

# NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING

**COURSE CODE: B21JL02AN**

**Ancillary Course  
For Undergraduate Programmes**



**SELF LEARNING MATERIAL**



SREENARAYANAGURU  
OPEN UNIVERSITY

**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

# SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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*To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.*

## Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

## Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

# **News Reporting and Editing**

Course Code: B21JL02AN

Semester - IV

## **Ancillary Course For Undergraduate Programmes Self Learning Material (With Model Question Paper Sets)**



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# MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The courses offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed “blended format,” a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

The university aims to offer you an engaging and thought-provoking educational journey. The undergraduate programmes are compared and aligned with similar programmes offered by other state universities in Kerala. The curriculum adheres to the University Grants Commission’s guidelines, which require the inclusion of three disciplines in a bundle. Consequently, it mandates the study of two ancillary disciplines, namely History and Journalism, for certain programmes. The current material encompasses a course titled News Reporting and Editing, designed to introduce learners to the latest practices in news reporting and editing, with a particular emphasis on issues related to print media. The earnest desire is that the ancillary course in News Reporting and Editing will inspire and motivate at least a few learners to explore the possibility of pursuing Journalism as a potential career path. The Self-Learning Material has been meticulously crafted, incorporating relevant examples to facilitate better comprehension.

Rest assured, the university’s student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.



Warm regards.  
Dr. Jagathy Raj V. P.

01-06-2024

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**BLOCK - 01**

# **Basics of Journalism**



# Unit 1

## Evolution of Journalism

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ describe the evolution of journalism from ancient traditions to modern platforms.
- ▶ explain the role and impact of major technological innovations.
- ▶ analyse how journalism as a profession has transformed over time.
- ▶ discuss the ethical responsibilities and challenges journalists face.

### Prerequisites

Have you heard about a book titled *Sapiens- A brief History of Humankind* written by Yuval Noah Harari? In his widely read book, he says that in the history of evolution, gossiping has helped humans to rule the world. Talking to one another helped humans to form groups. It then helped to build a community feeling among humans to fight and survive on earth. Even now gossip seems a part of our lives and in any news media platform, it is visible. Indeed, it is a way of communication. Talking with one another gives you new ideas, and his interaction will help build a common language and a sense of community.

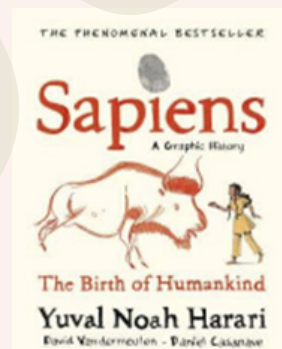


Fig 1.1.1 cover page of the book *Sapiens*

Can you imagine a day without talking to anybody and without using a phone or television? We all communicate with each other. Not only humans but other living animals also communicate. Communication is a universal phenomenon, and it can be carried out with or without language. Human communication has a specific quality of using language. We have already discussed communication in the previous blocks. We have also learned models like Aristotle's model, Shannon-weaver model, David-Berlo model, Osgood Schramm model and different theories formulated to explain communication as a process. Over time, our communication system has also developed into a widespread system where humans invented newspapers, radio, television, and many more platforms to make communication easier. Communication has built an important area of study called journalism. In order to understand journalism you need to dig up to find the roots of communication mediums. This unit puts forward the history of journalism in brief. You have to go back to your school textbooks of social sciences to recall the history of the press and some of the heard information to your memory before coming to this unit.

## Keywords

Mass Communication, Journalism, Print Media, Television, Radio, Internet

## Discussion

### 1.1.1 Journalism

*Have you heard about Sanjayan? In the great epic Mahabharata, the Kurukshethra war is to begin. Dhritarashtra, who is blind wanted to know about the ongoing events in the war. So he appoints Sanjayan to witness the battle for him and describes it for Dhritarashtra, maybe just like a commentary. Sanjayan became the middleman and communicated the war to Dhritarashtra.* If so, journalism is a craft that has a great history to tell even though, as a profession it is just decades old. Journalism is an umbrella term comprising communication and its different processes. Journalism is a form of communication that includes the collection, processing, reproduction and distribution of information. The term Journalism originates from the Latin word 'journaliste', which means 'one who keeps a journal'. As a craft, journalism is omnipresent and it is clearly visible in our early literature and texts. As discussed, communication is a process where the sender sends a message to the receiver through a medium. The sender and receiver can be single or in a group, according to which the nature of communication changes. Journalism is an umbrella term that explains all the branches of a communication tree. Sometimes the history of journalism is explained only through the history of newspapers, but it cannot be marked as a beginning. From the pioneering print medium, the history of journalism has moved to radio, television, the internet and now augmented reality, which is a generated technique that gives real experiences of objects through multiple sensory organs.

#### 1.1.1.1 To Know and to Tell - History of Communication

The history of communication is rooted in the times of foragers and the non-verbal communication times. The gestures and very minimal actions could communicate meanings. You might have heard about the Papyrus plant, which was used as writing material in ancient Egypt. Humans developed language to make communication easier and more meaningful. The invention of printing, and wireless transmission opened to the possibility of mass communication.

*"I thank God, there are no free schools, nor printing, and I hope we shall not have, these hundred years, for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both."* This is a statement by Governor William Berkeley of Virginia in 1671 in the USA.

In the simplest way journalism has given all people access to information. The power abuse of Lords and emperors became a matter of public discussion. Coming to India, during the independence era, kingdoms and British rulers imposed draconic rules against the press and freedom of communication. You must have heard about the Vernacular Press Act which had banned newspapers across languages in India during British rule from publishing. After newspapers came radio, television, and many other digital devices to help communication. Mass communication has become an important part of living as journalism has helped to democratise our society. Now, journalism is a widespread area



with a larger scope and importance. What began as an oral communication has now grown into audio-visual communication and to the internet era. Journalism has gained wide acceptance as a profession. It is a link between government and people, and thus, it is now called the *fourth pillar* of democracy.

Now, we will discuss the history of different media in detail.

### 1.1.2 Origin of Journalism

Before the digital age, there was a time when news travelled through word of mouth or written on scrolls, handed from one person to another like precious gifts of knowledge. The origins of journalism can be traced back to ancient civilisations, where scribes documented important events and chronicled the stories of their time. These early storytellers acted as the voice of their communities, passing on information and preserving history for future generations. Fast forward to the age of print, a transformative era that brought about a revolution in information dissemination. The invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 15th century marked a turning point in the history of journalism. Newspapers, magazines, and books became accessible to a wider audience, spreading ideas, knowledge, and opinions like wildfire.

With the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, journalism experienced unprecedented growth and diversification. The rise of telegraphs and telephones enabled news to travel across continents in a matter of hours, connecting the world like never before. Journalists ventured into the field, reporting from the frontlines of wars, covering social movements, and shining a light on important societal issues. The 20th century witnessed the birth of radio and television, bringing audio and visual dimensions to journalism. The immediacy of radio broadcasts allowed people to tune

in to live updates, while television brought the power of storytelling to life with moving images. News broadcasts became a staple in households, shaping public opinion and creating a shared sense of awareness.

As we entered the digital age, the landscape of journalism underwent a radical transformation. The internet opened up new avenues for information dissemination, enabling citizen journalism, where ordinary individuals could report on events as they unfolded. Social media platforms became a powerful force in shaping news narratives, and the 24/7 news cycle demanded constant updates and real-time reporting. In recent years, journalism has faced both challenges and opportunities in the digital realm. The rise of fake news and misinformation has posed ethical dilemmas, emphasising the importance of fact-checking and responsible reporting. However, it has also allowed journalists to reach global audiences and highlight issues that might have remained unnoticed in the past.

### 1.1.3 The Printing Era

The history of journalism can be read with the history of democracy and equality. When printing was invented, the dissemination of information became easier. Until then all the holy texts including the bible were read by the rich and aristocratic class in the West. *Acta Diurna* is considered the first piece of paper circulated in Rome. Coming to India, education was allowed to a small population and around two centuries back, literacy was less than 10 percent. Media is called the fourth pillar of democracy because it is a quintessential part of the formation of democracy through many mass media like newspapers, radio and television and now the Internet. 1455 is marked as a milestone in the history of journalism by the invention of the



printing press by Johann Guttenberg. In India it reached Goa in 1557. British missionaries were the first society which helped to spread education and press in India. Press reached Kerala only by 1821 in CMS Kottayam. The first ever newspaper published in India was the Bengal gazette by James Augustus Hickey in 1779. But only in 1847, the first newspaper *Rajyasamacharam* was published in Kerala. When the newspapers began to

produce large copies, the dissemination of information became a revolutionary change in society. The independence era marked the hype in the publication history of India. There were newspapers published by nationalists in India such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Swadhashabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai, and many more.

Not only newspapers but pamphlets, tracts,



fig 1.1.2 A copy of *Swadhashabhimani* newspaper.

periodicals, magazines, etc., also came to enhance the press and expand it to a wider area.

#### 1.1.4 Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Gunaya

Large military operations needed easier

ways for communication, especially during the first world war. The birth of radio took place when Passing of information to the masses during wartime was a major concern. Radio placed its position among people soon after its invention and became an influential medium. From using it in ships in times of distress to listening to songs for joy, radio has become a

#### A Panic Broadcasting History

*In 1938, the US had witnessed a terrifying report of aliens attacking them on radio and they panicked all of a sudden and ran out of their houses in fear. But it was a radio adaptation done by Orson Welles of the War of the Worlds, a play by HG Wells .*

popular medium throughout the world.

Radio broadcasting began in India by some amateur radio clubs in Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai. All India Radio(AIR) began in 1936 with the motto *Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Gunaya*. Since 1956, AIR has been

called *Akashvani*. Now, it has around 460 broadcasting centers covering 92 per cent of the country. Lionel Fielden became the first controller of broadcasting in 1935, and Saeeda Banu was hired as the first female newsreader in India to read in Urdu in 1947. Though radio has lost its primacy as it had in the nineties, it



still has a notable presence. Radio has changed with time like AM (Amplitude Modulation), FM (Frequency Modulation) and the very new community radio that keeps radio relevant to people.

### 1.1.5 A Walk to Moving Images

The beginning of the nineteenth century marks the era of the development of television. It has large network all over the world. The many scientific inventions like the cathode ray tube were the reason behind the television which then became a highly influential medium. In India, Doordarshan began experimentally in

1959. In the beginning it was used for educating people. It was an example of using media for development. Only after the 1990s did these 24/7 channels come to entertain us. From soap operas in the West to *Mahabharatha* in India, there began an overflow of programs through television. *Hum Log*, penned by Manohar Shyam Joshi, became the first television series in India. Later the growth of television was so wide that it became a cultural quotient. Cable television and satellite intervention have given widespread reach to it. 24/7 news channels have become a sensation in television. CNN is marked as the first news channel of full-time

#### *Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE)*

*It is a satellite communication project begun in India in 1975 jointly by NASA and ISRO. It produced television programs for the development of villages in rural India in fields like education, health and agriculture.*

broadcast.

Film is another important medium that can not be forgotten in the history of journalism. In 1895 at the Grand Cafe in Paris, the first film ever made was screened by the Lumiere brothers, marking the beginning of the Cinema

Era. The first ever-moving image they shot was the workers coming from a factory. That shot has become prophetic nature because later cinema became the art of the masses. Later, the great Soviet Union revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin remarked 'Film for us is the most important of the arts'. *The Jazz Singer*



Fig 1.1.3 Employees leaving the Lumiere factory

became the first sound movie screened in the world.

In the 1920s, resisting the talking films, Charlie Chaplin made his silent comedies

mocking the industries and dictators of the world. *The great dictator* and *The Kid* became worldly renowned movies. From Dada Sheb Phalke's *Raja Harishchandra*, Indian cinema has seen many great artists like Satyajit Ray, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Ritwik Ghatat, etc., who have enriched the film culture. The cinematic universe expands every day and India has a theatre release of more than 2000 films in a year.

### 1.1.6 Network of Networks

The invention of the internet was a paradigm shift in the twentieth century. It has revolutionised the communication field. It is referred to as 'network of networks'. Though the invention of the internet took place only at the end of the twentieth century, by 2020 approximately 450 crore (4.5 billion) people have access to the internet in the world. The Internet is a wider network that allows computer networks around the world run by companies, governments, universities and other organisations to talk to one another. The result is a mass of cables, computers, data centres, routers, servers, repeaters, satellites and Wi-Fi towers that allow digital information to travel around the world. ARPANET is considered as the pioneer of the connection networks in the world. It was an invention of America during the nineties. After the arrival of new media, journalism has become more citizen-centered. New media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc., began to make their own news by paving the way for citizen journalism.

### 1.1.7 Journalism as a Profession

*'The sole aim of journalism is service' - MK Gandhi*

*Gandhi has Four major newspapers in his credits, namely Indian Opinion, Young India, Navajivan (In Hindi) and Harijan(English language). His phenomenal life has began as*

*a journalist.*

News has freed from the expensive papers to different accessible platforms in this twenty-first century. This journalistic history is not so old. Journalism as a profession has a history of 200 years. This field has a very important function of informing people with truthful information. In the post-truth era journalism needs to be more careful as it has great influence on society. A journalist is different from a writer because journalism demands more objectivity and reality in writing. From the beginning of the press that is in the 15th century journalism began to grow. From Johannes Gutenberg to Svetlana Alexivich, the world has many people who have contributed to journalism. When we look back to history, many journalists contributed to the world. Just like the history of evolution the history of journalism is also imprecise. It began as a profession in different countries at different times.

"Professionalism is, strictly speaking, simply acting as the standards of the relevant profession require." - Michael Davis, *Why Journalism is a profession?*

"Emile Durkheim or Talcott Parsons, interprets professions as primarily cultural facts, the natural expression of a certain social function under certain conditions." Michael Davis, *Why Journalism is a profession?*

Professionalism varies with the nature of professions. There is a professional standard to which a group of professionals work and it may be different for different professions. In that way, journalism is a profession that has a certain way of doing. While carrying out journalism, one must have professional ethics. Professional ethics is a set of rules and





obligations one has to follow when becoming part of a profession. Being a journalist is a socially committed profession. Their intention is to inform and educate the public. We have media schools, media research centres and media and cultural studies schools that make this profession stronger. There are academics and also working journalists like reporters, content writers, interviewers, news presenters, and editors working in this profession. They are all responsible for doing their part and keeping professionalism. While reporting the news, a journalist needs to be truthful and should not be biased. A journalist works in many fields like environment, climate, sports, political groups, issues of women, poverty, equality, war, etc. Whatever the subject matter is, a journalist needs to be rational and

humanistic to it. Because after all, a journalist can induce empathy and opinion in society. So, a journalist needs to be up-to-date and sensible to the surroundings. Now, this global media is facing the threats of lobbying and bias. In order to keep it noble and responsible, journalism needs courage. We have many such stories of journalists who have kept their lives at risk for the truth.

Now, we can find that journalism has different subcategories, such as sting journalism, investigative journalism, paparazzi journalism, and subject-specific journalism, like sports journalism, crime journalism. This is because the journalistic profession is expanding and becoming more relevance.

## Recap

- ▶ Journalism - Communication & processes.
- ▶ History: Print, radio, TV, internet.
- ▶ Acta Diurna: Revolution of newspapers.
- ▶ All India Radio: Broadcasting evolution.
- ▶ Lumiere Brothers: Cinema's birth.
- ▶ ARPANET: Pioneer of networks.
- ▶ Internet: Global communication system.
- ▶ Communication mediums overview
- ▶ Journalism's rise in 80s
- ▶ Profession expanded, citizen journalism emerged
- ▶ Individuals as journalists
- ▶ Preserving journalism's nobility

## Objective Questions

1. Which is the first soap opera in India?
2. Which is the first newspaper in India?
3. Name any two of the films made by Charlie Chaplin.
4. What is 'SITE' ?
5. When did *Doordarshan* come to light?

6. Which is the first newspaper published in India?
7. Who was the first controller of broadcasting in the history of radio?
8. Which country invented *ARPANET*?
9. Which is the first sound movie in the world?
10. Who directed the film, *Raja Harishchandra*?
11. What is the motto of *Doordarshan*?
12. Where did Lumiere brothers made their first film screening?
13. What is termed as fourth pillar of democracy?
14. Who is considered as the father of the printing press?
15. What is considered as the pioneer of the connection networks in the world?
16. When did AIR has renamed as *Aakashvani*?
17. When did the first newspaper *Rajyasamacharam* was published from Kerala?
18. Which film of Charlie Chaplin is mocking the industries and Capitalism?
19. What is citizen journalism? Give one example.
20. Who are considered as the pioneers of cinema?
21. Name any two social media platforms.
22. What is AM and FM?

## Answers

1. Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
2. Bengal Gazette / Hicky's Bengal Gazette
3. The Kid, Modern Times
4. Software Integrated Text Editor (SITE)
5. 1959
6. Hickey's Bengal Gazette
7. Sir Lionel Fielden
8. United States
9. "The Jazz Singer"
10. Dadasaheb Phalke
11. "Satyameva Jayate"
12. Paris
13. Media
14. Johannes Gutenberg
15. ARPANET
16. 1948
17. 1847
18. "Modern Times"



19. Individuals reporting news, Example: Bloggers
20. Lumiere Brothers, Thomas Edison
21. Facebook, Twitter
22. AM - Amplitude Modulation, FM - Frequency Modulation

## Assignments

1. Create a timeline highlighting the development of journalism through print, radio, television, and the internet, and discuss their impact on information dissemination.
2. Compare *Acta Diurna*, the ancient Roman precursor to newspapers, with modern newspapers to understand the revolution in communication and information-sharing.
3. Analyse the history of All India Radio, its significance in broadcasting, and the challenges and opportunities it faced during the transition to the digital age.
4. Prepare a multimedia presentation showcasing the Lumiere Brothers' contributions to the birth of cinema, their first film screening, and the impact of their work on the film industry.
5. Write a research paper on ARPANET, exploring its development, objectives, and how it laid the foundation for the modern global communication system.

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## Suggested Readings

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## Unit 2

# Role and Relevance of Journalism

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ explain the significance of media as the fourth pillar of democracy.
- ▶ analyse the role of media in preserving freedom of speech and expression.
- ▶ discuss the impact of media on development, rescue operations, and disaster management.
- ▶ examine the influence of media on various sectors like art, literature, cinema, and marketing.

### Prerequisites

A small town called Oakville, where life used to move at a relaxed pace. One day, a new factory opened on the outskirts of town, promising jobs and economic growth. However, strange things started happening – people complained of foul odours and strange illnesses. This is where the town's local newspaper, *The Oakville Times*, stepped in. The journalists at the paper began investigating the factory's operations. Through interviews with workers, residents, and environmental experts, they uncovered that the factory was illegally dumping toxic waste, polluting the town's water supply. The Oakville Times played a crucial role in disseminating this information to the public. Their in-depth reporting served as a watchdog, holding the factory accountable for their actions. The paper provided a platform for the community to voice their concerns and facilitated a public discourse on the issue. As the story gained traction, national and international news outlets picked it up, amplifying the reach of the investigation. The Times' reporting became a historical record, documenting the events that would shape Oakville's future. The coverage raised awareness about the dangers of industrial pollution, educating the public on the importance of environmental protection. It also empowered the citizens of Oakville, who rallied together and took legal action against the factory, ultimately forcing it to clean up its operations. Meanwhile, the story resonated with communities across the globe facing similar issues, fostering a sense of interconnectivity and prompting discussions on sustainable development. Through it all, the journalists at The Oakville Times remained committed to preserving the nobility of their profession, upholding the principles of truth, accuracy, and ethical reporting.

In this story, we see how journalism played multiple roles – as an information source, a

watchdog, a public forum, a historical record, an educational tool, a catalyst for change, a connector, and a guardian of ethical standards – all while serving the greater good of the community.

## Keywords

Democracy, Science- research magazines, rescue reporting, art and culture, development

## Discussion

### 1.2.1 Role and Relevance of Journalism

As we all know, the media is considered the fourth pillar of democracy. Why? Look at the below image of *The Indian Express* newspaper published in June 1976. It was the time when India was going through impositions made by the Government as part of the emergency in 1975. Those times were bad for the press as they had restrictions, and this is how they reported the government's draconic rule of silencing the press.

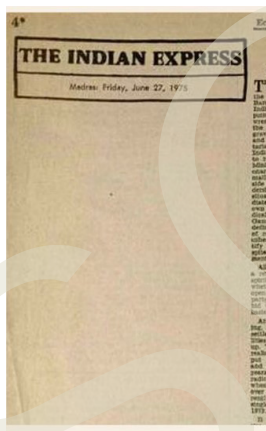


Fig 1.2.1 The Blank Editorial of *The Indian Express* to protest against Emergency in India

“Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”  
Thomas Jefferson

“Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy.”- Walter

Cronkite

The above-given statements are explaining the importance of freedom of the press. It is very important to have free journalism in a country because it acts as a middleman between the government and the people. It's their duty to inform people of the decisions of the government on welfare and policy. Media inform how the elected representatives work in the parliaments. How do they make laws? How is the budget allocated? How much money is spent in the country? Why does a country need to purchase weapons? All this information reaches people through the media.

“Democracy cannot function without communication. In order for voters to make informed choices among candidates, they must learn about the candidates' policy positions, track records, personalities, past experience and much more. This happens with the exchange of information from informants to voters. The most important informants have traditionally been the news media, but now communication can happen directly through social media from the candidates to voters and between voters, as well.”

This is how the Professor Frederic O. Glower explains democracy and communication in *Stanford News*.

Now, read the given report published in *Aljazeera English*, a newsgroup based in Doha. Analyse the report and find the relationship between democracy and media in India.



## India's media is failing in its democratic duty

Siddharth Varadarajan,

(Siddharth Varadarajan is a founding editor of *The Wire* in New Delhi)

*I work as a journalist in India and am happy and proud to be part of what I regard as a free press in the country. The website I helped found four years ago, The Wire, shines a critical light – a pretty harsh one – on the government, on politics and on big business. And there are others like us.*

*Sure, the politicians and ministers and captains of industry do not like what we do and have made their displeasure known in various ways; but show me a democracy where the government loves the media and chances are the media is not doing its job.*

*So why is it then that India – a country with a free press and an independent judiciary – does so badly on global indices measuring media freedom? In 2019, the country slipped two places down to 140 out of 180 in the World Press Freedom [index](#) compiled by Reporters Without Borders. How do we reconcile the fact that there is a constitution, laws guaranteeing press freedom*

*What has happened over the past few years is that a major section of the media has crossed over to the dark side.*

*Without being formally censored or compelled by other means to comply with official diktats, these media houses have simply stopped doing their job. They have stopped asking difficult questions about the government and its policies. They are in awe of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his senior ministers and are reluctant to be critical of them.*

*Many, sadly, have become mouthpieces of official propaganda. Some do not think twice about promoting religious polarisation and even hatred in pursuit of the political agenda of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).*

*There is also a major section of the media which is reluctant to be seen rocking the boat mainly because their proprietors have business interests that could be jeopardised. It is commonplace for governments at the central and*

*state level to use official advertising as a lever of influence on the media. But there is also a darker side: With most investigative agencies functioning at the beck and call of ruling politicians, proprietors fear becoming the target of a vendetta if their reporters are seen as taking on the establishment.*

*For those of us still willing to do our job, there are indirect financial pressures, of course, but also legal tactics aimed at silencing critical coverage. Defamation laws are misused to embroil editors and reporters in frivolous cases that can take us years to shake off. At one time, The Wire was facing 14 defamation suits filed by governing party politicians and their family members, businessmen and even a godman – a high-profile guru – known to be close to the establishment. Total damages currently being sought in these bogus cases against us run to over one billion dollars.*

*In the past few months, the government has sought new ways to get a grip on the country's scrappy digital media. It has announced new restrictions on foreign investment in digital media, including approval on a case-by-case basis, and is also proposing to introduce a compulsory registration process for news and current affairs websites.*

*new tactic, which affects not just media freedom but the freedom of speech and communication of ordinary citizens, is the imposition of bans on the usage of the internet and social media. In Jammu and Kashmir, a “temporary” [ban on social media](#) has lasted more than 200 days now.*

*Broadband internet remains banned and limited data internet access was permitted after a two-month hiatus but only for low-speed access to “whitelisted” sites.*

*The latest assault on freedom of speech is the government's decision to charge Kashmiris who access the internet via VPNs under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Given the growing interface between social media and news media, this clampdown can only have a further chilling effect on press freedom.*

*While the media in India has always had to contend with unfriendly politicians in the past, they could, with the exception of the 1975-1977 Emergency, at least count on the support of the country's judges if the going got tough. What makes the current phase so dangerous is both the Modi government's level of intolerance and the reluctance of the courts to defend free speech and press freedom.*





*The press freedom we have in India should no longer be taken for granted. And it is only if we use our freedom – fiercely and fearlessly – that we can stave off future assaults on it.*

*The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial stance*

*ALJAZEERA (24 Feb 2020)*

### 1.2.2 Research and Journalism

From foragers living in forests, we have become civilised and developed as a result of inventions. It was the gypsies who took inventions from land to land. They saw the new changes in one place and took it with them while they moved to another place. Gabriel Garcia Marquez in, his enigmatic work, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, talks about a gypsy coming to a village with a newly invented ice. Now, journalism connects research in all subjects. Science is a very interesting subject in which new inventions take place, and their impact on society is also observable in time. In newspapers, you can find news like the discovery of a new microbe or a wild variety of lizard or a fungus, a technological invention, or the development of a vaccine, etc. We read this news from newspapers and see it in visual media. This scientific news is having a futuristic impact on our lives. So, it is also important information that we get to know.

Now, there is another medium called *Journal* that has been exclusively created for research in all fields, such as science and social science. They are exclusively for publishing research papers on various subjects. We can access articles from these journals. In order to understand the research inventions that are happening around the world, they are circulated

through these journals. So journalism is not just confined to newspapers and visual media but also journals and magazines that publish in-depth articles on various subjects. There are plenty of Journals, Look at a few of the journals across the world.

- i. *Nature*- is the world's leading multidisciplinary science journal based in London.
- ii. *Cosmos*- An Australian-based magazine in both print and browser-based subscription editions by the Royal Institution of Australia.
- iii. *Science* - a global science weekly published by the American Association for Advanced Studies- AAAS
- iv. *Science Translational Medicine*- a journal integrating medicine, engineering and science to promote human health.
- v. *Science Robotics*- Publishes articles on engineering-based research on robotics.

There are also websites like *ScienceDaily*, which publishes science news and articles on global warming, evolution, health, medicine, etc. This American magazine was launched in 1995. These websites also inform us of up-to-date news in science and research.

### 1.2.3 Development and Journalism

Amartya Sen, India's Nobel prize-winning economist, understood development as freedom-freedom to live with equality and rights. How do you think development is related to journalism? There is a very interesting field called 'communication for development' where communication is helping for development. Through journalistic tools, development can be made easier because the prime characteristic of journalism is informing people. When people have the opportunity to get information that educates them. Media are focusing on the development of people.

For example, take People Archives of Rural India, a digital journalism platform founded by P Sainath to focus on rural lives and livelihood. Their reports on people's lives got global attention. Go through their archives and find their reports. This is how journalism participates in development. Journalism records and informs the public about how people of different lives, labour, colour, culture, and language live around. How can we contribute to them?

Read the content given below:

*"The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India lists 22 languages whose development the country's government is obliged to promote. Yet, there are states whose official languages fall outside those 22, like Khasi and Garo of Meghalaya. Each of six Indian languages is spoken by 50 million people or more. Three are spoken by 80 million or more. One, by close to 500 million. At the other end of the spectrum are unique tribal languages spoken by as few as 4,000 people, some by even less. The eastern state of Odisha alone is home to around 44 tribal languages. The Linguistic Survey reckons that close to 220 languages have died in the past 50 years. Saimar in*

*Tripura is down its last seven speakers.*

*The same diversity characterises rural India's occupations, arts and crafts, culture, literature, legend, transportation, and other fields. As the Indian countryside rushes through an extremely painful transformation, many of these features disappear, leaving us poorer. There are, for instance, probably more schools and styles of weaving in India than in any other single nation. Many of these traditional weaving communities face real collapse, which will rob the world of some of its greatest gifts. Some unique occupations – professional storytellers and epic poem singers – are also in danger of extinction.*

*Then there are professions known only to a few nations. Like toddy-tappers who climb 50 palm trees daily, each one thrice, in season. From the sap they make palm jaggery or a fermented liquor called toddy. In peak season, a toddy tapper climbs a height greater than New York's Empire State Building – every single day. But so many occupations are in collapse. Potters, metal workers and millions of other highly skilled craftspeople are rapidly losing their livelihoods.*

*Much of what makes the countryside unique could be gone in 20-30 years. Without any systematic record, visual or oral, to educate us – let alone motivate us – to save this incredible diversity. We are losing worlds and voices within rural India of which future generations will know little or nothing. Even as the present one steadily sheds its own links with those worlds.*

*There is surely much in rural India that should die. Much that is tyrannical, oppressive, regressive and brutal – and which must go. Untouchability, feudalism, bonded labour, extreme caste and gender oppression and exploitation, land grab and more. The*



*tragedy though is that the nature of the transformation underway more often tends to bolster the regressive and the barbaric, while undermining the best and the diverse. That, too, will be documented here.'*

(P Sainath, Founder of PARI)

### 1.2.4 Rescue Activity and Journalism

Journalism is more than informing people. It also participates in the process, especially in situations like rescue activities. Do you remember the 2018 flood in Kerala? In 2018, Kerala state was hit by a heavy flood, resulting in countless disasters and losses. In those times, do you remember watching television or reading newspapers or scrolling on social media? All the media actively helped the people who were at risk by helping them to connect with authorities and helping hands. Media literally became a medium between people and people. In those days, television channels were reporting lists of wanted

materials in villages and flood-affected places. Along with military forces, police, doctors and fire force, another bunch of journalists worked hard to overcome the flood that hit Kerala. Social media was circulating information about people at risk. Social media platforms became control rooms of information, and Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram groups were used to circulate information. They also made posters and short videos to spread awareness among the people, collected needed materials from different places, and circulated them all over the country. Malayalam Television channels became 24X7 helpline centres.

They were not just reporting but trying to help them through reporting. So, sometimes, media and journalism are more than we think. The flood coverage of Kerala's media is an example of such a thing.

The following tweet by Vinod K. Jose is on the coverage of the flood by many media in Kerala.

**Vinod K. Jose**  
**@vinodjose**  
**· Aug 20, 2018**

Not because I'm a Malayalee, but can't resist from saying it—language journalists in Kerala covering the flood must be a case study in J schools. TV, digital & print reported doggedly, with calm and grit & by doing it got everyone to act. Owners replaced ads with content.

### 1.2.5 Art, Literature and Journalism

Do you like reading stories? Who are the writers you are familiar with? Not only stories but there are many creative works around us. For poetry, short stories, novels, features, travelogues, autobiographies, etc., where do you find those interesting pieces of texts. We have a very old history of magazines and dailies that come to us with this literature.

It brings us stories about literary works, art forms, artists and their works. This will help us find peace through art, and it also gives us new ideas and conflicts about many things

For example: *Review, The Hindu, Apollo Magazine* (London), *ARTnews magazine* (US), *Aesthetica* (UK), *Art Africa*, etc., are some of the famous artistic magazines in the world.



## 1.2.6 Cinema and Journalism



Fig:1.2.2 Cover page of the magazine  
*Chalachitra Sameeksha*

Do you like to watch films? What are your favourite movies? Why do you watch films? Do you know that in India, almost 2000 movies are released in theatres every year? In different languages (Malayalam, English, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada, Bengali), in different genres (thriller, ghost films, romantic films, animated films, action films), in different stories. This is a very big industry in the world. Cinema produces a huge amount of money. Above that, cinema is a very influential medium. There are film clubs on social media discussing films, and also, there is a growing tendency for channels to make cinema reviews

and trolls. Film discussion groups online can be seen on Facebook-like media. There are also columns in newspapers for film reviews and information about channel programs. There are also magazines for cinema-related information. For example, *Kerala state Chalachitra Academy* has its own magazine called *Chalachitra Sameeksha* which, publishes articles and papers on cinema.

Many websites and web portals have active discussions on cinema. Cinema's impact is so great that it cannot be just viewed as a tool of entertainment.

## 1.2.7 Market and Journalism

We are all consumers. We buy books, pencils, pens, clothes, food, furniture, and many more things from shops. We can't imagine a world without sellers and buyers. Do you know about the first newspaper in India? It was Hicky's *Bengal Gazette*. It also had another name, *The General Calcutta Advertiser*. Who is an advertiser? The answer is a person who makes advertisements. Yes, we can see plenty of ads in a newspaper.

Products and services will have ads through in media. Print and visual media are the most accepted ways of advertising. Just like the film industry, the advertising industry is also very big because advertisements play a big role in ensuring product sales.



Fig:1.2.3 The front pages of *The Times of India* with advertisement



## Recap

- ▶ Relevance of Journalism: Connecting the World.
- ▶ Journalism: Fourth Pillar of Democracy.
- ▶ Global Reach through Journalism.
- ▶ Communication for Development: Empowering Change.
- ▶ Media: Active Role in Disseminating Information.
- ▶ Media: Vital Role in Entertainment.

## Objective Questions

1. What is considered as the first newspaper published in India?
2. What is the full name of AIR, the radio broadcasting service in India?
3. Name the first Indian television series.
4. Which journal is considered the world's leading multidisciplinary science journal?
5. Who founded the digital journalism platform 'People's Archive of Rural India' (PARI)?
6. In which year did the Kerala floods occur, where media played a crucial role in rescue operations?
7. Name the first sound movie screened in the world.
8. What is the name of the magazine published by the *Chalachitra Academy* in Kerala?
9. Which newspaper's front page is shown in the image, depicting the restrictions on press during the Emergency in India?
10. What is the term used for a person who makes advertisements?

## Answers

1. Bengal Gazette
2. Akashvani All India Radio
3. Hum Log
4. Nature
5. P. Sainath
6. 2018
7. The Jazz Singer
8. Chalachitra Sameeksha
9. The Indian Express
10. Advertiser

## Assignments

1. How does journalism play a significant role in connecting people worldwide?
2. Explain the concept of journalism as the fourth pillar of democracy and its impact on society.
3. Discuss the influence of global journalism in spreading scientific and social knowledge across borders.
4. Explore the role of communication for development and how journalism contributes to empowering positive change in communities.
5. Analyse the active role of media in disseminating crucial information during times of need and emergencies, with real-life examples.

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## Unit 3

# Trends in Journalism

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ identify and differentiate various digital platforms for news and information dissemination.
- ▶ familiarise the concept and impact of citizen journalism and user-generated content.
- ▶ recognise the role of emerging technologies like AI in modern journalism practices.
- ▶ analyse the changing trends in news consumption and production, such as short videos and mobile journalism.

### Prerequisites

You are scrolling through your social media feed, and you notice a trending hashtag, like *#BreakingNews*. It is a symbol that catches your eye, piquing your curiosity about the latest happenings around the world. This simple yet powerful symbol, the hashtag, has become an integral part of how we consume and share news in the modern age. In today's fast-paced, digital world, news travels at the speed of light, and the way we receive and engage with it has undergone a remarkable transformation. Gone are the days when news was confined to the printed pages of newspapers or the scheduled broadcasts of radio and television.

With the advent of the internet and the rise of social media platforms, news has become a constant stream, flowing through our digital devices and connecting us to events unfolding across the globe. Imagine being able to witness history unfold in real-time, as citizens on the ground capture and share their experiences through the lens of their smartphones. This new era of news is driven by the power of the hashtag. With a simple tap of the keyboard, anyone can categorize their content, making it easily searchable and discoverable to millions of people worldwide. Whether it is a breaking news event, a social movement, or a trending topic, hashtags have become the virtual rallying points that bring people together, fostering discussion, debate, and collective action. But this revolution in news consumption and dissemination isn't just about the hashtag; it's about the democratization of information itself. Citizen journalists, armed with their smartphones and social media accounts, have become powerful voices, challenging traditional media

outlets and providing alternative perspectives on the world around us. Just as the printing press revolutionized the spread of information centuries ago, the digital age has ushered in a new era of news, where the lines between consumer and creator have blurred, and the power of storytelling has been placed in the hands of the people.

As we explore the unit of “Understanding News,” we will go into the intricacies of this ever-evolving landscape, examining the impact of social media, the rise of citizen journalism, and the challenges and opportunities that come with this new era of news consumption and creation.

## Keywords

News websites, Citizen journalism, Podcast, campaigns, online advertising, shared points of view, Artificial intelligence

## Discussion

India has a high rate of social media users. As we know, our communication system has grown to become a very big network. From newspapers to radio to television to the internet, these changes have transformed the journalistic field. Now, look at the means through which you communicate with the world. You may have a newspaper in the house. Most Indian households have televisions in their houses. Now, people are also equipped with mobile phones. You might remember a situation in Kerala when the COVID-19 pandemic hit India and the world. Schools in the state were shut down. However, in Kerala, the government began to provide online classes through television. Then, there was a campaign to offer android phones to school children by different organisations. They began to access online classrooms through it. What are the mobile applications you have on your mobile phones? What are they for? After the spread of phones and the internet, people began to access many platforms to learn about the news and share the news. Now, we will look at different trends in the field of journalism.

of web pages and content related to specific areas. These days, there are plenty of websites available on the internet. A simple search can give many results that include many websites. You can also create your own websites and put content by yourself on any topic of your interest. *india.gov.in* is India’s national portal website. Websites are used to access data related to government sites and their programs. Likewise, most official institutions have their own websites. Education departments, health departments, and tax departments are all having their own websites to give information to the public.

Now, people also have access to news websites. For example, all the major newspapers have their digital versions. Take the case of The Hindu, the English language daily. It began in 1878 by G Subramany Iyer. It is the second most circulated English Daily in India. In 1995, The Hindu became the first to launch a website. It also has online e-papers that allow people to read it like a newspaper sitting anywhere. Now, it enable you to have an audio version of the news. You can listen to the news through the app. There are also easy ways to find subject-based news. This is the case of old newspapers shifting to online platforms.

### 1.3.1 News Websites

What is a website? Websites are collections





There are plenty of budding news websites in the world, such as *The Business Line*, *Outlook India*, *The Quint*, *The Wire*, *Caravan*, *Scroll India*, and so on.

### 1.3.2 Podcasts

Have you heard about podcasts? Podcast is the combination of two words-‘iPod’ and ‘broadcast’. It is like radio, but it works in digital instruments. Many of the old radio stations, like BBC and CBC Radionow, have podcasts available. Podcasts are used in academic fields, entertainment and news. It is a stream of audio content that can be accessed online or offline if you download it. It can be based on any subject area, ranging from difficult scientific topics to mundane life events. So, according to the readers’ tastes, they can choose the podcast. Podcasts are available free of cost and also in subscription. There are different types of podcasts, such as scripted podcasts, podcast novels, live podcasts, etc. Scripted podcasts are like radio dramas where fiction and stories are told. Podcast novels are like serialised audiobooks streamed online. Users can listen to it.

### 1.3.3 Hashtag Campaigns

A new trend observed in journalistic practice is hashtag campaigns. As citizen journalism is booming in the world, people have begun to participate and are very much opinionated. You might have seen a campaign titled *#blacklivesmatters* on social media in 2020. This hashtag campaign began when a black American, George Floyd, died while being arrested in Minneapolis, United States, by a policeman. This inhuman and terrific act raged the world, and many protests were conducted all over. In social media, users began to raise their concerns by writing under a hashtag titled ‘Black Lives Matter’. The symbol # is used in social media to find topics of the same subject. For instance, when you

search *#blacklivesmatters*, you will find posts written under this category. This also gives people a feeling of community unity. It also acts as a supporting hand to the victims or it is a measure of extending solidarity.

Twitter says that over 390 million people have made tweets on this subject. Now, this trend has become widespread in resistance and protest. The hashtag is also used for marketing purposes. To promote products and inform people about the products, hashtag campaigns are used.

### 1.3.4 Citizen Journalism

This is a new trend that has begun to make the journalistic field more participatory and democratic. Whether the term citizen is apt for denoting this new trend or not is still a question. As the term citizen itself has a problematic existence in the current world order, it may not be right to call journalism of people citizen journalism. But still, for this purpose, let’s use it here. This allows people to become reporters and gives them a public platform to share news and views. Citizen journalism is a 21<sup>st</sup>-century journalistic phenomenon where citizens become reporters.

WhatsApp has become the most-used app in 2020, with more than 53 crore users in India. Citizen journalism has initiated a boom in the quantity of news. There are many instances where those user generated contents get attention from people, and eventually, the popular-traditional media takes it to their newsrooms

### 1.3.5 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

This is a new technological invention where human intelligence is attributed to machines. It enables machines to work logical and cognitive activities without the continuous supervision of humans. Newsrooms are usually bombarded with news. Local, state,

national, and international news are loading back-to-back. In such situations, AI can help in sort news, deal with data, and perform many newsroom activities. Most of the news agencies uses AI in their journalistic process.

### 1.3.6 Diversity in Sources

Covid-19 has accelerated the need for digital journalism all throughout the world. As we know, social media use is increasing in India. It shows some of the prominent social media platforms that we use. WhatsApp has become the highest used app in 2020, with more than 53 crore users in India. While YouTube and Facebook secured second and third positions in the number of users. This points out that, in India, a large population uses social media platforms. This also became a major news source. Many news that we see in mainstream media are born on social media platforms. Artists especially get a public space to present themselves in front of the public. There are many artists who became known to many through social media. They then get into mass media platforms and gain more attention later.

As you know, we use the term Content creators to denote people who make their own content on platforms like *YouTube* or *Facebook*. They produce ideas and post them in an audio/visual/text format.

### 1.3.7 Short News

As we can see, new users tend to find news in short. Today's social media platforms are having a place for short videos with a duration

of 10- 30s. *Twitter* (now *X*) and *Instagram* have such facilities. Chatting application, *WhatsApp*, also has 30 second status option where one can upload short videos. In that way, news portals also began to produce short videos to present news. News portals like *Scroll* and *Quint* are using this technique widely through *YouTube*. They upload videos on news on *YouTube* and, lakhs of people who use *YouTube* watch it. This is also a new form of presenting news in an interesting way to the public. As the impact and spread of visual media are increasing, these short videos of news are reaching many people.

### 1.3.8 Mobile Journalism

Have you heard about MoJo? This is a new trend in journalism where journalists make use of portable devices like mobile phones for reporting. In this reporting, journalists take photographs, note down the facts, and report from the location itself. So, they do all of these activities from the place where the event takes place. In the wake of digital journalism, MoJo has become a widely used style among reporters. They go with a mobile phone and report.

For instance, imagine the inauguration of a metro rail in the city, and you are going to report it alone. Take a phone with a quality camera and a microphone in hand. Reach the location and collect the information. Then, you can take a selfie stick to give a live telecast of what is going on there. When you watch television, you can see many reporters doing this.



## Recap

- ▶ Evolving Journalism
- ▶ Pandemic Boosts Digital Journalism
- ▶ Rise of Citizen Journalists
- ▶ Mobile Journalism Revolution
- ▶ AI's Impact on Newsrooms
- ▶ Video-Audio News Format
- ▶ News Stories on Social Media
- ▶ Journalism's Participatory Shift
- ▶ Abundance and Reach of News

## Objective Questions

1. What is the term used for a collection of web pages and content related to specific areas?
2. Which Indian newspaper became the first to launch a website in 1995?
3. What is the combination of words that formed the term “podcast”?
4. Which hashtag campaign on social media protested against racial injustice?
5. Name the most used mobile application in India in 2020 according to the given information.
6. True or False: Citizen journalism encourages public participation in news reporting.
7. What technology is used to attribute human intelligence to machines for logical and cognitive activities?
8. Which social media platform secured the second position in terms of user base in India?
9. What term is used for people who create and post their own content on platforms like YouTube or Facebook?
10. What is the abbreviation used for mobile journalism, where reporters use portable devices for reporting?

## Answers

1. Websites
2. The Hindu
3. iPod-broadcast
4. Black Lives Matter
5. WhatsApp
6. True
7. Artificial Intelligence
8. YouTube
9. Content Creators
10. MoJo

## Assignments

1. How has the pandemic accelerated the growth of digital journalism, and what are the key changes it brought to news consumption patterns?
2. Discuss the role of citizen journalists in today's media landscape, and analyse the impact they have on shaping public opinion.
3. Explore the transformative effects of mobile journalism on reporting, and assess its advantages and limitations as a reporting tool.
4. How has artificial intelligence influenced newsrooms, and what are the potential benefits and challenges of integrating AI in journalistic practices?
5. Investigate the rise of video-audio news formats and their effectiveness in engaging modern audiences. Compare traditional news presentations with this new multimedia approach.

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# Unit 4

## Challenges of Journalism

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ comprehend the importance of press freedom and the challenges faced by journalists in India.
- ▶ recognise the issues of fake news, propaganda, paid news, and their impact on journalism.
- ▶ analyse the need for responsible journalism and ethical practices in news reporting.
- ▶ discuss the role of journalists in covering critical situations and disasters.

### Prerequisites

Journalism, as we discussed, is an abruptly changing field. It changes every second and acts like a volcano now and then. Information comes as a bullet train and embarrasses sometimes. The information abundance and also the intensity is a matter of concern these days.

Journalism is a big field in case of labour and the wideness it possesses. In the world there are many languages and each language has its own journalism practice. All differ in one or the other way. Some countries have certain rules and regulations for the journalistic profession. In some countries, journalism is controlled by the government. Because journalism is capable of opinion making and informing people. As the world is moving to globalisation and market liberalisations, media in countries are also changing to a great extent. When we are discussing the challenges of journalism, it is as important as studying the culture and politics of societies.

### Keywords

Fake news, press freedom, propaganda, paid news, data abundance, 24\*7 news channels, social media feeds, threats for journalists, censorship



## Discussion

### 1.4.1 Challenges of Journalism

Scandinavian countries ranked in the first positions in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index conducted by *Reporters Without*

*Borders*. Out of the 180 countries, India is positioned at 142, which counts as ‘bad’ for journalism.

Read the report published in *The Wire* below.

#### ***Eleven Journalists Killed, 46 Attacked, 27 Cases of Police Action: Report on Press Freedom 2017***

*From Gauri Lankesh’s murder to defamation suits, attacks on the media have become commonplace.*

*New Delhi: The ‘India Freedom Report: Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression in 2017’ by The Hoot confirms with data what an alarming year 2017 was for journalists, including photographers and stringers, reporting from different parts of the country. Last year saw 11 journalists murdered, the reason for three of which can be connected to their work, 46 cases of attacks and 27 cases of police action including arrest and cases filed.*

*In September, Gauri Lankesh, editor of the weekly Lankesh Patrike – a magazine that has been described as an “anti-establishment” publication – was shot dead at her residence in Bengaluru. Two journalists were killed in Tripura – Santanu Bhowmick from the news channel Din Raat while he was covering clashes between two rival tribal associations, and Sudip Datta Bhaumik, a senior journalist with Syandan Patrika, who was shot dead by a Tripura State Rifles trooper during an altercation in Bodhjung Nagar in Tripura.*

*Journalists faced the most number of attacks from the police and from politicians, as the table below shows. These include the journalists injured during the violence following the arrest of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Singh in August 2017. Television vans were set on fire and reporters and camera persons were injured in the clashes.*

*Andhra Pradesh saw the largest number of attacks on and threats to journalists. In December 2017, the police in Hyderabad arrested a member of a Christian evangelical organisation for allegedly giving a speech against ‘bharat mata’ in August 2016.*

*The highest number of state actions for internet and social media-related incidents was recorded in Karnataka.*

*In Tamil Nadu, the number of defamation cases have gone down sharply following Jayalalithaa's death in December 2016. It recorded a low of seven cases, with the AIADMK filing just one, and not against a journalist. This sets a new record for the party that had filed an estimated 200 defamation cases against journalists, social activists and opposition leaders between 2011 and 2016.*

*The largest category of complainants were politicians (25), followed by corporate houses (11) and film and TV personalities (nine). A further breakup of the politicians shows that of the 25 who filed complaints, 13 belong to the BJP.*

### **News censorship**

*A number of state governments restricted media access to various events, the list includes the governments of Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Odisha, Rajasthan and West Bengal.*

*The report mentions numerous instances of this, some of which include:*

- 1. The BJP-led government in Goa was accused of restricting media access to the secretariat and holding selective media briefings on orders from chief minister Manohar Parrikar.*
- 2. In June, electronic media in West Bengal's Darjeeling were asked to stop airing Gorkhaland protests. The same month, Naveen Patnaik's BJD-led Odisha government asked officials not to respond to the media without prior permission from the state's government.*
- 3. After weeks of political violence between the CPI(M) and the BJP in Kerala, when the leaders of the two parties gathered at a hotel to broker a truce in August last year, Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan chose to bar the media from reporting the event and had them removed from the room.*
- 4. In October, the Vasundhara Raje-led BJP government in Rajasthan brought an ordinance – the Criminal Laws (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill – that amends the Criminal Code of Procedure (CrPC), 1973, and enhances levels of immunity to public servants. According to the new rules, no investigation could be ordered by the police under Section 156 or a magistrate under Section 190 into allegations against public servants, judges and magistrates. Journalists are barred from reporting these allegations, unless and until the state government sanctions the prosecution. It was withdrawn following widespread outcry.*

5. *In December, reporters in Jammu and Kashmir were not allowed to cover the activities of the government of India's interlocutor Dineshwar Sharma's maiden visit to Kupwara district in the state.*

*Apart from censorship, the report also has a category called self-censorship, and 2017 had numerous examples of such cases as well. Some instances are the Sahara-Birla papers, which most media houses did not cover, "perhaps because of the defamatory implications of reporting on this," the report says.*

*India fell three places in the international press freedom rankings in April last year. The ranking, based on an index of press freedom report by the global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders, said journalists were less free under the Narendra Modi government. The Economic Times had carried the story but it was later taken down. The Times of India took down the story as well.*

(Boishakhi Dutt- *The Wire*)

It is very important to have free and unbiased journalism practice in a country because it acts as a middleman between the government and the people. They must inform people of the decisions of the government on welfare and policy. Media inform how the elected representatives work in the parliaments. How do they make laws? How is the budget allocated? How much money is spent in the country? Why does a country need to purchase weapons? All this information reaches people through the media.

