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**From Illegal Copying to Licensed Formats:
An Overview of Imported Format Flows into Korea 1999-2011**

**APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Supervisor:

Joseph D. Straubhaar

Karin G. Wilkins

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An Overview of Imported Format Flows into Korea 1999-2011**

by

Jennifer Minsoo Kang, B.A.; M.A.

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Dedication

To my family; my parents, sister and brother

Abstract

From Illegal Copying to Licensed Formats: An Overview of Imported Format Flows into Korea 1999-2011

Jennifer Minsoo Kang, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

Supervisor: Joseph D. Straubhaar

The format program trade has grown rapidly in the past decade and has become an important part of the global television market. This study aimed to give an understanding of this phenomenon by examining how global formats enter and become incorporated into the national media market through a case study analysis on the Korean format market. Analyses were done to see how the historical background influenced the imported format flows, how the format flows changed after the media liberalization period, and how the format uses changed from illegal copying to partial formats to whole licensed formats. Overall, the results of this study suggest that the global format program flows are different from the whole ‘canned’ program flows because of the adaptation processes, which is a form of hybridity, the formats go through. Previous studies tend to simplify the adaptation process of format programs by just seeing it as a proof of

nationalization, but this study found that format adaptations are much complicated. The way the formats were adapted to the local context differed by specific situations, such as cultural proximity, political ties with other countries, channel identities, target audiences, format genres, or conditions of the format license contracts. Moreover, there were also differences in where the initiative to make such adaptations came from. Thus, this study argues that format program flows are one of the many sub-flows in television program flows which complicate our understanding of what 'global' media is.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Over the past few years, format programs have become an important part of the international television market (Enli & Ihlebæk, 2011; Jensen, 2007). Although there is no concrete definition yet, the term format program usually refers to the copyrighted forms of television programs and the programs made from obtaining these forms by buying it from the format-holders. The idea of formats is not new; the practice of borrowing and adapting program ideas has been around for a long time. But it is only recently that the production knowledge that makes up a format program has been documented and recognized as eligible for a copyright (Moran, 2009).

Regardless of the short history of formats, the trade volume of these programs has been increasing steadily. The number of imported formats being adapted to local versions has nearly doubled in the 2002 and 2009 period (Format Recognition and Protection Association, 2009), and more countries are starting to participate in the market as format exporters. Internationally popular programs such as *Big Brother*, *American Idol* or *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, are all format programs that have been adapted for various countries around the world.

As noted above, formats are becoming more noticeable globally and thus this study will focus on these international flows of format programs as a topic because of the timeliness. Another reason that this study was initiated is because there is not much academic research done on formats, apart from a few statistical reports done by the industry. In particular, it will concentrate on the inflow of international formats in the Korean media market.

Korea, which has seen an inflow of format programs into its television market recently, is also following this global trend of format popularity. To name a few, *Top*

Gear Korea, *Dancing With the Stars* and *Korea's Got Talent* are all Korean versions of international formats that have gained high audience ratings. In the case of *Korea's Next Top Model*, it was so popular that it became the first country to produce a fourth cycle of the *Top Model* format (Baek, 2011). As such format programs proved to be successful, more Korean broadcast stations have been importing formats and producing local versions.

Despite this growing popularity, the research on the Korean format market is sparse; there are not many studies conducted on this subject, so this study will be concentrating on the Korean format market in particular. When looking at the few previous studies that actually are about the Korean formats, they are mostly centered on analyzing the adaptations of individual format programs (Park & Yu, 2009; Yang, 2011) or the market trends in the international format market (Hong & Sung, 2007; Eun, 2008; Chung & Jeon, 2010). Although focusing on a single format programs offers an in-depth understanding of how a format is adapted to the local audience, it tends to overlook the bigger picture of the format market. Likewise, focusing on the worldwide format market can give a broader understanding but it simplifies the processes at the local level. Thus, this paper will try to overcome these limitations by taking a middle approach; focusing on a single country's format market.

One of the reasons why formats have become so popular in the industry is because it ensures some predictability of its potential success in the market (Moran & Keane, 2004; Waisbord, 2004). When producers buy a format, not only do they gain access to the knowledge of how to create the program but they also obtain the know-how of other information related to the format such as the target audience, ratings or audience demographics from other versions of the format in different countries (Moran & Keane, 2004). Plus, even though importing the complete program is sometimes cheaper than

buying the format and producing a local version, producers prefer the latter because the local version can be adapted to the local audience and create greater audience appeal. Because complete programs are subject to cultural discount (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988), importing a format to create a local version with local characters and local traditions would be more efficient cost-wise, in the long run (Straubhaar & Duarte, 2005).

As the trade of formats became more prominent, they started to appear in the literature of television program flows. In the early 1970s, there was a concern of the one-way flow of television programs going from the Western countries to non-Western countries (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974). Cultural imperialism, which saw media content as an ideological apparatus, explained that this one-way flow was a new form of imperialism. The media content conveyed certain ideologies and cultural values to the lesser countries to make them dependent on the Western countries, both economically and culturally (Schiller, 1991; Chalaby, 2006). However, when the regional flows among the countries that were previously thought as Western content importers become prominent, cultural imperialism failed to address these newer flows (Chadha & Kavoori, 2000; Thussu, 2006). Moreover, although media reception and cultural studies showed that the audience was active in their interpretations of media text but this was never a critical point in the cultural imperialism discourse (Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 1996).

Thus, an intermediate approach that acknowledged the power relations from cultural imperialism and the audience reception from cultural studies was introduced into the literature. This perspective argues that although the media market is still somewhat dominated by core countries, the periphery countries are becoming more independent by producing content and exporting them to regional areas. It explains the regional flows with cultural proximity, which says that people will initially prefer local content but when

that is not available they will choose imported content that are from culturally similar places (Straubhaar, 1991).

There are still debates about how formats fit into the existing literature of television flows. Some argue that popular formats are mainly from the Western countries, such as the U.S. or England, and therefore reinforce the cultural imperialist approach to formats (Kunz, 2010). Others say that formats are local content because they are adapted to fit the local audience, so the popularity of formats relates to the intermediate approach. But formats do not quite fit into the existing literature because these approaches are all focused on complete programs (Moran, 1998). Formats are global in the sense that they all share the same elements from the original version, which is often imported from overseas. At the same time, they are local because each format version is adapted to the local audiences' taste and producers also add local aspects that are unique to that particular culture.

This study takes on Moran (1998)'s critique of seeing formats differently from the complete programs and will focus on a single country's format market specifically to see what kinds of formats are imported into a country and how the global context influences the formats within the local market. As Korea has seen more imports of formats recently and also beginning to export formats, this study will analyze the Korean media market as a case study. Specifically, it will look at the history of formats imported to Korea to see how formats become integrated in the market. This study argues that as the use of formats moves from illegal copying practices to using licensed whole formats, the local media market is not dominated by the imported format content but purposely localizes certain aspects of formats to fit the national market and produce local content.

The first part of the analysis will give the historical background to the imported formats into Korea by looking at what economic, social, or political factors influenced

the inflow of formats. After laying out the general background, the next section of the analysis will go more into detail by focusing on how the inflow of imported formats changed after the Korean media market went through deregulations, in terms of the formats' total numbers, channels, genres, and origins. The final section will examine several format programs as case studies to see how specific details of the formats programs, such as the reasons for imported the format, how the formats were changed to fit the local context, or the general perception about formats, changed as the uses of formats moved towards more transparent and legal practices.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

THE LANDSCAPE OF KOREAN TELEVISION

Television is an important medium for Koreans, which has had an extremely high penetration rate of nearly 90% in the 1980s and 98% in the 2000s (Korea Communications Commission, 2011). A wider variety of services are available within the market and the current landscape of the Korean television market largely consists of broadcast, cable, satellite, and Internet Protocol television (IPTV). As format programs are only produced by the broadcast and cable television channels, this section will specifically focus on the history of these particular services.

The government has had heavy influence in the early days of the Korea television market. During the periods of military administrations, the government gave preference to the certain media companies that supported the authoritarian rule (Shim, 2002). Commercial channels were closed down and the numbers of broadcast stations were reduced to an oligopoly of KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) and MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation) to keep a tighter control over the media. However, the installment of democratic administrations in the 1990s led to deregulations in the media market because it was thought that the deregulations would encourage democracy, with people being able to have a wider variety of information sources (Shim, 2002). Thus, an additional broadcast channel and cable television services were introduced during this period. This is known as the liberalization period and it was an important turning point in the Korean media history (Shim, 2002).

The deregulation policy allowed SBS (Seoul Broadcasting System), a commercial channel to be started in 1991 and the current landscape of the Korean broadcast television was then established; the four national wide network systems, which are SBS, KBS, MBC, and EBS. With the exception of EBS (Educational Broadcasting System), an

educational channel, the rest of the channels are comprehensive channels. SBS is the only privately owned channel among the broadcast channels. When the channel was first launched, SBS was based in Seoul, the capital of Korea, but in 1995, it established network relationships with 4 other regional commercial channels and became a national broadcast system (Youn, 1995). Though MBC and KBS are technically public channels, each broadcast system has both public and commercial aspects due to the history of the military administrations. For instance, MBC is owned by a public foundation but it is operated as a commercial channel, solely dependent on advertisement revenues. This is possible because prior to the military government, MBC was a commercial channel but was handed over to a public foundation during the military rule and the legal status of MBC is still a commercial channel (Lee, 1997). Also, as KBS is a public corporation it collects license fees but it also has advertisement revenues. This mixed revenue method was started when the military government tried to reinforce the financial hardships of KBS by introducing advertisements in the early 1960s (Lee, 1995). Another thing to note about KBS is that it operates two channels; KBS1 and KBS2. These channels are differentiated by the type of content they focus on; KBS1 is centered on the public affairs content, such as documentaries or news, while KBS2 is focused on home entertainment, such as talk shows or comedy programs.

These broadcast channels¹ hold a dominant position in the Korean media market, having a huge share of the advertising market and influential power. This dominant position is the main outcome of the pre-liberalization period; broadcast stations that were favorable to the military government were given privileges that enabled them to establish a strong foothold in the media market. The broadcast stations secured their positions in

¹ This refers to the four broadcast channels that have comprehensive programming schedules of various genres; SBS, KBS1, KBS2 and MBC. EBS is usually excluded from this term because it is a specialized education channel.

the media market through vertical integrations and this enabled them to establish an infrastructure for in-house productions. Moreover, the tight governmental regulations over the broadcast channels acted as a barrier to market entry and this furthered the dominance of the broadcast stations. The deregulation policies, in particular the introduction of cable television, were hoped to lessen the dominant positions of broadcast stations by increasing the market competition. However, the broadcast stations were too well-established for other media services to penetrate the market and create competition (Lee & Park, 2011).

Cable television was started in 1995, along with the deregulation policies of the democratic government. Cable television was first thought to bring diversity to the national media market, which had been dominated by the broadcast stations (Jin, 2007). However, in reality, cable television struggled to maintain its presence during the first decade of existence. While the introduction of cable television was hoped to bring more competition to the media market, the government kept a tight control over the number of cable channel services because of the concerns of excessive competition; cable channel providers had to go through a rigorous system to obtain licenses. Thus, only a few cable channels were granted the licenses to broadcast and the growth was not significant enough to effectively compete against the broadcast stations (Hwang & Jung, 2005). Also, cable channels struggled with financial problems because there was not enough paid subscribers and the high percentage of in-house productions from the established broadcast channels made it even more difficult to penetrate the media market. The lack of finances and infrastructures to produce content resulted in the cable channel stations to turn to imported content. The deregulation policies at the time had also lessened the quota of imported content allowed on television and this enabled even more imported content to be on cable television.

For awhile, cable channels were dependent on imported content and it is only recent that cable channels were able to produce their own content and gather a substantial audience. Policy changes, such as simplifying the license system to a registration system, allowing channel-tiering services and the unification of cable operators and service providers enabled cable television to gain a foothold in the media market (Y. M. Lee & Jung, 2009). The number of subscribers steadily has steadily increased and currently the percentage of subscribers is around 83.74% of the population (B. K. Kim, 2011).

Another reason that the cable channels were able to gather an audience was because they built upon their imported content audience. Cable channels that aired the popular overseas programs had a loyal audience and these channels started to produce programs that were specifically aimed at this audience (S. Y. Bae, 2011). For example, channels that were devoted to U.S. drama series produced television dramas and channels that focused on imported lifestyle programs produced similar content. Also, the success of a cable channel program *Super Star K* (2009)² stimulated other cable stations to actively produce their own content, and according to the Korea Cable Television and Telecommunication Association, the amount of self-produced programs nearly doubled that year (M. S. Kang, 2011).

Along with the increase of self-produced programs, cable channels have seen an inflow of format programs over the past few years. Format programs were seen as a solution for competing against the established broadcast channel content because it enabled cable stations to create a program that had already been ‘proved’ overseas (Jung, 2011). Also, most of the popular format programs being traded are reality shows, which

² *Super Star K* is a singing competition reality show that is similar to the *Idol* series. The program was the first cable program to achieve an audience rating over 10%; before *Super Star K*, 1% was considered popular for cable channel ratings (M. S. Kang, 2011). Many reality competition shows started after this program, so *Super Star K* is thought to have brought the reality show trend to Korean television (E. Kim, 2011).

are centered on 'normal' people rather than celebrities and this makes it possible to cut down the production budget. As cable channels do not have as much resources as the broadcast stations, format programs are way to compete against the broadcast channels. Moreover, the reality show format programs act as a barrier to broadcast channels; the broadcast channel content tend to be more conservative and regulated than cable channel content because they are using the public airwaves and therefore must promote public interest. The reality show formats are not considered to fit this sentiment; for example, some broadcast producers considered to buy the format of *Deal or No Deal* but eventually decided not to because they thought that giving an individual a prize of million dollars would not be promoting the public interest (Hong & Sung, 2007). However, the cable channels are exempt from this expectation and therefore free to produce the reality format programs. But at the same time, producing popular content and buying imported formats are still limited to the cable channels that are owned by the major MPPs (Multiple Program Provider) in the market and most of the other cable channels are still struggling to compete against the broadcast channels.

Another change during the media liberalization period is the deregulation of the Japanese cultural ban. Japan and Korea has had a hostile relationship because of the history of Japan's colonization of Korea in the early 1900s. During this period, the Japanese tried to eradicate the Korean culture through brutal policies, so because of this past threat of the Japanese taking over the national culture, the Korean government banned all Japanese cultural products from being imported after regaining independence (Hundt & Bleiker, 2007).. However, in line with all the deregulation going on in the media sector, the democratic administration started to lift the cultural ban in several phases in 1998. Television was not included until the third phase in 2000 and even then, only Japanese sports, news, and some movies were allowed to be broadcast on cable

television. The fourth phase in 2004 lessened the bans on Japanese television programs slightly more by enabling the paid television services (cable and satellite) to air some dramas and cultural programs (J. W. Park, 2006). However, to this day, most Japanese programs are not allowed on broadcast channels and Japanese entertainment programs are still banned on both broadcast and cable channels.

INTERNATIONAL FLOWS OF CONTENT

Television flows across borders has been a central part in international communications, ever since Nordenstreng and Varis (1974) empirically found that there was an unequal flow of content flowing from Western countries to other countries. This one-way flow sparked concerns about how the Western countries were influencing the non-Western country cultures. At that time, the cultural imperialism thesis dominated the discourse of television flows. Cultural imperialism is closely related to the dependency theory, which deems that the developing periphery countries are dependent on the industrialized core countries (Chalaby, 2006). Scholars focused on this perspective argue that there are rarely any counter-flows going from periphery to core countries because of the differences of economic and technological resources that are available. Core countries, like the U.S., had a media infrastructure in place that enabled them to create media content and export them at low prices. But the periphery countries simply did not have the capacities to produce enough content to fill their airtimes and eventually became dependent on the core country content (Yoo & Lee, 2001; Chung, 2011). As cultural imperialism sees media as part of a holistic system, which contributes to spreading capitalism (Chalaby, 2006), the outcome of the dependency of the periphery countries is the conversion of the audience into consumers of global brands (Dorfman & Mattelart,

1975). Television programs are not merely forms of entertainment but an ideological vehicle that carries the cultural values and ideologies of the core countries to the periphery countries.

The U.S. dominance in the media market may have become less pronounced over time as the media infrastructures of the non-Western countries improved, but Schiller (1991), one of the leading scholars in the cultural imperialism position, said the moving force behind the one-way flows has simply changed from the U.S. to the transnational corporations. Although the national power of the United States have somewhat lessened over time, the domination power has moved toward the American transnational corporations, and therefore the cultural imperialism is still occurring.

However, critiques about cultural imperialism began to arise when studies found that there were increasing flows of content from the periphery countries (Varis, 1986; Straubhaar, 1991; Biltereyst & Meers, 2000; Thussu, 2006). When Varis (1986) conducted an updated study on the international television flows, he found that there was a trend of regional programs exchanges amidst the U.S. and European dominance. Other studies found more empirical evidence of the regional flows, such as the higher percentages of telenovelas than U.S. content in the primetime schedules of Brazil (Straubhaar, 1991) or that U.S. fiction programs were being pushed out of European prime time schedules by national or European content (De Bens & de Smaele, 2001). Despite this empirical evidence, the core-periphery model of cultural imperialism failed to explain these regional flows. This dichotomous view neglects the semi-periphery countries that import programs from core countries but also export content to other countries as well.

Moreover, cultural imperialism simplifies the complexity of audience reception by assuming that the audience internalizes everything within the media content when it is

difficult to measure whether the audience was actually affected by merely watching it. Research results from cultural studies and reception studies show that the reception process is much complex with the audience resisting the dominant readings of the media text (Radway, 1983; Katz & Liebes, 1990; Ang, 2007).

In response to these critiques, different perspectives to television flows were introduced. One of the perspectives was about taking on an economic approach to international flows by examining how certain market structures or behaviors impacted the flows (Dupagne & Waterman, 1998; Jayakar & Waterman, 2000; J. Oh, 2001). The media economics perspective tended to see media content as a product, rather than a cultural artifact. This approach was able to produce empirical evidence through research, which cultural imperialism was criticized for not being able to do so (Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 1996)

The research done using this perspective tries to explain the one-way flows through the comparative advantages larger countries have over smaller countries, based on the free market forces (Dupagne & Waterman, 1998). Countries with larger audiences would be able to invest more money into media content because of their potential revenues, while smaller audience would mean that the country would not be able to invest as much because they simply did not have the incentives. The larger investments would lead to higher program quality, which would appeal to a wider audience. This explained the U.S. dominance in the media market; because the U.S. had a worldwide audience, it was able to produce media content that had international competitiveness.

Another approach that was introduced was an intermediate approach that recognizes the power relations from cultural imperialism and the active audience from cultural studies (Kraidy, 1999). Often referred as counter-cultural imperialism, cultural pluralism, or cultural globalization (Banerjee, 2002; Chalaby, 2006; Jin, 2007), this

perspective argues that while the traditional core countries may still have a dominant place in the media, the peripheral countries are producing more local content and becoming less dependent on U.S. content. Because of the changes in the media market, such as technological progress that lowered the costs of local production or the variety of distribution channels that were now available, countries that were dependent on the foreign content in the past were now capable of creating their own content (Kunz, 2010). This change is connected to the product life cycle theory, which predicts that there are certain stages a product must go through before it reaches maturity. When applied to television programs, a country will import high amounts of content when the industry is at its infancy. But as the country begins to improve the local infrastructure, such as adopting new technologies or gathering the resources needed, they start to produce their own content. It learns from the imported content and uses the knowledge to perfect the local content, and the amount of imported content begins to decline. At the last level of the cycle, the country becomes an exporter of content itself. Based on this cycle, it could be implied that the one-way traffic of television programs was giving away to a more asymmetrical interdependent one and this opened up more possibilities for equal flows (Straubhaar, 1991).

Another main focus of the cultural pluralism perspective is that it sees the audience as an active audience that chooses and interprets content at their own will. While cultural imperialism underestimates the local cultural resistance against the Western content, cultural pluralism gives more power to the audience (Jin, 2007). The local culture was not something that could be dominated by the inflow of foreign content because the latter had to overcome the advantages that the local content had, such as language barriers or social support (Pool, 1977). So in the cultural pluralist viewpoint, the audience tends to prefer locally produced content over foreign content. Empirical

evidence from research has backed these claims; for instance, the prime time programs in Hong Kong were nearly all Cantonese language programs (Chadha & Kavoori, 2000) and Korean dramas spread out the East Asian countries more easily because of the similar traditions and values within the storylines (Yoo & Lee, 2001).

The reason why people choose local content is explained by the concept of cultural proximity. People usually will prefer national programs first, but when their needs are not fulfilled by the local media they will turn to foreign programs that are from similar cultures or languages (Straubhaar, 1991, 2007). Cultural proximity also explains the regional flows; as people look for foreign content that they feel is close to them cultural-wise, programs from the surrounding cultures will be more likely to be imported.

Studies that have used cultural proximity can be roughly grouped into those that examine the content itself to find cultural themes that are close to specific cultures (Yoo & Lee, 2001; Burch, 2002), analyze cultural proximity of the audience watching foreign programs by how closely they identify with the other country (Chung, 2004; Ksiazek & Webster, 2008), or see how cultural proximity impacts the amount of imported programs from a particular country (Park, 2003). The first group of research tries finds that popular imported content has themes that the audience can easily identify with, such as the same traditional values or society norms. The second and third group of studies both use factors like geographical distance, familiarity with language or experience in the other country to measure cultural proximity.

Another concept that complicates the cultural proximity is Iwabuchi's (2002) concept of being 'culturally odorless,' which refers to the Japanese practice of erasing the cultural flavors from the content to make it easier export to other countries (Fung, 2007). It explains how Japanese content like manga or video games, that do not have specific Japanese characters or traditions within it, has become popular in Western countries.

