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B.A. Journalism and Mass Communication

FIRST YEAR

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM

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B.A.,

JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

PAPER –I

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM

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PAPER - I

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM

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Introduction to Journalism

Unit I: Concepts and principles of Journalism- News story - 5W's and 1H – Structure, Inverted pyramid Criteria. News: meaning, definition, nature the news process.

Unit II: Types of Journalism – Investigative, Tabloid, Print, Broadcast Journalism and Web. Opinion, News, Feature. Researching, sourcing for news, wire services, use of internet, Use of archives, Plagiarism.

Unit III: News worthiness, news values, principles for news selection Hard news vs. Soft news, basic components of a news story attribution, embargo, verification, balance and fairness, brevity, dateline, credit line, byline.

Unit IV: Elements of Style. Language and principles of writing - Basic differences between the print, electronic and online journalism Language of news. Principles of clear writing. Responsibility to Society - Press and Democracy relationship, Freedom of expression. Self Publishing, Contemporary debates and issues. Changing trends in Journalism.

Unit V: Communication – History and background, Intra-personal, non-verbal and verbal. Communication as a process - Barriers of communication– Mass communication today and tomorrow

Reference

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- Mass Media In a Changing World, George Rodmann McGraw Hill Publication
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The Newspaper's Handbook, Richard Keeble, Routledge Publication

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Concept of News
- 1.2 Definition of News
- 1.3 What is News?
- 1.4 Principles of Journalism
- 1.5 Types of News
 - 1.5.1 Expected News
 - 1.5.2 Unexpected News
 - 1.5.3 Straight News
 - 1.5.4 Explanatory News
 - 1.5.5 Hard News
 - 1.5.6 Soft News
- 1.6 Let us sum up
- 1.7 Unit end exercises
- 1.8 Points for discussion
- 1.9 Answers to check your progress
- 1.10 Suggested Readings

1.1 CONCEPT OF NEWS

The concept of news must have existed before the era of mass media. In those days people exchanged local news in weekly markets just by talking to each other. Various kinds of drummers communicated the public announcements. Such announcements even now occupy more space and time in newspapers and electronic media. Modern mass media has become an electronic drummer nowadays.

Though the concept is very old the word 'news' is relatively new in origin. In English, in 1443, it appeared as "newis", in 1485 it became "newyes" and in 1523 it evolved into "newes". It was only after 1550 it became "news" and even in

1622 there was *Weekly Newes* in London. In 1685 sentences such as “The amazing news of Charles at once were spread” (Shrivatsava, 1987, p. 1-2).

The term news has two meanings. One is “new”, which means something very new. The plural of new is news. Hence news means any new information. The second is N + E + W + S = NEWS, which means North, East, West and South, showing the four main directions from which the new information comes daily. Media get news from all the four directions. Hence the word NEWS arises here.

The popular Chambers dictionary says “News is new information which is about something that has happened just now”. The concise Oxford thesaurus substitutes the following terms in the place of news: information, facts, data, report, story, news item, news flash, account, statement, announcement, press release, communication, communiqué, message, bulletin, dispatch, disclosure, revelation, word, talk, the latest, gossip, title-tattle, rumour, scandal and expose.

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary gives the following explanations to understand the word news. It says news is

- An information about something that has happened recently; Any report of recent event that appear in newspapers or on television or radio;
- A regular television or radio broadcast of the latest news;
- A person, thing or event that is considered to be interesting enough to be reported as news.

There is no strict grammar to explain the word news. The explanation varies from country to country, and language to language. “When a dog bites a man it’s not news; but, when a man bites a dog it’s news “ is the witty explanation which has been in use for a long time. Here is a summary of some excerpts from the early explanations.

“What you did not know yesterday, but knows today is news”

“Bringing out something new is news”

“Anything which someone wants to hide becomes news”

“Anything which is different from the common and the regular is news”

“Any information spread by the media which arouses the interest of the people is news”

“Any information which affects the majority, anything or any incident or any opinion which affects a considerable number of people, is a news”

“Good news never becomes news”

“Whatever the newspaper creates is news”

“Collection of current affairs, which are tasty, interesting and true are news”

“Any information which adds taste to life, blossoms as news and spreads the aroma through its way of spreading”

“Opinions of very important people are news”

“Any information which is written by the people, for the people and from the people is news”

“Today’s news, tomorrow’s history”

To sum up, “News is an objective, true, fair note about an opinion, incident or issue; Explanations which are true, related to the present, arousing people’s interest and contradictory to the conventional, common and regular daily routines” says , Aiyer (1979, p.15).

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF NEWS

News may be defined as an accurate fact or idea that will interest a large number of readers. News is anything that is timely, interesting and significant to readers. The best news is that which possesses the greatest degree of this interest and significant for greatest number of people (Natarajan, Mani and Khan, 1988, p.33).

"The newspaperman cannot describe his product exactly because none has hit upon a completely satisfactory definition of news. However, here are some of the definitions attempted by leading journalists from the West collected by Walter A. Steigleman in his book *The Newspaper man and the Law*.

"Whatever interests' people is news", writes Charles C. Clayton.

"News is an impartial report of activities of mankind and matter that which does not offend the sensibilities of most enlightened people", quotes Kansas Editorial Association.

"News is an account of an event which a newspaper prints to the people that by doing so it will profit", adds Curtis D. Macdougall.

"News is a report of recent event, information about a thing unknown of recent intelligence".

"News exists in the minds of man. It is not an event; it is something perceived after the event", summarizes W. Schramm.

News is the account of an event, not something intrinsic in the event itself. News is the written, audio or visual construction of an event or happening or person. An event itself that makes news is nothing; but the write-up or the audio or visual presentation of the event is the news.

News is a professional value system, which is a presentation or representation or construction of an event, which has to be in a particular format and is selected according to the values system.

News is the end product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events according to a socially constructed set of category.

Roger Fowler describes news as a social institution and a cultural discourse which exists and has meaning only in relation to other institutions and

Check your progress

1. What N + E + W + S stands for?

2. Who told that "Whatever interests' people is news writes"?

3. Who did say news is a social institution?

discourses which exist and have meaning only in relation to other institutions and discourses operating at the same time.

Like language, news is a map, not the terrain which the map represents. A map uses codes, conventions, signs and symbols which have to be 'read' or interpreted. So does news; news as it were 'maps' the world. News selects, processes, produces and shapes an event or happening, but it is we as readers who make our own sense of the news (Kumar, K.J., 1981, p.55)

1.3 WHAT IS NEWS?

It is very difficult to design the grammar for news. By listing what will become news, we can find an explanation. The Editorial Study Centre of Thomson Foundation has compiled the types of what will become news, which are applicable to all the countries (Gursamy, 2001, p.111). Let's have an overview on the explanations given here:

i) Novelty: Anything which hadn't happened so far, but have happened just now as new will become news. Because, novelty always has the power to attract people. If a visually differently-abled person operates computer with the help of a new device, then it is news. Because operating computer with the help of a common man is not something very novel, but still when it is operated by a visually differently-abled person, it is news.

ii) Personal Impact: Anything which arouses the interest of the reader and affects the daily routine of the citizens it will become news. For example, information about the marriage ceremony of a star cricket player, indefinite closing of colleges due to students' strike, hike in petrol and diesel prices etc., have personal impact on the readers' lives.

iii) Local Affairs: Public are very much interested in knowing the local affairs than the news from abroad. Just imagine, four people are killed in a tragic road accident in your village and four hundred people are killed in a stampede in

London, people used to show more interest in the nearby road accident than the farthest stampede.

iv) Money: All information related to money become news. Budgets of State and Central Governments, newly announced taxes, income and expenditure statements of Government, hike in petroleum, diesel, LPG and the groceries give news.

v) Crime: News on crime is hot news. Murder, robbery, sexual abuse, etc., sensationalize people through news papers. However, there are people who show more interest on such news. There are special Tabloids for crime news abroad. *The Sun* and *The Mirror* are the popular tabloids of UK for such news. Since crime news are like crime novels to read for the common man, he shows more interest in crime news.

vi) Sex and Gender Issues: Humanity always shows interest in current affairs related to sex and gender. The affairs between the celebrities are exaggerated in news papers. There are some dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies which survive only by publishing such issues.

vii) Conflict: Controversial issues between two person, two countries and two states create news. People show more interest in knowing the controversies and the ends. Misunderstanding among the star couples, controversy over the international border between any two nations, issues over sharing of water and electricity among the two different states are some examples for conflicts.

viii) Religion: In a country like India, people show more interest in religion and spirituality. Even atheists show more interest on commenting religious issues. Information on religious organizations, pontiffs, mutts, churches, temples, mosques, etc., creates news.

ix) Disaster and Tragedy: Unexpected disasters and tragedies occupy space in news papers and time in the broadcast media. Stampedes, landslides, fire accidents, earthquakes, tremors, volcanoes, floods, tsunamis, unexpected demise of national and international leaders, bomb blasts etc bring tears in the eyes of the

readers. When leaders like Gandhi, Kennedy, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv were killed the whole world was moved.

x) Humour: Dailies provides the junk food for the hunger of the people towards humour. If a person behaves indifferently in the Parliament or Legislative assembly or an important gathering and if a daily publishes it, people enjoy it and discuss it with their kith and kin.

xi) Human Interest: Daily affairs related to people's happiness and sadness become news. When a millionaire loses his possessions, when a slum dweller wins a big amount in a lottery and when a cat in a hamlet gives birth to a kitten with two heads and three legs human interest news is created.

xii) The Under Privileged: News and current affairs related to the weaker section form news. When a youth from a poor background scores high marks in the IAS examination it becomes news. When a student commits suicide due to unbearable poverty, it is published by the dailies.

xiii) Mystery: Whenever there is suspense or secrecy or mystery, it will become news. If a leader vanishes unexpectedly and if the body is found dead in a nearby lake, immediately it will become news. Because, there is suspense over the death and killing of the person.

xiv) Health: All health related issues become news. Whenever a new medicine is discovered and a new device is introduced immediately they arouse the interest of the public. Medical developments on transplantation of human organs, replacement of organs with artificial facilities, innovations like cloning, technological developments on treatment to cancer, infertility, liver failure, kidney failure etc form news. People also show more interest in miracle healing and faith healing. Such news occupies health magazines.

xv) Science and Technology: The new innovations and discoveries grow into news. The demise of the Indian born American woman Astronaut Kalpana Chawla and the visit of the space Shuttle Sunita Williams to India were given wider

coverage by the news papers. Whenever Indian Space Research Organization sends the INSAT series of satellites, it occupies the first page with a big headline and an enlarged photograph.

xvi) Entertainment: Movies, sports, drama, dance, musical programmes, book reviews, comics, jokes, cartoon etc., become news. People always show more interest on movies, sports and games. They always respect the film heroes. When the celebrities announce their retirement from their field of fame, the fans are ready to do self immortalization too. Media play such an important role in providing information about their entertaining celebrities.

xvii) Famous People: Any information about any celebrities becomes news. When the pet dog of Tony Blair, the former Prime Minister of UK fell ill, it occupies space in the last page of *The Hindu* in the *News Scape*. When the star cricketer Yuvraj Singh was hospitalized the Indian cricket fans offered prayers for his quick recovery. The fans showed more interest on his quick recovery.

xviii) Weather: The fisher men and the farmers need weather forecasting daily. In the printed dailies and the news in broadcast media, every day weather forecasting is the must. The weather forecaster Mr. Ramanan of the Meteorological centre in Chennai is lovingly addressed as *Ramanan Mama* (Uncle) by the children of the delta districts of Kauveri river of Tamilnadu, since holidays are declared for heavy rains by the district collectors, depending upon his forecasting of upcoming heavy rains. Whenever holiday is announced for such reasons the children used to shout the slogan *Ramanan Mama Vazhga! (Long live Ramanan uncle!)*

xix) Food: Man cannot survive without food. Whenever there is food scarcity and water scarcity people suffers a lot. Suicide of farmers increases in the drought hit areas of our nation. Sharing of water among the states becomes a serious issue and is highlighted by the dailies. The hike in the prices of paddy, rice, wheat, kerosene, sugar, black gram, green gram, vegetables, fruits and the non-vegetarian items affect the public. Media play an important role in spreading news about such issues.

xx) Minorities: The religious and linguistic minorities play an important role in providing news. The conflicts between the minority and the majority, the treatment of the minority by the majority and the problems of the institutions of the minorities play an important role in providing news. The festivals of such groups are given wider coverage by the media.

1.4 PRINCIPLES OF JOURNALISM

Journalism is a craft, a profession and a trade. The origin of Journalism is traceable only to certain extent. Number of technologies have come together to make possible the availability of news anywhere and everywhere. The development of printing technology and the availability of transport facilities make the large scale printing and distribution of dailies and weeklies possible.

As a craft Journalism needs specialization in reporting, writing, editing, designing etc. The reporters and the editors have to follow the deadlines and the routines strictly. In those days..., knowledge of typing and shorthand were the main skills demanded; today, computing and DTP skills are in demand for all the areas of Journalism.

While the established professions like law, medicine, engineering, management or teaching requires some specialized educational qualifications and training. Journalism does not make any such requirements essential. Anyone can choose this profession. No one minds the educational background or professional experience. Journalism has been remaining as an open profession from the very beginning itself.

However, Journalism has no distinct body of knowledge that defines the profession and marks its relationship with its clients. The readers, advertisers, advertising agencies, public relations officials and others form the clients. Journalism has its own remarkable approach. It is a way of knowing different forms of what is produced in social science. Anyhow, there is no consensus among the journalistic community on this. Journalism needs a special kind of "calling", because it is a service, an entertainment, a cultural industry, a profit

motivation, a tool for propaganda, a public relation activity and advertising. Journalism is a combination of all these.

As a business and trade, Journalism involves publishing on a regular basis for profit, with news considered as the primary product. Hence, the need arises here to attract advertisers and readers, through marketing strategies which focus on circulation and readership.

So, who is a Journalist? Or what is Journalism? The words 'journalist', 'journal' and 'journalism' are derived from the French word 'journal', which in turn comes from the Latin term '*diurnalis*' or 'daily'. The '*Acta Diurna*', a handwritten bulletin put up daily in the *Forum* was the world's first news paper. The *Forum* was the main public square in ancient Rome. The later days, pamphlets, tracts, reviews, periodicals, gazettes, news books, news sheets and letters came to be termed as 'newspapers'. Those who wrote for them were first called 'news writers' or "essayists" even 'mercurists' and later 'journalists'. The Mughal rulers in India employed 'vaquia-navis' and 'confianavis' as public and secret news-writers to record once a week in a 'vaquia' (a sort of gazette or mercury), the events of importance in the empire. These news letters were read to the king every evening by the women of the court. The British colonial rulers used a system of 'informers' for their intelligence networks.

Today, a Journalist is anyone who contributes in some way to the gathering, selection and processing of news and current affairs for the press, radio, film, television, cable and the Internet; and Journalism is the profession to which they belong. Thus, editors, correspondents, assistant editors, reporters, sub-editors, proof-readers, cartoonists, photographers, photojournalists, are journalists; so are, camera crew, audio and video editors, news readers, producers, directors and managing editors. "Stringers" are part-time journalists, while 'free-lance' journalists are those who are occasional contributors (Kumar, K.J., 1981, p.53).

US newspaper baron Joseph Pulitzer once said, "Journalists are created, not born". As he says journalistic skills are not inborn. They are cultivated. To become a journalist one needs training. That is the reason behind the

mushrooming media institutions and training courses given by them. So if you want to become a journalist, check whether you have the following basic traits:

- Skepticism
- Curiosity
- Nose for news
- Positive attitude towards improving your language skills

The press is considered as the fourth pillar or fourth estate of democracy, while legislature, executive and judiciary are the other three. For an unbreakable democracy all these four pillars have to be effective.

Check your progress

4. The words 'Journalist', 'Journal' and 'Journalism' are derived from which French term?
5. What does Diurnalism mean?
6. Who are Part-Time Journalists?
7. Which Journalists are called as occasional contributors?

The media

- Spread diverse news so that the public can make a variety of choices of information.
- Persuade the public opinion
- Arise awareness on variety of issues
- Bridge a link between the State and the citizens
- Play the duty of the opposition when the legislative structure is weak
- Serves the national interest
- Creates constructive critical thinking
- Help to make decisions on democratic responsibilities
- Create a high sense of moral, social and ethical responsibility through journalism (Aram, I. A., and Dasan, N., 2001, p. 3)

1.5 TYPES OF NEWS

Depending upon the nature of news, you can classify them into eight categories (Gurusamy, p.115. 2001). They are

1.5.1 Expected News: Expected news is the one that is known well in advance. For example, a Nationwide Rally, Parliamentary Election, Assembly Election, Olympic Games, World Cup Cricket series, Common Wealth Meet etc. Such

events are announced well in advance and the people and the media are expecting them.

1.5.2 Unexpected News: Unexpected news is about the unexpected event or incident. It happens all of a sudden. A Tsunami, flood, stampede, collapse of a multi-storey building, volcanoes, earthquake, landslide etc. may happen without anyone's expectation. No one knows this earlier. If a journalist is not on the spot when such an incident happens, journalists are sent to the spot at the earliest to get the *scoops*. If not, news is received from the audience or the citizens. Here the need for citizen journalist arises. Whenever a reporter is not able to be on the place of incident the people who live and see the incident will play the role of a reporter by giving them information and photo or video clipping.

1.5.3 Straight News: If a reporter report an incident as it happens, then it is straight news. Here, the news narrates the whole incident. No need for explanation and interpretation. The reader can find the answer for the five Ws and the one H. (Who?, What?, Why?, Where?, When?, and How?).

1.5.4 Explanatory News: If a reporter reports news with explanations, then it is explanatory news. If he reports about a pandemonium in the Parliament among the MPs, he has to explain what the reason was, how it was started, how it became serious, how it could have been prevented, what went wrong among the Parliamentarians and who were there.

1.5.5 Hard News: American media analysts have classified news into Hard news and Soft news. News which are not sensationalized, but need analysis and description are hard news. The budget, report on a financial year's income and expenditure, reports on share market and stock exchanges are hard news.

1.5.6 Soft News: Information which initiates interest among the readers is soft news. A release of a movie, scoring of runs in cents in the World cup cricket by the Indian team, winning of gold medals in the Olympiad, results of recently conducted elections are the soft news to the readers and the audience.

In addition to the above there are investigative news and continuous news which we will discuss in the later sections.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

Radio, TV, Printed news papers, online news papers, printed magazines, online magazine, cell phones, iPods, tablets etc., etc., supply news in different ways and through different equipments. News is an objective, true, fair note about an opinion, incident, issue; they are also explanations which are true, related to the present, arousing people's interest and contradictory to the conventional, common and regular daily routines.

News is a social institution and a cultural discourse which exists and has meaning only in relation to other institutions and discourses which exist operating at the same time. Journalism is a craft, a profession, a trade. The origin of Journalism is traceable only to certain extent. Number of technologies have come together to make possible the availability of news anywhere and everywhere.

The words 'journalist', 'journal' and 'journalism' are derived from the French term 'journal', which in turn comes from the Latin term 'diurnalis' or 'daily'. A Journalist is anyone who contributes in some way to the gathering, selection, and processing of news and current affairs for the press, radio, film, television, cable and the Internet; and Journalism is the profession to which they belong.

To become a Journalist you need Skepticism, Curiosity, Nose for news, Positive Attitude towards improving your language skills. Depending upon the nature of news, you can classify them into four categories. They are: Expected News, Unexpected News, Straight News, Explanatory News, Hard News, Soft news, investigative news and Continuous news

1.7 UNIT END EXERCISES:

1. Read a newspaper thoroughly and find out the different types of news.
2. Identify recent and important news and compare the way of presentation of the news by two different news papers in your regional language.

Check your Progress

8. How the well in advance news is called?
9. If a reporter reports news with explanations, how the news will be called?
10. How American media analysts have classified news?

3. Compare a radio news and TV news on a same day and find out the differences in the flow of language.
4. Collect and analyse the headlines of different news papers. List the differences and similarities.
5. Collect cartoons from four newspapers on a same day. Check whether they have news values.

1.8 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Imagine that you are working as a reporter in a leading national daily, what are the qualities you have and list the qualities you need.

1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. North, East, West and South
2. Charles C. Clayton
3. Roger Fowler
4. Journal
5. Daily
6. Stringers
7. Freelance
8. Expected news
9. Explanatory news
10. Hard news and Soft news

1.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT I

Lesson 2

THE NEWS STORY

INTRODUCTION

The dailies occupy a special place in Journalism. In most of the developing nations, television is yet to be accepted. It has been used only as an entertainment medium, but not as an informative medium, though it is not so. Moreover, people believe that the dailies are devoted more to news than entertainment. The newspapers are credible, since the printed words are in a permanent form. Daily events are recorded by newspapers. People show more interest in using newspaper for additional references. Anyhow the limitations of newspapers are: only a literate can read it and it does not have the audio visual impact as television. Anyhow, newspapers provide a great promise for the countries like India with a low literacy rate. In spite of the growing popularity of the television and internet, circulation and readership of newspapers are kept alive, as more and more first generation literates choose newspapers.

A newspaper is considered as a living text book. It reflects the Economy, Politics, Geography and Society. What is going on different corners of the Universe and how people live, their problems and solutions are reported by the news papers. Latest developments in Science and Technology are explained to the public in a simple and easy to understand way. A newspaper keeps people alert by giving information about epidemics, flood, storms etc., Hence to help the reader to understand every event reported in a newspaper, a structure should be followed. In this unit let us have a study on the structure of a newspaper.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This unit helps the student to

- Learn what is a news story
- What are the different styles used for writing news stories

- Understand the components of a news story
- Know the process of news in a news paper office

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 The News Stories

2.1.1 The Inverted Pyramid Style

2.1.2 The Hourglass Style

2.1.3 The Nut Graph Style

2.1.4 The Narrative Style

2.1.5 The Five Boxes Story Style

2.2 Structure of a News Story

2.3 Elements of a News Story

2.4 Nature of the News Process

2.5 Let us sum up

2.6 Unit end exercises

2.7 Points for discussion

2.8 Answers to check your progress

2.9 Suggested Readings

2.1 THE NEWS STORIES

The news items that appear in newspapers are also called news stories. A news story is always based on facts, whereas stories in literature are always based on fiction and imagination. While history is also based on facts but it deals with things of the past, news stories are on current events. Further, a news story is normally written in inverted pyramid style, that is, the most important facts come first followed by the other facts in the order of their significance. In the dailies abroad some other styles are also followed.

2.1.1 The Inverted Pyramid Style: This style was first developed and widely introduced during the Civil War. It is best suited for hard news stories. In the news stories with this style, the story begins with the lead and presents information in the descending importance order. The most important information comes first, followed by the less important details.

2.1.2 The Hourglass Style: This style builds on the inverted pyramid and combines a narrative. It delivers breaking news and tells a story. The first 4-6 paragraphs contain a summary lead and answer the most pressing questions. Then a transitional phrase cites the source of the upcoming story - "Police says the incident occurred after closing last night." The story concludes with the chronological order.

2.1.3 The Nut Graph Style: This style was developed by the *Wall Street Journal* in the 1940s. This style starts with an anecdotal lead that gets the reader's attention. This anecdotal lead is followed by a paragraph that provides a larger context for the story and moves the news story in that direction. This form lets the reporter and the reader explore larger issues behind an incident. For example, a nut graph news story might begin with the story of a fire, then move into a discussion of budget cuts that lead to delays in fighting the fire.

2.1.4 The Narrative Style: This style has a beginning, middle and end just like a story. But for most news articles, narratives should be short. It should also be up to the point. Narrative style is used only where telling a personal story helps to convey the point of the story or article. *The New Yorker* is noted for using narrative form. One famous example, Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, was actually published as a novel.

2.1.5 The Five Boxes Story Style: This style combines the forms listed above. This style has been useful when you have a lot of data to sort through. Box 1 contains the lead, Box 2 contains the nut graph, Box 3 tells the story which has begun in Box 1, Box 4 contains supplemental details such as statistics or expert

Check your progress

1. Which style was first developed and widely introduced during the Civil War?
2. Which Journal developed The Nut Graph style in the 1940s?
3. Which style builds on the inverted pyramid and combines a narrative?

opinions and Box 5 contains the "kicker" or the quote, image, or comment that ends the story on a strong note.