#### 1.4.1.1 Fake News

Fake news may look like real news in structure and content, but they are fabricated. Making fake news can be for many reasons. It may have financial reasons, ideological reasons or any other personal purposes. Whatever so, it is an unethical act towards society. So now there are fake news detection tools to find whether it's true or false. Because sometimes the impact they are causing is very severe. Fake news also includes photo manipulations

and content manipulations.

#### 1.4.1.2 Propaganda

It comes from the Latin term *propagere* which means *to spread*. Media is considered a strong medium for spreading messages. In the time of Hitler, the fascist ruler in Germany, it is said he used films to propagate his ideology. Now, visual media has become a highly influential medium. It reaches thousands of thousands of people within seconds. If you want to send a particular idea to the public, the media can be used as a tool for that. You have learned sociological theories of the media. As the Cultivation theory (by George Gerbner) proposes, when people are exposed to media for a long time, they tend to behave according to that.

#### 1.4.1.3 Paid News

Paid news can be defined as "Any news or analysis appearing in any media (Print & Electronic) for a price in cash or kind as a consideration"- The Press Council of India.

This is how the Press Council of India, a statutory body that was established in 1966 by Parliament, defined paid news. In this activity, people pay to make news. Media produces news in favour of the party that pays. You might have seen advertisements in the media. It is a paid promotion of a product or a service. But paid news is different from that. According to the Press Council of India, paid news is “any news or analysis appearing in any media (print & electronic) for a price in cash or kind as consideration”. It is also

considered a threat to democracy. It is said that only after the 2009-general election, political paid news became a serious threat. It can be in different ways. This may allow the media to avoid the coverage of certain events. For example, elections use paid news as an effective way for promotions. The private persons for some interest pay the media to promote their candidate through television channels and newspapers. Nowadays, social media also have accusations of doing paid news.

### Representation of the People Act, 1951

The Union and state elections are regulated by the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The main purpose of this Act is to ensure free and fair elections in the country. Therefore, since election-time “paid news” undermines free and fair elections, it is recommended that Section 123 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, should be suitably amended so as to declare any payment for the publication of news as a corrupt practice or an “electoral malpractice” and should be made a punishable offence.

#### 1.4.1.4 Journalists at Risk

Read the given statement by *Editors Guild India*

*The Editors Guild of India urges the Union Government to declare journalists as frontline workers and be allowed priority vaccination against Coronavirus, along with other frontline workers. News organizations have been relentlessly covering the pandemic, elections, and other current affairs in an effort to ensure that the flow of news and information to readers continues unabated. News media is at is included in essential services. Therefore, it will only be fair that journalists be given this cover of protection, especially in the face of number of infected rising to astronomical levels. Without the protection of a vaccination, media persons are finding it very difficult to discharge their professional responsibilities.*

*Therefore, EGI calls on the Union Government to immediately get all the journalists, regardless of age, vaccinated so that there is no disruption in their work during this critical time.*

( April 15, 2021: *The Editors Guild of India*)





Journalists work even during the most difficult times of their lives. They get exposed to protests, violence, disasters, and traumatic situations. It is very important to ensure the safety of journalists at work.

Imagine you are in a zone. You may witness death and pain, and at the same time, you have to report it in the media. Your emotions will conflict with your duty. Dealing with these situations is challenging for journalists.

### **Hurricane Katrina: Flooding, Muck, and Human Misery**

*“The ‘blast zone’ of Hurricane Katrina was bigger than that of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” noted Wall Street Journal writer and editor Ken Wells. “Historically, not since the plagues of London (1665-66) has a great city been so depopulated. Reporting was done under very extreme circumstances.” Not only was the scope of damage huge; the logistics were nearly impossible. The storm closed major airports in the region, wrapped trees around broken power lines, turned interstate highways into obstacle courses, and uprooted well over a million people. The city of New Orleans was turned into a lake that was 20 feet deep in some places. Boats became the only way to get around—and boats were not on anyone’s planning list when the event began. The strain of the journalistic effort was intensified for local journalists by the fact that they were victims themselves. They were worried about more than their professional responsibilities. They were frantic about their families, their neighbors, and about their homes, many of which were destroyed by the winds and waters.*

*Many lost contact with their loved ones. It was not that they did not know whether their families were safe—they did not know in some cases where they were in the wake of disaster. And, journalistically, all the correspondents who covered Katrina were on their own. There were no newsrooms to provide comfort and support a few miles up the street, no rooms for sleep, no convenient power outlets to recharge batteries. Many of the reporters covering the flooding of New Orleans were working out of Baton Rouge, some 80 miles northwest. Others could find no place closer than Lafayette—another 40 miles up Interstate 10 from Baton Rouge. And a great number of them were bunking on couches and sleeping on floors even in those towns. And yet they did the job. Most would say that, overall, they did the job well in spite of numerous mistakes. Journalists provided information when information was almost impossible to get. They informed a beleaguered public who needed facts that literally could save their lives. They mourned the loss of life and the suffering of those who faced unbelievably harsh and trying personal circumstances. They harangued government officials whose responses to the physical suffering were universally considered to be inept.*

by Guido H. Stempel III (Covering disaster of Katrina and Rita)

This is an anecdote from the journalists reporting the Katrina hurricane hit on the American Gulf in 2005.

#### 1.4.1.5 Censorship

Censorship is a way of controlling the media and press to stay within certain rules of the country. Different countries have different censorship regulations.

According to the Information Technology Rules 2011, objectionable content includes anything that “threatens the unity, integrity, defence, security or sovereignty of India, friendly relations with foreign states or public order.”

Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) was formed in 1951 under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting the of government of India. Films produced in India are certified by the Board before screening in front of the public.

#### What is important?

24-hour news cycle has increased the demand for news. This also created a competition among news corps. As of now, journalism is also growing as a big industry. There are big news agencies that work with thousands of reporters. It is both labour-intensive and capital-intensive field. Nowadays, advertisements are considered the major income source for media groups. Television channels, newspapers and new media also rely on advertisements. So, they will definitely fail to see the corruption of their major income groups. Though there are media that stay away from these behaviours, there are big media corporations that choose to act for their own profit.

Channels are competing to increase the ratings and viewers. This also brought sensationalism to journalism. Sensationalism aims to produce excitement and interest in

people so that they will decide to stay with one media. After the arrival of visual media and 24-hours news channels, sensationalism became a major event in journalism. Sometimes, journalists cook up some kind of stories to make it sensational. Making news more emotional, controversial, and evoking is used to create sensationalism.

There is also a term, yellow journalism, that refers to the practice of giving exaggerated and manipulated news. It is considered an unethical practice in the journalistic field. Media manipulation is also an important challenge to deal with the journalistic field. Here, the media uses content selectively to promote certain ideologies. This raises questions on the authenticity of media.

#### 1.4.1.6 Clickbait

These are very commonly seen news thumbnails. Sometimes, you may come across these kinds of thumbnails that have catchy texts or visuals. They are usually produced to get attention from the readers. Sometimes, they are misleading and fraudulent. Social media users will be very much exposed to such clickbaits.

#### 1.4.1.7 Smoke Screen

Sometimes media, that have paid from private institutions or people try to distract people to a more convenient subject. This will help the beneficiaries by hiding the real issues. This is like having a smoke in front of the eye. The vision will be blurred. All these practices like, paid news, fake news, clickbait and many more, are creating a kind of disbelief towards media among people. People tend to think that the news produced in the media is not fully true.

Now, read the following news content and discuss among yourselves:



### **Fact check: Global Survey by Edelman didn't say Indian media is the least trusted. They said the opposite**

*It is the sort of report that offers the opportunity for every 'little guy' to point at the 'big guy' and say: 'Haha, you got no pants'.*

*In January, a number of such websites that give a lot of us the latest happenings registered their shock/awe/disgust over a report that took a look at the global perception of people about media. The websites said the Indian media was perceived to be the second worst-trusted organisation across the world. Considering the 'fact' that the World Economic Forum had supposedly said it, it was easier for the story to go 'viral' on the peg that media's credibility is sinking across the world.*

*It turns out though that those who peddled this around did not do what media houses pay their employees to do. Check facts.*

*In an 'expose', the website Boom Live followed the so-called modus operandi of actually going back and finding the source of these allegations.*

*The 'story' came from a report originally published by news website Quartz in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF) which carried a table at the end of the copy.*

*The table was A PART OF a global survey across 28 countries carried by the communications group Edelman on their website titled: '2017 Edelman Trust Barometer', and traced by Boom Live. The survey was trying to measure the levels of trust that the public, across the world, have in their institutions i.e. the media, NGOs and businesses based on feedback from 1150 college-educated respondents from each country who seriously consume news.*

*What is interesting however is how Indian media actually comes out on top on perception.*

*If those pointing fingers had even reached the twelfth slide of a 66-slide presentation, they would have found the table above. It says that though the trust in the media has declined across the world, the Indian media garners a 66% trust-vote, three percent higher than that in 2016. It is also the second-most-trusted after our counter-parts from Indonesia.*

*Same is the case with governments, NGOs and Businesses—while Indians' trust on them has been rising, the trust quotient across the world has seen a fall...*

*And coming back to the first table that everyone raised a hoohaa about, it came after the WEF tweeted the story with the table. The 'non-mainstream' guys lost it when they 'found out' how bad we were on the inside.*

*Clarifying, the reporter who wrote the Quartz story told Boom Live that the table did not intend to compare institutions across countries. It simply listed the least-trusted institutions in all of them, and India's name was listed alphabetically, (between Australia and Ireland) as one of the institutions within India that its public does not trust much.*

*That is about all.*

*The report was not intended to say everyone in the Indian media was doing their job wrong. It was, in fact, trying to show the 'loss of trust' the public has when stories fail to meet basic standards(read facts).*

*(Outlook Magazine, 14 March 2017)*

<https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/factcheck-global-survey-by-edelman-didnt-say-indian-media-is-the-least-trusted-t/298215>

## Recap

- ▶ Free and unbiased journalism is crucial.
- ▶ Journalism faces numerous challenges due to its vastness.
- ▶ Being a journalist entails risks and requires mental strength and political awareness.
- ▶ Safety measures are essential for journalists in hazardous situations.
- ▶ Paid news and fake news pose significant threats to journalism.
- ▶ Censorship can be a double-edged sword, limiting media freedom.



## Objective Questions

1. Which Scandinavian country ranked first in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index?
2. In which position did India rank in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index?
3. Who was the Indian journalist killed in Bengaluru in 2017?
4. What is the term used for news stories that are intentionally fabricated or manipulated?
5. According to the Press Council of India, what is the definition of “paid news”?
6. Which Act regulates the conduct of Union and State elections in India?
7. Which organization urged the government to declare journalists as frontline workers for priority COVID-19 vaccination?
8. In which year did the Editors Guild of India make the call for priority vaccination of journalists?
9. What term is used to describe the practice of exaggerating or manipulating news to create excitement or controversy?
10. Which organization’s survey found that Indian media is the second-most-trusted among the countries surveyed?

## Answers

1. Norway
2. 142
3. Gauri Lankesh
4. Fake News
5. News Paid in Cash or Kind
6. Representation of the People Act
7. Editors Guild of India
8. 2021
9. Sensationalism
10. Edelman



## Assignments

1. Why is free and unbiased journalism considered crucial in today's society?
2. Discuss the challenges faced by journalists due to the vastness of the field of journalism, and how these challenges impact their work.
3. How does being a journalist involve risks, and what are the necessary attributes like mental strength and political awareness that a journalist should possess?
4. Explain the importance of implementing safety measures for journalists when reporting in hazardous situations, and provide examples of such situations.
5. Analyse the impact of paid news and fake news on the credibility and integrity of journalism, and suggest measures to address these threats.

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## Suggested Readings

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# BLOCK - 02

## Reporting

# Unit 1

## News Values and Types of News

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ differentiate between news and information based on their characteristics
- ▶ familiarise with the elements that shape news and make it newsworthy
- ▶ identify the different types of news, such as hard news and soft news
- ▶ recognise the various news values that determine the importance of a news story

### Prerequisites

Can we imagine a world without news? Reading news is a normal part of our daily life. News comes from ordinary events that make us curious and surprised. We receive news in many ways: newspapers at our doorsteps, mobile notifications, and TV headlines. Everyone gets news every day. A newspaper's main job is to collect and report news at local, state, regional, national, and international levels.

Have you ever thought about the nature of news? Why do you watch, listen to, or read it? The answer is information. Without it, you feel isolated politically, economically, and socially. News is our daily information source. News existed even before mass media. In the past, people shared local news by talking in markets. Friends exchanging information was personal news. Letters to relatives and friends were also news. Information exchange has evolved from early society in many forms.

In this unit, we will discuss news, news values, and types of news, with detailed examples of each subtopic.

### Keywords

News, 5W's and 1H. Timeliness, Impact, Conflict, Prominence, Hard news, Soft news, Human Interest, Lead

### Discussion

"News is about the economic, political, social and cultural hierarchies we call nation and society. For the most part, news reports on those at or near the top of the hierarchies and on those particularly at the bottom who

threaten them to an audience most of whom are located in the vast middle range between top and bottom".

-Herbert J. Gans

### 2.1.1 What is News?

*“News and truth are not the same thing. The function of news is to signalize an event; the function of truth is to bring to light the hidden facts. The press if it did its job well, could elucidate the news. It is like the beam of a searchlight that moves restlessly about, bringing one episode and then another out of the darkness into vision”, wrote the great American journalist”*

Walter Lippman

News is a detailed report of current events. It is basically information about an event that happened or will happen in the future. News is a report on recent issues or topics seen in newspapers, television, radio, and the internet. News must be unfamiliar, new, and about the people. It is an evolution that happened in the past and later delivered to the people and ignites interest and curiosity.

For example, the people of Kerala heard the word coronavirus when it landed in Wuhan, China. Until it reached the state of Kerala, people had a vague idea of the dreadful pandemic that could take the lives of many people in a short time. After Kerala reported its first confirmation case in India, people in the state became unstable and panicked. They started to research the pandemic and how dreadful it is. Thus, the news becomes close to the people as it is in their place and adds more flavours of curiosity. They began to take precautions and prevention methods. Other news such as petrol hike news, budget news, election news, and development news also create an interest among the receptors as it is about the people, and this news can affect them. Thus, we can define news as accurate, unbiased, significant content of facts offered to people in a timely and interesting manner.

Now, let's learn some definitions of news;



“News is an accurate, unbiased account of the significant facts of a timely happening that is of interest to the readers of the newspaper that prints the account”.

William S. Maulsby

“News is what is important because of its impact on society; it is what people need to know and what they want to know”.

Sam Zelman

### 2.1.2 What Shapes a News?

News is complete if it answers the 5Ws and 1H, which are the six elements of a news story. These questions are: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Always answer these questions in a news story; otherwise, the story will be meaningless. This is the main rule of a news story. The first paragraph, known as the ‘intro’ or lead, should include the 5Ws and 1H. The lead should convey the subject, event, main issue, and main character.

For example, on May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old, was killed in Minneapolis while being restrained by police officer Derek Chauvin. Chauvin handcuffed Floyd and knelt on him for eight to nine minutes.

- ▶ **Who:** George Floyd
- ▶ **When:** May 25, 2020
- ▶ **Where:** Minneapolis, United States
- ▶ **Why:** Racism; a white police officer killed a black man.
- ▶ **What:** George Floyd was killed by police officer Derek Chauvin.
- ▶ **How:** Derek Chauvin arrested Floyd for a counterfeit bill, handcuffed him, and pinned him down for eight to nine minutes until Floyd was motionless.

### 2.1.3 News and Information are Different

When you step out of your home, you see



a lot of information everywhere—at the bus stop, railway station, or on the streets. For example, you can see information about using sanitisers, maintaining a two-meter distance, and following COVID-19 protocols from the government. This is not news but information for people to follow. So, how does news differ from information? News is always unusual and out of the ordinary. It includes events like government raising petrol prices, weather changes, disasters, pandemics, political scams, and corruption. News comes from the word “new.” People are interested in new and unpredictable things. They usually don’t read what they already know; they like new and fresh content.

### 2.1.4 News Values

Many incidents happen every day, but only some become breaking news. Have you ever wondered why? This is because certain news values make a story newsworthy. These values vary from person to person, society, state, and country. News values are norms that help reporters or journalists select and present news. Let’s learn about different news values.

#### a) Impact

News with a great impact on many people has high news value. For example, a hike in petrol prices affects many people’s lives. Emotional stories also have a strong impact. For instance, the photo of Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian boy who drowned while crossing to the Greek island of Kos, captured by Nilufer Demir, shook the world. Such stories influence many people with their impactful subjects.

#### b) Timeliness

News should be timely. It should be recent and current. Two-week-old news is not news. It should be fresh and new. However, timeliness varies by news medium. Newspapers cover

news from the past 24 hours. Magazines can cover stories from the past week or even a month. Television channels consider every second or minute as timely. Each medium varies in how quickly it disseminates news.

#### c) Prominence

Prominence is about well-known people, events, places, or organisations. For example, if a normal person plays football, it’s not news, but if a celebrity or a minister plays, it’s news. News about the death or divorce of famous people always gets attention. Similarly, famous places like Qutab Minar or events like Diwali and Christmas attract readers.

#### d) Proximity

News is more relevant if it’s close to you. An earthquake in the US might be a small news column in India, but an earthquake in India will be a lead story. Proximity relies on culture and emotions, making people more interested in news about their place and country.

#### e) Conflict

News often involves disagreements or arguments. For example, the Indian farmer’s protest against the government’s farmer’s bill was widely covered. Conflict news is prime bait for media, leading to public debate and discussions. Political news often involves conflicts and is very prominent in the media.

#### f) Oddity

Unusual or extraordinary news grabs attention. For example, a pregnant woman was airlifted during a flood on August 18, 2020, in Aluva, Ernakulam district. This surprising and emotional event became viral. Odd news is another important news value.

#### g) Human Interest or Emotion

Human interest or emotional stories

captivate people. Readers want to know about others' lives, cultures, and survival adventures. Stories with a human-interest angle are widely accepted, and the media focuses on the lives of people in various parts of the world. These stories inspire and astonish readers by showcasing selfless actions and unique lifestyles.

For example, a pet dog tied to a car was dragged by its owner along a road in Ernakulum district, Kerala. The video went viral, gaining emotional reactions from many. The dog was later adopted by an animal welfare organisation, which also filed a complaint against the owner.

#### **h) Usefulness**

News isn't just for inspiration and emotion; it also helps the public in many ways. For example, during COVID-19 in Kerala, the media played a crucial role. News about social distancing and sanitiser use helped people stay safe. Other useful news includes organ donation and weather forecasts, which help the public in practical ways.

#### **i) Disaster**

Disasters, whether natural or manmade, have news value. Natural disasters include earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, tsunamis, and landslides. Manmade disasters include road, train, and air accidents. If a celebrity or famous politician is involved in an accident, it creates a major news impact.

#### **j) Educational Value**

Media often features career or course-oriented news. This helps students pursue their career dreams. Examples include job opportunities, vacancies, and admission news.

#### **k) Contemporary News**

Current events are the lifeblood of news.



Current news is about what's happening now around the world. For example, daily COVID-19 updates in Kerala, election date announcements, news on election candidates, and continuous heavy rain updates with precautions. People are interested in current happenings, so daily updates on extraordinary events bring curiosity among readers.

### **2.1.5 Types of News**

We have learned about news, its values, what shapes it, and how it differs from information. Now, let's look at the types of news. You encounter various types of news daily through newspapers, radio, television, and digital media. News can be short, lengthy, or descriptive, with facts, figures, and subjective elements. Some news entertains, while some makes us think and influences us. This variety makes news different. Let's examine the types of news.

#### **2.1.5.1 Hard News/Straight News**

We start with hard news in newspapers. Hard news stories are compact, factual, and objective. Their main goal is to inform people about current events that affect their lives. Hard news includes no analysis, just straight facts and comments from people interviewed by the reporter. These stories cover serious topics like politics, economics, crime, and health, and they have a big societal impact. Hard news focuses on what happened, who was affected, and how it happened. Reporters write hard news on a strict deadline due to its urgency. It follows the inverted pyramid style.

Examples:

- ▶ Petrol price hiked today.
- ▶ School bus crashes in Ernakulum.
- ▶ COVID-19: Kerala government imposes curfew in three districts.

### 2.1.5.2 Soft News

Soft news is not compact and heavy but more subjective in tone and content. It covers topics like human interest, entertainment, lifestyle, and fashion. Soft news does not directly affect the audience. Journalists can be creative and entertaining in these stories. People enjoy soft news as it is relaxing, inspirational, and entertaining. Soft news stories do not have strict deadlines and the writing style is flexible. The primary role is to draw the reader's interest. Soft news does not follow the inverted pyramid style.

Examples:

- ▶ 67-year-old retired teacher from IIT-Madras zone cracks GATE. (Times of India, March 23, 2021).
- ▶ Tamil Nadu welding laborer makes a remote-controlled bed for his ailing wife; gets awarded. (One India news portal, March 26, 2019).
- ▶ Kerala farmer shares how to grow potatoes, carrots, and more with dry leaves. (Better India, March 8, 2021).

### Recap

- ▶ News: Detailed current events report
- ▶ News covers past and future events.
- ▶ News values guide news writing.
- ▶ News should be factual, not fiction.
- ▶ A good news answers 5W's and 1H.
- ▶ First paragraph: Lead or Intro.
- ▶ News and information differ.
- ▶ News values: Impact, Timeliness, etc.
- ▶ Hard news: Rigid, serious, researched.
- ▶ Soft news: Entertainment, lifestyle, human interest.

### Objective Questions

1. What are the six elements that a news story should answer?
2. Who defined news as "an accurate, unbiased account of the significant facts of a timely happening"?
3. Which news value is associated with events or stories that can create a great impact on many people?
4. True or False: Timeliness is not an important factor for news stories.
5. Which news value is related to the involvement of famous personalities, places, or organizations?

6. What is the term used for news stories that are factual, compact, and objective?
7. Which type of news deals with topics like human interest, entertainment, and life-style?
8. Which style of writing is typically used for hard news stories?
9. What is the term used for news stories that are extraordinary or unfamiliar?

## Answers

1. 5Ws, 1H
2. William S. Maulsby
3. Impact
4. False
5. Prominence
6. Hard News
7. Soft News
8. Inverted Pyramid
9. Oddity

## Assignments

1. Explain the key elements of a news report and how it differs from fiction writing.
2. How does the lead or introductory paragraph set the tone for a news article, and why is it essential?
3. Provide examples of hard news stories and soft news stories, highlighting their distinctive characteristics and purposes.
4. Discuss the significance of news values, such as impact and timeliness, in shaping the presentation of news.
5. Analyse a recent news article and assess how well it adheres to the 5W's and 1H principles in providing comprehensive information.

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## Unit 2

# News Gathering and Cultivating News Sources

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise various methods of News Gathering
- ▶ learn to conduct different types of interviews effectively
- ▶ develop skills to build a robust source list by leveraging people, press releases, beats, and networking
- ▶ utilise diverse sources for news gathering

### Prerequisites

In the fast-paced landscape of news and media, gathering information and fostering reliable sources is a cornerstone of journalism. Journalists are tasked with cultivating a diverse and extensive network of sources, each offering a distinctive perspective on the events that shape our world. From high-ranking government officials to grassroots community leaders, from eyewitnesses at the scene to subject matter experts in various fields, these sources provide invaluable insights and firsthand accounts that breathe life into news stories.

Through skilful and meticulous news gathering and the nurturing of relationships with dependable sources, journalists create rich information that accurately reflects the complexities of our society. This multitude of sources and information empowers readers and viewers to be active participants in understanding and interpreting the unfolding narrative of our times. By providing comprehensive coverage and presenting diverse viewpoints, journalists play a crucial role in informing and engaging the public, thereby fostering a well-informed and participatory society.

### Keywords

Newsgathering, Sources, Source list, Interviews, Research, Press Conferences, News Agencies, Vox Populi, Person-On-the-street interviews, Insiders, Outsiders

### Discussion

#### 2.2.1 News Gathering

“The best news isn’t planned... it’s just responding to events as they unfold. But no

newsroom can operate without some degree of planning. This includes checking important dates for a developing story or finding a follow-up that can help fill a gap on a quiet day. In television, much of the lighter end-of-



program features can be pre-planned as they can easily be held over to another day if the ‘on the day’ news agenda changes.” Simon Hare (*BBC Reporter*)

News is essentially a story, and without relevant information, it doesn’t qualify as good news. How do we acquire this crucial information? The answer lies in news gathering. This process involves gathering sources, researching, and obtaining information for various media platforms such as print, broadcast, radio, and online portals. The primary skill required by a journalist is methodical research for a news story. This task can vary in duration, ranging from a few days to several months, involving interviews and numerous calls. Despite its complexity, it’s imperative to ensure that the information gathered is accurate and pertinent to the news being covered. Let’s explore the steps involved in gathering news.

### 2.2.1.1 Steps of Gathering News

#### a. Observation

Observation is a vital tool for journalists in crafting a compelling story. A proficient observer utilizes their senses—eyes, ears, and mind—to discern figures, facts, and information. The ability to spot something extraordinary captivates readers. Developing keen observation skills is more about real-life experiences than simply reading a book.

A skilled observer comprehends the various facets of an event and the evolving situations. The act of observation requires discretion—never let subjects know they are being watched, as this may lead to unnatural behaviour. Put yourself in their shoes; human nature tends to make one self-conscious when under scrutiny. Therefore, maintaining discretion is crucial during investigations. Prior planning and establishing guidelines are essential before embarking on an observation.

Observation is not just about noting attitudes and behaviours; it is also about observing reactions to specific situations, adding depth to the story. A good reporter is also an adept listener. For example, when reporting on COVID-19 precautions for cancer patients at a hospital, it’s essential to listen to the doctor attentively and demonstrate empathy. Observation is an active skill in news gathering, contributing significantly to the reporting process.

#### b. Mobile Conversations

Imagine going a day without your mobile phone—it seems unimaginable, right? In today’s world, the mobile phone has become an indispensable device. For journalists and reporters, it holds a pivotal role, making their work more efficient and saving time. From scheduling interviews with busy individuals to conducting short interrogations, mobile phones streamline communication. However, before engaging in a phone conversation for news gathering, it’s essential to consider some points:

- a) Have a clear idea of the information you want to convey.
- b) Always have a notebook and pen ready; avoid rushing during the conversation.
- c) Ask for names and numbers to be repeated to ensure accuracy.
- d) Be precise and articulate when asking questions.
- e) Maintain politeness and patience throughout the conversation.
- f) Emphasize factual accuracy.
- g) Lastly, record the conversation using a call recorder, ensuring consent from the other party beforehand.

While the telephone is a convenient tool for news gathering, it's important to recognize that it's not the only tool. It simplifies the process but doesn't replace other methods. Stepping out of the comfort zone can lead to more comprehensive news gathering.

### c. Research

Research is a crucial step in news gathering, significantly impacting the quality of the news story. It involves amplifying or investigating the news to be covered, ensuring completeness, accuracy, balance, and understanding. Research sources include libraries, archived newspapers, magazines, the internet, and social media. Technological advancements, especially the internet, have greatly benefitted journalists, providing access to blogs and social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Twitter, in particular, has emerged as a primary source of news gathering, with hashtags and tweets from celebrities or government officials serving as valuable sources.

### d. Insiders and Outsiders

Consider writing a story about whether COVID-19 can be transmitted from a woman to her unborn or newborn baby. The primary sources would include COVID-19 medical experts, gynaecologists, and scientists—referred to as insiders. On the other hand, outsiders, such as parents, their families, and other affected pregnant women, also provide valuable insights. Some journalists may disregard information from outsiders, assuming it lacks authenticity. However, involving both insiders and outsiders can lead to a more comprehensive and accurate storyline.

#### 2.2.1.2 Cultivating News Sources

According to James Stewart, a Pulitzer Prize

Winner, in his book *Follow the Story*, “No story is any better than the facts within it.” Indeed, facts form the backbone of every news story. But where do these facts originate? They come from various sources that journalists tap into. The best sources provide broader perspectives. While many assume that news stories rely solely on eyewitnesses and individuals directly involved, a closer look reveals a plethora of sources contributing to both news stories and features. (The difference between a feature and a news story will be discussed in the next chapter). Now, let us explore how sources are cultivated.

#### a. Information From People

A journalist is always alert, keen, and observant when conversing with individuals, aiming to uncover the best leads for a story. Journalists navigate their lives surrounded by an abundance of information, skillfully extracting the most compelling stories from the masses. Gathering information from people is not an easy task; it requires trust and understanding. Journalists approach individuals with respect, nurturing warm relationships that often span years. These individuals may serve as primary or secondary sources, and sometimes even as the main participants in an event. Their insights shed light on different perspectives, new ideas, and additional sources. Successful journalists build trustful relationships with their sources, enabling them to craft relevant and impactful stories.

#### b. Building a Source List

How do you start crafting a story with numerous sources? It's a crucial consideration! The essence of a news story lies in the individuals from whom you gather information. Source formation varies; some provide focused information, while others ignite story ideas. Crafting an exceptional



story requires thorough research and source building. Ask yourself these questions to construct a source list:

a) What angles should the story encompass? b) Is the story local, national, or international in scope? c) Are there previous related stories? If yes, what points were covered or omitted, and what remains to be explored? d) If there are no previous stories, create a mind map, add focused points, and build a comprehensive source list.

For example, let's say you're covering mobile phone addiction in children. Begin by outlining the story, then identify sources such as parents, teachers, doctors or psychiatrists, experts, and children themselves.

#### **c. Beat**

A news beat refers to a designated area—geographical or subject-specific—assigned to a reporter to gather news regularly. This could include police stations, courts, universities, local government bodies, and political parties. Reporters monitor activities in their assigned beats, relying on trusted sources to report the news. Through continuous monitoring, reporters become well-versed in their beats, providing insightful commentary. They also cultivate potential sources within their beats, making beat reporters invaluable to news organizations.

#### **d. Press Releases**

Press releases, also known as handouts, are official statements or announcements prepared by individuals or organisations for publication in the media. They can be distributed physically or electronically and serve as a public relations tool to disseminate information, announce policy changes, or introduce new initiatives. Assessing the newsworthiness of press releases helps journalists make informed decisions and

develop sources for their reporting.

#### **e. Press Conference or News Conference**

A press conference is a formal meeting held by various entities, such as ministries, departments, or businesses, to communicate information to the public via media representatives. Specific topics are discussed, and reporters engage in critical questioning sessions based on the statements made. The relevant organizations arrange the conference details, such as time, venue, and topic. Journalists often uncover leads or sources for their news stories during press conferences, as they provide direct access to key figures and potential developments.

#### **f. Seminars, Symposia, Workshops**

Seminars, symposia, and workshops serve as rich sources of information where important decisions, findings, suggestions, and analyses are presented. Discussions in these events may spark controversial statements and ideas, offering journalists numerous story ideas and potential sources.

#### **g. Social Networking Sites**

Social networking sites play a pivotal role in news gathering, requiring journalists to stay alert and updated. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter host vast amounts of information and facilitate connections with the public. Journalists utilize these platforms to discover trending topics, gather stories, contact sources, and collaborate, as content is readily available and accessible.

#### **h. Government and Non-Governmental Agencies**

Government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) serve as valuable sources of news and announcements. Information from district collectors, ministers,

and other officials, as well as NGOs focusing on various causes like the environment, human rights, and childcare, provide journalists with substantial data and insights for their stories.

#### i. News Agencies

News agencies collect, write, and distribute news to various media outlets and government

agencies. Journalists can obtain news stories and cultivate sources from these agencies, whether for follow-up stories or fresh leads. News agencies serve as abundant sources of information, aiding journalists in crafting compelling lead stories.

**Table: Important news agencies in the world**

| Name of the Agency         | Year                              | Headquarters  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Press Trust Of India       | Registered: 1947<br>Started: 1949 | New Delhi     |
| United News of India       | 1961                              | New Delhi     |
| Associated Press           | 1845                              | New York      |
| Reuters                    | 1851                              | London        |
| Agence France Presse       | 1835                              | Paris         |
| United Press International | 1907                              | Washington DC |
| ITAR-TASS                  | 1904                              | Moscow        |
| Hindustan Samachar         | 1948                              | New Delhi     |
| Samachar Bharati           | 1948                              | New Delhi     |

The news agencies in India are the following:

- 1) Press Trust of India
- 2) Unite News of India
- 3) Hindustan Samachar
- 4) Samachar Bharati

#### j. Interviews

“Interviewing requires more than a good ear for quotes. It’s a process, like writing, that involves a series of decisions and actions designed to get the best possible information.” (Chip Scanlan, *Reporting and Writing: Basics*

*for the 21st Century*)

Interviews are a dynamic force in journalism. The interview has the power to change the minds of people, government, and history. If interviews aren’t perfect, they can lead to a bad story. Journalistic interviews are for a purpose. The style of interviews varies. Some of the interviews may be light, focused, leeway, opined and fact-oriented. Consequently, the style of interviews is different for each type of news story. A reporter must be efficient to interrogate and gather the news, which is





chiefly needed for the story and move on.

### 2.2.1.3 Types of Interviews

The following are the important types of the interviews:

#### a. Interviewing for Information

To gather authentic information, conducting interviews with knowledgeable individuals is essential. For example, to learn about the condition of NH roads in India, you'd interview officials from the Ministry of Transport and Highways, as well as professionals like highway engineers and project managers. Similarly, when reporting on the ration system in India during the pandemic, experts in public distribution systems and consumer affairs would provide insights into distribution protocols and food kit allocations.

In certain situations, gathering information directly from individuals is crucial, such as interviewing eyewitnesses of disasters or accidents. However, it's important to assess the person's emotional state and approach the interview with empathy, especially if they've experienced trauma.

#### b. Interviewing Politicians and Leaders

Politics dominates the media landscape, with news outlets frequently covering political developments. Interviewing politicians can be challenging due to the sensitive nature of political issues and party affiliations. Nonetheless, reporters must be diligent and well-informed to conduct meaningful interviews. Understanding the current issues, their historical context and their impact on the public is essential when arranging interviews with politicians. Providing regular updates on political developments, controversies, elections, and politicians' responses to public concerns is vital for keeping the public

informed about the state of affairs in their region.

#### c. The Person-On-The-Street Interview (Pots)

The Person-on-the-Street Interview (POTS), a common media practice, involves reporters approaching the public to gather spontaneous opinions on various topics. For instance, before elections, journalists often interview people in the city to gauge their views on potential candidates and government performance. Similarly, reactions to events like the budget or a major road accident are sought from passersby.

POTS interviews prioritize quick reactions over in-depth analysis. They capture a range of perspectives from diverse groups such as women, men, students, elderly individuals, youth, workers, and different ethnic and religious communities. For topics like rising vegetable prices, insights from vegetable sellers, street vendors, and other socio-economic sectors are more relevant than expert opinions. These interviews, also known as "Vox Populi" or the voice of the people, reflect the opinions of the majority.

#### d. Panel Interviews

Panel interviews involve journalists or reporters interviewing a group of professionals, experts, or politicians who discuss, critique, and analyse a particular issue or subject. They provide diverse perspectives and allow participants to respond to each other's views. Moderating the discussion effectively, journalists ensure equal participation and gather comprehensive insights for their news stories.

## Recap

- ▶ Keen, observant, and good listener: Vital for news gathering - detailed notes & recordings.
- ▶ Prioritize deep research over superficial.
- ▶ Search, find, and maintain - essential for story planning.
- ▶ Insiders and outsiders - key in news gathering.
- ▶ Cultivating sources is crucial for valuable news stories.
- ▶ Beat - specialized area for regular news gathering, and cultivating sources.
- ▶ Press releases, conferences, and media meetings - accessible news sources.
- ▶ Social media research - the initial step in cultivating sources.
- ▶ News agencies - staple and historically significant sources for reporters.
- ▶ Interviews - the main source for cultivating news: politicians, leaders, people on the street, and panels.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the primary skill required by a journalist for news gathering?
2. Which tool is indispensable for journalists in today's world?
3. What is the primary source of news gathering on Twitter?
4. What is the difference between insiders and outsiders in news gathering?
5. What is a "beat" in journalism?
6. What is the purpose of a press release?
7. Where can journalists uncover leads or sources during press conferences?
8. Which social networking site is widely used by journalists for news gathering?
9. What is the purpose of a "person-on-the-street" interview?
10. What is the role of news agencies in journalism?

## Answers

1. Research
2. Mobile
3. Hashtags
4. Expertise
5. Area
6. Announcement
7. Questioning
8. Twitter
9. Opinions
10. Distribution



## Assignments

1. Explain the importance of observation and detailed documentation in news gathering.
2. Compare deep and superficial research in journalism, highlighting the necessity of deep research.
3. Discuss the three steps of story planning (search, find, maintain) and their contributions to compelling news reports.
4. Analyze the roles of insiders and outsiders as sources in news gathering, with examples.
5. Explain the significance of cultivating diverse and reliable sources for valuable news stories.

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# Unit 3

## News Story Structures

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ understand the purpose and components of a news story structure
- ▶ learn the inverted pyramid style and its advantages/disadvantages
- ▶ understand the hourglass structure and its narrative approach
- ▶ identify suitable structures for different types of news stories

### Prerequisites

News stories are typically structured in a specific way to convey information effectively and engage readers. The most common structure is the inverted pyramid, where the most important details, such as the who, what, when, where, and why, are presented at the beginning, followed by additional information in descending order of importance. This structure allows readers to quickly grasp the essential facts and decide whether they want to continue reading. It also enables editors to trim the story from the bottom up without losing the core details if space is limited. Another common structure is the chronological order, where events are presented in the sequence they occurred. This approach is often used for narratives, such as feature stories or in-depth reports, where the timeline is crucial to understanding the full context. Some news stories may also employ a question-and-answer format, particularly for interviews or profiles, where the subject's responses are presented verbatim or paraphrased.

Regardless of the structure, news stories should be concise, informative, and objective, presenting facts without personal opinions or biases. Clear and straightforward language is essential for effective communication and maintaining the reader's interest. However, in this unit, we will learn how to structure the news after gathering news and source development. We will also examine leads and types of lead which is an integral part of news writing. The structure of news helps the reader to solely understand the news in an easier way, which means he or she can attain the idea and information within minutes.

### Keywords

News story structures, Headline, Lead, Dateline, Byline, Credit line, Caption, Body, Conclusion, Inverted Pyramid, Hour Glass Structure



## Discussion

### 2.3.1 Importance of News Story Structures

Let's think about news written like short stories or novels. Can readers go through all the news quickly? The answer is no! This is where the importance of news structures comes in. News is crafted for people, taking into account their time and need for information. With the rise of technology, people's reading habits have changed significantly. Many readers skim through newspapers or websites in a hurry, focusing only on the important leads or introductions. Others may struggle with reading, so they scan the intros and headlines, only delving deeper if something catches their interest. Similarly, on television or radio, people pay attention to the initial lines or headlines that grab their attention. However, regardless of the medium, news stories are structured and written with two main objectives:

- 1) They should cater to both casual readers and those who closely follow the news, recognizing the diversity of people in society.
- 2) They must quickly convey transparent facts to readers or listeners, even if they skip certain paragraphs.

Now, before discussing about the two types of news story structures, let's understand the components of a news report.

### 2.3.2 Components of a News Report

The structure of a news report may vary among newspapers, but they generally follow a specific pattern in writing and editing. News reports typically consist of eight parts:

#### a. Headlines

Headlines are large-font texts serving as the titles of news stories in newspapers, magazines,

or the key points of news broadcasts on television and radio. The tone, size, and style of headlines vary based on the importance of the news story. Headlines provide a crucial pathway to the news story, as many readers rely on them to grasp the basic idea of the news.

#### b. Byline

The byline contains the name of the writer who authored the particular news story. It is usually placed just below the headline. Including a byline helps readers identify the author of the news piece, and it is commonly used in newspapers, magazines, online portals, and blogs.

#### c. Dateline

The dateline indicates the city or location where the reporter filed the story and the date it was written. Typically, the dateline appears above the first sentence of a news story.

#### d. Lead/Intro

The lead, or introduction, is the opening sentence or paragraph containing the most important information about the news story. It's crucial because it's often the only part readers will read, so it must include the 5W's and 1H (Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How). This ensures readers get the key details upfront.

#### e. Body

The body of the news story expands on the points mentioned in the lead. It includes quotes, opinions, and factual data to provide further context and understanding. While concise, it should be written in simple language to make it accessible to all readers.

#### f. Conclusion (Ending)

The conclusion wraps up the story,



signalling its end to the reader. It may also hint at future developments or discussions related to the news topic. The conclusion should be brief and leave readers with a sense of closure.

### g. Credit Line

The credit line acknowledges the photographer's name below the photograph and may also credit news agencies that contributed the image.

### h. Caption

Captions are text printed below a photograph, describing the people or activities depicted and sometimes indicating the date the photo was taken. Captions add visual context to the news story.

Now, let's examine the components of a news story using an illustration from a newspaper.



Fig. 2.4.1 Different components in a news story

## 2.3.3 Types of News Story Structures

Let us now discuss some of the types of news story structures.

### 2.3.3.1 Inverted Pyramid Structure

The inverted pyramid structure is a common approach in news writing, also referred to as the traditional method. This style prioritises presenting the most crucial information first, followed by less important details in descending order. The lead

paragraph contains the essential facts, while subsequent paragraphs provide supporting and background information, known as the nut graph. Why this structure? Because leading with the most important information grabs the reader's attention, encouraging them to read further. If vital details were buried at the end, readers might miss them. This method is typically used for hard news stories. Now, let's visualise the inverted pyramid structure through a diagram.

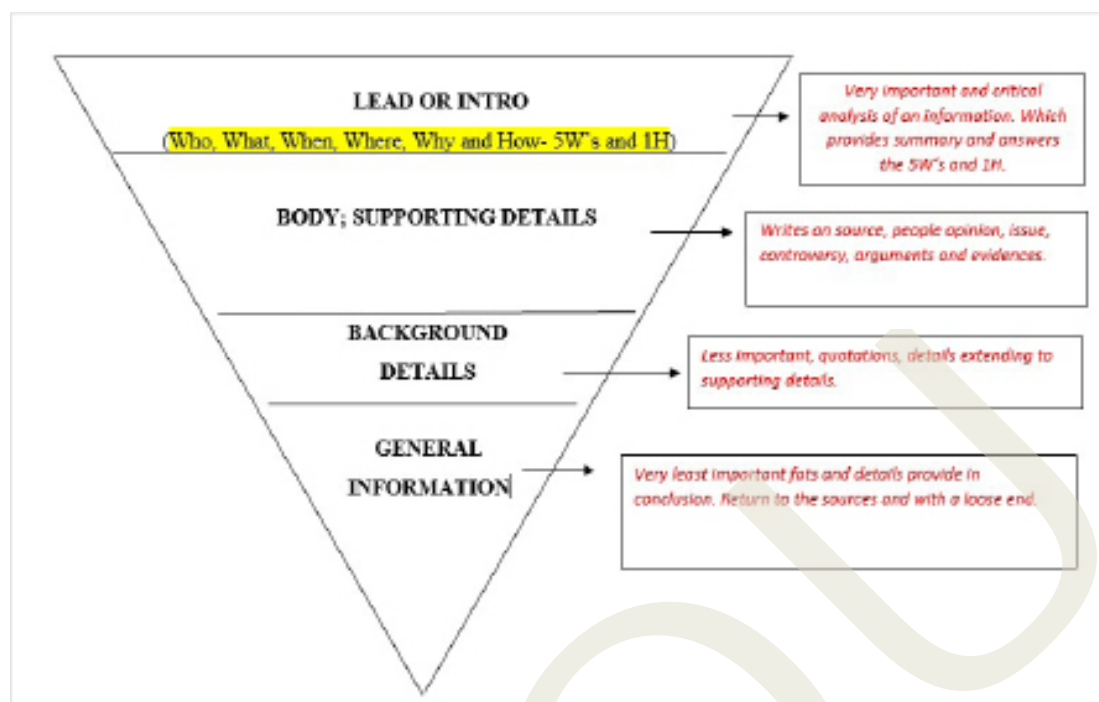


Fig. 2.4.2 The inverted pyramid structure of a news story

### Advantages of Inverted Pyramid Structure

1. **Facilitates Quick Understanding:** The inverted pyramid style enables readers to grasp information rapidly without needing to read the entire news story. They can glean key details by skimming through the introduction.
2. **Easy Navigation:** Readers can stop at any point within the news story and still access the essential information located at the beginning.
3. **Simplifies Editing:** Editors can effortlessly trim unnecessary portions of the news story while retaining the factual content, particularly the concluding parts. This aids in conserving space on the news desk, especially during periods of high news volume.
4. **Space-saving:** Inverted pyramid structure helps save space on news pages, allowing reporters to write news stories that fit within the designated column space.

### Disadvantages of the Inverted Pyramid Structure

1. **Traditional Approach:** The inverted pyramid style is considered outdated in today's digital age, where people are inundated with a vast amount of news from various sources.
2. **Limits Creativity:** This structure may restrict the creativity of writers, as they are constrained by the need to present all essential information upfront.
3. **Diminishes Surprise Element:** By revealing complete information in the first paragraph, the inverted pyramid structure may diminish the element of surprise and curiosity for readers.
4. **Not Suitable for Deep Readers:** This style may not be appealing to readers who prefer in-depth analysis and storytelling over concise summaries.

In the following, a sample news story developed using the inverted pyramid structure is given.

**Bengaluru hospital runs out of medical oxygen, two patients die** → **Headline**

Lack of medical oxygen resulted in the death of two coronavirus patients in Bengaluru's Arka Hospital in the wee hours of May 4. Bhaskar Bengaluru Information Portal's (BBMP) Yalahanka health officer Dr. Bhaskarabhat confirmed the development to INM. Further details are awaited.

→ **Lead/intro**

A total of 45 patients were said to be admitted in the hospital, while the number of patients needing medical oxygen is yet to be known. According to preliminary information, the hospital had put out an SOS request on May 3 evening and the situation turned critical by 8 pm. By the time adequate help arrived at 4 am, it was too late.

→ **Body with Supporting details**

The deaths at Arka Hospital in Yalahanka came as at least three hospitals in the city sounded distress calls in need of urgent oxygen supply. In these three instances, hospital authorities said that they got help from government and private players before the situation turned fatal. In a large-scale tragedy due to the same issue, 24 patients on ventilators succumbed due to lack of oxygen supply at the Chamarajwara Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS) on May 3, which is less than 200 km away from Bengaluru. With the crisis gripping Bengaluru and rest of the state, Chief Minister BS Yeddyurappa held a meeting with gas manufacturers. "At a meeting with six leading oxygen manufacturers, the Chief Minister told them to ensure uninterrupted and timely supply of allocated quantities of the gas to hospitals," a statement by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said. The Chief Minister also instructed the concerned authorities, including police to provide a green corridor for faster movement of oxygen tankers to hospitals across the state," said the statement.