However, Iwabuchi does not entirely dismiss cultural proximity; rather, he agrees with the basic idea but cautions against taking cultural proximity as a predetermined factor (Iwabuchi, 2001). When interviewing Taiwanese viewers of Japanese dramas, Iwabuchi found that the viewers felt closer to the dramas not only because of the cultural elements, such as familiar faces or customs, but because Taiwan and Japan had become closer in terms of economic statuses (Iwabuchi, 2004a). In other words, cultural proximity is not fixed but static, changing along with the audiences' perception of the temporal distance between the countries and Iwabuchi's concept of cultural proximity helps explain how an audience can identify with content from other regions that are not geographically close.

Despite the rich literature of television flows, they fail to address the recent trend of format programs. Formats are put together with the finished whole programs when formats are clearly different; formats are the basic elements that define a unique program and not a complete program by itself. Because formats are the essence of program, they hold the most potential to be the most globalized but at the same the time, they are able to be localized as each format version has been adapted to fit the national audience (Moran, 1998; Sen, 2012). On the other hand, the development and production of a whole program is typically done in a single location and allows very little room for adaptation for the local audience while it is possible for formats to be adapted for an audience that is culturally different from the original one (Moran, 2008).

An alternative perspective in the study of television that is frequently associated with format programs flows is the concept of hybridity. Before hybridity was brought into the literature of international media, it was used in many different contexts, such as referring to a mix of different races as an outcome of colonization, or as the resistance of the subalterns against dominating forces in post-colonial studies (Kraidy, 2002). However, when hybridity appeared in the discourses on globalization it was seen as the

result of the international dynamics between the local and the global (Kraidy, 2002). Most studies that use hybridity to examine international content tend to focus on the local adaptations emphasize that because such adaptations exist along with the global aspects, the content is indeed hybrid (Park & Yu, 2009; Yang, 2011). As mentioned above, format programs are thought to be both local and global, because all formats share the same structure and concept while having unique adaptations, and it seems appropriate that hybridity is associated with formats.

Among the other studies that use hybridity, some try to differentiate local adaptations by examining them in-depth, rather than looking at them as a whole. For example, through their analysis on the strategies of transnational television channels entering the Latin American markets, Straubhaar and Duarte (2005) found that there were different levels of adaptation strategies; the minimal and extensive adaptations. The former was more global, with more standardized content that was the same across different countries, while the latter was more changed and specific to local situations.

Also, Straubhaar (2009) makes a distinction among adaptations depending on the agency. He uses 'localization' to refer to the adaptations controlled by the global forces, such as a transnational company altering their content themselves to make it more appealing for the local audience. On the other hand, 'glocalization'³ refers to the adaptations initiated from the inside by local forces, for example, a local company looking overseas to find content to adapt to their needs. This distinction is helpful to understanding the local adaptations in format programs, because there are adaptations

³ This term originally comes from a Japanese marketing strategy called *dochakuka*, which means 'global localization', and it refers to the practice of adapting global products to suit the local cultures (as cited in Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007). It acknowledges both the standardization and specialization of products within the global context.

that are restricted by the format copyright holders and adaptations that are left to the judgments of local producers who are using the format.

As noted above, there are various approaches one can take when examining the international flows of content. But other than the discourse on hybridity, format programs are put together with whole canned programs. Thus, this study will not take a specific perspective but examine how the flows of format programs are different from that of whole programs, and argues that formats should be differentiated from the past literature of the whole programs flows.

FORMAT PROGRAMS

Background to Formats

The practice of using an existing program concept or idea to create a local version has been around for a long time. But documenting the ideas of a program and acknowledging it as an intellectual right that can be sold to others is a fairly recently development; this is what is now widely known as format programs. The term ‘format’ originates from the printing industry and it referred to a specific page size (Moran & Keane, 2004). When ‘format’ came over to the radio and television industry it then meant the invariable sets of elements in concurring programs series that set a particular program apart from others. Although there no concrete definition of formats, it is normally agreed that formats can be defined as the denationalized program template or recipe that can be used as a guideline to create domestic versions for specific audiences in local settings (Moran, 2009). To put it more simply, it is “the pie crust that is the same from week to week but the filling changes,” (Moran & Keane, 2004:5). For example, the *Pop Idol* series originated from England but there are other versions like *American Idol*, *Canadian*

Idol, or *Australian Idol*. All *Idol* series are about promoting local talent through competition but each version is has slightly different features, such as *Canadian Idol* focusing more on the participants' life stories than *American Idol* (Baltruschat, 2009).

Some formats are easy to define; for example, the format of a fictional program that has a script, such as dramas or movies, would be the plot, characters, or lines (Chae & Lee, 2010). However, most of the successful formats are reality shows that depend on the interactions between the participants rather than a script, which makes it difficult to be recognized as an intellectual property (Chae & Lee, 2010; Esser, 2010). In other words, there is no specific law that protects formats from plagiarism or recognizes formats as an intellectual property. But the format industry has found other ways, such as creating format bibles, registering related trademarks and merchandise or establishing international distribution networks, to ensure that the format is protected from plagiarism (Esser, 2010; Kretschmer & Singh, 2010).

Among these methods, the format bible is the most commonly used way to trade format programs. Format bibles are a comprehensive guide book that contains production information, experience, know-how, and etc. that are used to create a specific program (Moran & Keane, 2004; Esser, 2010). Not only does the bible act a guide, it also is an alternative protection against random modifications and the formats' mechanism, which do not have law protection. Other useful information, such as the audience ratings, target audience, budget samples, or shooting schedules, may or may not be included in the format bible (Hong & Sung, 2007). Also, production information can be traded in person, which is also known as the flying producer system. The format copyright holders send a person – the flying producer - who is knowledgeable about the format to give the needed advice and also monitor the production processes to keep it close to the original format as possible (Kretschmer & Singh, 2010; Yang, 2011).

Despite the lack of law protection, the format trade has been flourishing for the past decade. Due to the rises in production costs and high failure rates in whole programs, the trade of whole programs has been showing signs of stagnation while format programs market has been growing (Hong & Sung, 2007; Torre, 2012). The biggest advantage of format programs is that it has a proven performance; the format bible often comes with the program performances' in various countries and time slots (Chalaby, 2011). Thus, it is much less risky to produce a local adaptation of a format program than creating an entirely new program.

Another advantage to formats is that they are able to generate greater appeal to the national audience than imported whole programs because formats are adapted specifically to fit that particular audience. Although formats have strict guidelines, the copyright holders usually offer room to accommodate local situations to insure that the program will succeed in the local market. Moreover, adaptations of formats are generally treated as 'local programs' so they are not subject to any quotas against imported programs (Hong & Sung, 2007), which makes it easier for producers to simply buy the format and produce a local version than buying an imported whole program.

The current popularity trend of format programs began to take off in the early 2000s; the number of formats being traded, the countries where the formats were imported to, the number of companies involved in the format trade, and the speed of format adaptations began to rise sharply (Chalaby, 2011). Internationally popular formats such as *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, *Big Brother*, *Survivor* and *Pop Idols* are thought to have stimulated this format trend (Chalaby, 2011; Esser, 2010). Previously, the formats being circulated in the global market were restricted to a few countries and the game show genre but the worldwide popularity of the four formats mentioned above led to the

rise of factual entertainment genre formats, such as talent shows, studio game shows, and quiz shows (FRAPA, 2009).

Going into detail about the format genres, there is the tendency to use the terms ‘format’ and ‘genre’ interchangeably (Keane & Moran, 2008). However, to give a distinction between the two, genre is the categorization according to the narrative structures while formats refer to the concepts and elements of a show. Keane, Fung, and Moran (2007) point out that it is difficult to categorize formats by genre because most formats today are a convergence of various genres. Thus, Keane and Moran (2008) have categorized formats by the innovative modification on the generic genres. To name a few examples, they identify the ‘million-dollar prize’ (a winner-takes-all type of competition), ‘lifelines and immunity’ (audience voting system within the show that builds up the tension) or ‘built-in potential conflict’ (contestants conspiring against each other) elements within the reality shows (Keane & Moran, 2008).

But, despite the difficulty in categorizing formats by genre, they can also be help to understand the production, distribution, and consumption process of formats (Keane et al., 2007). Using the genre categorization, the formats that are being traded in the global market can be largely divided into non-scripted formats and scripted formats. The non-scripted formats are programs that do not have a specified script and depend on the interactions between the participants to advance the storyline. Some of the well known sub-genres of the non-scripted formats include game shows, reality shows, talent contest, and dating programs (Eun, 2008a; Chalaby, 2011).

Game shows are one of the most popular format genres, mainly because the production costs are relatively low compared to other genres, and also because they have incorporated drama into the traditional game show genre, such as offering a large sum of money as a prize or focusing on the participants’ reactions during the games (Hong &

Sung, 2007; Chalaby, 2011). The most noted game show formats are *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, which was sold in more than 100 countries and *Deal or No Deal*, over 60 countries. Along with game shows, reality shows have furthered the volume of format trades. Reality shows usually present unscripted situations of non-celebrities in a specific situation; for example, participating in a challenge that offers a prize. *Big Brother*, which is shows 24 hour coverage on a group of people isolated in a house competing for a prize, is an example of a reality show. This format has become a primetime hit in over 42 countries and many of these countries have been creating multiple seasons of *Big Brother* (Chalaby, 2011; Endemol, n.d.). The talent shows are close to the reality show genre in the sense that they have participants competing for a prize and also show the backstage scenes or focus on the life stories of the participants. This genre has also successfully integrated audience participation into the show by allowing them to vote their opinion through telephone, online, or text messaging. The *Pop Idols* series and *Strictly Come Dancing* are typical examples of a talent show. The last sub-genre in the non-scripted formats is the dating show. This genre is also similar to the reality and game shows because they create a competition among the participants, but are distinctly different because they focus on human matchmaking. Popular programs like *The Bachelor* and *Joe Millionaire* fall into this genre.

Unlike the non-scripted format, scripted formats have a planned script that advances the plot of the program. The more 'traditional genres' such as dramas, sitcoms or comedies, are included in this category. Although scripted formats hold only a small share in the format trade market, they are starting to be adapted many countries (Esser, 2010). For example, the telenovela *Ugly Betty* has seen over 70 adaptations in other countries, and the drama format of *Lalola* has sold to more than 52 countries (Torre, 2012).

This section has given an introduction on what format programs are, in terms of history, concept, definition, and genres. The following section will now examine the academic research done on these format programs.

Research on Formats

Because format programs are relatively new, there are very few studies done in this area. The existing research can be organized into those that look at the format trade market from an industrial perspective or those that examine on the individual format adaptations themselves.

The former group of research is a more macro view of format programs; it examines the format industry itself through analyses on market trends or structures (Moran & Keane, 2006; Jensen, 2007; Esser, 2010; Kunz, 2010; Chalaby, 2011). The common point of these research results is that the format market is driven by the Anglo-American-European countries (Moran & Keane, 2006). Moran and Keane (2006)'s study of the format trade fairs found that most of formats being traded were of Western in origin, especially the European countries. Similar results are found in Chung and Jeon (2010)'s study of the world trade of entertainment formats and Eun (2008)'s study on the imports of formats into Korea, which both showed that most of the formats originated from European countries like England or the Netherlands. These countries were able to gain a leading position in the format trade because they had entered the market early on and produced most of the popular formats around the world (Esser, 2010).

From this, it could be thought that there are dominant one-way flows in formats but recent studies have shown that the international competition has been growing. Both Kunz (2010) and Esser (2010) examined the format programs in the U.S. television

schedules, and each found that formats originating from non-European countries such as Japan, Israel, or Columbia, were included in primetime television. Also, Torre (2012) finds that Hollywood has seen more imported formats from various countries over the past decade, which in turn implies that the dominant position the U.S. has enjoyed in the media market is being challenged. Statistical reports also back up these results; for example, the 2009 FRAPA report show that more countries, such as Spain, Germany, or Japan, are also moving into the format exporting business (FRAPA, 2009).

The other group of format studies mostly focuses on the cultural differences on individual format adaptations by examining the text itself and the production processes or the audience reception of the format adaptations. As previously mentioned, imported formats are specifically adapted for the local audience and therefore are seen as national content. The textual analysis studies try identifying the local and global aspects within the format text and analyze why particular aspects were changed in the local context (Hetsroni, 2005; Park & Yu, 2009; Beeden & de Bruin, 2010; Yang, 2011). The production processes are often included in these studies to give a deeper insight of how the decisions for localizing or glocalizing the formats were made.

Results from these researches find that the negotiations of global and local forces exist within the local versions of formats, which undermine the pessimists of formats, who argue that the global format distribution leads to the homogenization of content (Waisbord, 2004). For example, Park and Yu (2009) examined the Korean version of *I vs 100* and found that there were unique aspects within the program, like having celebrities as contestants or donating the prize money to the public rather letting the winner take the prize home. Also, Beeden and de Bruin (2010)'s study of the British and American version of *The Office*, found that the characters, situations, or types humors of the sitcom were changed to fit the national context, and Hetsroni (2005), who analyzed five different

versions of the format quiz show *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire*, found that each format adaptation had changed the questions to reflect the local cultures.

These studies also examine the production process of the formats along with the textual analyses, which allows to them to see that the producers consciously made choices to adapt the format so it would become more glocalized. In the case of *Canadian Idol*, the producers worked closely with the copyright holders to make sure the format culturally translated well, and the relationship was described as a collaborative process (Baltruschat, 2009). Moreover, not only do the producers figure what fits the national audiences' sentiments but they also make changes to the format because of local resource constraints. Through interviews with the producers of *Project Runway Korea*, Yang (2010) found that the Korean producers altered parts of the format, such as the location of where the competition takes place or the types of participants, due to the lack of resources available. Similar results were seen in the Korean *I vs 100*, which had more celebrity participants than non-celebrities participants because the producers were under pressure to generate high audience ratings (Park & Yu, 2009).

The last group of format program research is those that concentrate on the audience of formats. These studies mostly examine audiences of reality show formats, which are one of the most successful format genres and also because this particular genre allows the general audience to participate in the voting process (Chalaby, 2011; Enli & Ihlebæk, 2011). The results find that the audience is also affected by the local adaptations, such as how much power they have in affecting the story narratives and how they perceive these formats, which take place within the formats. For example, Enli and Ihlebæk (2011)'s analysis of the British and Norwegian versions of *Dancing With the Stars* found that there were differences of the degree of audience participation in voting. The British version allowed less participation than the Norwegian version, mostly

because the British version was aired on a public broadcast channel while the Norwegian version was on a commercial channel. Also, the way the audience perceives the format programs differ depending on the culture. For the audience of *Indonesian Idol*, they felt that they were not only voting for their favorite participants but also taking part in the globalization because they were participating in a global franchise program (Coutas, 2006).

The research on formats are mostly focus on the international scale (i.e. examining the world trade of formats) or on a single format program (i.e. comparing local and original versions of a format). The former is helpful for the general understanding of the format trade market but it tends to overlook the regional flows within the greater trends. Results show that the Europe is the leading player in the format market and yet other places like Latin America or Japan also have exported successful formats (Moran & Keane, 2004). On the other hand, when focusing too much on a single format, it can lead to overlooking the larger picture of formats. It can only tell what that particular format has done to adapt to the local audience. Thus, this study will try to take a middle approach by focusing on the flows of a single country's format imports and format programs themselves to give a better understanding of the format phenomenon.

In particular, it will aim to see which forces influence the formats flows and how this has shown up in the formats by analyzing the formats' trade volume, genre, origins, and what channels they were aired on. For the format genres, the literature review found that most studies categorize genres into scripted and non-scripted formats (Hong & Sung, 2007). There are sub-genres for each of these categories and the frequently used ones were game, reality, talent, dating shows, dramas, sitcoms and comedies. However, the sub-genres of formats differ greatly by study and not all are applicable to the Korean

formats. Accordingly, this study also aims to see which of the existing sub-genres fit the Korean formats and create sub-genres for those that do not.

Chapter 3: Research Questions and Methodology

This purpose of this study is to look at both the general trend of format imports into Korea and how the formats became incorporated into the local media market. The popularity of format programs is more than just a trend in the international television market. It shows two important developments in the market, which are the globalization of the media systems and the efforts of transnational and local companies to negotiate with the local cultures (Waisbord, 2004). Thus, examining how a country incorporates formats into the media market over time will reveal how the globalization process works and looking closely at several imported formats will show how the local adaptations within the programs takes place. As Korea has had more imported formats over the past few years and also begun to export formats, it is a suitable case for this study.

This study will examine the imported formats into Korea from 1999 to 2011. This time period was chosen based on the data availability. The dataset was gathered by going through newspaper articles about the formats during this period. This sampling method was used because the cable channel schedules are not well archived and getting a sampling frame would be difficult. Instead, the words related to study, such as ‘format’, ‘copying’, ‘adapt’, and ‘plagiarism’ were used to search newspaper articles in the KINDS (Korean Integrated Newspaper Database System) database from 1999 to 2011. After gathering the articles, the researcher went through each article to find the program titles that were associated with the search terms. Then the researcher went to each broadcast or cable channel website that aired to program to see if the programs titles were valid and to see what year it was broadcast in.

When determining whether a program was a ‘format program’, this study operationalized this term as the specific grouping of a knowledge that can be used as a

guideline to create a local version of a program (Moran, 2009). Both the illegal use of program ideas that facilitate the production of a program and the legal use of obtaining the license to use the program idea to create a local version are included in the term ‘formats’. An example of the illegal copying would be a program using the same design of a studio set without the original producers’ consent, and legal uses would be buying the *Project Runway* format guide and license from the copyright holder FremantleMedia and creating a *Project Runway Korea*. The dataset also included programs that were accused of plagiarism, although not proved, as illegally copied programs.

The first research question will try to give a broad understanding of the Korean format market by examining the historical context of the inflow of format programs. There have been many changes in the Korean media market over the past decade. For example, deregulation policies, such as the introduction of cable channels services or lowering the quota for imported programs, were some of the noted changes during this period. Thus, the first research question identifies what factors influenced the Korean format market by examining the historical background to the format programs.

RQ₁. What factors influenced the inflow of format programs into Korea over time?

After laying out a broader context of the format program market of Korea, the next research question specifically looks at how the Korean media liberalization period affected the flows of format programs. One of the biggest changes in the Korean media market is the media liberalization period, which refers to the deregulation policies in the late 1990s to early 2000s (Shim, 2006). This study will use 2004 as the reference point for the media liberalization period, mainly because the biggest events during this period

were the introduction of cable television services and lessening of the Japanese cultural ban. Though started in 1995, it was from 1999 to 2003 when cable channels started to gather a significant growth (Y. M. Lee & Jung, 2009) and Japanese television programs were partially allowed on paid television channels in 2004 (J. W. Park, 2006). Thus, the second research question will see how the flow of formats has changed, in terms of the amount, channels, genres, the origin of country, and the influence of the Japanese cultural ban, before and after 2004.

In the case of genres, this study will use a combination of Moran and Keane (2004) and Hong and Sung (2007)'s categorization of format program genres as a guideline. Moran and Keane (2004) do not offer specific definitions of format sub-genres but they do mention the notable format genres in Asia, which are animation, children's television, dating, idol-drama, infotainment, lifestyle, quiz, reality/docu-soap, drama/soap opera, telenovela, and variety shows. Hong and Sung (2007) give more concrete definitions of format sub-genres by dividing them into non-scripted formats – game, reality, talent, and dating shows– and scripted formats – drama, sitcom, and comedy.

However, when the sampled dataset was examined, it was found that not all of these sub-genres were applicable. In those cases, the researcher went to the original format makers' webpage to find what genre they had used to define the program and created other categories based on that information. As a result, the sub-genres used for the analysis were game, quiz⁴, information, general reality, reality talent contest, dating,

⁴ Although there is fine line between game and quiz shows, this study draws a distinction between the two. It operationalizes 'quiz show' as a program in which the participants answer serious knowledge questions to win a prize. If the questions were more entertainment-based or the participants were doing other types of games to compete for a prize, the program was categorized as a game show.

and variety⁵ shows for the non-scripted formats and drama and comedy for the scripted formats.

RQ₂. How did the inflows of format programs change after 2004?

2-1. How many format programs were imported?

2-2. Which channels have imported format programs?

2-3. What genres of format programs were imported?

2-4. Where did the imported format programs originate from?

2-5. How has having access to Japanese content change the inflow of imported format programs?

Then, this study will analyze case studies to examine how Korea has incorporated formats into its domestic media market through the third research question. From the sampled program list, a total of 8 programs were chosen as case studies. The criteria for choosing the programs were based on how much information about the programs were available. For example, programs that had information about where the producers bought the format license from or how much was paid for the format, would become a case study but programs that only had information about whether it was a format or not were not chosen as a case study. Using those criteria, 8 programs – *Youth*, *Father's Challenge*, *Brain Survivor*, *Brain Wall*, *Solomon's Choice*, *I vs 100*, *Project Runway Korea* and *Dancing with the Stars* – were chosen for analysis.

Using these particular case studies, the third research question will examine the changes of format programs as the trend moves from illegal copying towards buying

⁵ Variety show is operationalized as a program that has a combination of various sub-genres to provide entertainment to the audience. It usually has a host that introduces the different segments of the program.

format licenses, by analyzing the reasons for using formats, mode of adaptation, perceptions, and how having access to Japanese content influenced the format uses of each case study. The adaptation mode refers to the three phases of adaptations, which were created by the researcher through the analyses on the selected case studies; the illegal copying, partial formats integrated into a larger program, and whole licensed format program phases. The analysis will examine each case study to see what elements were the same as the original or differently adapted to fit the local situations⁶. The perception of formats means how newspaper articles talk about format programs.