2.2 THE INVERTED PYRAMID STYLE

In all the above given styles, the "inverted pyramid" structure has been a mainstay of traditional mass media writing. *It has been used* for decades. Following this structure, the "base" of the pyramid will become the top of the inverted pyramid. That is, the most fundamental facts appear at the top of the story, which is the lead paragraph. As the top of the inverted pyramid is large, the very important facts appear at the top of the story. The non-essential information appears in the following paragraphs or "nut" graphs, in the order of importance. *In other words*, the inverted pyramid puts the most newsworthy information at the top and then the remaining information follows in the order of importance, with the least important at the bottom.

This style was developed more than a century ago. To take advantage of a new communications technology, the inverted pyramid remains a controversial yet widely used method of reporting news. It will have a future in the 21st century, as the journalists in all media agree. It had entered into common use by newspapers first and the newly-formed wire service organizations adopted it by the beginning of the 20th century.

Though the Historians argue over the inverted pyramid style when the form was created, they agreed that the invention of the telegraph sparked its development. The inverted pyramid structure is the product of an old media technology — the telegraph. When news outlets would telegraph information over the wires, it made sense to use the inverted pyramid because the most vital information in the story was transmitted first. In the event of a lost connection, whoever received the story could still print the essential facts.

Journalism historian David T. Z. Mindich argues that one of the first inverted pyramid leads was written by an Associated Press reporter after Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865. According to him, the inverted pyramid

has to be big at the top because it must answer all the questions that readers have. Remaining information is arranged in diminishing order of importance.

The conventions of the inverted pyramid require the reporter to summarize the story, to get to the heart, to the point, to sum up quickly and concisely the answer to the question: What's the news? The pyramid approach addresses the most important questions at the top of the story. It states the thesis and then provides supporting material.

Journalism has a love-hate relationship with the inverted pyramid. Its supporters consider it a useful form, especially good for breaking news. The inverted pyramid or at least its most substantial element "the summary lead," is used widely and is one of the most recognizable shapes in communications today. You'll find it on the front and inside pages of most newspapers, as well as in stories distributed worldwide by The Associated Press, Reuters and other news services elsewhere on the Internet.

"The inverted pyramid organizes stories not around ideas or chronologies but around facts," says journalism historian Mitchell Stephens in "A History of News." "It weighs and shuffles the various pieces of information, focusing with remarkable single-mindedness on their relative news value."

Critics of the inverted pyramid say it is unnatural, boring, artless and a factor in the declining readership that newspapers have been grappling with for decades. The inverted pyramid, as its critics say, is the anti-story. It tells the story backward and is at odds with the storytelling tradition that features a beginning, middle and end. Rather than rewarding a reader with a satisfying conclusion, the pyramid loses steam and peters out, in a sense defying readers to stay awake, let alone read on. Anyhow, despite decades of assaults, the pyramid survives.

In the memorable phrase of Bruce DeSilva of The Associated Press, "The inverted pyramid remains the Dracula of journalism. It keeps rising from its coffin and sneaking into the paper." There are good reasons for this staying power.

Many readers are impatient and want stories to get to the point immediately. In fast-breaking news situations, when events and circumstances may change rapidly, the pyramid allows the news writer to rewrite the top of the story continually, keeping it up-to-date.

It's also an extremely useful tool for thinking and organizing because it forces the reporter to sum up the point of the story in a single paragraph. The inverted pyramid and summary lead can be a challenging form for some journalists. At least, it is for beginners when they start reporting. Summing up three hours of a school board meeting or trying to answer the five Ws about a fatal car accident in a single paragraph, then deciding what other information belonged in the story — and in what order — is painful and frustrating, especially with the clock ticking to deadline.

Jakob Nielsen, an influential Web usability expert opines, "As a beginner, I usually didn't have the knowledge of the subjects I covered to easily answer the following central questions posed by the event: What was newsworthy about it and in what order of importance? I resisted the disciplined thinking the pyramid demands and like many reporters, scorned the form as uncreative and stilted. I preferred the storytelling approach of the fiction writer to the "just the facts", "style of the reporter". He further adds, "Over time, it became easier and I came to see that the form helps develop the powers of critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis that are the foundation of clarity in thinking and writing. The inverted pyramid is a basic building block of journalistic style".

In the days of "hot type" printing, when stories had to be trimmed to fit a finite space, the inverted pyramid allowed editors, even the compositors who made up the pages in the back shop, to cut stories from the bottom up. Here, no news judgment is required. Technology continues to wield its influence. With studies showing that those who get their news from computers don't want to look at more than a screen at a time, it's not surprising that the inverted pyramid is widely used by online news organizations.

While some media writers are critical of the inverted pyramid structure, it remains one of the most widely used and time tested structures in mass media writing. Essential information generally refers to the oft-cited "Five Ws" of journalism: Who, What, When, Where, and Why. A successful lead paragraph communicates, on a basic level, the essential facts of who did what, when, where, and why.

The "nut" graphs that follow contain additional details, quotes from sources, statistics, background, or other information. These are added to the article in the order of importance, so that the least important items are at the bottom.

The inverted pyramid structure also benefits editors. If an editor needs to cut an article, they can simply cut from the bottom. If their reporter was writing in the reliable inverted pyramid structure, the most essential information would remain at the top.

Some in the media criticize the inverted pyramid for being artless, and certainly, it is not right for every news story, as it removes a great detail of autonomy from the reporter. Others link inverted pyramid style to the decline in newspaper readership, arguing that, by giving away the ending first, the structure goes against the very fundamentals of narrative. Some scholars have theorized that the inverted pyramid structure might actually be more difficult for readers to understand.

With the emergence of online news writing, the inverted pyramid structure is not as prominent as it once was. In the online format, where editors are no longer bound by column inches, an article's length is more flexible. Similarly, online journalism is increasingly influenced by the presence of bloggers, who typically eschew traditional news writing structure.

The inverted pyramid structure simply means placing the most fundamental information in the lead paragraph of the story, and then arranging the remaining details, from most important to least important, in the following nut

45-Day fishing Ban Starts

Express News Service

Ramanathapuram: April 13

Around 1300, mechanized boats have been anchored on the shores of Rameswaram and other fishing areas in the district as the annual 45-day fishing ban began on Sunday. The ban would continue till May 29.

The government had introduced the ban order for the fishing industry to promote fish spawning during the season. The fisheries department would not issue fishing tokens to any mechanized boat during the period and the boat owners generally repair their boats and fishing equipments during these days.

During the ban period, the government offers Rs. 2,000 for each fisherman under the head of Fishing Banned Season Relief. Though a meager relief, the fishermen say that the relief amount would last them a few days. Many, however, get loans on interest from money lenders to run their families after the relief amount is spent.

Philomin Thiyagarajan, Assistant Director for Fisheries-Rameswaram, said that around 1,300 mechanized boats were being operated in the district and that the ban was launched for the benefit of the fishing community. The government relief amount would be helpful to them during the banned days, he added.

The ban was not applicable to country crafts who enjoy the season casting their nets in waters without any boundary. A fisheries department official said that government should introduce a ban order for country boats to make the scheme effective. The country boat fishermen net large quantities of fish while mechanized boats were anchored, he added.

Though the ban would end on May 29, fishing would resume on June 1 in the district.

(Courtesy: The New Indian Express, 15 April 2013, p.5)

graphs. Although there are critics of the inverted pyramid style, it remains a widely used approach to mass media news writing.

Here is a typical news story.

45 – Day Fishing Ban Starts which appears in bold type is the headline. It is kept at the head of the story and gives an idea to the reader about the content of the story.

Ramanathapuram: April 13 is the date line. It tells the reader the place of incident and date of the story of the incident.

Express News Service is the credit line. The news paper has published this story which was supplied by Express News Service, which is the news agency of Indian Express. The paper acknowledges the source of the story and this gives the credit to the news agency.

Sometimes the name of the reporter or correspondent appears below the headline with a *By* or *From*. For example, *From C Shivakumar* or *By C Shivakumar*. It is termed by *line*.

The first paragraph of the story is called *intro* or *lead*. In the above example,

“Around 1300, mechanized boats have been anchored on the shores of Rameswaram and other fishing areas in the district as the annual 45-day fishing ban began on Sunday. The ban would continue till May 29”, is the intro.

Check your progress

4. Which invention sparked the inverted pyramid style?
5. Which Press Reporter wrote the first inverted pyramid lead ?
6. Who is David T. Z. Mindich?

The rest of the story is called the *body* of the story. Intro gives the most important information which is contained in the story and therefore is the most crucial part. It should have the highest quantum of news value. A good intro is a prerequisite of a good story. A news writer really does half of the work on a news story if he or she writes a good intro or lead.

The body of the story will automatically follow in the inverted pyramid style.

2.3 ELEMENTS OF A NEWS STORY

Whenever a reporter writes a news, he has to answer the five Ws and the one H. What are they? The five Ws are Who?, What?, Where?, When?, Why?, And the one H is How? These are the basic elements of a news story or the components of a news story.

In those days the journalists were supposed to find answers all the above in the intro or lead. But slowly changes were suggested by the editors and the readers. Since the lead which was the opening paragraph of the news story, it was overcrowded with the answers for the five Ws and the one H. The readers were irritated and confused by the information overload and loss of clarity.

News Agencies Pool of Non Aligned Countries has published a Style book. The book has this to say on the subject. According to that, basically a news story must answer the three Ws: What? Why? and When? As a rule the answers to these questions should find place in the opening paragraph. Three other questions could be Who? Why? and How? But they do not always arise in all stories. But in some exceptional circumstances they themselves form the main point of the story. Answers to them can usually be accommodated in the later paragraphs. Thus there is no hard and fast rule about these Ws and H and their inclusion in the intro or lead.

2.4 NATURE OF THE NEWS PROCESS

The daily newspaper is a result of a glorious team effort. The members of the team are always restless. Lot of works is going on each other's nerves. Even a

single person's delay will affect the whole process of news. The newspaper making team always believe, "it is better to hang together than to hang separately". Yes...., indeed...., they always share the value of the profession. Though they belong to one big team, they are also members of smaller teams. Such teams are called departments.

The editorial department has the reporters, sub-editors, news editors, assistant editors and editors as the staff. The compositors, makeup men and printers form the printing or mechanical department. But for the paper to be edited and printed, it is not enough. Newspapers survive mainly by advertising. So, a newspaper has to be advertised, more importantly to collect and handle advertising. The circulation and readership have to be maintained by increasing the sales, through advertising. Therefore, regular accounts have to be maintained. The three departments responsible for these activities are the advertising, circulation, and accounting or accounts departments respectively. The five departments work in close co-ordination.

As the creative department the editorial section is manned by writers and re-writers. The writers are the editor and his assistants, as well as reporters and correspondents. The re-writers are called sub-editors or copy readers. The sub editors edit the copy before it is sent down to the pagination section. Desktop Publishing has eliminated the roles of the compositor and the layout artist, and had simplified the production process to large extent. Softwares like Page maker and Quark Xpress are used for designing and layout.

2.5 LET US SUM UP

A news story is normally written in inverted pyramid style. In this style, the story begins with the lead and presents information in the descending order of importance. The Hourglass style builds on the inverted pyramid and combines a narrative. It delivers breaking news and tells a story.

Check your progress

7. Name the five Ws and one H?
8. How the rewriters are called?
9. Name any two softwares used for page makeup and designing.

The Nut Graph style starts with an anecdotal lead that gets the reader's attention, followed by a paragraph that provides a larger context for the story and moves the flow of the news story in that direction. The Narrative style has a beginning, middle, and end just like a story. But for most news articles, narratives should be short. It should also be upto the point.

The Five Boxes Story style combines the forms listed above. This style has been useful when you have a lot of data to sort through. Box 1 contains the lead, Box 2 contains the nutgraph, Box 3 tells the story begun in Box 1, Box 4 contains supplemental details such as statistics or expert opinions, and Box 5 contains the "kicker" or the quote, image, or comment that ends the story on a strong note. Dateline tells the reader the place of incident and date of the story of the incident.

The news paper has published this story which was supplied by Express News Service, which is the news agency of Indian Express. The paper acknowledges the source of the story. The first paragraph of the story is called *intro* or *lead*.

Sometimes the name of the reporter or correspondent appears below the headline with a *By* or *From*. For example, *From C.Shivakumar* or *By C.Shivakumar*. It is termed as *by line*. The rest of the story is called the *body of the story*.

2.6 UNIT END EXERCISES

1. Read a newspaper thoroughly and find out the news stories with inverted pyramid style.
2. Recollect a recent incident from your memory and write it into a news story with inverted pyramid style.
3. Write a same incident in the different styles you have come across in this chapter, and enjoy the difference you feel in the way of writing.

2.7 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Identify few English dailies Online and identify the different styles used around the world, and discuss the differences.

2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Inverted Pyramid
2. Wall Street
3. Hourglass
4. Telegraph
5. Associated
6. Journalistic Historian
7. Who, What, Where, When, Why and How
8. Sub editor
9. Page maker and Quark Xpress

2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Keval J.Kumar(2001), Mass communication in India, Jaico Publishing House, Pune.
2. K.M.Shrivastava, News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi.
3. M.V.Kamath, Professional Journalism.
4. Rangasamy Parhtasarathy, Journalism in India.

UNIT - 2

Lesson 3

TYPES OF JOURNALISM

INTRODUCTION

In the first lesson we have seen what Journalism is, and how the word Journalism came. The term Journalism was derived from the Latin term diurnal, which means daily. The term journal has been used to mean the record of daily events. Vasco Da Gama's book on his journey is called "*The journal of the first voyage*". But now-a-days the term journal stands for the magazines and periodicals only.

From the evolution itself man showed interest in knowing others and their affairs. Man used sign language in the beginning to get and give news. When language was developed, he used language to spread news through oral communication. When he began to write and read, he wrote on sand, stones, tablets, palmyrah leaves etc to record the daily events. When the printing technology was introduced, the area of journalism has widened. When transportation was introduced, news began to travel. When the electronic and digital technology began to control the world, journalism also has grown in different dimensions and directions. Hence, in this chapter the different types of journalism are dealt with.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to

- Learn the different avenues of Journalism
- Understand the different types of Journalism
- Know the different explanations given by scholars on Journalism
- Form a foundation for Journalism

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Journalism
- 3.2 Types of Journalism
- 3.3 Investigative Journalism
- 3.4 Tabloid and Yellow Journalism
- 3.5 Print Journalism
- 3.6 Broadcast Journalism
- 3.7 Web Journalism
- 3.8 Let us sum up
- 3.9 Unit End Exercises
- 3.10 Points for Discussion
- 3.11 Answers to Check your Progress
- 3.12 Suggested Readings

3.1 JOURNALISM

The basic definition for Journalism is:

“The art of finding things out and then communicating them via radio, newspapers, television and internet; though it is not a product, it is an art of converting news into a product. The involving newspaper readers and the electronic media audience filter messages through their own experiences and understanding and arrive at their own conclusion” (Harcup, 2004).

While McNair (2002:9) writes,

“It is an account of the existing real world as appropriated by the journalist and processed in accordance with the particular requirements of the journalistic medium through which it will be disseminated to some section of the public”;

McQuail (2000) describes it as paid writing or the audio visual equivalent for public media that refers to current events of public relevance.

According to Franklin (1997:5), "The task of journalism has become merely to deliver and serve up what the customer wants; rather like a deep-pan pizza".

The Marriam – Webster dictionary says that Journalism means the collection and editing of news for presentation through the media or the public press. It is also an academic study concerned with the collection and editing of news or the management of a news-medium. Journalism is the art of writing designed for publication in a newspaper or magazine and a way of writing characterized by the direct presentation of facts or description of events without an attempt at interpretation or the style of writing designed to appeal to current popular taste or public interest.

Roland E Wolesly defines Journalism as a systematic and reliable dissemination of public opinion and public entertainment by modern media of communication.

3.2 TYPES OF JOURNALISM

Different authors of different books and the scholars and researchers who have been studying and analyzing journalism have classified journalism into several categories. Many of them are: Tabloid journalism or yellow journalism, Interpretative or Investigative journalism, Print journalism, Broadcast journalism and web journalism. They are discussed elaborately in the following. In addition to this, more avenues are also evolving daily in journalism due to the various facets given by the ever growing technology.

3.3 TABLOID AND YELLOW JOURNALISM

Generally journalists work for the 'broadsheet' (or 'quality' or 'serious') press and the 'tabloid' (or 'popular' or 'sensational') press. The terms 'broadsheet' and 'tabloid' usually describe the two main formats of newspapers. The term Broadsheet is generally used to mention the size of the newspaper. All the dailies like *The Indian Express*, *The New Indian Express*, *The Deccan*

Chronicle, Daily Thanthi, Dianmalar etc are broadsheets. They give the quality or serious news. Some news papers used to have half the size of the broadsheet. They are the tabloids. In India newspapers like *Employment News* and the educational supplementary of *The Hindu* and *The New Indian Express* like *Education Plus* and *EDEX* have the dimensions of the tabloid. They are in half the size of the broadsheets. They have the dimensions of tabloid in size and measurements, but they are not the Tabloid news papers. Actually the tabloid newspapers give popular and sensational news in Western countries. But in journalism, the labels broadsheet and tabloid connote two kinds of news stories selected and more importantly, the presentation, treatment and style as well. However, this distinction cannot be maintained always in countries like India, especially when the serious or quality papers (such as *The Times of India, The Indian Express* and *The Asian Age* choose to highlight the private lives of public figures and the tabloids (such as *The Blitz* and *The Midday*) to publish serious investigative stories of corruption in high places. The term tabloid journalism stands for popular or sensational journalism.

As printed tabloids, tabloid television follows the pattern of selection, treatment and style of the tabloid press. Segments of STAR News, 'The world this Week' and the video news magazines such as 'News track' and 'eyewitness' follow the tabloid tradition. So the Entertainment Today and news papers like *The Blitz* and *The Daily* as well as the evening papers not only in format but content as well. As the cable channels are mushrooming daily, number of programmes follows the tabloid tradition.

Tabloid Journalism is frequently termed Yellow journalism primarily because of its tendency to sensationalize and trivialize events, issues and people. The staple of the tabloids is the private lives of famous people, accidents, crime, public corruption, disasters, sex etc. Tabloid journalists are believed to indulge in 'Cheque book journalism' which implies that the subjects of the news stories are bribed to sell their true confessions. The particular person about whom the reporter is going to write is given money and the news is 'bought' from him. Such

Check Your Progress

1. How the Tabloid journalism is called?
2. Which journalism is an attempt to probe the personal lives of well known people?
3. EDEX is the supplementary of which magazine?

journalists are also believed to indulge in 'keyhole journalism' in their attempts to probe the private sexual infidelities and trifling offences of well known people. These kinds of practices raise several ethical questions about the privacy of individuals. The public's right to information is also questioned here. In most democratic countries, restrictions are imposed reasonably on these intrusions on privacy, especially if they are not in any way related to the public interest.

3.4 INVESTIGATIVE AND INTERPRETATIVE JOURNALISM

Investigative and Interpretative reporting is not necessarily getting 'scoops' and sensanalisising them but rather 'situation reporting' in place of event, or personality reporting. Here you have to understand the term scoop. It means a story or picture of some importance nobody else has or an exclusive. For example, just imagine that ten thousand people are killed in a stampede in Madurai, if a news paper or television channel publishes or broadcast it before the other news papers or channels, then is an *exclusive* or scoop. In this context, investigative and interpretative reporting is indeed a calm, restrained and detached manner of arriving at conclusions or at studied opinions from factual bits of evidence at hand. It may be reflective, even speculative, but always based on hardcore evidence, defines M.V.Kamath.

An investigative report begins with a guess that there is something more than what meets the eye. Ashwini Sarin of the Indian Express had heard of the miserable conditions in the Tihar Central Jail, but felt there was much more than mere hearsay in the reports. He wanted to do an investigative report on the jail and so got himself arrested on a flimsy charge. In mid 1979, the Indian Express carried four investigative reports by him on the inside story of Tihar Jail. More recently, the same reporter veiled himself and 'bought' a girl to acquire first hand knowledge of and report on, the 'flesh trade' in an area not far from Delhi. News magazines like India Today, Outlook, Sunday and The Week have exposed many police atrocities (often termed 'encounters') in many parts of the country, writes Keval J.Kumar (2002).

Newspapers and newsmagazines are turning more and more to investigative and interpretative reporting, as TV, radio and the Internet have a clear edge over them in giving up to the minute developments in news around the world. The morning's papers of course provide news in much greater detail, but it is all the same yesterday's news, which is in fact out of date news. However, TV and radio cannot match the press in in-depth reporting and critical analysis.

Investigative stories may be 'killed' at the last minute, unless the editor actively supports it. That is because such stories could tread on the toes of many officials, especially governmental and business people's toes. Months of tedious work is demanded in such reports and when finally published they can have dramatic effects. A branch of investigative reporting is consumer reporting. Consumer reporting exposes business practices which exploit consumers. Indian newspapers are yet to take on big business in a big way. Occasional reports focused on multinational companies, but without much dramatic impact. The findings of consumer organizations and Consumer Redressal Courts are rarely given wide publicity in the newspapers. The columns for complaints' in the press also do not follow-up the complaints made. As M.V. Kamath points out, "The line dividing an in-depth(report) from a feature article or an investigative report is pretty thin indeed and one can often be confused for the other".

Investigative journalism first became a separate branch in Britain's upper market press and on the nation's television in the 1960s. It was initiated by a young generation of reporters who adopted the exposure methods of the popular print media. The suffering or dishonesty of individuals to wider social contexts, and institutional corruption came out. Now the better knowledge of technology made gathering facts easier (Doig, 1992, 1997).

3.5 PRINT JOURNALISM

Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable type printing press in the 15th century. Bibles and other books were among the first produced by Gutenberg's press. In Europe, the first regularly published newspaper came out with the name

The Daily Courant. In America, Benjamin Harris's *Publick Occurrences both Foreign and Domestick* was published in 1690. But it was immediately shut down for not having a required license.

The Civil War era brought technological advances like photography to the news papers. And the invention of the telegraph enabled Civil War reporters to transmit stories to their newspapers' home offices with speed. But the telegraph lines often faced with mechanical difficulties and the reporters learned to put the most important information in their stories into the first few lines of the communication. This is the interesting story behind the birth and growth of inverted-pyramid style of writing which is followed by most of the newspapers.

This situation led to the formation of *The Associated Press* (AP) wire service, which was started as a cooperative venture between several large newspapers wanting to share news that arrived by telegraph from Europe. Today the AP is the world's oldest and largest news agency.

Newspapers thrived into the mid 20th century successfully. But with the arrival of radio and then television, newspaper circulation began to turn down. That decline has become fast by the dawn of the internet. The early years of the 21st century have seen the newspaper industry entering into a kind of death spiral. The newspaper industry faced layoffs, bankruptcies and even total shutdown of some publications. Still, even in an age of 24/7 cable news and thousands of websites, newspapers maintain their status as the best resource for in-depth and investigative news coverage.

The value of international print journalism is perhaps best demonstrated by the Watergate scandal. In this two reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, did a series of investigative articles about corruption in the Nixon White House. Their stories, along with ones done by other publications, led to Nixon's resignation.

The future of print journalism as an industry remains unclear. On the internet, blogging about current events has become enormously popular, but

Check your progress

4. Who invented the movable type printing press?
5. Which is the world's oldest and largest news agency?
6. Which war era brought technical advances in print journalism?

critics comment that most blogs are filled with gossip and opinions, not real reporting. Anyhow, there are hopeful signs online. But while the quality of print journalism remains high, it's clear that newspapers as an industry must find a new business model in order to survive well into the 21st century.

Print journalism has been split into many categories. They are newspapers, news magazines, general interest magazines, trade magazines, hobby magazines, newsletters, private publications, online news pages and others. Trade publications are news oriented and hobby publications are more feature-oriented.

3.6 BROADCAST JOURNALISM

Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and video content to the audience who spread over the world via radio, television or other. The original term broadcast referred to the literal sowing of seeds on farms by scattering them over a wide field. The early radio engineers adopted the word from the Midwestern United States to refer to the analogous dissemination of radio signals (Shetty, 2011, p.124).