→ **Background Details or additional details**

The Union government has allocated the state 671 tons of oxygen per day, the statement said. In connection with this, the government has passed a circular to audit oxygen usage and asked all Deputy Commissioners and BBMP Commissioner to appoint camp officers in each oxygen refilling facility. They have been asked to keep a track of their daily receipt, oxygen balance stock on a daily basis. Demand for oxygen has increased as Bengaluru being the epicenter of the covid in the state had recorded 10 times the number of positive cases in April at 3.38 lakh compared to 31,886 cases in March. (NEWS SOURCE: The News minute portal, May 4, 2021, Tue)

→ **General Information (Conclusion)**

### Did You Know?

The inverted pyramid style is one of the most commonly used structures in news writing. It's believed to have originated around 1845, coinciding with Samuel Morse's invention of the electric telegraph. This revolutionary communication technology allowed news to be transmitted rapidly, leading to the practice of including the most important information in the first paragraph of news stories.

Interestingly, there's debate about the exact origins of the inverted pyramid style. Some historians suggest that it emerged during the American Civil War (1861-1865). During this tumultuous period, news reports needed to be transmitted quickly and efficiently due to the challenges of communication in wartime conditions. As a result, journalists prioritized conveying the most crucial information first to ensure its timely dissemination.

#### 2.3.3.2 Hourglass Structure

The Hourglass style is an enhanced adaptation of the inverted pyramid style. Typically, it commences with the conventional opening of the inverted pyramid style. However, after the initial paragraph, the Hourglass style adopts a narrative approach to storytelling or transitions into narration, presenting information in chronological order. This style aims to combine storytelling with factual reporting, making it suitable

for covering topics such as crime, business developments, and government reports and meetings.

The Hourglass style is structured into three main parts: The Top, The Turn, and The Narrative. Each part serves a distinct purpose in crafting a compelling news story. Let's explore these components through an illustrative example.

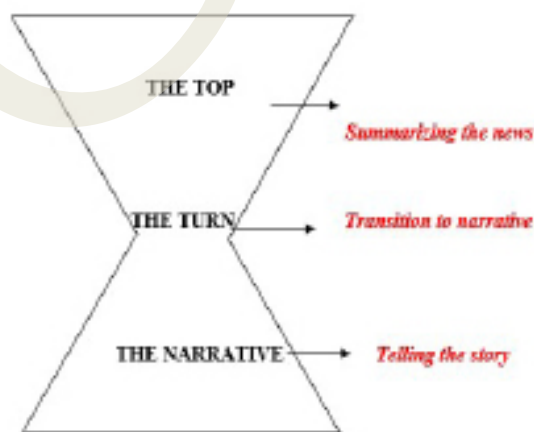


Fig. 2.4.3 The structure of news in hour-glass format

**The Top:** The top section of the hourglass structure mirrors the lead in the inverted pyramid style, focusing on the most crucial information. It addresses the primary question or issue at hand, providing readers with essential details right from the start. By reading the top section alone, readers can grasp the fundamental aspects of the news story.

**The Turn:** In the turn section, the narrative shifts to a detailed account of events, presented in chronological order. For instance, imagine a reporter covering a crime scene. An eyewitness might describe what they observed, detailing the sequence of events, the evidence present, the legal implications, and the reactions of nearby residents. This narrative approach offers readers a deeper understanding of the situation in a transparent manner.

**The Narrative:** The narrative section comprises three components: a beginning, middle, and end. Here, the focus is on providing comprehensive background information supported by dialogue and presented in chronological order. This segment allows for a more in-depth exploration of the

story, allowing readers to delve into the details and gain a richer understanding of the events unfolding.

### Advantages of Hourglasses Structure

- ▶ A reader can absorb the news from a storytelling format.
- ▶ A reporter can showcase their creativity in writing.
- ▶ The most important information is repeated in the narrative section so that the reader can grasp it again and again.
- ▶ The hourglass structure offers a balanced format.
- ▶ The hourglass style can grab the reader's attention and tends to reach a definite conclusion.
- ▶ Readers can leisurely and calmly read the news as it unfolds every situation or incident like a story.

### Disadvantages of the Hourglass Structure

- ▶ Not suitable for quick readers.
- ▶ Slow and storytelling narration is not suitable for immediate or breaking news.

## Recap

- ▶ News story: Gather, structure, and inform
- ▶ Eight components in a news report: Headline, Lead, Byline, Dateline, Body, Credit line, Caption, Conclusion
- ▶ Two types of news structures: Inverted Pyramid and hourglass
- ▶ Inverted Pyramid: Important first, used in hard stories
- ▶ Lead and Nut Graf: Basic and supporting details
- ▶ Lead: Critical analysis, answers 5W's and 1H
- ▶ Hourglass: Narrative shift, chronological order
- ▶ Hourglass style: The Top, The Turn, The Narrative





## Objective Questions

1. What is the opening line or paragraph that captures the most important information?
2. In which component is the name of the writer included?
3. Which component provides a visual description of the news event?
4. In which structure is the least important information presented last?
5. What is the narrative section of the hourglass structure called?
6. Which structure allows for more creativity in writing?
7. Which style is suitable for quick readers skimming the news?
8. In which structure is information presented in chronological order?
9. Which component indicates the location and date of reporting?
10. Which structure is not suitable for breaking news?

## Answers

1. Lead
2. Byline
3. Caption
4. Inverted Pyramid
5. The Narrative
6. Hourglass
7. Inverted Pyramid
8. Hourglass
9. Dateline
10. Hourglass

## Assignments

1. Describe the process of gathering and structuring news to inform readers.
2. List and define the eight components of a news report.
3. Compare and contrast the Inverted Pyramid and Hourglass news story structures.
4. Explain the significance of placing important details first in the Inverted Pyramid and its use in hard stories.
5. Differentiate between the Lead and Nut Graf in a news story and their roles in providing information.

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# Unit 4

## Trends in Reporting

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise with emerging trends like digital/mobile reporting and citizen reporting facilitated by technology
- ▶ learn about the convergence of different media platforms for news reporting
- ▶ recognize the role of podcasts as a new medium for audio news reporting
- ▶ identify the skills required for effective news reporting across various trends

### Prerequisites

It is clear that the world is changing swiftly. Technologies and media connectivity have shown astonishing growth in networking and communication. This change has significantly impacted news reporting. Consider the new changes in media. In the past, news reports were long and descriptive. Now, they are short, precise, and to the point. Changes in language style, reporting, visuals, and infographics have greatly advanced media development. Visuals and infographics have added an entertainment aspect for the audience. Today, media is quick and aims to entertain while informing their audience through channels or print mediums. Therefore, technological advances and the internet have brought significant changes to the media industry. Reporting style, interaction with people, and audience engagement have become highly competitive. Let's explore the different trends in reporting.

### Keywords

News reporting, Digital reporting or Mobile reporting, Citizen reporting, Convergence of media, Podcasts

### Discussion

#### 2.4.1 What is News Reporting?

News reporting involves investigating and discovering facts, gathering background information, selecting relevant details, and writing them into complete news stories.

Reporting is a demanding task in journalism. It requires journalists to go to the source of information and ultimately produce an exceptional news story. Reporting demands patience, a sense of news, hard work, and courage. A reporter must always uphold journalistic ethics. Reports must be unbiased and accurate.

*Following are some of the types of News Reporting.*

- ▶ Investigative Reporting
- ▶ Fashion Reporting
- ▶ Business Reporting
- ▶ Sports Reporting
- ▶ Specialized Reporting
- ▶ Court Reporting
- ▶ Political Reporting
- ▶ Crime Reporting
- ▶ Agricultural reporting
- ▶ Health Reporting

### 2.4.2 Skills of a News Reporter

- ▶ Good command of language
- ▶ Good writing skills
- ▶ He or she should be able to interact freely with people.
- ▶ Good news since
- ▶ Must be able to update the current happenings on time.
- ▶ Good observation skill
- ▶ He or she obeys the press laws.
- ▶ Should be unbiased, accurate, fair, and objective.
- ▶ Ability to stay stronger under pressure and stress.
- ▶ Must be punctual.
- ▶ Should be alert, creative, and brave.

### 2.4.3 New Trends in News Reporting

The new trends and technologies of the internet, websites, social media, and digital scenarios have set a path for significant changes in media. Let's explore some of the new trends in news reporting.

#### a. Digital Reporting or Mobile Reporting

Before the advent of the internet and mobile phones, journalists gathered initial reports from libraries, newspaper archives, and people at the scene. Now, the initial step is to google

it or collect information from mobile phones. After thoroughly investigating a news story, journalists report it through mobile devices via various portals and social media, reaching millions of people at once.

In this trend, journalists use portable devices like mobile phones for reporting. They take photographs, note down facts, and report from the location itself, performing all activities at the event site.

Have you heard about instant live reporting? Nowadays, journalists go live with exclusive news from the spot, capturing the attention of people instantly. Instant likes and replies are visible in live broadcasts, making the news more impactful and disseminating it to millions of viewers. Mobile reporting has also influenced the media industry and the credibility of news. It is not done solely by reporters but also by citizens.

As communication technologies rapidly evolve, the media industry adapts to engage audiences and raise TRP (Television Rating Points), a tool to judge the most viewed channels.

#### b. Citizen Reporting

Citizen reporting involves citizens or people reporting news and sharing it on various social media platforms. It is the reporting of facts by people without following journalistic laws. These news reports are communicated through websites, social media, blogs, etc. Citizens provide instant, interesting news on social media that can go viral and even lead to protests or hashtags. Later, this news is broadcast on television.

For example, the murder of George Floyd by police officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, USA, was captured on video by 17-year-old Darnella Frazier. This video became primary



evidence, and every media outlet utilized it for the investigation of the George Floyd news story.

The other names of citizen reporting are;

- ▶ Networked reporting
- ▶ Open-source reporting
- ▶ Citizen media
- ▶ Participatory reporting
- ▶ Stand-alone reporting
- ▶ Nonmedia reporting
- ▶ Guerrilla reporting
- ▶ Collaborative citizen reporting

The *Times of India* (TOI), a leading newspaper in India, has introduced an app exclusively for Indian citizens called TOI Citizen Reporter. This app allows citizens to share their opinions by contributing stories, text reports, videos, and photographs on societal and national issues. The internet and mobile apps have significantly broadened the scope of news reporting.

#### c. Convergence of Media

Media convergence refers to the merging of different mass media like print media, traditional media, broadcast media, the internet, and new media. For instance, newspapers such as *Malayala Manorama* and *Mathrubhumi* have their own news channels, YouTube channels, and news portals. This convergence allows the integration of text, photos, videos,

and interactive elements in a single platform. Smartphones have further enhanced this blend by combining various media forms like e-books, apps, and portals. This evolution has transformed news reporting, enabling a comprehensive presentation of news that includes text, photos, videos, and comments. The method of communicating news has changed, catering to people's preferences.

#### d. Podcasts

Podcasts are digital audio series available on the internet, derived from combining 'iPod' and 'broadcast.' Similar to radio but in a digital format, many old radio stations like *BBC* and *CBC Radio* now offer podcasts. Podcasts are used for academic purposes, entertainment, and news. They are popular among people who prefer listening to news, debates, speeches, and discussions while travelling or waiting for a bus or train. This format is more convenient than reading text.

Journalists write conversationally for podcasts, and notable personalities are often interviewed on various issues. Podcasts can be free or subscription-based and come in different types, such as scripted podcasts, podcast novels, and live podcasts. Scripted podcasts are like radio dramas, telling fiction and stories, while podcast novels are serialized audiobooks streamed online for users to listen to.



## Recap

- ▶ News reporting: Investigation, facts, storytelling; a challenging journalism task.
- ▶ Essential reporter skills: Patience, ethics, accuracy, news sense, objectivity, language command.
- ▶ Various types of reporting: Investigative, Fashion, Business, Sports, Political, Crime, Health, etc.
- ▶ Mobile reporting: On-location reporting with portable devices, photos, and notes.
- ▶ Citizen reporting: Non-journalistic news reports by people via the internet.
- ▶ Media convergence: Merging mass media (Print, Broadcast, Internet) into one.
- ▶ Podcasts: Digital audio series online, used in academia, entertainment, and news.
- ▶ Reporting demands hard work and courage, guided by journalistic ethics.
- ▶ A reporter must be unbiased and accurate, presenting news with fairness.
- ▶ Different reporting genres: Investigative, Fashion, Business, Sports, Political, Crime, Health, etc.

## Objective Questions

1. What do you mean by news reporting?
2. What are the five types of news reporting?
3. Write five skills of a news reporter.
4. Write one trend in news reporting.
5. What type of reporting is known as reporting where journalists make use of portable devices like mobile phones for reporting?
6. What type of reporting is known as the reporting of the news reports by the citizens or people and passes the reports to various social media?
7. What are the other names of citizen reporting?
8. What do you mean by convergence of media?
9. What is a podcast?
10. Write the acronym of TRP.

## Answers

1. Investigation
2. Investigative, Fashion, Business, Sports, Political
3. Patience, Ethics, Accuracy, News Sense, Objectivity
4. Mobile Reporting
5. Mobile Reporting
6. Citizen Reporting
7. User-generated content, Participatory Journalism



8. Merging of mass media
9. Digital audio series
10. TRP - Television Rating Points

## Assignments

1. Explain the challenges faced by journalists in news reporting and how they overcome them.
2. Discuss the importance of patience, ethics, and accuracy in the skill set of a news reporter.
3. Compare and contrast investigative, fashion, and sports reporting, highlighting their unique characteristics.
4. Analyse the impact of mobile reporting on journalism and its advantages in covering on-location events.
5. Evaluate the significance of citizen reporting in the era of the internet and social media and its implications for traditional journalism.

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# BLOCK - 03

## **Specialised Reporting**

# Unit 1

## Features and Interviews

### Learning Outcomes

By the completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise the concept and nature of a feature story.
- ▶ learn the steps involved in writing an effective feature.
- ▶ recognise different types of features like profiles, reviews, and human interest stories.
- ▶ comprehend the process of conducting interviews for feature writing.

### Prerequisites

Do you read newspapers? Are all news articles written in the same style, or do you notice differences in them? If not, take a Sunday newspaper and go through all the stories. On Sundays, newspapers have a supplement with many more varied stories. Now, look at a television channel. Are all the TV programs the same? Do all the anchors act in the same way? Similarly, formats and styles vary for news presented in different media. Writing or presenting in any medium requires its own style. A reporter cannot write a report without making inquiries. To write a report, a reporter needs to prepare because what they write will reach many people.

“Your delivery has to make people listen to you. You should sound like a broken-down record player” - this advice was given by Vikram Seth to Karan Thapar while he was practicing elocution in school (*Devil's Advocate* by Vikram Seth). This advice is suitable for media writing as it needs to capture the reader's or audience's attention. Having a format and style is essential for media writing. Interviews, features, editorials, etc., have different formats. In this unit, we are discussing specialised reporting.

### Keywords

Feature writing, Interview writing, Types, Features

### Discussion

#### 3.1.1 What is a Feature?

What is a feature? Have you read any features in newspapers or their supplements? If not, take a hard copy or search online for

a newspaper or magazine. You will find a lengthy but interesting piece of writing about a real thing, person, incident, or anything. This can be a feature. The word “feature” comes from the Latin word “factura,” which means “making from the facts.”

A feature is a detailed piece of writing on any subject of interest, written with a purpose and focus that differs from a news report. An interview written with focus and proper language is enjoyable to read.

Now, read a well-written feature published in *People's Archives of Rural India* and identify the features and characteristics of writing a feature.

### The Master Storyteller of Old Madurai

*"You're here to listen to my story?" Pon Harichandran is astonished. "I can't remember anyone coming to me for that. And frankly, I have nothing much to say." The 60-year-old has spent a lifetime telling the stories of others, of his village Kilakuyilkudi and of the over 2,000-year-old city of Madurai just 15 kilometres away.*

*His listeners have ranged from the illiterate to the erudite, locals to visiting literati. They have used those stories in award-winning novels, some have turned them into films. Yet others have utilised them in anthropological research. "These days, I get more visitors from colleges and universities. Professors bring their students to listen to me. Shall I tell you also one of those stories?" he asks earnestly.*

*We're sitting in Kilakuyilkudi, located between a pond choked with lotus flowers and the expansive Jaina caves of this region. The village is in the Thiruparankundram block of Madurai district. We'd been asking village elders sitting at the Karuppasamy temple where we could find him. "In a tea shop or at home," they said. "But now that you are here, he will come soon." And so he does, riding in on his bicycle.*

*He's on the ball at once – greeting us with: "Did you not find the route to this village slightly complicated? Our ancestors designed it that way to delay British forces coming to attack us. Before they arrived here, our messengers would have brought word of their movements. So the village would be ready to take them on when they showed up."*

*Kilakuyilkudi was a village of Pirmalai Kallars (a sub-group of the Thevar community – now the dominant caste cluster of Tamil Nadu). The village had a history of conflict with the British, whose sovereignty they never accepted and often challenged. The racist and draconian Criminal Tribes Act was introduced by the British in this part of the then Madras Presidency to quell them. It didn't quite do that, though. "You may have heard of people paying taxes to the British rulers. Our village was different," says Harichandran.*

*For a while, he says, the local administration of the British paid a tax – to at least one family in Kilakuyilkudi. "The family of Kazhuva Thevar," says Harichandran. Kazhuva Thevar took upon himself the challenge of stealing the jewellery of the queen of Madurai. That was before the British and in the time of Thirumalai Nayakkar, king of Madurai between 1623 and 1659. A king whose grand palace – barely two kilometres from the famous Meenakshi Amman temple – remains a great tourist attraction to this day.*





*And the story begins...*

*Kazhuva Thevar thought up an ingenious method of robbing the queen's jewellery. His trained 'burglars' were two monitor lizards, a species known for their characteristic of holding on stubbornly to anything they catch. In this case, prime pieces of the queen's jewellery, which they then carried back into Kazhuva Thevar's possession. "You will still find a board in the Thirumalai Nayak palace that says the queen's jewellery was stolen from this place," says Harichandran. (While it may well have existed in the past, there is presently no trace of that board in the palace).*

*At first agitated, but later impressed, the king told Kazhuva Thevar he would grant him a favour. Thevar sought a veshti (traditional men's garment from the waist down), a vallavettu (a towel-like upper garment) and an uruma (turban-like headgear).*

*"He also sought the right to be protector of Madurai – and to receive an annual fee for running a small security force, or 'police' of that time," says Harichandran. "This was granted, and his family enjoyed that privilege for a long time until a British officer refused to honour the practice." The officer, says Harichandran, conceded knowing its history. "But he wrote a letter to his superiors on the 'shameful episode of an administration as great as ours' having to pay tax to an ordinary family from a little-known village."*

*Harichandran is not typical of traditional storytellers here, for many of whom the preservation of folklore is a hereditary occupation. But the art has fascinated him from childhood days when village elders sat together and narrated anecdotes from their own lives and those of their ancestors. Ranging from stories spoofing the authority of pre-British kings to many of the village's anti-British escapades. From his teens, a spellbound Harichandran lapped up that folklore, not knowing he would one day be its custodian – the only one left to tell those stories to other audiences.*

*Increasingly frustrated by Kilakuyilkudi's stubbornness, the British introduced the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871 here. Indeed, Madras was the last presidency to introduce the CTA which had been mostly been used to brutalise tribes resisting British authority in northern India.*

*"It was only after the British unleashed the worst kind of oppression on us that our villagers were forced to turn to stealing," says Harichandran. "They banned anyone belonging to Kilakuyilkudi from visiting Madurai between 5 p.m. and 10 a.m." That destroyed many forms of work and trade for the villagers here.*

*"There are," says Harichandran, "four kinds of theft: kalavu (to steal what is available), thirudu (to steal what is necessary), kollai (to leave nothing for the victim) and soorai (to steal everything from that spot or victim and from neighbouring places, too). One thing common to all these types of robbers was that they did not hesitate to kill or rape. But look at any historical records or documents. You will not find a single instance of people of our village doing that."*

*In their efforts to 'reform' the defiant village, the British offered them loans and even set up a school for women – who they thought were 'misleading' the men. "They had a jail in Kilakuyilkudi to imprison those whose offences were relatively minor, and another big jail in Madurai." But the villagers simply "refused the loan and burnt the school," says Harichandran.*

*Hours and many tales later, we have still not got his 'own' story. By now, he's fully charged by those stories he is narrating and grumbles when we seek to bring him back to his personal tale. "I am a farmer with a piece of land that yields enough to sustain my family. What more do you want to know?" he asks, sounding slightly irritated. He has a wife and a son but says little about them. It seems there is no successor in the family for his extraordinary craft.*

*But he does have a story – a big political moment when M.G. Ramachandran broke away from the DMK in 1972 to form his own party, the AIADMK (presently in power in Tamil Nadu). "I joined the party and used to address local meetings. I was very close to K. Kalimuthu, a senior AIADMK leader. He was an avid reader and we often had long conversations on many issues." After Kalimuthu's death in 2006, Harichandran left the party. "Now I am just happy narrating stories," he says.*

*Su Venkatesan, whose Sahitya academy-winning novel Kaaval Kottam was also based on endless conversations he had with Harichandran, vouches for his authenticity. "He said the CT Act was first introduced in his village. In the extensive research I did for my novel, I found government records confirming this. Kilakuyilkudi was the first village in Madras Presidency where the Act was introduced.*

*"I believe every village somehow finds a person who can carry its stories on his back. He is rare but he is there. Harichandran is one such rare person. He carries the entire story of Kilakuyilkudi on his back. Even when very young, he only spent time with people who were in their 80s and 90s. He is unique, gifted, and we are lucky we can keep hearing his stories," says Venkatesan.*

*Aravaan (2012), a film by acclaimed director Vasanthabalan, was based on one of Harichandran's stories. (The historical-fiction film, set in the 18th century, follows the lives of a group of people stealing from the rich to help their tribe survive).*

*But the oral folklore has remained just that. Does Harichandran have any plans to document them? He seems to be toying with the idea. But, he says, "Nothing is as charming as telling a tale. But to think that there is no one interested in knowing these stories is sad – leave alone passing it down to other generations. Maybe I should just find someone and hand over everything I carry in my heart to him."*

*(Written by Kavitha Muralidharan in People's Archives of Rural India.)*



### 3.1.1.1 Features and News Stories

“Not being news (features are) liberated from spare functional prose. In place of the breathless messenger they can be entertaining gossips, perceptive analysts, eccentric experts, sympathetic counsellors, bitchy snoops, inspiring guides.”

-S. Adams [in Hicks], *Writing for Journalists* (1999)

A feature is not a news report that you can find on the front page of a newspaper. Single or double-column news and lead stories are also not features. They are reports on current incidents and happenings. A feature does not have a defined structure but has certain qualities that distinguish it. It is a well-written story focused on a particular topic. Below are some of the key characteristics of a news feature:

- ▶ It answers the 5Ws (what, when, which, where, why), but not necessarily in the same order. Unlike news stories, it follows a different structure depending on the topic.
- ▶ A report is usually on an ongoing event and is more like a commentary. In contrast, a feature can be on an ongoing issue but from a different perspective.
- ▶ A feature is generally longer than a news report. Comparing a feature to a news report is like comparing a narrative poem to prose writing.
- ▶ News reports typically follow an inverted pyramid structure, but features do not adhere to any defined structure. They may follow linear or non-linear formats and often have a storytelling style.

### 3.1.1.2 Nature of Features

#### a. Background

A feature demands in-depth research because it provides a detailed description of a certain topic. For example, suppose a reporter is writing a feature on the Sabarimala verdict of September 2018. In that case, they need to study the history of Sabarimala, its socio-political impact, feminist and cultural perspectives, opinions from different personalities, and its legal aspects. Unlike a news report, all these details will be part of the feature. The background research will be reflected in the writing.

#### b. Detailing

If you are writing a feature on something that did not happen recently, it requires more detail. Otherwise, readers may not relate to it or understand the context well. The amount of detailing varies according to the nature of the topic. Look at a sample part of a feature story:

*“We’re sitting in Kilakuyilkudi, located between a pond choked with lotus flowers and the expansive Jaina caves of this region. The village is in the Thiruparankundram block of Madurai district. We’d been asking village elders sitting at the Karuppasamy temple where we could find him. “In a tea shop or at home,” they said. “But now that you are here, he will come soon.” And so he does, riding in on his bicycle.”*

As we have seen in the feature story “The Master Storyteller of Old Madurai,” the writer uses the background of the profile subject to provide insight into the person. This is important because readers who live in cities may not be familiar with the nature of the villages where the story is set.

#### c. Language

Features use attractive and catchy language. They are simple yet engaging to capture the reader’s attention. While news stories often follow the “KISS” principle (“Keep It Simple

and Short”), features can be longer but should remain simple. The simpler the language, the less likely readers are to be distracted.

#### **d. Readability**

The internet has made information more accessible, and readers have a wide range of resources. Thus, readability is crucial. Features are written with this in mind to ensure they are easy to read and understand.

#### **e. Engaging**

Features serve various purposes based on their content; they can be informative, emotive, intellectually driven, or entertaining. Regardless of the purpose, the writing must be simple. Rarely used terms, long words, or jargon should be avoided unless necessary for subject-specific features. The goal is to be readable and engaging.

#### **f. Freedom to Explore**

A feature allows freedom to explore different perspectives. For instance, human interest features are popular because they focus on ordinary people who have done something inspiring. Features on sensitive issues can address various aspects in detail, as seen with the Nirbhaya verdict.

#### **g. Angle**

Every feature needs an angle. A writer cannot cover everything, so they must plan and specify the angle. For example, with the Abhaya case in 2012, many features could be written from different angles. The writer might focus on the legal system or the life of nuns, depending on the chosen angle.

### **3.1.1.3 How to Write a Feature?**

Primarily, the writer must find an idea to

work on. It can be anything, but it must be relevant to the reader or made relevant by the writer to ensure readability. A feature can originate from anywhere: a tea stall, a bus, a conversation, a local newspaper, or a movie. People, incidents, things, or anything can become the theme for a feature.

Feature writing generally follows certain formats. It usually begins with an introduction. Depending on the context, the writer can decide how to craft the intro. It can be a quotation, poem, story, or proverb. The intro doesn’t need to summarize the feature but should hint at its content, creating interest for the reader. An engaging intro—such as a punch, capsule, question, or indirect lead—helps to grab the reader’s attention.

Headlines in features must be creative and catchy to attract readers. Prior research on the topic is crucial for writing an effective feature. If interviews are needed, they should be planned and executed properly. The writing itself is very important. The language should be suitable for the subject and easy to understand, avoiding difficult terms unless necessary. Always keep the reader in mind to ensure the feature is suitable and engaging. Sometimes, photographs are added to features, and subheadings can be used to make the text easier to read.

### **3.1.1.4 Types of Features**

Features can be categorised based on their nature:

#### **1. Follow-up Features**

These features follow the main story. They are written in response to important news stories and can be published on the same day, the next day, or even the following week. For example, if a woman gave birth to six children in one delivery, a feature written five years later on their first day of school, would





be a follow-up feature. Another example is a feature written on the death anniversary of an eminent writer.

## 2. Profile Features

These features focus on individuals who are experts in their fields, such as writers, directors, activists, journalists, economists, or actors. Profile features are often based on interviews with these personalities. If an interview is not possible, the writer needs to

conduct thorough research to find out about the person. These features usually have an angle based on the current relevance of the person but are generally about individuals with unique talents.

Here is a well-written profile feature on the writer and Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy, written by Andrew Anthony in *The Guardian*.

### Arundhati Roy : Goddess of Big Ideas

Like India and Walt Whitman, Arundhati Roy contains multitudes. She is, however, far from large. Small, delicately boned, a beguiling mixture of piercing dark eyes and bright easy smile, she is a warm presence. She turns 53 tomorrow and the grey tint to her curls lends depth to a still strikingly youthful face. Looking at her, it's not hard to detect the author of the richly empathetic *The God of Small Things*, her debut, Booker-prize winning novel about family life in Kerala, that John Updike described as a "massive interlocking structure of fine, intensely felt details".

That was 17 years ago and photos from that period show a captivating figure, at once shy and fiercely proud, wary and utterly self-possessed. The book was a huge international hit and the publishing world readied itself to cash in on a phenomenal new talent, galvanised by the fact that so photogenic an author would be a dream to market.

But the follow-up novel didn't arrive. Instead Roy directed her considerable energies towards political activism, most especially in India where, despite her success, she has remained. It was a path that has led her to express solidarity with groups – such as Kashmiri separatists and Maoist guerrillas – that are seen by many Indians, with some reason, as terrorists. As a result Roy has become a controversial figure, an outspoken heroine in certain radical quarters, but loathed by large sections of Indian society, not least Hindu nationalists.

She has also become a prolific essayist and polemicist. She currently has two extended, book-length essays out. One, entitled *The Doctor and the Saint*, is an examination of caste, a subject she explored in *The God of Small Things*, and it forms the long introduction to a new edition of BR Ambedkar's classic work *The Annihilation of Caste*. Roy's essay traces the difficult relationship between Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi. She portrays the neglected Ambedkar – born an "untouchable" – as the true hero of India's poor, while Gandhi is controversially depicted as a self-dramatising defender of the status quo.



The other essay is called *Capitalism: A Ghost Story*. It's written in a very different style from *The Doctor and the Saint*, which, for all its contentious opinions, is a carefully constructed argument. By contrast *Capitalism* reads like an extended rant, strident, intemperate, conspiratorial, and relentlessly one-eyed in its outlook. The shrill prose is hard to reconcile with the softly spoken middle-aged woman sitting opposite me in the Soho offices of her publishers.

Her basic argument is that the reforms that liberated India's economy in the early 1990s and thrust it into the global marketplace may have created a vibrant new middle class, but have been devastating for the country's poor. She writes of the "800 million who have been impoverished and dispossessed to make way for us [the 300 million members of the middle class]".

The poor in India are of course not a recent creation. It's been said that India's historic problem was the redistribution of poverty, whereas now the issue is the redistribution of wealth. As Roy makes clear, there are vast and intolerable inequalities in today's India. But the implication of her words is that to make 300 million Indians richer, 800 million Indians have become poorer in real, rather than relative, terms. As she doesn't supply any supporting evidence for this claim in the book, I ask her if that's what she means.

"What happens," she says, "is that statistically people keep playing games with the poverty line. It's not that people get richer or poorer but they keep moving the line up and down redefining what poorer means."

She then goes on to say that you only have to visit the suffering villages of India to see the terrible plight of the poor, in particular the mass suicides of farmers whose land has been destroyed by mineral exploitation and industrialisation. This may be true, but has the rapid growth in India's middle class caused the poor to become poorer?

She continues talking about access to water, the drying up of land etc, until I push her once again on what seems to me a crucial matter of fact. "Well, I think so," she says finally. "For example, just things like food grain intake has actually reduced."

(Read the full text from The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/nov/23/arundhati-roy-interview-goddess-of-big-ideas>)

### 3. Reviews

Reviews are a form of feature where films, literature, plays, albums, and similar works are analyzed. These critical analyses are often written by experts in their respective fields. For example, a literary critic might write a review of a recently released book for a newspaper.

### 4. Human Interest Features

These features focus on human interest subjects that are emotive in nature. For example, a story about a woman who runs an orphanage or a child saving a drowning kid. These features often use photographs and emotive language to create an impact on readers and are sometimes called triumph-over-tragedy pieces.



## 5. Scientific Features

Scientific inventions and phenomena are always interesting to readers. Events like solar eclipses garner public attention, as seen on June 21, 2020, when many people watched the solar eclipse with special filter glasses. This category includes stories about scientific discoveries and science-related topics.

There are many other types of features, such as specialist features and reportage. When reading features, try to identify these categories.

### 3.1.2 Interviews

Have you noticed interviews in newspapers, on television, or YouTube? Many interviews of film actors, writers, politicians, and other famous personalities can be found on new

media platforms and television. An interview can provide a better understanding of a subject or a person in detail. It offers a perspective from another person's viewpoint. Interviews are one of the most common programs on television. The nature of the interview varies according to the medium.

For visual media, arrangements like setting up the camera, microphone, lighting, and location need to be made. Decisions about whether to conduct the interview inside a studio or outside and how to manage noise issues are crucial. For radio interviews, sound quality and clarity are of prime importance. In print media, the interview needs to be properly verbalized, with a focus on language and clarity.

Read the given excerpt of an interview with Arundhati Roy:

*Arundhati Roy does not believe in rushing things. With her novels, she prefers to wait for her characters to introduce themselves to her, and slowly develop a trust and a friendship with them. Sometimes, however, external events force her hand. One of these was the election of the divisive Hindu nationalist Narendra Modi as Indian prime minister in May 2014.*

*At the time, Roy had been working for about seven years on her second novel, the successor to her stunning, 1997 Booker prize-winning debut, *The God of Small Things*. But Modi's victory forced her to "really put down the tent pegs" on what would eventually become *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.*

*"It was just a moment of shock for people like me," says Roy, twirling an elegant, checked scarf around her neck like spaghetti around a fork. "For so many years, I'd been trying to yell from the rooftops about it and it was absolutely a sense of abject defeat and abject despair. And the choice was to get into bed and sleep for five years, or to really concentrate on this book. I didn't feel like writing any more essays, although I did write one, but I felt like everything I had to say had been said. It was time to accept defeat." "*

This interview of Arundhati Roy by Tim Lewis was published in *The Guardian* in June 2018. It does not follow a question-and-answer format. It is more descriptive and includes the interviewee's gestures and actions to make the readers close to it.

### 3.1.2.1 How to Conduct an Interview

The following is a general method to prepare for conducting an interview.

#### Purpose

- ▶ Ask yourself why you want to conduct the interview.
- ▶ Decide who should be interviewed and what angle it should have.

#### Research

- ▶ Once you have chosen the person, research their life and work. For example, if the interviewee is a fiction writer, read their books and understand the subjects they deal with. Get a good idea of their background and work.

#### Prepare Questions

- ▶ Based on your research, think of relevant questions. Prepare these questions in simple, polite language. Avoid questions that might cause discomfort.
- ▶ Review previous interviews with the person to avoid repetition.
- ▶ Organize the questions in a logical order to ensure a smooth interview

process.

#### Conduct the Interview

- ▶ Schedule a date that works for the interviewee and choose a comfortable location where you can record the interview.
- ▶ Your communication skills are crucial at this stage. Follow the questions in order to maintain the flow.
- ▶ Avoid repetition and ask clear, concise questions. Listen patiently and note down important points. Keep the process professional.
- ▶ Face-to-face interviews are ideal, but phone or email interviews are alternatives if necessary.
- ▶ If planning to take photos or videos, bring the necessary equipment and consider hiring a photographer.

#### Write the Interview

- ▶ Write the interview as soon as it is completed to retain the interviewee's tone.
- ▶ Present the answers as given by the interviewee, without adding your own interpretations.
- ▶ Newspapers typically use a question-answer format, but a narrative style can also be used, requiring a storytelling approach to convey the interviewee's ideas from the interviewer's perspective.



The following is a typical type of interview in a Q&A format.

## Interview with Arundhati Roy | We have to Endure

A complete edition of Arundhati Roy's unabashedly polemical essays was released in June. She speaks to Shougat Dasgupta

**Given all that has come to pass in the 20 years since you wrote some of these essays, do you despair? Or do you have some fight and anger left?**

In a sense it's immaterial whether I, personally, despair or not- or even whether there is fight and anger left in me or not. I am not the point. The question is whether we-all of us, collectively-feel things are going well or not. Do we feel that we live in a real democracy in which peoples' rights are protected regardless of what caste, class, religion or ethnicity they belong to? If not, is justice at least an ideal? Are we moving in that direction? Are we making the right decisions with regard to the environment? The rivers? The forests? The wildlife? Have the great dams we've built delivered what they promised they would? Are the institutions in our country-the courts, the schools and universities, the hospitals and clinics, the banks-working for the good of our people? Are they within reach of the poorest of the poor? How many lynchings per month, or per week, how many mass murders and public floggings can we permit ourselves and continue calling ourselves a democracy?

"Fight" and "anger" are reductive words, suitable for teenage rebels. Resistance is not merely about fight and anger. Nor is good writing. The real task is to be able to continue to be everything-to continue to create, to continue to love and laugh and think clearly-even when an ill wind blows. People have done it in situations far more alarming than the one we are in now-although I feel we are on the cusp of something pretty dreadful. To get a sense of perspective, we should read Frederick Douglass, or Primo Levi, or James Baldwin, Anna Akhmatova, Osip Mandelstam, Varlam Shalamov. Or Ambedkar. We must have a sense of the past and a sense of the future, and know that what is happening right now is just a chapter. No doubt a pretty horrible one, but still-just a chapter. Regarding the essays-I stand by every one of them. Even if they remain as nothing more than a record of what happened, of what was done to people and places, to rivers and mountains, and to language, both public and private-that's still something. I'd far rather go down on this side, than be buoyed up on the ugly tide that is rising all around us.

**While there is resistance-farmers' protests, for instance-it hardly seems to affect the public conversation? Or, for that matter, the elections.**

It's sad-but it's nothing new. It's the same old trope: declaring the nation to be under threat and denouncing everybody who questions that assertion as unpatriotic. It's as old as time. It's a sure shot trick and people fall for it every time. Shakespeare

wrote about it, Goebbels was a gleeful proponent. Read Shakespeare-you'll find Amit Shah and Modi and all of the motley members of the Opposition in his plays. It's a great irony that the suicide bomber of Pulwama had the greatest say in who would rule India for the next five years. His was the deciding vote, more or less-he managed to make those who were reeling under this government's policies vote against their own best interests. Kashmir decided who India's Prime Minister would be. Kashmir may yet destroy India in ways we least expect. From within. Using our votes, and our wholehearted consent. If it wasn't so tragic, it would be hilarious.

**After years of being asked when you were going to return to fiction, is it too early to ask when you might return to non-fiction?**

God knows. I have no idea what I'm going to do next. It doesn't matter. How long will they let people like me survive and work? I don't know. Sometimes I feel like *My Seditious Heart* is a weather forecast over twenty long years. Now the weather has arrived. We have to endure it. You remember how the Tsunami came? First the sea drew back, exposing miles of beach, while the water pulled itself up into this monstrous, devastating cliff. Some folks even ran out, delighted by the miles of beach that suddenly appeared, quite unaware of what they were running towards. That's what these recent elections feel like to me. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe people are quite aware-and this is what they really want. We'll see. We mustn't forget that out of 1,300 million of us, 900 million are eligible to vote. 600 million voted. 300 million voted for them. That's far from being a majority. But it's more than enough for a Tsunami.

Regardless, things can change very quickly, very surprisingly, and in ways we least expect.

(Interview with Arundhati Roy- *India Today*. July 15, 2019)

### 3.1.3 Types of Interviews

You might have encountered different types of interviews, depending on the medium through which they are conducted.

#### 1. Phone Interview

Phone interviews are conducted over the phone and later transcribed. They are useful when the writer is far from the interviewee or when there are other inconveniences. As long as there are no technical issues, phone interviews

can be effective. Establishing rapport with the interviewee is crucial, as understanding their tone relies solely on sound. Recording the call can make writing the interview easier. Phone interviews are also useful for getting quick responses from different personalities.

#### 2. Broadcast Interview

These interviews are recorded for television or radio. They involve using cameras and microphones, allowing the audience to see and hear the interviewee's answers and





expressions. This type of interview requires a noise-free location and a camera operator. Broadcast interviews can be either live or recorded and aired later.

### 3. Written Interview

When an interviewee is unable to give an in-person interview, a written interview can be an alternative. The interviewer sends a set of questions to the interviewee, who then responds in writing at their convenience. The drawback is that the interviewer cannot ask follow-up questions based on the interviewee's responses.

### 4. In-Person Interview

In-person interviews are conducted face-to-face, allowing direct interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. This is a conventional and convenient method of interviewing, facilitating a more natural and dynamic exchange.

## Recap

- ▶ Features and interviews with distinct styles based on the medium.
- ▶ Interviews vary based on medium – newspaper, TV, and more.
- ▶ Different types of features: follow-ups, profiles, human interest, and scientific reviews.
- ▶ Engaging features require research, focus, and readability.
- ▶ Key features of good writing include detail, catchy language, and a unique angle.
- ▶ Interviews classified by medium: phone, broadcast, written, in-person.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the Latin word from which 'feature' is derived?
2. Which component provides background information in a feature?
3. Which type of feature focuses on the analysis of artistic works?
4. What is the term used for interviews with common people?
5. In which type of interview is the person physically present?
6. Which element makes the language in a feature attractive?
7. What quality allows a feature to explore different perspectives?
8. How are ideas presented in a profile feature?
9. Which type of feature follows up on a previous news story?
10. What makes a feature more engaging than a news report?

## Answers

1. Factura
2. Introduction
3. Reviews
4. Vox Populi
5. In Person
6. Simplicity
7. Freedom
8. Through Interviews
9. Follow Up
10. Storytelling

## Assignments

1. Compare and contrast the distinct styles of features and interviews based on different mediums.
2. Identify and explain the different types of features and their respective purposes in journalism.
3. Discuss the key elements required to make a feature engaging and captivating for the readers.
4. Analyze the significance of using detail, catchy language, and a unique angle in feature writing.
5. Create a comprehensive classification of interviews based on their medium and provide examples of each type.

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## Unit 2

# Reporting Politics, Economy, Sports, Development and Governance, Crime and Disasters

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ differentiate between various types of reporting
- ▶ understand the techniques and challenges of reporting different subjects
- ▶ develop skills to gather and present information accurately
- ▶ recognise the importance of ethics and sensitivity in journalism

### Prerequisites

Journalism covers a wide range of topics that impact people's daily lives in different ways. From the decisions made by political leaders to economic policies that shape financial realities, from thrilling sports events to development initiatives that drive societal progress, and from criminal activities that threaten public safety to natural or man-made disasters that cause widespread devastation – these diverse areas demand responsible and skilled reporting.

Reporting on politics involves keeping the public informed about the actions and decisions of governments, political parties, and elected officials. It requires an understanding of complex systems, ideologies, and the ability to analyse and explain intricate policy matters objectively. Economic reporting delves into the intricacies of financial markets, trade, employment, and the factors that influence economic growth or decline, affecting businesses and individuals alike. The world of sports is an arena of passion, competition, and human achievement. Sports reporting captures the excitement of games, the stories of athletes, and the analysis of strategies and performance, engaging fans and providing insights into this universal cultural phenomenon. Development and governance reporting shines a light on the initiatives, policies, and projects that shape the progress of communities, nations, and the world. It covers areas such as infrastructure, healthcare, education, and social welfare, highlighting both successes and challenges in improving people's lives. Crime reporting is a crucial responsibility, as it informs the public about incidents that



threaten safety and social order. It demands sensitivity, objectivity, and a commitment to accuracy while respecting the legal process and the rights of those involved. Similarly, when disasters strike, timely and responsible reporting can save lives, mobilise aid efforts, and keep the public updated on unfolding situations.

Across these diverse domains, journalists must adhere to ethical standards, conduct thorough research, verify information from credible sources, and present stories clearly, engagingly, and impartially. Their work serves as a vital link between events and the public, fostering awareness, accountability, and informed decision-making.

As you know, reporting is an essential part of journalism. Whether in print or visual form, reporting must be well-planned and delivered properly. In the earlier chapter, we looked at writing features and interviews. This unit deals with reporting in different fields.

## Keywords

Reporting politics, economy, sports, development and governance, crime, disaster

## Discussion

### 3.2.1 Reporting

Reporting is a crucial aspect of journalism. It involves presenting collected information in a reader-friendly and realistic manner. Reporters from various media outlets gather information and process it into reports. The style and nature of reporting vary across different fields. For instance, reporting a crime is different from reporting a sports event.

A report on the economic growth rate of India will use jargon and statistical terms. In contrast, a report on a natural disaster will use simple, understandable language and convey a sense of remorse. The entire structure of a report, from its headline to its conclusion, changes according to its subject matter.

Read the news headline given below. What is it all about?

**Indian Rupee logs over 4pc gain this fiscal amid headwinds on economic front-**

*(The New Indian Express, 26/04/21)*

What subject is it dealing with? Yes, it is related to the country's economy. Now, let's look at reporting on different topics.

#### 3.2.1.1 Political Reporting

Here are some reports published on the 2020 Kerala elections.

- *Kerala election results 2021: CM Vijayan says 'Historic' win belongs to people, Metro man E Sreedharan loses in Palakkad* – News18.com, May, 02 2021
- *Red wave trounces UDF in Thrissur* – The Hindu, May 03, 2021

- *Kerala Assembly Election Results 2021: Why BJP failed to retain its only seat in the state- Deccan Herald, May 02, 2021*

- തുടർഭരണമെന്ന പുതുചരിത്രം രചിച്ച് ഇടതുപക്ഷം; പിണറായിക്ക് രണ്ടാമുഴം - Malayala Manorama, May 02, 2021

Political reporting is as important as politics. It is a branch of journalism that covers everything related to policy-making and policymakers. Every social activity can become a political action, making this a broad area of journalism. Here are some familiar political activities:

- Election campaigns
- Voting
- Parliament meetings
- Court cases
- Political parties and their propaganda
- Public interest news
- Government policies
- Press conferences

What other political activities are you familiar with?

The main importance of political reporting lies in its ability to shape public opinion. These reports influence the opinions of the masses. Political reporting itself has become a political activity. Beyond just updating on political activities, it now involves in-depth discussions and audience engagement techniques to stay close to the people. Elections are a peak time for political reporting.

### Parliamentary Reporting

Reporting on parliamentary proceedings is called parliamentary reporting. As you learned in school, Parliament consists of the Lok

Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Reporters record the proceedings and report them through television, newspapers, or mobile phones.

### Purpose of Political Reporting

The following are some of the purposes of political reporting:

- To provide authentic information about political activities.
- To inform the public without manipulating information.
- To shape and reinforce public opinion.
- To act as a mediator between the public and the government.
- To serve as a watchdog of the government.
- To keep information free from propaganda.
- To serve people with news and views.

### 3.2.1.2 Sports Reporting

Do you like football, cricket, badminton, and kabaddi? Have you ever watched an Indian cricket team play against England in a stadium? Where do you watch these games? How do you find the broadcast times for these sports? Have you seen the sports page in the newspaper? Maybe you even had a childhood where you cut out pictures of sports stars like Sachin Tendulkar and pasted them on your books and walls.

If you are passionate about sports, then sports reporting is an interesting profession. After television became common in households, sports reporting became more visible. A sports reporter writes about sports events, conducts interviews with sportspeople, and covers allegations.

Specializations like sports reporting and crime reporting emerged in the 1990s. Before that, a reporter had to write all types of news.





With specialized reporting, reporters began to focus deeply on specific areas like sports, crime, parliament, environment, and entertainment. This allowed reporters to learn more about their areas and report with expertise. In sports journalism, knowing the rules of the sport being reported is essential. Sports reporting differs for print and broadcast media. Nowadays, there is more media coverage of sports, and there are even channels dedicated to sports. As capital investment in sports increases, media coverage also grows. For example, the media played a significant role in making cricket a hugely popular sport in India.

Sports reporting can be written as hard news or soft news, depending on the subject. A report on the venue of the Olympics is soft news, but a scandal or controversy is covered as hard news. Like any other reporting, sports reporting has its jargon. For example, while reporting on cricket, terms like spin, bounce out, dead ball, fielding, and free hit are used. So, a sports reporter should be aware of terms specific to each game.

Nowadays, a sports reporter needs to be more careful, as readers often watch the games themselves. The report should include good descriptions, interpretations, or comparative studies. Sports reporting is not just about covering a certain sport; it also includes profiles of sportspeople and sports venues, like Olympic host countries.

### 3.2.1.3 Reporting Crimes

*'A total of 51,56,172 cognizable crimes comprising 32,25,701 Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes and 19,30,471 Special & Local Laws (SLL) crimes were registered in 2019. It shows an increase of 1.6% in registration of cases over 2018 (50,74,635 cases). Crime rate registered per lakh population has increased marginally from 383.5 in 2018 to 385.5 in*

### 2019' - National Crime Records Bureau

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 32 lakh crimes were reported in India in 2019. Just like the population growth, the number of crimes is also increasing in India. Therefore, the news media need to cover them. Crimes include murder, kidnapping, offenses against public tranquility, crimes against women and children, atrocities against minorities, cybercrimes, and more. A reporter should have a general understanding of these crimes when approaching them.

When reporting crimes, the following elements need to be considered:

**Access:** The source of the news is crucial in crime reporting. You may receive information through phone calls and have to investigate to verify the truth. This is firsthand information, and the reporter is accountable for the facts. Police reports are secondary sources, and reporters refer to them to find facts related to the crime. In such cases, the reporter may not be accountable as the information comes from an authentic source.

**Accusations:** Avoid accusing suspects in cases that are unresolved by courts. Anyone involved or arrested is innocent until proven guilty. For example, in the ISRO spy case, Nambi Narayanan, a retired space engineer, was falsely accused in 1994. Malayalam newspapers published many stories accusing him of causing irreparable harm. Reporters should focus on writing factual information to inform rather than exaggerating to attract readers.

