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Converted in to SIM format by: **SH. M. R. PATRA**

M. A. Mass Communication (2nd year)

MEDIA WRITING MMC 201 Lesson: 1

NEWS WRITING

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LESSON STRUCTURE

Media form an important part of our lives. Media inform us, they entertain us, they educate us, and they persuade us. How ever, one of the most important content of mass media is news. In this paper we shall discuss the various aspects of news writing. In this lesson we shall start with the basic aspects of news writing. We shall then focus on the structure, style, and types of news. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Presentation of Content

1.2.1 News Defined

1.2.2 Characteristics of News

1.2.3 News Story Writing

1.2.4 Structure of News Story

1.2.5 News Analysis

1.2.6 Structure of News Analysis

1.2.7 Backgrounder

1.2.8 How to write a Backgrounder

1.2.9 Difference Between News Analysis and Backgrounder

1.3 Summary

1.4 Key Words

1.5 Self Assessment Questions

1.6 References/Suggested Reading

1.0 OBJECTIVES:

Whenever we think of a medium of mass communication, we generally relate it with news. We all read, listen to, and watch news. We can immediately recognize what news is. But, it is difficult for us to precisely define news. In this lesson we will learn the following:

- *To Know about some major Definitions of News*
- *To Understand the Characteristics of News,*
- *To Know How News is Written?*
- *To Learn about Structure of a News Story,*
- *To Learn about News Analysis,*
- *To Learn about Structure of News analysis,*
- *To Know about Backgrounder,*
- *To Know about Structure of a Backgrounder, and*
- *To Know the Difference Between News Analysis and Backgrounder.*

1.1 INTRODUCION:

Human beings are curious by nature. They are always looking for new things, fresh information about anything and everything that interests them. Most media of mass communication have by and large been instrumental in satisfying the curiosities of human beings. Newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television and several other mass media have been endeavoring to gather information and disseminate that information to the people looking for such information.

The most important need that these mass media fulfill is of providing news—latest news from the place one is located, news of the region, news of the nation, country and of course of the world. Thus the news is the most important input that anyone is looking from a mass medium. But, what is meant by news? What constitutes news? We shall discuss about this and related things in this lesson.

1.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

News is the major ingredient of most mass media. Newspapers, radio, and news channels depend on news to a great extent. So do many magazines and many Internet portals. The fact that so many media provide news shows the importance of news. Here we shall learn about

how news is written. We shall also focus on other news related write-ups. The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- Definitions of News
- Characteristics of News
- Writing News
- Structure of News Story
- News Analysis
- Structure of News Analysis
- Backgrounder
- Structure of Backgrounder
- Difference Between News Analysis and Backgrounder

1.2.1 NEWS DEFINED:

Generally speaking, News is anything that is new. News is a report of an event that has just taken place. News is a detailed account that provides information or description. It could also include depiction, delineation, statement, and narration of a development, event, or occurrence. The event is usually recent, fresh or not known earlier.

According to *George Hough* of the University of Georgia, U.S.A., News is both a product and point of view. As a product, news is gathered processed, packaged. Newspapers, news services, news magazines, radio, television and cable station and networks then present news to their respective audiences.

News is something that at a particular moment happens to attract and hold the interest of the reader, or listener. A news story is a fair, accurate, concise, balanced account of a current event that is of interest to a majority of people. The trouble with news is that it does not remain newsworthy for long.

Several newspapers, editors, news reporters, eminent journalists and many media educators have attempted to define news, but these definitions have not always met the test of the time. Some of these are:

News is anything out of the ordinary.

News is anything published in a newspaper, which interest a large number of people.

News is what newspaper people make.

Good news is not news.

News is anything a big shot said.

News and truth is not the same thing.

The function of news is to signal an event.

News is any recent, up to date information of an event received from North, East, West and South (news)

The legendary American newspaper baron, *Joseph Pulitzer*, had his own definition of news. He once said that:

News should be: Original, Distinctive, Romantic, Thrilling, Unique, Curious, Quaint, Humorous, Odd, and Apt-to-be talked about.

A former managing editor of the New York Times, *Turner Cateledge* described news as:

“Anything you can find out today that you didn’t now before.”

In modern times, newsmen and media personalities are likely to define news in terms of what people, readers, listeners, viewers want to know.

1.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF NEWS:

Despite the several efforts to define the “newsworthiness” news still remains undefined. Perhaps, it is not amenable to a precise, pithy, definition or an easy explanation. But news has certain ingredients. Usually, the following are considered reliable ingredients or characteristics of news:

- *Timelines,*
- *Proximity,*
- *Prominence,*
- *Consequence,*
- *Human interest,*
- *Unusual events like mysteries,*
- *Conflict,*
- *Tragedies.*

The following are different categories of news: *novelty, personal impact, money, crime, sex, magnitude, religion, disaster, humour, the underdog, science, entertainment, weather, food, minorities, fashion.*

1.2.3 WRITING NEWS STORIES:

It is necessary to know that the purpose of news writing is to impart information. It has been stated that today's news is tomorrow's history. Therefore, it is imperative that news writing is done with a view to providing information that is correct, objective, fair, balanced, accurate, precise, and to the point. However, news writing is a skilled craft. Good reporters learn the craft and take it to the level of an art.

It can be acquired by dint of hard work, dedication, understanding, sustained and prolonged practice over a period of time. For being successful, one has to have a nose for news, besides being equipped with qualities of head and heart. In order to do effective news writing, one should be particularly skilled and discriminative at keenly observing, hearing and seeing things, events, and people, keeping notes and making mental record finding information sources. It also involves asking relevant questions; checking, counter-checking, crosschecking, and double-checking information. It requires the capability of fairly and impartially analyzing and interpreting information so collected.