Radio and television broadcasting are the most significant revolution in communication of the 20th century. The invention of the internal combustion engine and the telephone also paved the way for broadcasting. The relationship between the 'private' and the 'public' has been changed. It brought a new social dimension to the communication field.

The innovators of the early experiments of recording, playback and transmission of sound and pictures never had foreseen the social impact of their innovations. Guglielmo Marconi introduced radio in 1901. Radio was the combination of wireless telegraphy and wireless telephony. In the beginning, it was used only for communication between individuals. In 1922, in Britain, communication to the mass became possible. By 1927 broadcasting began to establish itself all over the world. Radio gripped the public imagination with its ability to bring events, people and music into the home. But, such a powerful Radio reduced its own influence when television was introduced. Because,

television brought the pictures as well as the sound. Television broadcasting really took off after the Second World War.

While radio is not television without pictures, television is not radio with pictures. Briggs (1965: 6) identified the relationship between the broadcaster and the audience as a key to understanding broadcasting.

'Communicating to the Mass' nature of radio, led to Broadcasting Journalism. In radio journalism, the journalists have to gather facts to present them objectively and accurately. They must also find and record relevant and interesting sounds to add their reports, both interviews with people involved in the story and background sounds that help characterize the news story. Radio reporters may also write the introduction to the story read by a radio news anchor and may also answer questions live from the anchor.

Television Journalists rely on visual information to illustrate and characterize their reporting. In on-camera interviews with people involved in the story, shots of the scene where the story took place and graphics usually produced at the station to help frame the story. Like radio reporters, television reporters also may write the introductory script that a television news anchor would read to set up their story. Both radio and television journalists usually do not have as much 'space' to present information in their reports as print journalists. Here the term 'space' means the minutes and seconds allotted for a programme. Television journalists have to be well presented and well prepared (Tripathy, 2000, p.56).

3.6.1 Types of Broadcasts: Broadcast can be classified into "recorded" and "live". In recorded programmes correcting errors and removing unnecessary materials, rearranging the programme, allowing slow motions and repetitions and other techniques to improve the standard of the programme are possible.

3.6.2 Forms of Broadcasts: In addition to the above, historically, there have been many other different types of electronic broadcasting media. They are: Telephone broadcasting, Radio broadcasting, Television broadcasting, Cable radio, Satellite television and webcasting of video/television.

3.6.3 Broadcast story forms: The broadcast story forms can be classified into two categories. They are the “tell” or “reader” story, the “V/O” or voice over and the “wrap” or “package”.

A “reader” story or “tell” story is just what it appears to be. It is a story without additional sound bites or video. It is usually presented by the newscaster or anchor in the studio.

A “voice over” or v/o is a television term for a story told with video but no “sound bites”. The term sound bite is a term used in broadcasting, which means “direct quotes”. While the video is playing, the news reader or anchor will read the script for the story. Adding a sound bite turns a V/O into a V/O-SOT,” shorthand for sound on tape. Even though the modern day’s digital technology replaced the use of tapes with modern devices and equipments, the abbreviation SOT appears to have stuck. These story forms like reader, V/O, and V/O-SOT tend to be short. These V/Os and SOTs take only less than a minute and sometimes only 10 or 15 seconds.

A complete story by a reporter is called a “wrap” in radio. The same is called “package” in television news. It consists of the reporter’s narration, also called “track” and often includes sound bites and natural sounds that occurs naturally on the location. As you know, the television version has video, which may include graphics, either static or animated. These types of stories can be presented live or recorded in advance and they tend to run longer than the other story forms – sometimes up to six or seven minutes, depending on the format of the newscast. Each package also has a “lead-in”, or introduction, to be read by the newscaster. Many programmes include a “tag”, which provides additional information at the end of the reporters’ package.

“Natural” sound is another type of broadcast story. It is also called “NATSOT” package. This story format is mainly used in television but occasionally in radio as well. It does not include any reporter track. Instead, the people featured in the story have to provide the narration. This approach can

require more planning and just as much reporting as any other story, but the results can be powerful. Photojournalists, produce this type of story. While doing so on their own without a reporter, they have to make sure that every bit of information needed to tell the story is captured on tape. Otherwise the final product will not make sense (Shetty, 126-128, 2011).

Radio and television stories are written for the listener's ear, and not for the readers' eye. Reporters must write copy they can read out loud. The copy must be clear, conversational and easy to understand. Unlike newspapers or online readers, the broadcast audience cannot go back and take a second look or listen to a story that didn't quite make sense the first time. "The words are spoken and, once spoken, are irretrievable", said former CBS news editor Ed Bliss once wrote.

3.7 WEB JOURNALISM

Anyone who is connected to the internet through their computer can be deemed to online. The term also has a conceptual value. In that it refers to a new form of journalism called online journalism or web journalism. For example, the World Wide Web version of a newspaper is said to be the online or web version of the newspaper. De Wolk (2001) defines online journalism as a quality news and information posted on the internet. The growth of the internet and the World Wide Web has created the newest medium for journalism. Online journalism is also called Cyber journalism. The news can be disseminated on the web with high speed.

Web journalism is an extension of existing print and broadcast media. News reports can be published as soon as they are written and edited. This increases the deadline pressure. Moreover the fear of being scooped also force the writers to speed up casting the news on the web. There are free websites and paid websites. The popular newspaper in US, the Wall Street Journal website requires subscription to view its contents.

Many news papers have started their web versions. Their websites may now include video, podcasts, blogs and slide-shows. Story chat, where readers

may post comments on an article, has changed the dialogue newspapers foster. Similar to the opinion section of the printed newspapers like “letters to the editor”, story chat has allowed the readers to express opinions without the time delay of a letter or the approval of an editor.

The growth of blogs has also changed the face of journalism. Blogs can create news as well as report it. It also blurs the dividing line between news and opinion. Anyhow the debate about whether blogging is really journalism goes on (Tripathy, 2001, p.57)

Online journalism has the attributes of print journalism and of broadcast journalism. The other attributes that are unique to the Web are also there. Frequently Web sites offer news articles to be read. At the same time the audience may select video clips also. Some websites resemble the TV broadcast. Web journalism allows the reader to become a participant, choosing his or her own path through the information presented. If TV is about showing the news, print is about telling and explaining, online is about showing, telling, demonstrating and interacting.

The basic online story format is “print plus”. It is a text story that includes additional elements like photographs, audio and video, or hyperlinks to more information. By attaching links, the journalist can take the reader to additional information on separate web pages, some of which may be provided by sources outside the news organizations. Online stories can be more effective when they are enhanced by links. For example, a story about the SSLC results across the state could link to a database of results from all schools. The user could search for a specific school, for all schools in a particular city or compare the result of different schools.

Most radio and television stations have websites. Most of these sites include news stories. Some stations have a separate department that is responsible for creating, maintaining and updating the website. In some stations, the news department has to handle the website. In almost every case, the news department

Check your progress

7. What does V/O stand for?

8. What does NATSOT mean?

9. What is the other name for web Journalism?

is expected atleast to submit content for the web site on a regular basis. Some Radio and TV stations simply make their news scripts available online, but many rework their scripts to create reasonable different versions of stories that are broadcast or cablecast. Some television channels do not simply place news scripts online. Unique versions of stories are created for the websites.

The writing style for web sites is still evolving, but the current trend is to create copy that incorporates the best of both writing for radio-TV and writing for the print media. The hybrid style emphasizes the brevity, clarity, informality, conversationality and directness of radio-TV news writing, but uses a more traditional print media style for attribution, writing numbers, using symbols including abbreviations and punctuations. In short, it is still desirable to write the way people talk and to tell good stories in an easy to understand, engaging, flowing manner (Wulfmeyer, 2005, p.51).

3.8 LET US SUM UP

Journalism means the collection and editing of news for presentation through the media or the public press. It is also an academic study concerned with the collection and editing of news or the management of a news medium.

Tabloid Journalism is frequently termed yellow journalism primarily because of its tendency to sensationalize and trivialize events, issues and people.

The term Broadsheet is generally used to mention the size of the newspaper. All the dailies like *The Indian Express*, *The New Indian Express*, *The Deccan Chronicle*, *Daily Thanthi*, *Dianmalar* etc are broadsheets. The broadsheet news papers present the general news.

The term tabloid means, half the size of broadsheet in dimension. But in the context of journalism, it means sensationalizing news, people and the issues.

Investigative journalism stands for reporting not the surface happenings, but investigating the Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How? in a serious

attempt and finding out the answers in an analytical way. Investigative reports may have follow ups on the next day.

Interpretative journalism stands for reporting not only what happened but also digging the background and hidden information and explaining them to the audience. It was not always possible to compartmentalize investigative journalism and interpretative journalism. Most of the time they overlaps.

Print journalism has been split into many categories. They are newspapers, news magazines, general interest magazines, trade magazines, hobby magazines, newsletters, private publications, online news pages and others. Trade publications are news oriented and hobby publications are more feature-oriented.

Broadcast journalism is the distribution of news through audio and video content to the audience who spread over the world via radio, television or other. The growth of the internet and the World Wide Web has created the newest medium for journalism. Online journalism is also called Cyber journalism. The news can be disseminated on the web with high speed.

3.9 UNIT END EXERCISES

Watch TV news and radio news on a same day. Read a newspaper also on the same day. Open the websites of the particular news channel and the radio channel which you have watched on that day and observe the news. Find out the differences in the language used for print, broadcast and the web.

3.10 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Compare the news presentation of different political parties' channels and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of those channels. Most of the time people are confused with the multiple ways of presentation of single information by different channels. Discuss how the audience can know the reality.

3.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Yellow journalism
2. Keyhole journalism

3. The New Indian Express
4. Johannes Gutenberg
5. Associated Press
6. Civil
7. Voice over
8. Natural Sound on tape
9. Cyber journalism Online journalism

3.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

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3. Arul Aram and Nirmaldasan (2001), Understanding News Media, Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited, Chennai.
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5. Shrivastava, K.M., (1987), News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Newdelhi.

UNIT 2

LESSON 4

NEWS AND VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

In literature different forms such as novel, short story, essay, poetry and drama have been used. So does in journalism too. Here we can see some common journalistic forms used in newspapers. You can choose a few of these forms as a reader and as a budding journalist and try them out. You may try to write a letter to the editor or a feature and send it to be published in a local daily. Unlike literary forms, journalistic forms are very easy to master and practice; journalistic ability is nothing inborn and it can be acquired through training (Aram & Dasan, 2006)

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to

- Understand the different forms of journalistic writing.
- Differentiate news from views.
- Learn the skill of writing features. Opinions, columns and editorials.
- Use internet effectively for writing.

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 News and views

4.2 News Report

4.3 Opinions

4.4 Column

4.5 Features

4.6 Editorial

4.7 Letters to the Editor

4.8 Review

4.9 Article

- 4.10 Middle
- 4.11 Column
- 4.12 Influencing Opinion Pieces
- 4.13 Overlapping of features, editorials and articles
- 4.14 Sources for news
- 4.15 News Agencies
- 4.16 Archive
- 4.17 Plagiarism
- 4.18 Internet
- 4.19 Let us sum up
- 4.20 Unit end exercises
- 4.21 Points for Discussion
- 4.22 Answers to check your progress
- 4.23 Suggested readings

4.1 NEWS AND VIEWS

As a journalism student you may question what is news? And what are the differences between news and views? Here is the answer. News means writing what happened as it is. The surface happenings used to be reported in the news. But in views the writer can add his own opinions. In an opinion piece, editorial, feature and letter to the editor the writer can include his opinions. An analysis of an issue and solutions to problems can be suggested in views. The opinion pieces like editorials, articles, middles, review columns, letters to the editor, etc. are the best examples for views. This type of writing expresses certain opinion, passes some judgments or offers certain suggestions.

4.2 NEWS REPORT

A news report is a bit of direct reporting of recent events in a news paper. It presents facts and it normally does not merge up views. Thus it is a reporting of an event with no interpretation. A news report is of just a few lines or several paragraphs. Preferably, it should be short and crunchy. It normally does not carry

a byline (the name of the writer), but is attributed or credited to a 'Staff Reporter' or a 'Special Correspondent' or a news agency. Generally, it follows the inverted pyramid structure. And its introductory paragraph (called 'lead' or 'intro') is normally a summary of the news report (Aram & Dasan, 2006).

Example: **Plus Two**

Results Today

Special Correspondent

Madurai: The much-awaited Plus Two results of State Board students would be declared at around 10 a.m. in 259 higher secondary schools in the district on Thursday. Students could also access the results through Internet from the four designated websites.

<http://tnresults.nic.in>

<http://dge1.tn.nic.in>

<http://dg2.tn.nic.in> and

<http://dge3.tn.nic.in>

Chief Educational Officer (CEO) C.Amuthavalli said the Education Department had identified 36 nodal centers' in the district for distribution of the tabulated mark lists. Each nodal centre had been given the task of distributing the lists of 10 to 15 schools.

Representatives of the nodal centres would collect the lists from the CEO offices at about 6.30 A.M. and reach their location between 7.30 A.M. and 8 A.M. Thereafter, the headmasters or headmistress of the schools must collect the lists from the nodal centres and reach their schools between 9 A.M. and 9.30 A.M.

"The heads of the institutions have been instructed to break open the seals of the bundle containing the mark list only after 10 A.M. when the results would be hosted on the Internet", she said.

4.3 OPINIONS

Opinion is a complete comment on current events. It gives background information, presents sidelights on news events, shows how several events are related or provides comments. A senior reporter or an expert in the particular subject writes it. It will logically elaborate the stand of the writer on an issue and it presents the inference of the news in detail. An explanation of the background helps fix an event in context. Interpretative journalism falls under this category. An interpretative journalist may not go the spot of the event but an opinion based on his/her vast knowledge helps the reader gain a proper understanding of the event.

4.4 COLUMN

A column is much like a feature or a news analysis. It is a unique space reserved for a particular writer on a particular subject that appears at regular intervals. It need not be particularly serious. The writer is one who is well-versed in the subject. The specialized areas include media, politics, economics, gossip and sports. Freelance writers (i.e. those who are not full time staffers) are more common as writers of columns and are normally the most independent writers of a newspaper or a magazine (Aram & Dasan, 2006). For example, the weekly-column of S.Vasanthan that appears in The Hindu with the title *Down Memory Lane* is quite famous.

4.5 FEATURES

A feature is a light-hearted article. It is timeless, ageless, and changeless, and makes interesting even days after publication. It reads like a short story. It can have a mixture of leads (or intro) unlike a news report which in general carries a summary of the news in its first paragraph. Unlike a news analysis, it does not deal with current affairs. Articles that appear in the Reader's Digest magazine are of this type. But newspapers are read in urgency – and so they use short features. The Sunday magazine section and most supplements of news papers specialize in features. Most articles in your school or college magazine too are of this range. A

feature could be of any attention-grabbing aspect. For example, it could be about a child genius who has cleared his/her bachelor's degree at the age of 11. A feature can have any type of interesting opening (Aram & Dasan, 2006).

Shrivatsava (1991) gives the following as the different types of features:

4.5.1 News Features: It appears in news columns but its news value content is lower as compared to hard news. *Backgrounders* and story describing 'how' of an event come in this category of features.

4.5.2 Anniversary Features: These kinds of features appear on anniversaries and are planned in advance. The news peg is anniversary. Those who specialize in it are called calendar journalists. But even this kind of feature can have a human interest angle.

4.5.3 Light or Entertaining Features: Such features may or may not have a news peg. They are meant for entertainment. *Middles* appearing in several daily papers are examples of this kind of features.

4.5.4 Personality Features: This kind of feature deals with personalities that are important or interesting. Such features should be high in human interest content. Obituaries also come in this category.

4.5.5 Serious Analytical Features: Features in this category are also called articles. They deal with a subject in depth and analyse its various aspects.

4.5.6 Human Interest Features: In such features human interest is the primary content. They deal with ordinary persons in extra-ordinary circumstances or extra-ordinary persons in ordinary circumstances. They touch the heart of the reader and appeal to his emotions.

4.5.7 Wild Life Features: With the interest in environment and wildlife on increase features dealing with these subjects are also increasing in newspapers and magazines. They are normally accompanied by suitable photographs.

4.5.8 Photo Features: Features that rest mainly on photographs are called photo features. This is the case where photographs are supported by words and not

Check your progress

1. Which gives a complete comment on current events?
2. Which is much like a feature or a news analysis?
3. What is called as a light hearted article?

where photographs add variety and colour to the text. Loosely any feature accompanied by photographs is described as a photo feature.

Like news stories, features can be exclusive (not given to any other newspaper) or syndicated (given to newspapers and magazines with an embargo). As news agencies supply news to several newspapers simultaneously, feature services or feature syndicates supply features to several newspapers simultaneously.

A good feature should hang on a news peg. It should contain interesting and important details of an event or person or situation. It should attract the attention of the reader and should be readable enough to take the reader from the beginning to the end. It should not have unnecessary details if they make the text very heavy. Necessary details that are difficult to understand should be interpreted. Sufficient background should be provided to put things in perspective. Language should be simple and the meaning clear.

4.6 EDITORIAL

An editorial gives the views of the daily on a particular topic. Since it is considered the collective opinion of the daily, personal pronouns such as "I" are avoided. It encourages critical thinking, initiates discussion and moulds opinion in the right direction. It has a small, but excellent readership. It generally does not have a byline. Usually it appears on a middle page of a newspaper. Sometimes if an editorial is of great value, it appears on the front page. A number of senior journalists and experts assist the editor in writing editorials (Aram & Dasan, 2006).

Mehta (1979) summarises the special features as follows. Editorial is the mirror of the particular daily's opinion. It is the sense of right and wrong of the paper. It projects the standpoint of the paper on a particular policy, programme or event. It can enthuse, encourage, motivate, demand, censure, or decline certain idea or policy. The expression of opinion is proposed to lead the public opinion, and change the readers to its point of view.

Editorials are written with grounds and confidence. The writer should have his spirit in the topic on which he is scripting. The editorial should not be repetitive of facts confirmed in the news story. It should give a digest of information, assess them, and arrive at sound conclusion step by step.

The editorial writer can write in a straight line, if he has a surrounding of the subject. Prior to lettering, it is necessary for him to find out his paper's past policy on the subject, so as to make sure that the line he is taking is not conflicting.

The argument to be developed in the editorial should be seen in the context of differing viewpoint. Naturalness and cool consistent approach is necessary to knock down the arguments of the other side. Offensive language or rhetoric does not help.

The style of writing of editorials differs from daily to daily. Though the writer has greater independence in regard to the length, brief editorials, properly written, make larger impact. Lengthy editorials are, generally, ignored by the readers. It would be a good approach not to argue too much after developing a point, or to include surroundings or other material just for the sake of filling space. The structure of editorial should be simple, so that the readers can easily follow it.

The writer may have unusual moods in writing the editorial. Mr. Brian Nicholas in *Features with Flair* has indicated several moods in which a writer may begin his editorial – doubtful, puzzled, counseling, beneficially critical, contradictory, scornful, visionary, interesting, understanding and praise.

4.7 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A letter to the editor is the explanation of news by the reader. It gives an opportunity for the ordinary man to air his/her opinion. The reader gives views on present issues or voices grievances. Several public problems get solved when they are taken up through letters to the editors (Aram & Dasan, 2006).

According to Mehta (1979) the letter to the editor is a type of feedback for the paper. In a letter to the editor, a person expresses his personal view or grievance on a specific topic of his interest or offers a proposal to overcome the difficulty. Letters to the editor may also be valid to minor complaints. Such letters can be successful if they deal with a definite point and proceed with logical arguments. They should not spoil in mistreatment or deal the subject-matter in a rough way. They are generally brief in length and projected to make a point or oppose a point. In some cases, the letters are written in a very powerful style and make great blow on the readers.

4.8 REVIEW

The critics write reviews on a range of subjects such as books, plays, films, television and radio programmes, etc. While writing reviews, they should keep in mind that they are not writing for themselves, but are facing the readers. Any effort, therefore, to plan too much of the critic's own viewpoint, or to criticize the work for the sake of criticism, or for the sake of controversy would not develop the value of the writing. The attempt should be to find out something 'good' in everything.

The work to be reviewed should be adjudged in proper standpoint, i.e., the level of readers or listeners for whom it is meant. The review should have two major elements- explain or portray and appraise or weigh up the work. One helpful principle is that one should not write anything about a person, which one would be unwilling to tell him on his face. The pen should be used with immense care.

The critic need not be a practicing specialist in a particular field, but he should have sufficient background knowledge of the subject. The reviewer is free to give his own evaluation, opinion and conclusion about the work, provided it is not based on untruth or cruelty; at the same time he should not become irritated, if the people do not agree or accept his point of view (Mehta, 1979).

4.9 ARTICLE

An article is a detailed piece of composition written on some wide subject, well-documented, and expresses the opinion of the writer who has studied the subject in all its angles. Dissimilar to features, the subject of the article is not very thin, detailed or tiny. The article is generally written in serious style, and the subject-matter is treated in an intellectual manner (Mehta, 1979).

4.10 MIDDLE

A write up that normally appears at the centre on the editorial page below the 'article' and above the 'letters to the editor' in a newspaper is known as 'middle'. It is so called in journalistic manner of speaking because of its middle position between the two different types of opinion pieces on the same page.

The 'middle' is usually a humorous, entertaining and crisply written piece, a satire, an unusual experience or a personality sketch. It may either deal with an innovative or a topical subject or attempt to expose or mock certain policy, programme, activity or bring to public watch some grievance or problem. In all these cases, the 'middle' is written in lighter vein, so as to make it an interesting reading and provide amusement to the readers.

The selection of subject, universal approach, action, style, etc. followed in the 'middle' is similar to feature writing. Such compositions, as a rule, do not have much of data or documentation or scholarly treatment of the subject as is generally found in an article. It is also shorter in length as compared to an article. The language is simple but effective with small sentences. The focus or the driving force is always on specific aspect or on single point.

The success of the 'middle' lies in its hold on the interest of the readers from the opening to the end. 'Middle' is generally written by skilled people who have mind's eye and observation, and have developed necessary skill by constant practice, over a period of time, in this type of writing.

4.11 COLUMN

The individual opinion of a column writer is spoken on a subject in a column. The writer has a fixed style of writing, and he usually writes on fixed subjects and has fixed point of view. However, there are columns in a newspaper where other persons also have a say. There are also columns on political, economic or cultural subjects or on sports, radio, films, books, humour, etc. Generally, columnists write once a week though there is no fixed rule about its regularity.

Exposure through the medium of the press is most popular and successful. The publicist should make every effort not only to get into newspaper columns but also to take advantage of other columns of the newspaper.

4.12 INFLUENCING OPINION PIECES

Apart from projecting the image of his business through news stories, features and articles, a clever publicist may also influence opinion pieces on the editorial page of the newspaper, which comprises editorials, comments, columns, middle, letter to the editor, etc., in favour of the organization or to the point of view held by it. To achieve this success, the publicist has to act in a persuasive and subtle manner.

The publicist may rarely suggest subjects for editorials. He may also indicate the line or approach to a particular trouble. This may be done through writing a letter to the editor, and giving him relevant material for his reflection and possible use. Such communications should be signed by the highest authority of the organization. They should be written in a very influential, pleasant and compelling style.

Another method is to make a personal call on the editor and discuss the subject with him comprehensively. The editor or leader writer may also be invited over lunch or dinner and the problem may be posed before him. If he is interested, the matter may be further pursued and necessary material forwarded to him. In

case, the publicists feel that the editor has fixed views on the topic, it is worthwhile not to pursue the matter any further. However, if the paper's policy is not firmly dedicated to a particular line, it is meaningful for the publicist to make all pains to 'sell' his point of view.

The publicist may make clever use of the letters to the editor column. He himself may officially write a letter to the editor contradicting certain news or certain stand taken by the paper, which unfavorably affects his organization or the point of view of the organization. A more effective way, however, is to get the letters written by private persons expressing the point of view which the publicist would like to focus. Care has to be taken, however, that it is not overcooked. Letters from confidential persons have not only more chance of publication but also have greater impact on the public mind. As such, very helpful use may be made of this column.