RQ₃. How has the use of format programs change from illegal copying to buying licensed formats?

3-1. How have the reasons for using the format programs changed?

3-2. How has the adaptation mode of format programs changed?

3-3. How has the perception on format programs changed?

3-4. How has having access to Japanese content changed the use of formats from illegal copying to obtaining licensed formats?

The research questions stated above will all be answered by using textual analysis. More specifically, the first research question will be answered through the analysis on annual reports⁷ from the Korea Communications Commission and related academic articles that was gathered to get information about the general Korean media

⁶ This study will differentiate the types of adaptations by using 'localization' for the adaptations that were done by global format copyright holders and 'glocalization' for the adaptations that were done by the local Korean producers (Straubhaar, 2009).

⁷ Although the sample period for this study is from 1999 to 2011, the most recent annual report was the analysis on the 2010 broadcast industry market. Thus, some of the data presented in this study will exclude 2011 because the data was not available.

market. The analysis for the second question will use newspaper articles that are about imported format programs in general as data and the last research question will also use newspaper articles for analysis, but only those that cover the 8 chosen case studies. As noted above, all newspaper articles were gathered by inputting related keywords into the KINDS system, a comprehensive newspaper online newspaper database operated by the Korea Press Foundation.

Chapter 4: The Inflow of Formats

This chapter examines the factors that have influenced the inflow of format programs into Korea to answer the first research question. The results can be summarized as the globalization of the production markets, deregulation policies, higher competition in the media market, and economic factors.

GLOBAL PRODUCTION MARKETS AND THE KOREAN WAVE

Through technological advances, such as satellite or digital television, media markets all over the world have been experiencing an expansion of channels (Hong & Sung, 2007; Chalaby, 2011). In most cases, countries were experiencing a shortage of content because there simply was not enough content to fill in the vast number of channels. Usually the channels relied on imported programs to use as filler content but as noted earlier, imported programs are affected by the cultural discount effect so audiences preferred to watch local content over imported content (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988). But producing new local programs tends to be expensive and there is no guarantee that the program will succeed. Thus, the extensive amount of channels had created a programming market that was in need of content that would be appealing to their audience and not hindered by cultural discount (Chalaby, 2011).

Responding to this need, both independent production companies and television stations have created formats to supply this particular market. Leading companies, such as FremantleMedia, Endemol, BBC Worldwide or Zeal Entertainment, have been expanding their local businesses to a global basis. For example, FremantleMedia had acquired production subsidiaries and strategic alliances in over 20 countries around the

world by 2008 and BBC Worldwide has expanded their format businesses into countries like Australia and the United States (Esser, 2010).

These format companies have production and distribution networks that reach out globally, and this has enabled them to identify key markets around the world. In particular, Endemol has set up an information network that is devoted to observing and gathering information on specific markets (Chalaby, 2011). Korea had drawn attention through this network because of the Korean Wave (Hong & Sung, 2007), which is a term that refers to the popularity of Korean cultural products in Asian countries. Because Korean programs were popular in China and other Southeast Asian countries, format companies saw this as an opportunity to expand their formats into these countries through the Korean market (Hong & Sung, 2007). If Korean versions of international formats were successful, it would be much easier for formats to gain a foothold in the Chinese and Southeast Asian markets. So, format companies have a reason for wanting to see many formats succeed in the Korean market and the format flows into Korea have risen significantly in the recent years.

In addition, the Korean television channels, especially broadcast channels, are keen to import formats because they are trying to diversify the Korean Wave content that they export to Asian countries. It has been criticized that the Korean Wave is limited to dramas and also that the one-way flow of Korean content into these countries has caused animosity towards Korea (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2004). Most of the television stations' export revenues are made from these Asian countries but they rarely import content from those countries. The negativity created from this unidirectional flow is similar to that of the dominance of U.S. content in the past. Thus, television stations have been trying to overcome these problems through format programs. Because formats are able to be customized to each country, it is more likely that the local audience will not be

more hostile towards Korean format programs than whole programs. So, Korean television stations have given attention to this advantage of formats and are trying to develop format programs to sell the Korean Wave countries. An example is that one of the main broadcast channels, SBS, has been working with a local venture company in Indonesia to sell and distribute the formats of Korean programs (Hong & Sung, 2007).

Connecting this to the imported format flows, it can be said that because Korea has not had much experience of handling format programs, it is trying to learn the format trade business by importing foreign formats from the noted format companies. Television stations are not only producing format programs for high audience ratings but also to learn the business of the format trade, like putting together a licensing contract or coping with the adaptation changes a producer might want to make (Hong & Sung, 2007). As a result, the format licensing for some Korean programs, like *We got Married* or *Golden Bell*, has been sold to Turkey and Vietnam respectively and other programs are in the process of selling their format to other countries (E. Y. Kang, 2011). However, this is not the general situation for all programs; only a couple programs have been able to sell their formats overseas. Thus, it can be expected that the Korean television stations will continue importing formats to learn the know-how of creating a successful format and distributing it to other countries.

DEREGULATION OF THE PROGRAM QUOTAS

One of the biggest changes in the Korean media market during the sample period is the deregulation of the domestic television program quotas. Program quotas are governmental regulations that enforce television stations to broadcast a specific amount of domestic programs to protect the local television market (Papandrea, 1998). Moreover,

these quotas regulate the percentages of specific program genres, which are to promote the public interest by offering the audience a diversity of viewing options (KCC, 2000).

Korea is one of the countries that still has a domestic program quota, which is specified in the Broadcasting Act. It currently consists of three sections; the restriction of the amount of national programs in general, the amount of the national programs allotted for specific genres and restrictions for imported programs by origin. The domestic program quota first became effective in 2000 and prior to 2000, there was only a clause in the Programming Article about imported programs, which stated that each broadcast channel could not broadcast imported content over 20% of the weekly broadcasting time.

The official Programming of Domestically Produced Broadcast Programs Article⁸ was established in 2000 and over the next two decades, the quota was amended several times. The 2001, 2004, and 2011 quotas were chosen for analysis because these were the years when there were notable changes. A comparison of these quotas showed that there was trend towards allowing more imported content and distinctions among the different television services.

In 2001, the quota started to specify different amounts of national content for broadcast and other television services to broadcast. The broadcast channels had to fill 80% of the monthly broadcasting time with national programs, while other television services were only restricted with 50%. There were also different restrictions for the movie, animation, and popular music genre programs⁹, and broadcast channels were again expected to air a higher percentage of each genre than the other television channels.

⁸ Korea controls the amount of imported content through the regulation of national content by stating how much national content should be broadcast.

⁹ There are only three genres specified in the genre quota because these genres were considered especially vulnerable to imported content. It was thought that Korea could not compete against Hollywood films or Japanese animations, and also because these specific genres were thought to have a stronger impact on the national culture (KCC, 2008).

	1990	2001	2004	2011
Broadcast	Imported content cannot exceed over 20% of weekly broadcasting time ¹⁰	80% of the monthly broadcasting time	60-80% of quarterly broadcasting time	60-80% of the half-year broadcasting time
CATV and Satellite	-	50% of the monthly broadcasting time	40-70% of the quarterly broadcasting time	40-70% of the half-year broadcasting time
Cable Program Providers	-		20-50% of the quarterly broadcasting time	20-50% of the half-year broadcasting time

Table 1: Changes in the Domestic Program Quota

The deregulation trend starts to show in the 2004 amendment of the Broadcasting Act. As seen in the quotation below, the biggest change in the 2004 quota is that there are categories for satellite and cable television. The 2004 quota states that broadcast channels must air domestically produced programs for 60-80% of the total quarterly broadcasting time while satellite is required 40-70% and cable, 20-50%. Compared to the 2001 quota, which stated that broadcast channels had to show 80% and other channels 50% of national programs, the restrictions have become looser. Also, the unit of the quota has changed from monthly from quarterly, which allows a more flexibility for the television stations to program their content.

A broadcasting business operator shall, under Article 71 (1) of the Act, broadcast the domestically produced broadcast programs of at least the ratio publicly

¹⁰ This clause was specified in the Programming Article, which was established before the Domestic Program Quota went into effect in 2000. Because this is a different Article, the wording of the Article is aimed at regulating imported programs, rather than domestic programs.

notified by the Broadcasting and Communications Commission, within the limit referred to in the following subparagraphs:

1. Terrestrial broadcasting business operators and terrestrial broadcasting program providers: not less than 60/100 but not more than 80/100 of the total quarterly broadcasting time of the relevant channel.
2. CATV broadcasting business operators and satellite broadcasting business operators: not less than 40/100 but not more than 70/100 of the total quarterly broadcasting time of the relevant channel.
3. Program providers except for terrestrial broadcasting program providers: not less than 20/100 but not more than 50/100 of the total quarterly broadcasting time of the relevant channel.

Another notable change in 2004 is that there is a new quota on the origins of imported content, which is also shown in the quotation below. To elaborate, there is a limit to how much imported program from a single country is allowed. For instance, a television channel cannot broadcast only U.S. programs for over 60% of the allotted time; it has to vary the origins of the imported programs by also airing programs from other countries, like Australia, England or Canada. This purpose of this quota was to promote the diversity of imported content and also to protect the national movie and animation market (KCC, 2008). Again, broadcast channels had stricter regulations than the satellite and cable television in this quota.

A broadcasting business operator shall, under Article 71 (3) of the Act, program the movies, animations and popular music produced in one country among the movies, animations and popular music imported from foreign countries, not exceeding the ratio publicly notified by the Broadcasting and Communications Commission, within the limit of 60/100 of the total quarterly broadcasting hours of imported movies, animations and popular music of the relevant channel.

In 2011, more restrictions in the quota were being lessened. While the percentages of required national program quota remained the same, the unit of the national program quota had changed to half-year, enabling more imported content to be aired. Another reason for the deregulation during this period is the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

(FTA), which was ratified by the Korean National Assembly in 2011. For the media sector, Korea agreed to lower programming quotas for the movie and animation genres by 5% and the country-of-origin quota was changed as well; television channels were now allowed to show 80% of imported content from a single country (KCC, 2007).

Despite these deregulations of the imported television programs, the amount of imported programs on broadcast and cable channels has not dramatically risen. Looking at Figure 1, the broadcast channels seem to have not been influenced by the changes in the domestic quota. In fact, in 2004, the quota was lessened compared to 2001, but the amount of imported content has actually dropped after 2004 while the amount of national content has steadily risen.

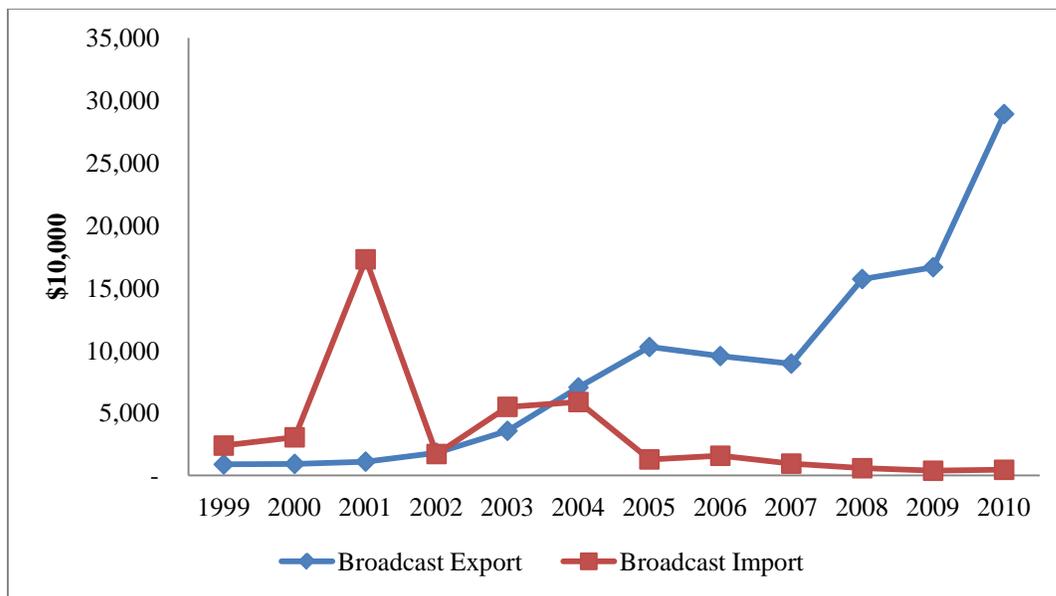


Figure 1: Amounts of Imported/Exported Programs in Broadcast 1999-2010

This outcome comes from the fact that production sites were now able to produce more national content and the channels no longer had to rely on imported content to fill in their broadcasting hours (Lim, 2008). Moreover, as the local content began to improve in

quality, the audience began to prefer local content over imported ones (Lim, 2008). As explained in the cultural proximity theory, the audience will favor national content first because of the local factors within the content, such as the familiar faces of national stars or the knowledge required to understand the local humor, traditions, or cultures (Straubhaar, 1991, 2007). But if certain needs of the audience are not able to be satisfied by the national content, the audience would then turn to imported content to fulfill those needs. In this case, the notion of cultural discount comes into play. Cultural discount explains that a program's appeal diminishes as it travels overseas because of the cultural differences, and this makes the audience choose a program that is more culturally closer to them (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988). Thus, when the Korean audience had the choice of choosing between national and imported content because of the abundance of national content, they were inclined to choose the national programs.

Another reason for the steep growth of exported programs is the Korean Wave. In 2003, the Korean Wave started to take off in Japan through Korean dramas (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2004) this corresponds with Figure 1. The exported Korean Wave content tends to be mostly dramas from the broadcast channels (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2004) and Figure 1 shows that the broadcast exports start to increase greatly during the 2003 and 2004 period.

Just like in the case with broadcast channels, the deregulation of programming quotas does not seem to have significant impact on the cable channels. The quota was lowered in 2001, 2004, and 2011, and there is no great increase in those years. There is a sudden rise in the imported programs 2002, but this is simply the outcome of importing

some expensive documentaries from the U.S. When the raw number of imported programs in 2002 was compared to the other years, there was not much difference.¹¹

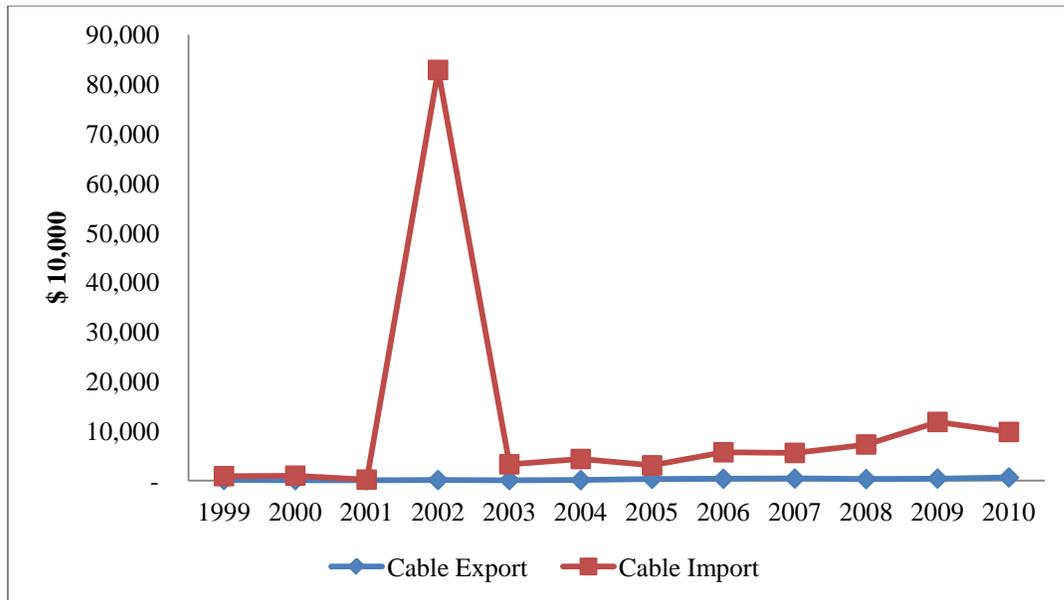


Figure 2: Amounts of Imported/Exported Programs in Cable 1999-2010

Also, although cable channels are still more dependent on imported content than broadcast channels, the situation for cable channels has somewhat improved over the years and some cable channels have been able to produce original programs that are well received (Han, 2011). This trend can be seen in the later years in the graph, 2009-2010, where the amount of imported content decreases while the exported content increases. It can be said that though the imported program quotas were lowered, cable channels did not turn towards increasing their imported content. Instead, they are trying to produce more local content to fill their broadcasting hours and to export them other countries.

¹¹ Refer to Appendix A for exact numbers.

From the analysis above, it can be inferred that the domestic program quota deregulations did not have a significant influence on the inflow of imported whole programs. As the national content became sufficient in both quality and numbers, the audience started to prefer national content to imported content. Thus, both cable and broadcast stations did not import as much foreign programs even with the deregulation of the domestic program quotas.

Relating this result with the format program flows, it implies that because of the cultural discount effect, the television stations would prefer importing format programs instead of whole programs. As format programs are adapted to fit the local audiences' taste by using national characters and culturally familiar themes, it is considered as local content and not subject to the cultural discount effect (Yang, 2011). Therefore, it is more likely that locally adapted format programs would gather a larger audience than an imported whole program so producers tend to import formats (Moran & Keane, 2004).

HIGHER COMPETITION

Another factor that influenced the inflow of formats is the growing competition in the media market. The easiest way of identifying this competition is to examine the size of the advertising market. Due to the complicated media history, the public broadcast stations, MBC and KBS, have both license fees and advertisements as revenue. Thus, all television channels in the Korean media market share the advertising market as a source of revenue.

The advertising market, as shown in Figure 3, has been growing more competitive over the years. In the late 1990s to early 2000s, broadcast channels dominated the advertising market at nearly 90% of the market. As these channels were given favorable

positions during the military administration in the 1970s and 1980s, they were able to establish a strong foothold in the media market, which made it difficult for other new television services to penetrate the market.

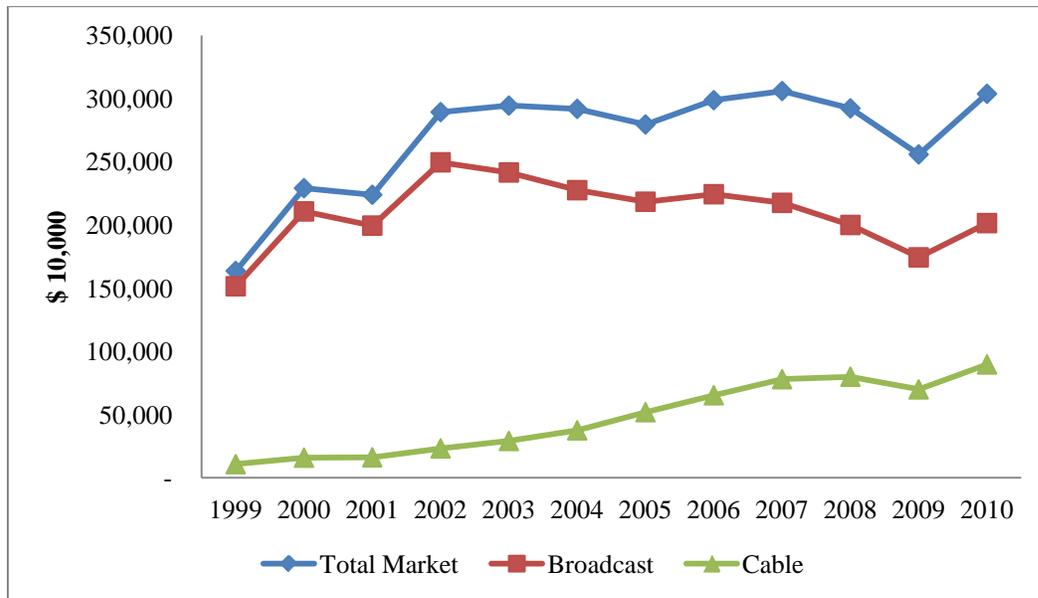


Figure 3: Total of Korean Advertising Market Revenues 1999-2010

However, from 2002 and on, the percentages that the broadcast channels hold in the advertising market began to decline while cable channels' percentages steadily rise. There are many factors to this outcome, but the most significant factor is the advertisement restrictions on the broadcasting channels (Y. J. Lee & Park, 2011). Broadcast channels' advertisement hours must be sold through a state-operated media representative, Korea Broadcasting Advertising Corporation (KOBACO), and broadcast channels cannot sell their airtime to advertisers themselves. The price for broadcast advertisements are not decided by the demand and supply of the market but controlled by KOBACO because the reason for installing KOBACO was to control the inflation of advertisement prices (S. I. Lee, 2007). Other restrictions for broadcast advertisements,

such as not allowing commercial breaks or product placements¹², are all enforced to control the inflation. However, cable channel advertisements are exempt from these restrictions; they can directly sell their airtime to the advertisers, and can air commercial breaks and product placement ads.

The advertisement restrictions did not hinder the broadcast channels' revenue in the past. They had established strong positions in the media market, which made it difficult for newer television services to enter the market, and it was possible for the broadcast channels to dominate the advertisement market as well. Among the newer services, cable channels in particular struggled against financial hardships due to low penetration rates and advertisement revenues (Hwang & Jung, 2005).