**Court Coverage:** After the police investigation, cases move to court. Reporters must follow court proceedings to gather further information. Court language has its own jargon, which reporters need to learn before attending cases.

| <u>Court Wordings</u> |        |           |      |
|-----------------------|--------|-----------|------|
| Affidavit             | Bail   | Defendant | Plea |
| Acquittal             | Charge | Appel     |      |

When writing a crime story, the reporter needs to clearly explain the 5Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. Crimes are a very sensitive subject and should be treated with the same sensitivity. Crimes come in various forms, such as robberies, homicides, and thefts.

### 3.2.1.4 Reporting Disaster

Disasters can be natural or human-made. Earthquakes, flooding, and landslides are natural disasters, while oil spills, nuclear explosions, and famines are human-made disasters. Reporting on a significant disaster is risky in many ways. Not only are you at risk yourself, but you may also face the dilemma of whether to take action or report on it. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Kevin Carter, known for his haunting photograph of a starving child in Sudan, tragically took his own life due to the emotional toll of witnessing human suffering. His powerful photographs continue to resonate with humanity.

Photojournalism is particularly powerful in disaster reporting, as photos can convey emotions more effectively than words. It's crucial to capture these images at the location of the disaster. Disaster reporting requires a strong heart and emotional detachment, as you may witness countless tragedies and pains. Here are some important points for dedicated reporters:

- Ensure your safety and that of your equipment. When covering events

like floods or heavy rainfall, take precautions to avoid danger while capturing important visuals.

- Sometimes, disaster reporters play a role in rescue efforts. During the 2019 floods in Kerala, many media outlets used their platforms to aid communication and assist those in need.
- Conduct interviews with witnesses or affected individuals, but do so with sensitivity, as they may be traumatised or in pain.
- Disaster reporting isn't always done on-site. In some cases, reporters gather information from news agencies from a distance to ensure accuracy and avoid spreading misinformation.
- Building relationships with authorities and other media personnel can reduce risks and help uncover facts related to the disaster. Utilising public resources for data collection is crucial in disaster reporting.

### 3.2.1.6 Reporting Economy

Reporting on the economy is crucial for understanding and interpreting economic activities such as economic growth, inflation, GDP (Gross Domestic Product), debt, labour, tax policies, fiscal policies, budget, and employment. This field requires expertise to navigate the complexities of economic principles and policies.

The ancient Indian text, *Arthashastra*,



written by Kautilya in the third century, provides insights into economic and military policies. Money and trade are fundamental elements of economics, with production, distribution, and consumption playing significant roles.

Economic reporting has a rich history, with publications like *The New Hampden Journal* and *The New York Herald* dedicating sections to business reporting as early as the 18th and 19th centuries. *The Wall Street Journal*, established in 1889, became renowned for its exclusive focus on business reporting.

Reporting on economic matters requires professional skills as it involves conveying complex yet essential information to the public. Previously, such information remained confined to official documents, but the media's role in simplifying economic reports has democratized access to economic affairs, holding officials accountable for their actions.

Journalists reporting on the economy have a social responsibility to the public, as their work aids in making officials accountable and promotes transparency in government actions. While economics is a vast field, it can be divided into branches such as microeconomics, macroeconomics, and labour economics for a clearer understanding.

Becoming an economy reporter requires several essential skills and resources:

1. **Knowledge:** A solid foundation in economics is crucial for analysing data and providing detailed interpretations. Stay informed about current and past economic affairs by consulting multiple sources, including real company or government data, news agencies, and reliable journals. Avoid merely copying information from other sources; reading extensively in the field will improve the quality of your reports.

2. **Information Gathering:** Seek assistance from subject experts and conduct interviews to enhance your understanding and produce better reports. Access press releases from companies or organizations to obtain firsthand information. Refer to reliable news sources and expert opinions, such as those provided by renowned economists like Amartya Sen, Jayati Ghosh, CP Chandrasekhar, and Prabhat Patnaik, who often contribute articles on economic affairs to newspapers and journals. Additionally, monitor government systems, such as tax offices, budget reports, and the finance ministry, for valuable data.
3. **Statistics:** Understand the basics of statistics, as they play a significant role in collecting, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting economic data. Utilise statistical methods effectively when writing reports.
4. **Economic Indicators:** Familiarize yourself with key economic indicators, which provide insights into the direction and health of an economy. Examples include GDP (a measure of economic growth) and labour productivity (indicative of the labour market). Understanding these indicators is essential for accurately reporting economic trends.
5. **Resources:** Stay updated with economic news by following reputable business newsgroups such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, *Forbes*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, *Business Today*, and *Business India*. These publications provide valuable insights and analysis on global economic developments.

### 3.2.1.7 Reporting Development and Governance

Development reporting has evolved

into a new dimension within contemporary journalism, reflecting the importance of developmental communication. This field centres on development as a crucial tool for shaping a better future, with a focus on how communication can facilitate this process.

‘Communication for development stresses the need to support two-way communication systems that enable dialogue and that allow communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns and participate in the decisions that relate to their development ’ - *United Nations Assembly, 1996.*

When communication is seen as integral to development, reporting becomes equally vital. Communication for development plays a crucial role in aiding disadvantaged segments of society. For instance, during the 2019 floods in Kerala, news channels and social media were extensively utilised to ensure essential facilities, including food, reached vulnerable communities. Media outlets disseminated news to prompt immediate assistance and facilitated connections between organisations and the government by providing timely information. This serves as a tangible example of utilising media communication for societal benefit.

In India, numerous media groups exclusively focus on reporting news stories related to development. One notable example is PARI (People’s Archives of Rural India), founded by eminent journalist P Sainath, a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2007.

“PARI aims to address the complete failure of the corporate media to cover two-thirds of the country’s population. Our aim is to report and record what is easily the most complex part of the planet.”- this is what PARI describes about the function of PARI.

Development reporters’ reports cover a wide range of topics, including farmers, labourers,

students, schools, rural village health, and the lives of disadvantaged individuals. Their approach serves as an excellent example of developmental reporting. Visit their website to see how they present their stories: simple language that resonates with empathy, factual yet emotionally engaging. Impactful photographs further enhance the meaning of their reports.

When writing a report on development, remember:

- ▶ Development encompasses various aspects of human life, not just profit and infrastructure. Factual information on poverty, labor, exploitation, health, and policies can all be the basis of a report.
- ▶ Gathering information for developmental reporting is challenging, spanning from individuals’ lives to global corporations. Armchair journalism is not suitable; instead, seek facts from grassroots sources and report truthfully, expecting action.
- ▶ Use simple language and explain jargon to make the report accessible to all.
- ▶ Incorporate figures, images, and infographics for reader-friendly presentation.
- ▶ Adapt success stories, profiles, features, or interviews based on the subject matter of the report.



## Recap

- ▶ Reporting style varies with fields of study.
- ▶ Political reporting: Covering policy-making, elections, and government actions.
- ▶ Disaster reporting: Handling natural and human-made crises.
- ▶ Economic reporting: Expertly interpreting economic activities and policies.
- ▶ Reporting in development: Integral to communication for development.
- ▶ Communication for development benefits disadvantaged sections.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the primary purpose of reporting?
2. How does political reporting influence public opinion?
3. Why is specialized knowledge essential for sports reporting?
4. What is the importance of court reporting?
5. How can a reporter ensure accuracy in crime reporting?
6. What are the risks involved in disaster reporting?
7. Why is statistical knowledge crucial for economic reporting?
8. What are economic indicators, and why are they important?
9. What is the role of a journalist in democratizing economic affairs?
10. Why is it essential for a reporter to seek expert help in economic reporting?

## Answers

1. Inform
2. Influence
3. Jargon
4. Accuracy
5. Sources
6. Safety
7. Analysis
8. Indicators
9. Responsibility
10. Knowledge



## Assignments

1. Explain how the style of reporting differs between political reporting and disaster reporting.
2. Discuss the key elements involved in economic reporting and how it contributes to our understanding of economic activities.
3. Elaborate on the significance of communication for development and its impact on disadvantaged sections of society.
4. Compare and contrast the objectives and scope of political reporting and reporting in development.
5. Provide examples of natural and human-made disasters that are commonly covered in disaster reporting, and discuss the challenges faced by journalists in these situations.

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# Unit 3

## Investigative Reporting

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise themselves with the concept and importance of investigative journalism.
- ▶ recognise the characteristics and techniques of investigative reporting.
- ▶ develop skills to conduct thorough research and gather credible information.
- ▶ appreciate the ethical considerations and social responsibilities of investigative journalists.

### Prerequisites

Journalists have a responsibility to tell the truth and uphold ethical standards in their reporting. While there may be instances of bias or misinformation in media coverage, it is unfair to generalise all journalists as mere “payday workers.” Like any profession, journalism encompasses a wide range of individuals with varying levels of integrity and dedication to their craft.

As we have discussed in previous chapters, reporting can take many forms, each tailored to specific subject areas such as economics, crime, disasters, and more. Each field of journalism requires its own style and approach to reporting, reflecting the complexities and nuances of the topics being covered.

Indeed, reporters play a crucial role in uncovering news from the vast array of information available. They must maintain a critical perspective on their surroundings and possess the ability to inquire deeply into various issues. Through inquiry-based reporting, reporters can uncover groundbreaking truths that may have otherwise remained hidden. However, to accomplish this, extensive research is essential. Moreover, reporters must also demonstrate fearlessness in their pursuit of the truth, even when facing potential challenges or obstacles along the way.

### Keywords

Investigative Journalism, Courage, Social Impact, In-depth Research, Right to Information (RTI), Sting Operations, Whistleblowers, Ethics

### 3.3.1 Investigative Journalism

Investigative journalism is a daring profession where journalists risk their lives to uncover the truth. These reports require great effort and courage from journalists. Investigative reporting is highly regarded and often leads to groundbreaking revelations that shape history. In India, *Tehelka* is a prominent example of investigative journalism. The media is often seen as a watchdog of the system, and investigative reporting exemplifies this role by uncovering serious issues that are concealed by those in power or obscured by complex circumstances.



Fig. 3.3.1 A career advertisement of *Tehelka*

Unlike regular news reports, investigative journalism involves delving deep into hidden matters using both secret and open sources and documents. Reporters must be clever enough to understand untold facts and process them to uncover the truth. Investigative reports are not dependent on directly available materials but require extensive investigation to uncover the facts behind the initial leads. This process takes time and effort, as reporters seek answers to the questions of what, when, where, why, and how.

The Watergate scandal in America, uncovered by journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, is a famous example of investigative journalism's impact. Their reporting led to the resignation of President

Nixon and demonstrated the significant role investigative reports play in society by revealing news of public interest.

#### 3.3.1.1 Characteristics of Investigative Reporting

- ▶ Extensive research is necessary for every investigative report.
- ▶ Investigative reporters require reliable resources to ensure the credibility of their reports.
- ▶ The process of writing and publishing investigative reports is time-consuming due to the complexities involved.
- ▶ Reports are only published once the final results are confirmed.
- ▶ Unlike paparazzi journalists, investigative reporters prioritize social impact and driving positive change.
- ▶ Specificity is crucial in investigative reporting, requiring a deep dive into the subject matter.
- ▶ Secrecy is often essential in investigative reporting, especially when dealing with powerful individuals who may try to obstruct or threaten reporters. *The Carawan*, a respected magazine in India for investigative journalism, emphasizes the use of highly confidential communication channels like Proton Mail due to safety concerns.

#### 3.3.1.2 How to do Investigative Reporting?

When choosing an area for investigative reporting, opt for topics with social relevance. There are stories waiting to be uncovered in every corner, revealing loopholes and issues that need attention. To do this effectively, stay observant and critically evaluate news and opinions that may appear superficial at first glance. Given the current skepticism toward media due to fake news and bias, investigative

reporting plays a crucial role in maintaining ethics and truthfulness. Always prioritize subjects that contribute positively to society.

Before stepping into investigative reporting, develop a hypothesis and a plan of action. Compared to regular news stories, investigative reports require more time and preparation. A broad understanding of the potential outcomes is essential for conducting thorough research. Maintain secrecy throughout the investigative process until the report is ready for publication.

Anand Patwardhan, a prominent documentary filmmaker in India, exemplifies investigative storytelling through his films. He travels with his camera, capturing stories with an investigative approach that sheds light on important societal issues.

### 3.3.1.3 How to Become an Investigative Reporter?

To become an investigative reporter, one must embody responsibility and social commitment. This is especially crucial in today's climate of increasing fake news and biased reporting, which erodes public trust in the media. Investigative journalists must uphold truthfulness and integrity in their profession, maintaining a critical eye toward news and opinions.

Self-motivation is essential for investigative reporters, who should take the lead without waiting for instructions. Strong communication skills are vital, along with the ability to build rapport, especially when working in groups to achieve results. Upholding professional ethics is paramount, as journalists often face accusations of unethical behaviour. Prioritizing market reach and profit over journalistic integrity can lead to compromises, undermining the core principles of the profession.

Courage is indispensable for investigative journalists, who may encounter threats and warnings from individuals implicated in their reports. Vinod Jose, the executive chief editor of The Caravan, shared his experiences of facing threats while publishing reports on the ruling government. Being an investigative reporter often means risking one's safety and even life. Many journalists, like Vinod Jose, demonstrate such bravery in India and around the world.

### 3.3.1.4 Purpose of Investigative Reporting

- ▶ To responsibly inform the public with new information. Unlike regular news reports, investigative reports provide extensive data and analysis, often requiring lengthy research. These reports shed light on truths that may otherwise remain hidden.
- ▶ It prompts action in various areas. For example, a report on drug use among school children would delve into its causes, raising awareness and prompting preventive measures not only within schools but also among the public.
- ▶ Investigative reporting underscores the accountability of public institutions and exposes abuses of power. Many media investigations uncover cases of bribery and corruption within government agencies, holding authorities accountable to the public.
- ▶ It utilizes tools like Right to Information (RTI) requests to uphold the public's right to information, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- ▶ Investigative reports on cultural aspects contribute to archival records. For instance, reports on local artists and art history serve as valuable cul-

tural documentation.

### 3.3.1.5 Forms of Investigative Reporting

Investigative reporting can take various forms, such as utilising the Right to Information (RTI) Act, conducting sting operations, or relying on whistleblowers to expose corruption and wrongdoing within institutions.

#### a. RTI

American investigative journalist Katherine Boo emphasised the importance of the RTI Act as a tool for holding social programs and corrupt officials accountable. Enacted in 2005, the RTI Act grants citizens the right to access information held by government institutions, except for cases involving national security.

#### b. Sting Operations

Sting operations are carefully planned actions undertaken by journalists to uncover illegal activities perpetrated by individuals, groups, or even government entities. While effective in revealing the truth, ethical concerns surrounding sting operations are prevalent due to the methods employed to gather information.

#### c. Whistleblowers

Whistleblowers are individuals, often public servants, who expose corruption and

misconduct within organizations. They play a crucial role in bringing internal abuses of power to light by informing the press and the public about the wrongdoing.

When writing an investigative report, clarity, accuracy, and precision are paramount. Using simple language and presenting information in chronological order aids readers in understanding the case. Timelines are often included in investigative reports to provide a clear overview of events. For instance, *Tehelka*, an Indian magazine founded by Tarun Tejpal, uncovered a major corruption scandal involving the Assam Rifles in 2014. This investigative report revealed instances of bribery within the armed forces, posing a serious threat to national security. Despite ethical concerns surrounding its methods, *Tehelka*'s investigative journalism served the public interest by exposing corruption. However, it is important to note that not all investigative reports are truthful and ethical. Some may be fabricated or biased, aiming to defame certain individuals or organisations.

## Recap

- ▶ Investigative journalism exposes concealed matters of public interest.
- ▶ Requires extensive research and reliable sources.
- ▶ Aims to induce positive social change and accountability.
- ▶ Prioritises public interest over market motives.
- ▶ Investigative reporters face risks and threats.
- ▶ RTI is an important tool for investigative reporting.
- ▶ Sting operations uncover unlawful activities through planned actions.



- ▶ Whistleblowers expose corruption within systems.
- ▶ Clarity, accuracy, and chronology are essential for investigative reports.
- ▶ Ethical concerns arise, especially in sting operations.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the primary aim of investigative journalism?
2. Which famous investigative report led to the resignation of a US President?
3. What is the significance of maintaining secrecy in investigative reporting?
4. Which Indian magazine is known for its groundbreaking investigative stories?
5. What is the role of RTI (Right to Information) in investigative journalism?
6. What are sting operations in the context of investigative reporting?
7. Who are whistle-blowers in the context of investigative reporting?
8. Why is it essential for investigative reporters to have strong communication skills?
9. What is the importance of maintaining clarity and accuracy in investigative reports?
10. What ethical concerns are associated with investigative reporting?

## Answers

1. Exposing
2. Watergate
3. Safety
4. Tehelka
5. Uncover
6. Undercover
7. Informants
8. Collaboration
9. Credibility
10. Ethics

## Assignments

1. Explain the significance of investigative reporting and how it serves the greater good of society.
2. Discuss the key elements of a well-planned investigative report and its role in revealing hidden news to the public.
3. Why is public interest an essential aspect of investigative reporting, and how does it differentiate it from other forms of journalism?
4. Investigate and analyse a recent example of investigative reporting, highlighting its purpose and impact on society.
5. How does investigative reporting contribute to transparency and accountability in various sectors, benefiting the public at large?

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# Unit 4

## Social Media as a Source for Stories, Citizen Journalism

### Learning Outcomes

By completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise with the concept of citizen journalism and its evolution in the digital age.
- ▶ analyse the impact of citizen journalism on traditional media and its role in amplifying diverse perspectives.
- ▶ evaluate the advantages and challenges of citizen journalism, including issues like fake news and gatekeeping.
- ▶ develop critical thinking skills to assess the credibility and authenticity of user-generated content.

### Prerequisites

In the previous four units of this block, we have explored specialised reporting styles. It is now evident that every piece of news we see in print or broadcast media is crafted carefully and systematically. Different writing techniques are used for features, interviews, follow-ups, and more.

Nowadays, we all have small, handy devices that have become integral to our lives. Mobile phones are used for various purposes: reading news, booking train tickets, paying bills, watching movies, finding locations, chatting, and socializing. How do we socialize through mobile phones? We use social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, YouTube, and many others to communicate with one another and with larger audiences.

With the rise of internet-accessible smartphones, people from different places began interacting with each other more easily. Unlike the one-way communication modes of print, television, and radio, this new media allows not just for feedback but also for creating and sharing news. This unit will discuss social media and its potential for creating news stories.

The tweet below is written by the Prime Minister of India as a condolence note on the death of Sunil Jain, a senior journalist at *The Indian Express*. Even the Prime Minister uses social media platforms to convey important messages. The popularity and reach of social media are significant today. Such notes from the Prime Minister would be seen by many

people directly, showcasing the platform's wide and immediate reach

Narendra Modi

@narendramodi

You left us too soon, Sunil Jain. I will miss reading your columns and hearing your frank as well as insightful views on diverse matters. You leave behind an inspiring range of work. Journalism is poorer today, with your sad demise. Condolences to family and friends. Om Shanti.

10:49 PM · May 15, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

## Keywords

Citizen Journalism, Social Media, User-Generated Content, Diverse Perspectives, Feedback Gatekeeping, Fake News, Critical Thinking

## Discussion

### 3.4.1 What is Citizen Journalism?

Citizen journalism is a 21st-century phenomenon where ordinary citizens act as reporters.

Look at the table below. It shows some of the prominent social media platforms we use. WhatsApp became the most-used app in India in 2020, with over 530 million users. YouTube and Facebook secured second and third positions in terms of the number of users. Instagram and X (earlier Twitter) have also become trending social media platforms. This indicates that a large population in India uses social media platforms. On social media, users are not just passive listeners; they are also active participants. For example, on Facebook, when someone posts something, there are three ways to react, enabling two-way communication.

Another important aspect of social media is that users can also become news producers. For instance, if you are interested in bird

watching and you see a rare bird, you can capture a photo on your mobile phone and post it on your social media platform, describing its peculiarity. Many people will see that picture and share their views. In this way, you are socialising and creating news, becoming a “little reporter.”

Being a little reporter means you are not a professional journalist, but you can still report events around you. You can use social media to share your thoughts, take videos of events, or capture photos and post them. This is why citizen journalism is also called participatory journalism or collaborative journalism. The content created through citizen journalism is known as user-generated content.







It is believed that this practice and terminology began in Korea by an entrepreneur, Yeon-ho, who defined it as “every citizen as a reporter.” They started a website called Ohmynews, where they used volunteers to generate content. Citizen journalism is also carried out by activists and people who have opinions on making a social change. Today,



traditional newspapers often have sections for publishing selected pieces of writing from social media. This shows how much things have changed.

platforms. Do you use any of these? If so, you will be familiar with how they work. If not, have a look at their features and modes of operation. They will allow you to find contacts and friends.

Below is a list of highly used social media

| Social Network Logos   | Date launched | Founded by  |
|--|---------------|---|
| Gmail<br>       | 2004          | Paul Buchheit   |
| Facebook<br>    | 2004          | Mark Zuckerberg<br>Eduardo Saverin<br>Andrew McCollum<br>Dustin Moskovitz<br>Chris Hughes |
| Youtube<br>   | 2005          | Jawed Karim,<br>Steve Chen,<br>Chad Hurley  |
| WhatsApp<br>  | 2009          | Brian Acton,<br>Jan Koum  |
| Telegram<br>  | 2013          | Nikolai Durov<br>Pavel Durov  |
| Instagram<br> | 2010          | Kevin Systrom   |

### 3.4.1.1 Social Impact of Citizen Journalism

#### a. What is Important and What is Not?

Citizen journalism has led to a surge in the amount of news available. Often, user-generated content grabs people's attention and eventually gets picked up by mainstream media. For example, in 2018, in Palakkad district, Kerala, a man named Madhu from the Attappadi tribal community was mob lynched after being accused of stealing food. This brutal incident became known when someone took a selfie while beating Madhu and posted it on social media. The post quickly went viral, sparking outrage and becoming a significant news story in mainstream media. This highlights how citizen journalism can bring critical issues to light. However, it also demonstrates the potential for spreading fake news. Despite the risks, social media often serves as a valuable source for mainstream news media.

#### b. Wide Variety of Content

Social media hosts groups and communities that share news from villages and remote areas, often covering stories overlooked by mainstream media. For example, YouTube has revolutionized content consumption in India. According to Sanjay Gupta, Country Head

& Vice-President of Google India, "India is seeing its biggest content revolution and there is a fundamental shift in viewing habits, with two out of three Indians saying that they would rather give up TV than YouTube for a month." This was reported by *The Business Line* of *The Hindu*, highlighting the increasing preference for YouTube over traditional TV. Thousands of YouTube channels in India cover a wide range of topics, including literature, cinema, travel, food, art, books, comedy, science, political news, and more. A quick look at YouTube or any social media platform will reveal the vast array of content available.

#### c. New Perspectives

Citizen journalism gives individuals a platform to share their perspectives on various incidents. For example, on Twitter, political statements often spark widespread reactions, with people retweeting and sharing their opinions. This allows for diverse viewpoints and discussions on social platforms. Citizen journalism enables people to contribute their unique perspectives, enriching the public discourse and providing a broader understanding of events.

Look at the below tweet:



Fig.3.4.1 A Twitter post by a celebrity star Rihanna

*Business Insider India* reported that Rihanna's tweet about the farmer's protest was retweeted by 209,000 people in India, many of whom added their own political statements about it.

#### **d. Diversity of News**

As discussed, social media content created by citizens is diverse, reflecting their surroundings, geography, cultures, languages, age groups, and perspectives. This diversity is limitless, offering informative and novel experiences. Often, content from social media garners attention from a larger population and is subsequently reported by mainstream media.

#### **e. Feedback**

New media allows for quick feedback, unlike conventional media. Social media platforms facilitate various reactions to uploaded content. For example, on Facebook, users can like, comment, share, or quote content to add their opinions. Additionally, content can be shared across multiple platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram. Television channels frequently use images of social media posts as evidence.

#### **f. Different Form**

Citizen journalism operates through various genres or forms, such as blogs. Blogs provide a web platform for individuals to share their experiences and creations with the public or a private community.

#### **g. Gatekeeping**

Sociologist Kurt Lewin introduced

the gatekeeping theory in mass media, where gatekeepers decide what content is allowed. In traditional media like newspapers and television, editors serve as gatekeepers, deciding what gets published or broadcasted. However, citizen journalism lacks this gatekeeping process, allowing individuals the freedom to speak. While this freedom is fundamental, some countries restrict it, citing speech policies. In India, every citizen has the right to free speech, although hate speech can cause harm. In such cases, gatekeeping may be necessary to prevent the spread of misinformation and hate speech, but it should not impede individuals from speaking the truth.

#### **3.4.1.2 Fake News**

The internet and social media have contributed to a significant increase in the spread and creation of fake news. According to Allcott and Gentzkow (2017), fake news refers to intentionally and verifiably false articles that could mislead readers. Essentially, fake news is fabricated content designed to resemble real news in structure and content. It may be created for financial, ideological, or personal reasons, but regardless of the motive, it is unethical and harmful to society. To address this issue, there are now fake news detection tools available to differentiate between true and false information. Fake news can also involve photo manipulations and content alterations, further complicating its detection and impact.

## Recap

- ▶ Social media platforms, diverse platforms after 2000.
- ▶ A boom in social media platforms diversified post-2000, encompassing Facebook, Telegram, Twitter, and more.
- ▶ Citizen journalism: Citizens as reporters.
- ▶ Social media introduced citizen journalism, empowering citizens to become reporters.
- ▶ Citizen journalism: A voice for all.
- ▶ Citizen journalism offers news from diverse places, cultures, and languages, becoming a platform for the voiceless.
- ▶ New media: Quick feedback, public opinions.
- ▶ New media enables rapid feedback and public expression of opinions.
- ▶ Gatekeeping in mass media.
- ▶ Conventional media employs gatekeeping to determine what is published or broadcasted.
- ▶ Fake news: Fabricated, unethical.
- ▶ Fake news refers to fabricated and unethical practices in news dissemination.

## Objective Questions

1. What term is used to describe citizens becoming reporters?
2. Which social media platform is highly used for citizen journalism in India?
3. What is the content created through citizen journalism called?
4. Which sector of society does citizen journalism give a voice to?
5. What is the process of determining what news gets published or broadcasted in traditional media?
6. What is the term used to describe intentionally false and misleading news articles?
7. Which factor enables rapid feedback and public expression of opinions in new media?
8. What is one advantage of citizen journalism in terms of news diversity?
9. Which social media platform is known for enabling quick feedback and reactions?
10. What is the primary challenge associated with citizen journalism?

## Answers

1. Citizen Journalism
2. WhatsApp
3. User-Generated Content
4. Voiceless
5. Gatekeeping
6. Fake News





7. Quick Feedback
8. Diverse Places/Cultures/Languages
9. Facebook
10. Fake News/Lack of Credibility

## Assignments

1. How has social media diversified since 2000, and what platforms are now part of this boom?
2. Explain the concept of citizen journalism and how social media has enabled citizens to become reporters.
3. In what ways does citizen journalism provide a voice for the voiceless, and what kind of news does it offer?
4. Describe the role of new media in facilitating quick feedback and public opinions.
5. What is gatekeeping, and how does it apply to conventional mass media?

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# BLOCK - 04

## **Writing for Media**

# Unit 1

## Language and Style of Journalism for Various Print and Broadcast Media

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ craft news content with appropriate language and style tailored to print and broadcast media platforms.
- ▶ analyse and adapt their writing style to effectively communicate news stories in diverse journalistic formats.
- ▶ assess ethical considerations in journalistic language and style across different media channels.
- ▶ evaluate the impact of language and style choices on audience engagement and comprehension in print and broadcast journalism.
- ▶ apply multimedia storytelling techniques while maintaining consistent language and style standards across various media outlets.

### Prerequisites

The declaration of election results is one of the most important news events in an Indian scenario. Different kinds of media report election results in different styles and languages. In a newspaper, the coverage of a national election would typically follow the traditional journalistic style. The front-page headline would be clear and concise, providing the most critical information: the winner's name, the margin of victory, recalling the previous results, and perhaps a brief statement on the significance of the election. The article that follows would offer a detailed analysis of the election process, the candidate's political affiliations, and the implications of the election for the country.

On television, the coverage of the election would be a blend of visuals, on-air reporting, and live interviews. The broadcast might start with an anchor at the news desk introducing the story, followed by live footage of polling stations, interviews with voters at different locations, and clips of candidates giving their speeches. There might also be interactive graphics on the screen showing real-time vote counts and projections. The coverage would prioritize visuals and immediacy, aiming to engage viewers through both audio and visual elements.

Radio may use a very different strategy in its coverage of the election. It would focus on delivering information through the spoken word. A radio broadcast might include live

reporting from various polling stations, interviews with political analysts, and updates on the vote count. Online news coverage of the election would be dynamic and interactive. The website's homepage would feature a breaking news banner announcing the election results, with links to more in-depth articles, live blogs, and interactive infographics. Readers could access candidate profiles, analysis, and election-related videos. Social media integration would encourage readers to share election updates, and there might be a comment section for user-generated discussions. In this real-life situation, the presentation of the election news varies significantly across different media platforms, reflecting the unique strengths and characteristics of each medium. Even though news conveyed to the public would be the same news on different media platforms, its magnitude and impact vary. In this session, we take a very close look at such differences.

## Keywords

Inverted Pyramid Style, Objective Tone, Clarity and Conciseness, Narrative Style, SEO-Friendly Content, Multimedia Integration, Mobile Responsiveness, Interactivity, Reader Engagement

## Discussion

The language and style of journalism can vary significantly depending on the type of print and digital media, as well as the target audience. The language of print doesn't suit radio and video media. Therefore, writing for each medium needs special attention and practice. So, let's take a closer look at the style of writing for print, online, and broadcast media.

### 4.1.1 Writing for Print Media

#### 4.1.1.1 Writing for Newspaper

Writing for newspapers requires a specific style that is concise, factual, and engaging. Newspapers are meant for the general public and vary in various aspects, including educational background and culture. So, writing for newspapers should primarily be more inclusive. Here are some common approaches to writing effectively for

newspapers:

**1. The Inverted Pyramid Style:** In newspaper writing, the most important information comes first, followed by supporting details in descending order of importance. This structure allows readers to grasp the essential facts quickly.

Example: Imagine you're writing an article about a local fire. The lead paragraph should answer the "Five W's": Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

"A massive fire broke out at a downtown warehouse last night, leaving several businesses destroyed and residents evacuated. The blaze, which started around 10:30 p.m. at 123 Main Street, is suspected to have been caused by an electrical fault. Firefighters from three neighbouring towns rushed to the scene to contain the inferno, and fortunately, no casualties have been reported so far."



**2. Objective Tone:** Newspaper articles should maintain an objective tone, presenting facts without inserting personal opinions or biases. Example: When reporting on a political event, avoid subjective language: “The Minister delivered a speech outlining his plans for tax reform” (objective)

“The Minister delivered an inspiring speech about much-needed tax reform” (subjective)

**3. Clear and Concise Language:** Use clear, simple language to ensure readers of all backgrounds understand the news. Example: Instead of “utilised,” use “used”; instead of “commenced,” use “began.” “The police used surveillance cameras to identify the suspect.”

**4. Headlines:** Headlines should be concise and attention-grabbing while summarising the main story. Example: For an article about a new technology breakthrough: “Scientists Develop Breakthrough Technology for Renewable Energy”

**5. Attribution and Sourcing:** Always attribute information to its source and use quotation marks for direct quotes. Example: In an article about a press statement from a company: *XYZ Corporation is committed to reducing our carbon footprint, says the company spokesperson Thomas Mathew*

**6. Use of the Active Voice:** The active voice makes sentences clearer and more direct. Example: Instead of “The report was read by the CEO,” use “The CEO read the report.”

**7. Avoid Jargon and Abbreviations:** Minimize the use of industry-specific jargon and explain abbreviations on their first mention. Example: If you’re writing about a new medical treatment, it can be written as: “The new drug, which stands for ‘Advanced Medical Solution’ (AMS), has shown promising results.”

**8. Proofreading:** Thoroughly proofread articles to eliminate errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Accuracy is paramount in journalism. Example: “The police is investigating the case.” (Incorrect) “The police are investigating the case.” (Correct)

**9. Avoid Sensationalism:** While headlines should be attention-grabbing, avoid sensationalism or exaggeration that misrepresents the story. Example: Sensational headline: “Massive Monster Storm to Devastate the City!”

**10. More balanced headline:** “City Braces for Severe Weather as Storm Approaches”

A news story is intended to inform readers objectively and efficiently. Remember to answer questions such as who, what, when, where, and why of the story in your lead paragraph, maintain a neutral tone, and use clear and concise language to engage your audience effectively.

#### 4.1.1.2 Writing for Magazines

Writing for magazines allows for more creativity and depth compared to newspapers. Magazines often focus on feature articles, human interest stories, profiles and in-depth reporting. Here are detailed notes on the key elements of writing for magazines:

**1. Narrative Style:** Magazine articles often employ a narrative style that draws readers into a story. This means storytelling elements such as anecdotes, vivid descriptions, and personal experiences are encouraged.

Example: If you’re writing an article about a travel destination, consider starting with a personal story or vivid description: “As the sun dipped below the horizon, casting a warm golden glow over the ancient city, I couldn’t

help but feel like I had stepped back in time...”

**2. Feature-Length Articles:** Magazine articles can be longer and more in-depth than newspaper stories, allowing for comprehensive coverage of a topic.

Example: When writing about a scientific discovery, you have the space to delve into the details and implications:

“The recent breakthrough in quantum computing has the potential to revolutionize industries from cybersecurity to drug discovery. To understand its impact fully, we must first grasp the underlying principles of quantum mechanics.”

**3. Engaging Language:** Magazine articles often use descriptive and engaging language that appeals to readers’ emotions and senses.

Example: In an article about a food festival, evoke the senses and emotions:

“The aroma of sizzling street food wafted through the air, drawing in food lovers from all corners of the city. With each bite, I could taste the rich blend of spices that made this festival a culinary journey worth savoring.”

**4. Expert Opinions and Analysis:** Magazines often include expert opinions, analysis, and commentary to provide readers with a deeper understanding of complex topics

Example: In an article about the economy, incorporate insights from economists:

“According to K. N. Raj, a leading economist, ‘The recent fluctuations in the stock market can be attributed to a combination of global economic factors, including trade tensions and monetary policy changes.’”

**5. Varied Length and Format:** Magazine articles can vary in length and format, allowing for versatility in storytelling. Some may

include sidebars, photo spreads, or interviews.

Example: In a travel magazine, consider including a photo spread to showcase the destination’s beauty:

(Accompanying high-quality photos with captions that enhance the narrative)

**6. Creative Headlines and Subheadings:** Magazine headlines can be creative and intriguing, enticing readers to explore the article further.

Example: For an article on personal finance:

“Unlocking Financial Freedom: How One Woman Turned Her Financial Life Around”

**7. Thematic and Lifestyle Focus:** Magazines often cater to specific themes or lifestyles, allowing for targeted content that resonates with a particular audience.

Example: In a health and wellness magazine, focus on themes like fitness, nutrition, and mental well-being:

“Mastering the Art of Mindful Living: A Guide to Achieving Balance in a Hectic World”

**8. Editorial Voice:** Magazine writers often have a distinctive editorial voice that reflects the publication’s tone and style. Writers should adapt their style to align with the magazine’s voice.

Example: If writing for a tech magazine known for its conversational tone: “Tech Talk: Exploring the Latest Gadgets That Are Changing the Game”

In magazine writing, the emphasis is on storytelling, engaging language, and depth of coverage. Writers have the freedom to use their creativity to captivate and inform readers while exploring a wide range of topics.





## 4.1.2 Writing for Broadcast Media

### 4.1.2.1 WRITING FOR RADIO

Writing for radio requires a unique set of skills to convey information through the spoken word effectively. Here are detailed notes on key elements of writing for radio, along with elaborate examples:

**1. Clarity and Conciseness:** Radio relies on the immediacy of the spoken word, and listeners need to grasp information quickly. To ensure clarity and conciseness, use straightforward language and sentence structures. Avoid convoluted sentences or complex vocabulary that can confuse listeners. Remember, you're aiming to provide information efficiently.

Example 1: "The traffic situation on the freeway is expected to worsen in the next few hours due to an accident involving multiple vehicles." Example 2: "Multiple vehicle accidents will worsen traffic on the freeway in the next few hours."

**2. Active Voice:** Active voice not only makes sentences shorter but also more engaging. It emphasises the subject performing the action, making it easier for the listener to follow. Direct and engaging language is crucial in radio writing.

Example 1: Passive voice: "The decision to implement the new policy was made by the board."

Example 2: Active voice: "The board decided to implement the new policy."

**3. Conversational Tone:** Radio is an intimate medium, often speaking directly to the listener. A conversational tone helps connect with the audience. Imagine you're having a friendly conversation and using language accordingly.

Example 1: Formal: "Let's discuss the latest developments in the tech industry." Example

2: Conversational: "Now, we're going to talk about what's happening in the world of tech."

**4. Pronunciation and Enunciation:** Radio presenters need to be understood clearly by the audience, so it's crucial to write scripts with pronunciation and enunciation in mind. Avoid slang or overly casual language that might hinder clarity.

Example 1: Unclear: "Gonna head to the beach for some fun in the sun." Example 2: Clear: "I'm going to the beach for some fun in the sun."

Writing with pronunciation and enunciation in mind ensures that radio presenters can communicate information effectively without stumbling over words or causing confusion.

**5. Varied Sentence Structure:** To keep listeners engaged, vary sentence structure. Use a mix of short and long sentences to create rhythm and prevent monotony in speech. Example 1: All short sentences: "The event starts at 7:00. It's a free concert. Come and enjoy." Example 2: Varied sentence structure: "At 7:00, the free concert begins. Come and enjoy the music, and don't forget to bring your friends."

Varied sentence structures help maintain listener interest and provide a natural flow to the narrative when writing for radio.

### 4.1.2.2 Writing for Television

Writing for television news requires a specific set of skills to effectively convey information through both spoken and visual elements. Here are detailed notes on key aspects of writing for television news, along with elaborate examples:

**1. Conciseness and Clarity:** Television news must be concise and clear due to the limited time available for each story. Keep sentences short and to the point to ensure

viewers can grasp information quickly.

Example: Instead of saying, “In the event that there is a power outage,” say, “If the power goes out...”

**2. Inverted Pyramid Structure:** Television news typically follows the inverted pyramid structure, with the most important information presented at the beginning of the story. This helps viewers understand the core of the story even if they don’t watch the entire segment.

Example: The lead sentence in a story about a natural disaster should provide the essential details: “A powerful earthquake struck the region today, causing widespread damage and leading to evacuations.”

**3. Visual Storytelling:** Television relies heavily on visual elements. Consider how visuals, such as video clips, images, maps, and graphics, can enhance the storytelling and help viewers better understand the story.

Example: When reporting on a wildfire, accompany the narration with video footage showing flames and firefighters in action.

**4. Active Voice:** Use the active voice to make sentences more direct and engaging for the viewer. Active voice emphasizes the subject performing the action, making it easier to follow.

Example: Instead of “The decision was made by the city council,” say, “The city council made the decision.”

**5. Conversational Tone:** Television news should have a conversational tone as if the anchor is speaking directly to the viewer. Avoid overly formal language.

Example: Instead of “We will now provide an analysis of the economic situation,” say,

“Let’s take a look at what’s happening with our economy.”

**6. Storytelling Techniques:** Use storytelling techniques to engage viewers emotionally. Share personal anecdotes or interviews to humanise stories.

Example: When covering a local charity event, include an interview with a volunteer who shares their motivation for participating.

**7. Pronunciation and Articulation:** Write scripts with proper pronunciation and articulation in mind. Ensure that names, places, and technical terms are pronounced correctly.

Example: If reporting on a foreign dignitary, provide a pronunciation guide for their name, e.g., “The President of France, Emmanuel Macron (EH-man-yoo-el mah-KRONE).”

**8. Timeliness:** Television news is timely, so scripts should reflect the latest developments. Be ready to update stories as new information becomes available.

Example: During a live broadcast, news anchors should provide updates on an unfolding event, such as a natural disaster or breaking news story.

**9. Avoid Jargon and Abbreviations:** Minimize the use of industry-specific jargon and explain abbreviations on their first mention to ensure viewers understand the content.

Example: If discussing a medical breakthrough, explain the technical terms for a lay audience: “Researchers have made a significant discovery in the field of oncology, which is the study of cancer.”

**10. Transitions:** Use clear and smooth transitions between stories or segments to guide viewers from one topic to the next.



Example: After reporting on a local event, smoothly transition to the next story with a sentence like, “Now, let’s turn our attention to national headlines.”

Writing for television news requires a balance of clear, concise language, visual storytelling, and the ability to engage viewers through effective spoken communication. Television news writers play a crucial role in delivering information accurately and engagingly to a wide audience.

#### 4.1.2.3 Writing for Internet

Writing for Internet news, often referred to as online journalism or digital journalism, requires a distinct set of skills to engage readers in a fast-paced, digital environment. Here are detailed notes on key elements of writing for Internet news, along with elaborate examples:

**1. Attention-grabbing Headlines:** Online news headlines must be attention-grabbing and concise. They should convey the main point of the story and entice readers to click and read more.

Example: Instead of “Local School Board Holds Meeting,” say, “School Board Reveals Controversial Changes in a Surprise Meeting.”

**2. SEO-Friendly Content:** Optimise online news articles for search engines (SEO) by including relevant keywords and phrases. This helps articles rank higher in search results, increasing their visibility.

Example: In an article about home gardening tips, include relevant keywords like “organic gardening,” “vegetable gardening,” and “beginner gardening.”

**3. Inverted Pyramid Structure:** Similar to traditional journalism, online news often follows an inverted pyramid structure. It

starts with the most important information and provides supporting details in descending order of importance.

Example: In a story about a natural disaster, the lead paragraph should cover the essentials: “A massive earthquake struck the region today, causing widespread damage and leaving thousands without power.”

**4. Engaging and scannable Content:** Online readers tend to scan content rather than read it word for word. Use short paragraphs, bullet points, subheadings, and visuals to make the content more engaging and accessible.

Example: In an article about healthy eating, use bullet points to list key tips: Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. Limit processed foods and sugary beverages. Stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day.

**5. Multimedia Integration:** Enhance online news articles with multimedia elements like images, videos, infographics, and interactive graphics to provide context and engage readers.

Example: In a story about a space mission, include images of the spacecraft, a video explaining the mission’s goals, and an interactive graphic displaying the trajectory.

**6. Hyperlinks and Attribution:** Link to relevant sources, articles, and references to provide additional context and credibility. Clearly attribute the information to its source.

Example: In an article discussing a scientific study, hyperlink to the original research paper or the website of the research institution.

**7. Social Media Integration:** Promote articles on social media platforms by including

share buttons, embedded tweets, and concise, shareable quotes within the content.

Example: After a key point in an article about climate change, insert a tweetable quote: “Scientists warn that urgent action is needed to combat climate change. #ClimateCrisis”

**8. Mobile Responsiveness:** Given the prevalence of mobile users, ensure that online news content is mobile-friendly and loads quickly on smartphones and tablets.

Example: Use responsive design to ensure that the article layout adjusts seamlessly for various screen sizes, making it easy for mobile users to read and navigate.

**9. Engaging Openings:** Capture readers’ attention from the beginning with a compelling lead that provides a teaser of the story’s significance or intrigue.

Example: Instead of starting with a dry fact, begin with a hook: “In a groundbreaking discovery, scientists have unlocked the secrets of a long-lost civilisation buried deep in the Amazon rainforest.”

**10. Interactivity and Reader Engagement:** Encourage reader engagement through comment sections, polls, surveys, or interactive elements that invite user participation.

Example: Include a poll at the end of an article about a controversial topic, asking readers for their opinion.

**11. Continuous Updates:** In fast-evolving news stories, update articles with the latest information to keep readers informed and engaged.

Example: In an article about an ongoing political crisis, add new developments as they unfold, providing a timeline of events.

Writing for Internet news requires balancing engaging, concise, and scannable content that caters to the digital audience’s preferences. Adapting to the dynamic nature of online journalism is essential for delivering news effectively in the digital age.

In conclusion, writing for various forms of media demands adaptability and a keen understanding of the medium, audience, and purpose. Whether you’re crafting news articles for print, broadcast, or online platforms, each medium requires unique styles and techniques. In print media, such as newspapers and magazines, writers employ the inverted pyramid structure, objective tone, and narrative elements for in-depth reporting and storytelling. Broadcast media, including television and radio, emphasise clarity, conciseness, and visual or spoken engagement to deliver information effectively to audiences. In the digital realm, writing for the internet necessitates attention-grabbing headlines, SEO optimization, and multimedia integration for online journalism that appeals to modern readers. Ultimately, successful media writing hinges on the ability to tailor content to the medium’s strengths, maintain audience engagement, and deliver accurate, timely information. Adapting to the specific demands of each medium allows journalists and writers to effectively communicate and connect with their intended audiences in today’s diverse media landscape.



## Value Additions

- ▶ The “inverted pyramid” style of writing, where the most important information is presented first, followed by supporting details in descending order of importance, originated in the field of journalism. It allows for easy editing and accommodates space constraints in newspapers.
- ▶ The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook is a widely used guide for journalists, providing standards for grammar, punctuation, and usage in news writing. It’s considered the industry standard in the United States.
- ▶ Yellow journalism emerged in the late 19th century, characterised by sensationalism, exaggeration, and often biased reporting. It aimed to attract readership through lurid headlines and exaggerated stories.
- ▶ Investigative journalism involves in-depth research and analysis to uncover wrongdoing, corruption, or abuses of power. It often requires significant time and resources and can lead to groundbreaking revelations.
- ▶ The “5 W’s and H” (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How) are essential elements in journalistic writing, ensuring that a story is comprehensive and answers all the pertinent questions.
- ▶ Broadcast media often relies on visual storytelling techniques, such as video footage, graphics, and soundbites, to engage audiences and convey information effectively.
- ▶ Opinion pieces and editorials are common features in newspapers and news websites, allowing journalists and columnists to express their viewpoints on current events and issues.
- ▶ Citizen journalism, facilitated by the internet and social media platforms, has become increasingly influential in the modern media landscape, enabling ordinary individuals to report on events and share information in real-time. However, it also raises concerns about accuracy, bias, and ethics.



## Recap

### ■ Writing for Print Media (Newspapers and Magazines)

- ▶ Print Media Style: Concise, factual, and engaging, with a focus on inclusivity.
- ▶ Inverted Pyramid Style: Most important information comes first, followed by supporting details.
- ▶ Objective Tone: Maintain objectivity and avoid personal opinions.
- ▶ Clear and Concise Language: Use simple language for broad comprehension.
- ▶ Headlines: Concise and attention-grabbing.
- ▶ Attribution and Sourcing: Attribute information and use quotation marks for direct quotes.
- ▶ Active Voice: Make sentences clearer and direct.
- ▶ Avoid Jargon and Abbreviations: Explain abbreviations on the first mention.
- ▶ Proofreading: Eliminate errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- ▶ Avoid Sensationalism: Use attention-grabbing headlines without exaggeration.

### ■ Writing for Broadcast Media (Radio and Television)

- ▶ Writing for Radio: Clarity, conciseness, active voice, conversational tone.
- ▶ Writing for Television: Conciseness, inverted pyramid structure, visual storytelling.
- ▶ Pronunciation and Enunciation: Ensure clear communication.
- ▶ Varied Sentence Structure: Keep engagement by varying sentence lengths.
- ▶ Visual Storytelling (Television): Use visuals like videos, images, and graphics.
- ▶ Transitions: Smoothly guide from one topic to the next.

### ■ Writing for Internet (Online Journalism)

- ▶ Attention-grabbing headlines: Concise, engaging headlines.
- ▶ SEO-Friendly Content: Optimize for search engines with keywords.
- ▶ Engaging and Scannable Content: Use short paragraphs, bullet points, and visuals.
- ▶ Multimedia Integration: Enhance with images, videos, and interactive elements.
- ▶ Hyperlinks and Attribution: Link to relevant sources, explain abbreviations.





- ▶ Social Media Integration: Share buttons, embedded content, shareable quotes.
- ▶ Mobile Responsiveness: Ensure readability on mobile devices.
- ▶ Engaging Openings: Start with compelling leads.
- ▶ Interactivity and Reader Engagement: Encourage user participation.
- ▶ Continuous Updates: Keep content current in fast-evolving stories.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the primary purpose of the inverted pyramid style in newspaper writing?
2. In print media, what is the significance of an objective tone in journalism?
3. What is the key benefit of using the active voice in writing for broadcast media?
4. How does writing for television news differ from writing for radio news?
5. Why is mobile responsiveness important in online journalism?
6. Which writing style is more likely to use storytelling elements like anecdotes and vivid descriptions?
7. What is the primary goal of a headline in print media?
8. In online journalism, why is it important to use SEO-friendly content?
9. What role does interactivity play in online journalism?
10. What is the primary reason for using the inverted pyramid structure in newspaper writing?