The publicist may attempt to manipulate the column writer by sending relevant matter, which can be fitted into topic of the column. Since every columnist has his own field and individual style, the publicist should provide him only suitable material and also make it special for his use. The publicist may also manipulate him to his stand-point to some extent (Mehta, 1979).

4. 13 OVERLAPPING OF FEATURES, EDITORIALS AND ARTICLES

According to Shrivatsava (1991), it is difficult to draw a dividing line between feature and news story. Now, a news story can be "featurised" by playing up a human interest angle. He further adds that article is not different from feature. What appears on the edit page as main article is nothing but a category of feature – severe or investigative feature. In leading Indian news papers, PTI feature service, INFA (India News and Feature Alliance), publication syndicate and Punjabi Features Service mainly supply articles that appear on the edit pages of newspapers as main articles. Feature has even crept into the editorial columns. What many newspapers publish as the interesting and light third editorial is more a feature and less an editorial. It could be called 'feature editorial'.

A good feature should have strength and human interest. While the news story deals with more important facts the feature deals with more interesting facts. Further, timeliness is more essential in news than in feature. These criteria are relative and not supreme. But together they can be effectively applied to identify a feature or a news story.

4.14 SOURCES FOR NEWS

How news men get news? Sources of news are countless, if one has nose for news he can get it while walking on the road or even casually talking to people. The innumerable sources of news can be classified into various categories depending on the criteria applied. Similarly, there is no permanent source that is suitable for all kinds of stories. A particular source, however highly positioned, may be applicable for one kind of story but totally inappropriate for another. This makes it essential to determine in each case the suitable source or sources. The source should always be named in the stories except in special situation.

Sources can be hard or weak. Source is hard when the facts of a report come from the horse's mouth, where they are credited to the concerned person or persons by name. On the government policies, for example, the Prime minister or other ministers, top officials of the concerned ministers of departments, etc., are the hard sources. But they are not hard enough with regard to matters that do not fall within the area of their own operation. Official press releases and briefing by "spokesman" are equally hard even if not identified by name.

Sometimes the name of the source is not given because of certain reasons. But the same is authentic enough to be considered as a hard source. In such situation, the following phrases are used to indicate authenticity.

It is authoritatively learnt means

According to knowledgeable or informed sources

According to a source (or quarter) close to X..... would mean that information may be taken as if it is coming from X.

Often particularly in political matters, an official spokesman discloses a genuine piece of information, on the understanding that it is released without credit, that is, on what is called *understood basis*. The press publishes it with, “*it is understood*” or “..... *is understood to be*”, etc.

When a general opinion within a particular group with a broad base is to be given, the practice is to quote “*circles*”. For example, political circles, trade circles etc., Such sourcing can relate to reaction, comments, etc., but not to any hard news. These are considered weak sources.

There are other phrases that constitute weak sourcing:

“*It is learnt*”,

“*it is believed*”,

“*it is stated*”, “*it is gathered*”,

“*it is reliably learnt*”,

“*according to reliable sources*”,

“*according to political observers*”

“*according to political circles*”.

Sources can also be classified as government sources and non-government sources. Government sources include legislative, executive and judiciary and institutions attached to them. Non-government sources include political parties, voluntary and other non-government institutions and members of public.

To be successful in his work, the publicist must know that in newspapers there are different people to do different work. Every newspaper has a number of ‘beats’ – police, political, economic, social, cultural, sports, university, transport, etc. He must contact the right man to sell his stuff. If there is any doubt in the matter, the news editor or the chief reporter should be consulted.

It should be clear that special representatives of newspaper deal with news of all-India importance in their respective subject-fields, while reporters cover

Check your Progress

4. What is the explanation of news by the reader?
5. How a write up that normally appears at the centre on the editorial page is called as?
6. What may be the sources of news?

local functions and news of local interests. As such, it will not serve any purpose to contact a special correspondent dealing with your subject-field for local coverage. Similarly, for an event of all-India importance, the publicist should approach the concerned representative of the newspaper, and not the local reporter.

Apart from the above sources of news, radio news, tv news, telephone calls, press release, hand out, press conference or briefing, interview, legislatures, courts, conferences, seminars, symposia, speeches and reports help the reporters as sources.

4.15 NEWS AGENCIES

Though news gathering is the job of the reporters, all the news that is printed in a news paper is not gathered by its reporters, correspondents and special correspondents. Some comes from them and some from retainers or stringers who are not on the regular staff but send news to the paper as and when they get it.

The main source of news for a news paper is news agencies or wire services. We find their credit lines – PTI, UNI, Reuter, AP, AFP, TASS, etc., with the date line of the story or in some papers after intro such as ‘reports PTI’.

The wire services have large network connecting the reporters from the whole world. Such agencies gather news and process them to deliver to newspaper subscribers in their news room (Shrivatsav, 1991, p. 29-31).

There are four major international news agencies: They are Reuters of Britain, Associated Press (AP) of the United States of America, AFP (Agence France Press) and UPI (United Press International) of the United States. Among these three, the last has lost much of its international market since the late eighties, except in South America. DPA (Deutsche Press Agentur) of Germany, Itar-Tass of Russia, and MENA (Middle East News Agency) of Egypt are the other such agencies. The major financial and business news agencies are Reuters, Dow Jones, Bloomberg Information Service and Bridge Information Systems. To counter the

dominance of the big four, OPECNA (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries – News Agency), NANAP (Non-Aligned News Agency Pool), The news agency of developing countries, Action de Sistemas Informativos Nacionales (ASIN) and the Agencia Latin Americana de Informacio (ALAI) were started. The PAN African News Agency (PANA) serves the African Continent, CANA, the Carribean region, OANA, the Asia-Pacific region and PACNEWS the Pacific region. India has its own international news agency. India Abroad News Service (IANS) with it headquarters in New York. Rome is blessed with a news agency IPS (Inter Press Service), which is mainly for the third world countries with an alternative approach (Kumar, 2001, p.101-103)

India has two news agencies PTI (Press Trust of India) and UNI (United News of India). Both have a language wing *Univarta* (of UNI) and BHASHA (of PTI). There were two multilingual wire services with Hindi as base language- *Hindustan Samachar* and *Samachar Bharti*. During the internal emergency declared in 1975 all the four were merged by Government into *Samachar*. Again the four agencies were revived by the *Janatha* government. Anyhow they were wound up in 1988. News agencies or wire services do not sell newspapers but they collect and sell news to newspapers. They also have reporters, sub-editors, news editors, special correspondents and foreign correspondents. News agency desk processes copy from reporters and foreign news agencies not for printing but for crediting to newspapers on their network. News agency copy is also called *creed* in the newspaper news room (Shrivatsava , 1987, 31-33).

4.16 ARCHIVE

Archive is a store of news stories. Complete newspapers are also stored in archives. Previously published broadcast bulletins are also stored in archives. Therefore archives serve as a source of research material for future. Newspaper stories from earlier decades and centuries may still be kept as cuttings.

News stories or features are kept in paper form after being cut out, e.g by scissors, from the page on which they were published. A print journalist applying

for a job will usually enclose his/her best work as photocopied cuttings., 'Cuts' is a slang abbreviation of the term. A 'cuttings library' is an old form of archive(Franklin, Hamer, Hannah, Kinsey and Richardson, 2005).

4.17 PLAGIARISM

The term plagiarism came from the Latin term, "Plagiarise" which means kidnapper. It is an act of stealing from others their thoughts or their writings or ideas and claiming them for one's own (Watson and Hill, 1993).

Such habit of using or passing off the writings or ideas of another as one's own, without crediting or attributing the source, is an offence against the ethics of journalism (Rayadu, 1998).

Copyright protects the rights of artists, authors and other creative people legally to profit from their creations. Radio and TV news writers must be careful not to pass off the work of others as their own. Not only is such plagiarism unethical, it is also illegal (Wulfemeyer, 2005).

Copyright Act gives protection to dramatic, literary, musical, archaeological artistic, or any work of craftsmanship, engraving and also to television, films, broadcasting diffusion. In such creations, only the author has exclusive right for publication, production, reproduction, performance in public, translation, etc. However, a fair dealing with literary, musical, artistic work for the purpose of research, criticism, review, reporting current events in a news paper or magazine or for judicial proceedings etc., do not constitute an infringement of copyright (Mehta, 1979, p.240).

4.18 INTERNET

Internet is a huge network of computers and smaller networks linked world wide. Such network allows people to access information and contacts each other. Internet helps a journalist as well as a reader in the following ways.

Reading news

Searching for news sources/story idea

Check your progress

7. What does PTI stand for?

8. What is called as a store of news stories?

9. What helps to protect the right of the artists?

Social networking
Micro-blogging
Blogging
Watching webinars / webcasts
Watching YouTube
Exploring Wikis
Producing/listening to podcasts
Social bookmarking

To get general information on a subject like world population trends, manufacturers of bicycles, animal welfare groups, you can try a human-edited web directory. To get a specific document, fact or image, you can try a computer-compiled search engine that has indexed the web. To get newstories about the happening now or within the last few days, you have to try a specialised news site. You can get the archives or current output of news organisations from the internet. If you are away from your homeland and you have to refer a newspaper of your native, then you can see the online edition of it on the web. You can also listen to an Internet radio station. If you are interested in the discussions of ordinary Internet users, then you need a site that searches newsgroups and other discussions. Are you interested in email mailing lists or email magazines about your subject area? The mailing list and e-zine directories are immediately available. Do you need reference material, usually based on printed sources? You can avail online reference tools, plus useful governmental sites, maps, etc. If you are you interested in finding specific people, you can use telephone, email and electoral directories. You can use the 'invisible' or 'hidden' web, you can find out the material which is not available through normal search tools.

The News & Observer in Raleigh, North Carolina was an early leader in online journalism. Steve Yelvington wrote on the Poynter Institute website about Nando, owned by The N&O, He wrote "Nando evolved into the first serious, professional news site on the World Wide Web". In the early 1990s it originated as "NandO Land". Online news sources began to multiply in the 1990s. An early

leader of online-only reporting *Salon*, was founded in 1995. In 2001 the *American Journalism Review* called *Salon* the Internet's "preeminent independent venue for journalism (Fahri, 2012) became popular."

As of 2009, audiences for online journalism continue to grow. In 2008, for the first time, more Americans reported getting their national and international news from the internet, rather than newspapers. Despite the uncertainty, online journalists report expanding newsrooms. They believe advertising is likely to be the best revenue model supporting the production of online news.

Many news organizations based in other media also distribute news online, but the amount they use of the new medium varies. Some news organizations use the Web exclusively or as a secondary outlet for their content. The Online News Association, founded in 1999, is the largest organization representing online journalists, with more than 1,700 members whose principal livelihood involves gathering or producing news for digital presentation.

4.19 LET US SUM UP

The surface happenings used to be reported in the news. But in views the writer can add his own opinions. A news report is a bit of direct reporting of recent events in a news paper. It presents facts and it normally does not merge up views. Opinion is a complete comment on current events. A column is much like a feature or a news analysis. A feature is a light-hearted article. It is timeless, ageless, and changeless, and makes interesting even days after publication.

An editorial gives the views of the daily on a particular topic. A letter to the editor is the explanation of news by the reader. It gives an opportunity for the ordinary man to air his/her opinion. The critics write reviews on a range of subjects such as books, plays, films, television and radio programmes, etc. An article is a detailed piece of composition written on some wide subject.

The 'middle' is usually a humorous, entertaining and crisply written piece, a satire, an unusual experience or a personality sketch. The individual opinion of a column writer is spoken on a subject in a column.

Sources can be hard or weak. Source is hard when the facts of a report come from the horse's mouth. The main source of news for a news paper is news agencies or wire services. Archive is a store of news stories. Complete newspapers are also stored in archives.

The term plagiarism came from the Latin term, "Plagiarise" which means kidnapper. It is an act of stealing from others their thoughts or their writings or ideas and claiming them for one's own.

Internet is a huge network of computers and smaller networks linked World Wide. Such network allows people to access information and contacts each other. It paves the way for online journalism.

4.20 UNIT END EXERCISES

Write a letter to the editor about a problem in your area like water scarcity or unusual power cut and get it published. See whether the problem is rectified by the higher authorities.

4.21 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Collect letters to the editor, editorials, features, columns, cartoons and opinion pieces from different newspapers and analyse the differences.

4.22 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Opinion
2. Column
3. Feature
4. Letter to the editor
5. Middle
6. Hard and weak

7. Press Trust of India
8. Archive
9. Copy Right

4.23 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. R. Ramachandra Aiyer (1979), 'Quest for News', The Macmillan Company, Delhi.
2. V. Natarajan, K. Mani and H. S. A. Khan (1988), 'Outlines of Communication and Journalism', HMN Syndicate Service, Coimbatore.
3. Arul Aram and Nirmaldasan (2001), Understanding News Media, Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited, Chennai.
4. Gurusany, Ma. Pa., (2001), Ithaliyal Kalai (Tamil), GuruThemozhi, Dindigul.
5. Shrivastava, K.M., (1987), News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

UNIT 3

LESSON 5

SELECTING NEWS

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever thought how a reporter selects news? How a reporter decides what news is and what is non-news? What are the qualities of news? How the value of the news is measured? How the reporters weigh the news? Does the weighing of news vary from country to country? Do the National Newspapers and the vernacular dailies follow the same methods for measuring? Why newspapers reject some news? Why news which is important to a person living in Delhi is not important to a person in Madurai? Why all international news is not published in the international column? Why local news which seems to be so important to you is not published in your local daily today? Why the defeat of your college cricket team is not published, while the defeat of the Indian cricket team occupies the space for headline? How the reporters and editors take all such decisions? You can find out the answer for many of your queries in this section.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

From this section you can learn

- What are the news values?
- How news is selected?
- Why Gate keeping is necessary?
- What are the differences between hard news and soft news?

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 News Selection

5.2 News Values

5.3 Principles for Gate Keeping

5.4 Hard News and Soft news

5.5 Let us sum up

5.6 Unit End Exercises

5.7 Points for discussion

5.8 Answers to check your progress

5.9 Suggested Readings

5.1 NEWS SELECTION

How to select news? News values help the journalist to select news. These news values help the reporter to find out how much importance is given by a media passage to a news story and how much attention is given by the audience to a news story. News values are also called news worthiness or news criteria. Boyd. A (1994) states that: "News journalism has a broadly granted set of values, often referred to as 'newsworthiness'..." News values are not universal and can vary widely between different countries.

In Western countries, decisions on the selection and arranging of news in order are made by editors. They do it on the basis of their experience and sixth sense. Some of these factors are listed below. A list of news values are given by Schlesinger (1987) and Bell (1991) "Anyhow, there is no end to lists of news criteria". Among the many lists of news values that have been listed by scholars and journalists, some, like Galtung and Ruge's (1965), attempt to describe news practices across cultures. But, others have become remarkably specific to the press of certain (often Western) nations.

Galtung and Ruge, put forward twelve factors together to define 'newsworthiness'. Focusing on newspapers and broadcast news, they devised a list. Such a list describes what is significant and what is not? They are the contributing factors to construct the news. The more an event has these values the more it has to be reported on in a newspaper. Furthermore, the more factors an event satisfies, the higher, the possibility that it becomes news; In addition to that

the factors will tend to exclude each other; and finally, the exclusion, that is events that satisfy none or little factors will not become news.

A variety of external and internal pressures also control the editor's decisions. Depending on them the editorial team decides which stories are covered, how issues are interpreted and how the importance is given to them. These pressures can sometimes lead to partiality or unethical reporting. Achieving significance, giving audiences the news they want and find interesting, is an increasingly important goal for media outlets. Such efforts will help to keep up market share in a quickly changing market. This has made news organizations more open to audience input and feedback. They also forced them to adopt and apply news values. The growth of interactive / participatory media and citizen journalism has been altering the traditional difference between news producer and passive audience. This may in future lead to a deep-ploughing redefinition of what 'news' means.

The practical difficulties of the newsgathering process and the collective norms of the newsroom affect the news value given to an event by the journalist. And treatment by external pressure groups also affects the way it is reported. The news value given to the story by the audience, its impact or interest, is determined by the degree of change it contains. The relevance of that change to the physical and social security of the individual or group also decides the news value. Major change, coupled with high relevance, gives the story a correspondingly high news value; little or slow, change, together with low relevance, indicate low news value.

Some commentators Harcup & O'Neill, (2001) argue that since many stories are actually manufactured, Galtung and Ruge's (1965) list of news values is open to be questioned. Most of the news papers are filled with celebrity news and social news. The boundary between news and reality shows is getting blurred. Moreover popular culture and the advent of citizen journalism may suggest that the nature of 'news' and news values are evolving daily. Hence the traditional models of the news process are now not sufficiently, but only partially relevant.

- i. **Frequency:** Some events occur suddenly. They fit well with the news organization's agenda. Such news is more likely to be reported than those that occur gradually or at inconvenient times of day or night. Long-term trends and events are not likely to receive much coverage.
- ii. **Negativity:** Generally the readers show more interest in bad news than good news. In such situation, bad news is more newsworthy than good news.
- iii. **Unexpectedness:** If an event is unusual it will have a greater outcome than something that is an everyday happening.
- iv. **Unambiguity:** The term ambiguity literally means "having more than one meaning or interpretation". Events whose explanations are clearer are news than those that are open to more than one interpretation. Hence events and issues which have only one interpretation will be of more value than the others.
- v. **Personalization:** Actions of individuals will be more attractive than one in which there is no such "human interest." Interesting acts of cricket players, film stars and other such celebrities have more news value than the other news.
- vi. **Meaningfulness:** This relates to the sense of recognition the audience has with the topic. "Cultural proximity" is a factor here. Stories concerned with people who speak the same language, look the same. The audience from same language and culture receive more coverage than those concerned with people who speak different languages, look different and have different preoccupations. An Oscar Award given to a Tamil actor or actress will be more appealing to the Tamil speaking people than the other people.
- vii. **Reference to elite nations:** Stories concerned with global powers like the first world countries, receive more attention than those concerned with less influential nations like the third world countries. All the international affairs of United States is given wide coverage by all the newspapers in India.
- viii. **Reference to elite persons:** Stories concerned with the rich, powerful, famous and popular get more coverage. Birthday celebrations of political

leaders and cricket stars and other very important people are given more importance in newspapers than the celebrations of ordinary people.

- ix. **Conflict:** Opposition of people or forces result in a dramatic effect. Stories with conflict are often quite newsworthy. Border issues between nations, sharing of water and electricity between states, sharing of fishing area among the fishermen of different nations.
- x. **Consonance:** Stories that fit with the media's expectations receive more coverage than those that do not fit with them (and for which they are thus unprepared). Note this appears to conflict with unexpectedness above.
- xi. **However,** consonance really refers to the *media's readiness* to report an item. Conflicts between two countries or two states are reported differently by the newspapers of the two different sides. They support their nations and states, than being objective.
- xii. **Continuity:** A story that is already in the news gathers a kind of inactivity. This is partly because the media organizations are already in place to report the story and partly because previous reportage may have been made the story more accessible to the public (making it less ambiguous). When natural disasters like tsunami, earthquake, volcanoes etc., are continuously reported in different media, the readers enjoy the continuity.
- xiii. **Composition:** Stories must compete with one another for space in the media. For instance, editors may seek to provide a balance of different types of coverage. So if there is an excess of foreign news for instance, the least important foreign story may have give space to an item concerned with the domestic news. In this way the importance given to a story depends not only on its own news values but also on those of competing stories. (Galtung and Ruge, 1965)
- xiv. **Competition:** Commercial or professional competition between media may lead journalists to give their approval to the news value given to a story by a rival. If the readers or the audience jump from one newspaper to another or one channel to another, their regular newspaper or channel have

to publish the news which is already given priority by their competing news paper or channel.

- xv. **Co-optation:** A story that is only marginally newsworthy in its own right may be covered if it is related to a major running story. For example, If five countries are affected by the killer wave tsunami, in addition to the international coverage of tsunami, information about your own coastal villages affected should be properly given priority by the newsman in your newspaper.
- xvi. **Prefabrication:** Imagine that a story is marginal in news terms but written and available, it may be selected before a much more newsworthy story that must be researched and written from the ground up.
- xvii. **Predictability:** An event is more likely to be covered if it has been pre-scheduled. (Bell, 1991) The home coming of the Indian athletic team after winning more than five gold medals in the Olympics is predicted news.
- xviii. **Time constraints:** Traditional news media such as radio, television and daily newspapers have strict deadlines. They also have short production cycle. Hence the newsmakers team selects for items that can be researched and covered quickly.
- xix. **Logistics:** The availability of global communications even from remote regions is eased. Similarly, the ability to deploy and control production and reporting staff and functionality of technical resources also becoming easier now. These available logistics can determine whether a story is covered or not. (Schlesinger, 1987)

Usual models concentrate on what the journalist perceives as news. But the news process is a two-way transaction. It involves both the journalist and the audience. The boundary between the two is rapidly blurring with the growth of citizen journalism and interactive media.

Little has been done to define equivalent factors that determine audience perception of news. This is largely because it would appear impossible to define a common factor, or factors, that generate interest in a mass audience.

Basing his judgment on many years as a newspaper journalist Hetherington (1985) states that: "...anything which threatens people's peace, prosperity and well being is news and likely to make headlines".

Whyte-Venables (2012) suggests audiences may interpret news as a risk signal. Psychologists and primatologists have shown that apes and humans constantly check the environment for information that may signal the possibility of physical danger or threat to the individual's social position. This openness to risk signals is a powerful and virtually universal survival mechanism.

A 'risk signal' is characterized by two factors, an element of change (or uncertainty) and the relevance of that variation to the security of the individual.

The same two conditions are observed to be characteristic of news. The news value of a story is determined by the degree of change it contains and the relevance that change has for the individual or group among the audience. Analysis shows that journalists manipulate both the element of change and relevance ('security concern') to maximize, and some cases play down, the strength of a story.

Security concern is proportional to the relevance of the story for the individual, his or her family, social group and societal group, in declining order. At some point there is a Boundary of Relevance, beyond which the change is no longer perceived to be relevant, or newsworthy. This boundary may be controlled by journalists, power - elites and communicators seeking to encourage audiences to keep out, or hold close, certain groups: for instance, to distance a home audience from the enemy in time of war, or conversely, to highlight the difficulty of a distant culture so as to encourage support for aid programs.

5.2 NEWS VALUES

News values are general guiding principle or criteria used by media outlets, such as newspapers or broadcast media, to determine how much importance to give to a story. According to Owen Spencer-Thomas (2001), they

Check your progress

1. What does help the journalist to select news?
2. Who put forward twelve factors together to define 'newsworthiness'?
3. What results will get by the Opposition of people or forces?

are basic to understanding news production and the choices that editors and other journalists face when deciding that one piece of information is news while another is not.

So what are the components of a good story? What makes it interesting or newsworthy?

i) Impact or broad appeal: Some events affect many people— the more it affects the better the story. An anticipated income tax increase, for instance, has impact, because it will involve a lot of people.

ii) Timeliness or immediacy: News gets out of date speedily; it's timely if it happened freshly. What is deemed "recent" is related to the publication cycle of the news medium in which the information appears? On BBC News 24 events that happened during the past half hour are timely. In your fortnightly campus magazine events that took place over the past 15 days are timely.

iii) Prominence: Stories involving well-known places, companies, groups or people, especially celebrities. If you or I trip and fall in railway platform, no one will take much interest, because we aren't well known. But, if the cricket captain of Indian team trips and falls during a tour on a railway platform, that's a news story.

iv) Proximity or closeness to home: Events occurring in the newspaper circulation area or the broadcast area are likely to be of most interest. 2,000 job losses in Chennai won't get a mention in a newspaper published from Tokyo. Arrest of 20 fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy near by the Pak Strait may get more importance in all Tamil dailies. The success of your college team in the National Chess Championship will be an essential story for your campus magazine.

v) Conflict: Stories are about people or organizations at odds with each other. Different nations have conflicts at the international level. Different states have

conflicts at the national level. Information has conflict if it involves some kind of disagreement between two or more people. Conflict has drama.

vi) Bizarre or out-of-the-ordinary: What deviates sharply from what you would expect and experience of everyday life, unusual, strange or off the wall. A newborn chick with four legs and three eyes is something bizarre. Definitely it will occupy space with photograph in your local daily.

vii) Currency or flavour of the month: Events and situations that are currently in the news and being talked about. Announcement of SSLC and HSCC results used to be the flavour of the month of May in all over India.

viii) Human interest: People are interested in people, so personalize your story. A grand wedding ceremony of a filmstar or a popular sportsman used to have human interest as value and be published.

ix) About people's everyday problems or interests: Food, health, housing, schools, work, money problems. Lack of electricity, water scarcity, drought, etc are given importance by all the Indian news papers

An interesting news story will contain some of these elements, but it's unlikely it will contain them all. However, all stories should be perfect and truthful.