But as cable channels began to become competitive through the government's efforts to promote cable television, broadcast channels suddenly found themselves competing against cable channels for advertisement revenues. The most significant policy that influenced the cable channel growth was simplifying the acquisition of broadcast licenses for cable channels in 2001 (Hwang & Jung, 2005), and it can be seen in Figure 3 that as the advertisement revenues for cable grow, the revenues for broadcast channels decline. Moreover, as the cable channels do not have restrictions on advertisements like the broadcast channels do, it is expected that the cable channels' market share will further grow, which will create higher competition in the advertising market.

Along with the advertisements, new media services are also creating higher competition in the media market. Until the mid 1990s, there were no other television services except for broadcast channels, so these channels held a monopolistic position in the market. However, the Korean government began to deregulate the media market in

¹² It is only recent that broadcast channels were allowed to air product placement advertisements, starting in May of 2009 (J. Yoon, 2011). Prior to this, product placements on broadcast channels were restricted by the Broadcasting Act.

the late 1990s, starting with cable channel services in 1995 (Shim, 2002). Other new media, such as satellite television in 2002, DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) in 2005 and IPTV (Internet Protocol television) in 2009, started to provide their services. These new media services began to grow rapidly, gathering over 23 million subscribers in total (KCC, 2011) and the monopolistic status of broadcast channels has started to weaken (Y. J. Choi, 2005). Figure 3 shows that in the years when the new media services mentioned above enter the market, the market shares of broadcast channels decline accordingly.

Another recent development in the Korean media market is the approval for the comprehensive programming channels¹³. In 2009, the National Assembly of Korea passed the media reform bill that gave the approval to these channels to start broadcasting, with much controversy (Cho, Song, & Lee, 2011). The reason for the controversy was that newspaper companies would be permitted to operate these comprehensive channels. Prior to this reform bill, the cross-ownership of broadcast and print properties were prohibited because of the concern over the political influences these companies might wield through both mediums (Ranstad, 2009). After this reform bill was passed, the Korea Communications Commission granted licenses to four newspaper companies and a news agency¹⁴, and the comprehensive programming channels started to air in 2011. In the case of the newspaper companies, they are the top four newspapers in terms of circulation, (Ranstad, 2009) and have political viewpoints that align with the current administration. With this kind of power and money behind these comprehensive

¹³ The term comprehensive channels refers to the paid television channels that can air all kinds of program genres, including news, entertainment, culture, dramas, sports, and etc. These channels are basically the same as the terrestrial broadcast channels except that they are aired through paid television services. Before the comprehensive channels, paid television channels were only allowed to be specialized genre channels.

¹⁴ The Chosun Daily, JoongAng Daily, Dong-A Daily, and Maeil Business Newspaper were granted licenses for comprehensive programming channels, and Yonhap News was granted a specialized news channel.

programming channels, both broadcast and cable channels are facing even more competition.

As seen as above, many types of new media are entering the market and they all share advertisements as a revenue source. However, the Korean advertisement market has reached its maturity and the tight governmental restrictions, such as KOBACO, limit the market growth (Y. J. Lee & Park, 2011) and this leads to fiercer competition among the media channels.

Because of the growing competition in the advertising market, both broadcast and cable channels are pressed to create successful programs that will gather a large audience because higher audience ratings will lead to higher airtime prices for advertisements. One of the advantages to format programs is that it offers proven success because other data, such as the target audience, ratings, or know-how of the formats from various countries, can be acquired along with the format licenses (Moran & Keane, 2004). Also, as formats are adapted to specifically fit the local audience, it is less likely that formats would be subject to cultural discount. Thus, this competitive situation has led more channels to buy format licenses rather than producing new programs because formats are less risky, performance-wise.

ECONOMIC SITUATION

The third factor to influence the format flows into Korea is the economic situation. This is related to the increasing competition in the advertisement market because the competition for a limited source leads to the demand for investing more money into competitive programs (Esser, 2010). As the growth of the advertisement

market is somewhat constrained because of the regulations, broadcast and cable channels both are facing higher productions costs to produce more competitive programs.

Figure 4 shows the production costs of broadcast and cable channels, and it can be seen that the productions costs increase steeply after 2009. The 2008-2009 period experienced a sudden drop of costs because of the global financial crisis in late 2008. The television stations went into retrenchment during this time, such as airing more reruns rather than producing new programs or cancelling programs that had low audience ratings, and this led to the decrease in production costs (KCC, 2010). However, as Korea began to recover from the crisis afterwards, the production costs rose sharply because they were compensating from the sudden drop in 2008-2009 (KCC, 2011).

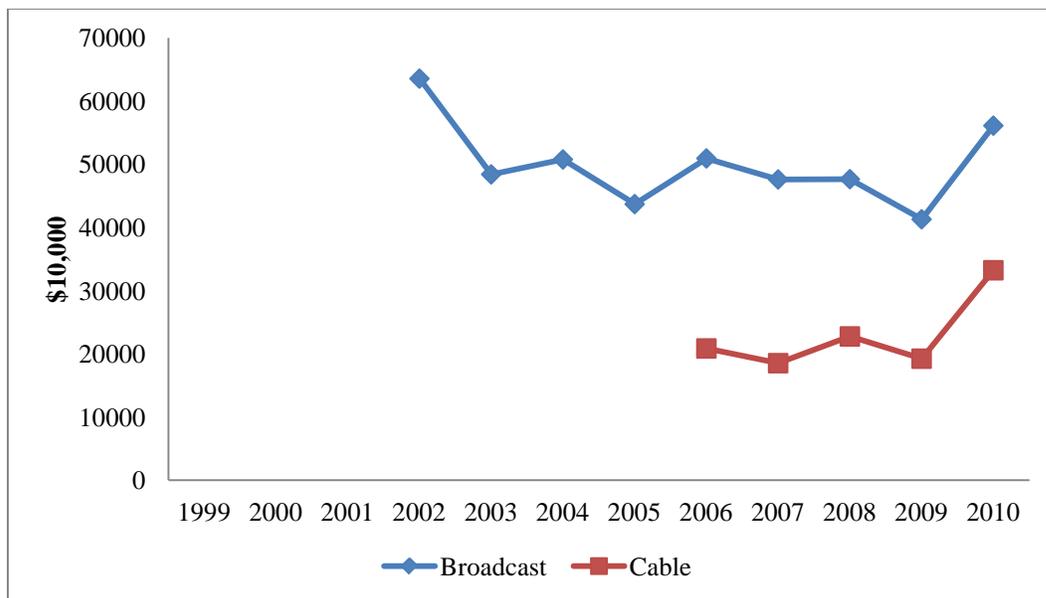


Figure 4: Total Production Costs for Broadcast and Cable 1999-2010¹⁵

¹⁵ The Korea Communications Commission used a different methodology for calculating the broadcast production costs starting in 2002, so the numbers prior to this year were not included in the graph. Also, the KCC started to include productions costs for cable channels in the 2006 annual report, so data prior to this year was not available.

Another reason for the rising production costs, which is specific to the Korean media, is the practice of heavily relying on celebrities and famous figures for program competitiveness (Hong & Sung, 2007; Park & Yu, 2009). Featuring stars on programs leads to higher production budgets because of the money television stations have to pay for them to appear on their programs. But television stations continue to pay these high prices because celebrity appearances will assure higher ratings to some degree (Bae, 2005). Also, as the comprehensive programming channels prepared for their launch in late 2011, these channels offered even more money to celebrities because they were relying on 'star power' to promote their new channels (Nam & Huh, 2011). This has led to the inflation of celebrity payments and ultimately contributes to the increase of broadcast and cable channel production budgets.

The economic hardships due to the world financial crisis and rising production costs have led television stations to explore new approaches to program productions, and imported formats are considered one of the solutions (Esser, 2010). Not only do format programs have the advantage of proven successes, it also has the benefits of cutting down production costs. Currently, the most popular genre in the international format market is the reality show format, which tends to feature normal people instead of celebrities (Chalaby, 2011). Because the reality show formats do not need celebrities or other famous figures that demand high payments, television stations are able to cut down the rising production costs while guaranteeing high audience ratings (Hong & Sung, 2007; Torre, 2012). So, producing a format program is much more profitable for the television channels and this has resulted in the increase of format programs into Korea over the years.

This chapter answered the first research question, which aimed to give a larger picture of the Korean format market through examining the factors that influenced the

inflow of imported formats. The analysis identified four main factors that had significant influence on the format inflow, which were the advent of global production markets, the deregulation of domestic program quotas, intensified competition between media channels, and the economic factors. The next chapter will go into more detail about the imported formats by answering the second research question, which looks at how the imported format inflows have changed over time.

Chapter 5: Changes in the Format Programs Flows

This chapter focuses on the second research question, which looks at how the inflow of format programs into Korea has changed after the media liberalization period. In particular, it examines the changes in the total number, genres, origins of the formats, and channels that imported the format programs.

IMPORTED FORMATS AND CHANNELS

First of all, the most noticeable trend in the analyzed data is the number of formats imported into Korea. From 2004, the number of formats steadily rises, with the exception of 2008, which was the year of the world financial crisis. The deregulation of the domestic program quota occurred during this period, but it did not bring a significant change to the total of imported whole programs.

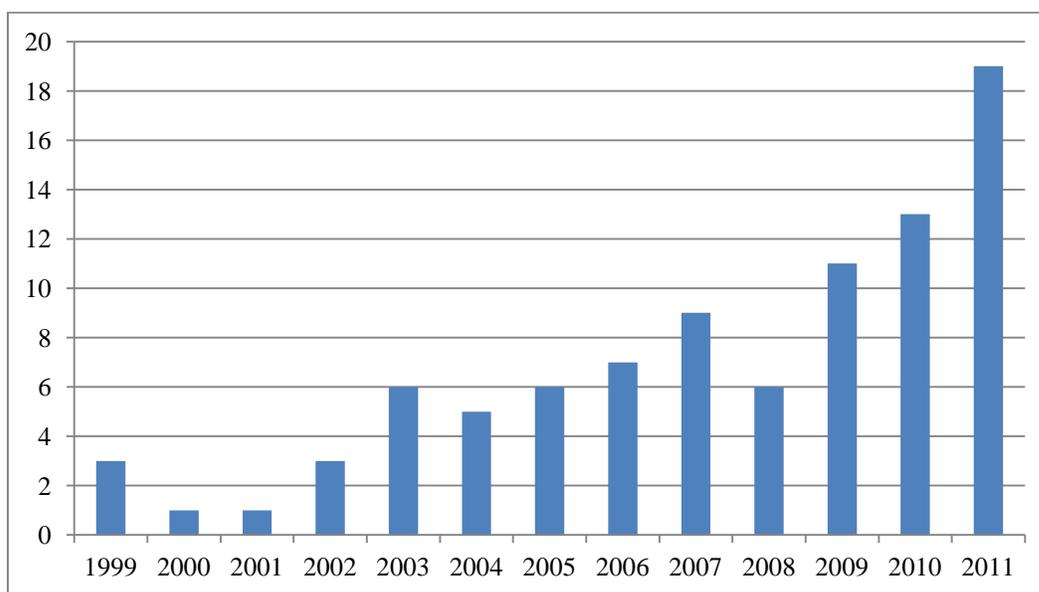


Figure 5: Total Number of Imported Formats 1999-2011

Instead, the total number of imported formats increases after the deregulations took place, which in turn, backs up the argument that television stations were moving towards importing formats because producing formats offered more advantages than importing whole programs. Such advantages include being able to act as an insurance against low audience ratings because formats are proven elsewhere, having the flexibility to adapt to the local audiences' taste, and requiring smaller production budgets than other fiction programs (Waisbord, 2004; Moran, 2009).

Throughout the entire sample period, the amount of imported formats steadily rises, with an especially sharp increase in 2009. This sudden increase is mostly because 2008 was the year of global recession and television stations in general were cutting their budgets by decreasing the number of imported programs during this time (KCC, 2011). This strategy of reducing imported programs to cut budgets is contrary to the belief that television stations will usually increase imported programs to save costs because it is cheaper than producing domestic programs (Havens, 2002). The Korean television stations chose other ways, such as increasing reruns of domestic programs or cancelling expensive genres, like dramas, and replacing them with cheaper genre programs, to survive during the global recession period (KCC, 2011). Korea began to recover from the global recession in the following year and the television stations also regained their usual imported format levels as well.

Also, as mentioned earlier, the overall advertisement revenues sharply decrease in 2009, which implies that the competition among the media channels have become more intensified. This corresponds with the sudden increase of formats in 2009 and this can be interpreted as the television stations seeing format programs as a way to be more competitive because formats are more likely to be successful than imported whole programs. To give some examples of successful formats, *The Voice of Korea* had the

scored an audience rating of 5%, which is extremely successful for a cable channel program (Lim, 2012) and *I vs 100* had maintained an average of 10% audience ratings for five years (KCCA, 2011). By comparison, imported whole programs were being pushed to non-primetime, especially in the late night times when not many people would watch these programs (B. Seo, 2010b).

Another explanation for the sudden rise of imported formats in 2009 is the increase of formats from the cable channels. Figure 6 shows the number of imported formats by channel type and it can be seen that while broadcast channels have continuously aired formats throughout the sample period, there had been no formats on cable channels until 2005. But after 2005, cable channels started to imported formats and the number of formats on cable rose sharply in the more recent years.

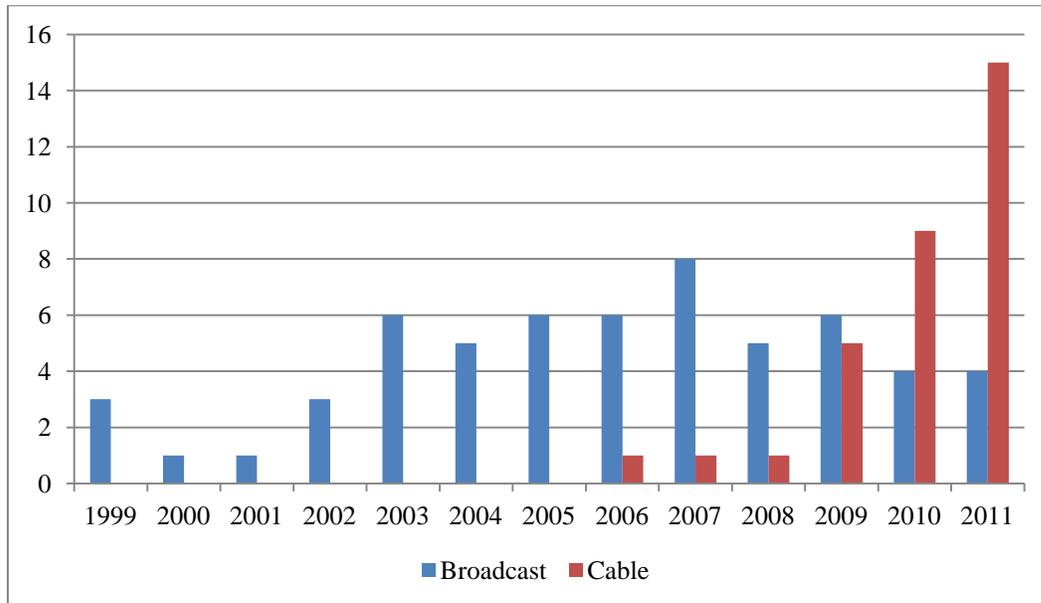


Figure 6: Total Number of Imported Formats by Channel Type 1999-2011

The first official format program on cable was *Yes or No*, which is the Korean version of *Deal or No Deal*. Although *Yes or No* received some attention at the beginning, it was cancelled after two seasons because it failed to successfully adapt to the local context and was not well received by the audience. The show concept of an individual winning a large sum of money caused negative feelings because it was thought to emphasize the rich-poor gap. Previous game or quiz shows had gotten around this sentiment by having the winner donate the winnings (Hong & Sung, 2007), but *Yes and No* did not appeal to the audience because it did not change this rule.

Another cable format in 2008, *Perfect Bride*, which was a reality dating show with competitors trying to meet their future spouse, was also a failure because the original format was not well known in Korea. One of the merits of global formats is that they have a brand name that is recognized by the audience and *Perfect Bride* did not have this advantage. Also, there were problems with recruiting competitors because of the show's rule of competitors living together during the filming period.

However, cable stations learned from these format failures and in 2009, one of the most successful format programs, *Project Runway Korea*, was aired on the cable channel OnStyle. It achieved an audience rating of 1%, which was considered high for a cable channel at that time (G. Yoon, 2009), and it set the atmosphere for reality programs to become popular in Korea. Along with *Project Runway Korea*, a reality singing competition show called *Super Star K* was broadcast later that year and it was the most popular cable program in history. This program is similar to *American Idol*, but the producers claimed that this was not a format but an original Korean singing competition show (B. Seo, 2012). As mentioned before, a 1% audience rating for cable channels was reckoned to be very high, but *Super Star K* reached over 6% in its first season in 2009 (B. Seo, 2010a). Not only was *Super Star K* popular, but it also was the start of the current

reality competition trend and this program even led broadcast stations to air reality competition programs on their channels (E. Kim, 2011).

In these conditions, even more formats started to be imported in 2010. This is also the year when the number of formats on cable channels began to surpass the number of formats on broadcast channels. Having witnessed the success of *Super Star K*, other cable channels began to actively produce programs than relying on imported whole programs. In particular, formats were a way for cable channels to produce successful content on a budget and some of the well-known international formats like *America's Next Top Model* or *Wife Swap*, were imported and locally adapted in 2010.

Also in this year, CJ Corporation, one the conglomerates in Korea, expanded their cable business by merging with the largest cable company, OnMedia, and established CJ Entertainment & Media. Through this merger, CJ E&M achieved a market share of over 30% (K. Y. Seo, 2010c) and it began to invest huge amounts of money into producing original content, stimulating other cable channels to also invest in their original content productions.

Instead of trying to produce program genres that were already popular on broadcast channels, cable channels tried to differentiate themselves by producing genres that were hard to see on broadcast channels. For example, melodramas are one of the main genres on broadcast, so cable channels started to produce dramas with newer themes that are not focused on love stories, such as vampire dramas (*Vampire Prosecutor*), sports dramas (*Birdie Buddy*), and crime investigation dramas (*Special Task Force TEN*). However, there is the problem of selling advertisement airtimes when producing such new content. New and unproven content are unattractive to advertisers because there is no guarantee to high audience ratings. But producing formats, which are already proven to be successful elsewhere, has a lesser risk of being a failure. Moreover,

formats are also easier to promote because in the cases of internationally famous formats, people already know the title and have certain expectations about what the program is about (Yang, 2011).

While the total number of formats coming into the country was increasing, this was not applicable to all channels. As seen in Figure 7, all four of broadcast channels – SBS, KBS1, KBS2, and MBC – were importing formats, and a total of nine cable channels were importing formats. Out of those cable channels, MBC every1 and KBS joy are affiliates of the broadcast channels, so only six channels are actual cable channels that are separate from the broadcast channels.

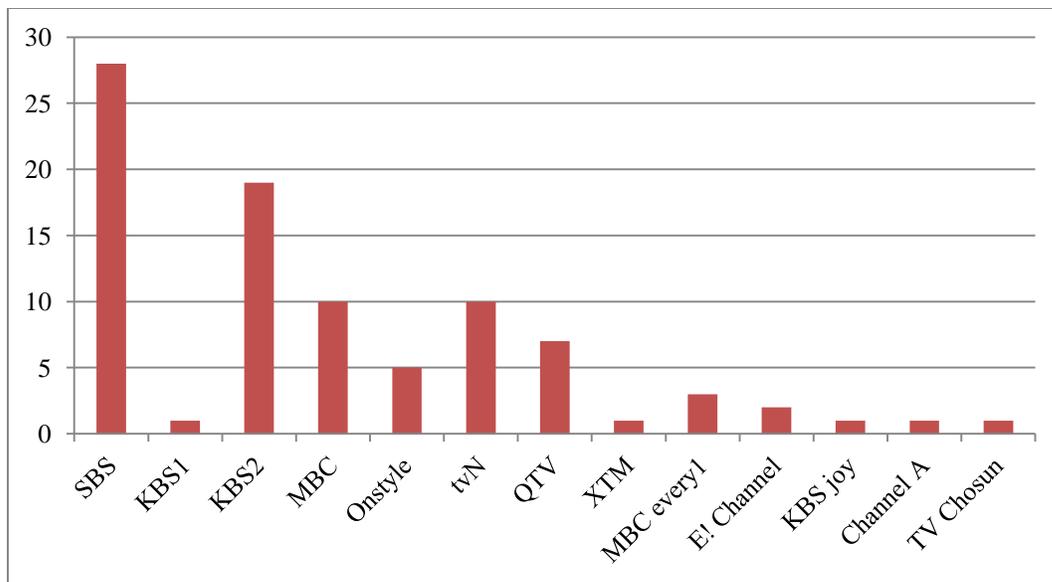


Figure 7: Total Number of Imported Formats by Channel Name 1999-2011

- **SBS:** This is the only commercial broadcast channel and is known for its entertainment programs.
- **KBS:** KBS is a public broadcast channel separated into two channels. KBS1 concentrates on more serious programming, such as public affairs, news reports,

- and educational documentaries. KBS2 is focused on entertainment content, like dramas, comedy, and variety shows.
- **MBC:** As mentioned in previous chapters, this is a public channel in name but operated more as a commercial channel due to historical consequences. This channel is widely known for its successful dramas and was nicknamed “The Drama Kingdom Channel” in the past.
 - **OnStyle:** This is a cable channel that specializes in lifestyle/beauty content and its target audience is women in their 20-30s. Prior to the format popularity trend, the originals of international formats, such as *Project Runway* and *American Idol*, were aired on this channel. It is owned by the conglomerate CJ E&M and was previously owned by OnMedia before the merger of the two companies.
 - **tvN:** Short for ‘Total Variety Network’, this cable channel is a entertainment channel that was started in 2006 by CJ E&M. This channel is infamous for its provocative content because it marketed itself through this type of content when it was starting out and even received warnings for the Korea Communications Commission as a result.
 - **QTV:** This is an entertainment cable channel that is targeted at men and women in their 20s-40s. It was created through a global joint venture between the Choongang Daily Newspaper and Turner Broadcasting Network of Time Warner. The channel markets itself as a ‘Real Entertainment Channel’ and it means that it is focused on reality shows.
 - **XTM:** This cable channel identifies itself as a men’s entertainment channel and it shows programs that are targeted toward men, such as extreme sports, men’s fashion, or bodybuilding shows. It was started in 2003 by CJ E&M.