## Answers

1. To present the most important information first.
2. It maintains neutrality and presents facts.
3. It emphasizes the subject performing the action.
4. Television news has shorter and more concise content.
5. To provide a better reading experience on smartphones and tablets.
6. Writing for magazines.
7. To grab readers' attention and summarize the main story.
8. To optimize articles for higher search engine rankings.
9. It allows readers to actively participate and provide feedback.
10. To present the most crucial information at the beginning.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How does the inverted pyramid style contribute to effective newspaper writing, and what key information should be prioritized in the lead paragraph of a news article?
2. In magazine articles, what role does engaging language play in captivating readers, and how does it differ from the language used in newspapers?
3. Discuss the importance of a conversational tone in radio scripts. How does this tone enhance the connection with the audience, and provide an example illustrating its application?
4. Explain the significance of visual storytelling in television news. How do visuals contribute to viewer comprehension, and can you provide an example of effective visual storytelling in a news segment?
5. In the context of online journalism, why is it crucial to create attention-grabbing headlines, and how do they contribute to reader engagement? Provide examples to illustrate the impact of concise and compelling headlines.

## Assignments

1. Comparative analysis of news coverage across media outlets

**Assignment Description:** Select a current news event and analyse how it is covered by two different types of media: print (newspapers/magazines) and television broadcast (news programs). Focus on the language, writing style, and overall presentation of the news in each medium.

**Hint:** Learners will gain an understanding of how the language and style of journalism differ across various media platforms and how these differences may impact audience perception and engagement.

2. Interview and profile writing for different media

**Assignment Description:** The Learners have to interview a prominent figure in their community or field of interest. Then, ask them to write a profile of the interviewee suitable for two different media outlets: a newspaper/magazine and a radio broadcast. Emphasise adapting writing style, tone, and length for each medium.

**Hint:** This assignment will help students practice tailoring their journalism writing to specific media platforms, considering the needs and preferences of different audiences.



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## Suggested Readings

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## Unit 2

# Language and Style of Journalism in Convergent Formats (Online)

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ adapt their language and style of journalism to effectively engage online audiences in convergent formats;
- ▶ create news content optimized for online platforms, considering the unique characteristics of digital media;
- ▶ analyze and employ SEO and digital marketing strategies to enhance the visibility and reach of their journalistic work online;
- ▶ evaluate the ethical implications of language and style choices in convergent journalism, addressing issues such as clickbait and misinformation; and
- ▶ utilize multimedia storytelling techniques, including video, interactive graphics, and social media integration, to enhance online journalism's impact and appeal.

### Prerequisites

COVID-19 was a significant milestone in the history of the human race. All human inventions played their pivotal roles in defending the pandemic. Media played very important role in equipping people against COVID-19. The internet was a major tool against COVID so are the online media platforms. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online journalism played a crucial role in delivering real-time updates and information to the public. News websites and platforms adopted a style of online journalism that included live updates and interactive multimedia elements to keep the audience informed and engaged. News websites provided continuously updated information on COVID-19 cases, government policies, and health guidelines. This style of online journalism allowed readers to stay informed about the rapidly evolving situation in real time. Many news outlets used interactive maps and graphics to visually represent the spread of the virus, infection hotspots, and vaccination progress. Readers could click on specific regions to access detailed information.

Online journalism incorporated data visualization techniques such as charts, graphs, and infographics to simplify complex information like infection rates, testing statistics,



and vaccine efficacy. This made it easier for the audience to understand critical data. They also encouraged user-generated content, including firsthand accounts from individuals affected by the pandemic. User stories, photos, and videos were often featured alongside traditional journalism to provide a comprehensive view of the situation. This style of online journalism during the COVID-19 pandemic showcased the adaptability of digital media in delivering timely and interactive content. It allowed readers to access the latest information, understand the data, and engage with experts and fellow readers in a way that traditional print or broadcast media couldn't match. The pandemic highlighted the importance of online journalism in disseminating accurate and up-to-date information during a global crisis.

In this unit, we will discuss the style of online news presentation and its impact.

## Keywords

Convergent formats, Online journalism, Digital-first approach, Immediate publication, 24/7 availability, Multimedia storytelling, Hyperlinks, Reader interaction, Live reporting, Audience engagement

## Discussion

In convergent formats, such as online journalism, the language and style of journalism are adapted to the digital environment, where text, visuals, and interactive elements converge to deliver news and information to a diverse online audience. Here are some key aspects of language and style in online journalism:

### 4.2.1 Digital-First Approach

In the realm of online journalism, the digital-first approach is a fundamental principle that emphasises the importance of prioritising digital platforms for news dissemination. Unlike traditional journalism, where print or broadcast may have historically taken precedence, the digital-first approach acknowledges the dynamic nature of the internet and its role as a primary source of news for today's audiences. Here's a deeper exploration of this concept:

**i. Immediate Publication:** Online journalism follows a digital-first model

by publishing news articles, reports, and updates on digital platforms as soon as they are ready. This approach allows news organisations to break stories in real-time, ensuring that their audience receives the latest information as it unfolds. The traditional print or broadcast media may then follow with more in-depth coverage.

**ii. 24/7 Availability:** Online news sources are accessible 24/7, providing a continuous flow of information to readers. This availability acknowledges that news consumption is no longer limited to specific broadcast times or print publication schedules. The digital-first approach aligns with the anytime, anywhere access that modern audiences expect.

**iii. Audience Engagement:** Digital-first journalism leverages social media, comment sections, and other interactive features to engage directly with the

audience. News organisations can receive immediate feedback, answer questions, and involve readers in discussions related to the news. This engagement fosters a sense of community and strengthens the relationship between journalists and their audience.

**iv. Multimedia Integration:** In the digital-first scenario, multimedia elements such as videos, images, and interactive graphics play a crucial role. News organisations use these assets to enhance storytelling and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the news. This multimedia integration is a key feature of online journalism that caters to the visually oriented nature of digital audiences.

**v. Global Reach:** Digital-first journalism transcends geographical boundaries, allowing news organisations to reach a global audience instantly. This expanded reach not only broadens the potential impact of stories but also exposes audiences to diverse perspectives from around the world.

**vi. Adaptation to Changing Trends:** The digital-first approach acknowledges the ever-evolving digital landscape. News organisations continuously adapt to emerging technologies, social media platforms, and shifting online behaviours to remain relevant and accessible to their audience. This adaptability is critical for staying competitive in the digital space.

**vii. Breaking News and Updates:** Online news platforms excel at delivering breaking news and real-time updates. Whether it's a major event, political development, or natural disaster, the digital-first approach enables news

organisations to provide immediate coverage and continuously update stories as new information becomes available.

#### 4.2.2 Immediate Publication

Immediate publication is a core principle of the digital-first approach in online journalism. It emphasizes the urgency and immediacy of delivering news and information to the audience as soon as it becomes available. This concept reflects the ever-changing nature of the digital landscape and addresses the following key aspects:

**i. Real-Time Reporting:** Online news organisations prioritise real-time reporting. They aim to be the first to break important news stories by publishing articles, updates, or social media posts as events unfold. This immediacy allows them to inform their audience promptly, often well before traditional media outlets can produce broadcast segments or printed editions.

**ii. Continuous Updates:** Immediate publication is closely tied to the idea of continuous updates. Online news stories are not static; they evolve as new information emerges. This practice ensures that readers receive the latest details, developments, and insights related to a particular news event. It also helps maintain a story's relevance over time.

**iii. Live Reporting:** The digital-first approach embraces live reporting through live blogs, video streams, and social media updates. For significant events like elections, protests, or sporting events, online journalists provide minute-by-minute coverage, creating an immersive and interactive experience for the audience.





- iv. Push Notifications:** Many news organisations employ push notifications through mobile apps or browser alerts to instantly notify their audience of breaking news. This feature ensures that readers are alerted to important developments even when they are not actively engaged with the news site.
- v. Rapid Verification:** While immediate publication is crucial, online journalists also prioritise accuracy. They use a range of tools and techniques to verify information swiftly before publishing it. This approach balances the need for speed with the responsibility of providing reliable news.
- vi. Multimedia Storytelling:** Immediate publication extends to the use of multimedia elements to enhance storytelling. Online news platforms incorporate videos, images, infographics, and interactive graphics to provide a comprehensive understanding of a news event. These multimedia elements help convey the urgency and impact of a story effectively.
- vii. Crisis and Disaster Reporting:** In cases of crises or disasters, immediate publication is vital for public safety and awareness. Online news platforms play a critical role in disseminating information about evacuations, emergency services, and relief efforts, helping affected communities make informed decisions.
- viii. Global Reach:** The immediacy of online journalism enables news organisations to reach a global audience instantly. As news stories break, they can be accessed by individuals around the world, fostering a shared understanding of global events.
- ix. Community Engagement:** Immediate

publication invites immediate feedback and engagement from the audience. Readers can comment on articles, ask questions, or share their own experiences, contributing to a sense of community and a broader understanding of the news.

#### 4.2.3 24/7 Availability

The concept of 24/7 availability is a cornerstone of online journalism within the digital-first approach. It reflects the understanding that news consumption is no longer tied to specific broadcast schedules or print publication times. Instead, news organisations aim to make their content accessible to audiences around the clock, meeting the demand for timely information regardless of the hour. Here's an in-depth exploration of this principle:

- i. Instant Access:** Online journalism ensures that news content is instantly accessible to audiences. News websites are live and operational at all times, allowing readers to access articles, videos, and updates whenever they desire, be it early morning, late at night, or in different time zones.
- ii. Global Reach:** The 24/7 availability of online news transcends geographical boundaries. News organisations acknowledge that their readership extends beyond local or national audiences. Therefore, they make efforts to provide content that appeals to global readers, recognising that news events can impact people worldwide.
- iii. Breaking News:** Major news events, emergencies, or significant developments can occur at any moment. The digital-first approach enables news organisations to cover breaking news and provide immediate updates regardless of the

time of day or night. This practice ensures that readers are informed in real-time, contributing to their safety and preparedness during crises.

- iv. Audience Convenience:** The availability of news around the clock caters to the convenience of the audience. Readers can access articles during their commute, at work, or in their leisure time. This accessibility aligns with modern lifestyles, where individuals seek information when it suits their schedules.
- v. Time Zone Considerations:** Online news organisations recognize that their audience spans various time zones. They aim to provide content that accounts for these differences and ensures that important news stories remain relevant regardless of the reader's location.
- vi. Continuous Updates:** 24/7 availability goes hand in hand with the concept of continuous updates. News stories are not static but evolve with new information and developments. Readers can return to a news website at any time to find the latest details on a particular story.
- vii. Live Coverage:** Major events, such as political debates, sporting events, or award ceremonies, often occur during non-standard hours. Online news platforms offer live coverage through video streams, live blogs, and real-time social media updates, allowing audiences to follow events as they happen.
- viii. Audience Engagement:** The availability of news content at all hours encourages audience engagement. Readers can comment on articles, participate in discussions, or share their perspectives with a global community of fellow

readers.

- ix. Digital Delivery Channels:** News organisations utilize a variety of digital delivery channels, including websites, mobile apps, email newsletters, and social media platforms, to ensure that news is accessible through preferred mediums and devices at any time.

#### 4.2.4 Live Reporting

Live reporting is a dynamic and interactive aspect of online journalism, made possible by the digital-first approach. It involves providing real-time coverage of events, breaking news, and significant developments through various digital channels. Here's an in-depth exploration of this concept:

- i. Real-Time Engagement:** Live reporting focuses on delivering news and updates as they occur. This can take the form of live blogs, video streams, social media updates, or even dedicated live coverage sections on news websites. It allows audiences to engage with the news as it unfolds, creating a sense of immediacy and connection.
- ii. Event Coverage:** Live reporting is particularly effective for covering time-sensitive events, such as political debates, sports matches, elections, protests, product launches, and breaking news stories. Audiences can follow the events in real-time, almost as if they were present on the scene.
- iii. Multiple Digital Channels:** News organisations leverage a variety of digital channels for live reporting. These may include live blogs, where journalists provide a continuous stream of updates with timestamps; live video streams that allow viewers to watch events live;



and live social media updates, where journalists provide bite-sized news updates on platforms like Twitter and Facebook.

- iv. User Interaction:** Live reporting often encourages user interaction. During live events, audiences can comment, ask questions, and share their thoughts, creating an engaging and interactive experience. Journalists may also incorporate user-generated content, such as photos and videos shared by viewers, into their live coverage.
- v. Audience Participation:** Live reporting can extend beyond the passive consumption of news. Some events, like press conferences or town hall meetings, may include opportunities for audience participation through polls, surveys, or the submission of questions. This participatory aspect enhances engagement and provides a sense of involvement.
- vi. Enhanced Transparency:** Live reporting fosters transparency as it allows audiences to witness events in real time. This transparency is crucial in situations like elections or court proceedings, where trust in the accuracy of reporting is paramount.
- vii. Global Accessibility:** Live reporting is not limited by geographical boundaries. Audiences from around the world can access and engage with live coverage, contributing to a global understanding of events. This global accessibility also allows news organisations to reach a broader audience.
- viii. Adaptation to Emerging Platforms:** As new digital platforms and technologies emerge, news organisations adapt their

live reporting strategies. For example, live reporting on platforms like *Instagram Live*, *TikTok*, or *Clubhouse* has become increasingly popular, catering to the preferences of different audiences.

- ix. Ethical Considerations:** While live reporting offers numerous advantages, it also raises ethical considerations, especially when covering sensitive or rapidly evolving situations. Journalists must exercise caution to ensure the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of individuals involved in live coverage.

#### 4.2.5 Multimedia Storytelling

Multimedia storytelling is a dynamic and engaging technique used in online journalism that combines various media elements to tell a compelling and comprehensive news story. It recognises that modern audiences have diverse preferences for consuming information, and it leverages multiple media formats to deliver news and narratives effectively. Here's an in-depth exploration of multimedia storytelling:

- i. Visual Content:** Multimedia storytelling often incorporates visual elements, such as images, photographs, and graphics, to enhance the storytelling process. Visuals can provide context, evoke emotions, and illustrate key points within a news story.

Example: In an article about a natural disaster, including a photo gallery or slideshow of images depicting the impact of the disaster on affected communities can help convey the gravity of the situation.

- ii. Videos and Video Reporting:** Videos play a significant role in multimedia storytelling. News organisations produce video content for various purposes, including breaking news reports, feature stories, interviews, and explanatory

pieces. Video reporting allows journalists to capture the atmosphere and emotions surrounding an event.

Example: When covering an election, news outlets may produce video interviews with candidates, highlight reels from campaign rallies, or live streams of election night coverage.

**iii. Interactive Graphics:** Interactive graphics, such as maps, charts, and data visualisations, are effective tools for conveying complex information in a reader-friendly manner. These elements enable audiences to explore data, trends, and statistics interactively.

Example: In an article about climate change, an interactive graphic displaying temperature trends over the past century can help readers understand the topic more comprehensively.

**iv. Podcasts and Audio Stories:** Multimedia storytelling extends to the realm of audio with podcasts and audio stories. These formats allow journalists to convey narratives, interviews, and in-depth reporting through sound.

Example: A news organisation might produce a podcast series that explores a specific issue in detail, featuring expert interviews, firsthand accounts, and compelling narratives.

**v. Infographics:** Infographics condense complex information into visual, easy-to-understand formats. They are especially useful for explaining processes, illustrating statistics, or summarising key points.

Example: In an article about a new healthcare policy, an infographic can outline the main provisions, the impact on patients, and the timeline for implementation.

#### **vi. Live Streams and Social Media:**

Multimedia storytelling includes live streaming events and using social media platforms to provide real time updates, engage with the audience, and enhance coverage of live events.

Example: News organisations often use platforms like Facebook Live or Twitter Live to stream live press conferences, protests, and other events, allowing audiences to watch and interact in real-time.

#### **vii. User-Generated Content:**

Multimedia storytelling can incorporate user-generated content, such as photos and videos submitted by readers or viewers. This approach can provide unique perspectives and on-the-ground reporting.

Example: During a major weather event, news outlets may encourage the audience to submit their weather-related photos and videos, which can be featured in news coverage.

#### **viii. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR):**

Emerging technologies like VR and AR offer new dimensions to multimedia storytelling. They allow readers to immerse themselves in news stories, explore 360-degree environments, or interact with digital overlays in the real world.

Example: In a feature about a historical site, news organisations can create a VR experience that lets readers explore the site virtually, providing historical context and visual immersion.

### **4.2.6 Hyperlinks and Attribution**

Hyperlinks and attribution are fundamental elements of online journalism that play a





crucial role in enhancing the transparency, credibility, and accessibility of news content. They enable readers to access additional context, sources, and references related to a news story. Here's a more detailed exploration of hyperlinks and attribution:

**i. Providing Context:** Hyperlinks are used to provide context and additional information within a news article. They allow journalists to reference related articles, background information, or relevant reports, enriching the reader's understanding of the topic.

Example: In an article discussing climate change, hyperlinks can be used to direct readers to previous articles on the same subject, scientific studies, or government reports that support the claims made in the current article.

**ii. Citing Sources:** Attribution is the practice of crediting the sources of information used in a news story. It is a fundamental aspect of journalistic ethics and transparency. Proper attribution ensures that readers can verify the accuracy of the information presented and assess the credibility of the sources.

Example: When reporting on a scientific discovery, journalists should attribute the findings to the original research paper and include the names of the scientists involved.

**iii. Linking to Primary Sources:** Online journalism allows for direct linking to primary sources, such as government documents, academic studies, or official statements. This practice empowers readers to access the source material themselves, promoting transparency and trust in the reporting.

Example: In a news article about a new

healthcare policy, journalists can provide hyperlinks to the official government website where the policy document is published.

**iv. Correcting Errors Transparently:** If errors or inaccuracies are discovered in a news article, online journalism allows for quick corrections and updates. Ethical practices involve acknowledging the errors, providing corrections, and maintaining transparency with the audience

Example: A news organisation should append a correction notice at the bottom of an article, explaining the error and the correction made. The original erroneous information should not be removed but corrected.

**v. Avoiding Plagiarism:** Proper attribution is critical to avoiding plagiarism, which is a serious ethical violation in journalism. Journalists should clearly distinguish between their original content and information obtained from external sources.

Example: When quoting or paraphrasing from another news source, journalists must attribute the information to that source and, if possible, link to it.

**vi. Enhancing Credibility:** The inclusion of hyperlinks and attribution enhances the credibility of a news article. It demonstrates that the journalist has conducted thorough research, consulted reliable sources, and is committed to transparency and accountability.

Example: A news article reporting on a controversial political decision is more credible when it attributes statements to government officials, experts, and stakeholders, with hyperlinks to their official statements or interviews.

### **vii. Encouraging Further Exploration:**

Hyperlinks encourage readers to explore related topics, follow up on references, and access a broader range of information. This allows readers to form a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Example: In an article about technological innovation, hyperlinks can guide readers to in-depth technical explanations, videos demonstrating the technology, or user reviews for additional insights.

## **4.2.7 Reader Interaction**

Reader interaction is a fundamental aspect of online journalism that fosters engagement, encourages feedback, and creates a sense of community between news organisations and their audiences. In the digital-first approach, interactive features and opportunities for readers to participate in news consumption are prioritised. Here's a more detailed look at reader interaction:

- i. Comments Sections:** Many online news articles include comment sections where readers can share their thoughts, opinions, and questions related to the content. These sections facilitate conversations and allow readers to engage with both the news story and other readers.

Example: In an article about a contentious political issue, the comments section allows readers to express their views, engage in debates, and respond to one another's comments.

- ii. Polls and Surveys:** News organisations frequently incorporate polls and surveys into their articles to gauge reader opinions on specific topics. These interactive elements encourage participation and provide valuable insights into public sentiment.

Example: An article about upcoming elections may include a poll asking readers to vote for their preferred candidate or share their predictions.

- iii. User-Generated Content:** Online journalism often invites readers to contribute user-generated content, such as photos, videos, and eyewitness accounts of news events. This practice can enhance news coverage by incorporating diverse perspectives.

Example: During a natural disaster, news outlets may encourage readers to submit photos or videos of the event, which can be featured in news reports.

- iv. Social Media Engagement:** News organisations actively engage with their readers on social media platforms. They respond to comments, share articles, and create opportunities for readers to share and discuss news stories.

Example: A news organisation's *Twitter* account may share an article about a significant cultural event and encourage readers to use a specific hashtag to join the conversation.

- v. Q&A Sessions and Ask the Experts:** Online journalism sometimes hosts Q&A sessions with experts, journalists, or public figures, allowing readers to submit questions and receive direct responses. These sessions provide an interactive learning experience.

Example: A technology news website may host a live Q&A session with a cybersecurity expert, where readers can ask questions about online safety.

- vi. Interactive Multimedia:** Multimedia elements, such as interactive graphics, data visualisations, and virtual tours,





encourage readers to explore content actively and engage with the information presented.

Example: In an article about climate change, an interactive map allows readers to explore the impact of rising sea levels in different coastal regions by zooming in and out and clicking on specific areas for more details.

**vii. Crowdsourcing and Citizen Journalism:** News organisations may engage their audience in crowd-sourced investigations or citizen journalism projects. Readers can contribute information, research, or data to support investigative journalism efforts.

Example: A news outlet investigating local corruption may encourage residents to share their experiences or provide documents related to the issue.

**viii. Feedback Mechanisms:** News websites often include feedback mechanisms, such as rating systems or “report an error” buttons, that allow readers to provide feedback on the quality and accuracy of content.

Example: If a reader spots a factual error in an article, they can use the “report an error” button to alert the news organisation, which can then correct the mistake.

**ix. Live Chat and Webinars:** Some news organisations host live chat sessions

or webinars on specific topics, where readers can interact with journalists or experts in real time, ask questions and participate in discussions.

Example: A financial news website might host a live webinar in which investment experts discuss market trends and answer questions from the audience.

In conclusion, the language and style of journalism in convergent formats, particularly in the online realm, reflect the evolving landscape of media consumption and information dissemination. Online journalism embodies principles of immediacy, engagement, transparency, and multimedia integration to cater to the dynamic preferences of digital audiences. In this digital-first era, news organisations adapt by delivering content in real-time, making it accessible 24/7, and capitalising on multimedia elements to enhance storytelling. Hyperlinks and attribution ensure transparency and credibility, while features like push notifications and reader interaction foster a sense of community and engagement. The convergence of text, visuals, videos, and interactive elements allows news outlets to create immersive and accessible narratives. As the online journalism landscape continues to evolve, it remains essential to uphold ethical standards, promote transparency, and engage with readers actively to meet the demands of the ever-changing media landscape. In doing so, journalists and news organisations can continue to inform, educate, and inspire their audiences in the digital age.

## Value Additions

- ▶ Hyperlinks in online journalism allow readers to access additional information or related articles, enhancing the depth and context of a story.
- ▶ Search Engine Optimization (SEO) plays a crucial role in online journalism, as writers and editors strategically use keywords and metadata to improve visibility and reach through search engine rankings.
- ▶ Online news articles are typically structured for easy reading on both desktop and mobile devices, with shorter paragraphs and concise sentences to accommodate shorter attention spans.
- ▶ Interactive features like polls, quizzes, and comment sections encourage reader engagement and foster community participation in online news platforms.
- ▶ Social media platforms serve as distribution channels for online news content, with journalists and news organisations sharing articles and updates to reach a broader audience.
- ▶ Online journalism faces challenges such as misinformation and fake news, as the ease of publishing content online makes it susceptible to manipulation and dissemination of false information.
- ▶ Data journalism, which involves analysing and visualising large datasets to uncover trends and insights, has become increasingly prevalent in online news reporting.
- ▶ Personalization algorithms on news websites and apps tailor content recommendations based on user preferences and browsing history, shaping the way news is consumed in the digital age.

## Recap

- ▶ Convergent formats adapt journalism for the digital environment.
- ▶ The digital-first approach prioritizes online platforms for news dissemination.
- ▶ Online journalism emphasizes immediate publication and 24/7 availability.
- ▶ Multimedia storytelling combines various media elements for comprehensive news coverage.
- ▶ Hyperlinks and attribution enhance transparency and credibility.
- ▶ Reader interaction fosters engagement and community building.
- ▶ Live reporting offers real-time coverage and audience engagement.
- ▶ Online journalism transcends geographical boundaries for a global reach.
- ▶ Ethical considerations include accuracy, fairness, and privacy in live reporting.
- ▶ The convergence of text, visuals, and interactivity enriches news narratives.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the primary principle of the digital-first approach in online journalism?
2. How does online journalism adapt to the digital environment regarding breaking news?
3. What role do push notifications play in online journalism?
4. How does online journalism handle errors and inaccuracies transparently?
5. What is the main purpose of hyperlinks in online journalism?
6. How does multimedia storytelling contribute to online journalism?
7. What is the significance of user interaction in online journalism?
8. In online journalism, what is the purpose of Q&A sessions and Ask the Experts features?
9. How does 24/7 availability benefit online journalism?
10. What is the primary goal of live reporting in online journalism?

## Answers

1. Immediate publication
2. It publishes news as soon as it's ready for immediate access.
3. They instantly notify the audience of breaking news.
4. By appending a correction notice.
5. To provide context and additional information.
6. It combines various media elements to tell a compelling story.
7. It fosters engagement, encourages feedback, and creates a sense of community.
8. To provide a platform for readers to ask questions and receive direct responses.
9. It caters to the convenience of the audience by making news accessible at all times.
10. To engage the audience in real-time updates.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How has the digital-first approach transformed the way news is disseminated and consumed compared to traditional journalism methods?
2. How does the concept of 24/7 availability in online journalism cater to the diverse needs and preferences of modern audiences?
3. Can you provide examples of how live reporting enhances the audience engagement and understanding of news events?
4. In what ways does multimedia storytelling enrich the news consumption experience for online audiences?
5. How do hyperlinks and attribution contribute to the transparency and credibility of online journalism content?
6. What ethical considerations should journalists and news organizations keep in mind when engaging with readers and incorporating user-generated content?



## Assignments

1. Create a multimedia news story on state elections which includes:
  - ▶ A written article (500-800 words) providing an overview and context of the news event.
  - ▶ At least two relevant images or photographs with proper attribution.
  - ▶ A video segment (1-2 minutes) that adds depth or presents interviews related to the topic.
  - ▶ An interactive element, such as a data visualization, infographic, or map, to enhance understanding.

## Reference

1. Journalism Today, 13th Edition by James W. Tankard Jr. (2020), New York: McGraw-Hill Education
2. Writing for the Web: An Inverted Pyramid Approach by Susan Weinschenk (2016), Boston: Morgan Kaufmann
3. Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide by Henry Jenkins (2006), New York: NYU Press

## Suggested Readings

1. *Click: Why We Click Online and How to Get People to Click on You* by David Meerman Scott (2008), New York: John Wiley & Sons
2. *The Art of Storytelling in Digital Media: Engaging the Modern Audience* by Joanna Posetti (2014), Chicago: Northwestern University Press
3. *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and Do* by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel (2011), New York: Three Rivers Press

## Unit 3

# Legal and Ethical Framework of Reporting and Editing

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ apply a comprehensive understanding of legal principles to navigate the complex landscape of media law and regulations in journalism
- ▶ analyze and critically assess ethical dilemmas and challenges faced by reporters and editors in the field of journalism
- ▶ demonstrate the ability to make informed and ethical decisions when reporting, editing, and disseminating news stories
- ▶ evaluate the ethical considerations surrounding emerging technologies and their impact on reporting and editing practices
- ▶ develop and implement editorial policies and guidelines that uphold legal and ethical standards in journalistic work, fostering responsible and accountable reporting.

### Prerequisites

In 2003, during the lead-up to the Iraq War, several major news outlets, including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, published articles that asserted the presence of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iraq. These reports played a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing the decision to go to war. The reports on WMDs in Iraq underscore the vital importance of fact-checking and verification in journalism. Journalists have an ethical responsibility to ensure the accuracy of their reporting, especially when their work can have far-reaching consequences, such as impacting international relations and leading to armed conflict. In this case, the failure to verify the claims led to misinformation and a significant geopolitical event. Journalism is a very important profession in formulating public opinions. In this real-life situation, the absence of a robust legal and ethical framework in journalism may lead to profound consequences, including misinformation, loss





of public trust, and far-reaching geopolitical ramifications. It underscores the critical importance of ethical guidelines, fact-checking, accountability, and source protection in responsible journalism.

## Keywords

Article 19(1)(a), Reasonable Restrictions, Defamation Laws, Civil Defamation, Criminal Defamation, Contempt of Court, Official Secrets Act, Press Council of India, Self-regulation

## Discussion

The legal and ethical framework of reporting and editing in India is governed by a combination of laws, regulations, and journalistic principles that journalists and media organisations are expected to adhere to. It is essential for maintaining press freedom, journalistic integrity, and accountability. The legal and ethical framework of reporting and editing in India represents the cornerstone of responsible journalism in one of the world's largest and most diverse democracies. This framework is designed to strike a delicate balance between the principles of freedom of speech and expression, accountability, and societal well-being. Let's have a closer look at press laws in India.

### 4.3.1 Legal Framework

#### 4.3.1.1 Article 19(1)(A)

India's Constitution, which came into effect on January 26, 1950, enshrines the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a). This provision forms the bedrock of media freedom and journalistic expression in the country.

- **Fundamental Right:** Article 19(1)(a) recognizes freedom of speech and expression as a fundamental right of every citizen. This means that individ-

uals have the inherent right to express their thoughts, ideas, opinions, and information freely, without fear of government censorship or reprisal.

- **Reasonable Restrictions:** While the Constitution upholds the right to freedom of speech and expression, it also introduces "reasonable restrictions" in the interest of India's sovereignty and integrity, the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign countries, public order, decency, morality, contempt of court, defamation, and incitement to violence.
- **Public Order:** One of the "reasonable restrictions" relates to maintaining public order. This implies that while individuals have the right to express themselves, their expression should not incite violence, riots, or public disturbances that disrupt the peace and stability of the nation.
- **Defamation:** Defamation, both civil and criminal, is another restriction. It means that individuals cannot make false statements that harm someone's reputation. Journalists must exercise

caution when reporting on individuals, public figures, or organisations to avoid potential defamation lawsuits.

- ▶ **Incitement to Violence:** Incitement to violence or any form of hate speech that encourages hostility or enmity between different groups is also prohibited. Journalists must avoid promoting hate speech in their reporting.
- ▶ **Safeguarding Democracy:** The constitutional provisions regarding freedom of speech and expression play a critical role in safeguarding democracy. They allow for open debate, criticism of government policies, and the dissemination of information that holds those in power accountable.
- ▶ **Judicial Interpretation:** The Indian judiciary, particularly the Supreme Court, has played a significant role in interpreting and upholding these constitutional provisions. Landmark judgments have reaffirmed the importance of freedom of speech while also setting limits to protect public interest and national security.
- ▶ **Press Freedom:** The freedom of the press is considered an integral part of the broader freedom of speech and expression. Journalists and media organisations often rely on these constitutional provisions to defend their right to report on matters of public interest.

#### 4.3.1.2 Defamation Laws

Defamation laws in India are designed to protect an individual's or organisation's reputation from false statements that can

harm their standing in the eyes of the public. Defamation can take two forms: civil defamation, which can result in a monetary lawsuit, and criminal defamation, which can lead to criminal charges. Here's a detailed expansion on defamation laws in India:

##### a) Civil Defamation

**Elements of Civil Defamation:** To establish a case of civil defamation in India, the following elements must generally be proven:

1. **Publication:** There must be a statement, either spoken (slander) or written (libel), that is published or communicated to a third party.
2. **Falsity:** The statement must be false and damage the reputation of the person or organization it targets.
3. **Identification:** The statement must identify the plaintiff directly or indirectly.
4. **Harm:** The false statement must have caused harm to the reputation of the plaintiff, resulting in damages or injury.

**Defences to Civil Defamation:** Defendants in civil defamation cases can avail themselves of certain defences, including:

1. **Truth:** If the statement is true, it is an absolute defense against a defamation claim.
2. **Fair Comment:** Expressing a genuine opinion based on facts is generally a defence, as long as it is not malicious or intended to harm someone's reputation.
3. **Privilege:** Qualified privilege may ap-



ply in situations where statements are made in the public interest, such as in court proceedings or legislative debates.

4. Apology: In some cases, issuing an apology or a correction promptly after making the false statement may mitigate damages.

**Compensation:** In civil defamation cases, if the court finds in favour of the plaintiff, the defendant may be required to pay monetary damages as compensation for the harm caused to the plaintiff's reputation. The amount of compensation varies depending on the severity of the harm.

## b) Criminal Defamation

**Criminal Offense:** Criminal defamation is a non-bailable offence in India, and it can result in imprisonment and a fine. Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code defines defamation as a criminal offence.

**Elements of Criminal Defamation:** To establish a case of criminal defamation in India, the following elements must generally be proven:

1. Publication: Similar to civil defamation, a statement must be published or communicated to a third party.
2. Falsity: The statement must be false and damaging to the reputation of the person or organisation.
3. Intention to Harm: It must be proven that the defendant had the intention to harm the reputation of the plaintiff.
4. Punishment: If found guilty of criminal defamation, the defendant can face imprisonment for up to two years, a fine,

or both.

5. Controversy: The criminal defamation law in India has been a subject of debate and controversy. Critics argue that it can be misused to stifle free speech and target journalists and critics. Advocates of reform argue for its repeal or modification to decriminalise defamation.

In conclusion, defamation laws in India, both civil and criminal, serve to protect individuals and organisations from false statements that harm their reputation. While civil defamation allows for monetary compensation, criminal defamation carries the risk of imprisonment. However, the application and implications of these laws have been a matter of ongoing debate and discussion, with calls for reform to strike a better balance between protecting reputation and safeguarding freedom of speech and expression.

### 4.3.1.3 Contempt of Court

Contempt of court is a legal concept that exists in most judicial systems, including India, to uphold the integrity and authority of the judicial process. It refers to any act or behaviour that disrespects or obstructs the functioning of a court or undermines the administration of justice. Contempt of court can be categorised into two main types: civil contempt and criminal contempt.

#### a) Civil Contempt

Civil contempt pertains to actions that involve the willful disobedience of court orders or judgments, resulting in the obstruction or interference with the court's proceedings or the rights of the parties involved. Here's an expansion on civil contempt in the context of Indian law:

1. **Violation of Court Orders:** One common form of civil contempt occurs when an individual or entity fails to comply with court orders, such as injunctions, restraining orders, or directives to produce evidence.
2. **Non-Payment of Debts:** Refusal to pay a court-ordered debt, fine, or compensation to another party can also constitute civil contempt.
3. **Contempt in Family Court Matters:** In family court cases, civil contempt may arise when a party fails to adhere to child custody arrangements, visitation orders, or alimony payments.
4. **Purging Contempt:** In civil contempt cases, the contemnor typically has the opportunity to “purge” the contempt by complying with the court’s orders. This means that if the individual complies with the original order, the court may lift the contempt finding.
5. **Disobeying Court Proceedings:** Any act that disrupts court proceedings, disobeys court orders during hearings, or obstructs the course of justice can be deemed criminal contempt.
6. **Contemptuous Behaviour in Court:** Conduct within the courtroom, such as shouting, offensive language, or disrespectful behaviour toward judges, may result in criminal contempt charges.
7. **Publication of Contemptuous Material:** Publishing or disseminating material that scandalises or prejudices ongoing court cases or hampers the administration of justice can be subject to criminal contempt.
8. **Penalties:** The Contempt of Courts Act allows for the imposition of penalties for criminal contempt, which may include fines or imprisonment. The severity of the penalty can vary based on the nature and gravity of the contemptuous act.

## **b) Criminal Contempt**

1. Criminal contempt involves conduct that directly interferes with the administration of justice or undermines the authority of the court. In India, criminal contempt is governed by the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, and can include the following:
2. **Scandalizing the Court:** Making derogatory or scandalous statements about the judiciary with the intent to lower the court’s authority or public perception is considered criminal con-

tempt.

It’s important to note that the law of contempt is intended to ensure the smooth functioning of the judicial system, maintain respect for the court, and safeguard the rights of litigants and the public. However, it must also strike a balance with the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression as enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Contempt proceedings are usually initiated by the court itself, but they can also be initiated on the basis of a complaint made by an interested party.

In summary, contempt of court in India encompasses civil and criminal forms of



contempt, both of which aim to preserve the sanctity of the judicial process. While contempt laws are essential for maintaining the authority of the judiciary, they must be applied judiciously to prevent misuse and ensure that they do not infringe upon the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

#### 4.3.1.4 The Official Secrets Act

The Official Secrets Act is a piece of legislation in India that primarily deals with the protection of sensitive government information and the prevention of unauthorized disclosure of state secrets. It is aimed at safeguarding national security by regulating access to, possession of, and communication of information that is deemed confidential by the government. Here's an expanded overview of the Official Secrets Act in India:

### Historical Context

The Official Secrets Act (OSA) has its roots in British colonial-era legislation. It was first enacted in India in 1923, during British rule, and was subsequently modified and expanded over the years. After India gained independence in 1947, the government continued to maintain and enforce the OSA, with certain amendments.

### Scope and Definitions

The OSA applies to government employees, individuals working with or having access to government documents or information, and the general public. It defines what constitutes an "official secret" and outlines the penalties for its unauthorised disclosure.

**i. Prohibited Activities:** The act prohibits several activities, including the communication of official secrets to unauthorised persons or entities, their wrongful possession, and their

unauthorised use. It also covers the approach or entry into prohibited areas or the taking of photographs in such areas.

**ii. Penalties:** The OSA prescribes severe penalties for violations, including imprisonment. Those found guilty of unauthorised possession or communication of official secrets can face imprisonment for varying periods, depending on the seriousness of the offence. The act also allows for the forfeiture of property used in connection with the offence.

**iii. Defences:** The OSA recognises certain defences, such as demonstrating that the information was already in the public domain or was disclosed in the public interest and that the accused had no intention to harm national security.

**iv. Government Discretion:** The government has broad discretion in determining what constitutes an official secret and in classifying information. This can lead to concerns about potential misuse or overreach.

**v. Amendments and Challenges:** Over the years, there have been calls to reform or repeal the Official Secrets Act, which has been criticized for being overly broad and potentially misused. Critics argue that it can be used to stifle whistleblowers and infringe on freedom of expression.

### Controversies and Criticisms

The Official Secrets Act has been a subject of controversy and criticism, primarily for the following reasons:

**i. Lack of Transparency:** The act gives the government significant discretion in classifying information as "official



secrets,” which can lead to a lack of transparency and accountability.

**ii. Suppression of Whistleblowers:** Critics argue that the OSA has been used to target whistleblowers and journalists who expose government misconduct or wrongdoing. This can have a chilling effect on free speech and investigative journalism.

**iii. Need for Reform:** Advocates for reform contend that the OSA needs to be updated to align with modern principles of government transparency and accountability. They argue for clearer definitions, a narrower scope, and stronger protections for whistleblowers and journalists.

The Official Secrets Act in India is a legal framework designed to protect sensitive government information and safeguard national security. While it plays a vital role in maintaining confidentiality and national security, its broad scope and potential for misuse have raised concerns about its impact on freedom of expression and the need for reform to strike a better balance between security and transparency.

## The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021

The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, commonly referred to as the IT Rules 2021, are a set of regulations introduced by the Indian government to govern digital media, social media intermediaries, and online news publishers. These rules aim to address various issues related to online content, user privacy, and accountability in the digital space. Here’s an expanded overview of the key provisions and implications of the IT

Rules 2021:

**i. Applicability:** The IT Rules 2021 are applicable to a wide range of entities, including social media intermediaries, digital news platforms, streaming services, and other online content providers.

**ii. Compliance Officer:** The rules require these platforms to designate a Compliance Officer, who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules. This officer is also the point of contact for communication with the government.

## Grievance Redressal Mechanism

The rules mandate that significant social media intermediaries and digital news publishers establish grievance redressal mechanisms. Users can file complaints about content that violates these rules, and the platforms must respond within specific timeframes.

**i. Traceability of Messages:** For messaging platforms with more than 5 million users, the rules introduce the concept of traceability. This means that platforms like *WhatsApp* may be required to trace the origin of certain messages if requested by law enforcement agencies during investigations.

**ii. Removal of Content:** Platforms are required to remove or disable access to content that is flagged as unlawful within a specific timeframe. This includes content that is defamatory, infringes copyrights, or violates other laws.

**iii. Proactive Monitoring:** Social media intermediaries with over 5 million users must implement automated tools for content filtering and moderation. They





are also required to report compliance with these tools.

**iv. Privacy Concerns:** The IT Rules have been criticised for potential privacy issues, especially the traceability provision. Critics argue that it could lead to privacy violations and undermine end-to-end encryption on messaging platforms.

**v. Impact on Online News Publishers:** Online news publishers are subject to additional obligations, such as specifying their ownership structure, adhering to a self-regulatory body, and ensuring compliance with the Press Council of India's norms.

**vi. Challenges and Concerns:** The IT Rules 2021 have faced criticism from various quarters. Critics argue that they could be used to stifle free speech, target online dissent, and place undue burdens on digital media and social media companies. There are concerns that the rules grant excessive powers to the government to regulate online content.

**vii. Legal Battles and Compliance Challenges:** Several digital media organisations and social media companies have challenged the constitutionality of the IT Rules in courts. These legal battles have highlighted the complex regulatory landscape and compliance challenges for online platforms operating in India.

In summary, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 represent the Indian government's efforts to regulate digital media, social media intermediaries, and online content providers. While they aim to address various issues related to content, privacy, and accountability in the digital space, the

rules have sparked debates about their impact on free speech, privacy, and the regulatory environment for online platforms in India. The legal battles and ongoing discussions around these rules continue to shape the digital media landscape in the country.

#### 4.3.1.5 The Press Council Of India (PCI)

The Press Council of India (PCI) is an autonomous regulatory body established by the Government of India to oversee and uphold the standards of print journalism and news media in the country. It was created to ensure ethical and responsible journalism, protect the freedom of the press, and maintain the highest professional and ethical standards in the field of print media. Here's an expanded overview of the Press Council of India:

**1. Establishment and Legal Framework:** The PCI was established in 1966 under the Press Council Act of 1978. It operates as a statutory, quasi-judicial body, and its functions and powers are outlined in the Act.

**2. Composition:** The Press Council of India is typically composed of a Chairman and 28 other members, including representatives from various stakeholders, such as journalists, newspaper owners, academics, and members of the public. The Chairman is usually a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India.

**3. Objectives:** The primary objectives of the PCI include promoting and protecting the freedom of the press, maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies, ensuring the accuracy and truthfulness of news and reports, and safeguarding the interests of the public.

**4. Functions and Powers:** The PCI has several functions and powers, includ-

ing:

- i. Investigating complaints of violations of journalistic ethics and professional misconduct.
- ii. Receiving and adjudicating on complaints against the press for false or defamatory news.
- iii. Advising the media on maintaining high standards of journalism.
- iv. Issuing warnings, censures, and admonitions to publications found guilty of unethical practices.
- v. Recommending appropriate action to be taken against errant journalists or media organisations.
- vi. Conducting studies and research on various aspects of the media industry.

**5. Complaints Redressal:** One of the essential functions of the PCI is to address complaints from the public against newspapers and journalists. Anyone who believes that a newspaper or journalist has violated ethical standards or published false or defamatory content can file a complaint with the PCI for investigation.

**6. Ethical Guidelines:** The Press Council of India has issued a set of ethical guidelines and norms for journalists and media organisations to follow. These guidelines encompass principles of truthfulness, accuracy, fairness, and respect for individual privacy.

**7. Promotion of Freedom of the Press:** While the PCI has a regulatory role, it also plays a crucial role in promoting and protecting the freedom of the press. It seeks to strike a balance be-

tween maintaining high standards in journalism and allowing journalists the freedom to express their views and report without fear of censorship or harassment.

**8. Challenges and Criticisms:** The PCI has faced criticism and challenges over the years. Some critics argue that it lacks teeth and the power to enforce its decisions effectively. There have been calls for reform to strengthen its authority and make it more independent of government influence.

**9. Role in Digital Media:** In recent years, the PCI has expanded its scope to include digital media, recognizing the changing landscape of journalism. It has started to address issues related to online journalism and news websites.

In conclusion, the Press Council of India serves as a vital institution in India's media landscape, aiming to maintain high journalistic standards while protecting the freedom of the press. Its role in addressing complaints, issuing guidelines, and promoting responsible journalism is integral to upholding the principles of ethical and professional journalism in the country. However, the challenges it faces and the evolving nature of media continue to shape its role and influence in the digital age.

#### 4.3.1.6 Self-Regulation by Media Bodies

Self-regulation by media bodies is a fundamental aspect of responsible journalism and maintaining ethical standards within the media industry. In India, as in many other countries, various media organisations and associations have established their own codes of ethics and mechanisms for self-regulation. Here's an expanded overview of self-



regulation by media bodies in India:

1. **Voluntary Codes of Ethics:** Media bodies in India, including the Press Council of India (PCI), the Editors Guild of India, the News Broadcasters Association (NBA), and others, have developed voluntary codes of ethics that guide the conduct of journalists and media organisations.
2. **Ethical Standards:** These codes of ethics typically lay down ethical standards that journalists and media outlets are expected to uphold. These standards encompass principles such as accuracy, fairness, impartiality, objectivity, and respect for individual privacy.
3. **Professional Conduct:** The codes of ethics also address professional conduct. They provide guidelines on issues like conflict of interest, source protection, avoiding sensationalism, and ensuring editorial independence.
4. **Accountability Mechanisms:** Media bodies often establish mechanisms for accountability. This may include setting up ethics committees or grievance redressal cells to address complaints from the public or stakeholders regarding unethical journalism or violations of the code of ethics.
5. **Monitoring and Enforcement:** Media organisations are encouraged to monitor their own adherence to ethical standards and to enforce the code of ethics among their journalists. This may involve conducting internal reviews and assessments of journalistic practices.
6. **Education and Training:** Media bodies promote education and training in journalism ethics. They often organize workshops, seminars, and training sessions to educate journalists about ethical principles and the importance of responsible reporting.
7. **Public Awareness:** Media organisations and associations engage in public awareness campaigns to highlight the significance of ethical journalism. These campaigns aim to foster media literacy and encourage consumers of news to critically evaluate media content.
8. **Advocacy and Representation:** Media bodies often advocate for the rights and interests of journalists and media organisations. They represent the industry in discussions with government authorities, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders to protect press freedom and ensure fair treatment.
9. **Challenges and Adaptation:** The media landscape is constantly evolving, especially with the rise of digital media and social platforms. Media bodies have had to adapt their codes of ethics to address new challenges, including fake news, online harassment, and privacy concerns.
10. **Independence and Autonomy:** Maintaining the independence and autonomy of media self-regulatory bodies is crucial. They should be free from external influence, including political pressure, to effectively uphold ethical standards.
11. **Role in Upholding Democracy:** Self-regulation by media bodies plays a vital role in upholding the principles of a free press and democracy. Ethical journalism is essential for ensuring that the public has access to accurate and unbiased information, which is critical for informed decision-making in a democratic society.

Self-regulation by media bodies in India is an integral part of responsible journalism and ethical media practices. It reflects the industry's commitment to maintaining high standards of journalism while also serving as a mechanism

for accountability and addressing public concerns. It plays a pivotal role in safeguarding press freedom and promoting responsible journalism in the country.

### Value Additions

- ▶ Defamation laws in India, governed by civil and criminal statutes, protect individuals and organisations from false and damaging statements that harm their reputations.
- ▶ Civil defamation involves seeking monetary compensation for harm caused by defamatory statements, while criminal defamation can result in fines and imprisonment for the accused.
- ▶ Contempt of court refers to actions that defy or undermine the authority and dignity of the judiciary, such as disobeying court orders or making statements that scandalise the court.
- ▶ The Official Secrets Act is a law in India that prohibits the disclosure of classified information related to national security and defence.
- ▶ The Press Council of India is a statutory body that promotes and maintains standards of journalism and freedom of the press. It adjudicates complaints against the press and works to safeguard press freedom.
- ▶ Media bodies in India often engage in self-regulation through codes of conduct, ethical guidelines, and ombudsman mechanisms to address complaints and uphold journalistic standards.