5.3 PRINCIPLES FOR GATE KEEPING

Who decides what stories will be printed in the newspaper or read in the TV/Radio? Who picks the stories for the 10 O'Clock News on Channel eleven? Journalists make those decisions. When they do, they are performing their "gatekeeper" function. They decide which stories to let through the "gate" and which to throw into the garbage.

Journalists decide which stories are important enough to be printed on page one and which ones for inside. But the gatekeeper function also affects the way we write our stories. The reader looks to the journalist to make sense out of a puzzling world. It is the journalist's job to find out what's going on. He then

Check Your Progress

4. What does deal with stories involving well-known places, companies, groups or people, especially celebrities?
5. Which events and situations that is currently in the news and being talked about
6. How people interest matters are called?

choose from a notebook full of scribbles only those facts necessary to give the reader a clear, concise picture of the most important events. Observably, this process leaves some facts out of the story. You must be sure that your story includes the most important information.

But for you to make that decision, you have to learn the whole thing possible about your subject. You will end up knowing a lot of less-important facts that will never make it into a news story. A good reporter loves to dig into a story. The rule is: "Write 10 percent of what you know".

Gatekeeping is the process through which information is filtered for spreading. It may be for publication, broadcasting, the Internet or some other mode of communication. The academic theory of gatekeeping is found in many fields of study, including communication studies and journalism. The theory was first introduced by Social Psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1943. Gatekeeping occurs at all levels of the media structure. That is from a reporter deciding which sources are chosen to include in a story and the editors deciding which stories are printed or covered. Sometimes media outlet owners and even advertisers are also included. Individuals can also act as gatekeepers, deciding what information to include and what not.

According to Pamela Shoemaker and Tim Vos (2009), "Gatekeeping is the process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people everyday and it is the center of the media's role in modern public life. [...] This process determines not only which information is selected, but also what the content and nature of the news, will be." " In exercising its "observation" function, every news medium has a very large number of stories brought to its attention daily by reporters, wire services and a variety of other sources. Due to a number of practical considerations, only a limited amount of time or space is available in any medium for its daily presentations of the news to its audience. The remaining space must be devoted to advertising and other content. Within any news organization there exists a news

point of view, a subculture that includes a compound set of criteria for judging a particular news story - criteria based on economic needs of the medium, organizational procedure, definitions of newsworthiness, conceptions of the nature of relevant audience and beliefs about fourth estate obligations of journalists. This news perspective and its complex criteria are used by editors, news directors and other personnel who select a limited number of news stories for appearance to the public and program them in ways such that the necessities of the medium and the tastes of the audience are met. Therefore, employees in the news organization become gatekeepers, letting some stories pass through the scheme but keeping others out, thus limiting, controlling and shaping the public's knowledge of the whole of actual event occurring in reality (DeFluer, 2009)."

Gatekeeping as a news process was identified in the literature as early as 1922, though not yet given a formal theoretical name. In his book, *The Immigrant Press*, Park explains the process, "out of all of the events that happen and are recorded every day by correspondents, reporters and the news agencies, the editor chooses certain items for publication which he regards as more important or more interesting than others. The rest he condemns to nothingness and the wastebasket. There is a huge amount of news 'killed' every day" (Park, 1922, P.328). In 1950 gatekeeping was officially applied to news. White looked at the factors an editor takes into concern when deciding which news will make the paper and which news will not (White, David Manning, 1950). White contacted an editor, a man in his mid-40s with 25 years of experience who was the wire editor of morning newspaper with 30,000 circulation in a mid-west city of 100,000 whom he calls Mr. Gates.

The editor retained all copy that he rejected from the paper. After his shift, made notes on why that story was rejected, assuming he could still remember the reason. White wanted to know if these are prejudiced decisions based on the editor's own set of experiences, attitudes and outlook. He found that rejections could be classified in two ways: 1) Rejecting based on not being worthy of being reported or 2) Rejecting based on carbon copy of other reports on the same thing.

These considerations fit with what we call news norms today. However, Mr. Gates also admitted to preferring political news to other types, trying to avoid sensationalism, not liking suicide stories, preferring stories that have more sequence of events and did not contain facts or figures.

5.4 HARD NEWS AND SOFT NEWS

News stories are basically divided into two types. They are hard news and soft news. Hard news generally refers to up-to-the-second news and events that are reported at once, while soft news is background information or human-interest stories. Politics, war, economics and crime used to be considered as hard news, while arts, entertainment and lifestyles were considered soft news.

But increasingly, the lines are beginning to blur. Is a story about the private life of a politician “politics” or “entertainment”? Is an article about the importance of investing early for retirement a “business” story or a “lifestyle” story? Judging solely on subject matter, it can be difficult to tell.

One difference between hard and soft news is the tone of appearance. A hard news story takes a truthful approach: What happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why?

A soft news story tries instead to entertain or advise the reader. You may have come across newspaper or TV stories that promise “news you can use.” Examples might be tips on how to draw out properly before exercising, or what to look for when buying a new computer.

Knowing the difference between hard and soft news helps you develop a sense of how news is covered, and what sorts of stories different news media tend to publish or broadcast. This can be important when you want to write articles or influence the media yourself (College journalism, 2008).

5.5 LET US SUM UP

News values help the reporter to find out how much importance is given by a media passage to a news story, and how much attention is given by the

Check Your Progress

7. What is the process through which information is filtered for spreading?

8. What generally refers to up-to-the-second news and events that are reported at once?

9. What gives is background information or human-interest stories?

audience to a news story. News values are also called news worthiness or news criteria. Gatekeeping is the process through which information is filtered for spreading. It may be for publication, broadcasting, the Internet, or some other mode of communication. News stories are basically divided into two types. They are hard news and soft news. Hard news generally refers to up-to-the-second news and events that are reported at once, while soft news is background information or human-interest stories.

5.6 UNIT END EXERCISES

Read today's newspaper and find out the hard news and soft news.

5.7 POINT FOR DISCUSSION

Form a team among yourself with five members. One of you acts as an editor. Let the remaining four work as reporters. The reporters have to write five news each. Let the editor do the Gate keeping. Find out the difficulties in gate keeping and discuss the problems among yourself and write the solutions.

5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. News values
2. Galtung and Ruge
3. Conflict
4. Prominence
5. Currency
6. Human interest
7. Gatekeeping
8. Hard news
9. Soft news

5.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. R. Ramachandra Aiyer (1979), 'Quest for News', The Macmillan Company, Delhi.
2. V. Natarajan, K. Mani and H. S. A. Khan (1988), 'Outlines of Communication and Journalism', HMN Syndicate Service, Coimbatore.

3. Arul Aram and Nirmaldasan (2001), Understanding News Media, Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited, Chennai.
4. Gurusany, Ma. Pa. (2001), Ithaliyal Kalai (Tamil), GuruThemozhi, Dindigul Shrivastava, K.M., (1987), News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Newdelhi.

5.7 POINT FOR DISCUSSION

5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. News values
2. Getting and Rugs
3. Conflict
4. Prominence
5. Currency
6. Human interest
7. Gatekeeping
8. Hard news
9. Soft news

5.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. R. Ramachandra Aiyer (1979), 'Quest for News', The Asianist
2. V. N. Nopparat, K. Chani, and H. A. Khan (1988), 'Outline of Communication and Journalism', HMN Syndicate Service, Coimbatore.

UNIT 3

LESSON 6

BASIC COMPONENTS OF NEWS

INTRODUCTION

In all courses of Journalism, the first class starts with the importance of five simple words. Who, What, When, Where and Why. These 5 W's are the necessary building blocks of news writing. In addition these five Ws and one H, there are other components which help to complete the news story. In this lesson you will study about such components. This lesson will also teach you to create such components as a news paper maker.

Two more essentials have impacted the flow of a news article. *How?* And *So What?* The total amount of news now needs new plans to get readers involved in a lone news story. These seven news necessities will counterfeit a news article that is informative, well-written and even potentially significant.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to learn

- The basic components of a news story
- How to create such components of news stories
- To identify the components from your daily
- To know the difference among the national and international dailies in following different styles of fixing the components.

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Necessary Building Blocks of News

6.1.1 Who

6.1.2 What

6.1.3 When

6.1.4 Where

6.1.5 Why

6.1.6 How

- 6.1.7 So What
- 6.2 Basic components of news
- 6.3 Date line
- 6.4 Credit line
- 6.5 Byline
- 6.6 Attribution
 - 6.6.1 Source – Paraphrase
 - 6.6.2 Source – Quote
 - 6.6.3 Source – Paraphrase and Quote
 - 6.6.4 When to Attribute
 - 6.6.5 Different Types of Attribution
- 6.7 Embargo
- 6.8 Source
 - 6.8.1 Anonymous sources
- 6.9 Balance and fairness
- 6.10 Brevity
- 6.11 Let us sum up
- 6.12 Unit end exercises
- 6.13 Points for discussion
- 6.14 Answers to check your progress
- 6.15 Suggested readings

6.1 NECESSARY BUILDING BLOCKS OF NEWS

6.1.1 Who: some questions should be asked in order to underline any people who may be involved in the story. Find the major players, well-informed sources, stakeholders, etc. Secondary people would include those who support or oppose an issue or who may be indirectly affected by the problem or event.

6.1.2 What: What is going on? What happened? Answers to these simple questions may be driven by key moments in the story. Moreover, such forces

have created the issue or alternately, fixed the problem. This factor is the basic premise that supports why the story is news worthy.

6.1.3 When: Attached to the events of *What?*, it is important to include a timeline of events. At what position does the story begin and where does it stop? For future articles on the issue, an correct timeline can be a useful tool.

6.1.4 Where: Where is the deed? This includes more than just the address or cross streets. Think what the location looks like, sounds like and smells like as well as any nearby locations that might impact the story. A great news writer would be able to make the reader "see" the place with minimal words.

6.1.5 Why: This factor is not always the easiest to discover depending on the state of affairs. Look deeper than a simple, "Why did this thing happen?" Look towards why the people involved are behaving a convinced way. Are there conditions beyond the instant story that contribute to the question of why?

6.1.6 How: Once the first story has broken, readers will want to gain insight into how the event happened, how the story was revealed and how the end has played out. *How* is an important factor for people to make sure something dreadful never happens again, or even leads to administration's action *How?* adds insight to a story that otherwise would be buffed over and forgotten.

6.1.7 So What: So much news is at our tongue tips today. With only little time to read it all, it becomes important to learn quickly, "Why should I care about this story?" Writers need to gain a solid clutch early in the writing of the article about why their story matters. For people to stick around and keep reading they should know why this story relates to them, impact their life or is simply significant for people to know about.

These seven factors come together to give a story as much relevant information as possible. The story can be informative, forceful and essential at the

same time. Journalism, at its best, is an hard to believe tool for society. Before you pick up a newspaper, ask yourself this. So What?

6.2 THE BASIC COMPONENTS OF A NEWS STORY

All well-written new stories have most of the components listed below. Capable journalists know how to write each of these components into an interconnected whole. Most basic news stories should have:

6.2.1 The Headline: The headline is rarely more than a one or two line summary of the contents of the news story. It tells the readers what the story is about and whether (for a particular reader) it is worth reading. Headlines have a telegraphic style. Because they must fit a particular and very limited space that is usually not known at the time the news story is being written. Headlines are not usually written by the reporter. Headlines act as an index of the contents of the newspaper. It is also a summary of the information in its stories.

6.2.2 The Lead: The lead is usually defined as the first sentence of a news story, sometimes as the first few sentences. If news stories have a beginning, it should also have middle and an end. The lead is the beginning. The lead on a hard news story is often called a *summary lead*. Many journalists have their own definition of the ideal lead. Almost all agree that a good hard news lead should contain the most important facts of the story. That is, at least some of the Five Ws. Most agree that the ideal lead should be short and it should have not more than 25 or 30 words. Leads should be "tight". It should be, written with economy. Leads need to be interesting. The job of the lead is to attract readers into reading the rest of the story. A news story with a strong lead is more prone to be read.

6.2.3 The Backup Quote: Most news stories, except the shortest of short, should have a backup quote placed soon after the lead. In an ideal world, the backup quote is attributed to someone with knowledge of the story. It will sum up the claim made in the lead in a concise, understandable and amusing way. The problem from the reporter's point of view, of course, is that he must accurately set down a authentically instructive quote. Not every interview subject can or will

provide a good backup quote. A good backup quote in brief explains what's going on and keeps the reader's reading.

6.2.4 Attribution: All hard news stories require attribution and even the softest of news, stories require some. Attribution is the clarification of the source of the information in the news story. It is also the naming of who made the statements contained in quotes or paraphrases of quotes. Attribution allows the reader to judge for herself/himself whether the facts set out in the story have value. The best stories contain lots of quotes and all such quotes have attribution. A news story without attribution is worthless.

6.2.5 Reaction: Most hard news stories and all news stories that contain controversial statements should have reaction the comments of someone who is familiar with the circumstance written about or of someone with an alternative view of the main view of the story. If there has been a natural disaster in New Delhi, reaction should be sought from the local Indian community. If your community's MP, a member of the opposition, slams the Government, a representative of the Government should have the opportunity to respond. Fairness requires reaction.

6.2.6 The Nut Graph: A nut graph informs readers of the focus of the story. It is usually placed in the top third of the story that is near the beginning of the middle. The nut graph states the main point of the story. Lots of news stories must deal with composite topics and a variety of ideas, but all good stories should focus on one key theme. Not every story requires a nut graph. In a short, hard news story, the lead will serve the same purpose as the nut graph. In a feature story with a softer lead, a nut graph is necessary to set out for the reader what is going on.

6.2.7 Background: Most stories need some background for the reader to understand what's going on. The history leading up to an event, the throw of characters, the value of the local currency, the physical properties of water etc., are examples of background. The more difficult the story, the more pressing the need for background. Background helps explain the action.

Check Your Progress

1. What does tell the readers what the story is about?
2. How the first sentence of a news story is called?
3. What informs the focus of the story to the reader?

6.2.8 The Ending: Notwithstanding the concept of the Inverted Pyramid story, which in theory can be cut anywhere, the most stylishly written stories come to a clear conclusion. The conclusion somehow ties the story up with a neat little bow. Sometimes writers end a story with a reference to future action that is expected. Sometimes stories end with a new quote that summarizes what has happened. Good endings often fall victim to heavy-handed editing. Still, they are worth the effort: Good endings leave the reader with a feeling of satisfaction. Anyhow, most of the Indian dailies do not have the ending.

6.3 DATELINE

A dateline is a brief piece of text included in news articles that describes where and when the event happened. It is also about when it was written or filed, though the date is often absent. In the case of articles reprinted from wire services, the name of the news agency is also included (though the originating one is not). Datelines are conventionally placed on the first line of the text of the article, before the first sentence. The location appears first, usually starting with the city in which the reporter has written or dispatched the report. City names are usually printed in uppercase, though this can vary from one publication to another. (You can not use lowercase and upper case in vernacular news papers). The political division and/or nation the city is in may follow, but they may be dropped if the city name is widely recognizable due to its size or political importance (a national capital, for instance). The date of the report comes after, followed by an end dash surrounded by spaces or in a different way and then the article. In a typical newspaper abroad the dateline might read *Madurai, INDIA, June 2 — The outlook was uncertain today as ...* The same story if pulled from the Associated Press (AP) wire might appear as *Madurai (AP) — The outlook was uncertain today as* Datelines can take on some strange forms. When reporters work together on a story, two different locations might be listed. In other cases, the exact location may be unknown or purposely vague, such as when covering military operations while on a ship at sea or following an invasion force.

The concept of a dateline has been adapted to television and radio too. Reporters on news programs might have their location mentioned in an introduction from the news anchor ("Here now from Thane, Mumbai, is reporter Gopal Basu"). A field reporter might also end his stories by combining the location from where he filed the report with a "lockout" (the last thing a reporter says in the report, includes his name and station ID) especially if the segment is recorded and not live. (For example, the last bit of a report could sound like "...prompting an investigation into the matter. Rama Moorthy, DD News, Delhi."). The term Dateline has also been used as the name for several current affairs TV shows.

6.4 BY LINE

The byline on a newspaper or magazine article gives the name, and often the position, of the writer of the article. Bylines are usually placed between the headline and the text of the article, although some magazines (notably *Reader's Digest*) place bylines at the bottom of the page, to leave more room for graphical elements around the headline. A typical newspaper byline might read

Priscilla Jeba

Staff Writer

A byline can also include a brief article summary, introducing the writer by name. Writing a short account of a long piece has never been as easy as often appears, as *Staff Writer* Priscilla Jeba now explains: Magazine bylines, and bylines on opinion pieces, often include biographical information on their subjects. A typical biographical byline on a piece of creative nonfiction might read Priscilla Jeba is working on a book, *Human Rights in Schools of Tamilnadu*, based on this article. She is returning to the region this summer to gather material for a follow-up essay. Most current newspapers and magazines attribute their articles to individual editors, or to wire services.

An exception is the British weekly *The Economist*, which publishes nearly all material anonymously.

6.5 CREDIT LINE

Credit line is acknowledging the source of a picture. But in some circumstances the meaning of By line and Credit line overlaps.

6.6 ATTRIBUTION

Attribution simply means telling the readers where the information in your story comes from, as well as who is being quoted. Generally, attribution means using a source's full name and job title (when relevant). Information from sources can be paraphrased or quoted directly. Here are some examples:

6.6.1 Source – Paraphrase

Rama Lakshmi, a resident of the fourth car street, said the sound of the cyclone was terrifying.

6.6.2 Source – Quote

"It sounded like a giant steam engine train coming through. I've never heard anything like it," said Murugan, who lives nearby the second railway gate. Often, reporters will use both paraphrases and direct quotes from a source.

6.6.3 Source – Paraphrase and Quote

Ramalakshmi, a resident of the fourth car street, said the sound of the cyclone was terrifying. "It sounded like a giant steam engine train coming through. I've never heard anything like it," Murugan said. (Notice that in news writing style abroad they use a source's full name on first reference, then just the last name on all subsequent references. If your source has a specific title or rank, use their title before their full name on first reference, then just the last name after that.)

6.6.4 When to Attribute

Any time the information in your story comes from a source and not from your own firsthand notes, it should be attributed. A good rule of thumb is to attribute once per paragraph. It may seem repetitive, but it's important for reporters to be clear about where their information originates.

Example: The suspect escaped from the police van on Mount Road. Officers captured him about a block away on Meenampackam, said Lt. Guru Moorthy.

6.6.5 Different Types of Attribution

In his book *News Reporting and Writing*, journalism professor Melvin Mencher outlines four distinct types of attribution (cited by Tony Rojers, 2002)

i) On the record: All statements are directly quotable and attributable, by name and title, to the person making the statement.

Example: "The U.S. has no plans to invade Iran," said White House press secretary Jim Smith. Reporters should strive to have their sources speak on the record whenever possible. A named source gives a story greater credibility.

ii) On Background: All statements are directly quotable, but can't be attributed by name or specific title to the person commenting.

Example: "The U.S. has no plans to invade Iran," a White House spokesman said.

iii) On Deep Background: Anything that is said in the interview is usable but not in direct quotation and not for attribution. The reporter writes it on his or her own.

Example: The U.S. has no plans to invade Iran.

iv) Off the Record: Information is for the reporter's use only and is not to be printed or made public in anyway. The information also is not to be taken to another source in hopes of getting confirmation. You probably don't need to get into all of Mencher's categories when you're interviewing a source. But you should clearly establish how the information your source gives you can be attributed.

And remember, on-the-record attribution should be used as often as possible.

6.7 Embargo

In Journalism and Public Relations, a news embargo or press embargo is an appeal by a source that the information or news provided by that source not be published until a certain date or certain conditions have been met. The

Check Your Progress

4. What does describe where and when the event happened?

5. What is usually placed between the headline and the text of the article?

6. How is acknowledging the source of a picture called?

understanding is that if the embargo is broken by reporting before then, the source will hit back by restricting access to further information by that journalist or his publication, giving them a long-term difficulty relative to more supportive outlets. They are often used by business concerns making a product announcement, by medical journals and by Government officials announcing policy initiatives; the media is given advance knowledge of details being held undisclosed so that reports can be prepared to match with the announcement date and yet still meet press time. In theory, press embargoes reduce wrongness in the reporting of breaking stories by reducing the encouragement for journalists to cut corners in hopes of "scooping" the struggle. Embargoes are usually arranged in advance as "Gentlemen's Agreements." However, sometimes publicists will send embargoed press releases to newsrooms unwelcome in hopes that they will respect the embargo date without having first agreed to do so — the phrase "For Immediate Release" often found at the top of press releases indicates that the information in the release is not embargoed. News organizations sometimes break embargoes and report information before the embargo expires, either accidentally (due to miscommunication in the newsroom) or purposely (to get the jump on their competitors). Breaking an embargo is typically considered a serious violation of trust and can result in the source excepting the offending news outlet from receiving advance information for a long period of time. News embargoes are one of several ways a source can influence media presentation of the information they provide; others include providing information "on background" or "not for attribution," limiting or providing "access," or even direct Government or market intervention against the reporters or media company. (See confidentiality terminology in journalism for a full discussion of these.) The manner in which journalists react to these and other attempts to influence coverage are a matter of journalistic ethics.

Examples of Embargoes

Biweekly press briefings from the International Monetary Fund are typically embargoed until 10:30 a.m. Washington time, 1430 GMT (for synchronized effect on global stock markets).

- Reporters who accompanied U.S. President George W. Bush on a Thanksgiving visit to Iraq in 2003 were embargoed from filing until the President left the country. They were told that, in the interests of security, the trip would be canceled if news broke before its conclusion (Moniz, 2003).
- The Ministry of Defense in the United Kingdom informed a handful of journalism outlets that Prince Harry would be serving in Afghanistan, on condition that the information not be released until the end of his deployment. The information was leaked after about two months and officials agreed to end the embargo. The prince was immediately removed from the battlefield, reportedly for his safety and that of his fellow soldiers.
- In Canada, Australia and other countries, prior to the release of the budget and other important government announcements, reporters are held in a "lockup" so that they can prepare stories in advance. They are not permitted to file until after the official announcement (for example, after the Minister of Finance rises to deliver the budget speech.) Lockups are particularly aimed at preventing insider trading on the basis of leaked government announcements (Hildebrandt, 2006 and Allan, 2007). A similar lockup is done in the United States when the Federal Reserve Board is preparing to adjust an interest rate.
- *The New York Times* in 2008 prompted suppression of the story of the kidnapping of David Rohde (their reporter) in news outlets and on Wikipedia until his return in 2009. This example, in which the instigator of the embargo is not the source, may be a case of self-censorship instead.
- Embargoes on articles in scientific journals

6.8 SOURCE

In journalism, a source is a person, publication or other record or document that gives timely information. Outside journalism, sources are sometimes known as "News Sources". Examples of sources include official minutes, publications or telecasts, officials in Government or business, organizations or corporations, witnesses of crime, accidents or other events and people involved with or affected by a news event or issue. According to Shoemaker (1996) and McQuail (1994), there are a huge number of factors that tend to condition the acceptance of sources as authentic by investigative journalists. Reporters are expected to develop and plant sources, especially if they regularly cover a specific topic, known as a "beat". Beat reporters must, however, be careful of becoming too close to their sources. Reporters often, but not always, give greater scope to sources with little experience. For example, sometimes a person will say they don't want to talk and then carry on talking; if that person is not a public figure, reporters are less likely to use that information. Journalists are also encouraged to be doubtful without being distrustful. As a rule of thumb, but especially when reporting on debate, reporters are expected to use many sources. Off-the-record material is often precious and reporters may be keen to use it, so sources wishing to make sure the confidentiality of certain information are generally advised to discuss the "terms of use" before actually disclosing the information, if possible. Some journalists and news organizations have policies against accepting information "off the record" because they believe it interferes with their ability to report truthfully or because they suspect it may be intended to mislead them or the public. Even if they cannot report certain information directly, journalists can use "off the record" information to discover related facts or to find other sources that *are* willing to speak on the record. This is especially useful in investigative reporting. Information about a surprise event or breaking news, whether on or off the record, is known as a "tip-off". Information that leads to the uncovering of more interesting information is called a "lead".