- **MBC Every1:** This is an affiliate of MBC and it labels itself as a variety channel, programming various genres like drama, sitcom, comedy, or reality. Most of its content are reruns of popular programs from MBC, but it has recently started to produce original content.
- **E Channel:** It is owned by Tcast and the channel was first started in 2000 as a telecommunication channel but later changed into an entertainment and variety channel in 2005.
- **KBS joy:** This channel is an affiliate of KBS and it is a specialized entertainment channel. It mostly shows reruns of KBS entertainment programs but it also produces original content as well.
- **Channel A:** This is one of the comprehensive programming channels that started broadcasting in late 2011. This particular channel is owned by the Dong-A Daily Newspaper and it airs all genres, including news, dramas, and entertainment content on its channel.
- **TV Chosun:** A comprehensive programming channel that is owned by the Chosun Daily Newspaper. As same as Channel A, it does not specialize in a specific genre but broadcasts a variety of genres.

Among the four broadcast channels, only KBS1 imported a single format throughout the sample period and SBS, KBS2, and MBC had a fair amount of formats. KBS1 was not actively importing formats as the other channels because it was the public broadcast channel that focused on airing programs that promoted the public interest, such as news, public affairs, or educational entertainment programs. Importing foreign content would not be well received by the public because this channel is expected to air more national programs for the public interest. But the other broadcast channels do not have as

high expectations to be as 'public', so it was relatively easier for those channels to import and produce formats.

Among the other broadcast channels, SBS had the highest number of imported formats probably because it is the only commercial channel and has the image of being famous for its entertainment content. This is also seen in the annual reports from the Korea Communications Commission; SBS has had over 40% of entertainment programs in their yearly programming schedule (KCC, 2011). Most of the formats on SBS were game show formats and this corresponds with SBS's channel image of having the strongest variety show programs.

KBS2 also has a high number of formats and this is possible because KBS2 is an entertainment focused channel. However, as it is part of KBS, the public broadcast station, promoting the public interest is still expected of KBS2, although the expectation is not as high as KBS1. Thus, the formats that are seen on KBS2 are either dramas or educational quiz shows and some of the more sensational format genres, like reality shows or reality competitions, are not shown.

The last broadcast channel, MBC, is a channel that is famous for its dramas. However, this particular genre was not seen in the formats MBC had imported during sample period. There was only a single drama format and the rest were game show formats. This could be that MBC is confident about its dramas and did not see the need to use formats to produce them.

As mentioned earlier, the rise of the total number of imported formats was an outcome of the increase of formats on cable channels. In 2010 and 2011, the number of formats on cable channels surpassed that of the broadcast channels, and also, the number of channels showing formats also became higher. In other words, the formats were

becoming more widely shown on various cable channels and not confined to a few channels.

Among the cable channels, tvN had imported the most format programs. The reason for this high number comes from the ambition of this channel to become self-sufficient in programming. Recently, tvN has announced that they would be increasing their production budgets to achieve a programming schedule that is completely made up of self-produced content (Ko, 2011), and this movement towards increasing self-produced content is reflected in their format inflows. Formats are relatively safer, not to mention cheaper than producing completely new programs, and this has led tvN to import a high number of formats.

QTV and OnStyle also have a significant number of format programs on their channels. QTV was originally a documentary channel but it was redesigned into an entertainment channel in 2009 because the channel was not able to gather a significant audience by airing only documentaries. The first program QTV promoted after this change was *The Moment of Truth Korea*, which is a format based on the Fox TV version. Because formats are a type of franchising operation, allowing other stations to produce localized versions of the original program, the audience is not completely unfamiliar with the program itself (Moran, 2009). For example, *The Moment of Truth Korea* may have been a new program that QTV had locally produced, but people would already be familiar with the program because Fox's version of *The Moment of Truth* is globally popular. This name brand of format programs benefited QTV to establish their new position as an entertainment channel and led them to import a high number of formats.

As for OnStyle, it had previously imported and aired the original versions of format programs, such as *America's Next Top Model* and *Project Runway*. These programs had achieved good audience ratings and OnStyle had wanted to try producing

local versions of these formats. Just as it was with QTV, OnStyle recognized that formats would get more attention from the audience than creating new programs and this moved them towards importing formats.

The other cable channels included the affiliates from broadcast channels, but not many formats were seen on these channels. The affiliate channels, MBC every1 and KBS joy, already had a large number of content from their parent channels and this made these channels achieve the highest audience shares among the cable channels. Thus, they did not have as much need as other channels to produce original content or import format programs.

Another thing to note about the cable channels importing format programs is that they were all specialized channels in entertainment. As most of the international format trade is centered on genres like reality shows, studio games, or quiz shows (FRAPA, 2009; Esser, 2010), it makes sense that entertainment channels would have more formats on their airtimes. This corresponds with the results of the analysis on the genres of imported formats, which is explained in the following paragraph.

GENRES OF THE IMPORTED FORMATS

In order to see what genres of format programs were being imported, the sampled format program titles were organized by genre, which can be seen in Table 2. Before the 2004, only three format genres – game show, drama, and information – were imported but the genres become more diverse as time goes by.

The most consistently imported genre through the whole sample period was game shows. This genre was the only one that was imported every year, which led it to be the most imported format genre, with a total of 34 programs. Game show genres tend to be

less sensitive to cultural discount effects than genres that concern humor, like comedies, and this is why this particular format genre was favored by the television channels (Eun, 2008b). This observation is also supported by the fact that there is only a single comedy format that was imported during the entire sample period.

	Game	Quiz	General Reality	Talent	Dating	Variety	Information	Drama	Comedy
1999	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
2000	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2002	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
2003	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
2004	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
2005	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
2006	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
2007	4	2	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
2008	2	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
2009	3	2	1	1	1	1	-	2	-
2010	2	3	1	2	1	2	-	2	-
2011	5	2	2	5	2	-	-	2	1
Total	34	11	4	8	5	3	12	11	1

Table 2: Total Number of Imported Formats by Genre 1999-2011

The next most popular genre is the reality program genre. When combining the reality-related genres – the general reality, talent, and dating shows – the total number is 17 programs, making it the next highest number after game shows. When looking closely at the years when the reality genres were imported, they are all after 2008. The high number of game show formats is the result of an accumulation for over ten years but the

total for reality shows are only during four years. In other words, the reality program trend is very recent and growing rapidly, compared to the game shows.

Reality programs have become one of the most popular genres in the global format market because of the many advantages it gives to the television stations. As mentioned before, the reality genre requires less money than fiction genres to produce because reality shows do not need high paid celebrities or well-known production crews and this has led many television channels to import this particular genre (Waisbord, 2004). Moreover, the reality genre usually offers other commercial opportunities, such as the vote-in services or sales of related merchandise, and this makes the genre more appealing to the television stations (Moran, 2008; Enli & Ihlebæk, 2011).

Another interesting point about the reality program genres is that most of them were aired on cable channels. As reality shows are often associated with extreme situations, like participants fighting among each other or putting participants under surveillance cameras, it is more likely that reality shows would be shown on cable channels because they are less restricted in terms of what content can be aired than the broadcast channels (Hong & Sung, 2007). As broadcast channels are available to everyone, they are expected to show content that is appropriate to the general public. However, paid television services, like cable channels, do not have a wide reach to the audience as the broadcast channels do, so they are allowed to have more freedom in their content. In order for broadcast channels to show these genres, they would have to go through much more careful adaptations than cable channels to ensure that the format would be appropriate to their audience. The broadcast channels already have somewhat established positions in the media market, so going through the extra preparations for producing this type of format genre may not have been worth it.

The information genre also has a high number during the sample period, but the actual number of programs is not high at all. This number is an outcome of two programs – *Solomon's Choice* and *Choice! Taste vs Taste* – being broadcast for a long period of time. While the more entertaining genres, such as games or dramas, did not last for more than a couple months, the information genre programs each lasted for over 5 years. This is partly because entertainment programs are often pressured to get high audience ratings because they are one of the genres that earn high advertisement revenues (Shim & Kim, 2009). In other words, when an entertainment program is not able to get substantial ratings quickly, they are cancelled and replaced with a new program. But as information programs are more focused on offering helpful information to the audience and thus more beneficial to promoting the public interest, they are under less pressure to gather a large audience and are able to air for several years.

ORIGINS OF THE IMPORTED FORMATS

Moving on to the format origins, as shown in Table 3, the results showed that the country of origins become more diverse over the years. At the beginning of the sample period, formats were imported from a single country, Japan, but the format origins begin to become more diverse after 2007, including countries like the U.K., U.S., Belgium and Israel. The origins of the imported formats are extremely different from the imported whole programs flows into Korea. During the sample period time, nearly 70% of the broadcast channels' imported whole programs were from the U.S. and U.K., and 90% of the cable channels' imported whole programs were from the U.S. (KCC, 2011).

However, the analysis of the imported formats showed that over 60% of the imported formats were from Japan. This finding not only differs from the origins of the

whole programs imports, but also contradicts the results from previous reports and studies about formats, which have found that European countries are especially noted in the global format market (FRAPA, 2009; Chung & Jeon, 2010; Esser, 2010; Chalaby, 2012). At the international level, Japan is thought to be an emerging player in the format market but not yet prominent as the U.K. or the U.S. (FRAPA, 2009). However, contrary to this view, Japan had an extremely strong position in the Korean format market.

	U.S.	U.K.	FR	AUS	Germany	Nether-lands	JP	Turkey	Belgium	Israel	Colombia
1999	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
2000	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
2001	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
2002	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
2003	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
2004	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
2005	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
2006	1	-	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-
2007	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	-	-	-	-
2008	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	-	-
2009	1	1	-	-	-	1	6	1	-	-	1
2010	2	1	-	1	-	2	6	-	1	-	1
2011	5	5	-	1	1	3	3	-	-	1	-
Total	9	7	1	2	1	10	55	2	1	1	2

Table 3: Total Number of Imported Formats by Origin 1999-2011¹⁶

The main reason why Japan was able to have such a presence in the Korean format market is the cultural proximity between the two countries. The Japanese

¹⁶ The total number for the country origin is different from the total number of format programs because the variety show *Neverland* combined two formats from Japan and Belgium.

television industry has successfully localized the inflow of American programs and created their own content, eventually becoming one of the highest self-sufficient countries in television programming (Iwabuchi, 2004b). Thus, in the past, Japanese content was influential in the East Asian region because it was thought to be as well made as the Western content but not as culturally distant (Keane & Moran, 2005). This was also the case in Korea and many Korean television stations looked towards Japanese programs as a successful model.

When the Korean television industry was going through liberalization, the number of channels increased and television stations began to become concerned about audience ratings (D. H. Lee, 2004). Also, the audience was starting to demand global standards of their local content and the producers were being pressured to create high quality programs that would gather high ratings. This situation led producers to turn towards Japanese programs because they were thought to be successful in adapting Western content to fit the local tastes. As cultural proximity explains that the audience will be likely to choose content from more familiar cultures, it makes sense that the producers were inclined to using Japanese programs because it would be more appealing to the audience than Western content.

However, Japanese cultural products were not allowed to be imported into Korea because of the cultural ban that was enforced by the government after World War II. This ban was put in place because of the past threat of the Japanese taking over Korean culture during Japan's annexation of Korea. The annexation period is the main reason for the animosity between the two countries because of the extreme measures the Japanese used to eradicate the Korean culture (Hundt & Bleiker, 2007). Thus, Japanese cultural content, such as films, television programs or music, was banned until 1998 and producers were unable to officially import Japanese programs. Moreover, openly importing and

broadcasting Japanese content would have raised hostile feelings in the audience, so the illegal copying of Japanese programs became a common practice in the 1990s (D. H. Lee, 2004).

The illegal copying of Japanese programs became so prominent that the Korean Broadcasting Institute conducted several studies devoted to the plagiarism on television programs during this period. In particular, Japanese entertainment related genres, like games or quiz shows, were the most frequently plagiarized genres (D. H. Lee, 2004). However, it was difficult to legally prove that the programs were guilty of plagiarism when Japanese content was banned from being imported. So in most cases, such programs were only suspected of plagiarism and no other serious actions were taken afterwards.

Although no legal actions taken against the plagiarized programs, the producers could not keep up this practice for long. As new media, such as satellite television or the Internet, became available to the public, people could easily gain access to foreign programs that were not imported into Korea. Thus, the audience began to notice the similarities between the original Japanese programs and illegally copied Korean versions, and began to criticize the plagiarized programs. Television stations could no longer keep on doing such obvious plagiarism practices and they began to turn to legal methods, such as buying Japanese formats or co-production rights, to use the Japanese program ideas (D. H. Lee, 2004). Because of this long practice of incorporating Japanese programs into the local programs, it makes sense that the Japanese formats would be the most imported format (K. S. Kim, 1999a).

FORMATS AND THE JAPANESE CULTURAL BAN

Along with the advent of new media services, the deregulation of the Japanese cultural ban also had an influence on the inflow of Japanese formats. As mentioned earlier, Japanese cultural content was regulated from being imported into Korea but the government decided to lessen the ban in 1998, along with the other deregulation policies that was going on in the media market. The deregulation of the ban was implemented in several phases, from 1998 to 2004. Although the cultural ban concerned all cultural products, like popular music albums, computer games, or manga, this study will focus on the deregulations for film and television because it is relevant to the study topic. The details of the deregulation are shown in Table 4.

To this date, the deregulation on the cultural ban has gone through a total four phases but there are still some regulations on the Japanese television programs. The first and second phases served as the preparations for bigger issues and not many changes were made because the government was careful of the hostile public sentiment towards the Japanese (J. W. Park, 2006). When the first and second phases went through without any problems, the government began to lessen the bans on bigger issues, particularly the Japanese television programs.

Allowing Japanese programs to be officially imported into Korea was a sensitive issue because not only because there was the hostile feelings coming from the memory of the Japanese annexation period, but also because the audience had seen many local television programs copying the Japanese programs in the past. Even with the cultural ban in place, the local programs were already heavily influenced by Japanese programs and the audience feared that the Japanese programs would completely take over Korean television if the cultural ban was taken away (Hundt & Bleiker, 2007).

	Film	Television
1 st Phase (Oct. 20, 1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Films that won prizes from Cannes, Venice, Berlin, and Academy Awards are allowed ▪ Co-produced films between Korea and Japan are allowed ▪ Japanese actors are allowed on Korean films 	-
2 nd Phase (Sept. 10, 1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Films that won prizes from international film festivals are allowed 	-
3 rd Phase (Jun. 27, 2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animation films that won prizes from international film festivals are allowed ▪ All films except 'teenage restricted'¹⁷ rated films are allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sports, documentaries and news programs are allowed ▪ Paid television channels are allowed to air films and animations that have won prizes from film festivals
4 th Phase (Jan. 1, 2004)	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paid television channels: allowed to air lifestyle and cultural programs. All Japanese films, animations, and music allowed. Co-produced and '12+' rated dramas are allowed. ▪ Broadcast channels: lifestyle and cultural programs allowed. Japanese films that had been shown in Korean theaters are allowed. Only co-produced dramas are allowed.

Table 4: Deregulation Phases of the Japanese Cultural Ban on Film and Television

This situation led television stations to turn to Japanese format programs and it can be seen that the number of Japanese formats increase after 2004, which is the year of the final phase of the deregulation of the Japanese cultural ban. Using Japanese formats

¹⁷ The Korea Media Rating Board rates visual content into the following categories. All (suitable for all ages), 12+ (suitable for children over 12 years old), 15+ (suitable for children over 15 years old), and Teenage Restricted (suitable for adults over 18 years old).

was an attractive alternative to the television stations because it overcame the problems of the Japanese cultural ban and the criticism against illegal copying. Producing local versions of licensed formats ensured that the television channels had a legitimate claim for using Japanese content and because formats are seen as domestic content, they were exempt from the restrictions of broadcasting Japanese content on television.

Also, using Japanese formats meant that producers would be able to localize the content to fit the Korean audience. Although Japanese programs were thought to be good models for high audience ratings, not all of the content was suitable to the local context. Japanese programs were often regarded as problematic, with its overly liberal expressions and viewpoints about sex and violence (D. H. Lee, 2004; Shim, 2005). But as format programs can be adapted to the local audience tastes, it would be more likely to be successful than importing Japanese whole programs. Therefore, because of these advantages, the Japanese formats were able to have a strong presence in the Korean format market.

In the more recent years, the number of Japanese formats declined as the country of origins became more diverse. In 2011, more formats from the U.K. and U.S. are imported than the Japanese formats. This is in line with the international format market trend, which is that the U.K. is the leading country in exporting format programs (FRAPA, 2009; Chalaby, 2012). It could be that the Korean format market is becoming more globalized and is now starting to follow the international patterns seen in the global format market. Also, this result could come from the fact that Korean television stations are importing formats for the purpose of learning the format business (Hong & Sung, 2007). As the U.K. is the leading exporter of format programs, the Korean channels might benefit more to learn from the leading exporter than a prominent regional format

exporter. So, it can be that the channels are purposely importing more formats from the U.K., which led to the decrease of Japanese formats.

Also, the dynamics of cultural proximity may be applicable to this change of format origins. As Iwabuchi points out, cultural proximity is not fixed but constantly shifts, depending on the audience perceptions or national situations (Iwabuchi, 2004a). It can be that the importance of cultural proximity changes during the different phases in the format adaptations. When producers first started to use format programs, they mostly imported them from a culturally proximate country, which would be Japan in Korea's case. Cultural proximity was an important factor in this phase because the producers were not confident about adapting the format to fit the local context due to the lack of experience. Using a format from a culturally proximate country would require fewer adaptations and be relatively safer than a format from an unfamiliar culture. But as the television stations got more experienced in using and adapting format programs, cultural proximity was not as important as before. Thus, the Korean television stations started to look towards globally famous formats that were not necessarily from closer countries, like the U.K., Netherlands or Germany.

This chapter examined how the media liberalization period influenced the inflows of format programs over the years. Results showed that the total number of formats had increased and that the imported format genres and country of origin became more diverse after the liberalization period. When analyzing the channels that imported the formats, it turned out that cable channels started to import format programs after the liberalization period and eventually surpassed the broadcast channels in terms of the number of format imports. Also, the deregulation of the Japanese cultural ban, which was one of the biggest events during the media liberalization period, was found to have a positive influence on the number of Japanese format imports.

The next chapter answers the last research question, which is about how the format programs change as the general trend of format uses moves from illegal copying to obtaining licensed formats.

Chapter 6: From Illegal Copying to Licensed Formats

This chapter aims to answer the third research question, which examines the changes of the format programs as the practice of using formats moves towards buying licensed formats.

The basis for the format program uses build upon the practice of television producers monitoring Japanese programs for inspiration. In the past, it was a common practice for Korean producers to go to Pusan, a city close enough to Japan to pick up the airwaves, and watch Japanese programs to see the newest trends in the programs (D. H. Lee, 2004). Television stations even had correspondents stationed in Japan who would tape interesting Japanese programs and send them to Korea for the producers to watch (S. H. Lee, 1999). This shows that the producers were already familiar with identifying foreign program concepts that would work with the local context, which is the basic idea for using format programs. So, it can be said that this practice of monitoring and adapting Japanese programs was the foundation for using format programs later on.

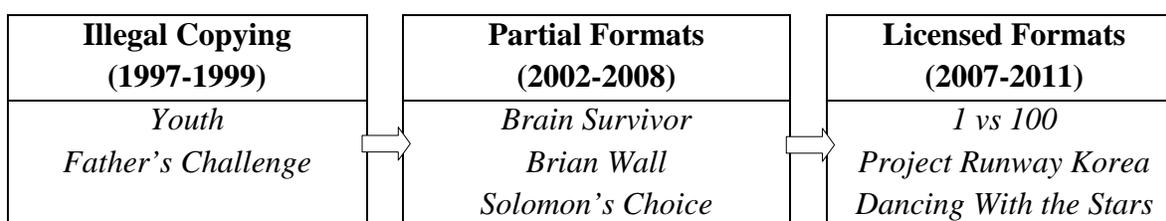


Figure 8: The Changes in Format Program Uses

As this practice evolved towards using licensed format programs, this study identified three phases in the format adaptations; illegal copying, partial formats, and whole licensed formats. It will analyze the following case studies in terms of the reason for using the format, the adaptation mode of the format, and the perceptions from the

press about using the format. When analyzing how the adaptations in the formats were done, this study uses Straubhaar (2009)'s distinction of localization and glocalization, depending on whether the initiative for the adaptations was initiated by global or local organizations. The case studies used in this chapter are *Youth* and *Father's Challenge* for the illegal copying phase, *Brain Survivor*, *Brain Wall*, and *Solomon's Choice* for the partial format phase, and *I vs 100*, *Project Runway Korea*, and *Dancing With the Stars* for the licensed format phase.

ILLEGAL COPYING: 1997-1999

The first phase in the format adaptation practices is the illegal copying phase. In this adaptation phase, the concept of buying a program format from the copyright holders is not widely used and television producers are used to simply copying program ideas from other programs. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the illegal copying practices were especially common in the Korean media in the 1990s (D. H. Lee, 2004), and this section will analyze two programs from this period; the drama *Youth* and the game show *Father's Challenge*.