## Recap

- **Article 19(1)(a): Guarantees freedom of speech and expression in India's Constitution.**
  - ▶ Reasonable Restrictions: Constitutional limitations on free speech for public interests.
  - ▶ Defamation Laws: Protect individuals and organisations from false statements.
  - ▶ Civil Defamation: Legal action for false statements causing harm to reputation.
  - ▶ Criminal Defamation: Non-bailable offence with potential imprisonment for false statements.
  - ▶ Contempt of Court: Preserves judicial integrity and authority.
- **Official Secrets Act:**
  - ▶ Legislation protecting sensitive government information and national security.
  - ▶ Historically rooted in British colonial-era laws.
- **Information Technology Rules 2021:**
  - ▶ Regulations governing digital media, social media, and online news.
  - ▶ Mandates compliance officers, grievance redressal mechanisms, and content removal.
  - ▶ Controversial traceability provision for messaging platforms.
- **Press Council of India (PCI):**
  - ▶ Autonomous regulatory body for print journalism standards and ethics.
  - ▶ Established in 1966 under the Press Council Act of 1978.
  - ▶ Functions include addressing complaints, issuing guidelines, and promoting responsible journalism.
  - ▶ Represents the industry's interests and advocates for press freedom.
- **Self-regulation by Media Bodies:**
  - ▶ Voluntary codes of ethics and guidelines for journalists and media organisations.

- ▶ Ethical standards encompass accuracy, fairness, impartiality, and privacy.
- ▶ Accountability mechanisms, such as ethics committees and grievance redressal cells.
- ▶ Education and training in journalism ethics.
- ▶ Advocacy for press freedom and industry interests.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the fundamental right enshrined in Article 19(1)(a) of India's Constitution?
2. What are the "reasonable restrictions" related to freedom of speech and expression?
3. Which type of defamation can lead to criminal charges and imprisonment in India?
4. What is the primary objective of the Official Secrets Act in India?
5. What do the Information Technology Rules 2021 mandate for significant social media intermediaries?
6. Which organisation in India oversees and upholds the standards of print journalism and news media?
7. What is the primary function of the Press Council of India (PCI)?
8. Which type of contempt of court involves actions that directly interfere with the administration of justice?
9. State one criticism regarding the Information Technology Rules 2021.
10. What is the key role of self-regulation by media bodies in India?

## Answers

1. Right to freedom of speech and expression
2. Restrictions on incitement to violence
3. Criminal defamation
4. To protect sensitive government information
5. Traceability of all messages
6. Press Council of India (PCI)
7. Promoting and protecting the freedom of the press
8. Criminal contempt
9. They may stifle free speech and privacy.
10. Maintaining high ethical standards in journalism





## Self Assessment Questions

1. What constitutional provision forms the foundation of media freedom and journalistic expression in India, and what are some of the “reasonable restrictions” imposed on this right?
2. Can you explain the distinction between civil defamation and criminal defamation under Indian law, including the elements required to establish each form of defamation?
3. How do defamation laws in India, both civil and criminal, aim to protect individuals and organisations from false statements while balancing freedom of expression?
4. What are the main types of contempt of court recognised in India, and how do they differ in terms of their definitions and consequences?
5. How does the Official Secrets Act in India seek to safeguard national security, and what are some criticisms and controversies surrounding its implementation?
6. What are the key provisions of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, and what impact do they have on digital media and online content providers in India?
7. What is the role of the Press Council of India in overseeing the standards of print journalism and news media, and what challenges does it face in fulfilling its mandate?
8. How does self-regulation by media bodies contribute to maintaining ethical standards and accountability within the Indian media industry, and what mechanisms do these bodies employ to address complaints and promote responsible journalism?

## Assignments

1. How would you approach and make ethical decisions in real-world scenarios involving sensitive information, anonymous sources, or contentious political issues as a journalist? Provide recommendations and reasoning for your ethical choices.
2. Select one of the following media regulations in India (Defamation laws, Official Secrets Act, Information Technology Rules 2021, or the Press Council of India). Research and analyze the regulation’s history, key provisions, real-world appli-

cations, and its impact on press freedom and journalistic practices. What reforms or improvements would you suggest for the selected regulation based on your analysis? Present your findings and recommendations in a structured presentation.

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## Suggested Readings

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## Unit 4

# Leads, Body and Conclusion (Print, TV, Radio and Online)

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ craft compelling and attention-grabbing leads suitable for print, TV, radio, and online news formats
- ▶ develop coherent and engaging body content that effectively conveys key information in various media platforms
- ▶ create effective conclusions that leave a lasting impact on the audience in the context of print, TV, radio, and online journalism
- ▶ differentiate between the specific nuances of leads, body content, and conclusions across different media channels
- ▶ adapt storytelling techniques to optimize leads, body, and conclusion elements for each respective medium, ensuring effective communication of news stories

### Prerequisites

In today's fast-paced world of journalism, the way news is delivered can vary significantly depending on the medium used. Whether it's in print, on television, through the airwaves of radio, or on the vast landscape of the internet, the art of crafting a compelling lead—the opening lines of a news story—takes on different forms and nuances. Each medium has its unique characteristics, audience expectations, and tools at its disposal, leading to a rich tapestry of lead styles and approaches. Let's have a closer look at different kinds of lead writing techniques used in different types of media in an Indian scenario.

### Keywords

Print journalism, Lead, News article. Summary lead. Anecdotal lead, Descriptive lead, Question lead, Contrast lead, Quotation lead, Delayed lead

## Discussion

In journalism, the term “lead” (sometimes spelt as “lede” in the industry) refers to the opening or introductory part of a news story or article. The lead is designed to provide essential information about the news event and engage the reader by summarising the most important details. The lead typically answers the key journalistic questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. The way leads are structured and crafted can vary from one medium of journalism to another, such as print, broadcast, and digital media. Let’s take a deep look into various types of leads in different kinds of media

### 4.4.1 Lead in Print Media

In print journalism, the term “lead” (pronounced “leed”) refers to the opening or introductory portion of a news article or story. The lead is arguably the most critical part of a news story because it serves to grab the reader’s attention and provide essential information about the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the news event being reported. A well-crafted lead should answer these questions concisely and provide a clear summary of the story’s most important details.

There are several common types of leads in print journalism:

- ▶ **Summary Lead:** This type of lead provides a brief, straightforward summary of the most important facts of the story. It is often used for breaking news or when the story’s significance is immediately apparent.
- ▶ **Anecdotal Lead:** An anecdotal lead begins the story with a specific example or anecdote that illustrates the broader issue or theme of the article.

It can make the story more relatable and engaging for readers.

- ▶ **Descriptive Lead:** A descriptive lead paints a vivid picture of the scene or the people involved in the story. It aims to create a sensory experience for the reader and draw them into the narrative.
- ▶ **Question Lead:** A question lead opens with a rhetorical question related to the story’s topic. It encourages readers to think about the issue and creates a sense of curiosity.
- ▶ **Contrast Lead:** This lead sets up the story by highlighting a contrast or unexpected element, often focusing on the difference between what was expected and what actually occurred.
- ▶ **Quotation Lead:** A quotation lead starts with a relevant, attention-grabbing quote from a key person involved in the story. It can provide insight or a unique perspective on the topic.
- ▶ **Delayed Lead:** In a delayed lead, the writer starts with a more creative or narrative approach before transitioning to the main news angle. It can build suspense or intrigue before revealing the essential information.

The choice of lead depends on the nature of the story, the target audience, and the writer’s style. Journalists aim to craft leads that are concise, informative, and engaging, as they play a crucial role in determining whether readers continue to read the entire article.



#### 4.4.1.1 Lead in Visual Media

The lead in visual media, such as television and video journalism, differs from that of print media primarily due to the nature of the medium itself. Visual media relies on images, sounds, and video footage to convey information, which affects how leads are structured and presented. Here are some key differences between leads in visual media and print media:

- ▶ **Immediate Visual Impact:** In visual media, the lead often begins with striking visuals or video footage related to the story. This visual impact is designed to capture the viewer's attention immediately. A powerful image or video clip can convey information and set the tone for the story even before any words are spoken.
  - ▶ **Audio and Voiceover:** In addition to visuals, audio plays a crucial role in visual media leads. A news anchor or reporter may provide a voiceover to narrate the lead and introduce the story. The tone and cadence of the voice can convey emotion and urgency, enhancing the impact of the lead.
  - ▶ **Short and Concise:** Visual media leads are typically shorter than print leads. Viewers have limited time and attention span, so the lead must deliver the most critical information quickly and succinctly. It often focuses on the who, what, when, and where aspects of the story.
  - ▶ **Emphasis on Visual Storytelling:** Visual media leads may rely on visual storytelling techniques, such as showing images of people affected by the story, using on-screen graphics, or incorporating charts and graphs to illustrate key points. These visual aids help viewers grasp complex information rapidly.
  - ▶ **Soundbites and Interviews:** Visual media leads often include soundbites or short interview clips with key individuals involved in the story. These snippets provide firsthand perspectives and can be emotionally engaging for the audience.
  - ▶ **Pacing and Timing:** The pacing and timing of visual media leads are crucial. The lead must flow smoothly into the main story segment, ensuring that viewers are drawn into the narrative without abrupt transitions.
  - ▶ **Live Reporting:** In live broadcasts, reporters on the scene may provide live leads, where they describe the unfolding situation in real time. This approach adds immediacy and a sense of being “on the scene” for the audience.
  - ▶ **On-Screen Text:** Visual media often uses on-screen text, also known as chyrons, to display key information, such as headlines, dates, and locations. This text complements the verbal narration and visuals.
  - ▶ **Teasers and Hooks:** Visual media leads frequently include teasers or hooks to keep viewers engaged. These can be questions, intriguing statements, or previews of what will be shown later in the broadcast.
- Overall, the lead in visual media prioritises the sensory aspects of sight and sound, aiming to engage viewers through a combination of striking visuals, concise information, audio narration, and the use of video footage. It

leverages the unique strengths of the medium to convey news effectively and engage the audience.

## Different Types of Lead in Visual Media

In visual media, such as television and video journalism, there are several types of leads or openings that journalists and producers use to engage the audience and introduce news stories effectively. Here are some common types of leads used in visual media:

1. **Visual Lead:** A visual lead starts with compelling images or video footage related to the story. It relies on the power of visuals to capture the audience's attention and convey the essence of the story before any narration or reporting begins.
2. **Voiceover Lead:** In a voiceover lead, a news anchor or reporter narrates the lead while viewers see relevant visuals or video clips. The voiceover provides context and introduces the story.
3. **Live Lead:** A live lead involves a reporter delivering information directly from the scene of the news event. This type of lead conveys immediacy and can create a sense of being on the ground as events unfold.
4. **Soundbite Lead:** A soundbite lead features a short clip of an interview or statement from a key person involved in the story. The soundbite is often chosen for its emotional impact or relevance to the story's theme.
5. **Teaser Lead:** A teaser lead uses a provocative question or statement to pique the audience's interest and encourage them to keep watching. It raises a question or issue that the story will address.
6. **Narrative Lead:** A narrative lead opens with a brief storytelling element, setting the scene or introducing a character or situation. It can help draw viewers into the story by creating a sense of storytelling.
7. **Contrast Lead:** A contrast lead highlights the difference between what was expected and what actually occurred in the news event. It can be attention-grabbing and generate curiosity.
8. **Graphic or Visual Element Lead:** This lead type uses on-screen graphics, charts, or animations to present key information or statistics related to the story. Visual aids can help viewers understand complex data quickly.
9. **Historical or Contextual Lead:** A historical or contextual lead provides background information or historical context relevant to the news event. It helps viewers understand the broader significance of the story.
10. **Quote Lead:** A quote lead begins with a relevant and impactful quote from a person involved in the story or from a notable source. The quote can set the tone and provide insight into the story.
11. **Problem-Solution Lead:** This lead type presents a problem or issue in the opening and then offers a potential solution or course of action. It engages viewers by framing the story in terms of addressing a problem.
12. **Interactive or Multimedia Lead:** Some digital and online visual me-





dia incorporate interactive elements or multimedia presentations as leads. These can include interactive maps, 360-degree videos, and immersive experiences that engage viewers.

#### 4.4.1.2 Lead in Radio

The lead in radio journalism differs from that of other media, such as print, television, or digital, primarily due to the auditory nature of radio. Radio journalists must engage their audience using only sound, which necessitates a unique approach to crafting leads. Here are some key differences between radio leads and leads in other media:

1. **Auditory Focus:** Radio is an audio-only medium, so the lead in radio journalism relies solely on spoken words and sounds to engage the audience. Unlike print or visual media, there is no visual or text to support the story.
2. **Immediacy:** Radio leads often aim to convey a sense of immediacy. They must grab the listener's attention quickly and make them feel connected to the story as it unfolds.
3. **Sound Elements:** Radio leads can incorporate various sound elements, such as natural sounds, ambient noise, music, or sound bites from interviews or witnesses. These elements help set the scene, create an atmosphere, and enhance the storytelling.
4. **Conciseness:** Radio leads are typically concise and to the point. Given that listeners cannot visually skim or rewind as they can with print or digital content, radio leads must deliver essential information succinctly.
5. **Engaging Narration:** Radio journalists rely on their vocal delivery and storytelling skills to engage the audience. A compelling and authoritative voice can draw listeners in and maintain their interest.
6. **Descriptive Language:** Radio leads often use descriptive language to paint a vivid mental picture for listeners. Effective adjectives and adverbs can help convey the setting, emotions, and significance of the story.
7. **Teaser Approach:** Some radio leads use a teaser approach, posing a question or hinting at the story's intriguing aspects to encourage listeners to stay tuned.
8. **Human Interest:** Radio leads frequently incorporate human-interest elements, focusing on people's experiences, emotions, and personal stories. These elements can create a strong connection between the audience and the story.
9. **Live Reporting:** Similar to television, radio can feature live reporting from the scene of an event. Live leads in radio provide immediate updates and on-the-ground perspectives.
10. **Listener Engagement:** Radio journalists often encourage listener engagement through call-ins, social media, or interactive segments. Leads can be crafted to solicit listener opinions or experiences related to the story.
11. **Background Soundscapes:** In addition to sound bites and interviews, radio leads may use background soundscapes to immerse listeners in the story's environment. For example, a lead about a busy city might include the sounds of traffic and street vendors.

- 12. Information Clarity:** Radio leads prioritize information clarity, ensuring that listeners can easily understand key details, including who, what, when, and where.

In short, radio leads distinguish themselves by their exclusive reliance on sound and auditory elements, the need for immediacy, and the importance of engaging vocal delivery. Radio journalists use storytelling techniques and descriptive language to make stories come alive in the listener's imagination. These elements contribute to the unique character of radio journalism and its ability to connect with audiences through the power of sound.

### Different Types of Leads in Radio

In radio journalism, there are several types of leads or openings used to engage the audience and introduce news stories effectively. Radio leads are crafted to be engaging and informative while taking advantage of the auditory nature of the medium. Here are some common types of radio leads:

- 1. Straight Lead:** This lead provides the most important facts of the story right away. It succinctly answers the key journalistic questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Straight leads are clear and to the point, making them suitable for breaking news or essential updates.
- 2. Descriptive Lead:** A descriptive lead paints a vivid picture for listeners by using descriptive language to convey the scene or setting of the story. It aims to immerse the audience in the environment and create a mental image.
- 3. Narrative Lead:** A narrative lead opens with a brief storytelling element. It sets the scene, introduces characters, and engages listeners with a compelling story or anecdote related to the news event. Narrative leads can be particularly effective in drawing the audience emotionally into the story.
- 4. Soundbite Lead:** This lead features a short clip or soundbite from an interviewee or a person involved in the story. Soundbites provide firsthand perspectives and can be emotionally engaging. They are often chosen for their impact or relevance to the story.
- 5. Question Lead:** A question lead poses a rhetorical question related to the story's topic. The question can create curiosity and encourage listeners to think about the issue. It sets up the story by hinting at the answers to come.
- 6. Teaser Lead:** A teaser lead uses an intriguing statement or a hint of what's to come to grab the listener's attention. It provides a teaser of the story's main point or an element of suspense, encouraging listeners to stay tuned.
- 7. Contrast Lead:** A contrast lead highlights the difference between what was expected and what actually occurred in the news event. It can be attention-grabbing and generate curiosity by emphasizing the unexpected.
- 8. Historical or Contextual Lead:** This lead provides background information or historical context relevant to the news event. It helps listeners understand the broader significance of the story by placing it in a historical or societal context.
- 9. Quote Lead:** A quote lead opens with a relevant and impactful quote from a person involved in the story or from a notable source. The quote can set the



tone and provide insight into the story's theme or perspective.

- 10. Live Lead:** In a live lead, a reporter delivers information directly from the scene of the news event. Live reporting conveys immediacy and offers listeners real-time updates and insights.
- 11. Human Interest Lead:** This lead type focuses on people's experiences, emotions, and personal stories related to the news event. It can create a strong emotional connection between the audience and the story.
- 12. Interactive or Audience Engagement Lead:** Some radio shows and segments encourage listener engagement through interactive leads. These leads may involve soliciting listener opinions, experiences, or questions related to the story.

#### 4.4.1.3 Leads in Online Media

Leads in online media, which include digital journalism and content published on websites, blogs, social media, and other online platforms, differ from those in other media formats like print, television, and radio due to the unique characteristics and capabilities of the online medium. Here are some key differences in how leads in online media differ:

- 1. Headline as Lead:** In online media, the headline often serves as the lead. It must be attention-grabbing, concise, and informative since it's the first thing readers see and can determine whether they click to read the full article.
- 2. Multimedia Integration:** Online leads can easily incorporate multimedia elements like videos, images, interactive graphics, and embedded social media posts. These elements can enhance the

storytelling and provide additional context.

- 3. Hyperlinks:** Online leads can include hyperlinks to related articles, sources, or additional information. This allows readers to explore the topic further and provides a dynamic, interconnected reading experience.
- 4. SEO Considerations:** Online leads may be optimised for search engines (SEO) to increase discoverability. They often include relevant keywords to ensure the article ranks well in search engine results, driving organic traffic.
- 5. Engagement and Interactivity:** Online media can encourage reader engagement through comments, social media sharing, and interactive features like polls or quizzes. Leads can be designed to prompt reader participation.
- 6. Shorter Attention Spans:** Online readers often have shorter attention spans, so leads in online media tend to be more concise and get to the point quickly. They must engage readers within the first few sentences.
- 7. User-Centered:** Online leads consider the user experience, focusing on readability, scannability, and mobile-friendliness. They may use subheadings, bullet points, and shorter paragraphs to accommodate online reading habits.
- 8. Visual Storytelling:** Online media frequently employs visual storytelling techniques, using images, infographics, and videos to convey information quickly and engage readers visually.
- 9. Immediate Updates:** Online leads can be updated in real-time to reflect breaking news or changing developments.

This allows for constant updates and ensures that readers have access to the latest information.

**10. Metrics and Analytics:** Online media tracks user engagement and metrics such as page views, click-through rates, and bounce rates. This data can inform content strategy and lead optimisation.

**11. A/B Testing:** Online media often conducts A/B testing to assess the effectiveness of different leads and headlines. This data-driven approach helps refine lead-writing techniques.

**12. Content Sharing:** Online media leads often encourage content sharing through social media buttons or shareable elements within the content. They may incorporate calls to action (CTAs) to prompt readers to share.

**13. Global Reach:** Online media has a global reach, so leads may need to consider an international audience. This can impact language choices, cultural sensitivity, and the use of translation or localisation.

In summary, leads in online media are adapted to the digital environment, with a focus on multimedia integration, SEO, interactivity, and user engagement. They must grab readers' attention quickly while catering to the unique characteristics of the online audience, which include shorter attention spans and the potential for a global readership. The evolving nature of online media also allows for real-time updates and data-driven optimizations to improve lead effectiveness.

## Different Kinds of Leads in Online Media

In online media, there are various types of

leads or openings used to engage the audience and introduce articles, blog posts, and other online content effectively. These leads are tailored to the digital environment and the specific characteristics of online readership. Here are some common types of leads in online media:

- 1. Straight News Lead:** This type of lead provides the most important facts and answers the key journalistic questions (who, what, when, where, why, how) upfront. It is concise and straightforward, delivering essential information immediately.
- 2. Question Lead:** A question lead starts with a compelling, relevant question related to the topic. It piques readers' curiosity and encourages them to continue reading to find the answer.
- 3. Anecdotal Lead:** An anecdotal lead begins with a brief, engaging story or anecdote related to the main topic of the article. It helps readers connect with the content on a personal level.
- 4. Descriptive Lead:** A descriptive lead uses vivid language to paint a picture or set the scene for the reader. It creates a sensory experience and draws the reader into the article.
- 5. Quotation Lead:** This lead type opens with a relevant and attention-grabbing quote from a person involved in the story, an expert, or a notable figure. The quote adds credibility and insight to the piece.
- 6. Narrative Lead:** A narrative lead starts with a storytelling element that engages the reader's emotions and imagination. It sets the stage for the rest of the article and encourages readers to continue



reading to learn more.

7. **Statistical Lead:** A statistical lead begins with a key statistic, data point, or numerical fact relevant to the topic. It can be effective for articles that rely heavily on data or research.
8. **Contrast Lead:** A contrast lead highlights the difference between expectations and reality, emphasizing an unexpected or surprising aspect of the topic. It arouses curiosity and encourages further reading.
9. **Historical Lead:** This lead provides historical context or background information related to the topic. It helps readers understand how the subject has evolved over time.
10. **Problem-Solution Lead:** A problem-solution lead starts by presenting a problem or challenge and then introduces a solution or course of action. It engages readers by framing the content in terms of addressing a problem.
11. **Teaser or Intriguing Lead:** A teaser lead uses an intriguing statement, a provocative assertion, or a hint of what's to come to capture the reader's interest and make them want to read on.
12. **Listicle Lead:** In articles structured as listicles (list-format articles), the lead often previews the list's contents or highlights the benefits of reading the list.
13. **Interactive Lead:** Some online content, especially on interactive websites, begins with an interactive element. This could be a quiz, poll, or interactive infographic that engages the reader before delving into the main content.

**14. Social Media Engagement Lead:** For articles shared on social media, the lead may include a call to action (CTA) that encourages readers to comment, share, like, or engage with the content on social platforms.

**15. Video or Multimedia Lead:** For video content or multimedia articles, the lead often starts with a brief introduction delivered via video or multimedia elements before transitioning into the main content.

#### 4.4.2 Body and Conclusion in Different Media

The body and conclusion of a news story in various media, including print, television, radio, and the internet, follow distinct conventions based on the medium's characteristics and audience expectations. Let's explore how the body and conclusion differ in each of these media:

##### 4.4.2.1 Print Media (Newspapers and Magazines)

###### Body

- In print media, the body of a news story elaborates on the details of the event, often following the inverted pyramid structure, where the most important information comes first, and subsequent paragraphs contain less critical details.
- Journalists include quotes from relevant sources, statistics, and additional context to provide a comprehensive view of the story.
- The body is typically organized into paragraphs, with each paragraph addressing a specific aspect of the story.



- ▶ Background information, expert analysis, and eyewitness accounts may be included to provide depth and context.

### **Conclusion:**

- ▶ The conclusion in print media often wraps up the story by summarizing key points, reiterating the main takeaway, or highlighting the potential implications or future developments related to the story.
- ▶ It can include a final quote or perspective from an expert or authority to provide closure and perspective.
- ▶ Some articles may end with a “kicker,” which is a surprising or thought-provoking statement that leaves a lasting impression on the reader.

#### **4.4.2.2 Television News**

##### **Body:**

- ▶ In television news, the body of a story is presented through a combination of visuals, voiceovers, soundbites, and on-screen graphics.
- ▶ The video footage, interviews, and relevant B-roll (supplementary footage) are used to provide a visual and auditory understanding of the story.
- ▶ The body is divided into segments, with each segment addressing a specific aspect of the story, often accompanied by narration from the news anchor or reporter.

##### **Conclusion:**

- ▶ The conclusion in television news typically offers a concise summary of the story’s main points, often reiterat-

ing key takeaways.

- ▶ It may include a closing soundbite from a key interviewee or footage that encapsulates the essence of the story.
- ▶ Television news often concludes with a transition to the next story or segment.

#### **4.4.2.2 Radio News**

##### **Body**

- ▶ In radio news, the body of a story is presented through spoken words, soundbites, and ambient sounds.
- ▶ The reporter provides narration and context while incorporating relevant soundbites from interviews or witnesses.
- ▶ The body is structured with the most critical information presented first, followed by additional details.

##### **Conclusion**

- ▶ The conclusion in radio news summarizes the story’s key points, often revisiting the most important facts.
- ▶ It may include a final soundbite or interview excerpt to provide a concluding perspective.
- ▶ Radio news often transitions smoothly to the next story or segment.

#### **4.4.2.4 Online Media (Internet)**

##### **Body**

- ▶ In online news articles, the body contains a detailed narrative that expands on the story’s key elements.
- ▶ Journalists may include multimedia





elements such as images, videos, infographics, and hyperlinks to provide additional context and engage readers.

- ▶ Online articles often use shorter paragraphs and subheadings to improve readability.

## Conclusion

- ▶ The conclusion in online media usually restates the central message or main takeaways of the story.
- ▶ It may include a call to action (CTA) or invite readers to share their thoughts in the comments section.

- ▶ Links to related articles or further reading may be provided to encourage readers to explore related topics.

In all media formats, the body of a news story serves to provide detailed information and context, while the conclusion offers closure and summarises key points. Each medium leverages its unique strengths to engage the audience effectively, whether through visuals and sound in television and radio, or multimedia elements and interactivity in online media.

### Value Additions

- ▶ Television news broadcasts often begin with a teaser or headline segment, followed by an anchor introducing the lead story. The lead is presented succinctly, with visuals and soundbites to enhance storytelling and engage viewers.
- ▶ Radio journalism relies heavily on audio cues to capture listeners' attention. A strong lead in radio news typically includes a catchy headline, followed by a brief summary of the main points, delivered in a clear and engaging manner.
- ▶ Online news articles may feature different types of leads depending on the platform and audience preferences. Some use a traditional inverted pyramid structure with the most important information upfront, while others may employ a narrative or feature-style lead to draw readers in with storytelling elements.
- ▶ In television news, the body of a story often includes interviews, footage from the scene, expert analysis, and relevant visuals to provide depth and perspective.
- ▶ Radio news stories use audio clips, interviews, and narration to convey information and keep listeners engaged. The body of a radio news report typically elaborates on the lead with additional facts, quotes, and analysis.

- ▶ Online news articles may incorporate multimedia elements such as images, videos, infographics, and hyperlinks to provide a richer and more interactive experience for readers. The body of an online news article may include embedded tweets, social media posts, or interactive maps to enhance storytelling.
- ▶ Across all formats, journalists strive to maintain objectivity, accuracy, and fairness in their reporting, ensuring that the lead, body, and conclusion of a news story effectively communicate the relevant information while adhering to ethical standards.

## Recap

- ▶ **Lead in Journalism:** Refers to the opening of a news story, answering key questions and engaging the reader.
- ▶ **Print Media:** Uses the lead to summarise the most critical facts and grab the reader's attention.
- ▶ **Types of Leads in Print Media:** Summary, anecdotal, descriptive, question, contrast, quotation, delayed, and more.
- ▶ **Visual Media:** Uses striking visuals and audio to engage viewers, setting the tone for the story.
- ▶ **Differences in Visual Media Leads:** Immediate visual impact, audio and voiceover, short and concise, visual storytelling, soundbites, pacing, live reporting, on-screen text, teasers, and hooks.
- ▶ **Types of Leads in Visual Media:** Visual, voiceover, live, soundbite, teaser, narrative, contrast, graphic or visual element, historical or contextual, quote, problem-solution, interactive or multimedia.
- ▶ **Lead in Radio:** Focuses on sound and auditory elements, aiming for immediacy and listener engagement.
- ▶ **Differences in Radio Leads:** Auditory focus, immediacy, sound elements, conciseness, engaging narration, descriptive language, teaser approach, human interest, live reporting, listener engagement, background soundscapes, and information clarity.

- ▶ Types of Leads in Radio: Straight, descriptive, narrative, soundbite, question, teaser, contrast, historical or contextual, quote, live, human interest, interactive, and audience engagement.
- ▶ Leads in Online Media: Must be attention-grabbing, concise, and often start with the headline.
- ▶ Differences in Online Media Leads: Multimedia integration, hyperlinks, SEO considerations, engagement and interactivity, shorter attention spans, user-centered, visual storytelling, immediate updates, metrics and analytics, A/B testing, content sharing, and global reach.
- ▶ Types of Leads in Online Media: Straight news, question, anecdotal, descriptive, quotation, narrative, statistical, contrast, historical, problem-solution, teaser, listicle, interactive, social media engagement, and video or multimedia.

## Objective Questions

1. What does the term “lead” refer to in journalism?
2. In print journalism, what is the purpose of the lead?
3. Which of the following is NOT a type of lead in print journalism?
4. How does the lead in visual media, like television, differ from that in print media?
5. Which type of lead in visual media often begins with a striking visual or video footage?
6. What is the main focus of the lead in radio journalism?
7. Which of the following is a key characteristic of online media leads?
8. What does a teaser lead aim to do?
9. What makes online media leads different from leads in other media formats?
10. What is the primary role of the conclusion in television news?

## Answers

1. The opening or introductory part of a news story
2. To engage the reader and provide essential information
3. Visual Lead
4. It relies on visuals and audio.
5. Visual Lead
6. Engaging the audience using sound and spoken words
7. Optimization for search engines (SEO)
8. Encourage readers to keep reading by raising curiosity
9. They often include hyperlinks and interactivity.
10. To provide closure and summarize key points

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How do the leads in print journalism differ from those in visual media like television and video journalism?
2. What are some common types of leads used in print journalism, and how do they serve to engage readers?
3. How do visual media leads prioritize the sensory aspects of sight and sound to engage viewers?
4. What are some key differences between radio leads and leads in other media formats, such as print, television, and online?
5. How does the auditory nature of radio journalism influence the crafting of leads in comparison to other media?
6. In online media, how does the headline often serve as a lead, and what role does it play in engaging readers?
7. What are some strategies used in online media to encourage reader engagement and interaction with the content?
8. Can you explain how the body and conclusion of a news story differ across various media formats, such as print, television, radio, and online?



## Assignments

1. Select three news articles from different sources, each representing a different type of media (e.g., a print article from a newspaper, a video news segment, a radio news clip, and an online news article). Identify and extract the leads (opening paragraphs) from each of the selected articles. Analyze each lead based on its style, structure, and content. Consider elements such as clarity, engagement, informativeness, and audience appeal. Create a comparative analysis that highlights the similarities and differences between the leads. Discuss how the choice of lead aligns with the medium's characteristics and target audience.
2. Select a current news topic or event of your choice. Ensure that it is a topic that can be presented in different media formats, such as print, video, audio, and online. Develop a multimedia lead for the chosen news story. This lead should be suitable for various media platforms, so consider how it could be adapted for print, visual, radio, and online media

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BLOCK - 05

## News Editing

# Unit 1

## Principles of Editing

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this Unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ explain the principles and objectives of news media editing
- ▶ comprehend the editing process and its various stages
- ▶ apply editing techniques at different levels (structural, copy, and proofreading) to ensure accuracy, eliminate ambiguity, and enhance the emotional impact of news stories
- ▶ analyse the importance of editing in maintaining the integrity, credibility, and quality of news content

### Prerequisites

Imagine that you are participating in a competition on news writing. You have to cover the news of your wish at a specific time. Yes, of course, you will jump out and go to report an exclusive news. After the specific time, you will submit your news report to the group coordinator. Is that enough? Do you think you have to check your news report once again? Do you have any idea of spelling mistakes, the structure of intro, body and conclusion, or even the irrelevant facts filled in the report?

At a point you may think about clearing all these questions and also trimming out the extra information in the news report. That's why every news is not directly published in the newspaper after a reporter cover the news, broadcasted in television or radio, and even uploaded in a news portal. These news reports are edited by a separate editing desk which is the backbone of a media organization. The unedited news can never communicate the right emotion of news covered. This can create an ambiguity among readers. A final revision by the editing desk is important in news writing. However, in this unit let us learn what is editing, its principles, objectives and why it is important in a media organization.

### Keywords

Editing, Accuracy, Attribution, Readability, Brevity, Copy Editing, Proofreading



## Discussion

### 5.1.1 Understanding Editing

To understand editing, we must know what editing is, what we edit, and why it is important. We edit information, ranging from books, magazines, and newspapers and when it comes to electronic media, it will be television, cinema, radio and internet portals. So, why do we do this? This is because information should be clear, transparent and valid. It can be better expressed to the readers and viewers and better understood. An editing goal should be to make writing significant and of high quality by keeping in mind the public's knowledge and intelligence. In a media organisation, news flows minute by minute or second by second. The hurried news may have errors, where the role of editing is necessary. That's the reason a news organisation has a good editorial team to trim, add, polish and tone the news stories. After these processes, a worthy news story is selected and published. Thus, every media centered ultimately goes through editing. As we understand why editing is needed, let's move to the objectives of editing.

### 5.1.2 What is Editing?

According to eminent Norman Podhoretz, the American theorist and editor of *Commentary* magazine, "Editing is to improve an essentially well-written piece or to turn a clumsily written one into, at the very least, a beautifully shaped effective essay which remains true to the author's intention and which realizes that intention more fully than he himself is able to do."

Editing is a process of selection, cutting, shaping, correction, revision, and checking the

grammar and overall presentation of a piece of information in printed form or electronic format. Printed formats include newspapers, books, and magazines and electronic formats include television, radio and the Internet. It's also known as organising information to convey the correct, consistent, transparent and accurate work to the people who read and watch the facts.

#### 5.1.2.1 Objectives of Editing

**Aim for Focus and Accuracy:** While editing, the prime work is to focus on and build up accurate edited material. A news story is written specifically for the people to make them aware and informed. Accuracy and focus mean keeping the news story perfect, relevant, and faultless. Thus, the information can be communicated in the right way. The ethical responsibility and professionalism in news organisations is a must. They must check the facts, mistakes, spellings and details of the news gathered. When we come to electronic media, the pronunciation of names should be checked. Every writer and editor must be cautious about the information they pass. So, always aim for focused and accurate information.

**Checking the Facts:** A news story is always supported by the facts. Nowadays, an abundance of information can mislead people and lead to ambiguity in the news. This can easily manipulate the readers. People are confused about accepting information because they think about its credibility. Genuine and credible news should be conveyed to the people. So, we must always check the facts while editing content. Make the content sound good, error-free, and truthful.

**Maintain Objectivity:** Maintain objectivity, which means freeing the content from bias and focusing on facts and data. Never involve personal opinions, emotions, perceptions,

ideas and beliefs while editing a news story.

**Stay in Track:** A news story can be written with many supporting facts and data. But always make sure to maintain the track. You need not present multiple elements in a single story. If a news story is out of track, the story never arouses a reader. So, always trim out the unwanted and irrelevant details and keep the information on track.

### 5.1.2.2 Principles of News Editing

#### Accuracy

Accuracy in editing means checking the facts and figures, cross-checking names and grammar, and following the editing guidelines to make the story accurate. The accurate news stories are important or else they can reach a negative notion towards the respective news organisation. Accuracy must be the slogan of the sub-editor. (You will be learning about the subeditor and his roles in the next unit).

**Attribution:** A news is said to be believed when it is attributed to its sources as well the names of the persons who quoted. The sources are written in a news story to show credibility and truthfulness. For example, the sources from the chief minister's office, the district collector said, etc., can help the reader avoid suspicion in the information.

**Balance and Fairness:** Balance is about keeping both sides equal, and fairness is truthfulness and not taking any sides. A balanced edit can keep the objectivity of the news writing. There shall be no supporting of a particular political party, caste, religion, community or any individual unnecessarily.

**Brevity:** Brevity means a news story must provide accurate or to-the-point information rather than telling a pointless story. Brevity helps save time and leads to the of a news story.

**Clarity:** Clarity is the transparent expression in news editing, which means keeping the news story clear, concise, and simple in language. Clarity in a news story can enable a reader to think rightly. The use of the right word at the right time and simple sentences is necessary while editing.

**Readability:** Readability means how easily you can read a piece of information. So, for that, we must use short sentences and simple sentences and avoid jargon (*Jargons are specialized terms or words used by a specific member of a group or an organisation.*) Because the news is read by a common man, too. The standard length of a sentence should be 18 words. Words beyond this can confuse a reader, and he or she may not get the right information.

**Human Interest:** Human interest in editing is known as the editor must see the people's point of view, emotions, and aspirations while editing. An editor must support the emotion of a common man, edit a story of human interest and make it more relatable to the people. A news story is crafted for the people and it is the story of people.

### 5.1.2.3 Process of Editing

In this topic, you will learn what is the process of editing. What are the step-by-step processes of editing in a media organisation? The following are some of the instructions for rewriting, revising and some basic principles of editing:

**Revision:** Revision is the process of examining the news write-up to improve it again or to provide a rearrangement. Here, the editor has the freedom to mark the marginal notes and add or trim the contents needed.

**Structural Reorganisation:** A writer of a news story normally structures the complete news story. However, the sub-editor of the news



media organisation produces a reorganisation after he gets the copy of the written news story. So, structural reorganisation means assembling the facts and figures legibly and organising them in a readable and understandable manner. The important factor to note is that you have to connect all the tiny pieces of information together. And also undertake the process of trimming the unwanted data for an organisation.

**Shortening:** Long and broad facts in a news story can never attain attention. Thus, shortening is the process of shaping a news story to be short, crisp and precise. With a suitable number of facts and figures and other

background, data can add more curiosity among readers. The sub-editor must see the sections, illustrations or tables to be added or deleted. Short, meaningful, and relevant details add more understanding among readers.

**The Title/Headline:** If the headline or title of a news story is not catchy or attractive, the journalist cannot attract their reader. The soul of a news story is in a headline or title. Thus, editors know the relevance of a title. Always monitor the title and check whether it is suitable for the news story. If it is not, an editor can re-title it.

### **Instruction For Rewriting, Revising And Some Basic Principles Of Editing**

1. Always provide important points in the lead or first paragraph.
2. Write an attractive headline like you tell a story. It is the door to a news story.
3. Check and recheck it! This means you must have an eye on names, headlines, subtitles, dates, facts, figures and illustrations.
4. If you are dealing with an argument in a news story, always convey both sides of the issue.
5. Use short sentences, paragraphs, and simple language. Avoid complex words and phrases.
6. Never begin a sentence with despite or because.
7. Always be sure to define the medical, scientific, and new terms for the public.
8. Write the name of the accused and witness in the court report.
9. Never try to add personal opinion.
10. Try to avoid the uncertain phrases. For example, 'Probably done', and 'Certain situations'. These words can confuse the readers.
11. Use concrete words and phrases in the news story. Thus, you can create a visual word story.
12. Check punctuation, grammar and spelling.

#### 5.1.2.4 Levels of Editing

**Structural Editing:** Structural editing is otherwise known as substantive or developmental editing. This editing is done when there is a need for structural variations or changes in the news story. This editing takes time but gives a clear idea of editing before the task. Structural editing is done when the write-up requires more than a copy-editing process. Thus, structural editing reviews-

- i. Content
- ii. Information or data flow
- iii. Language, style and tone
- iv. Clarity
- v. Vocabulary
- vi. Sentence structure and length
- vii. Coherence and continuity

**Copy Editing:** Copy editing is the process which guarantees the text to check whether the write-up is correct in grammar, spelling

and punctuation and effectively readable. This process is done by a copy editor. He or she is responsible for reviewing the factual information and errors before the news story is sent to the proofreader. This editing process also ensures the news story is easy for the readers to understand.

**Proofing or Proofreading:** Proofreading or proofing is the task of reviewing or checking the final news write-up or draft to guarantee the spelling, grammar, punctuation and other elements in the text. Proofreading is done only after the execution of the other editing processes. Normally, the proofreading is done by sub-editors or proofreaders.

Let's examine the proofreading and editing symbols in the next page.



## Copy Editing and Proofreading Symbols

| Symbol | Meaning  | Example  |
|--------|--|--|
|        | Delete   | Remove the <del>end</del> fitting.   |
|        | Close up   | The tolerances are with <u>in</u> the range.   |
|        | Delete and Close up                              | <del>Delete</del> and close up the gap.  |
|        | Insert   | The box is <sup>not</sup> inserted correctly.  |
|        | Space  | The <sup>is</sup> procedure is incorrect   |
|        | Transpose  | Remove the fitting <u>and</u>  |
|        | Lower case                                       | The <del>E</del> ngineer and manager agreed  |
|        | Capitalize                                       | A representative of <u>nasa</u> was present.   |
|        | Capitalize first letter and lower case remainder | <del>G</del> ARRETT <del>P</del> RODUCTS are great.                                    |
|        | Let stand  | Remove the <del>battery</del> <sup>stet</sup> cables.                                  |
|        | New paragraph                                    | The box is full. The meeting will be on Thursday                                       |
|        | Remove paragraph break                           | The meeting will be on Thursday.<br><del>¶</del> <sup>no</sup> All members must attend |
|        | Move to a new position                           | All members <del>attended</del> <u>who were new</u> .                                  |
|        | Move left  | <del>Remove the faulty part.</del>   |
|        | Flush left                                       | <del>Move left</del>   |
|        | Flush right                                      | <del>Move right.</del>   |
|        | Move right                                       | <del>Remove the faulty part.</del>   |
|        | Center   | <del>Table 4-1</del>   |
|        | Raise  | 16 <sub>2</sub>  |
|        | Lower  | 16 <sub>2</sub>  |
|        | Superscript                                      | 16 <sup>2</sup>  |
|        | Subscript  | 16 <sub>2</sub>  |
|        | Period   | Rewrite the procedure. Then complete the tasks.  |
|        | Apostrophe or single quote                       | The company's policies were rewritten.   |
|        | Semicolon  | He left; however, he returned later.   |

## Recap

- ▶ Mastery in explaining news media editing aspects.
- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge on editing principles, process, and stages.
- ▶ Editing spans various media: books, TV, web, etc.
- ▶ Editing vital for accurate and polished news.
- ▶ Unedited news lacks emotion, creates ambiguity.
- ▶ Editing: selection, cutting, correction, presentation.
- ▶ Objectives: accuracy, objectivity, staying on track.
- ▶ Focus on accuracy while editing news stories.
- ▶ Principles: Accuracy, Balance, Clarity, Human interest.
- ▶ Editing levels: structural, copy, proofreading.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the process of selection, cutting, shaping, correction, revision, checking grammar, and overall presentation of information in printed or electronic format called?
2. Which process of editing means checking facts, figures, cross-checking names, grammar, and following editing guidelines?
3. Name two ways to keep the news story easy to understand for the reader.
4. Which is the first level of editing?
5. What is another name for structural editing?
6. Which type of editing reviews content, information or data flow, language, style, and tone?
7. Which is the process that guarantees the text is grammatically correct, checks spellings and punctuations, and makes it effective and readable?
8. Which is the activity called that is done only before executing the complete other editing processes?



## Answers

1. Editing
2. Accuracy
3. Simple and concise
4. Structural editing
5. Substantive or developmental editing
6. Structural editing
7. Copy editing
8. Proofreading

## Assignments

1. Explain the importance of mastering news media editing aspects and how it contributes to journalistic excellence.
2. Discuss the significance of acquiring comprehensive knowledge on editing principles, processes, and stages for effective communication in media organizations.
3. Analyse how editing plays a crucial role in various media platforms such as books, TV, and the web, and its impact on audience engagement.
4. Investigate the relationship between editing and the quality of news, emphasizing its role in delivering accurate and polished content to the audience.
5. Explore the effects of unedited news on reader comprehension and the importance of emotional engagement in news stories.

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## Unit 2

# Workflow of an Editorial Section in a Newspaper

### Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this Unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ identify the three major departments in a newspaper organization (Editorial, Business, and Mechanical) and describe their primary functions.
- ▶ comprehend the role of the Editorial Department
- ▶ describe the hierarchy of roles within the Editorial Department, including the responsibilities of each position, from the Editor to the Sub-editor
- ▶ analyse the specific duties and contributions of key editorial roles, such as the News Editor, Chief Sub-editor, and Senior Sub-editor
- ▶ evaluate the importance of the Editorial department's critical analysis of news stories and its role in maintaining the integrity and objectivity of the news content across various platforms.

### Prerequisites

Haven't you wondered about the newspaper reaching our door-step covering different types of news that happened the previous day with error-free? This is because a newspaper is never published directly from a reporter. It is collected, edited, discussed, and disseminated by the assigned departments in the newspaper organization. This organizational set up differs for different newspaper organisations clinging on their size and level of income. Basically, a newspaper organization consists of three big departments such as Editorial, Business and Mechanical. When it comes to a large-scale newspaper, they consist of other departments like the Public Relation, Human Resource, Legal, ICT and Personnel. The production of newspapers ranging from reporting to publication happens in pressure and deadlines. These all departments work quickly or with sleepless nights to accomplish their task. Because, a tiny change outside can be a news or it can lead to an exclusive news on the day. The complete departments in the newspaper organization are professionally trained and experienced. However, in this unit we will learn and discuss the editorial department of the newspaper organization. This unit will also enlighten you with workflow of the editorial department, their duties and skills.

## Keywords

Editorial, Workflow, Newsroom, Editor, Executive Editor, Resident editor, Chief sub-editor, Subeditor, Style Sheet.

## Discussion

### 5.2.1 The Newsroom

A newsroom is the sole of a newspaper organisation. The real news operation takes place in a newsroom. The selection, processing and editing of the news is the crucial work done in a newsroom. They enable the news to be relevant and disseminated to consumers. The editorial and reporting department is part of it. As said earlier, the newsroom never rests. They take shifts in the morning, noon and night. The gathering of news, analysis, discussion, editing of the news, the hierarchy of different news to be printed, etc., are managed in the newsroom. This is intelligently organized by the editorial department. The newsroom also plays a vital role in designing a newspaper. It plays a key role in layout, page designing, illustration and photo editing. Broadly, the newsroom is known as an office in a newspaper organisation, a television, or a radio station to gather, edit and publish the news in a newspaper, and broadcast it on television or radio and in an online newspaper. The immense growth of internet technologies has changed the structure, style, and practice of newsrooms and the way in which they communicate with the public. Next, we will learn about the workflow of the editorial department and its duties.

### 5.2.2 The Editorial Department of Newspaper

The editorial department is known as the nerve centre of the newspaper. This department coordinates all other officials in the organisation. The news features, editorials, cartoons, and letters to the editor, which

we see in a newspaper, are controlled and operated by the editorial department under the guidance of the editor or chief editor. There is a team of official work under the chief editors. They are news editors, sub-editors, assistant editors, special correspondents and reporters. Some newspapers have separate news desks for gathering news at the local, regional, national and international levels. The editorial department is responsible for everything that comes in a newspaper apart from advertising. The chief goal of the editorial department is to communicate accurate, truthful and unbiased news. They critically analyse all the news piled up in their department and finally select the news, edit and pass it over to the printing department. Nowadays, we can also see separate editorial staff assigned to diverse social media like *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter* and also handling other digital publications.

#### 5.2.2.1 Workflow of an Editorial Department in a Newspaper

##### Workflow of an Editorial Department

Editor or chief editor → Assistant editor  
→ Executive editor → Resident editor →  
News editor → Chief sub-editor → Senior  
sub-editor → Sub-editor

#### a. The Editor or Chief Editor or Editor-in-Chief

The editor of a newspaper is known as the governing authority of the newspaper. He will be responsible for every news published. The news, features, editorials, cartoons, and letters to the editor are managed by the editor. The





editor has to answer the authorities if there is libel, defamation or other legal action against the newspaper. The editor takes every important decision in association with the organisational and editorial policy. He or she also responds to the opinions and expressions from national and international news. You might have seen the name of the editor printed in newspapers. Because it is the press law to print the editor's name in a newspaper. It also shows that the complete responsibility of the newspaper is within him or her. If the particular newspaper violates the law, the editor shall be easily tracked and interrogated. The editor monitors the editorial department from dawn to dusk. As the leader of the team, he or she has to plan, decide, select and direct the entire work. Not only that, but he must also ensure the smooth functioning of the department. He or she should know the taste of readers, their opinions, and their interests. In such a way, he or she can structure the content for the people. The editor must be determined about the credibility, truthfulness, transparency, acceptability and, unbiased nature of the content to be printed.

The editor also writes the newspaper's editorials. He or she writes on socially relevant issues by critically analysing the conditions of the people and government. He or she must always strive to enhance the newspaper's brand value among the readers. The editor must keep the editorial policies in mind to attain the people's trust and acceptance. The proprietor of a newspaper appoints the editor. They must have a healthy and smooth relationship. But this can vary because opinions and decisions differ from person to person. Obviously, there might be differences of opinion between the proprietor and editor. Finally, he or she is the person who continuously comprehends the time-to-time news updates. The editor has to connect all the team members for the best output. However, the ultimate recognition of a

newspaper, its function and its contents are in the hands of the editor.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of the Editor in a Nutshell**

In a newspaper organisation, the editor:

- i. must be responsible for unifying the departments in the organisation.
- ii. should follow the editorial policies.
- iii. should be aware of the press laws and ethics.
- iv. should review the news content
- v. should write editorials
- vi. should conduct training programmes for other editors through workshops.
- vii. should participate in editorial meetings.
- viii. should always ensure the completion of editing on time.
- ix. should check the production and distribution department on time.
- x. should motivate the staff to come up with the best news.