6.8.1 Anonymous sources

The use of anonymous sources has been a controversial subject for many years. Some news outlets insist that anonymous sources are the only way to obtain certain information, while others hold strict prohibitions against the use of unnamed sources at all times. News organizations may impose safeguards, such as requiring that information from an anonymous source be corroborated by a second source before it can be printed.

6.9 BALANCE AND FAIRNESS

Balance in journalism is considered one of the most important characteristics of any news piece. Balance means a lack of bias and it is the ethical very important for a journalist to transmit the news in an impartial manner. This means that a reporter should, whenever possible, demonstrate the opposing viewpoints at play in a story lively; it is important to note that there are often more than two sides to any story. Objectivity is a significant principle of journalistic professionalism. Journalistic objectivity can refer to fairness, disinterestedness, factuality and nonpartisanship, but most often encompasses all of these qualities. In the context of journalism, *objectivity* may be understood as synonymous with *neutrality*. This must be distinguished from the goal of *objectivity* in philosophy, which would describe mind-independent facts which are true irrespective of human feelings, beliefs or judgments (Ehow, 2007).

6.10 BREVITY

Ohlone (2007) suggests the ABCs of news writing as Accuracy, Brevity and Clarity.

The first and most important is Accuracy. A story can be creative and compelling, but if it contains errors, it is worthless. The public needs unbiased information to make intelligent choices in the voting booth.

Second is Brevity. Each word in your story should do a job. If not, take it out. Get to the point. Say it just once. Don't be redundant. Don't say "7 A.M. in the morning," since "7 A.M. is in the morning." Just say "7 A.M." Or say "7" in the

Check Your Progress

7. What is one of several ways a source can influence media presentation of the information they provide?
8. What does give timely information on a person, publication or other record or document?
9. What means a lack of bias?

morning. Remember the inverted pyramid style of writing. Put the most important fact in the lead. Catch the reader's attention. Explain the lead and then go on to the next most important fact in the second inverted pyramid. Lead up to an interesting finish. Don't just stop writing when you run out of information.

Clarity starts before you write. Clarity starts with complete, competent reporting. You should understand your subject so completely that your story leaves it crystal-clear in the reader's mind. Your story should leave no questions unanswered. Avoid jargon. Explain anything that wouldn't be obvious to the average person. The more information you gather, the more you have to sift through to determine what belongs in the lead. The more you know, the harder it is to tell it quick and make it simple. It's only easy if you don't know what you're talking about. No one said good reporting is easy.

6.11 LET US SUM UP

The 5 W's and one H:- Who, What, When, Where, Why and How are the necessary building blocks of news writing. The headline is rarely more than a one or two line summary of the contents of the news story. The backup quote is attributed to someone with knowledge of the story. All news stories that contain controversial statements should have reaction -the comments of someone who is familiar with the circumstance written about. A nut graph informs readers of the focus of the story. It is usually placed in the top third of the story that is near the beginning of the middle. Most stories need some background for the reader to understand what's going on. The conclusion somehow ties the story up with a neat little bow. A dateline is a brief piece of text included in news articles that describes where and when the event happened. The first words in lead of a story which give name of city from which the story was sent. The byline on a newspaper or magazine article gives the name, and often the position, of the writer of the article. Attribution is the identification of the source of reported information. A source is a person, publication, or other record or document that gives timely information. Balance in journalism is considered one of the most important characteristics of any news piece. The lead is usually defined as the first

sentence of a news story. Acknowledging the source of a picture is called credit line. Line located under headline which tells the name of the writer is called by line.

6.12 UNIT END EXERCISES

Collect five different newspapers. Identify the components of news stories which you have learnt in this lesson.

6.13 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Notice the differences among the dailies in giving Byline, Credit line, Attributes, Captions etc., Discuss the reason for such differences.

6.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Headline
2. Lead
3. Nut Graph
4. Date line
5. By line
6. Credit line
7. Embargoes
8. Source
9. Balance

6.15 SUGGESTED READING

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UNIT 4

LESSON 7

STYLES OF NEWS WRITING

INTRODUCTION

Way of writing varies from country to country and state to state. Do you know it also varied from medium to medium and channel to channel? In radio people have no visuals. In newspapers people have no music. In television they can not tune back the TV for missed information, that is they can't enjoy a 'replay' for a sentence in a news. Now some techniques are developing for the replay options. Keeping all these in mind a writer has to prepare the news. This chapter deals with such techniques.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This lesson will teach you to know

- The techniques of different news styles
- The techniques of writing for radio
- The techniques of writing for television
- The techniques of writing for newspaper
- The techniques of writing for online

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Styles of writing

7.1.1 Pyramid Style

7.1.2 Inverted Pyramid Style

7.2 Why News Styles Differ..??

7.2.1 Newspaper Style

7.2.2 Radio Style

7.2.3 Television Style

7.2.4 The Online Style

7.3 Differences between print and online journalism

7.3.1 Breaking News

7.3.2 World Wide Exposure

7.3.3 Images, Video Audio Clips

7.3.4 Style and Presentation (links and keywords)

7.4 Let us sum up

7.5 Unit end exercise

7.6 Points for discussion

7.7 Answers to check your progress

7.8 Suggested readings

7.1 STYLES OF WRITING

There are two different styles of news writing. They are:

Pyramid Style, Inverted Pyramid Style

7.1.1 Pyramid Style: Journalism instructors usually describe the organization or structure of a news story as pyramid. The journalist top-loads the essential and most interesting elements of his/ her story with supporting information that follows the order of importance i.e. he/she mentions the most important details in the beginning following down to least important. Mostly writers start their stories with the "1-2-3 lead". This format invariably starts with a 5W (who, what, where, why, when) opening paragraph, followed by an indirect quote that serves to support a major element of the first paragraph and then a direct quote to support the indirect quote.

7.1.2 Inverted Pyramid Style: This style of writing describes the organization or structure of articles, essays or novels. The details and general information about the topic are mentioned in the beginning whereas specific information is given at the end. The information moves from least important to the most important. This structure enables readers to stop reading at any point and still come away with the essence of a story. It allows people to enter a topic to the depth that their curiosity takes them and without the imposition of details or nuances that they would consider irrelevant, but still making that information

available to more interested readers. The inverted pyramid structure also enables articles to be trimmed to any arbitrary length during layout, to fit in the space available.

7.2 WHY NEWS STYLES DIFFER..??

Irving Fang gives the following as writing Styles for Newspaper, Radio, and Television News Differences are not due to happenstance. Writing styles have evolved in newspapers, radio and television due to the unique nature of each medium and to the manner in which its audience consumes each medium. An evolutionary process has been at work adapting each news writing style to its medium. Further, by taking note of the gradual shift of many newspapers to a more conversational writing style and the shortening of both television news stories and sound bites, one could well argue that the evolutionary process will continue. Each of these styles are mentioned and described below:

7.2.1 Newspaper Style: News in newspapers is written so that it may be edited from the bottom up. A sold editor liked to say, a page form is not made of rubber. It won't stretch. What doesn't fit is thrown away. Historians trace the inverted pyramid, which is not the traditional style of British or other foreign newspapers, to the American Civil War, when correspondents, fearing that the telegraph would break down before they could finish transmitting their dispatches, put the most important information into the first paragraph and continued the story with facts in descending order of news value. During the days of letterpress printing, the makeup editor fit lead type into the steel chase by the simple expedient of tossing paragraphs away from the bottom until the type fit the allotted space. In modern offset lithography the same job can be accomplished by a razor blade or a computer delete key; the editing, especially under time pressure, is often still done from the bottom of a story up. The reading of a newspaper matches bottom-up editing. The reader's eye scans the headlines on a page. If the headline indicates a news story of interest, the reader looks at the first paragraph. If that also proves interesting, the reader continues. The reader who stops short of the end of a story

is basically doing what the editor does in throwing words away from the bottom. If newspaper stories were consumed sequentially as they are in radio and television newscasts, the writing style would change of necessity. If, for instance, a newspaper reader was unable to turn to page 2 before taking in every word on page 1 starting in the upper left hand corner and continuing to the lower right corner, the writing style of newspaper stories would, soon resemble a radio newscast. Yet, although the newspaper reader can go back over a difficult paragraph until it becomes clear, a luxury denied to listeners to broadcast news, it is also true, as one newspaper editor noted, that if the newspaper reader has to go back often to make sense of stories, the reader is likely to go back to the television set.

7.2.2 Radio Style: The radio newscast must be consumed sequentially; that is, the listener does not hear the second story in the newscast without hearing the first story. The eighth story waits on the first seven, which means in practice that all seven are chosen to be interesting to a significant number of listeners and are presented at a length, which maintains that interest. In addition to the inevitable centrality of thinking which affects story choice and story length, a pressing concern exists for clarity in both sentence length and word choice because the radio listener, unlike the newspaper reader, is unable to stop to review and reconsider the meaning of a sentence. The eye can go back; the ear can go only forward with the voice of the newscaster. During the "Golden Age of Radio," 1930-1950, before television sets appeared in every home, the family gathering around the parlor radio console in the evening sat facing it, a natural thing to do because the radio talked to them.

Today, it seems no one looks at radios. They speak to us from under the steering wheel or over our shoulder. Unlike the attentive newspaper reader, the radio listener is often driving, working or engaged in some task other than absorbing the latest news and consequently is paying less than full attention. As a result radio news stories are written to be told in familiar words combined into sentences, which run at comfortable lengths in a style known as "conversational."

One textbook guideline suggests writing as if telling a story to a friend who is trying to catch a bus that is ready to pull away. Because listeners lack opportunity to go back to reconsider a bit of information, there should be no need to do so. This limitation affects the structure of phrases of attribution and the use of pronouns, because pronouns have antecedents.

The radio broadcast news writer learns to beware of innocent little words like "it." These conditions influence television news as well, but perhaps they apply with a little more force to the writing of radio news summaries, where news items average two or three sentences and then the topic shifts. Particularly important is the care needed in the presentation of the numbers sprinkled throughout economic news. Writing news of the economy requires a balance between precision and understanding. An additional difficulty in absorbing the information in a summary newscast is its demand on the listener's ability to keep up not only with a rapid delivery but also with the variety of news. The newscaster jumps from topic to topic, Geographic location to location, as if the listener would have no difficulty in going from a flood in Bangladesh to a political crisis in Romania to a train accident north of town.

Radio news is hard enough for anyone to follow but the confusion is greater for people who are not on top of events. The thoughtful newscaster takes these topical twists and turns into consideration in both writing and delivery; the newspaper editor need not give the matter a moment's thought. The radio news writing style that has developed includes the choice of simple words and short, declarative sentences. Attribution precedes statements as it does in normal conversation. Sentence structure is incomplete at times, such as verb less sentences. Purists may howl, but the reality is that understanding is more important than grammar to a radio news writer.

7.2.3 Television Style: Television news style is much like radio news style, for a viewer can no more return to a group of facts than a listener can. The viewer, like the listener, does not always focus on what the newscaster says. Television news

adds further complexities when pictures join the words; that is, anchors or reporters deliver what is called a "voiceover." Ideally the words that accompany a videotape story of an event are written, even under time pressure, only after the writer has viewed the unedited videotape and made editing decisions such that the pictures follow logic of their own. In practice the ideal method of editing video first and writing text afterward is rarely followed in television news rooms, but the better news writers at least keep the pictures in mind as they write, and the tape is edited to fit the words. Besides all the other constraints which limit the writing of a news story lead, chronology, clarity, etc. the words should relate in some way to the pictures. If the words and the pictures do not support each other, they surely fight each other for the viewer's attention, a dissonance that detracts from understanding. An examination of a random selection of television newscasts will demonstrate that nearly all of the fresh information is found in the words, but it is the pictures that carry the impact for the viewers. It is the pictures that will be remembered. There are other types of videotape stories, such as news about the economy, which consist primarily of file tape chosen for the sole purpose of illustrating the words.

Here, picture logic barely exists, yet care must be taken that the words are not overwhelmed by the helping pictures. Economic news presents an additional difficulty alluded to in considering radio above. The difficulty lies in communicating numbers. Television has one advantage over radio here, because numbers can be presented visually while the newscaster reads them; the presentation can be enhanced by graphs, pie charts or other visual aids lacking in radio.

7.2.4 The Online Style: World Wide Web (WWW) - The online journalism has introduced journalists to new writing forms. Visiting faculty member Jonathan Dube shared these online writing tips.

i) Know your audience:

Write and edit with online readers' needs and habits in mind. Web usability studies show that readers tend to skim over sites rather than read them

Check Your Progress

1. What are the two different styles of news writing?
2. Which period is called as the "Golden Age of Radio?"
3. What is WWW?

intently. They also tend to be more proactive than print readers or TV viewers, hunting for information rather than passively taking in what you present to them. Think about your target audience. Because your readers are getting their news online, chances are they are more interested in Internet-related stories than TV viewers or newspaper readers, so it may make sense to put greater emphasis on such stories. Also, your site potentially has a global reach, so consider whether you want to make it understandable to local, national or international audience and write and edit with that in mind.

ii) Think First and Think Different:

Before you start reporting and writing a story, think about what the best ways are to tell the story, whether through audio, video, clickable graphics, text, links, etc. or some combination. Collaborate with audio, video and interactive producers. Develop a plan and let that guide you throughout the news gathering and production process, rather than just reporting a story and then adding various elements later as an afterthought. Also, look for stories that lend themselves to the Web stories that you can tell differently from or better than in any other medium.

iii) Tailor Your News Gathering:

Just as print and TV reporters interview differently because they are looking for different things, so must online journalists tailor their interviewing and information gathering specifically to their needs. Print reporters tend to look for information. TV reporters look for emotion on camera, sound bites and pictures to go with words. Online journalists must constantly think in terms of different elements and how they complement and supplement each other: Look for words to go with images, audio and video to go with words, data that will lend itself to interactive, etc... Remember that photos look better online when shot or cropped narrowly and streaming video is easier to watch when backgrounds are plain and zooming minimal. Tape interviews whenever possible in case someone says that would make a powerful clip. Look for personalities who could be interesting chat

guests. And always keep an eye out for information that can be conveyed more effectively using interactive tools.

iv) Write Lively and Tight:

Writing for the Web should be a cross between broadcast and print tighter and punchier than print, but more literate and detailed than broadcast writing. Write actively, not passively. Good broadcast writing uses primarily tight, simple declarative sentences and sticks to one idea per sentence. It avoids the long clauses and passive writing of print. Every expressed idea flows logically into the next. Using these concepts in online writing makes the writing easier to understand and better holds readers attention. Strive for lively prose, leaning on strong verbs and sharp nouns. Inject your writing with a distinctive voice to help differentiate it from the multitude of content on the Web. Use humor. Try writing in a breezy style or with attitude. Conversational styles work particularly well on the Web. Online audiences are more accepting of unconventional writing styles. At the same time, don't forget that the traditional rules of writing apply online. Unfortunately, writing quality is inconsistent throughout most online news sites. Stories suffer from passive verbs, run-on sentences, mixed metaphors and clichés. This is a result of fast-paced new gathering, short staffing and inexperienced journalists. This is also a big mistake. Readers notice sloppy writing and they don't forgive. They'll stop reading a story and they won't come back for more. Unlike local newspaper readers, online readers have options.

v) Explain:

Don't let yourself get caught up in the 24/7 wire-service mentality and think all that matters is that you have the latest news as fast as possible. Readers rarely notice or care who was first. People want to know not just what happened, but why it matters. And with all the information sources out there now, in the end it will be the sites that explain the news the best that succeed. Write and edit all your stories with this in mind.

vi) Never Bury the Lead:

You can't afford to bury the lead online because if you do, few readers will get to it. When writing online, it's essential to tell the reader quickly what the story is about and why they should keep reading or else they won't. One solution is to use a "Model T" story structure. In this model, a story's lead the horizontal line of the T summarizes the story and, ideally, tells why it matters. The lead doesn't need to give away the ending, just give someone a reason to read on. Then the rest of the story the vertical line of the T can take the form of just about any structure: the writer can tell the story narratively; provide an anecdote and then follow with the rest of the story; jump from one to another, in a "stack of blocks" form; or simply continue into an inverted pyramid. This enables the writer to quickly telegraph the most important information and a reason to keep reading and yet still retain the freedom to write the story in the way he or she wants to.

vii) Don't pile on

Another story structure that has evolved online, mostly by accident, is what I call The Pile-On. A common problem with online writing occurs in breaking news stories. In an effort to seem as current as possible, sites will often put the latest development in a story at the top no matter how incremental the development. Then, they'll pile the next development on the top and the next creating an ugly mish-mash of a story that makes sense only to someone who has been following the story closely all day. Unfortunately, the only people who are usually doing so are the journalists. Few readers visit a site more than once a day. Remember this when updating stories, and always keep the most important news in the lead.

viii) Short but Sweet

Most stories online are too long for a Web audience and I imagine few readers finish them. Roy Peter Clark has written a wonderful essay arguing that any story can be told in 800 words a good guideline for online writing. But let that be a guideline, not a rule. Readers will stick with longer stories online if there is a

compelling reason for a story to be that long and if it continues to captivate their attention. Making readers scroll to get to the rest of a story is generally preferable to making them click. Online news users do scroll. If someone has clicked to get to a page, it's generally because they want to read the story and thus chances are high that they will. The Poynter eyetrack study showed that about 75 percent of article text was read online far more than in print, where 20 to 25 percent of an article's text gets read, on average. Print readers have less vested in any given story, because they haven't done anything proactive to get the article.

ix) Break it up

Larger blocks of text make reading on screens difficult and you're more likely to lose readers. Using more subheads and bullets to separate text and ideas helps. Writing should be snappy and fast to read. Keep paragraphs and sentences short. Try reading sentences out loud to see if they're too long. You should be able to read an entire sentence without pausing for a breath. It also helps to extract information into charts, tables, bulleted lists and interactive graphics. Even a simple box with a definition or summary can help break up text and convey information in an easy-to-read format.

x) Eliminate the guesswork

People often don't know what they're going to get when they click on stuff. And people are not going to click on something unless they know what they're getting. When they click on something that's not worth it, they lose trust in you as a source and are less likely to come back and click on things in the future. So make sure you tell people what they are going to get. Studies show online news users preferred straightforward headlines to funny or cute ones. Cute headlines didn't do as good a job of quickly explaining what a story is about and thus discouraged online users from clicking through.

xi) Do not fear the link

Don't be afraid to link. Many sites have a paranoid fear that if they include links to other sites, readers will surf away and never return. Not true! People prefer to go to sites that do a good job of compiling click-worthy links witness Yahoo!'s success. If people know they can trust your site, they will come back for more. At the same time, journalists have a responsibility to apply news judgment and editorial standards to the links they choose. Avoid linking to sites with blatantly false information or offensive content. Select links that enhance the value of the story by helping readers get additional information from the people behind the news. And of course, link to related stories on your site, past and present. This is truly one of the advantages of the Web. By linking to other stories to provide context and background, writers have more freedom to focus on the news of the day without bogging stories down with old information.

xii) Take risks...but remember the basics

Online journalism is a new and evolving industry and we are writing the rules as we go along. Challenge yourself and your colleagues to question the way things are being done and to stretch the boundaries of what can be done. There are no rules, only ideas. Take risks. Try something different. But don't forget the fundamentals of journalism. Facts still have to be double and triple-checked; writing still needs to be sharp, lively and to the point; stories should include context; and ethical practices must be followed. Don't let the 24/7 speed trap and the new tools distract you from these basics. With so many alternative news sources now at everyone's fingertips thanks to the Web, it is now more important than ever that we stick to the fundamentals of journalism to produce news people can trust, because in the end that's what will keep people coming back for more.

7.3 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRINT AND ONLINE JOURNALISM

Kristi Carter summarizes the differences between print and online journalism as follows. It is important for journalists, reporters and article writers to understand the differences between print and online journalism. What works

well in print might not be so effective online, and what people want to see online might not be what they want to read in print. Opinion pieces, reviews, straight reporting and political analysis continue to be published in print, and also appear online. To produce an effective piece of journalism it is important to consider who will be reading the piece, where it is to be published and how people will find what they want to read.

7.3.1 Breaking news: One of the biggest and greatest differences between print and online journalism is that a news story appears in print when it is already old news. Newspapers generally print yesterday's news. Online news is reported almost as it happens. Members of social sites such as Twitter and Facebook often report breaking news and share links to pictures taken while events are still happening. Online journalists take advantage of this by writing up-to-date news on a blog or for a news site, based around what is being reported by eyewitnesses posting updates on their social pages. There would be less value in that same information by the time it appears in print.

7.3.2 World Wide Exposure: Anything posted online can be read around the world. In online journalism it is often necessary to include additional information as it cannot be assumed that everyone reading it will know where the city is located, or why the celebrity involved is famous. Online news stories need to be reported in good plain Standard English, avoiding the use of slang terms unless the meaning is clear. Direct quotes might need some explaining when cultural references will not be understood outside that locality. Journalism in a print publication is generally written for local people or for a national readership. Then is not always necessary to record all the minor details or to translate colloquial expressions.

7.3.3 Images, Video Audio Clips: Online journalism is not just concerned with words, there could also be some relevant images, or the story can be linked to a slide-show. Original video footage is highly valuable to online journalism. An audio clip can be used to feature an extract from a speech or a full interview.

When a topical news story or an unusual event is reported online, and is enhanced with exclusive images, video or audio, it is more likely to be shared and discussed on social sites and in online forums. Online journalism can potentially be viewed by far more people than traditional print journalism could possibly achieve.

7.3.4 Style and Presentation (links and keywords): When people are searching online for a particular news story, or wanting up-to-date information about a celebrity, they generally use search engines and social sites. Keywords in online journalism must match relevant search phrases so more people find and read the article. For search engine optimization several keywords need to be repeated in the text, and keywords should also be used in the title. Print journalism can go over several pages and be written in any style which readers will find familiar. Online journalism requires information to be presented concisely, under subheadings or in bullet points, so it is easy to read on a screen. Online readers will lose interest in lengthy pieces of prose. Internet users usually prefer instant facts, or amusing anecdotes, which they can then share with online friends and followers. As part of an online writing community it is important for a writer to know something about marketing online. Article writers need to know how to get noticed online, how to write articles that will gain more page views, from search engine traffic, and be sure that their articles get top ratings on writing websites. There are important differences between print publishing and online journalism, mainly because print publications and the Internet are two entirely different types of media. Knowledge of how best to write for each of these media can make a big difference to the success of a writer.

7.4 LET US SUM UP

Differences are not due to happenstance. Writing styles have evolved in newspapers, radio and television due to the unique nature of each medium and to the manner in which its audience consumes each medium. News in newspapers is written so that it may be edited from the bottom up. The radio newscast must be consumed sequentially; that is, the listener does not hear the second story in the newscast without hearing the first story. Television news style is much like radio

news style, for a viewer can no more return to a group of facts than a listener can. Write and edit with online readers' needs and habits in mind. Web usability studies show that readers tend to skim over sites rather than read them intently. They also tend to be more proactive than print readers or TV viewers, hunting for information rather than passively taking in what you present to them.

7.5 UNIT END EXERCISES

Listen to Doordarshan news and All India Radio news today in your language and compare the differences.

7.6 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Listen to English news in BBC, CNN and Doordarshan on a same day. Discuss the differences.