In the early 1990s, copying from Japanese programs was a common practice for the television stations. Japanese programs became so embedded into the Korean programs during this time that most of the characteristics of Korean entertainment programs, such as the use of subtitles, multi-angles, or groups of show hosts, are said to have come from the Japanese programs (D. H. Lee, 2004). It was more favorable for television stations to resort towards illegal copying because it was an easy and quick way to get high audience ratings and it was cheaper than buying the official copyrights. In a

way, this was the foundation for the use format programs; taking successful program ideas that were proven elsewhere and adapting them to fit the local audience.

However, towards the late 1990s, these illegal practices were no longer able to be overlooked because policies began to reduce the cultural ban on Japanese television programs and the audience was becoming more aware of plagiarism as foreign programs became more accessible through the Internet (Keane & Moran, 2005). Even when the Japanese cultural ban was in place, it was possible for people to gain access to Japanese content through informal routes, like roadside shops selling pirated video tapes of programs or through satellite dishes that picked up Japanese airwaves (S. H. Kang, 1981; H. M. Kim, 2003). However, when the Internet became widely used, it facilitated and sped up the process of getting access to Japanese programs. Also, people were able to gather in a virtual space to discuss these programs, which led to sharing the knowledge about plagiarized programs. In other words, the Internet made it possible for the audience to be aware of original programs and monitor the illegally copied programs.

Thus, illegally copied programs began to suffer consequences during this period. Among those programs, *Youth* and *Father's Challenge* are significant cases studies because *Youth* was the first program to face serious charges about plagiarizing and *Father's Challenge* was the first case in which the Japanese television stations took action against the Korean television stations. This is not to say that there were no other programs that were officially accused of plagiarism during this time, but in most cases, it was difficult to legally prove that such programs were plagiarized or the producers cancelled the program before such actions were taken (D. H. Lee, 2004).

Father's Challenge was a game show that was aired on the broadcast channel SBS and it ran from 1997 to 1999. Like the program title suggests, the program is about a father taking up a difficult challenge to win prizes for his family. The father is given a

week to practice the challenge task that is usually entertaining, such as balancing multiple trays at once or jumping rope in flippers, and then performs the task at the studio. If the father succeeds at the challenge, he will be able to provide his family with gifts they had specified before the father was informed of the challenge.

The basic format of this program was copied from TBS (Tokyo Broadcasting System)'s *Happy Family Plan*, which was a successful format, winning an International Emmy Award and selling to more than 30 countries around the world (Iwabuchi, 2008). The method of a camera filming the father's practice progress for a week in a reality show style and the way the entire family entered the studio for the father's challenge was exactly the same in *Father's Challenge*. Also, specific challenge tasks, such as playing Bach's Minuet on the xylophone (aired October 27, 1997), were the same as the original program (Seo, 1997). Other than changing the prize money to a smaller amount or creating some different challenge tasks, not so much adaptation was done on this program.

When TBS became aware of *Father's Challenge*, an official statement demanding SBS to officially pay the format license fees was sent to SBS. At first, SBS denied that *Father's Challenge* was an illegal copy of *Happy Family Plan* and replied that they would not pay any money for the copyrights because the program was an original idea of their own (K. S. Kim, 1999b). TBS considered pressing charges by suing for the infringement of intellectual property rights through the International Court of Justice, but settled for issuing an official complaint to SBS (K. M. Kim, 1999). SBS later admitted to plagiarizing *Happy Family Plan* and cancelled the program soon afterwards.

In the past, the plagiarizing practices of Korean programs were disregarded by the Japanese television stations and there were no serious actions taken against these programs. However, as the deregulation of the Japanese ban was to start in the late 1990s,

Japanese television stations started to take an interest in the Korean media market (Kim, 1999). They were aware that the television market would open to the Japanese programs and the Korean media market was a possible place to sell their programs. So, the Korean stations could no longer continue the illegal copying practices without facing consequences.

Another infamous program that was charged of plagiarism during this period was the drama *Youth*, which was aired on the broadcast channel MBC in 1999. This drama was accused of copying off from Fuji TV's drama *Love Generation* and it faced serious charges from the Korea Broadcasting Commission (currently the Korea Communications Commission).

The general storyline, characters, and filming techniques of *Youth* were found to be copied off *Love Generation*. Both dramas are about a male and female protagonist that falls in love with each other, despite the fact that they start their relationship as squabbling colleagues. During this relationship, a love triangle is going on because the male protagonist struggles with his ex-girlfriend being engaged to his own brother and the ex-girlfriend realizes that she still has feelings for the male protagonist. But in the end, the male and female protagonists succeed in their love. Although the storyline of *Youth* differs from *Love Generation* towards the end, the earlier episodes were almost the same and it was these episodes that eventually made the Korea Broadcasting Commission act against *Youth* (Jeon, 2000).

Also, though the supporting characters are portrayed in slightly different ways, the similarities between the main characters were extremely noticeable. For example, the male protagonist in *Love Generation* is set up as a salesman who works in an advertisement company, while the male lead in *Youth* is a salesman in a computer company. *Love Generation* and *Youth*'s female protagonists both have cheerful and

bright personalities and they work in the same department as the male protagonist. Moreover, certain scenes, such as the male protagonist wearing a checkered shirt and an earring in the first episode or reminiscing about his ex-girlfriend while looking at a photo, were also the same as *Love Generation* (Jeon, 2000).

After *Youth* was aired, it was the audience who first brought attention to the plagiarism (S. H. Lee, 1999). As the Internet became widely used in the late 1990s, the audience was able to gain access to foreign programs that were not available in Korea. The Internet was especially significant for Japanese content because they had been banned from being imported and the Internet was an easy way of people to watch these programs. People who had watched *Love Generation* pointed out the similarities between the two dramas and the information spread out rapidly through the Internet, eventually becoming a big issue. Thus, the Internet enabled the audience to become a monitor for the plagiarism on Japanese programs and the producers could no longer deceive the audience.

With the public sentiment growing negative towards *Youth*, the Korea Broadcasting Commission conducted an official investigation and concluded that *Youth* was indeed an illegal copy of *Love Generation* (Jeon, 2000). Like *Father's Challenge*, the producer first denied the plagiarism charges and claimed that the storyline of *Youth* would be completely different as it progressed (S. H. Lee, 1999). However, the producer eventually admitted to using *Love Generation* as a reference and that some parts of the drama were copied into *Youth*.

The Korea Broadcasting Commission ordered MBC to broadcast an apology to the audience and the drama was cut from a total of 16 episodes to 10 episodes. This was the first time that a program was ordered to finish early because of plagiarism charges and the head scriptwriter was expelled from the Korean TV & Radio Writers Association,

which meant that the writer was no longer able to write scripts for any type of media. These actions showed that illegal copying could no longer be tolerated because the audience was becoming more sensitive towards such practices.

Another reason for the serious consequences is because the media market was becoming more globalized. Not only were the Japanese television stations closely watching the illegal copying in Korean programs, but the Korean television stations were also trying to expand their market by exporting programs to Asian countries. MBC had already sold the broadcasting rights of *Youth* to other Asian countries before the drama had even aired and had to change the contract deals due to the plagiarism charges (J. Y. Kim, 1999). At this time, Japanese trendy dramas were popular in the East Asian region (Keane & Moran, 2005) and explicitly copying off these dramas made it difficult for Korean content to be exported. Thus, it can be that Korea was trying to stop these illegal practices in order to reach out to the global media market.

In both cases, the producers of *Youth* and *Father's Challenge* apologized for the illegal copying but also complained that plagiarism was inevitable because of the poor production environments (K. S. Kim & Lee, 1999). Broadcast stations were not able to produce enough content to fill in their broadcasting hours due to poor production conditions during this time, and they were still relying heavily on imported content. As broadcast stations were trying to lessen their dependency on imported programs, a large number of programs were expected to be created quickly and also gather a substantial audience share as soon as possible. Production crews had to struggle to produce such programs because of the lack of resources, like human resources or money, and they turned towards illegal copying because it was difficult to meet such expectations of the stations (S. H. Lee, 1999b).

Despite these reasons, the general media was critical of the illegal practices, calling them ‘embarrassing’, ‘a viscous cycle’, ‘a death sentence for programs’ and ‘an international disgrace’ (K. S. Kim, 1999c; S. H. Lee, 1999; H. K. Seo, 1997). Although there were also programs that were copied from other countries, namely the U.S., the plagiarism of Japanese programs was more criticized (D. H. Lee, 2004). This harsh criticism probably comes from the concerns about the deregulation on the imports of Japanese television programs. Because the audience was already exposed to the Japanese program styles through the illegal copying in domestic programs, there was the fear that the audience would accept the Japanese programs more easily and would eventually result in the Japanese taking over the national media market (Hundt & Bleiker, 2007). Thus, the perception of the illegal copying of Japanese programs was extremely negative.

PARTIAL FORMATS: 2002-2008

The next step in the format adaptation phase is the use of partial formats. This refers to the practice of buying a specific part of a format and integrating it into a larger program. The use of partial formats can be seen as the transition phase, because it has not quite reached the stage of using whole format programs but has moved away from illegal copying to legal programs uses. Partial formats were especially noted during the early 2000s and this section will focus on three case studies from this particular period. The programs are *Brain Survivor*, *Brain Wall*, and *Solomon’s Choice*.

This time period is during the media liberalization period, which typically means the time during the 1990s to early 2000s when various deregulation polices went into effect. For example, the Japanese cultural ban was finally lessened starting in 1998 and some Japanese television programs were allowed to be imported into the country. Also,

the use of paid television channels, like cable and satellite, started to grow rapidly during this period and the audience was able to gain more access to imported content through these new media services.

As the audience became more aware of foreign programs and plagiarism in the national programs, television stations were moving towards legal methods of using other programs' ideas. This is not to say that the illegal copying practices had completely disappeared but it is clear that using legal practices to obtain formats was becoming more common (D. H. Lee, 2004).

Brain Survivor was one of the successful partial format programs during this period. It was a segment of *Sunday, Sunday Night*, a variety show that was aired on MBC from 2002 to 2005. *Brian Survivor* was a game show that was a hybrid mix of game, quiz and talk shows. It mainly focused on celebrities competing against each other answering silly quizzes that required no knowledge, such as guessing words to fill in blanks, memorizing color sequences, or finding hidden pictures, and the winner would win a scholarship to give their alma mater.

This format was originally from Japan's TBS and the producers of MBC discovered this program while monitoring Japanese programs for ideas (Korea Creative Contents Agency, 2011). The original *Brain Survivor* was a pilot program that aired only a couple times in Japan but the MBC producers liked the concept of the program so much that they ended up buying the format. This is a big change from the 1990s, because the producers purposely chose to obtain the format license rather than just copying the program. At this time, the format trade system was not as established as it is nowadays, and MBC did not obtain the format bible, flying producer, or other details that are common in today's format packages. Instead, MBC bought specific parts of the program,

such as the licenses to use the set design or certain quiz questions, and paid around \$500-600 for each episode (KCCA, 2011).

Other than gaining a significant audience share of 19%, *Brain Survivor* is also known for its successful glocalization for the Korean audience (D. H. Lee, 2004; S. H. Lee & Kim, 2007; KCCA, 2011). The biggest difference seen in MBC's *Brain Survivor* is the introduction of elements that were aimed to promote the public interest. The original version was a serious quiz program, with the participants competing for a big monetary prize. But the participants in MBC's *Brain Survivor* competed for the chance to win a monetary prize that the winner would donate to their alma mater as a scholarship. As mentioned earlier, the idea of an individual winning a large sum of money was not well received by the audience (Hong & Sung, 2007) and MBC, as a public broadcast channel, was expected to act in favor of public interest. So, the prize money was not given to the winner, but donated to a school as a scholarship.

Also, the Korean version of *Brain Survivor* had different types of participants and also included talk show elements within the program, which was not seen in the original version. The original version featured young stars showing off their knowledge by answering questions, but the Korean *Brian Survivor* had a panel of sixteen celebrities that included various famous people, such as athletes, singers, models, comedians and etc. from all ages, and the host would chat with each celebrity about their personal lives or joke with them between quiz questions. In other words, the program was more focused on the participants themselves than the actual competition, so actions like copying answers from other participants or discussing the answer with others were tolerated as funny situations and this was an element that was unique to the Korean version (S. W. Kim, 2004).

The quiz questions were also slightly different from the original version. Although some of the question concepts from the original Japanese show were used in the Korean version, the Korean *Brain Survivor* also created unique questions that required good memory than serious knowledge to answer. For example, there was a question that showed an animated video clip of a person quickly making a sushi roll would be shown and the participants had to remember which ingredients were used.

These changes probably come from the fact that *Brain Survivor* was broadcast on Saturday primetime hours. It is customary for broadcast channels to air entertainment programs during weekend primetime hours, which is roughly from 7pm to 11pm (E. M. Lee, 2001). Because other broadcast channels were airing entertainment programs, it would have been risky for MBC to air a serious quiz show during this time. Thus, *Brain Survivor* was adapted to include more entertaining elements, like having talk show elements or showing funny situations like cheating or copying answers, to ensure the audience ratings.

Unlike the negative response to the illegal copying, newspaper articles were much favorable to *Brain Survivor* and tended to emphasize how the program had been adapted to the Korean audience. One article praised how the Korean version had taken the unpopular original Japanese version and succeeded in changing it into a popular program because it had been localized to the Korean context (S. W. Kim, 2004). Also, there were mentions about how the *Brain Survivor* format had been sold to other countries and those countries were benchmarking the Korean version rather than the original, because it was so well made (B. Seo, 2004). An interesting thing about the articles about *Brain Survivor* was that not much attention was given to the format business side. There was rarely any mention about the details of how *Brain Survivor* was bought from Japan or how much was paid to obtain the rights. Also, the word 'format' was not used in these articles; it

was phrased as ‘bought the license to the program’ or ‘acquired the rights to produce *Brain Survivor*’, and this hints that format programs were not widely known in Korea during this period.

Another partial format program from this time period is *Brain Wall*, which was a segment of the variety show *Mental Concentration*, and it aired on the broadcast channel SBS in 2007. This format segment is also known as ‘Human Tetris’ because it is a game segment that has participants fit their bodies through a wall to win. The wall is made out of Styrofoam and has a cutout shapes in it like Tetris blocks, and it is placed a few feet away from the participant. The participant has a few seconds to decide how to position his or her body so that the wall can pass through and if the participant fails to fit the shape, the wall pushes him or her into a pool of water below the set.

This format was originally a segment called *Tunnels*, from Japan Fuji TV’s *Thanks to the People of Tunnels*, and it has been sold to over 30 countries in the world, including the U.S., U.K., and Australia (KCCA, 2011). SBS had bought the partial format rights to the segment *Tunnels* prior to producing *Brain Wall*, paying around \$400 for each episode. However, SBS did not release any information to the public that this was a format program. After the *Brain Wall* was first broadcast, people accused SBS of plagiarism because they saw the similarities in the program with *Tunnels* (Heo, 2007), but this incident was cleared up when SBS officially announced that *Brain Wall* had bought the format license from TBS.

SBS placed *Brain Wall* in a Saturday evening slot, during the weekend primetime. The predecessor of *Brain Wall* was *Super Viking*, another format program that was bought from Japan. *Super Viking* had aired for only five months and was cancelled because of low audience ratings. SBS was trying to regain their fame as the ‘Entertainment Channel’ (Heo, 2007) and the quickest way of producing programs that

would gather high ratings was to use formats. Thus, SBS bought another format, *Brain Wall*, to replace *Super Viking*, but eventually cancelled the program soon after because it gathered an average rating of 8%, which was even lower than *Super Viking*'s ratings (KCCA, 2011).

One of the reasons for the unsuccessfulness of *Brain Wall* is the lack of adaptation. Unlike *Brain Survivor*, *Brain Wall* did not have as much local elements within it. When comparing an episode from the original format *Tunnels* (June, 2007) with an episode from *Brain Wall* (April 21, 2007), there was not much difference found between the two programs. Other than having local faces, different uniforms, and giving hints about the wall shapes to the participants, *Brain Wall* was nearly the same as *Tunnels*. Because of the many similarities between the two programs, the criticism for plagiarism continued while *Brain Wall* was airing, despite the fact that SBS had announced that this was format program. The accusation on *Brain Wall* was probably an influence from the long history of blatant illegal copying from Japanese programs. As the audience gained more access to foreign programs through new media and also saw how the local television stations were starting to face serious charges from their illegal copying, the audience became more sensitive to the plagiarism practices (D. H. Lee, 2004).

The similarities of *Brain Wall* and *Tunnels* also influenced the perception on the program. Newspaper articles on *Brain Survivor* had praised the program for its successful adaptation to the local audience but the articles on *Brain Wall* did not include such positive topics. Instead, *Brain Wall* was frequently used as an example of plagiarism charges or how SBS was not working hard enough to provide the audience with self-produced, good quality programs (Heo, 2007; T. E. Kim, 2007a).

The last partial format case study is *Solomon's Choice*. This was broadcast on SBS from 2002 to 2008, and it is a program that focused on providing the audience with legal advice in an entertaining way. There is a panel consisting of celebrities and lawyers in the studio, and they watch a number of reenactments that are about legal issues that people encounter in everyday life. The panel acts as a jury and gives their personal viewpoints about how they would give a verdict. Because the panel has both celebrities and lawyers, they are able to give a mix of entertaining jokes and serious legal information, and this is designed to make the audience more interested in legal issues.

The original format is called *Legal Advice Center with Lines*, which is from Japan's NTV (Nippon Television) and SBS bought the format license for \$800 per episode (KCCA, 2011). The interesting about this format is that there was an incident of NTV accusing SBS for plagiarizing off *Legal Advice Center with Lines*. NTV aired a program that compared the two programs and accused *Solomon's Choice* for copying the studio set design, characteristics of the panel members, placement of the panel seats, and the color of subtitles from *Legal Advice Center with Lines* (T. E. Kim, 2007b; S. Lee, 2007). However, SBS explained that *Solomon's Choice* was not illegally copied because they had bought the official format and were in the process of negotiating the price of the format with NTV (T. E. Kim, 2007b). It turned out that this incident occurred from the misunderstanding from NTV's side and NTV later gave an official apology to SBS.

Solomon's Choice was also placed in the Saturday primetime hours, just like the case study programs that were previously mentioned. But a big difference about *Solomon's Choice* is that it aired for six years, when the other partial format programs were cancelled after a couple months. This program gathered an average audience rating of 13.7%, which was better than the other partial formats, and this was probably the reason why it was able to air for such a long time. Also, as *Solomon's Choice* was more

of a serious program, offering legal information than just pure entertainment, so it is possible that the program was less pressured for achieving high audience ratings and was able to air for several years.

Another interesting thing about *Solomon's Choice* is that it is a different type of partial format than the previous case studies. In the beginning, *Solomon's Choice* was a full format program that was similar to the original program, but in 2008, the program was reformed into an entirely new program called *TV Law Firm Solomon*. The basic concept of panel guests offering legal advice to the audience was still the same, but the format was changed completely, such as adding short comedy skits to reenact the legal situations or quizzes about legal knowledge to make the program more entertaining, because the producers felt that the previous format was getting too old and needed a fresh change (H. W. Lee, 2008b). After this change, SBS no longer paid NTV for the format license fees after this change. Thus, *Solomon's Choice* is a partial format in the sense that it was a format program during the first couple years, but stopped using the original Japanese format towards the end because they had created a new format of their own.

It can be that the product life cycle on a smaller scale can be seen in this particular case study. Pool (1977) first applied the product life cycle theory to the global flows of television programs, and the basic idea of this theory is that a country first relies on imported programs but later learns from those programs and eventually succeeds in producing their own content (Pool, 1977). In line with Pool's explanation, SBS first bought the format program from Japan to learn the program concept of offering legal advice on everyday conflicts and later moved onwards to create a new program after learning from the original format. This may not be applicable to all format programs, but it is worth noting that some television channels import formats to learn the skills to produce a successful program themselves.

The newspaper articles that mention *Solomon's Choice* are mostly about the miscommunication between NTV and SBS. They focus on the announcement that SBS made about *Solomon's Choice* being an official format program but at the same time it criticizes SBS for producing the format before the negotiations were complete (S. Lee, 2007). Also, just like *Brian Wall*, *Solomon's Choice* was often mentioned along with the illegally copied programs even though it was a format program (S. Lee, 2007; Kim, 2007). There was some press coverage on the *TV Law Firm Solomon*, mainly about the fact that *TV Law Firm Solomon* would no longer be a format program because of the original changes made to the program. But at the same time, there were also negative reviews about the new program because it did not achieve as high ratings as *Solomon's Choice* did (H. W. Lee, 2008c). This suggests that audience ratings were the most important standard for a successful program, whether it was a format program or a domestic program.

When looking at the newspaper coverage on all three partial format programs, it can be noted that a format which was nearly the same as the original version tended to be criticized and put together with illegally copied programs even though it was a format program (Heo, 2007; Kim, 2007; S. Lee, 2007). On the other hand, a format that was different from the original version because of the local adaptations was received with positive views, such as how well made the Korean version was or how other countries were using the Korean version as a reference (Kim, 2004; B. Seo, 2004). As mentioned earlier, such perceptions on formats were probably affected by the past of television channels' illegal copying practices. The audience was quick to accuse even format programs of illegal copying and the use of formats were often considered to be a lazy way of producing programs (D. H. Lee, 2004; Kim, 2007). But formats that had changed

much of the original versions were considered to be more 'Korean' and therefore not as heavily criticized as other format programs.