### **Skills of the Editor**

- i. must have excellent oral and written communication skills.
- ii. good organisational skill and time management.
- iii. must be patient and calm under pressure and deadlines.
- iv. should be adaptable and flexible.
- v. should possess a good command of languages.

- vi. should have a keen interest in the current affairs.
- vii. should be an active listener.
- viii. should be a critical thinker.
- ix. should have good insight, broad view and imagination
- x. should on a good news sense
- xi. should have quickness in thought and work
- xii. should be able to think objectively
- xiii. should be a good teacher
- xiv. should be a good communicator to the staff and team leaders

#### **b. Assistant Editor**

The Assistant Editor is the editor who regularly assists the chief editor and also performs the duties allotted to him or her by the Chief Editor. Also, the central person is close to the chief editor. It can be on writing features, columns, and other supplements written by the reporter. The Assistant Editor occasionally writes the editorial. He or she has to be supportive and authoritative in monitoring the editorial department. To be an assistant editor means not only to assist the editor but also to reorganise, to fix the deadlines and to check whether the written work is correct and original in a speedy working environment.

#### **c. Executive Editor**

The Executive Editor assists the editorial and production department of the newspaper. He or she also directs the work of the resident editor and assistant editor. The Executive Editor implements the insight of the chief editor. He or he gives guidelines to the

subordinate staff and also participates in every meeting organised by the editor. The executive editor tracks the dates and activities and informs the editor about the updates on time.

#### **d. Resident Editor**

The newspaper is published in different cities, capitals, and towns even though it originally functions in a particular region. The person who heads this edition of the assigned newspaper from various cities and towns is known as the resident editor. For example, The *Indian Express* functions as its headquarters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, but it also has editions from Mumbai, New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, etc. So, think about managing these editions with a single editor. That is impossible, but this task is accomplished by resident editors. The resident editors serve from far regions by following the editorial policies, gathering, selecting and publishing news in local editions. He or she also leads the local reporting and editorials.

#### **e. News Editor**

The news editor is the chief person in the editorial department planning a day's newspaper. He/she selects and rejects the news item and assigns the news to particular pages. He or she also provides a specific space for the news on the page if the news is newsworthy. A news editor has deep contact with the reporting section and also coordinates them. He or she is also aware of the editorial policies and administers the staff under the guidance of the editor. The news editor conducts meetings every day and also monitors the day's newspaper. The meeting also exchanges views on the production of the next day's newspaper.

#### **f. Chief Sub-Editor**

The chief sub-editor is the person who



assigns the duties to other editors for editing and pages for designing. He is widely known as the ‘Captain’ of the news desk. The chief sub-editor must always keep his or her eyes and ears wide open because news is unpredictable, and we can’t assume which can be exclusive news. He or she also monitors the advertisement and circulation section. His or her duties can be underlined as;

- ▶ The chief sub-editor finalises the angle and also the treatment of the news story.
- ▶ He divides the works into the subordinate editor.
- ▶ He arranges and receives news stories from various sources.
- ▶ He or she combines each plan for newspaper production in a day with quality control.

#### **g. Senior Sub-Editor**

The senior subeditor assists the chief subeditor and also acts as a middleman between the chief subeditor and subeditor. He or she must examine the news with quality, accuracy, transparency, objectivity, and balance. This ensures that mistakes are avoided under pressure and deadlines. During the absence of staff, Hero performs all the tasks of subeditors, like editing and designing pages.

#### **h. Sub-Editor**

The sub-editor is known as ‘the unsung hero’ in the news production. He or she works inside the news desk for hours for the best results. He or she is also known as the copy reader or copy editor. But they also play a major role in the editorial team. He or she mostly works in editing, designing, rewriting with an effective lead, trimming to an inverted pyramid format and often translating the news from English to other languages.

The sub-editor also often provides captions for photographs. Another task for a sub-editor is placing news stories and making the whole newspaper readable.

### **STYLE SHEET**

Style sheets play an important role in the organisation of print media. It is specially for editors and proofreaders to maintain uniformity and consistency in the writing of the newspaper.

A style sheet is popularly a Word, Page Makeup, or Adobe In Design document describing layout, design, words, parameters, page size and fonts.

Stylesheets help newspaper editors to be aware of common elements such as headlines, bylines and text. This helps to save time. Normally, copy editors or sub-editors create the style sheets.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Sub-Editor**

- i. Before the chief sub-editors first review, the sub-editor solely checks the news story and understands the angles from international, national, regional, and local perspectives.
- ii. He or she should organise and structure the story.
- iii. He or she should be aware of the editorial policy of his or her newspaper.
- iv. They should read the story again and again. If there is any correction, he or she should rewrite it.
- v. Always check the syntax, spelling, punctuation, facts and illustrations.
- vi. They would develop the lead or the first paragraph of the story if the reporter is not done up to the mark.

- vii. They would translate the news story. history.
- viii. They would write headlines for the news story. vi. be aware of general knowledge and current affairs.
- ix. They would write captions for photographs. vii. have memory power and analytical ability of a news story
- x. They would secure the newspaper from falling into the legal actions of Libel, Defamation and contempt of court. viii. have good news sense

### Skills of a Sub-Editor

A sub-editor usually should:

- i. be highly resourceful.
- ii. be patient when meeting deadlines and pressures.
- iii. have language command.
- iv. possess skills of translating from one language to another.
- v. possess wide knowledge of politics and
- ix. possess creative sense, especially during headline writing.
- x. possess the capability to expand and minimise the news story to place the news stories in newspapers.
- xi. possess good communication skills. In oral and written.
- xii. display determination.
- xiii. have knowledge about legal activities.

### Recap

- ▶ Newspaper has three major departments: Editorial, Business, and Mechanical.
- ▶ Newsroom is the hub of the organisation, handling news for various platforms.
- ▶ Editorial department is the nerve centre, coordinating all officials.
- ▶ Editorial's chief goal is to deliver accurate, unbiased news.
- ▶ Editorial critically analyses news stories.
- ▶ Editorial hierarchy: Editor, Assistant Editor, Executive Editor, Resident Editor, News Editor, Chief Sub-editor, Senior Sub-editor, Sub Editor.
- ▶ Editor is the governing authority, overseeing all content.
- ▶ Assistant Editor assists and works closely with the Chief Editor.
- ▶ Executive Editor oversees the editorial and production departments.
- ▶ Resident Editor heads editions in different cities and towns.



- ▶ News Editor selects, assigns, and provides an angle to news.
- ▶ Chief Sub-editor assigns duties to other editors for editing and designing.
- ▶ Senior Sub-editor assists the Chief Sub-editor and coordinates with sub-editors.
- ▶ Sub-editor is the unsung hero, working on editing and designing.

## Objective Questions

1. Which department is known as the nerve centre of the newspaper?
2. Real news operations take place in?
3. Who is the first person in the hierarchy of the editorial department?
4. Who is known as the governing authority of the newspaper?
5. Who appoints the editor?
6. What is the other name of the editor?
7. Who integrates the editorial department from dawn to dusk?
8. Write one duty and responsibility of the editor.
9. Write the skills of the editor.
10. Who is the person who regularly assists the chief editor and also performs the duties allotted to him or her by the chief editor?
11. Who is the editor who assists the editorial and production department of the newspaper? He or she also directs the work of the resident editor and assistant editor.
12. What is the editor who heads the edition from various cities and towns in the assigned newspaper known?
13. Who is known as 'the unsung hero' in the news production?
14. Write one skill of sub-editor.
15. Who is widely known as the 'captain' of the news desk?

## Answers

1. Editorial department
2. Newsroom
3. Editor or chief editor
4. Editor

5. Proprietor
6. Chief Editor
7. Editor
8. Following the editorial policies.
9. Good insight, broad view and imagination
10. Assistant editor
11. Executive editor
12. Resident Editor
13. Sub editor
14. Translation skills from one language to other
15. Chief Sub-Editor

## Assignments

1. Identify and explain the three major departments in a newspaper organization.
2. Describe the role of the newsroom in handling news for different platforms.
3. Discuss the significance of the editorial department as the nerve center and coordinator of officials in a newspaper.
4. What is the chief goal of the editorial department, and why is it important in journalism?
5. Explain the editorial hierarchy in a newspaper and the responsibilities of each position.

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# Unit 3

## Packaging, Value Addition and Other Roles of a News Desk

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this Unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise the roles and functions of the different departments within a newspaper organization including the business, circulation, advertisement, mechanical, and editorial departments
- ▶ analyse the specific responsibilities and duties of each department such as revenue generation, distribution, news gathering, editing, and production processes
- ▶ evaluate the impact of the internet and digital technologies on the operations and workflows of a modern news desk

### Prerequisites

Every morning, we eagerly await the arrival of our daily newspaper, complete with its supplements and inserts. Have you ever wondered about the intricate process that ensures the timely delivery of this comprehensive news package to our doorsteps? Behind the scenes, a well-orchestrated system is in place, managed by a dedicated department that guides the selling, subscription, revenue collection, and location-specific strategies. Within the bustling newsrooms, a flurry of activity takes place, with each media organization operating according to its own unique set of procedures and workflows. At the heart of this dynamic environment lies the news desk – a pivotal hub where the critical decisions surrounding news selection and publishing are made.

The news desk is a widely recognized entity in the news industry, responsible for orchestrating the intricate dance of gathering, reporting, selecting, filtering, editing, advertising, branding, and ultimately, publishing the final news product. It is here that the entire news production process unfolds, from the initial spark of an idea to the polished, packaged content that graces our screens and pages.

In this unit, we will go through the inner workings of the news desk, exploring the packaging, business, advertising, and other roles that contribute to the seamless delivery of news to our communities.



## Keywords

Circulation, Advertisement and Mechanical department, news desk, packaging, Business department

## Discussion

### 5.3.1 Business Department

The business department is the sole department of a newspaper organization. Its aim is to achieve financial success with the help of the newspaper and also enable the growth of the newspaper with a commercial venture. For example, sales, revenue, branding and advertising. The business department runs two departments: the advertising department and the circulation department.

- ▶ Business
- ▶ Classified
- ▶ Design
- ▶ Media data
- ▶ Features
- ▶ Relationships

### 5.3.2 Circulation Department

The circulation department is a major department in the newspaper industry. As the name suggests, they are in charge of circulation and distributing the newspaper. The circulation department supervises the selling of newspapers and their revenue. The three major tasks of this department are as follows;

- ▶ Selling the newspaper
- ▶ Giving to the retailers
- ▶ Gathering data from subscribers

The circulation department is headed by the circulation manager or manager executive.

### 5.3.3 Advertisement Department

The advertising department is another major department in the newspaper industry. Their duty is to generate revenue by offering advertisement space for the local, regional and national news industry. Their task is accepting the orders, creating remarkable advertisements, discussing with media about advertisements and helping to grow advertisement plans. They check different duties in advertisements. They are;

### 5.3.4 Mechanical Department

The Mechanical Department is the one in charge of the actual production of the newspaper. This department accomplishes the duties of plate formation, composing, printing, packing and dispatching. The pages are changed to metal plates and given for offset printing. After the printing process, the pages are neatly folded, the newspaper is counted, and packed to different destinations.

### 5.3.5 Other Roles of News Desk

The news desk is an important department which collects, gathers, selects, edits the news composition, writings, corrections, proofreading and processes the news. It's the nerve centre of the newspaper industry. Each task is assigned to different people in the office. The different desks are the international desk, district desk, sports desk, and local desk. Let's check the other different roles done by the news desk on news copies.

**Checking the News Values and Organisation of News:** An important and unorganised news can never attain a reader's attention. News should be relevant to society. So, the news desk must check the news value and their composition. They should also check whether the headlines are perfect and leads are arranged properly. These factors are

monitored at the news desk.

**Language:** Language is the most important factor in a newspaper. If the language is not understandable to the common man, then news cannot convey its right angle. The news desk always keeps an eye on language and its basic usage.

**Follows Ethical Policies:** A newspaper must follow its ethical policies. News is communicated to the people to inform rather than mislead them. The newspaper should never violate its responsibility. The news desk must monitor baseless information, rumours, and sensationalising an issue. So, it's the duty of a news desk to check for violations of ethical responsibilities.

**Designing and page layout:** A newspaper would look perfect when it has a good design and layout. This is one of the major roles of the news desk. The layout is known as the look of a newspaper page. In the field of publications, content alone cannot make a newspaper attractive. It is a challenge for newspapers to give the best quality product to the readers. Layout is the arrangement of materials in a newspaper that is to be printed. The layout of a newspaper decides the effectiveness of a newspaper in presenting newspaper pages. A good quality of content doesn't make a newspaper attractive, but also packaging it in a good layout and design makes it worth reading. Creating an entrancing layout for a newspaper is really important.

**Copy selections:** The newspaper industry receives a lot of news, features, and photographs. So, you may be wondering who selects the copy. It's the role of the news desk. They check the news copies and select them

based on the news value. They see whether each news is relevant or not. This is known as copy selection.

**Editing:** Editing is the final task in the news desk after receiving the complete news of the day. Editing is a process of selection, cutting, shaping, correction, revision, and checking the grammar and overall presentation of information in printed form or electronic format. Here, the editor and sub-editor edit the copy as per the new guidelines and set for the printing.

**Maintaining shift:** We know that newspaper organisations work quickly, and they are immensely busy publishing their news in the newspaper the very next day. Normally, the news desk works in three shifts. News can arrive at the office at any time. It's the duty of the news desk to maintain the shifts and assign them to respective employees.

### 5.3.6 Modern News Desk

The rise of the Internet made news desks more updated. The Internet and computer systems have changed the functions of the news desk a lot. The tasks are done quickly and easily. The quality production of newspapers is pristinely visible in the industry. Access to both international and national news contents and their editing processes by the new software etc., is easy with the arrival of the internet and computers. Nowadays, every news content is in soft copy format, and the use of hard copies has decreased. Presently, there is no need for teleprinters to send and receive the news copies.



## Recap

- ▶ Business department: Aims for financial success and newspaper growth through commercial ventures.
- ▶ Circulation department: Manages newspaper distribution, sales, and data collection.
- ▶ Advertisement department: Generates revenue by offering ad space for various industries.
- ▶ Different ad duties: Business, Classified, Design, Media data, Features, and Relationships.
- ▶ Mechanical department: Produces the newspaper through plate formation, composing, printing, packing, and dispatching.
- ▶ News desk: The nerve center, collects, selects, edits, and processes news.
- ▶ News desk roles: News values, language, ethics, layout, copy selection, and editing.
- ▶ Internet impact: Modernizes news desk functions, increasing speed and quality of newspaper production.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the name of the department which aims to make financial success with the help of newspaper and also enable the growth of newspaper with a commercial venture.
2. Which department is in-charge of circulation and distributing the newspaper?
3. Write the three major task of circulation department.
4. Who heads the circulation department?
5. Which department owns the duty to generate revenue by offering advertisement space for local, regional and national news industry?
6. Which is the department accomplishing the duty of plate formation, composing, printing, packing and dispatching. The pages are changed to metal plates and given for offset printing. After the printing process, the pages are neatly folded, count the newspaper and packed to different destination?
7. What is the final task in news desk after receiving the complete news of the day?

## Answers

1. Business department
2. Circulation department
3. Selling the newspaper, giving to the retailers, Gathering data from subscribers
4. Circulation manager
5. Advertisement department
6. Mechanical department
7. Editing

## Assignments

1. What is the primary objective of the Business Department in a newspaper organization?
2. Describe the responsibilities of the Circulation Department in the newspaper industry.
3. How does the Advertisement Department contribute to the newspaper's revenue generation?
4. List the different types of ad duties handled by the Advertisement Department.
5. Explain the role of the News Desk as the nerve center of the newspaper industry, highlighting its key responsibilities.

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# Unit 4

## Writing Effective Leads, Editorials and Columns, Editing Exercises

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this Unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ identify the key components of an effective lead paragraph, including the 5W's and 1H, specificity, and the ABCs
- ▶ distinguish between different types of leads, such as summary, narrative, contrast, question, quote, anecdotal, and direct address.
- ▶ comprehend the purpose and structure of an Editorial
- ▶ recognise the different types of columns and the techniques for writing compelling columns

### Prerequisites

Every news story we read has an attractive lead or introductory paragraph. If the lead is not attractive, readers do not pay attention to the news story. The effective lead is a promise to readers to read an influential news story. In this era, people are busy and will not devote a lot of time in reading the complete news. So, if a lead is perfect and effective, a reader can just scan the lead and he or she can understand the news story. Next comes the editorials and columns. They are the backbone of the newspapers. Here we can see a balanced, unbiased and critically analysed view on the issue happening in the society. Without lead, editorial and column a newspaper is incomplete. A column discusses mass subjects. They unendingly speak to the readers and attract them by well-crafted writing style. However, in this chapter you are learning about writing effective leads, editorials and also editing exercises. Now you are familiar with editing. You have learnt about Editing, Principles of editing, Editors and their duties and Editing symbols. The editing exercises will provide you with complete learning skills to edit the news story.

### Keywords

Lead, Editorials, column, Summary lead, Interpretative editorial, Specialized column



## Discussion

### 5.4.1 What is a Lead?

Lead is an opening sentence or paragraph with the most relevant information about the news story. Lead is a very important part of a news story because it is the paragraph from which almost every reader reads quickly and acquires information. Only a good lead can make the reader dive into a news story. A lead must be attractive and grab the interest of the readers. So, a lead must contain the six elements of a news story, which are known as 5W's and 1H. The best lead offers the reader precise, relevant and interesting information.

#### 5.4.1.1 Types of Lead

**a) Summary Leads /Hard Leads/Direct Leads:** The summary lead is the part which provides the most important or relevant information about a news event. The summary lead holds the answers of 5W's and 1H. It does not extend to more than 35 words. It is widely used in every kind of news story, as the summary lead offers concise, compact and relevant information in the first paragraph of a news story. Here are two examples of summary leads:

1. *Many private hospitals that had stopped vaccinating people on April 30 are set to resume operations on Monday after they managed to procure stock directly from manufacturers. Hospital managements are offering the vaccine to anyone who is above the age of 18 who has registered on the CoWIN portal.* (Source: *The Hindu*, 24/5/2021)
2. *With four more bodies found on two beaches in Raigad on Saturday evening, the number of bodies suspected to be from sunken Barge P-305 spotted along the district coast has gone up to*

*eight. While one body was found on Awas beach, three were found on Kihim beach in Alibaug taluka. The barge sank off Mumbai on May 17 after Cyclone Tauktae hit the coast.* (Source: *The Hindu*, 24/5/2021)

**b) Narrative Leads:** A narrative lead is widely used in features, soft stories, and non-breaking news stories. The main purpose of a narrative lead is to draw the reader and make him or her the central person in the news story. The narrative lead must persuade a person to continue reading. This lead tells the story, which is the classical way of starting a feature or non-breaking story. The narrative lead narrates the story from a person's point of view and grabs the readers to stick to the all-around news story.

Example: *In this arid Pakistan province, Roshan the camel brings the world to children missing school due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Roshan's even toes sink into the sand, dodging scree as he plods along the expansive plains towards Mand, a small town in southern Balochistan bordering Iran. The camel passes sights that belong to a medieval play — small houses, their doorways covered in hessian sacks, pepper the hillside; lone trees stand scattered; and the only colour in the dun landscape is from intricately painted Bedford trucks on the highway and the children dressed in bright salwar kameezes racing to meet him.* (Source: *The Hindu*, 5/5/2021)

**c) Contrast Leads:** The contrast lead is written in a news story to compare and contrast an event, person or any situation. The higher the contrast in the lead, the stronger the news story will be. For example, the contrast between old and new, changes in past years and present years, etc., in a news story. This is used in both news stories and features. Here is an example of contrast lead;

*Education Times looks at the massive transformations in the education sector that impacted the teaching-learning process, and changed students' lives. The last decade has witnessed new paradigms in education, changing the way students engage with courses and content. While the Draft National Educational Policy (NEP) has attempted to bring in a more equitable education system, NCERT is set to revise the curriculum framework, and edtech is disrupting the way students learn and introducing them to blended learning. (Source: Times of India, 30/12/2019)*

**d) Question Leads:** A question lead is a part of the news story that interrogates the readers and creates curiosity among them to find the answer in the news story. It simply starts with a conversational style. This lead helps to attract the attention of the reader easily. Example:

*What is happening in Jerusalem? On Monday, Israeli armed forces stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Haram esh-Sharif in Jerusalem, ahead of a march by Zionist nationalists commemorating Israel's capture of the eastern half of the city in 1967. More than 300 Palestinians were injured in the raid. In retaliation, Hamas, the Islamist militant group that runs Gaza, fired dozens of rockets. The Israelis launched an airstrike on Gaza in response, killing at least 21 Palestinians, including nine children. (Source: The Hindu, May 16, 2021)*

**e) Quote Leads:** A quote lead is the part which begins with a quote related to the following news content. It could be a speaker's direct expression from a press meeting, public speech or interview. The quote becomes the sole character in a news story or a feature that immediately expresses the news angle. This enables the reader to build his or her eagerness

to read the complete news story. Example:

*"I feel like a fish," Madurai-based photographer Jaisingh Nageswaran told us at some point in the conversation. We were talking about his life at his parents' house in Vadipatti, where Jaisingh has now been living for over a year — the longest he's been since moving out to live on his own in his early 20s. Over the past two decades, Jaisingh has worked in Bollywood while pursuing his independent documentary photography projects. Sometime in early 2020, he moved back home due to an ailment. (Source: The News Minute, 21/4/2021)*

**f) Direct Address Lead or Direct Appeal Leads:** This type of lead directly talks or addresses with the reader by using the word 'you'. It makes the reader the individual in the news story. This type of lead is mostly used in features. Example:

*If one of your goals is to drink more water, you're on your way to a healthier body. "Every cell in our body requires water. Water is critical for the function of your digestion, heart, lungs, and brain," says Sarah Krieger, a registered dietitian nutritionist in St. Petersburg, Florida. (Source: Everyday Health Portal, 22/11/2020)*

**g) Anecdotal Leads:** Anecdotal lead is a part of a news story which begins with a story. The descriptive narrative of the story can arouse the curiosity in readers. It slowly unfolds the story and narrates the main points in the news story. The story or narration can be based on an individual, situation or social conditions. Example:

*It was the year 2008, and the Telangana movement was gaining momentum. The media's focus was on protests, road rokos and meetings held in the state, especially*



*Hyderabad. It was then that 18-year-old Mallishwari entered the media industry as a cameraperson. It was her dream job, and she was placed in HMTV, a local Telugu channel. (Source: The News Minute, 23 April, 2021)*

#### 5.4.1.2 Writing Effective Leads

The lead of a news story must be attractive, or else that news can never attract the readers. Only a good lead can accomplish the task. So, let's see some effective ways to write good leads.

**a) The Use of 5W's and 1H:** Start the lead by answering fundamental questions – who, what, when, where, why, how. Because this emphasises the important elements of the news story. Go to the second and third paragraphs with less important information. This is because a reader first scans the leading paragraph. And he or she can understand the relevant details quickly. Also, follow the inverted pyramid style of news writing.

**b) Specificity:** Specificity means precise and exact. A news lead must be particular. The broader and unwanted elements fitting into a news lead is not an effective method. Always use exact and precise information to make the lead interesting.

**c) The ABCs- Accuracy, Brevity and Clarity:** The ABCs are important in a news story as well as in a lead. A journalist has the power to influence the reader. What would happen if he or she offered wrong information and spelling errors? This can badly affect the people. Thus, a reporter shall be accurate in providing the data. It should be credible, authentic and genuine.

Next comes the brevity. Brevity means to keep the information short and brief. A lead is generally written in 20 to 30 words. A reporter can reduce it or expand it with respect to

the news story. The reader in this era never read for long. He or she needs to grasp the information which matters to them swiftly. Thus, keep the lead simple and brief. Finally, the clarity. It's an important element when writing a lead. Can disorganized information communicate the correct emotion of the news? No, because lack of clarity and the use of unfamiliar words can confuse the readers. Thus, organise your lead with familiar and simple words and phrases.

**d) Use Active Sentences:** The use of active sentences can make the lead alive and engaging. Passive construction of sentences creates a dull approach and makes the reader passive. Avoid overusing of adjectives and adverbs.

#### 5.4.1.3 Editorial

“Editorial is an essay written on the subject which is being discussed in the society and is not written only to fulfil the newspaper; in fact, it should have worth also.”- M. Ali Johar (Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar a journalist and a poet, and was among the leading figures of the Khilafat Movement.)

An editorial is an article that showcases the opinion and views of the issue or events in society. It is written by the editor. Generally, editorials are the heart and soul of newspapers or the mirror of society. The topics discussed in the editorial can be current events, criticism about administrative failures, debates on social conditions and international issues. The editorials evoke the minds of people and put an issue in society for debate. The editorial of a newspaper offers the reader the opportunity to leave feedback on the issue with a letter to the editor. The editorial influences the public opinion. It is written as a serious note. It provides the information by adding solid facts, statistics and figures. The conclusion of an editorial encourages people to take action or voice their opinions.



## Types of Editorials

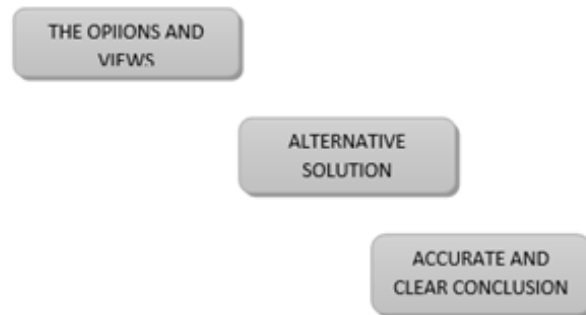


Fig 5.5.1 Structure of Editorial

**a) Interpretative Editorial:** This type of editorial widely discusses current events or issues. It provides a detailed description of various factors and actions on an issue. Opinions and views are less stated in interpretative editorials, which are mostly written with facts and figures. Here, the editorial leaves the audience to interpret the news and judge it.

**b) Criticism Editorial:** This editorial constructively criticises the news, policies or events happening in the country. The editor writes the good and bad sides of the issues. Also, an editor must provide solutions to the news being discussed. For example, If the editor is criticising the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act, he or she should provide better measures for the act. Otherwise, the editorial will not ensure its quality and credibility.

**c) Entertainment Editorial:** Entertainment editorial is light and humorous. The main style of this editorial is to pick a relevant issue and present it in a humorous way. The other way is to choose a serious topic and write it in a satirical or humorous manner. This entertains the readers with a mild laugh and thoughtful insights. This type of editorial will be shorter

than other editorials.

**d) Informative Editorial:** As the name suggests, this editorial serves to offer information to the public. New calamities, diseases and problems are deeply discussed in this editorial. For example, COVID-19 was entirely new to the world. The newspaper provided historical information, precautions and vaccines for this pandemic to the people. Thus, this type of editorial gives deeper knowledge as well as information on new happenings in the world.

### Effective Ways of Writing Editorial

- ▶ The editorial must have an introduction, body and conclusion.
- ▶ Start with a good lead explaining all the objective factors depending on the issue being discussed.
- ▶ The editorial should always focus on important issues and social conditions in society. So, write about the people, not editors' own opinions and views.
- ▶ Initially, write the opposite details of the issue.
- ▶ Next, deny the opposition factors related to the issue.
- ▶ Provide transparent facts, objec-



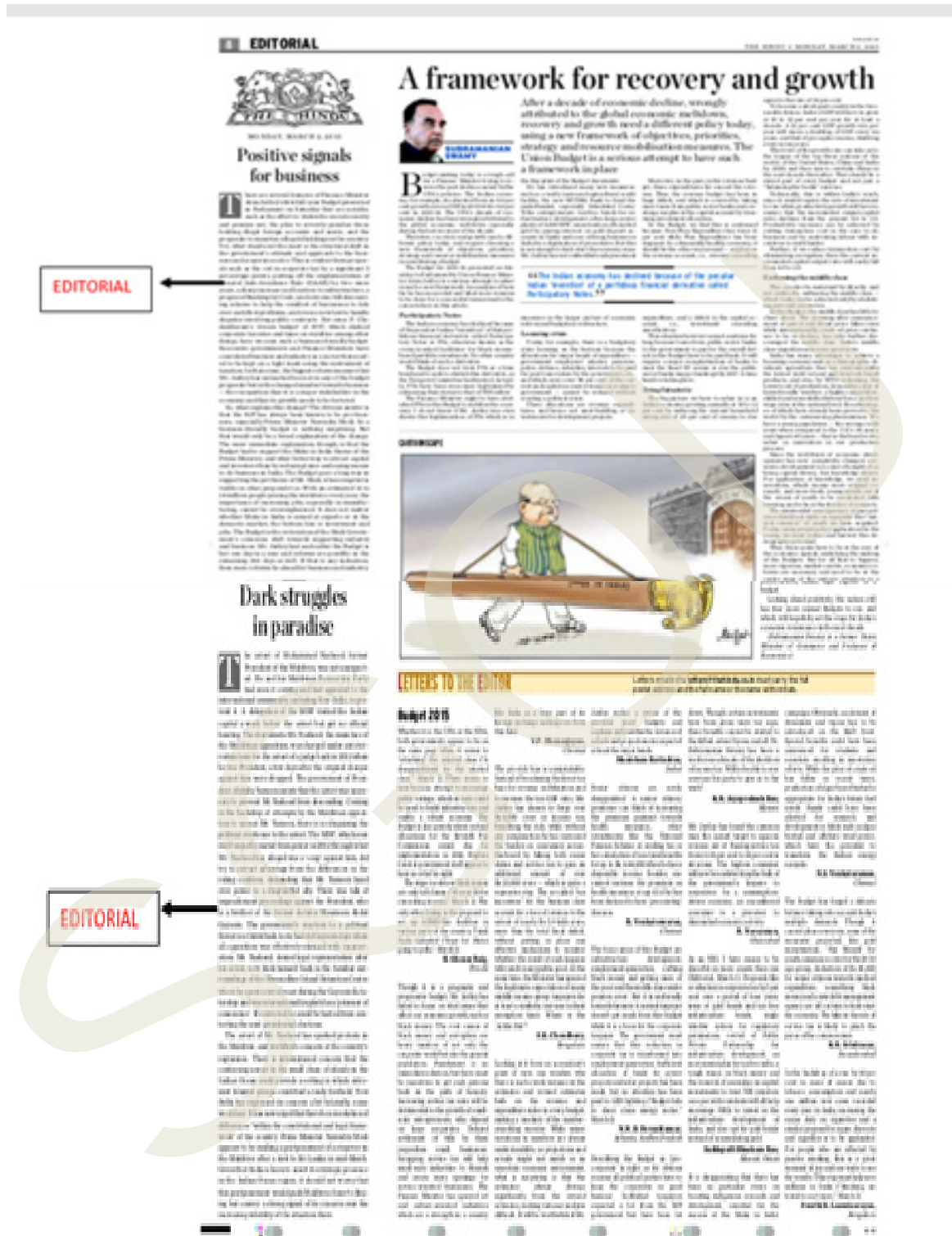


Fig 5.5.2 Editorial page of the newspaper *The Hindu*.

- tive points and unbiased to support the claims.
- ▶ Always clarify the points, criticise in a positive tone and communicate specifically.
  - ▶ The editorial size must stick between 500 and 1000 words.
  - ▶ Always study both sides of controversies and balance the editorial with accurate analysis.
  - ▶ The usage of active sentences can make editorial effective.
  - ▶ Describe the issues or events objectively. Never use a subjective tone.
  - ▶ Develop the editorial by including the facts, figures and quotations.
  - ▶ Always use formal language.
  - ▶ Constructive criticism and professionalism shall be maintained.
  - ▶ Never be passive in presenting the facts and statistics or readers may lose interest in the editorial.
  - ▶ Persuade the reader to concentrate on the solutions and suggestions.
  - ▶ Finally, conclude the editorial by adding powerful or noteworthy information, leaving a judgment thought for the reader and also placing a call for action.
  - ▶ Concede a point of the opposition: they must have some good points you can acknowledge that would make the editorial look rational.
  - ▶ Repeat key phrases to reinforce an idea in the reader's mind.
  - ▶ Give a realistic solution(s) to the problem that goes beyond common knowledge. Encourage critical thinking and proactive

reaction.

- ▶ Wrap it up in a concluding punch that restates your opening remark.

#### 5.4.1.4 What is a Column?

A column is a consistent piece of writing or an article in a newspaper written by a columnist. It appears in newspapers regularly, weekly or monthly. This writing offers the readers the writer's opinion and views on current events or certain subjects. The column, often found on the editorial page of a newspaper and named 'Opinion', is a platform for the columnist to share their unique perspective and insights, adding a personal touch to the writing and making it more relatable.

The column is published along with the columnist's byline, title and even the photograph. The column is an opinionated section, so a writer has full freedom to write his or her opinion. No restrictions and rules are provided for the writer here. The writer can write about whatever he or she experiences and observe the issue, event, or subject arising in society. The column plays an important role in journalism, as it shows the in-depth views and expression of the society. A column is also known as general writing and specialised writing.

#### Types of Columns

**a. Opinionated Columns:** Opinionated columns are columns that are written with opinions and views from columnists on certain issues or events in society. Their observation, experience and extensive training make them experts in writing opinions for people.

**b. Humorous Columns:** Humorous columns consist of satirical and comedy elements. People are amused by reading such columns. The humorous columns normally mock or satirically criticize the government,



policies and even changes happening in the society.

**c. Question and answer columns:** This column mostly comes up with a question-and-answer writing mode. It questions and answers various topics. For example, a doctor answering questions about precautions to be taken if he or she is affected by COVID-19. The topics of this type of columns may be educational, technological, scientific theories, books, etc. The writer makes this column interesting, simple and stylish. The column will be easily understandable to readers.

**d. Specialized columns:** The specialised columns are also known as the professional columns. This column discusses the detailed

and in-depth specialised subject. These columns are arranged in newspapers according to the circumstances. The specialised columns can be like the Sports column, Legal column, Students column, Fashion and trends column, Women and Children column, Agriculture column, etc. The language and style of specialised columns are simple and basic. The opinions and views are not reflected in the specialised column.

### Effective Ways of Writing Columns

**a. Be specific:** Write the column adding the relevant and important factors. Specifying the information can engage the readers rather than overstating the points in the news. Skip the generalisation and concrete statements. Always write for the reader. A reader must

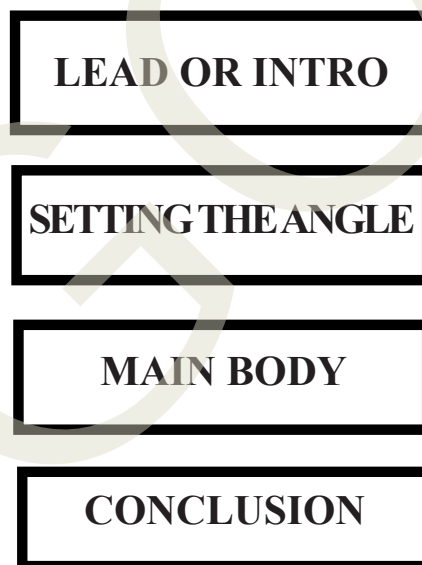


Fig 5.5.3 Structure of column writing

craft a picture in mind through the words and points written in the column.

**b. Use Active sentences:** The use of active sentences makes the writing precise and clear. Otherwise, it can turn a reader into a passive one.

**c. Good Openings and Endings:** A good opening can grab the attention of a reader. In addition to a good opening, the writer must write strong facts. The use of metaphors and phrases adds more curious elements. The ending sentences must state the solutions and conclusions. They should also create a



Fig. 5.5.4 A sample column



Fig. 5.5.5 A sample column in the Q&A mode

persuasive ending and offer the reader the opportunity to think deeply about the news and call for action.

**d. Avoid Jargons:** Jargons are special kinds of words and are also new to the common reader. They may be unaware of the meanings of the jargon. So, use simple and common words. This can make a reader close to the writing.

**e. Good Headline or Title:** A good headline attracts the reader. They start reading the column after they see the headlines. So, the headline must be catchy and stylish.

**f. Using Quotes:** Powerful quotes convey in-depth thoughts and add more serious elements to the writing. Always state the name of the person who delivered the quote.

#### 5.4.1.4 Editing Exercises

Below is a piece of news taken from the news portal *The News Minute*. There are certain errors in the news given below. You must edit using the *Copy Editing* and *Proofreading* symbols. The symbol chart is given below.

***Union govt seeks report from social media companies on compliance with new IT rules***  
***Wednesday, May 26, 2021 - 21:05***

*The Union government on Wednesday staunchly -defended its new digital rules, saying the requirement of messaging platforms such as WhatsApp to disclose origin of flagged messages does not violate privacy, and went on to seek a compliance report from social media firms. A Day after WhatsApp filed a lawsuit in the Delhi High Cort challenging the new digital rules on*

*grounds that the requirement for the company to provide access to encrypted messages will break privacy protections, IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the new norms will not impact normal functioning of the popular free-messaging platform.*

*The requirement of tracing origin messages of under new IT rules is for prevention and investigation of “very serious offences” related to sovereignty and integrity the India and security of the state, a statement from his ministry said. Separately, the ministry asked social media companies such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp to report their status on compliance with the new rules, which kicked in from Wednesday. The new rules, announced on February 25, require large social media platforms to follow additional due diligence, including the appointment of chief compliance officer, nodal contact person and resident grievance officer.*

*Non-compliance with rules would result in these social media companies losing their intermediary status that provides them exemptions and certain immunity from liabilities for any third-party information and data hosted by them.*

Proofread the above editorial content. Could you identify the errors in it?



## Recap

- ▶ Lead - An attractive opening with 5W's and 1H.
- ▶ Types of Lead- Summary, narrative, contrast, question, quote, anecdotal, direct address.
- ▶ Effective Lead- 5W's and 1H, specificity, ABCs (accuracy, brevity, clarity), active sentences.
- ▶ Editorial - Opinion article reflecting society's views.
- ▶ Types of Editorials - Interpretative, criticism, entertainment, informative.
- ▶ Writing an Editorial- Introduction, body, conclusion; objective, transparent, specific, within word limit.
- ▶ Column - Regular newspaper article on opinions.
- ▶ Types of Columns- Opinionated, humorous, specialized, Q&A.
- ▶ Writing a Column- Be specific, use active sentences, compelling openings and endings, avoid jargon, use quotes.

## Objective Questions


1. Write the six elements in a news story.
2. What are the two effective ways to write a lead?
3. Which article showcases the opinion and views of the issue or events in society and is written by the editor?
4. Write two effective ways of writing an editorial.
5. Write the structure of an editorial.
6. Who writes a column?
7. Name the two types of columns.
8. Write two effective ways of writing a column.
9. What is the other name of Summary leads?
10. Which is the lead which provides the most important or relevant information in news events?
11. What is the name of the lead that begins with a story?
12. Which lead interrogates readers and creates curiosity among them to find the answer in the news story?
13. Which is the editorial that picks a relevant issue and present it in a humorous way or satirical?
14. Which is the editorial that provides less opinions and views?
15. Which is the editorial that offer information to the public?
16. What is the name of the column which consist satirical and comedy elements?
17. Which is the column known as the professional column?





18. Which is the column written in question-and-answer mode?
19. Which is the proofreading symbol used for wrong word?

## Answers

1. Who, What, When Where, Why and How?
2. Specificity and ABCs- accuracy, brevity and clarity
3. Editorial
4. The use of formal language and Persuade the reader to concentrate on the solutions and suggestions
5. The opinions and views, Alternative solution, Accurate and clear conclusion
6. Columnist
7. Specialized column and Humorous column
8. Use Active sentences and write good Openings and Endings
9. Hard leads and direct leads
10. Summary lead
11. Anecdotal lead
12. Question lead
13. Entertainment editorial
14. Interpretative editorial
15. Informative editorial
16. Humorous column
17. Specialized column
18. Question and answer column
19. 

## Assignments

1. Explain the components of an effective lead and how the use of 5W's and 1H enhances its appeal to readers.
2. Compare and contrast three different types of leads, and provide examples of each from real news stories.
3. Discuss the importance of specificity, accuracy, brevity, and clarity in crafting a compelling lead, and illustrate with a lead of your own creation.

4. Analyze an editorial from a reputable newspaper, identifying its type and explaining how the author maintains objectivity while presenting their opinion.
5. Choose one type of editorial and write a 500-word piece expressing your views on a current societal issue while following the structure of an editorial, including a well-crafted introduction, body, and conclusion.

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# BLOCK - 06

## **Headlining and Page Layout**

# Unit 1

## Types and Functions of Headlines

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this Unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ comprehend the purpose and importance of headlines in news writing.
- ▶ analyse the characteristics of effective headlines, including simplicity, attractiveness, and the ability to grab readers' attention.
- ▶ distinguish between different types of headlines and their respective functions in newspaper layout and design.

### Prerequisites

A newspaper consists of several category of news. Every News story has a structure. The news story structure includes headline, lead, body and a conclusion. Without these things a news story cannot be fulfilled in which headline is one of the most important parts of an article. The famous proverb by Fletcher thus: "let me make the headlines of a newspaper, and I don't care who writes its editorials." Hence, it's clear that Headlines appear in newspapers define the demand of a newspaper. They have a strong presupposition in deciding what people choose to read. A headline is the title of the news story. The most important creative duty of a Subeditor is writing headlines. For readers headline is the most important part of the news story. Headline gives a brief knowledge about what the news story speaks about. It is not only the summary of the story, also it invites the reader's attention towards the written publication. As the first option of a news story, the headline is a first impression for a News reader on the information that is to follow. People grade a news story by evaluating the tone and language of headline. Smart headlines will have great influence over the readers. In this unit, let us learn types and functions of Headlines.

### Keywords

Headlines, Kicker, Banner, Crossline, Hammer, Flush left headline, Centered Headline, Inverted Pyramid Headline, Cross line Headline.



## Discussion

### 6.1.1 What is a Headline?

What must bring the curiosity of a reader to follow a news story and to make them keep reading? The best way to make a reader stay in a news story is to make its headline eye-catching and interesting.



Fig 6.1.1 Headline in *The Telegraph* news paper

The above-shown image is the headline published in one of the leading newspapers in India, *The Telegraph*. When we go through this specific headline, it gives us the urge to read the news story. An effective headline takes the reader to the story. In this way, a headline always sells the story to the reader. Make the reader find out more by reading the article. One of the best ways to create a headline is to make it simple and attractive. A simple headline must grab the attention of the reader.

Also, it is the level of boldness/size of the headline which enables the reader to understand the importance of a story. Mostly, the headline is a hint of what is written in the story. It creates curiosity and gives answers to questions or solutions to a problem. Headlines in newspapers perform the following functions:

#### Functions of headlines:

a) **Summarises the story:** Headlines are used to convey the story information in a short and precise form. Headlines are considered the hint of a news story. Summarising the topic in headlines helps readers to understand the news easily. A sum-up headline will give an idea of the story. This creates anxiety for a reader to follow the news story.

b) **Generate interest in a story:** News headlines function to generate interest in a reader. If the goal of a news editor is to ensure stories are read, the news headline must convey interest to the reader. When a reader reads the headline, he/she must read the story. So that it generates an interest in the reader to enter the news story.

c) **Satisfy a busy reader:** Headlines help the audience get information quickly. A headline must satisfy a busy reader. The aim of a headline is to gratify the reader with little time for news. All readers are not of the same type; some may be busy, so a headline must satisfy a busy reader.

d) **Highlight to direct attention:** Headlines often highlight the most important parts of a new story to direct the reader's attention. By using catchy phrases, headlines grab the attention of readers. The main function of a headline is to take the reader to the story by giving an attractive and eye-catching headline.

e) **Headlines sell the article:** Headlines advertise the content of an article or news story. By reading a headline, the reader decides whether to continue reading the article or news story. When a headline is not very attractive, the reader may decide not to read the article. So, it is essential to make a headline catchy and interesting.

f) **Appealing appearance of the page:** Every newspaper page has a typical style

in appearance, but headlines add variety to the page by its font and look. Thus, headlines make the newspaper more attractive. Reading newspapers is still a part of our culture and daily habits, so for the existence of a print medium, it is more important to make its appearance good. Headline styles add more colour to the page.

### 6.1.1.1 Types of Headlines

There are different types of headlines that serve as the layout of a newspaper. The following are some of the most important types:

a) **Kicker Headline:** A Kicker, also known as a tagline, is a one-line sentence or phrase that introduces the headline. Kicker has been defined as the headline that is placed above the main headline. Its purpose is to supplement the meaning and concept of the main headline.



Fig.6.1.2 A sample kicker headline

b) **Flush-left headline:**



Fig. 6.1.3 A Sample flush-left headline

The flush-left headline is a two or three-line head with each line set flush left. The lines do not have to be equal in width. This is the most common headline style. Usually, readers' eye movement is from left to right, so this style is more useful for them.

c) **Banner headline:** The banner head is the headline that stretches in full-page width. It is usually placed at the top of a news page to draw attention to the lead story of that particular page. They are considered the attention grabber headlines.



Fig. 6.1.4 A sample banner headline

d) **Centered Headline:** This type of headline is above the column. Each line of this type of headline is centred on the column's width. Space is distributed equally on the sides in the centre-aligned text. This headline gives the page a traditional look.



Fig. 6.1.5 A sample centred headline

e) **Inverted Pyramid Headline:** This headline contains three or more lines that are



centrally structured. The first line fills in the entire column and then uses less space as it gets to the bottom, resembling an inverted pyramid. This headline helps present the relevant facts first.

### With IDF's blessing, right-wing American group holds Hanukkah party at Anatot army base



Fig.6.1.6 A sample inverted pyramid headline

**f) Cross-line headline:** It does not always span the full width of the page but does cover all the columns of the story. This headline is mostly used when there is more than one column for a news story and also when adapting a formal style.



Fig. 6.1.7 A sample cross-line headline

**g) Hammer Headline:**



Fig. 6.1.8 A sample hammer headline

The hammer is the opposite of the kicker headline. Usually written in bold and capital letters, hammer headlines impress the readers with their size and keep them sticking to the page. They are not traditionally used, but they are eye-catching headlines.

### 6.1.1.2 Steps for Writing Headlines

Headline writing is an art. Setting a headline is not as easy as it looks. It's a creative work that has been added with authenticity. Following are the steps for writing a catchy headline:

**a. Read the article and understand the theme of the story:** Carefully read through the entire article or story to grasp its central theme, main idea, and key takeaways. Look for the overarching message or purpose the writer aims to convey. Having a deep understanding of the story's essence is crucial for crafting a headline that accurately represents its content.

**b. Write the theme in active voice:** Once you've identified the core theme, express it using active voice. Active voice makes the writing more dynamic, engaging, and impactful. It also helps to create a sense of immediacy and action. Passive voice, on the other hand, can make the headline sound dull, lacking energy, and disconnected from the reader.

**c. Make it brief and precise:** Headlines should be concise and straight to the point. Aim to capture the story's essence in as few words as possible without sacrificing clarity or accuracy. Avoid wordiness, extraneous details, or filler words that don't contribute to the headline's main message. Precision is key— choose words carefully to convey the most important information in a compact, punchy way.

**d. Give immediacy to the story:** An effective headline should create a sense

of urgency, relevance, and timeliness that compels the reader to delve into the full story. Use present tense verbs, vivid language, and attention-grabbing details to make the story feel current, newsworthy, and significant. This immediacy grabs the reader's interest right away and entices them to read further.

**e. Use the lead information to write the headline:** The lead paragraph (or first few sentences) of the article often contains the most crucial details about the who, what, when, where, why, and how. Mine this opening

section for the most important nuggets of information to include in your headline. The lead lays out the major facts that should be reflected in the headline's brief summary.

Headline writing is indeed an art form that requires creativity, precision, and a keen understanding of the story's essence. By following these steps, you can craft headlines that accurately represent the content, engage the reader, and effectively pique their interest to explore the full story.

## Recap

- ▶ A headline crowns the news story
- ▶ Headline should be simple and attractive
- ▶ Headline grab the attention of reader
- ▶ Use the lead information in headline.
- ▶ Headlines in newspapers perform the many functions.
- ▶ Summarizes the story
- ▶ Headlines give immediacy to the story
- ▶ The aim of a headline is to gratify the reader with little time of news.
- ▶ An effective headline takes the reader to the story
- ▶ There are different types of headlines, such as kicker, banner, flush left, centered, cross line, hammer headlines etc.
- ▶ Headlines serve as an element in newspaper layout.