7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

1. Pyramid Style, Inverted Pyramid Style
2. 1930 to 1950
3. World Wide Web

7.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. R. Ramachandra Aiyer (1979), 'Quest for News', The Macmillan Company. Delhi.
2. V. Natarajan, K. Mani and H. S. A. Khan (1988), 'Outlines of Communication and Journalism', HMN Syndicate Service, Coimbatore.
3. Arul Aram and Nirmaldasan (2001), Understanding News Media, Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited, Chennai.
4. Gurusany, Ma. Pa. (2001), Ithaliyal Kalai (Tamil), GuruThemozhi, Dindigul
5. Shrivastava, K.M., (1987), News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

UNIT 4

LESSON 8

RESPONSIBILITY IN WRITING

INTRODUCTION

News writing is a painstaking and important job. While handling news there are greater possibilities of committing errors. Before a matter goes for printing or broadcasting, corrections should be carried out. In such a way the editor has more responsibility in checking the language. This chapter deals with the skill of language in writing and editing, Press and democracy, Contemporary debates and issues, Changing trends in journalism, Responsibility to society and Freedom of expression.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to learn

- Principles of clear writing
- Press and Democracy
- Contemporary debates and issues
- Changing trends in Journalism
- Responsibility to Society and Freedom of expression

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Principles of clear writing

8.1.1 Do s

8.1.2 Don't s

8.1.3 Elements of Good Writing

8.1.4 Ten-Point Check List

8.1.5 Story Organization

8.1.6 Avoid Logical Fallacies

8.1.7 Active Voice, Passive Voice

8.2 Press and Democracy

8.3 Changing Trends in Journalism

8.4 Contemporary Debates and Issues

8.4.1 Internet-Related Changes – Understanding Online Journalism

8.4.2 Multimedia Changes – Impact of Technology on Journalism

8.4.3 Journalist Changes – Journalism in Digital Age

8.5 Responsibility to Society and Freedom of Expression

8.6 Let us sum up

8.7 Unit End Exercises

8.8 Points for Discussion

8.9 Answers to check your progress

8.10 Suggested Readings

8.1 PRINCIPLES OF CLEAR WRITING

8.1.1 Do s:

- a. Condense story into one or two words. Put those words as close to the beginning of the first sentence as possible without destroying the flow of the lead sentence.
- b. Keep leads short. 20 to 30 words for the first sentence. Or fewer.
- c. The news lead should tell the reader what the story is about and be interesting enough to draw the reader into the rest of the story. Remember that the readers won't know what the story is about until you tell them.
- d. Find the action in the story. Put the action in the lead.
- e. Always double-check names and numbers. Check spelling, style and grammar. Put everything in order.
- f. Attribute opinions. Stick with the facts.
- g. Details, description. Report first, then write. Learn all, tell 10 percent.

- h. Decide which of the news values best applies to the lead of the story. Write a lead that emphasizes that news value.
- i. Write in the active voice.
- j. Don't lead with a name, time or place unless that is the most interesting/important thing in the story.

8.1.2 Don't s:

- a. Don't make the lead too complicated. Don't load it down with too many names, figures or details. Keep the lead sentence short never more than 35 words.
- b. Don't begin with the time, day or date or place. Better to focus on the action, who or what.
- c. Don't begin with an empty, say-nothing expression or a generality that fails to distinguish this news from other news: *There were... In a report released today... According to...*
- d. Don't begin with a question if the question is answered in the story. Question leads are cliché leads.
- e. Don't begin with a direct quote if it is a full sentence. Don't start with a quote unless it is an exceptional quote.
- f. Don't use a form of the verb *to be* in the lead, if you can avoid it. Use an action verb.
- g. Don't overstate the news in the lead, making it more dramatic than it really is. Watch "disaster" words.

8.1.3 Elements of Good Writing:

- a. **Precision.** Use the right word. Say exactly what you mean. Be specific. Avoid sexism in your writing. Use generic terms: firefighters instead of firemen, letter carriers instead of mailmen.

- b. **Clarity.** Use simple sentences. Use noun and verb at the right place. Think clearly and then write. Watch grammar and punctuation.
- c. **Pacing.** Movement of sentences creates a tone, mood for the story. Long sentences convey relaxed, slow mood. Short declarative sentences convey action, tension, movement. Use variety of sentence lengths. Use shorter sentences when writing about the more active, tense part of the story.
- d. **Transitions.** Progress logically from point to point. Put everything in order.
- e. **Sensory appeal.** Appeal to one or more of our five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. What does it sound like? Was the room too hot? Could you smell the cooking outside on the walkway? Did the person speak slowly and carefully or rapidly, with confidence?
- f. **Using analogies.** Describe it as being “like” or “as” something that is familiar to readers.

8.1.4 Ten-point check list

1. Accuracy
2. Brevity
3. Clarity
4. Be specific
5. Get to the point
6. Put things in order
7. Get quotes right
8. Write smooth/active voice
9. Grammar/spelling/AP style
10. Five Ws/answer all the questions

8.1.5 Story Organization

What do I want to say? Where do I put it?

1. The lead.
2. Material that explains and amplifies the lead.
3. Necessary background material.
4. Secondary or less important material.
5. Descending pyramids. Narrative.
6. Transitions.
7. Quotes.
8. Ending.

Form versus content. Form becomes part of content. Without form, content can be lost. Know what you want to say. Then say it. Don't begin by saying something else which you think will lead up to what you want to say. (The city council met last night) Never start writing without a plan in mind. Even long, complicated stories can be stated in a sentence or two.

8.1.6 Avoid Logical Fallacies:

i) Hasty generalization: A conclusion based on insufficient or unrepresentative evidence. Deaths from drug overdoses in Fremont have doubled in the past three years. Therefore, more Americans than ever are dying from drug abuse. Many hasty generalizations contain words like all, every, always and never, when qualifiers such as most, many, usually and seldom would be more accurate. Either have enough data to verify your statements or use qualifiers.

ii) Non Sequitur (Latin for "does not follow"): A conclusion that does not follow logically from preceding statements or that is based on irrelevant data.

Mary loves food; therefore she will be an excellent chef.

Mary's love of food is no guarantee she will be able to cook.

iii) False Analogy: Falsely assumes that because two things are alike in one respect, they must be alike in others.

If we can put a man on the moon, we should be able to find a cure for the common cold. Both are scientific challenges, but quite different.

iv) Either... Or Fallacy: The suggestion that only two alternatives exist when in fact there are more.

Either the 49ers find a new running back or they will never make it to the Super Bowl..

Actually, the team could make it to the Super Bowl without a new running back.

v) Faulty Cause-And-Effect Reasoning: Assuming that because one event follows another, the first is the cause of the second. Like a non sequitur, it is a leap to an unjustified conclusion.

Since Gov. Smith took office, unemployment in the state has decreased by 7 percent. Gov. Smith should be applauded for reducing unemployment.

We must show Gov. Smith's policies caused the decrease.

vi) Circular Reasoning: Instead of supporting the conclusion with evidence, the writer simply restates the conclusion in different language.

Faculty and Administrators should not be permitted to come to student council meetings because student council meetings should be for students only. The writer has not explained the position, but has merely repeated the point.

8.1.7 Active Voice, Passive Voice:

Voice is that inflection of a verb that shows whether its subject is the doer of the action indicated or is acted upon. If the subject performs the action, the verb is in the active voice. If the subject is acted upon, the verb is in the passive voice. Active voice is dynamic. Passive voice is static. Active voice is vigorous and emphasizes the actor. Passive voice is evasive about naming the actor. News writing should almost always be in the active voice because news is about action

Check Your Progress

1. How the lead should be?

2. In which voice format the news should be written?

and actors. To test for the active voice, find the subject and verb in the sentence. Put the subject before the verb so that the subject takes action: *Jill hit the ball*, not: *The ball was hit by Jill*.

8.2 PRESS AND DEMOCRACY

Actually, it is worse than worthless; a false news story undercuts the public trust necessary for the survival of a free press. Keep in mind that the First Amendment specifically protects the press from Government control so that the public can receive accurate and unbiased information. The first and most important is accuracy a story can be creative and compelling, but if it contains errors, it is worthless. The public needs unbiased information to make intelligent choices in the voting booth. This is critical to the process of democracy in our country. If the public loses faith in the accuracy and fairness of the press, loss of faith in democracy will soon follow. Always check numbers, spellings of names, who said what, and the other basic facts of any story. A reporter's job is to find out what is going on and then write a story that's interesting and informative. Accuracy always comes first. Second is brevity. Each word in your story should do a job. If not, take it out. Get to the point. Say it just once. Remember the inverted pyramid style of writing. Put the most important fact in the lead. Hook the reader's attention. Explain the lead and then go on to the next most important fact in the second inverted pyramid. Lead up to an interesting finish. Don't just stop writing when you run out of information (ohlone.edu).

8.3 CHANGING TRENDS IN JOURNALISM

www.poynter.org gives the following as the recent changes in journalism. How often do you read a paper and think: 'This is not what I want to read' or switch channels because the news being telecast is not really news? There can be several reasons for this, but the most important one is that Indian media and journalism is in a state of flux and is slowly evolving to include a variety of media for dissemination of news. The Indian media like most other sectors is experiencing a boom. Foreign companies are looking to enter the market and

existing media companies are constantly evolving. So where is journalism headed? There was a time when journalism was a hallowed profession and the journalist was credible. However, now, thanks to the internet, the newspaper is not the only source of information and news. So with an increase in the number of media for distribution, the competition is tough and everyone is in the race for getting an exclusive. As a result, at times they forget the need to just present news. This in turn has led to the evolution of 'Citizen Journalism' a term used frequently these days. This allows viewers/readers to report news. It may be amateurish and lack the finesse of the professional, but at least it is authentic. Citizen journalists can be paid or unpaid. In fact this model is very popular among websites as is the case with portals such as www.ohmynews.com and www.merinews.com.

Another method that is becoming increasingly popular is blogging. What began as means to keeping an online diary is now also being used to give out credible and current information. The flipside though is that the information thus provided can veer one way. Besides, there is no way to guarantee the veracity of the information. The Indian blogging sphere is still in its nascent stage, but it holds immense promise as an alternate thread of news dissemination. The reason why such alternate channels flourish is because there has been a decisive shift in the way news is delivered today. It has been condensed into little "byte" sized portions which can be easily chewed and digested. Newspapers also do not stress on large features or investigative pieces. News here too is carried in snippets usually accompanied with large pictures.

Channels and newspapers are slowly but surely moving towards "Packaging Information" some bits that inform while others that entertain the reader. There is no "news" anymore or rather just about anything is news these days. Take the instance of the famous Bollywood actress Aishwarya Rai's marriage. The flurry of activity that followed the speculation on whether or not Ms. Rai will change her name after marriage was unbelievable. To some it may not be news, however television channels carried 30 minute slots on this very subject. A real event, stories about everyday heroes and news that effects the

common man is often relegated to the lower ranks. Is this truly because we the viewers actually don't want this information or is it dictated by what the advertisers and networks want? However, one way or another, sensationalism is here to stay. As a result of this, investigative journalism has also taken on the ominous tone of sting operations. So much so, that the judicial machinery and ministries have had to come out with a set of regulations for this kind of investigative reporting.

News broadcasts will now be given a rating which also points to the kind of news that is being shown. And in this age of sensationalism very little grassroots work it to our front pages. Frontline and, to an extent, Tehelka seem to be the only mainstream publications that carry such information. Today there are over 30 news channels local and national put together and there is not that much happening to fill these channels round-the-clock for 24 hours. Hence each channel tries to do something different, something radical so that you it does not lose eyeballs. Journalists tend to get overly familiar with the people they are interviewing at times this makes it difficult to maintain objectivity. In a recent interview of Richard Branson, Shireen Bhan was dumped in the pool. While some look at this as frivolity, it takes away any credibility of the interview. Media, like other knowledge-driven industries, is also seeing an influx of foreign capital. But this is also the industry that is called conscience keeper of society. So, these investments need to done with care. There can be several instances where conflicts arise.

Indian journalists will have to move towards a more quality driven approach. Another sign of the changing times is the fact that a good journalist will be one no matter what the medium. The days of popular print journalists or a popular face on television are not gone but we are seeing a new definition emerge. Platforms and technologies will merge and good journalists will be able to deliver, irrespective of the medium.

8.4 CONTEMPORARY DEBATES AND ISSUES

Janaki Ghatpande gives the following as contemporary debates and issues in journalism. Journalism is an ever-changing profession. As the world changes and the way of thinking changes, journalists must adapt to those changes both in the way their stories are reported and the way they find those stories. Below are some of the current journalism trends based on those same changes with the world.

8.4.1 Internet-Related Changes – Understanding Online Journalism:

While journalists have long been the conveyors of the news, they now find themselves in competition with regular, average, everyday Joes and Janes. These are the bloggers of the world and it's surprising how quickly these bloggers can get their information and have it published on the Internet. The advantage they have over journalists is that they have no publication times – they simply hit a button and the news is out there for the world to read. Massive blogs like Tech Crunch have gained a huge readership and many of these blogs bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in advertising revenue.

8.4.2 Multimedia Changes – Impact of Technology on Journalism:

While today's generation would find it difficult to believe, once upon a time the only news came from newspapers or word of mouth. Today, the public wants and demands multimedia options from streaming video online to downloadable apps where they can receive the news via their cell phones. They want the option of reading the news online, picking up a newspaper, watching television or even checking the news out on their iPhone and journalists must give them those options or lose the readers. Therefore, journalists are working harder than ever some of them creating website content and reporting the news while checking facts and interviewing sources.

8.4.3 Journalist Changes – Journalism in Digital Age:

While it's difficult to see a future that replaces schooled and trained journalists altogether, there are some changes in journalists. In an era where the public seems to identify more with ordinary people, individuals who have no journalistic training at all have taken on the role. These individuals may have training in the topic they end up reporting on, though. For instance, Nancy Grace, law school graduate, now has her own show where she focuses mainly on homicides and missing children. As an advocate for children's rights and a victim of a terrible crime as well, Nancy is hard on the people she interviews. This is one of the reasons she is so popular with the public – she takes the victims' sides and gives no slack to persons of interest or individuals who may be holding back information. This kind of change in journalism is seen with sports figures and celebrities as well. Although these are the trends as of now, journalism is sure to continue changing over the years as people advance and technology advances as well.

Check Your Progress

3. What is Citizen Journalism?

4. 'Everyone has the right of freedom of opinion and expression'. It mentioned in which article?

8.5 RESPONSIBILITY TO SOCIETY

The press informs, educates and entertains the public. It molds their opinion by informing, crusading, watch-dogging, campaigning, safe-guarding: in short by being a backbone of democracy. In order that everything should take place smoothly. Information must flow freely without any restriction. Free society encourages rise in professional standards and technical efficiency. In democracy unless the people are well informed through free press and are free to participate in public issues government will not function properly. Freedom of the press means, "Freedom to seek, impart information and ideas through any media". It means the right to collect, print, publish without any interference from the state or authority.

The first Amendment to the American Constitution provides for an explicit assurance on the freedom of the press. It reads 'Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech...or press'. Art 19 of the UN declaration of

Human Rights 1948 reads, 'Everyone has the right of freedom of opinion and expression'. Art 19 (1) (a) of Indian Constitutions states "All citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression". Even though freedom of the press is not included explicitly, the Supreme Court observed in Bennet Coleman and Co (vs) Union of India case that ".....freedom of speech and expression includes freedom of the press and circulation". But it is not an absolute freedom. The press does not enjoy any special legal freedom other than those enjoyed by an ordinary citizen. It is meant that the concept of freedom of the press must go together with a sense of responsibility. Freedom of the press is subject to the Art 19 (2) of the Indian Constitution called 'reasonable restrictions'. Public interest is safeguarded by Article 19(2) which lays down reasonable limitations to the freedom of expression in matters affecting.

- (a) sovereignty and integrity of the State
- (b) security of the state
- (c) friendly relations with foreign countries
- (d) public order
- (e) decency or morality
- (f) contempt of court
- (g) defamation and
- (h) incitement to an offence

The restrictions are not defined but the reasonableness should not be arbitrary.

8.6 LET US SUM UP

Check for Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity, Be specific, Get to the point, Put things in order, Get quotes right, Write smooth/active voice, Grammar/spelling/AP style, Five Ws / answer all the questions.

The first and most important is accuracy a story can be creative and compelling, but if it contains errors, it is worthless. The press informs, educates and entertains the public. It molds their opinion by informing, crusading, watchdogging, campaigning, safeguarding: in short by being a backbone of democracy. Art 19 (1) (a) of Indian Constitution states "All citizens shall have the right to

freedom of speech and expression". Even though freedom of the press is not included explicitly, the Supreme Court observed in Bennet Coleman and Co vs. Union of India case that".....freedom of speech and expression includes freedom of the press and circulation".

8.7 UNIT END EXERCISES

Write a feature for a news paper, radio, television and online journal and find out the differences and difficulties.

8.8 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Listen to same news in radio and television. Read the same in online newspaper and a printed news paper. Find out the differences in language.

8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Short.
2. Active Voice.
3. Reader or viewer reports news.
4. 19 (1) (a).

8.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. R. Ramachandra Aiyer (1979), 'Quest for News', The Macmillan Company. Delhi.
2. V. Natarajan, K. Mani and H. S. A. Khan (1988), 'Outlines of Communication and Journalism', HMN Syndicate Service, Coimbatore.
3. Arul Aram and Nirmaldasan (2001), Understanding News Media, Vijay Nicole Imprints Private Limited, Chennai.
4. Gurusamy, Ma. Pa. (2001), Ithaliyal Kalai (Tamil), GuruThemozhi, Dindigul
5. Shrivastava, K.M., (1987), News Reporting and Editing, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

UNIT 5

LESSON 9

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

What is communication? We use the word all the time, but what does it mean? You have heard people say, "We get along because we are able to communicate", or "That Professor talk a lot, but he does not seem to communicate", or our remark about a preacher, "What we have heard is a failure of communication". So the word communication is a common word. But what does it mean? There is no single definition about communication has ever been coined completely with the all the facets of communication. Many people see communication as sharing, caring, treating people with personal worth, and encouraging individual growth. If you lack at the word communication, what word do you almost see in the first six letters? The word is Common. The word communication is related to other words with the same root: Community, Communist and Communion-all of which refer to people holding something in common.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you to understand

- The Definitions of Communication
- The History and Background of Communication
- The Different Types of Communication
- The Different Forms of Communication

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Definitions of Communication

9.2 History and Background

9.2.1 Communication by Drums

9.2.2 Heraldry

9.2.3 Runes

9.2.4 The Semaphore

9.2.5 Smoke Signals

9.2.6 Sign Language

9.2.7 Language

9.3 Intra personal communication

9.4 Interpersonal communication

9.5 Group communication

9.6 Mass Communication

9.7 Forms of communication

9.7.1 Oral communication

9.7.2 Written and printed

9.7.3 Non-verbal communication

9.7.4 Graphical and Numerical Communication

9.7.5 New Technologies

9.7.6 Folk Media

9.8 Let us sum up

9.11 Unit end exercises

9.12 Points for discussion

9.13 Answers to check your progress

9.15 Suggested Readings

9.1 DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNICATION

The word communication is derived from the Latin word Communis which means common. To communicate is to make common, to share, and to transmit. When we communicate we are trying to establish 'commonness' with someone. That is we are trying to establish 'commonness' with someone. That is we are trying to share information, an idea or an attitude. In a broad sense, communication of some kind or the other takes place in all form of life. For example, in plants, the roots communicates sap to the trunk, branches and leaves; Bees do a kind of dance and the other bees find out where the food supply is;

some ants can organize themselves into an army quickly by communicating through touch; animals communicate through sound and gestures; human beings communicate verbally through sound (spoken word) and visuals (written word) and non-verbally through gestures. In the strict sense communication is a human activity, for only human beings can think, imagine, plan and recall information stored in the memory. Since communication is a human activity not in isolation but in relation to other people it is by its very nature is social.

“Communication is the name we give to the countless ways that human beings have of keeping in touch – not just words and music, pictures and print, nods and pecks, postures and plumage to every move that catches someone’s eye and every sound that resonates upon another’s ear” – Ashley Montague and Floyd Matson Communication is a concept whose scope of application is rather flexible. In the most general sense, communication occurs when some kind of energy is transferred from one place to another, for example when a disturbance occurring on one side of a pond is “communicated” to the other side by a series of waves.

Terry A. Weldon and H.W. Ellingworth, *Effective Speech – Communication Theory in Action* (Chicago) Scott, Foresman, 1970). Communication is a process that links discontinuous parts of the living world to one another. Jurgen Ruesch, “Technology and Social Communication”. In *Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Lee Thayer (Spring field, III, Charlkes C. Thomas, 1957). In its broadest perspective, communication occurs whenever an individual assigns significance or meaning to an internal or external stimulus. Lee O. Thayer, *Administrative Communication* (Homewood, II; Richard D. Irwin, 1961. Communication means that information is passed from one place to another. George A. Miller, *Language and Communication* (New York: McGraw – Hill, 1951. Every communication act is viewed as a transmission of information consisting of discriminative stimuli, from a source to a recipient. Theodore M. Newcomb, “An approach to the study of Communicative Acts”, in *Communication and Culture*, ed. Alfred G. Smith (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1966).

Check Your Progress

1. The word communication is derived from which Latin word which means common?
2. How the linking process of discontinuous parts of the living world to one another is called?
3. How every communication act is viewed?

9.2 HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

9.2.1 Communication by Drums:

Drums were used for communication in central Africa. Many languages of the Bantu family of languages, spoken there, have drum equivalents. It works just about like the morse code, except that the morse code uses letters as units and the drum communication uses words. Intonation is very important in the Bantu languages. A word can have completely different meanings on the intonation. That intonation relies on high/low tones. These tones can easily be duplicated by the drums. Of course, there are words that have the same amount of syllables and have the same intonation. How do they handle this problem/ The Africans just tell something more about the word, so the receiver can derive the meaning of the word from the context it is used in. You can imagine that a message sent using drums could get quite long.

9.2.2 Heraldry:

Heraldry is the study of symbols used to represent individuals, families, countries and such institutions as churches and universities. The basic heraldry symbol is the coat of arms. Coats of arms were originally used on the shields of knights. Heraldry is related to systems of symbolism, such as seals and flags. It also is connected with genealogy, the study of family history. The rulers of countries in ancient times used special messengers called heralds to deliver messages and orders around the kingdom. In the Middle Ages, heralds became personal assistants for the king and the position carried many privileges. It was a crime to interfere with the work of these men.

9.2.3 Runes:

Runes are ancient characters used Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon, and Scandinavian inscriptions, probably first used by the early German group called Ostrogoths. They may have gotten them from Hellenic-Italian writing. Adapted to carving, they consisted of perpendicular, oblique and a few curved lines. They

were used extensively in Northern Europe, Iceland, and the British Isles before Christianity. Runes were used consistently in Scandinavia and well into the Middle Ages. There were no limits to the format that the runes were craved in. The runes could be written (a blade or axe head was used in the early days) in all kinds of directions and used almost any kind of common material such as rocks, wood or large stones to make beautiful decorations or as a hidden, magic formulas. When runes were carved in stone, carving many points close to each other created the runes, until the rune master had a complete line.

9.2.4 The Semaphore:

Semaphore is a communication method in which a person signals with two hand flags, moving his arms through various positions to represent letters, numerals, and special signs. Semaphore and flashing light can be used interchangeable for many purposes, but semaphore is more rapid for short-distance transmission in clear daylight and may be used to send messages to several addressees at once if they are in suitable positions. Because of its speed, semaphore is better adapted to the sending of long messages than other visual methods. Both the ancient Greeks and the Roman are known to have signaled over short distances with torches and flags.

9.2.5 Smoke Signals:

Smoke signals weren't used as much by the Indians as people think. Some Indians used smoke signals, especially in the plains or in the southwest, where the sky is usually clear and the smoke signals can be viewed from far. They were very basic, though one short puff indicated the presence of an enemy group. If the signals were quickly repeated, it was a sign that the enemy was numerous and well armed. A continuous, steady smoke signaled the Indians to rendezvous at a certain point.

9.2.6 Sign Language:

Sign language can be manual, that is, each hand symbol means one letter. Another type of sign language is the use of hand or arm movements to mean entire words. These are two types of communication for the deaf. Other examples are hearing aids, TDD (telecommunication device that can be used to type things over the phone) and even special closed caption for the television. Closed caption is a person who signs on television and this captioning can be turned on and off. Programs that offer closed captioning will advertise it when the program comes on.