LICENSED FORMATS: 2007-2011

The final stage in the format adaptation phase is the use of licensed formats. This step refers to the practice of obtaining format licenses in the way that is commonly known today; buying a format package that includes the format bible, flying producer, and other supporting information, such as the target audiences or audience ratings from other countries, which facilitates the production of the format program (Moran & Keane, 2004). Format programs that fall into this stage tend to be globally famous formats, like *Big Brother* or *American Idol*, and they share many similarities with the original format so that it is recognizable as a format program. Because formats in this phase buy the format bible, they often have restrictions in what can be changed to fit the local audience and have to consult the format copyright holder to make such changes. Thus, this phase is when the localizations – the adaptations from the outside forces – start to come in. Korea started to see such format programs in the late 2000s and early 2010s, and three case studies were chosen for the analysis. The programs are *1 vs 100*, *Project Runway Korea*, and *Dancing With the Stars*.

As it was analyzed in the previous chapters, licensed whole formats began to increase in the Korean media market due to several factors. The Korean media market became more globalized and started following the global trend of popularity of format programs. Cable channels began to flourish and started to import formats actively because it was a way to compete against the established broadcast channels, and higher

competition in the media market moved television channels towards importing whole formats because they were more likely to be successful than new original programs.

Another thing to note about this period is such formats were being imported from a wide variety of countries, like the U.K., Australia, or Columbia, and not focused on the Japanese. In the past, television stations tended to copy off mostly Japanese programs or chose to import Japanese formats, but this has been changing in the recent years. This is not to imply that Japanese programs are no longer being plagiarized or that television channels are not using Japanese formats, but it is clear that the Korean channels are becoming more diversified in terms of the origins of their imported formats. It may be that the Korean channels are starting to import more formats from the leading format exporters in the world, rather than a regional exporter because they want to learn from the more famous format exporters, and also because the local producers became more confident in adapting imported formats and did not need to rely on culturally proximate formats to minimize the adaptation efforts.

One of the first full format programs from this period is *1 vs 100*, which is a quiz show that was produced by the public broadcast channel KBS2. It first started to air in 2007 and is still being broadcast on KBS2. This format is a quiz show that is simply put, a contest between a single person (the One) and a panel of 100 people (the Mob) to win a large sum of money. In order for the One to win, he or she must eliminate the Mob by answering the questions correctly. Every time a member of the Mob gets a question wrong, the member is eliminated from the show. This process goes on until the One is the only person left, thus becoming the winner. If the One answers a question incorrectly, he or she leaves the game without any winnings.

The format license for *1 vs 100* was bought from Endemol and the original program is called *Eén tegen 100*. This format was one of the first to buy a full format

package, which included the format bible and flying producer (KCCA, 2011). The exact amount of how much KBS2 paid for the license is not known, but a report from the Korea Creative Contents Agency shows that around 10-15% of the entire production budget was used to pay for the format license. One of the conditions of the format contract was that KBS2 was only allowed the primary broadcasting rights of the format, which meant that KBS2 was unable to offer VOD services or reruns of *I vs 100*. KBS2 first bought the license to produce 20 episodes, but later renewed the license contract by a season of 26 episodes. Currently, the license contract is renewed on a yearly basis.

I vs 100 was a whole format in the sense that it was recognizable as a franchise of the original format because it used the same show logo, set design, and quiz rules, and was a program by itself and not incorporated as a segment of a larger program. Although much of *I vs 100* was true to the original *Eén tegen 100*, there were also significant glocalization factors within the program (Park & Yu, 2009). One of the biggest differences was the high percentage of celebrities on the show. While other versions of *I vs 100* have regular people as participants, the Korean version tended to have a lot of celebrities come out on the program. The reason of relying on celebrities was because the producers were under the pressure to deliver high audience ratings, due to the negative responses about a public broadcast channel paying royalties to buy a foreign format (Park & Yu, 2009). Thus, using celebrities was a safer way of ensuring high ratings than using regular, unknown people on the program. Moreover, the producers explained that Koreans were not talkative or comfortable in expressing their thoughts to an audience and this was another reason why they turned to celebrities instead (Park & Yu, 2009: 209)

Also, because there were many celebrity participants as the One, other elements of the format were adapted to fit this change. Talk show elements were incorporated into the program so the host would chat with the celebrity about their personal lives between

quiz questions. This is unique to the Korean version because the hosts in other versions of *I vs 100* tended to have a neutral attitude towards the participants. But the Korean host was more biased towards the One, by cheering the participant on to win the final prize or saying that he hoped the Mob would be eliminated from the challenge. Relying on celebrities in programs is an old custom in the Korean television industry (Hong & Sung, 2007; Park & Yu, 2009), and celebrities are often seen in not only entertainment shows or dramas but a wide variety of genres, including educational and cultural programs. So, changing the *I vs 100* format to focus more on celebrities is a glocalized adaption that was made to fit the local context by the producers' judgments.

Just like *Brain Survivor*, the winner was not allowed to keep the prize money because the idea of an individual winning a large sum of money was not viewed in a positive light in the local context (Hong & Sung, 2007). Moreover, *I vs 100* was aired on KBS2, a public broadcast channel, and it was expected that KBS2 should act in favor the public good. Thus, in the Korean *I vs 100*, the winner does not keep the prize money but donates it to a public cause of their choice.

I vs 100 was put into a Tuesday evening slot at 9 pm, which was not in primetime. As this was a quiz show that required serious knowledge questions, this program was not as pressured to generate high audience ratings, as it was for the entertainment shows or dramas. *I vs 100* has had an average rating of 9.3%, which was higher than the previous program in this time slot. Because of the lower pressure for audience ratings, this format program was able to continue for five years, whereas the entertainment genre formats were quickly cancelled when they failed to achieve high ratings.

When *I vs 100* first started, the producers of KBS2 announced that the program was a format bought from Endemol. But after the program was aired, there was confusion

about whether *I vs 100* was an illegal copy of NBC's *I vs 100* (M. J. Choi, 2008). Because the NBC version was more well-known than the original Netherlands version, people thought that *I vs 100* was copied off the NBC version. However, this matter was quickly resolved when the producers restated that this was a format program.

Although many aspects of the format were changed to fit the local audience, there was not much mention of this fact in the newspaper articles. There was only a quote from the producer saying that they had successfully adapted the format to fit the Korean audience but other than this quote, there was no detailed information about how these changes were made (E. J. Lee, 2008a). The articles on *Brain Survivor* had much more information and positive reviews about its glocalizations but this was not the same for *I vs 100*. A possible explanation could be that more attention was given to *Brain Survivor* because it was a format focused on providing entertainment and had high audience ratings, whereas *I vs 100* was a serious quiz format that was focused on educational purposes and had lower audience ratings. Also, it could be that the perception on full format programs was not yet favorable because it was so new and the audience was not used to the idea of using whole licensed formats to produce programs.

The next case study is *Project Runway Korea*, which is a reality competition format that was bought by the cable channel OnStyle. It was first started in 2009 and the fourth season is currently being broadcast. This program is a reality show that focuses on the competition between aspiring fashion designers. The contestants compete against each other every week, designing clothes that fulfill a challenge that is given to them by the host. One contestant is eliminated each week by the judges and this competition continues until three contestants remain. The final three contestants design and showcase a complete fashion collection and the judges decide the winner based on the fashion

collection. The winner wins a large sum of money to help start his or her own fashion line, a magazine shoot that features their designs, and a brand new car.

OnStyle bought the format license through FremantleMedia, but the original format was from the U.S. The original title is *Project Runway* and it was first broadcast on Bravo TV but later aired on Lifetime. OnStyle had previously aired the original *Project Runway* on their channel and saw that the program had achieved high ratings. This motivated the producers to obtain the format license to produce a local version of *Project Runway* because it was likely that the Korean version would also be successful because the audience was already familiar with the original version (Yang, 2011). OnStyle also bought the full format package, which contained the format bible and flying producer, and paid \$4,000-7,000 for each episode (KCCA, 2011). The initial contract was made for 12-13 episodes and is renewed for each season, depending on the how successful the format was. *Project Runway Korea* is currently airing its fourth season and it is the first country to produce a fourth season of this format.

Project Runway Korea was put into the Saturday midnight time slot and it generated an average audience rating of 0.9% (KCCA, 2011). As mentioned before, 1% is considered an extremely high audience rating for cable channels (M. S. Kang, 2011), so *Project Runway Korea* was one of the more successful programs on cable. The program was especially noted for being well adapted to the Korean context and the second season even won the Best Adaptation of an Existing Format award at the 2010 Asian TV Awards.

The interesting thing about the local adaptations in *Project Runway Korea* is that the adaptations were an ongoing process, with more adaptations taking place in later seasons. The first season was extremely close to the original format, which was a conscious effort by the producers. Because OnStyle had aired the original *Project*

Runway, their viewers were already familiar with the original format and knew what to expect in the Korean version. As this was the first format program that the channel had ever produced, the producers realized that in order to meet the audience expectations, it would be safer to follow the format as closely as possible to avoid negative responses (Yang, 2011). This was somewhat different from the producers' viewpoint of the audiences in past phases. Previously, the producers were aware that the audience was acting as monitors for plagiarized programs because the Internet had facilitated their access to foreign programs and enabled them to recognize plagiarized elements in national programs. However, in the phase of whole licensed formats, the producers saw that because the audience had been accessing the original formats, they would have high standards for the Korean versions as well. There are some cases in which formats fail because the audience is unsatisfied with the local adaptations. For instance, NBC aired a much criticized format called *Coupling*, which was originally a British sitcom, and the reason for its failure is because the audience felt that the local producers had changed too much of the original format and ruined the show (Sanson, 2011). Thus, in this phase of format uses, there were some situations in which the producers felt that being true to the original as close as possible would be better than glocalizing the format. This is not to say that the first season of *Project Runway Korea* did not have any local adaptations, but that the producers were not very eager to make big changes to the format at the beginning.

By the time of the second season, the producers had learned how to produce a format program and began to make more distinct adaptations (G. Yoon, 2009). The biggest difference between the *Project Runway Korea* and *Project Runway* was the size of the production budget. The budget of *Project Runway Korea* was around \$6,000-9,000, which was about one-tenth of the original program budget, and changes were made to fit the production budget. For example, the contestants in *Project Runway* work

on their designs at the Parsons School of Design but the contestants in *Project Runway Korea* work at a studio set that is made to look similar to Parsons. Also, the final prize offered to the winner in *Project Runway Korea* was smaller than the prize in the original version, and this was also because of the budget restrictions.

In addition, the Korean version frequently had subtitles in the program that emphasized the contestants' conversations. This change was made partly because the sound technology in Korea was not as advanced as the U.S. The sound technology of the U.S. productions was sensitive enough to clearly pick up the contestants' conversations in non-studio settings, but the Korean productions did not have enough money for such technology, so subtitles were used for to clarify the conversations (Yang, 2011). Moreover, this adaptation could have been made because it is customary for Korean entertainment programs to have subtitles within them. The use of subtitles was a practice that came from the Japanese programs (D. H. Lee, 2004) and *Project Runway Korea* could have been putting in subtitles because the local audience was used to seeing such practices.

Other than the adaptations due to the production conditions, there were also adaptations in the program content itself. In *Project Runway Korea*, there were less dramatic conflicts among contestants than the original *Project Runway*. The Korean version showed the contestants being nicer to each other, such as asking other for advice or giving compliments to one another, while the original version features strong conflicts, such as loud arguments and blatant criticism of others' designs, among the contestants. The producers explained how Koreans were not as individualistic as Americans and tended to group together, so the viewers would not have liked to see the contestants slander each other (Yang, 2011). So, *Project Runway Korea* ended up focusing more on the contestants' personal stories than conflicts among themselves. In other words, this

was more of a cultural adaptation – the adaption to make the text more acceptable to the local culture or sentiments – that can be commonly seen in other format programs around the world. For example, the U.S. version of the British sitcom *The Office* had adapted the humor to the local audience by being more centered on the community of the characters rather than making them an object of laughter, which was a common trait in British humor (Beeden & de Bruin, 2010). Also, *New Zealand Idol* was changed to be less brutal in competition than *American Idol* in order to fit the New Zealanders’ concept of being fair to each other (de Bruin, 2012).

While other formats like *1 vs 100* or *Brain Wall* had officially announced that there were using licensed formats to produce the program, there were still confusions about whether these programs were illegally copied or not. But this did not happen with *Project Runway Korea* because this program was already well-known and also because OnStyle held a promotional press conference rather than a simple press release, which enabled more people to know that the program was a licensed format.

As more licensed format programs were coming into Korea when *Project Runway Korea* was being broadcast, there were more articles about formats in general than the past. The advantages of using formats, how a format license was obtained, or information about the global format market were frequent topics in the articles about format programs (J. Y. Lee, 2010; S. Lee, 2010; N. Oh, 2010), and it shows how format programs were becoming a trend in the Korean media market. In such articles, *Project Runway Korea* was clearly acknowledged as a format program and this is different from the coverage on past formats, which had grouped the formats with plagiarized programs (Heo, 2007; Kim, 2007; S. Lee, 2007). *Project Runway Korea* was noted as one of the successful format adaptations and detailed information about which aspects of the program were changed to fit the Korean audience or in-depth interviews with the producers about the production

processes could be seen (J. H. Kim, 2010; H. J. Kim, 2011; Baek, 2011). The program was also praised as the ‘beginning of Korean reality shows’ (J. H. Kim, 2010).

The coverage on *Project Runway Korea* was extremely different from that of *I vs 100*, and it probably is because of the program genre; *Project Runway Korea* was more of an entertainment program while *I vs 100* was a serious quiz program, so the former gathered more hype than the latter. Also, the original format of *Project Runway Korea* was better known than *I vs 100*’s original format, and this could be why more attention was given to *Project Runway Korea*.

The last case study in the licensed format phase is *Dancing With the Stars*. This format was broadcast on MBC in 2011 and the second season is expected to air in late 2012. As the title suggests, this program is a reality competition program that is focused on professional dancing. Unlike other reality shows, *Dancing With the Stars* does not have regular people but celebrities partnered with professional dancers as the contestants and they compete in ballroom dances. Each week, the contestants perform their dances and one team is eliminated based on the votes from the judge panel and audience. This process goes on until a single team is left.

The format program *Dancing With the Stars* was created by BBC and the original title is *Strictly Come Dancing*. The format has been sold to over 32 countries in the world, making it one of the most popular formats in the format market. The exact numbers in the format license contract between MBC and BBC was not revealed in articles or reports, but it is mentioned that 10-15% of the production budget was used to buy the format package (KCCA, 2011). While previous formats were only able to obtain the primary broadcasting rights, *Dancing With the Stars* was allowed secondary broadcasting rights, meaning that MBC was able to air the program via VOD, DMB and

IPTV services after the initial broadcast, which is a notable difference from the past formats (KCCA, 2011).

Dancing With the Stars was placed in a Friday 10 pm slot and it gathered an average audience rating of 12.9%, which was not extremely high by broadcast channel standards, but high for the specific time slot (KCCA, 2011). The predecessor of *Dancing With the Stars* was an original reality competition show by MBC called *Star Audition: The Great Birth* and this was a singing competition that received contestants from all over the world. After witnessing the successful reality competition programs that were on cable channels, such as *Project Runway Korea*, *Super Star K*, or *Korea's Next Top Model*, MBC quickly started to produce reality competition shows of their own (H. N. Lee, 2011). MBC was looking for a reality program to produce while they were getting ready for the second season of *Star Audition: The Great Birth*, and *Dancing With the Stars* was chosen to be that program.

Although *Dancing With the Stars* had relatively good audience ratings when viewed by itself, the rating was not that high when it was compared to its predecessor *Star Audition: The Great Birth*. Thus, the program tended to be viewed as a not-so-successful format (KCCA, 2011). There are many reasons why this particular format achieved such ratings but the biggest reason comes from the theme of the competition. Ballroom dancing was not a well-known or popular sport in Korea and the audience found it hard to relate to the show itself (KCCA, 2011). Other successful reality competition formats had more generic topics, like fashion, singing, or dating, but ballroom dancing was something that the audience was not familiar with and this unfamiliarity could have acted negatively against the program.

Another reason why *Dancing With the Stars* was not successful is because the format seemed to have a much stricter format bible than the other format programs (Jung,

2011). Interviews with the head producer revealed that MBC did their best to add 'Korean colors' to the program but it was difficult to do so because BBC was fairly strict about the format rules (Jung, 2011). For instance, in the first episode, MBC had inserted product placement advertisements within the program but it turned out that the format did not allow any advertisements on the studio set (KCCA, 2011) and these advertisements were eventually removed from the show. Product placement ads have been allowed on broadcast channels since 2009 and many channels have used this type of advertisement because they are a helpful way of generating advertising revenues in a competitive market (J. Yoon, 2011). However, the copyright holder did not allow such changes and this particular local aspect was removed from the program. Thus, this adaptation can be seen as a localization because the changes in the format was done by an outside force, BBC in this case, rather than the local producers.

Moreover, the fact that MBC was not very practiced in producing format programs could have been a factor in *Dancing With the Stars*' ratings (Jung, 2011; KCCA, 2011). Cable channels had been moving towards importing whole format programs because they saw them as an opportunity to be able to compete against the more established broadcast channels and in 2010 they had imported more formats than the broadcast channels. Thus, cable channels were very experienced in producing whole licensed formats, such as how to make adaptations or dealing with the format copyright holders, whereas broadcast channels did not have as much experience. Throughout the sample period of this study, MBC had imported only two whole licensed formats, which were *Dancing With the Stars* and *Trivial Challenges for 60 Seconds*, and the lack of such experience could have resulted in less appealing format adaptations.

Nonetheless, *Dancing With the Stars* did had some significant local adaptations within it. More emphasis was placed on the 'reality' component of the show by focusing

on the process of contestants working hard to learn new dances (Nam, 2011). Just as in *Project Runway Korea*, fierce competition was not the main theme in the program and the contestants were portrayed as being friendly towards each other. This theme of togetherness or groupism is a sentiment that is familiar to the Korean audience and *Dancing With the Stars* had also adapted the original format to meet this local expectation (H. N. Lee, 2011; Yang, 2011).

Because the year 2011 had the highest number of imported formats, *Dancing With the Stars* did not appear a lot in newspaper articles that were about format programs. Internationally popular formats like *Britain's Got Talent*, *Popstar to Operastar*, or *The Voice*, were being aired or filmed in this year and a mediocre format like *Dancing With the Stars* was not able to gather much attention. Most of the coverage on *Dancing With the Stars* was about the incidents on the set, such as two contestants withdrawing from the show because of injuries or information about which celebrity had been eliminated (B. R. Choi, 2011). Not much attention was given to the local adaptations or format license deals either, which had been frequent themes in the articles about *Project Runway Korea*. This lack of interest could come from the fact that formats were no longer a new idea, but a familiar concept when *Dancing With the Stars* was being broadcast.

Negative perceptions about whole format programs started to be seen in the articles from this period. These articles pointed out that while formats were more likely to be successful than original programs, this was not true for every imported format (Jung, 2011). Also, with so many format programs being imported into Korea, there started to be worries about whether this was helping the local productions. One article expressed concern over how only a small number of Korean formats were being exported while there were many imported formats coming into the country (Nam, 2011), and another article criticized the fact that television stations were all importing similar formats and

not working hard enough to provide the audience with diverse, original programs (E. Kim, 2011).

To summarize the results of this chapter, it mainly looked at how the reason for using formats, the mode of adaptations, and the perceptions on format programs had changed, as the trend moved from illegal copying towards obtaining licensed whole format programs. Three historical adaptation phases were identified through the analyses on eight case studies, which are the illegal copying phase, partial format phase, and the licensed format phase.

Results showed that the pressure to achieve high audience ratings was a constant motivation for using format programs throughout all three phases and producers recognized that formats were more likely to gather a larger audience because they were proven to be successful in other countries. Moreover, the cost-efficiency of the format programs was also an important reason for using formats during the phases. It may have been simply cheaper to copy from a program illegally rather than paying for the format fees in the beginning, but later on it was profitable to obtain the format licenses legally because it would cost less than going through legal disputes.

As for the mode of adaptations, more glocalization of format programs could be seen as the general trend moved from illegal copying to licensed formats. Illegally copied programs rarely had any adaptations within them and even if there were such adaptations, not much attention was given to them. But in the partial format phase, there started to be some formats that had successfully glocalized the original format to the local audience. For the licensed format phase, the programs tended to have the most glocalized adaptations compared to the other phases in general, but this was dependent on the format license contracts. Formats that had stricter format bibles and licensing contracts were not

able to make changes to the original format or had to rely on the format copyright holders' decisions for localizations.

Unsurprisingly, the perceptions of illegal copying in the press were extremely critical. When formats first started to come into the media market, the perceptions were more positive than those on illegal copying but they did tend to get slightly critical; using formats were seen as a lazy way to produce programs. Whole format programs were praised for adapting the format to the local audience and first seen as a way of producing successful programs, but later received critical coverage about the channels overusing formats.

Another interesting thing to note about the perceptions in the newspaper articles was that the formats that had high audience ratings tended to be viewed in a positive light but formats that were not as successful were often associated with negative tones. This shows how much pressure the producers were under to deliver high ratings from both the television stations and the audience.

The following chapter will summarize the analyses answering the research questions and discuss the theoretical implications of the results. Also, it will identify the limitations of this study and also talk what should be further addressed in future researches.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The television format program market has grown rapidly during the last decade, generating high numbers of revenues across the world, thus becoming an important part of the television industry and academic research. This study aimed to give a greater understanding of this phenomenon through analyzing how international formats enter and become part of a particular national market. As Korea has seen more imported formats coming into its media market in the recent years, this study chose to focus on the Korean media market for analysis.