## Objective Questions

1. What do you call a headline that stretch 8 columns in a newspaper?
2. "A two- or three-line head with each line set flush left"-Name the headline.
3. Which element of a news story satisfy a busy reader?
4. What is kicker?
5. "The highlighted portion of a passage", name the type of headline.
6. What is skyline?
7. Is it a right way to use well known abbreviations and phatic words while writing headlines?



8. What is cross line headline?
9. What is the first step in writing headline?

## Answers

1. Banner headline
2. Subhead or Sub headline
3. The headline
4. A kicker is a short, catchy phrase or sentence that appears above the main headline to add context or interest to the story.
5. Highlight or Highlighted headline
6. A skyline is a line of type, typically set in larger and bolder letters, that appears above the main headline to introduce the story and catch the reader's attention.
7. Yes
8. A cross-line headline is a secondary headline that appears between the main headline and the body of the article. It is used to add additional information or intrigue the reader.
9. Understanding the essence of the story and identifying the main point or focus.

## Assignments

1. Explain the primary functions of headlines in newspapers and how they serve as a crucial element in newspaper layout.
2. Describe the characteristics of an effective headline and how it can grab the attention of readers, leading them to read the entire story.
3. Explore the various types of headlines, including kicker, banner, flush left, centered, cross line, and hammer headlines, and analyse their distinct features and purposes.
4. Discuss the importance of using lead information in headlines to provide immediacy to the story and summarize its key points concisely.
5. Analyse the role of headlines in gratifying readers with limited time for news consumption, and highlight the significance of crafting simple and attractive headlines that crown news stories effectively.

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## Unit 2

# Writing Effective Headlines

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ explain the significance of headlines in news writing, including their impact on reader understanding, capturing the essence of a story, and emphasizing its importance.
- ▶ recognise the role of headlines in satisfying busy readers and contributing to the overall tone of a publication.
- ▶ analyse the characteristics of effective headlines, such as clarity, specificity, and adherence to stylebook guidelines.
- ▶ identify the importance of following stylebook conventions, ensuring political correctness, and maintaining simplicity and attractiveness in headline writing.

### Prerequisites

In the previous unit we discussed basics of headline writing. We went through the steps for writing headlines and studied about the different types and important functions of headline. In this unit let's discuss some points about how to write an effective headline. Headline writing is a creative and risky job. We already studied who are Editor and Subeditor with their duties in the previous Block. It is the duty of a subeditor or copy editor to write headline. Even if the content of the story is unique and innovative, a bad headline will destroy the importance of a story. Most of the headlines function to advertise the article. In order to increase the sales of the newspaper organization, headlines are prepared sensationally and exaggerate the news. Since the average reader should understand what the headline speaks, you should select the headline type and plan the arrangement according to the reader. When we come to the case of television and web, headlines play a vital role in influencing its viewers. As the innovations in new technologies increase, the style and structure of headlines change gradually. This unit will help you with contents and effective skills to write a good headline.

## Keywords

Headlines, Content, Style, Abbreviate, Political correctness

## Discussion

### 6.2.1 Why Headlines

Headlines are the most important part of a story. Whether for an article, news story, feature or the web, it grabs the attention of a reader or web visitor. The case of first impression becomes the best impression, which effectively matters in the case of headlines. What we see, hear, feel, or experience in our first view of something reflects how we value the rest of it. The headline decides how many people will read a story. More interestingly, a headline changes the way people understand a story, and they remember it. They indicate the nature of the news story or article. Most headlines emphasise the important points of a news story.

Every headline will be interesting and informative to encourage the reader/viewer to follow the news story. They must be accurate and credible. They should include maximum information about the news content that directs the reader/viewer to the story. The following are the characteristics of a headline:

- i. Captures the essence of a story.
- ii. Grabs the attention of people.
- iii. Emphasises the importance of a news story.
- iv. Satisfies a busy reader.
- v. Contributes to the overall tone of a publication/ show.

### 6.2.2 Headline Content

Headlines should be clear and specific, telling the reader what the story is about, and be interesting enough to take them into

the story. In the case of a newspaper and web portal, a busy reader scans the headlines to decide if they want to read the stories. In the case of television, every viewer watches a news bulletin to get the main attention. For straight news stories, it is preferable to write straightforward headlines that are easy to understand. Also, we can use literary devices to write a headline, such as quotes, rhymes, allusions, etc. The primary aim is to seek the attention of a reader to the head. Headlines in newspapers often serve as a visual element to the page. So, the content of a headline must be that much accurate and attractive to fascinate the reader.

### 6.2.3 Changing Patterns of Headlines

In general, every newspaper follows a specific pattern for developing headlines. These cannot be defined as rules for writing heads, but they are the basics of writing attractive and effective headlines. We have already discussed the basics of writing headlines.

In the modern era, the layout and settings of newspapers have changed a lot. So, it is mandatory to change or update the usage and pattern of headlines nowadays. In the older days, there was no other media to compete with newspapers. But today, there are different types of media that are more dominant than print media. However, print media is one of the main mediums of communication, primarily because of the attractive style and structure of news writing and page layout. When we consider the layout of a newspaper, the headline is one of the essential elements that add beauty to the page design. Headlines change the entire look of the newspaper. They





don't follow a particular style or structure. The style and structure of headlines differ according to the type of news. Every newspaper contains different types of fonts and styles. As we mentioned earlier, in the older days, there was no need for attractive headlines to grab a reader, because there was no other medium to compete with print media. But nowadays, as the increase of social media and television shows, information reaches us as quickly as possible. So, newspapers have to be more conscious about their reach and frequency. As if to withstand other communication mediums, today, newspapers use more attractive and flourished language to attract a reader. The evolution of radio, television and the internet made print media ratings comparatively low. So, it is a matter of existence for print media in the field of information gathering.

Earlier, information was communicated straight forward to the people. For example, a newspaper headline on 21 May 1991 was "Rajiv Gandhi assassinated." but if this happened today, this would be communicated as "The father of information technology and telecom revolution passed away." Nowadays, social media is a challenge for newspapers. In older days, newspapers were not allowed to use trendy words and flourished languages in headlines. Today, we can see newspapers using phatic words and flourishing language. The usage of phatic words adds more colour to the newspapers. Also, the usage of numbers has not been common in past years. But today, if they are important, numbers are used even in main headlines. As per the socio-political context, it is essential to change the patterns of headlines for the permanence of print media.

The main attraction of newspapers is the sports page. It is said that most people are interested in the sports page. Most of the sports pages will be colourful. They add photographs and different font styles to highlight the page.

They also use flourished words and catchy phrases in headlines to make the sports page more attractive. An example of sports pages published in a Malayalam newspaper is given below.



Fig. 6.2.1 Sample design of a sports page in a Malayalam newspaper (Source: Malayalammanorama)



Fig. 6.2.2 Sample design of a sports page in a Malayalam newspaper (Source: Malayalammanorama)

When we have a look at the changing pattern of newspaper styles, most newspapers

own their own stylebooks. A style book is a book containing rules and examples of punctuation, typography, etc., for the use of writers and editors.

In today's newspapers, polite words and phrases are used in the headlines and other news content to avoid offensive or unpleasant wordings or remarks. Some of these types of words and phrases are given below.

- ▶ Disabled - differently-abled
- ▶ Mentally retarded - mentally challenged
- ▶ Blind - visually challenged
- ▶ Paperboy – media distribution executive.
- ▶ അന്യസംസ്ഥാന തൊഴിലാളികൾ - ഇതരസംസ്ഥാന തൊഴിലാളികൾ
- ▶ അംഗൻവാടി - അങ്കണവാടി



Fig. 6.2.3 Sample coverage page title in an English news paper (Source: Madraswala)

As we mentioned earlier, media headlines play a vital role in grabbing the attention of the audience. Television heads are mostly short heads, which is the sum up of a story accompanying visuals. More visuals make the subject more colourful. So, it is not a big task for television to attract more viewers. In the case of web headlines, they must be more attractive and attention-seeking to get more viewers for the online media page.

Headlines are the most important factor in creating great content. Because, headlines decide whether your target audience is going to read your article. A headline is one of the most important elements that can transform an internet surfer into a potential reader.

Headlines can be differentiated according to the types of news. Headlines written for hard news are different from that for soft news. Hard news is news stories that have an impact on society and must be reported urgently. It includes international, business, government, and political news. So, such headlines must probably be quick to understand and sum up the news story. Soft news stories are news stories about art and cultural aspects, which are human interest stories or entertainment news, such as features, columns, etc. Headlines of soft news stories will be more interesting and flourish.

## 6.2.4 Writing Effective Headline

When applying rules for writing headlines, the best way to write a headline is to make it simple and attractive. Make the headline easy to read. Remember, the key purpose of the head is to communicate. The headline must not mislead a reader. We must verify accuracy and avoid words that carry double meaning. Don't use unwanted words in head. Also, there is no need to exaggerate things, as you should maintain neutrality in writing. Try not to make grammatical errors. It is not good

to use different slang unless it is for human-interested stories. The main aim of a news headline is to direct attention to certain parts of a news story. Headlines are the most important

element of news content, as they have evolved over the years to attract readers. For decades, they have developed their own conventional style to capture attention effectively.

## Recap

- ▶ Headlines are the most important part of a story.
- ▶ A headline changes the way people understand a story and they remember it.
- ▶ A headline captures the essence of a story.
- ▶ Headlines emphasize the importance of a news story.
- ▶ Headlines can satisfy a busy reader.
- ▶ Headlines Contribute to the overall tone of a publication.
- ▶ Headlines should be clear and specific.
- ▶ Most newspapers own their own stylebooks.
- ▶ Style book should be followed
- ▶ Check political correctness of language and usage.
- ▶ The best way to write a headline is to make it simple and attractive.
- ▶ The main aim of news headline is to direct attention to certain parts of a news story.
- ▶ Newspapers developed their own conventional style in developing headlines.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the basic purpose of headlines?
2. How does headlines change the entire look of the newspaper?
3. Why is it mandatory to change or update the usage and pattern of headlines?
4. What is a style book?
5. How headlines satisfy a busy reader?
6. Which is the most important factor used in creating a content?
7. How do headline contribute to the overall tone of a publication/ show?
8. What makes a news story readable?
9. What attracts a reader to a lengthy news story?

## Answers

1. Attract attention
2. Visual impact
3. To stay relevant
4. Writing guide
5. Quick information
6. Relevance
7. Sets tone
8. Clarity
9. Engaging detail

## Assignments

1. How do headlines influence the way readers perceive and remember a news story?
2. Explain the significance of headlines in setting the tone of a publication and enhancing the overall reader experience.
3. Why is it important for newspapers to maintain a consistent stylebook, and what role does it play in headline writing?
4. Discuss the dual role of headlines in capturing the essence of a story while also catering to the needs of busy readers.
5. How have newspapers developed and maintained their distinctive style conventions for crafting effective headlines?

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## Unit 3

# Writing Cutlines and Blurbs

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ comprehend the purpose and importance of cutlines in newspaper writing
- ▶ analyse the essential components of an effective cutline, such as maintaining conciseness, precision, and adherence to the 5W's and 1H
- ▶ recognise the distinction between cutlines and blurbs, and identify the promotional and attention-grabbing function of blurbs in news stories

### Prerequisites

Have you ever looked at the pictures in a newspaper and wondered what they are all about? Those little sentences underneath that explain the photo are called cutlines. Cutlines give you more details and information to help you better understand the image. Have you also noticed those short, attention-grabbing phrases or sentences that sometimes appear alongside news articles? Those are called blurbs. Blurbs act like mini headlines, highlighting the most important or interesting part of the story to grab the reader's interest. Cutlines and blurbs are like little helpers that work together with photographs and articles to tell a complete news story. Cutlines give you the who, what, where, and when details of a picture. Blurbs tease you with just enough information about an article to make you want to read the whole thing.

In this unit, we will learn how to write good cutlines and blurbs. Crafting effective ones is an important skill for anyone working in journalism or communications.

### Keywords

Cutlines, Blurbs, 5 W's and 1H, Reader, Copy editor





## Discussion

### 6.3.1 Cutline

A picture in a newspaper can convey a lot of information, but its impact depends on having a well-written cutline. Cutlines are the words describing the photograph or illustration in a newspaper. It is the text below a picture explaining what the reader is looking at. Most people call it a caption, but to a journalist, a “caption” is the title for the photograph, while the “cutline” describes what is happening in the picture and then explains the significance of the photograph. It informs the reader of the who, what, when, where, and how information about the photograph.

Newspaper cutlines are usually written by copy editors. It is a straight news line in one or two sentences. The sentence should include the five W’s and 1H of given information. Actually, it is necessary to cover all five Ws, but still, you need to focus on making the cutline brief. Cutlines are normally written in the present tense. If you need additional sentences (more than one sentence), the usage of the present tense is not essential. When writing a cutline, it is essential to remember that it must be useful for a reader. So, it must be clear and understandable to a reader.

When seeing a picture, a reader usually first goes through it and tries to interpret it. However, not all readers can understand the meaning through the available visual information. So, the reader typically looks for the content of the photograph below the photo for information regarding the photo. That’s what the cutline must perform.

While writing a cutline, it is essential to maintain the 5W’s and 1H as follows.

- a. Who or what is in the photograph?

- b. Why is this photograph in the newspaper?
- c. What is the relevance of it?
- d. When and where did this happen?
- e. Why do they look that way?
- f. How did this occur?

When cutlines explain the picture, the readers are satisfied with their understanding more than with the picture. So, they do not get confused about what the picture conveys. Cutlines convey more information than the picture.

For example, a picture shows a football player leaping to catch a pass, but it does not show the result of winning the team. So, here, the cutline fills that information

#### 6.3.1.1 Writing Cutline

While writing cutline, do remember these things:

- a. Use present tense.
- b. When identifying the members in the photograph, write from left, not from right.
- c. Spell the names correctly and in order.
- d. Always include a photo phrase.
- e. Try not to repeat the information contained in the lead.
- f. cutline: The sentence or phrase should be straightforward and as brief as possible.
- g. It is not good to use such phrases as “looks on, is shown, pictured above, etc.”
- h. Cutline must give the facts to the readers.
- i. Avoid explaining the known things. Instead, explain the unknown facts about the picture.

- j. Cutline writer should make sure that the words are accurate and apt for the picture.
- k. The cutline must be concise and precise for easy understanding.



Fig.6.3.1 An Example of cutline

## 6.3.2 Blurb

A blurb is a short and brief piece of writing in a newspaper story. It is the most highlighted portion of a news story. Blurbs are usually seen in newspapers, with the news stories in different patterns. They are the summary of important points of the article to be read. Blurbs are originally known as short promotional pieces of writing that coincide with a creative work. Blurbs are also given mostly for novels and stories and are printed on the back cover of a published book to introduce the book or author. Nowadays, they are found in newspapers as a small summary that accompanies a news story or article. Blurbs are designed to drive readers to the story. The style and structure of blurbs differ according to the newspaper. They have an extremely different style of writing compared to news writing. There are two aims for blurbs:

- They seek the attention of a reader

to read the story.

- They provide a brief summary of the story for a one-time reader.

While writing a story, many tools help to sell an article. A blurb is such promotional writing that helps to increase readership. And for a busy reader, a blurb is too helpful for summarizing the story.

Until the spread of the World Wide Web, blurbs were usually found only in books. But now, in newspapers, it is used to enhance the important points of a story. Nowadays, blurbs are one of the most useful things that are used by online web portals to increase their readership.



Fig. 6.3.2 Examples of blurb

### 6.3.2.1 What makes a good blurb?

#### a. Sample

The reference makes a piece of work better. Refer to as many samples as possible to learn more about a blurb. Then, it will be easy for you to write a good blurb.

#### b. Simple

News reaches in many hands. We must keep in mind that there is a vast readership for a story. So, it is always best to keep a blurb as simple as possible. Long and tough sentences make a blurb appear complicated and confuse the reader.

### c. Short

Most people don't have time to read a long description. So, it is good to make the blurb short and crisp. A lot of information in a few words is easier to attract a reader.

### d. Story selling

A blurb must sell a story to the reader. It is the responsibility of a good blurb to sell

an article. A good blurb attracts a reader. The more highlighted the blurb is, the more enhanced the story.

### e. Summary

Blurbs don't tell a whole story. They give hints to the story. Blurbs that sound good give a sum up of the news story to the reader.

## Recap

- ▶ Cutline are the words describing the photograph or illustration in a newspaper.
- ▶ Cutline comes below a picture, explaining what the reader is looking at.
- ▶ Newspaper cutline is usually written by copy editors.
- ▶ Cutline must be useful for a reader.
- ▶ While writing a cutline it is essential to maintain the 5w's and 1H
- ▶ Cutline convey more information of the picture.
- ▶ Cutline must be concise and precise for easy understanding.
- ▶ Cutline writer should make sure that the words are accurate and apt for the picture.
- ▶ Photographs that do not accompany stories often are termed wild art.
- ▶ A blurb is short and brief piece of writing in a newspaper story.
- ▶ Blurb is a promotional writing which helps to increase the readership.
- ▶ Blurb is the most highlighted portion in a news story.
- ▶ Cutline seeks attention of a reader.

## Objective Questions

1. What is a cutline?
2. What is a blurb?
3. What are the five things that make a good blurb?
4. What are the photographs that do not accompany stories known as?
5. What are the 5 W's and 1H of blurb writing?
6. What is the most highlighted portion in a news story?

7. What are the aims of writing a blurb?
8. Avoid explaining the known things and explain the unknown fact about the picture. What is this statement about?
9. Who is responsible to write a newspaper outline?

## Answers

1. Photo description.
2. Brief promo.
3. Concise, Intriguing, Relevant, Engaging, Clear.
4. Standalone photos.
5. Who, What, Where, When, Why, How.
6. Lead paragraph.
7. Intrigue, Inform, Engage.
8. Picture's mystery.
9. Journalist.

## Assignments

1. What are cutlines, and how do they enhance the reader's understanding of a photograph or illustration in a newspaper?
2. Explain the importance of maintaining the 5W's and 1H (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) while crafting a concise and precise cutline for a picture.
3. How does a cutline contribute to conveying additional information beyond what's captured in a photograph?
4. Discuss the role of accuracy and apt word choice in creating effective cutlines, ensuring a seamless connection between text and image.
5. Why are blurbs considered a promotional tool that can significantly impact readership, and how do they stand out within a news story?



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# Unit 4

## Principles of Layout and Designing

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiarise the role of layout in defining a newspaper's overall appearance and visual identity
- ▶ analyse how effective layout involves strategically placing various elements on a page to create an appealing and organized design
- ▶ recognise the importance of balance, focal points, and visual hierarchy in creating visually appealing and functional newspaper layouts

### Prerequisites

Have you ever wondered how newspapers look so neat and organized? With all the text, pictures, ads, and other elements, it must be tricky to arrange everything in a way that is both appealing and easy to read. That is where principles of layout and design come in! Layout refers to how all the different pieces of a newspaper page are positioned and spaced out. Good layout makes the page inviting and guides your eyes naturally from one section to the next. Design takes it a step further by using things like font styles, colours, and graphics to give the page a unified, visually appealing look. You have already learned about crucial elements like headlines that grab attention. But there's more to putting together a well-designed page! This unit will teach you techniques for organizing text, images, ads, and more into balanced and eye-catching layouts.

We will explore how playing with white space, columns, sizes, and colours can completely change the feel of a page. You will learn principles for placing important pieces "above the fold" and using design to highlight the most interesting stories. By the end, you will have an expert eye for creating newspaper pages that are both functional and visually appealing. Getting the layout and design right is key to help readers easily navigate and engage with the news. Master these skills, and you will be designing professional-quality pages like a pro! Let's go to the principles that take newspapers from chaos to works of art.





## Keywords

Newspaper layout, Balance, Page Design, Page Makeup

## Discussion

### 6.4.1 What is layout?

The layout refers to the overall design and arrangement of elements on a newspaper page. In the field of publications, content alone cannot make a newspaper attractive. It is a challenge for newspapers to give the best quality product to the readers. Layout is the arrangement of materials in a newspaper that is to be printed. The layout of a newspaper determines its effectiveness in presenting newspaper pages. Giving a good quality of content doesn't make a newspaper attractive, but also packaging it in a good layout and design makes it worth reading. Creating an entrancing layout for a newspaper is, thus, really important.

Layout is the blueprint of a newspaper that shows the placement of different elements for the final product. It is said that the layout establishes the overall appearance and attraction of a newspaper. It is considered as one of the most important processes in editing. Nowadays, designers in a newspaper organization are highly skilled professionals who command substantial salaries.

Many publications own a specific department for layout and designing the newspaper. Preparing a newspaper is not an easy task, as it involves many different aspects. These include the placement of news, pictures, illustrations, and infographics on a page in the appropriate locations. So, this process adds credibility to the newspaper. Thus, layout is an art of placing the right thing in the right place. A picture is valued only when it is placed according to the

content with the proper size, cutting, etc. The layout also includes the usage of appropriate headlines and fonts for more attraction. The placement of advertisements is another important aspect that falls under the purview of the layout department. Advertisements contribute to making the pages colourful and visually appealing. The layout of a newspaper is designed to attract the reader and to make the newspaper more user-friendly. The layout process is carried out using various software programs on a computer system. The layouts of every page differ from each other. Most newspapers give importance to the first page and sports page. The first page contains more elements than the inside pages. The sports page should be attractive and simple. The editorial page is another important section that presents the newspaper's viewpoint. It must be eye-catching and easy to read. Readers expect a newspaper that is easy to read and does not overwhelm their eyes with excessive text, images, and infographics. A pleasant and attractive look for a newspaper is achieved by the creation of a layout designer. White space is another thing that makes a page look elegant. A layout designer should ensure there is sufficient white space to allow words and images to flow freely on the page. White space increases the readability of a newspaper. It makes the page look neat and well-arranged. Most of the newspapers fail to add white space to accommodate maximum content. But this may repel the readers.

When a newspaper uses the same kind of layout every day, then it has a static layout style. When a newspaper employs various types of layouts, it is said to have a dynamic

layout style. The static layout always gives the newspaper an identity. For a regular reader, it is very easy to go through a static layout style. The dynamic layout is the one in which the newspaper experiments with different kinds of designs every time. This layout helps to create an element of curiosity and surprise in a reader, but it may also confuse the reader.

A well-prepared layout makes the reader easy to read. An attractive and powerful layout is not created by chance. It is the result of a team's collective effort. A newspaper layout fulfils the need for effective communication through good design skills. Every layout and design consist of different aspects such as balance, rhythm, emphasis, unity, simplicity, harmony, line, shape and movement.

#### 6.4.1.1 Types of Layouts

Layout is the placement of text and images in the right place in a given surface area. Layouts can be classified into three categories.

- a. Text dominant
- b. Image dominant
- c. Image and text dominant

If there is a large amount of text, then it will be text-dominant. Newspapers are mostly text-oriented, but they don't follow a text-dominant layout formula. Image-dominant layouts are regularly used in newspapers and magazines. Mostly, pictures take centre stage of attraction. An image-and-text dominant layout, which uses images and text in equal proportion, is considered the best as it provides a balanced presentation on the page.

#### 6.4.1.2 Layout Composition

A layout is best because of its aesthetic appeal. A good layout can communicate effectively to the readers. Every layout is dependent on a fixed format called the grid. We

can notice that the layout of all publications differs from others. Balance in the layout composition is classified into different categories:

- a. Symmetrical
- b. Asymmetrical
- c. Mechanical
- d. Visual

A newspaper typically has a layout where the pages are divided into columns. Generally, it contains 8 columns, each 4 cm wide. There are spaces left blank between columns, called gutters, which make it easier to separate news items and improve readability. The width is measured in columns, and the height is measured in centimeters. While some newspapers may vary their layout according to their style, the following is a common format used.

- a. Most stories appear in a rectangular format.
- c. Every page consists of an image-dominant style.
- d. Special effects depend on the style and occasions.
- f. Different fonts are used to make the page attractive.
- h. Headlines and cutlines are essential for every story and image.
- j. Headline must be brief and crisp
- k. The font must be of minimum readable quality.
- l. A well-designed and well-planned layout makes an attractive page.
- m. One photo is worth a thousand words.



### 6.4.1.3 Types of Balancing in Layout

Mostly, a newspaper is rectangular in shape. Therefore, when studying the layout, it is important to know how we place things: vertical, horizontal, or dynamic. This is known as the balancing or orientation of the newspaper.

When a person is working on a page it is essential to know which style suits the page best: landscape, portrait or dynamic.

Therefore, it is important for a designer to work on this. Horizontal balance is a good basic design style, but it is not ideal to use it every time. It may make reading repetitive and monotonous.



Fig.6.4.1 (Left to right) Examples of vertical and horizontal balance in layouts

Vertical balance is a type of balance in which the content can appear crowded and may create a zipper effect on the page.

Diagonal balance is one of the best layout styles, as it follows the natural movement of the reader's eye. The design guides the reader's gaze diagonally across the page, making it more engaging and intuitive.

Newspapers are becoming commercial products nowadays because of the competition among publications. Content alone cannot make a newspaper sell; it is the layout and design that decides its market. Readers decide to buy a newspaper not only because of the

good content provided but also because of the better packaging. So, it is important for a newspaper to make its layout and page makeup attractive.

### 6.4.2 Page Makeup

After the layout is prepared, the designer works on making up the page. If layout preparation is a blueprint, page makeup is the work on that blueprint. During layout, the designer uses news advertisements, photographs, and infographics as the raw materials for the preparation of a page and creates the actual page structure. Page makeup involves giving balance to these elements, which makes the page look attractive. Page makeup focuses on objectives such as making the news content important, making the page easy to read, and making the page attractive. This gives the look of the newspaper a distinct manner.

It is said that every newspaper has a primary optical area. Research says that a reader's eyes first enter the top left corner of the page, then move diagonally towards the bottom right of the page. The line that is thus formed from the top left to the bottom right is called the 'Line of Reading.' Most newspapers follow this when placing materials so that we can ensure the news that readers want to read is placed accordingly. It is important to place every news item in the right position according to its importance.

Every newspaper page must have a focal point, a point on the page where the reader looks first. The important news is placed at the focal point. Advertisements are also placed according to the focal points on the inside pages. Another essential aspect of page makeup is to attract the newspaper buyer by creating an impressive appearance for the newspaper. Every page of makeup should have aesthetic beauty and creativity. Otherwise, it

will be a failure for the newspaper. Nowadays, Some of the popular editing software are most layout preparation is done on computers. QuarkXPress and Adobe InDesign.

## Recap

- ▶ Layout defines a newspaper's appearance.
- ▶ Elements placed through layout's guidance.
- ▶ Layout: newspaper's personality and getup.
- ▶ Page's aesthetics demand a skillful layout.
- ▶ Layout: elements in correct spaces.
- ▶ A well-executed layout reflects meticulous content.
- ▶ Lines: vertical, diagonal, horizontal makeup.
- ▶ Pages feature a dominant image style.
- ▶ Balance: Symmetry, Asymmetry, Mechanical, Visual.
- ▶ Focal point is essential on newspaper pages.
- ▶ Editing software: Quark Xpress, InDesign.

## Objective Questions

1. What is a layout?
2. What are the three basic types of lines used in make-up?
3. Which is the mostly used layout in newspapers?
4. What is a page makeup?
5. Which are the three balances in layout?
6. In which format stories appear in a newspaper?
7. What is called as line of reading?
8. How much columns are there in a newspaper page?
9. What is diagonal balance?
10. What is the balance of composition?
11. Mention the three categories of layout?

## Answers

1. Appearance design.
2. Vertical, diagonal, horizontal.
3. Symmetrical layout.
4. Page arrangement.
5. Symmetrical, asymmetrical, visual.
6. Column format.
7. Reading line.
8. Varies by design.
9. Slanting equilibrium.
10. Element harmony.
11. Visual, mechanical, layout.

## Assignments

1. How does layout influence a newspaper's appearance and personality?
2. Explain the significance of balancing elements in a layout.
3. What types of lines are used in makeup, and how do they affect layout composition?
4. Why is a well-executed layout important for reflecting the quality of content?

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## Suggested Readings

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# Unit 5

## Infographics and Pagination Software

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ recognise the importance of infographics in presenting complex information in a visually appealing and easily understandable manner for newspaper readers.
- ▶ identify the key elements that constitute effective infographics, such as graphics, colour, font, content, data, and titles.
- ▶ comprehend the role of pagination software in crafting compelling page layouts.

### Prerequisites

Have you ever wondered how newspapers manage to present news and ideas in such an attractive and organized way? It is the magic of infographics and pagination software! An editor starts with a blank page, but by the end of the day, that same page is filled with exciting stories, eye-catching visuals, and a layout that's both informative and appealing. That is because newspapers use special design techniques to communicate their messages effectively. One crucial aspect of this process is pagination, which helps organize and structure the pages using layout and design principles. Infographics, on the other hand, allow editors to present complex information in a simple, visually engaging manner. Together, infographics and pagination software are powerful tools that help editors transform a blank canvas into a masterpiece of storytelling and design. Without these editing processes, newspaper pages would just be a jumble of text and images, failing to capture the reader's attention or convey the intended message effectively. In this unit, we will learn more about infographics and pagination software.

### Keywords

Infographics, Pagination, Adobe InDesign, Page Maker, Quark Xpress

## Discussion

### 6.5.1 Infographics

When we look at newspapers over the past years, we can notice many changes in the visual elements of a page. One of the most visible changes is the increased number of graphical elements and photographs. Nowadays, it is clear that large usage of graphics adds more colour to the newspaper page. The illustrations, such as infographics, clarify complex topics. Infographics is one of the most essential elements of a newspaper. Infographics present information in a visual format that increases the readers' ability

to understand the information more easily. It allows readers to quickly and clearly understand complex data. When a piece of information needs to be explained in a concise manner, it is good to use graphics. Infographics are used for signs, maps, and data presentations. In infographics, the text and pictures collaborate to represent the information and data visually. In this modern age, newspapers are in tight competition to stick around in the field. Like the old days, it is not enough with just text to create interest among readers. So as part of modernization, more technologies are arriving in the field of journalism.



Fig. 6.5.1 Sample page of a newspaper that uses graphs

Infographics are the representation of data and information using graphics. The use of infographics attracts users and conveys things easily. For this, we have enough software and applications to create attractive and eye-catching infographics. Infographics are widely used in the fields of education, business, and journalism. Indian newspapers started to use various infographics to convey statistical data

using graphs, diagrams, maps, tables, etc. In the age of new media, newspapers have to implement various strategies to stand out among other mediums of communication. Mostly, in this busy world, people need to get information in a short time. Here, infographics play a vital role in conveying complex data in the simplest form. Because of this, many newspapers started to use infographics for

data representation. Nowadays, not only data but news and content are also represented using infographics. It is said that infographics are a real example of media convergence, which is widely used across every medium of communication at the same time. The Times of India and The Indian Express are the most important Indian newspapers that widely use infographics. When we look at Malayalam newspapers, Malayala Manorama is one example that always represents statistical and geographical data in infographics.

This is one example from an American newspaper during an election. This example provides detailed information on the polling percentage of each candidate. When this information is in written form, people may not read the news or article. However by representing information or data graphically, it is easier for the reader to understand and grasp. Good infographics have a clear idea about their target audience.



Fig. 6.5.2 An example of using infographics (Source Malayalammanorama)

Shown above is an example from the *Malayala Manorama* newspaper which use infographics on a full page. The invention of digitalization really changed the overall design and quality of newspapers across the world. In the age of information, it is equally important to present and design information for readers. The newspapers also changed their pattern and structure as per the time, technology, and need.

With the invention of more software and layout techniques, there has been an effective increase in the use of photographs, illustrations, and graphics. And it is essential for newspapers to use infographics in this modern era. With the emergence of colour in the mid-1970s and the advent of informational graphics, a design revolution in newspapers evolved. Infographics are also called information graphics that convey complex data and content in the simplest form. In newspapers, commonly used infographics are for weather, maps, and plans for news events. These are represented in graphs, diagrams, or maps. The design revolution, which brought out modular design, infographics, and increased usage of colour, has given newspapers a different aspect. Today, about 90 percent of newspapers use more graphical elements to make the appearance of the newspaper more elegant. The usage of infographics makes newspapers more attractive, navigable, and easier to understand.

#### 6.5.1.1 Key Elements of Infographics

With the use of various elements, a well-defined infographic is easy for readers to understand. Graphics are in the form of drawings, designs or plans to explain something. Charts, flowcharts, diagrams, maps, and graphs are commonly used graphical elements in designing infographics. A chart is a graphical representation of data using



symbols. A flowchart is an algorithm-based diagram that represents a process. A map is a visual representation of a geographical area. A diagram is a two-dimensional geometric symbolic representation of information according to some visualization technique. These graphical tools organize and represent information through infographics. Colour tone is one of the most important elements of infographics. It deals with how we perceive the content. Too many colours can make your infographic confusing. So, reduce the use of colours, but opt for the apt colour for better viewing. The colour you choose must align with the text. Content is the key element because it is the context of the data. This is the main thing to be presented as infographics. So, it must be clearly structured. Data is another important component of infographics. It must be accurate. Data can be statistical or scientific. The main aim is to make it readable. People do not need a heavy amount of information; they need a compelling narrative. The title is one of the attractive parts of infographics. Whatever the content is, the title must be eye-catching. Only after reading the title does a reader reach the information graphics. So, the title must be descriptive and attractive. Use appropriate fonts that may align with the content. Fonts must match with the text and design. These elements help us make infographics attractive and informative. The main thing we have to remember is that it is meant to convey complex information in a simple way. So, the infographics must be comprehensive for the common person.

## 6.5.2 Pagination

Page layout and designing is one of the final processes of the editorial department. This process gives the final output of the newspaper page. After evaluating the space for editorial content and leaving space for advertisements, the designer accommodates news stories

on a page with the required importance. Then, the arrangement of headlines, text, pictures, and other items on the page is done. Every newspaper has its own style and structure. Pagination can be described as the process of producing good page layouts for the given material. Newspaper pagination depends on distributing and presenting the material. Before decades ago, during the invention of newspapers, pagination was a manual process, and print output was its sole purpose. Every pagination decision was made by the newspaper editor. Today, due to the arrival of information technology, most of the printing process is done by machines. Everything has become mechanical. Over the years, developers have developed software to increase the quality of newspapers. Some of the commonly used software for newspaper pagination are PageMaker, QuarkXPress, InDesign, FlipHTML5, Scribus, etc. Among these, InDesign is one of the most updated and widely used software. Let's know how to create a page in InDesign. This is a versatile software that helps create both graphics-heavy and text-oriented projects. This software is important because it presents many amazing features.

### 6.5.2.1 Adobe InDesign Page Creation

#### a. Create a new document

The Start screen appears when no documents are open in InDesign. It lists your recent files (if available), presets, and more. You can also access various resources and search Adobe Stock from here.

Choose File > New > Document. In the New Document dialogue box, start by choosing a preset. For example, the Print category shows various sizes and document options you can set for a new document. The New Document



dialogue box is where you can access free and paid Adobe Stock templates, which are a great starting point for your designs.

### **b. Save your documents**

Explore the different methods for saving your InDesign documents.

Choose File > Save or File > Save As.

- ▶ Save in InDesign (INDD) format to retain layers, type, and other editable InDesign content. It's best to save your document in InDesign format while you're working on it.
- ▶ Choose File > Save As and choose IDML to save your project as a file that is backwards-compatible with previous versions of Adobe InDesign, starting with CS4.

### **c. Get around in InDesign**

**Take a hands-on tour of the workspace in Adobe InDesign.**

- ▶ Document window (in the middle) displays the file you're currently working on. Multiple open documents appear as tabs in the Document window.
- ▶ The menu bar (at the very top) shows the File, Edit, and other menus that give you access to a variety of commands, adjustments, settings, and panels.
- ▶ The toolbox (on the left) contains tools for creating and editing artwork. Similar tools are grouped together. You can access them by clicking and holding a tool in the toolbox.
- ▶ Panels (on the right) include Properties, Pages, and CC Libraries that contain a variety of controls for working with documents. You can find a full list of panels under the Window menu.
- ▶ Zoom and pan

Explore how to zoom and pan in an InDesign document.

The Zoom tool, located in the toolbox, can be used to show you more detail of a document. To change from Zoom In to Zoom Out, press Alt (Windows) or Option (macOS).

- ▶ The Hand tool, also located in the toolbox, allows you to pan across a document.
- ▶ The view menu below the document can be used to change the view of a document.
- ▶ Understand frames in InDesign

**Explore the different types of frames you can use in InDesign.**

- ▶ The tools used to create frames — Type tool, Frame tools, and shape tools — are located in the toolbox.
- ▶ Frames can be created and used as placeholders (a frame without content).
- ▶ Text and images in InDesign reside within a frame. When you place images or text in InDesign, a frame is created automatically for that content.
- ▶ For text, the frame indicates the area where the text is to be shown. Text frames have small boxes in the upper-left and lower-right corners, which can be used to connect frames together so text can flow from one frame to another.
- ▶ For images, the frame can be used to crop or mask parts of the image.
- ▶ Add text (24/05/2021)

**Learn how to add text to your InDesign projects.**

- ▶ Select the Type tool in the toolbox.
- ▶ With the Type tool selected, drag in

the Document window to add a text frame to the document, or click in an existing text frame to add text.

- ▶ Choose Type > Fill With Placeholder Text to fill the frame with placeholder text.
- ▶ With the text cursor in the text frame, type your text. Text will wrap once it reaches the right edge of the text frame. Dragging a corner of the text frame scales the text object and wraps the text within it. If the text frame is too small, a red plus appears in the lower-right corner of the frame, indicating overset text (the text doesn't fit). Reposition the text object with the Selection tool in the toolbox.
- ▶ Format text with the options in the Properties panel.
- ▶ Create columns of text
- ▶ Select the Type tool in the toolbox.
- ▶ With the Type tool selected, drag in the Document window to add a text frame to the document.
- ▶ By default, you can type your text with the text cursor in the text frame.
- ▶ With the Selection tool in the toolbox selected, double-click a bounding box point around the frame to fit the frame to the text.
- ▶ Choose Object > Text Frame Options. Set the number of columns to 2 and select Balance Columns to balance the paragraphs of text. Set other options as needed, and then click OK.
- ▶ Import text

### **Bring text files into Adobe InDesign from Microsoft Word, and more.**

Text can be pasted, dragged, or placed into an InDesign document from an outside

source, such as Microsoft Word. Text can be placed in an existing text frame or in a frame that InDesign created when placing the text.

- ▶ Choose File > Place to place a text file such as .DOC, .RTF, or .TXT. Depending on the file type, you may be able to set options, such as removing the formatting.
- ▶ Click to place the text in an existing text frame, or click (or click and drag) to have InDesign create a text frame.
- ▶ Click the Screen Mode button at the bottom of the toolbox to choose Preview and see the document without guides. Click the same button to choose Normal.
- ▶ Flow text between frames

You can connect text frames so that text flows between them. This is called threading text. Text frames have an in port and out port that are used to connect text frames and also visualize any connections. A red plus in the out port indicates that the text doesn't fit in the frame. This is called overset text.

#### **To thread text:**

- ▶ With the Selection tool, click to select a text frame and then click the out port (or in port) to load a text cursor.
- ▶ Position the loaded text cursor within an existing text frame and click to thread the text or drag to create a new text frame.
- ▶ Choose View > Extras > Show Text Threads to see the threads between the frames.





## Recap

- ▶ Infographics: Vital for newspapers.
- ▶ Visual info via infographics.
- ▶ Clearing complexity through infographics.
- ▶ Infographics and information graphics are synonyms.
- ▶ Education, business, and journalism embrace infographics.
- ▶ 90% of newspapers use more graphics.
- ▶ Elements: graphics, colour, font, content, data, title.
- ▶ Graphics: drawings, designs explain.
- ▶ Content: pivotal, provides data context.
- ▶ Colour tone: pivotal infographics aspect.
- ▶ Data: statistical or scientific.
- ▶ Attractive titles enhance infographics.
- ▶ Fonts align with content.
- ▶ Page design: editorial's final touch.
- ▶ Pagination: crafting page layouts.
- ▶ Goal: compelling page layouts.
- ▶ Software for pagination: Page maker, Quark Xpress, InDesign, flipHTML5, scribus.
- ▶ InDesign: modern and popular software.

## Objective Questions

1. What is infographics?
2. What is the goal of pagination?
3. What is graphics?
4. What are the key elements of infographics?
5. What are the commonly used graphical elements in designing infographics?
6. Mention some of the commonly used pagination software.
7. What is pagination?
8. What helps to convey a complex information to simple?
9. How to save a file in In Design software?
10. How can you create a document in In Design software?
11. How is Frames created?

## Answers

1. Visual data.
2. Good layout.
3. Visual elements.
4. Graphics, colour, font, content, data, title.
5. Graphics, images, charts.
6. Page maker, Quark Xpress, InDesign.
7. Crafting layout.
8. Infographics.
9. File > Save.
10. Create > Document.
11. Create Frames.

## Assignments

1. Why are infographics considered vital for newspapers?
2. How does infographics help in clearing complexity when presenting information?
3. Explain the key elements that constitute an effective infographic.
4. How do attractive titles and appropriate fonts contribute to enhancing infographics?
5. Name some commonly used software for crafting page layouts in pagination.

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# **Model Question Paper Sets**



**Model Question Paper**  
**Set-01**  
**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

QP CODE : .....

Reg. No : .....

Name : .....

FOURTH-SEMESTER UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES  
END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION  
ANCILLARY COURSE - B21JL02AN: NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING  
( CBCS - UG )  
2022-23 - Admission Onwards

**Time: 3 Hours**

**Max Marks: 70**

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**Section A**

**Answer any ten of the following questions in one word or sentence. (10×1= 10)**

1. What is the term for news or analysis appearing in media for a price in cash or kind?
2. Which social media platform had the highest number of users in India in 2020?
3. What is the combination of words that forms the term “podcast”?
4. What is the term for a report on recent issues or topics seen in newspapers, television, radio, and the internet?
5. Which structure presents the most important information first in a news story?
6. What is the opening sentence or paragraph of a news story called?
7. What is the term for content created by non-professional journalists on social media?
8. Which social media platform became the most-used app in India in 2020?
9. In which country did the term “citizen journalism” originate?
10. What is the fundamental right enshrined in Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution?
11. What type of defamation can result in criminal charges?
12. What is the first paragraph of a news story called?
13. Who typically writes the editorial in a newspaper?
14. What is the text below a picture in a newspaper called?
15. What is a short promotional piece of writing accompanying a news story called?

### Section B

Answer any five of the following questions in one or two sentences.

(5×2=10)

16. How does citizen journalism make the field more participatory and democratic?
17. What are the main challenges faced by journalists reporting from conflict zones?
18. Explain the concept of “timeliness” as a news value.
19. How does the “hourglass structure” differ from the inverted pyramid structure in news writing?
20. How does citizen journalism differ from traditional journalism in terms of content creation?
21. What role do whistleblowers play in investigative journalism?
22. How does the “inverted pyramid” style apply to newspaper writing?
23. What is the difference between civil and criminal defamation in India?
24. Explain what a summary lead is.
25. What is the “Line of Reading” in newspaper design?

### Section C

Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph.

(6×5=30)

26. Discuss the evolution of journalism from print to digital media. How has this transition affected news consumption habits?
27. Analyze the impact of social media on modern journalism. What are the benefits and drawbacks of news spreading through platforms like Twitter and Facebook?
28. Analyze the importance of cultivating news sources for journalists and discuss three methods they can use to build a strong source network.
29. Compare and contrast hard news and soft news, providing examples of each. Discuss how their writing styles and purposes differ.
30. Describe the characteristics of investigative reporting and explain why it is considered a challenging form of journalism.
31. Explain the impact of social media on news dissemination and public discourse, using examples from the text.
32. Explain the concept of “reasonable restrictions” on freedom of speech and expression in India. How do these restrictions impact journalism?



33. Discuss the role of hyperlinks and attribution in online journalism. How do these elements contribute to transparency and credibility?
34. Describe the different types of leads used in news writing and explain when each type is most appropriate to use.
35. Explain the structure and purpose of an editorial in a newspaper. How does it differ from regular news articles?
36. Explain the concept of balance in newspaper layout design. What are the different types of balance, and how do they affect the overall appearance of a page?
37. Discuss the importance of headlines in newspapers. How have headline styles and content changed over time, and what factors have influenced these changes?

### Section D

**Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words. (2×10 = 20)**

38. Critically examine the major challenges facing journalism in the 21st century, including technological disruption, economic pressures, and threats to press freedom. Propose potential solutions to address these challenges.
39. Explore the ethical considerations in news reporting, focusing on the principles of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness. Provide examples of ethical dilemmas journalists might face and discuss strategies for maintaining journalistic integrity in challenging situations.
40. Evaluate the evolution of journalism from traditional forms to citizen journalism, discussing the advantages, challenges, and potential future implications for the field of journalism and society at large.
41. Analyze the role of editorials in shaping public opinion and fostering debate on important issues. Discuss the responsibilities of editorial writers in presenting balanced viewpoints while also taking clear stances.



**Model Question Paper**  
**Set-02**  
**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

QP CODE : .....

Reg. No : .....

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FOURTH-SEMESTER UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES  
END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION  
ANCILLARY COURSE - B21JL02AN: NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING  
( CBCS - UG )  
2022-23 - Admission Onwards

**Time: 3 Hours**

**Max Marks: 70**

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**Section A**

**Answer any ten of the following questions in one word or sentence. (10×1= 10)**

1. What is the symbol used in social media to find topics of the same subject?
2. What is the abbreviated term for mobile journalism?
3. What type of reporting involves citizens sharing news on social media platforms?
4. What is the term for merging different mass media like print, broadcast, and internet?
5. What are digital audio series available on the internet called?
6. What is the name of a designated area assigned to a reporter to gather news regularly?
7. What is another name for citizen journalism that emphasises collaboration?
8. Who coined the phrase “every citizen as a reporter”?
9. What type of journalism involves ordinary citizens acting as reporters?
10. What is the term for actions that defy or undermine the authority of the judiciary?
11. Which regulatory body oversees print journalism standards in India?
12. What type of lead begins with a quote?
13. What type of editorial criticises policies or events?
14. What is the overall design and arrangement of elements on a newspaper page called?
15. What software is commonly used for newspaper layout and design?

### Section B

Answer any five of the following questions in one or two sentences.

(5×2=10)

16. What is the main concern with the practice of paid news?
17. How has the 24-hour news cycle impacted journalism?
18. What are the advantages of mobile reporting in journalism?
19. Describe two skills that are essential for a news reporter.
20. How has YouTube impacted content consumption in India, according to Sanjay Gupta?
21. What ethical concerns are associated with sting operations in investigative journalism?
22. What are the two main types of contempt of court in India?
23. What is the purpose of a narrative lead?
24. What are the two main purposes of blurbs in newspapers?
25. What is the difference between a static and dynamic newspaper layout?

### Section C

Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph.

(6×5=30)

26. Describe the role of journalism in a democratic society. How does press freedom contribute to the functioning of democracy?
27. Discuss the ethical challenges faced by journalists in the digital age, including issues of privacy, source protection, and the pressure for rapid reporting.
28. Evaluate the impact of social media on modern news gathering and reporting. Discuss both positive and negative effects on journalism.
29. Explain the concept of the 5W's and 1H in news writing. Why are they important, and how do they contribute to creating a comprehensive news story?
30. Discuss the potential benefits and risks of citizen journalism in the context of modern media landscapes.
31. Analyze the role of the Right to Information (RTI) Act in investigative journalism and its importance in promoting transparency.
32. Analyze the challenges and criticisms faced by the Official Secrets Act in India. How does it impact journalism and transparency?

33. Describe the key provisions of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. What implications do these rules have for digital media and online content creators?
34. Discuss the importance of the lead in a news story. What makes an effective lead and how does it impact reader engagement?
35. Compare and contrast interpretative editorials and criticism editorials. What are the key differences in their approach and purpose?
36. Describe the process of writing an effective outline for a newspaper photograph. What elements should be included, and what guidelines should be followed?
37. Analyze the role of white space in newspaper design. How does it affect readability and visual appeal, and what are the challenges in incorporating adequate white space?

#### **Section D**

**Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words.**

**(2×10 = 20)**

38. Analyze the changing role of the journalist in the era of citizen journalism and social media. Discuss the potential for collaboration between traditional and new forms of journalism.
39. Critically examine the evolution of news reporting in the digital age. Discuss how traditional reporting methods have been transformed by technology, and analyze the challenges and opportunities this presents for modern journalists.
40. Compare and contrast the legal and ethical frameworks governing traditional print media and online journalism in India.
41. Evaluate the evolution of newspaper layout and design in the digital age. How have technological advancements and changing reader preferences influenced modern newspaper layouts?

## സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യായാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം  
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം  
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കുതിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ  
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം  
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം  
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം  
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ  
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

കുറിപ്പ് ശ്രീകുമാർ

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