9.2.7 Language:

Sensory communication alone was not enough for man to survive. Hence the evolution of symbolic communication called language – from non-verbal gestures, grunts and grimaces to the verbal and then to the written and printed word. Language is inseparable from culture which is its very source of nourishment; language embodies and expresses a community's culture. The 'arts' have grown out of this same fundamental desire and need to express oneself and to reach out to others. Cro-Magnon men and women adorned their caves with paintings of animals and hunters; the modern artist shows a preference for the abstract and 'pop', for the electronic and computer arts, for 'virtual reality'. But the human need to communicate has remained the same; only the forms and languages have changed.

9.3 INTRA PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

We can divide our experiences of communication into four categories. They are a useful way of trying to define our field of study, like the terms 'Form' and 'Media'. Some forms or media belong more to one category than another.

This is communication within and to the self. Intra means within or inside. When we think, we are communicating within ourselves. We could be reflecting on a passage read in the scripture, or working out a problem in our head. We also

talk to ourselves and write diaries for ourselves. In intra-personal communication, sensory channels of perception are eliminated. Transcendental Meditation provides a methodology for this type of communication. Here the mind alone is active. Between consciousness and unconscious state, the mind is always in communication with itself.

Communication is a ceaseless function of the mind in its state of consciousness. Thinking is self communication. The stimuli may be the ideas and concepts accumulated through experiences of the objective world and concepts accumulated through experiences of the objective world and the inventive logic of the 'inner world'. From the logical point of view, for instance, "within this mental environment, the 'self' interacts with itself, experiences the non-material presence of the 'supreme self' and receives revelations". Values, beliefs and faiths are realities constructed from communications with 'self'. We come across such terms as 'introspection', 'examination of conscience'. These are ways of looking inwards into the 'self' and communicating with it.

9.4 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication is communication between people. If communication takes place between human beings, then the interaction level is interpersonal. Inter means between. Interpersonal communication is person-to-person communication; two people are involved in the process. Person-to-person communication does not mean that one person send only messages and another person only receives messages. We are 'transceivers'. Each person involved in an interpersonal communication situation is both a transmitter and a receiver of messages. In interpersonal communication, when there are two people communicating, there are two transmitters of messages and two receivers of messages. One person is the actor and the other the reactor; the two are interacting. Interpersonal communication can be formal or informal. It is a form of communication we engage in most. This form of communication seems most effective in influencing opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values. This form of communication can be face-to-face. Here the sender and the receiver are present in

person. The sender can see the reactions of the receiver and this helps the sender to adjust his communication. It can be also indirect. Here face-to-face communication is not possible. The sender sends the message to the receiver through a medium e.g. a telephone or a letter. That is what interpersonal communication is all about.

9.5 GROUP COMMUNICATION

It is communication with groups of people and by groups of people to others. Group communication is interpersonal communication by genre, but differs from it in form. In the context of social interaction, a group is a form of social organization composed of a number of persons identifiable by their physical proximity within recognizable “boundaries”. They interact ‘face to face’. The group may be homogenous or heterogeneous depending upon their social context. Group communication takes place at formal and informal levels and the structure of organization of the group may differ from situation to situation as for instance, in the context of the primary group (a family or friend’s circle); or the formal work organization (industry or business enterprise or government bodies); or the association based on locality, class or interest (tenants’ association, recreation club or chamber of commerce); or an institutional activity such as politics or religion (party organization or church activities). For the purpose of definition we need to distinguish groups from an ordinary collection of people. Groups are composed of people in interaction with each other, people sharing common goals and sharing a system of norms.

What is group?

It is a collection of people who have some shared interest or aim. Each belongs to many different groups, such as:

Family groups

Friendship groups

Work/organization groups

Groups depend on relationships,

Have common interests,

Expect norms of behaviour

Develop set roles for members.

Why do people join groups?

There are two main reasons for forming groups:

- a) to achieve a set goal
- b) to develop social contact and personal identity

How do people behave in groups?

- a) Each of us plays different roles according to group expectations and our individual personality. Roles are influenced by professions, age, gender, class and status.
- b) We follow group-imposed norms of behaviour
- c) We adopt different styles for achieving our aims

Communication in groups,

- a) Participation and interaction patterns
- b) Observing group communication for achieving the task of the group and for maintaining the group relationships.
- c) Individual functions in achieving group purposes
- d) Understanding ourselves and our relationships with others in the groups we belong to.

9.6 MASS COMMUNICATION

It is communication received by or used by large modern mass media like television, radio, the cinema and the printed media, but these media are processes and must not be mistaken for the phenomenon of communication itself. Indeed, the term 'mass communication' ought to refer to the totality of communication which has within its compass not only the electronic media, but also the spoken word, song, drama, dance, painting, sculpture and architecture. Traditional community media like theatre are organs of the mass media in a developing country. The term 'mass' in mass communication has kept stretching its meaning to include ever greater numbers, with the development of every new technological

tool for communication. It has thus become an elastic term referring to no fixed number of a country's or the world's population.

Mass communication may be defined as a process of human communication in which a mass medium is used to communicate a to a mass audience. Mass communication refers to a process, while mass media refers to technical instruments such as the press, radio, cinema and television. The use of mass media does not by itself constitute mass communication. For example, a nationwide telecast is mass communication but a closed circuit telecast is not mass communication. So also a film projected in a movie house is mass communication, but when the same film is projected in the home for a few people, it is not mass communication. Though in both cases a mass medium is used, there is not a mass audience but you cannot have mass communication without a mass medium and a mass audience.

Check Your Progress

4. How the Communication between you and your 'self' is called?

5. How the Communication between two persons is called?

6. How the Communication with uncountable number of people is called?

9.7 FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

9.7.1 Oral communication:

Human communication includes both oral and written or verbal and non verbal or speech and non speech communication. Oral communication involves the transmission and reception of three component messages. These messages have a verbal, vocal and visible element. Oral communication involves both verbal and nonverbal elements. Oral communication includes individual presentation; types of discussion like debate; recognition of para- linguistic features such as tone, intonation, accent, stress etc.

9.7.2 Written and Printed:

Forms are distinct and separate from one another as far as they have their own system for putting the message across. So, writing uses words, which are marks on paper made according to certain rules (grammar). A book uses forms of communication such as words, pictures and drawings. His includes texts in a wide variety of styles and registers.

9.7.3 Non-Verbal Communication:

Non-verbal communication is the transfer of meaning involving absence of symbolic sound or sound representations. Popularly it is called the 'silent language'. Non-verbal communication can be classified as follows:

- i. **Body Language or Kinesics Behavior:** It includes gestures and other body movements including facial expression, eye movements and posture.
- ii. **Paralanguage:** The extra effort we put into our speaking with our tone of voice, rate includes voice qualities, speech, non-influences, and softness, laughing, yawning, and grunting.
- iii. **Proxemics:** The human use of perception of the physical space. The amount of distance we want to have between ourselves and others is referred to as 'Proxemics'.
- iv. **Olfaction – Smell**
- v. **Haptics** - Skin sensitivity – to touch or temperature
- vi. **Use of Artifacts** – object language. This category includes such things as dress, cosmetics, the car we drive.

Non-verbal communication is culture bound. That is to say, it is not instinctive human nature. Rather non-verbal communication is learned behavior, acquired through the process of informal socialization. Consequently it is marked by different behavior from culture to culture.

9.7.4 GRAPHICAL AND NUMERICAL COMMUNICATION:

This includes graphics in their pictorial and symbolic modes; analysis of ways (including conventions) by which images are constructed, as well as sequence of images (visual narrative). The presentation and interpretation of data is numerical form (e.g. statistical information).

Check Your Progress

7. Which communication messages have a verbal, vocal and visible element?

8. What is the extra effort we put into our speaking with our tone of voice?

9. How the human use of perception of the physical space is called?

9.7.5 NEW TECHNOLOGIES

This includes appreciation of the uses and effects of communication technologies; informational technology; the personal and social implications of new technologies e.g. video, satellite technology, computer.

9.7.6 FOLK MEDIA

It includes puppetry, drama, song, story-telling and symbolism. This is also known as traditional media.

9.8 LET US SUM UP

The word communication is derived from the Latin word *Communis* which means common. Communication is a process that links discontinuous parts of the living world to one another. Drums were used for communication in central Africa. Heraldry, Runes, semaphores, smoke signals and signs were used as modes of communication in ancient days. Intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication and mass communication are the different types of communication. Oral communication, written and printed communication, non-verbal communication, Body language, paralanguage, proxemics, olfaction, skin sensitivity, use of artifacts, signs, symbols and colours are the different forms of communication.

9.9 UNIT END EXERCISES

Form a group with five members. Each one has to communicate through signs and symbols. The remaining four has to find out the message. Analyze how successfully the message is communicated through non verbal communication. Find out the difficulties. List them and find the answers.

9.10 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

List ten symbols. Observe how your class mates understand them. List the meanings assigned by them to the symbols. Discuss the reasons among yourself.

9.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Communes
2. Communication Process
3. Transmission of Information
4. Intra
5. Inter
6. Group
7. Oral
8. Paralanguage
9. Proxemics

9.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. John Fiske (1982), Introduction to Communication studies, Methuen, London.
2. Keval. J Kumar (2001), Mass Communication in India, Jaico, New Delhi.
3. Denis McQuail (1994), Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction, Sage, London.
4. Ashley Montagu and Floyd Matson (1979), The Human Connection, McGraw-Hill.

UNIT 5

LESSON 10

COMMUNICATION AS A PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process by which an individual (the communicator) “transmits” stimuli (usually verbal symbols) to modify the behavior of other individuals (communicates). How does the communication process work? To answer this question, one must analyse the variable factors that influence or inhibit each element. This lesson will teach you communication as a process and the barriers encountered in the process of communication.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

This section will help you to know

- To know about Communication is a Process
- To learn about the Components of Communication
- To know about Barriers of Communication
- To learn about the Future of Communication

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Communication as a process

10.1.1 Senders and Receivers

10.1.2 Field of Experience

10.1.3 Message

10.1.4 Channels

10.1.5 Noise

10.1.6 Feedback

10.1.7 Effects

10.2 Barriers of communication

10.2.1 Physical Barriers

10.2.2 Psychological Barriers

10.2.3 Self Image

10.2.4 Resistance to Change

10.2.5 Defensiveness and Fear

10.2.6 Linguistic and Cultural Barriers

10.2.7 Language and Meaning

10.2.8 Mechanical Barriers

10.3 Mass communication today and tomorrow

10.4 Let us sum up

10.5 Unit end exercises

10.6 Points for discussion

10.7 Answers to check your progress

10.8 Suggested reading

10.1 COMMUNICATION AS A PROCESS

When we are in a conversation, there is a continuous exchange going on. Ideas or facts or opinions are being turned into words and shifted from one person to the other through speech. Later on we will also look at how, in another part of the process, non-verbal communication is also conveying messages. So when we talk about the communication process, we are talking about this active flow, Communication is a process. And what we want to do is to explain what's happening, why and how we want to know what is going on in the process, so that may-be-we can improve our handling of it. Through knowledge comes understanding and the possibility of change. So the reason why we look at the communication process from various angles is that we will become better communicators. We use communication terms to describe various aspects of the process breaking it down into stages and parts. We use terms to identify factors which may affect how communication is carried on. We interpret the evidence thus produced and try to make sense of it. Interpretation is not only about making deductions, but also saying why these deductions are significant.

For example, if we see context as a factor in the process, then what is important is to say why it matters in the example that we are looking at. Theory

needs to be applied. One of the earliest and still the most useful attempts to describe the communication process in separate parts was made by Harold Lass Well in 1948. He said the process of communication could be described in these terms.

Who

Says what

In which channel

To whom

And with what effect

This is the same as saying that every example of a communication process can be broken down into the following term:

A sender

Directs the message

Through some form/medium

To a receiver

With some effect

To these five points, at least two more ideas that we have already suggested could be added.

One is the idea of context. Because, every act of communication must happen in some sort of surroundings. This might be the physical context. It makes a difference as to whether we are talking with a group of friends in a tea shop or with a group of mourners at a funeral.

Another is a double headed one: the related ideas of purpose and need: This answers the basic question, why does the communication takes place/ Everyone has a need that cause them to communicate, and everyone has a purpose

in communicating. So, communication is a process, and the process can be broken down into parts which help explain what is happening, how and why.

10.1.1 Senders and Receivers:

Communication involves people who send and receive messages, sometimes simultaneously. This means that the role of sender or receiver is not restricted to any one party to the communication process, instead they play both the roles. It is good. Otherwise we will be sending messages unceasingly, never bother to know whether the message was being received as we intended it to be, or we will only be receiving, whether it was for our better interest or how to respond. To be effective, it should be both the ways.

10.1.2 Field of experience:

Each of us carries our field of experience with us wherever we go. Communication depends on placed meaning. When our field of experience diverge, it becomes harder to share meanings. When they coverage the sharing of meaning becomes easier.

10.1.3 Message:

The message is the content of a communicative act. People communicate a wide variety of messages. Some are private (eg. I love you) while others are directed at millions (eg. A net work tv) while others are accidental (eg: I didn't realize you were watching me) But as long as some one is there to interpret the result of the senders' efforts, a message is being sent.

10.1.4 Channels:

We send our messages to receivers through a variety of sensory channels. We may use sound, sight, smell, taste, touch or any combination of these to carry a message. Some channels are more effective than others (hearing/seeing) we have channel preferences.

Check Your Progress

1. How can we send our messages to receivers through a variety of sensory?
2. What is anything that interferes with the ability to send or to receive messages?
3. What is the return of information to the sender of a message?

10.1.5 Noise:

Noise is anything that interferes with the ability to send or to receive messages. Noise could be sound, physical discomfort (headache), psychological makeup (poor self concept or inflated ego or defensiveness). Semantic misunderstandings, a broken machine or environment. Noise can function as a common barrier. As noise increases, the chances for effective communication usually decrease.

10.1.6 Feedback:

Feedback is the return of information to the sender of a message, enabling him to determine whether the message was received correctly and was understood.

Four ways of looking at feedback:

- (i) It can be positive or negative: Positive enhances or reinforces behaviour, negative terminates
- (ii) Internal or external: Subjective perception of the effectiveness of message sent or responses received from others.
- (iii) Immediate or delayed
- (iv) Free or limited

10.1.7 Effects: Communication has an outcome, though not immediately observed.

10.2 BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION

‘Barriers’ are any difficulties that come in the way of communication. They may be physical, mechanical, psychological, cultural or linguistic in nature. In business communication, for instance, the major obstacles arise because of the set-up of an organization-the organizational barriers. The size of an organization, the physical distance between employees of an organization, the specialization of jobs and activities, and the power and status relationships, are the main organizational barriers. Besides, there are the barriers, raised by interpersonal

relationships between individual and groups, the prejudice of both individuals and groups, and the channels they use to communicate. In the 'jargon' of communication, all barriers whatever their nature are clubbed under a common label-'noise'. A term from modern physics, it denotes not only atmospheric or channel disturbance, but all barriers that distort communications in any manner. Is there such a thing then as 'perfect' communication free of all barriers/ this is hardly ever true, except perhaps at higher spiritual or mystic levels where communication is transformed into a 'communion'. For us, mere mortal, the wrestling with imperfect communications must continue.

10.2.1 Physical Barriers: Four main kind of distractions act as 'physical barriers' to the communication process. These are:-

1. The Competing Stimulus in the form of another conversation going within hearing distance, or loud music or traffic noise in the background. The cawing of crows or a plane passing overhead can, for example, drown out messages altogether.
2. Environmental Stress: A high temperature and humidity, poor ventilation, vibrations felt, a strong glare – all can contribute to distortions in the sending and receiving of messages.
3. Subjective Stress: Sleeplessness, ill health, the effects of drugs and mood variations give rise to forms of subjective stress that often lead to great difficulties in listening and interpretation.
4. Ignorance of the Medium: The various media for communication are: oral, written, audio, visual and audiovisual. The use of a medium with which the communicators are not familiar would turn the medium itself into a barrier. For instance, the use of visual media like maps and charts to instruct workers who have not been taught to read maps and charts would alienate the workers immediately; they would 'switch off' for lack of knowledge of the medium.

10.2.2 Psychological Barriers:

Each of us has a certain 'frame of reference', a kind of window through which we look out at the world, at people, and events and situations. A frame of reference is a system of standards and values, usually implicit, underlying and to some extent controlling an action, or the expression of any belief, attitude or idea. No two individuals possess exactly similar frames of reference, even if they should be identical twins. To a large extent our frames of reference are influenced by our experiences, particularly our childhood experiences, and the cultural environment we have grown up in. Heredity too has a great influence. However, learning and deeper experiences modify these 'mental sets' as we grow and mature, and develop diverse frames of reference to meet different need – our own and that of the group we identify ourselves with. This is the 'reference group', whose attitudes towards religion, politics, and education and so on we adopt as our own-without being fully aware that we are doing so.

10.2.3 Self Image:

Tied up with the term 'frame of reference' is the term 'self-image' or 'self concept'-i.e., the way an individual looks at himself, or the picture he has of himself. It is this 'self-image' that makes us always defends our point of view, to interpret messages in the way we wish to interpret them, and to see 'reality' according to our own pre-conceived notions. That is why few people see things alike: Freud, Jung and Adler interpreted the same dream in three different ways; Indian historians differ on who was responsible for 'the partition', and people understand 'love', 'beauty', 'honour' and 'freedom' according to what suits their 'self-image'. The American poet Wallace Stevens wrote that there were 13 ways of looking at a blackbird. He was mistaken, for there were as many ways as there were cultural contexts. Thus, we tend to listen attentively to, and interpret favorably those messages which give a boost to our self-image, and reject or misinterpret messages which threaten that same image. The consequence is: Communication selectivity. It is not only with regard to the sending and receiving of messages that we are selective, but also in the extent we remember them. For

instance, we retain only that information that is pleasant to us or reinforces our ego, and very conveniently forget details that are unpleasant or humiliating.

10.2.4 Resistance to Change:

“The risk of being changed is one of the most frightening prospects many of us can face” (Carl Rogers). No wonder, we resist change in any form except where we are convinced it is to our benefit. So new ideas that do not support our own views are resisted outright. In fact, most of the time we do not actually hear views which conflict with our own. But we hear with rapt attention any communication that reinforces our beliefs, and our self-image. The effective communicator, therefore, does not wait till resistance builds up against an intended change or innovation, but takes the people into confidence even at the planning stage. Instead of springing a surprise on them, he listens to their point of view with respect, involves them in the change; talks to them about the benefits the change will bring; assures them their security will not be affected; and explains the reasons why the change is necessary.

10.2.5 Defensiveness and Fear:

Closely related to the barrier raised by our ‘resistance to change’ is the barrier of defensiveness. One of man’s most compelling needs is to justify himself. Even when we are convinced we are wrong, few of us admit it, as it means a loss of face. More often than not, therefore, we tend to ‘rationalize’ (explain away) the mistakes we make, the attitudes and opinions we hold so dear. Together with the allied emotions of nervousness, anxiety and tension, fear is the most constricting of all the affects, resulting often in ‘tunnel vision’ (near-blindness to a great part of the communication). It also gives rise to slow and narrow thinking which selects and distorts communication. During an interview, a candidate’s fear, tension and anxiety tells on his performance: he fumbles for words, misinterprets questions and in general gives a poor show of himself. During a written examination, nervous candidate misread the instructions, misunderstand the questions asked. Some psychologists, however, are of the view

that a little anxiety is good, for it brings into use brain-cells otherwise inactive, and heightens attention, improves performance, releases certain hormones, and facilitates learning by a greater spread of nerve messages in the brain. In other words, fear and anxiety can be turned into a source of energy and confidence.

10.2.6 Linguistic and Cultural Barriers:

A language is the expression of the thoughts and experiences of a people in terms of their cultural environment. When the same language is made use of in a different culture, it takes on another color, another meaning. When, for instance, English is employed in India, it comes under the influence not only of the accent of the local language, but also of the meanings and connotations of words, phrases, and idioms of that language, and of the culture that has given rise to it. Each language shapes the reasoning of its speakers. Thus English enforces 'either/or' thinking and reasoning, which Chinese does not. Indeed, no human is free to describe nature with strict objectivity; he is a prisoner of his language and even the same language has to cross not only cultural and generation gaps, but political and social gaps as well.

10.2.7 Language and Meaning:

Language facilitates understanding, but there are times when it can be a barrier to communication. In the first place, a language (whether verbal or non-verbal) is ambiguous by nature. The words of language, for instance, are mere symbols, and by themselves rarely represent only one meaning. Further, these symbols are understood differently by participants in communication. And words (symbols) possess objective and subjective meanings. While objective (denotative or dictionary) meanings point to objects, people and events, subjective (or connotative) meanings point to emotional and evaluational responses. The favorable and unfavorable associations of a word depend upon the cultural context in which it is used. Take the words 'fascist', 'capitalist' or 'communist', for example: they carry different association in communist and non-communist states. Meanings, therefore, exist not in words themselves but in the minds of people who

use them. Even simple words like 'love', 'freedom', 'happiness' and 'tragedy' carry numerous associations depending upon the political and cultural situations people find themselves a part of.

10.2.8 Mechanical Barriers:

Mechanical barriers are those raised by the channels employed for interpersonal, group or mass communication. Channels become barriers when the message is interfered with by some disturbance, which (1) increased the difficulty in reception or (2) prevented some elements of the message reaching its destination or both. The absence of communication facilities too would be a mechanical barrier. Technically, such barriers are clubbed together under one general term 'channel noise'. This type of barrier includes any disturbance which interferes with the fidelity of the physical transmission of the message. A telephone that is in poor working order, making demands on the yelling ability of sender and receiver, is a mechanical barrier in interpersonal communication. So also is 'cross talk' often heard over an 'intercom' link in an office, or during long-distanced calls. Thus, hearing is the physical act of receiving sound waves, a natural process. Listening, however, is a skill that has to be learned and developed, requiring hard work and practice.

A whistling microphone, wrong placement of loud speaker, static on the radio, smeared ink in a newspaper, a rolling screed on television, a barely readable size of a letter etc are the examples for mechanical barriers.

10.3 MASS COMMUNICATION TODAY AND TOMORROW

Information technology and information superhighway has been changing the field of mass communication. Everyday a new innovation has been evolving in the market. Once upon a time radio was a news medium, then television was a new medium, then the computers, then the internet, then the pagers, cell phones, ipods, ipads, tablets, lap tops, palm tops, etc are coming in the market daily. Policies like "Globalization", "Privatization" and "Liberalization" has broken the geographical boundaries. Information flow cannot be banned by anyone. Anybody

Check Your Progress

4. How the Barriers due to psychology are called?
5. How the Barriers due to language are called?
6. How the Barriers due to culture are called?

can write and upload it on the internet. Anybody can publish his or her own creation on the internet. Blogs are helping everyone to publish their own creations. SMS and MMS services through cell phones are not able to be stopped. Inboxes are overflowing daily. Out boxes are empty daily. No failure delivery in modern cell phones. Video, audio, text and music are merged in cell phones and internet. Internet and cell phones are merged through smart phones. Internet telephone, internet video, internet radio, internet text, email, etc are available at your finger tip. Who knows in the future virtual marriages and virtual engagements may be possible through the technology. The future of communication technology depends on the imagination of the technocrats and technologists.

10.4 LET US SUM UP

Communication is an ongoing, endless, dynamic process. Senders, receiver, messages, channels and feed backs are the different components of communication. The barriers of communication are physical, mechanical, linguistic and cultural.

10.5 UNIT END EXERCISES

List the barriers of communication which you have faced today. Find out solutions for them.

10.6 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Why communication is a process? Find examples to explain the word process from your daily life.

10.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Channel
2. Noise
3. Feedback
4. Psychological barriers
5. Linguistic barriers
6. Cultural barriers

10.8 SUGGESTED READING

1. John Fiske (1982), *Introduction to communication studies*, Methuen, London. Keval. J.Kumar (2001), *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico, Delhi.
2. Denis McQuail (1994), *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*, Sage, London.
3. Ashley Montagu and Floyd Matson (1979), *The Human Connection*, McGraw-Hill.

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