accomplish, which helps the agriculture industry but also helps the aquaculture industry and other industries in Virginia.

The whole section is closed with an intervention from the anchor. In all, the lion's share is taken up by the anchor and the semi-layperson actually gets a larger share of the segment than the expert herself. Thus, it seems that the expert's testimony is needed so as to endorse prestige and rigor, but the information is then reformulated and reconstructed between anchors and semi-laypersons for better understanding by the lay audience. As Calsamiglia and van Dijk (2004: 371) point out "[p]opularization of discourse is not primarily characterized by specific textual structures but rather by *the properties of the communicative context*" [our emphasis].

In DHV there are a variety of roles involved in the delivery of information: experts, semi-laypersons, laypersons and anchor people. The principal societal role of the experts is to advance science, usually through experimentation and the reporting of evidence. The experts featured in the programme take on the part of an authoritative but friendly figure who offers scientific testimony on the topic being commented upon.

In contrast, in research articles authors "establish their objectivity by removing people from the account" (Parkinson & Adendorff, 2004: 381) because in our culture the personal is associated with "emotion, the polar opposite of reason and logic" (Parkinson & Adendorff, 2004: 381). It may be precisely for this reason that the identity of the expert is not hidden in this particular genre as the producers of the programme wish to bring in the human touch to mitigate any possible feeling of being preached, or talked down to.

In DHV, unlike another TV genre, talk shows (Livingstone & Lunt, 1994; Gregori-Signes, 2000a; Ilie, 2001; Wood, 2001; Lorenzo-Dus, 2005), experts are not contested but are employed to give authoritative information about news items related to farming or the environment in a purely professional capacity probably because the main goal in this type of segment is to inform the audience while entertainment is given a secondary role.

The inclusion of semi-laypersons, to our mind, is also carried out to offset what van Dijk (2004: 1) calls the audience's "asymmetric relationship with the communicating subject who has access to the knowledge in the field of science" which the audience does not have. Moreover, the use of semi-laypersons helps the audience to understand the social implications or "social context" (Calsamiglia & van Dijk, 2004: 370) of the scientific news. Semi-laypersons reformulate or paraphrase the scientific information and present to the lay audience the social implications of such information, making the information relevant to the farming community as in the water hyacinths example above.

In the specialist news segments the power relationship existing between those "in the know," experts, semi-laypersons, presenters, on the one hand, and the viewing audience on the other is minimized, that is, the prevalent tone is one of solidarity with the audience. Viewers of DHV are never talked down to, that is, the power relations between the participants in the programme and the audience appear to be equal as they are in the popular science texts analyzed by Parkinson and Adendorff (2004). The writers of these texts have a similar goal to DHV in that they attempt to:

> […] make the reader feel recognised in a number of ways: by including the reader in fields outside their own field, narrative form, enthusiasm for topic, humour and endorsing the projected values of the reader. (Parkinson & Adendorff, 2004: 389)

4. Conclusions

Work on the differences between specialized and popularized genres is a relatively new and unexplored area, especially from the genre-as-activity point of view. Like genre studies in general, a necessary first step was the study of how vocabulary and structures differed between these two types of genres but the study of popularization discourse eventually had to become multidisciplinary as the complexities of this type of genre became evident. Too much emphasis on discourse itself may bring with it the danger of seeing popularization as merely the simplification or translation of an original (Myers, 2003). It is clear that it is much more than that.

In this article, we have centred on goals as we believe that by analyzing the aims of a piece of discourse we can explain, among other things, the different roles that participants have; how images, music, and language are used; and the influence of the audience on the make up of a genre. We found on undertaking our analysis that we had to refine the term "goal" as it did not capture all the nuances needed in the study of genre –or at least of the genre examined here. As we have seen, some goals, which we call tactical, are basically designed to carry out higher-order or strategic goals. The nature of both tactical and strategic goals affects the actual language used so the discourse in DHV, for instance, will be quite different from a government report on agriculture or a scientific treatise. We are not alone in putting forward the idea of extra-linguistic goals. Askehave and Swales (2001: 203) following Askehave (1998) also seem to posit extra-linguistic goals, albeit implicitly, when they say "we should investigate the context in which the text is used." They say that a company brochure's real purpose is not to promote the company but to present the company "as a qualified partner" (Askehave & Swales, 2001: 204). They describe such purposes as "underlying" and "central" but stops short at distinguishing them completely from

terms such as "communicative purpose." What is more, they say brochures may also be used for ancillary purposes such as informing employees about its core values. For these researchers having the fact that a brochure may have two or more goals is problematic. However, if we think of the brochure as something that is telling both employees and prospective partners or clients that it is an entity that is worth taking into account, we could say that the underlying goal is to show the world that it is to be taken seriously.

The differentiation we make between overt and covert goals, on the other hand, is a useful one as part of our task as linguists is to see beyond the surface of discourse and delve into the motivation behind the use of certain types of discourse, music or images. In fact, covert goals give us an insight into the possible reasons for the very existence of certain genres as is the case of DHV. Our conclusion is that DHV is, first and foremost, a vehicle designed to justify the need for an organization such as the VFB.

The implementation of goals through extra-linguistic resources such as music, images, stereotypes and paralinguistic aspects such as voice and accent have been covered less in the literature than strictly linguistic aspects. Although television is a visual medium in which music also has a capital role, our view of strategic and tactical goals means that we see images and music as the background to the messages the producers wish to convey to the audience. In our opinion the paralinguistic aspect of voice works the same way as music and images in that it provides viewers/listeners, in the case of DHV, with the comforting presence of familiar voices. Finally, couching the actual information in DHV in unpretentious, digestible discourse becomes part of the style of the programme. Indeed, after all the effort to make the programme as familiar, undemanding and straightforward as it is obviously designed to be, it would be strange to be confronted with any other style of discourse other than that found in the programme.

DHV is part of a rather more general trend in the popularization of specialist/scientific discourse on TV which goes from documentaries, niche programmes, such as DHV, current affairs programmes, which often feature scientific issues, and even talk shows: *Ophrah Winfrey, Kilroy,* etc. To date very little work has been done on the differences between these genres. Our preliminary data shows that in comparison with a much studied genre, the Talk Show, in which a certain amount of conversation-like discourse is found, DHV is entirely script-based with recorded and edited interviews. The role of experts in DHV is closer to the traditional status given to scientists and professionals than in Talk Shows where experts are often contested and are drawn into somewhat unscientific debates.

Finally, it is evident that what sets DHV apart most of all is the specificity of the issues it deals with, which, once again leads us back to goals and their implementation.

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NOTES

[1] Cf. "Hillbilly stereotype is no joke" in "Home for good: building a future for young west Virginians." At www.herald-dispatch.com/webextras/wvhomeforgood/day3/main2.htm.

[2] P. Davison, "Media Literacy Strategies for Gender Equity," paper written for the "Men for Change" group (http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/Men4Change/); also available from the Commission on Gender Issues in English Teacher Education (www.coe.ufl.edu/faculty/pace/GenderCommis/readingroom.htm [retrieved January 20, 2005]) at the University of Florida.