The first research question examined the general background of the imported format programs into Korea by analyzing what factors influenced this inflow of formats. First, the globalization of production markets had encouraged the format program growth. As media markets in the world, including Korea, experienced an expansion of channels due to technological advances, there was a demand for television content to fill in the extra airtime and format program production companies were established to meet this need. Also, these companies saw Korea as an opportunity to enter other Asian countries because of the competitiveness of the Korean Wave in these countries. As Korean content already has a strong presence in Asian countries, it would be much easier for the format companies to enter those markets via Korean versions of international formats. The economic situations had an influence on the inflow of formats as well. The world financial crisis in the late 2000s had led the television stations to operate on a tighter budget and formats were a way to deal with this change. Formats are more cost-effective than whole canned programs because they are more likely to be successful, due to their extensive knowledge about audiences in the format bibles, and also because some

format genres tend to feature regular people than celebrities, which helps cut down the production costs (Waisbord, 2004).

At the national level, deregulation policies and higher competition among channels were factors that encouraged the inflow of imported formats. The deregulation of the domestic program quota in Korea enabled television stations to air more imported whole programs on their channels. However, despite these deregulations, the amount of imported whole programs was steadily declining while the amount of imported formats was rising. Thus, it can be inferred that the audiences' preferences for local content led to the increase of imported formats because formats have the advantage of being adapted to the local audience. Also, more television services, such as cable, satellite, or IPTV, were introduced into the market, and this created higher competition among the channels for advertisement revenues. Imported formats were a way for television stations to ensure high audience ratings because they were already proven successful in other countries, and this was important because high audience ratings are positively related to higher sales in advertisement air times.

In order to answer the second research question, a closer analysis was done on the global formats coming into Korea. Overall, the study found that the inflows of formats had a significant change after the media liberalization period from the late 1990s to early 2000s, which was one of the important turning points in the Korean media history (Shim, 2006). The total number of formats steadily increased over time, especially towards the more recent years in the sample time period. When examining the channels that had imported formats, results showed that the increase of formats was attributed to the cable channels. Formats were first seen on cable in 2006 and since then, cable channels imported more formats, finally surpassing the number of formats on broadcast channels in 2010. Cable channels had been struggling to compete against the well-established

broadcast channels and formats were a way for cable channels to be more competitive, because they were more likely to be successful, while keeping a low cost production budget.

In the case of genres, the most popular genre of the imported formats was game shows, followed by reality shows. This corresponds with the existing industry reports on the global format market, which show that the reality show and studio game genres are the top earning genres (FRAPA, 2009). This result also supports the statement that game shows are a genre that is likely to be less affected by cultural values (Eun, 2008a), thus making it easier for them to travel overseas. Also, as the reality show genre is currently the most popular genre in the global format trade market, the high percentage of reality shows hints that the Korea format market is becoming more globalized, following global trends.

Most of the previous research on international format flows finds that the European countries are at the center of production (Chalaby, 2011; Esser, 2010), but the research that focuses on the regional format markets finds that Japan has been a prominent exporter in the East Asian region (Iwabuchi, 2004b; Keane & Moran, 2005). This study has found that Korea had imported almost all of its formats from the Japanese in the earlier years, which corresponds with the latter group of studies. In the earlier years, Japanese formats dominated the local format market, and this may have been partly because the ban on Japanese cultural products did not allow Japanese programs to broadcast in Korea, so importing formats were a way to get around this policy. However, in the later years, the origins of imported formats became more diverse with more formats being imported from the U.K. and the U.S., and not just from the Japanese.

This change of format program origins can be linked to the cultural proximity theory. Cultural proximity is not a predetermined concept but a flexible one that changes,

depending on the temporal distance between the countries in terms of the industry growth (Iwabuchi, 2004a). In other words, cultural proximity can matter differently in different stages in the format program industry. When the Korean television industry was first starting out, television stations looked towards the Japanese programs as a reference because they saw them as a success model for audience ratings because they were more likely to be well received in the local market due to the cultural similarities within the format programs. Producers did not have to put in too much effort into adapting the Japanese formats to fit the local audience, compared to that of formats from culturally distant countries, so cultural proximity served to be cost-efficient as well.

However, as the local format industry grew with many imported formats coming into the market, local producers were able to gain more experience on using format programs. Such experience could be dealing with the format copyright holders or making adaptations to the original format, and the producers became more confident in using formats. Thus, television stations were not as concerned with the advantages that formats from a culturally proximate country, such as Japan, could offer. Instead, they started to import formats from more culturally distant countries, like the U.K. or the U.S., which are the leading exporters in the global format market that have created internationally popular format programs. Therefore, there seems to be a certain trajectory to how much cultural proximity matters, depending on the growth of the format industry; the newer the format industry, the more cultural proximity matters.

The last research question went into more detail of the imported format programs by examining several case studies to see how the use of formats changed from illegal copying to buying licensed whole formats over time. There were three phases in how formats were being used. The phases were the illegal copying phase, the partial format phase, and the licensed whole format phase.

In the first phase, which mostly falls in the 1990s, the local television stations frequently copied from Japanese programs mostly because of the pressure to produce high quality programs that would gather a large audience in a short period of time. But because of the poor production conditions, local producers were not able to create such popular programs and they looked towards Japanese programs as success models. As the Korean television stations did not have sufficient economic resources available at that time, illegally copying the programs was more efficient than paying for royalties (S. H. Lee, 1999b). The selected case studies, *Father's Challenge* and *Youth*, showed that these programs had simply replicated the original Japanese programs without much adaptation. Even if there were such adaptations, the press coverage did not give attention to them because the general perceptions on the plagiarism of Japanese programs were extremely negative. This negativity was not only related to the animosity between the two countries that came from the history of Japan's annexation of Korea, but also because there was the fear that the Japanese programs might take over the local media market when the Japanese cultural ban was reduced (Hundt & Bleiker, 2007). In this situation, cultural proximity was double-edged; Japanese programs were being copied because they were culturally similar to Korea and thus more likely to appeal to the local audience, but also because of such similarities, there were concerns about how it might dominate the Korean media content.

The next phase in format programs uses is the partial format phase, which is the transition phase between the illegal copying and licensed whole format uses because these formats in this phase incorporate a partial format into a larger program. In this phase, the local producers were moving towards buying format licenses rather than just illegally copying them as they had in the past. Due to the advent of new media services, namely the Internet, the audience was able to gain access to foreign programs that were

not officially imported into Korea more easily. So, the producers could no longer keep up the illegal copying practices because the audience was becoming more aware of the original programs, and they started to use legal practices to produce the format programs. Through analyzing three case studies, *Brain Survivor*, *Brain Wall*, and *Solomon's Choice*, the results showed that the reason for using partial formats did not change much from the past; partial formats were used because of the high possibility of achieving high audience ratings. Although there were variations among the case studies in how much adaptation were done to the original format, there tended to be more adaptation than with the illegal copied programs. Not only were there adaptations done to fit the local sentiments, but there also were adaptations that were made because of the channels' characteristics. For example, the game show *Brain Survivor* was aired on a public broadcast channel that had an obligation to act in favor of the public interest, so the participants competed for the chance to win a scholarship for their alma mater rather than a monetary prize. As for the press perceptions, there was a tendency for the press to be more favorable to partial format programs that had significant adaptations because the idea of using official formats was a new concept at that time. If the Korean version of an imported format was too similar to the original format, people were quick to accuse the partial formats of plagiarism even though they were legal.

The last phase in the formats uses is the licensed whole formats phase, which is during the early 2000s to the 2010s. This format use refers to the practice of obtaining not only the license to produce a format, but also the format bible and other resources that help the production process. Through the analyses on *I vs 100*, *Project Runway Korea*, and *Dancing With the Stars*, it was clear that the possibility of higher audience ratings was a strong motivation for using licensed formats, just as it was for the past phases. However, there were also reasons that were related to the specific needs of the channels.

For example, *I vs 100* fit the needs of KBS2 to air educational content and *Dancing with the Stars* fit MBC's need to fill in a specific time slot until their original reality show was ready to air its second season. When looking at the adaptations, formats in this phase were recognizable as a local version of the original format because the adaptations were restricted by the format bibles or format consultants (Moran & Malbon, 2006). The formats from the partial format phase tended to differentiate themselves from the original format by adding local flavors. But this was not always the case for the licensed formats; the audience sometimes had certain expectations of local versions of an internationally popular format program because they had already watched the original format. Thus, producers had to be true to the original format rather than changing the format, in order to ensure that the program would be well received by the audience. The perception in the press was favorable to whole formats when this phase was fairly new, but as whole formats became more widespread, there started to be concerns about the unbalanced format flows because Korea was not exporting as much as importing format programs.

When taking the results from the past chapters and relating it to the bigger picture of international content flows, it seems that the imported format flows are more complex than the canned program flows. This is mainly because format programs go through the process of adaptation, while canned whole programs do not. Moran (2009b) points out that the adaptations in formats are a complicated process, consisting of both commercial and cultural elements. This process was seen in the Korean format case studies, which backs up Moran's argument. The format programs that were analyzed in this study had been imported by the television stations mainly because they wanted to achieve high audience ratings. High audience ratings led to higher prices for selling advertisement airtimes and this eventually meant that the television stations were able to generate more revenue. Also, some of the formats in this study had adapted the production sets to fit the

local production budget. For instance, *Project Runway Korea* had used a studio to film the competition because there it was more expensive to use a professional design school as a shooting location. Thus, these examples show that adaptations that are related to commercial elements existed within the Korean formats. The cultural elements would include all the changes that were made in the formats to ensure that the program would fit the local context, such as *I vs 100* and *Brain Survivor* changing the rules of the competition so that the winner would either donate the winnings to charity because of the negative feelings about an individual winning a large sum of money. Moreover, format programs transfer not only the program itself, but also the knowledge of producing such programs by using format bibles or specialized consulting services, and these are not seen in the canned program flows (Moran, 2009b). Therefore, the format programs flows should be thought of differently than the canned program flows.

An additional thing to note about formats programs is that they are frequently associated with hybridity because they are at the intersection of both global and local, as they have a common structure that is the same across countries and also have specific adaptations (Waisbord, 2004). While this is somewhat true, we should take caution not to simplify formats to the national or global level because they are complicated in both aspects.

Format adaptations tend to be reduced to the national level because these adaptations are what make each format version unique to the local context. However, this study argues that just because adaptations exist, it does not mean that the formats are all simply 'nationalized'. Esser (2010) also critiques the tendency to simplify format adaptations as nationalization and argues that they should not be thought as just a pull between global and local cultures. The adaptations that were found in the case studies supports this statement, because it turns out the adaptations differed by the many

situations the format in which was used, such as which channels had imported the format, which audience was watching the format, what resources were available to the producers, and how the format license contracts were made.

Also, we should recognize that the dynamics of ‘global’ formats are much fragmented than we realize. The term ‘global’ is frequently used for things that are widespread across the world, but the term is abstract and reduces the complexity of such phenomenon. The findings of this study support this argument because it shows that there are various aspects in such ‘global’ format markets. Through the analysis on the Korean format market, it turned out that the globalization of the format market was done on two levels; first at the structural level and then in the flows of formats. Before format programs became prominent, the structure of the Korean market started to follow the global trends in other media markets, such as the deregulation policies, expansions of channels, and increasing competition among the media, and this acted as a pre-condition for the inflows of global formats. After the structure was set, formats started to enter the Korean market and there were two different dynamics in how these global flows were formed; a transnational flow with the Japanese formats and a more global flow with countries from other regions. To give an example, the former was deeply associated with animosity due to the historical and political tensions between the two countries, while the latter was more associated with Korea’s aspiration to learn the format program business from the worldwide format exporters. In other words, it is difficult to say that formats are all just ‘global’ when there are such complicated dynamics at work.

One way of clarifying the ‘global’ formats is making a distinction in the format adaptations, by seeing whether the initiative to make such changes came from the outside (localization) or the inside (glocalization) (Straubhaar, 2009). For example, an adaptation from the inside would be when *Project Runway Korea* added subtitles to the program,

which was not seen in the original format. This change was decided by the producers because using subtitles were a common feature in Korean entertainment shows and the audience was used to seeing them (Yang, 2011). An adaptation from the outside would be when BBC made the Korean producers of *Dancing With the Stars* take the product placement advertisements out of the program or not enabling them to change the rules of the show to compensate for unexpected events (Jung, 2011).

Also, formats are often seen as a way of promoting cultural diversity because they allow adaptations that are more relevant to different countries (Waisbord, 2004). However, as noted above, the format adaptation processes are much complicated than being just 'national' and global forces from outside the country often have a hand in how the certain adaptations are made. Thus, we should be careful when talking about format programs encouraging cultural diversity or localization because just because of these adaptations.

The biggest limitation of this study is that it only examines the imported formats in Korea, so the results cannot be simply applied to other countries or other kinds of imported programs. Moreover, the study uses a convenience sampling method, which means that study results can only be generalized within that particular sample and not to the entire Korean media market. The sample was gathered by relying on data sources such as newspaper articles and research papers, and the exact criteria that was used to define those programs as 'format' or 'illegal copying' was difficult to find. It could be that the criteria used in newspaper articles were different than the operationalization that the study used for 'format program' but this is hard to confirm because there is no mention of what format means in these articles. For instance, some sources might use formats to indicate only the whole licensed formats but exclude partial format programs, which is different from the operationalization that this study used.

Despite these limitations, this study used the format program flows in Korea to argue that the international program flows are becoming much more diverse. Not only do format programs complicate our understanding of international flows, but also the flows of whole canned programs are being more complex as well. We need to give more attention to these sub-flows. For example, there is a fan audience called the '*Ilde-jeok*', a newly coined term that translates to 'the Japanese drama manias,' in Korea that is devoted to consuming Japanese dramas. Because Japanese dramas are not allowed on the local television channels, this audience accesses Japanese dramas, creates and shares subtitles with others, and discusses the dramas through the Internet (Jun, 2007). This is only one example of how there are fragmented audiences that consume foreign programs through unofficial routes, and there are probably more of these sub-flows around the world. Therefore, the literature on international programs flows should not only look at general flows, but also take notice of these sub-flows and become more refined to explain such phenomenon.

Another possible topic for future research would be identifying the product life cycle of format programs. Pool (1977) explains that there is a cycle to using imported programs; a country first relies heavily on imported content but learns from these programs and eventually succeeds in producing their own content. The analysis in this study examined the imported format inflows in Korea and found that one of the reasons for importing formats was to learn the format business from the global format exporters because Korea was trying to become a format exporter (Hong & Sung, 2007). It seems that there might be a product life cycle for formats programs, but as this study only looked at the imported formats and not the exported ones, it is hard to say so. Thus, future research should include the exported formats to find if a format product life cycle exists.

Appendix A

\$ is rounded off by 1,000

	Broadcast		Cable	
	\$ of programs	# of programs	\$ of programs	# of programs
1999	8,690	n/a	960	n/a
2000	9,130	8,600	660	787
2001	10,910	12,079	300	481
2002	18,020	17,828	900	805
2003	35,560	13,983	680	752
2004	70,310	15,317	790	1,065
2005	102,630	21,625	3,260	7,242
2005	95,380	21,710	3,470	2,443
2007	89,340	30,603	3,930	5,589
2008	157,000	35,391	2,790	2,393
2009	166,490	41,638	3,740	3,188
2010	289,000	55,026	6,040	4,053

Table 5: Total Amount Made on Exported Programs of Broadcast/Cable

\$ is rounded off by 1,000

	Broadcast		Cable	
	\$ of programs	# of programs	\$ of programs	# of programs
1999	23,730	n/a	8,700	n/a
2000	30,340	4,849	9,670	5,966
2001	172,760	3,183	1,680	1,414
2002	16,980	2,866	828,770	11,876
2003	54,720	3,291	32,660	12,617
2004	58,590	1,762	43,310	19,665
2005	12,660	1,729	30,520	18,536
2005	15,590	1,876	56,980	21,349
2007	9,310	2,126	55,630	19,211
2008	5,620	2,467	72,640	13,758
2009	3,610	2,067	118,120	23,848
2010	4,360	23,284	97,940	21,284

Table 6: Total Amount Spent on Imported Programs of Broadcast/Cable

\$ is rounded off by 1,000

	Broadcast	Cable
1999	1,515,400	107,900
2000	2,107,200	159,200
2001	1,995,000	161,700
2002	2,495,600	232,400
2003	2,415,100	291,400
2004	2,275,200	375,300
2005	2,183,700	519,100
2005	2,243,300	652,900
2007	2,175,000	779,900
2008	1,999,900	799,600
2009	1,743,800	699,400
2010	2,014,700	896,600

Table 7: Total Advertising Market Revenues by Broadcast/Cable

\$ is rounded off by 1,000

	Broadcast	Cable
2002	635,400	-
2003	483,900	-
2004	507,500	-
2005	436,900	-
2005	509,200	208,500
2007	475,900	185,200
2008	476,300	227,500
2009	412,900	192,300
2010	561,000	332,200

Table 8: Total Production Costs of Broadcast/Cable

Appendix B

Format	Channel	Original Title	Origin	Year
<i>Father's Challenge</i>	SBS	<i>Happy Family Plan</i>	Japan	2004-2005
<i>Youth</i>	MBC	<i>Love Generation</i>	Japan	1999
<i>Family Game Show</i>	KBS1	<i>Quiz Magical Brain Power</i>	Japan	1999-2009
<i>Brain Survivor</i>	MBC	<i>Brain Survivor</i>	Japan	2002-2004
<i>Solomon's Choice</i>	SBS	<i>Legal Advice Center With Lines</i>	Japan	2002-2008
<i>Choice! Taste vs Taste</i>	SBS	<i>Dotch Cooking Show</i>	Japan	2003-2007
<i>My Fair Lady</i>	SBS	<i>Perfect Woman</i>	Japan	2003
<i>Fort Boyard</i>	SBS	<i>Fort Boyard</i>	France	2003
<i>Spring Day</i>	SBS	<i>Heaven's Coins</i>	Japan	2005
<i>Yes or No</i>	tvN	<i>Deal or No Deal</i>	Netherlands	2006-2007
<i>Super Viking</i>	SBS	<i>Viking: The Ultimate Obstacle Course</i>	Japan	2006-2007
<i>Alone in Love</i>	SBS	<i>Along in Love</i>	Japan	2006
<i>Hello, God</i>	KBS2	<i>Flowers for Algernon</i>	USA	2006
<i>I vs 100</i>	KBS2	<i>Eén tegen 100</i>	Netherlands	2007-2011
<i>Quiz! Sixth Sense Challenge</i>	SBS	<i>Quiz! Hexagon 2</i>	Japan	2007-2010
<i>Brain Wall</i>	SBS	<i>Tunnels</i>	Japan	2007
<i>White Tower</i>	KBS2	<i>White Tower</i>	Japan	2007
<i>Perfect Bride</i>	MBC every1	<i>Perfect Bride</i>	Turkey	2008-2009
<i>Brain Battle</i>	MBC	<i>Nep League</i>	Japan	2008
<i>Project Runway Korea</i>	OnStyle	<i>Project Runway</i>	USA	2009-2011
<i>Women who Choose the Ranks</i>	QTV	<i>Ranking the Stars</i>	Japan	2009-2011
<i>Mom Swap</i>	QTV	<i>Wife Swap</i>	U.K.	2009-2010
<i>The Moment of Truth Korea</i>	QTV	<i>Nothing But the Truth</i>	Columbia	2009-2010
<i>Boys Over Flowers</i>	KBS2	<i>Boys Over Flowers</i>	Japan	2009

(continued)

<i>The Man Who Couldn't Get Married</i>	KBS2	<i>The Man Who Couldn't Get Married</i>	Japan	2009
<i>Korea's Next Top Model</i>	OnStyle	<i>America's Next Top Model</i>	USA	2010-2011
<i>Love Switch</i>	tvN	<i>Take Me Out</i>	Australia	2010-2011
<i>Triangle</i>	tvN	<i>Divided</i>	Netherlands	2010-2011
<i>Neverland</i>	tvN	<i>Silent Library</i> <i>Benidorm Bastards</i>	Japan Belgium	2010
<i>Producer Shin's Entertainment Production</i>	E Channel	<i>Company</i>	Japan	2010
<i>Playful Kiss</i>	MBC	<i>Playful Kiss</i>	Japan	2010
<i>Master of Study</i>	KBS2	<i>Dragon Zakura</i>	Japan	2010
<i>Korea's Got Talent</i>	tvN	<i>Britain's Got Talent</i>	U.K.	2011
<i>Top Gear Korea</i>	XTM	<i>Top Gear</i>	U.K.	2011
<i>Dancing With the Stars</i>	MBC	<i>Strictly Come Dancing</i>	U.K.	2011
<i>Trivial Challenges for 60 Seconds</i>	MBC	<i>Minute to Win it</i>	USA	2011
<i>My Man Can</i>	MBC every1	<i>My Man Can</i>	Germany	2011
<i>City Hunter</i>	SBS	<i>City Hunter</i>	Japan	2011
<i>Opera Star 2011</i>	tvN	<i>Popstar to Operastar</i>	U.K.	2011
<i>Queen</i>	E Chanel	<i>Queen</i>	Japan	2011
<i>Saturday Night Live Korea</i>	tvN	<i>Saturday Night Live</i>	USA	2011
<i>Super Nanny Korea</i>	QTV	<i>Super Nanny</i>	U.K.	2011
<i>The Chair Korea</i>	KBS joy	<i>The Chair</i>	USA	2011
<i>Lee Su Geun's Change</i>	Channel A	<i>Upgrade</i>	Israel	2011
<i>Dating in the Dark Korea</i>	TV Chosun	<i>Dating in the Dark</i>	Netherlands	2011

Table 9: List of Imported Format Program Titles 1999-2011

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