For news writing, one has to inculcate a strict discipline of writing in the required style, with a view to conveying maximum information using minimum words.

Ordinarily, a complete news item, when written professionally, should answer the following six questions:

WHO – is or are involved?

WHEN -- did the event take place?

WHERE -- did the event take place?

WHY -- did it take place?

WHAT -- did actually take place? and

HOW -- did it take place?

These questions are known, as the five W's and one H. These questions are the heart and soul of a well and properly written news item. Again, a news item will have a wide impact if it...

Interests people directly;

Makes interesting reading;

Is a clear statement of facts of an event?

Concerns what people are interested about; and

Is an event that affects reader's life?

Example of a News Story: Here is an example of the introduction of a fairly well written news story:

"A 25 years old woman, Mrs. Sarla Choudhary from Jaipur died of an accident at gun shot by a Delhi Policeman in a crowded Connaught Place shop this evening. Her husband, Rajesh and mother-in law Mrs. Rani Chowdhary were with her when the accident took place. She was selecting kitchenware for her newly wedded daughter who lives in Delhi. The policeman, Ram Narain, has been arrested and is in custody. Mrs. Sarla Chowdhary's body has been sent for post-mortem in RLM hospital".

Here's another example of a good news item:

"KANPUR, March 17--In a bizarre incident a two-and-a-half-year-old girl was brutally murdered today allegedly by three children while playing under a tree in a village here, Police said. The boys, aged between three and four, allegedly stoned the toddler, then brought a kitchen knife from the house to stab her and disposed the body in a nearby drain in Hathipur village on Sunday evening, SSP M.A. Ganapathy said.

The children during interrogation narrated the incident in an innocent manner, he said. But though the act of beating and stoning seems to be unintentional, criminal intent could not be ruled out as they tried to dispose of the body, Mr. Ganapathy said. No case has been registered against the three as under section 82 of the Indian Penal Code, crime committed by a child under seven years of age is not considered a crime, he said, but added that police was investigating the incident. The children belonging to poor families said they were fond of watching action movies and had learnt to stab from films.

The Inspector-General of Police Mr. L.P. Mishra, said the police had arrested them after registering a case of murder. The children did not hesitate to confess their act before the police. They also told police that they had seen such things happening in movies. He said this was probably the only incident of its kind in the country.

1.2.4 STRUCTURE OF A NEWS STORY:

The technique and style of writing a news item is generally called the "inverted pyramid". Although over the years several innovations and changes in news writing styles and techniques have taken place, most news stories still follow the inverted pyramid design, style and techniques. The inverted pyramid structure of news means that the news will begin with the

most important information. This is known as the "lead". Lead is also called "intro" or introduction as it introduces the news story.

Lead could be of several types:

Name Lead: When the person(s) mentioned in the news is/are important.

Quotation Lead: When what one says is crucial for the news item.

Short Lead: Conveys the most important part of the news in three/four words-'Nehru is dead'.

Negative Lead: *No possibility exists of any survivors in the train accident that occurred yesterday.*

Suspended Interest Lead: When there is no particular focus in the story yet it deserved to be told. It is also known as a "Featurised lead".

Question Lead: The first sentence raise important questions, e.g. who is responsible for the mess o Delhi roads?

Direct Quotation Lead: when the first paragraph begins with a quotation from a speech or statement made by a V.I.P.

Contrast Lead: A lead, which compares the two different situations to bring out the focus. For example: *What marks the easy-going attitude of the government servants is hard to comprehend when one looks at pending case in courts.*

Then, there are other leads such as:

- *Descriptive lead,*
- *Parody lead,*
- *Chronological lead, and*
- *Staccato lead (stop and start lead)*

After the lead, the subsequent parts would be developed in logical order to support the lead. That is, the second most important fact comes next, then the third, and fourth and so on. Normally, the story is written in short paragraphs. Each sentences of not more than two-dozen words, and each paragraph of not more than two or three sentences. Though the inverted pyramid structure is applicable to hard news, but is not applicable to soft news, featurised news and sometimes even for sports news.

First paragraph: Most Important point

Second Para: The second important point

Third Para: The next important point

Fourth Para: The next important point

Fifth Para: The next important point

Examples of Lead or Introduction:

As stated earlier, the news story is structured in such a manner that the "lead" contains the focal print of the event. This is known as the "Summary lead", also the five Ws and one H.

For Example:

The Hisar police yesterday discovered the body of a Delhi student, Ramesh, 21, on the city main market square."

Here's another example:

A Chandigarh trader, Ram Chand, 33 was killed on Monday morning when the Delhi-bound Punjab Roadways bus overturned on the outskirts of Karnal.

The lead normally should answer all or as many of the six (five Ws and one H) questions. The lead could emphasize one of the Ws. If the person killed is a minister, the lead could highlight "who"; if the accident took place in a busy market place, "where" could be stressed; if the mishap occurred due to the carelessness of the driver 'why' and 'how' could be underlined; if the number of deaths or loss of properties is very high, "what" could be the lead and if time is crucial, "when" would be the lead of the story automatically.

In addition, in the news stories pertaining to ordinary happenings, the reporter will have to decide which of the "Ws" is to be highlighted.

For example:

A devastating fire occurred on Monday night at the Rajpath slum in Delhi burning down 120 thatched huts. (jhuggies). No loss of life was reported.

Yet another lead of an ordinary event:

Hisar, Jan. 5, - Two eight-year-old boys, Anil and Sunil, were kidnapped on Saturday from the Local DAV School playground where they were playing yesterday afternoon.

1.2.5 NEWS ANALYSIS:

News Analysis is that type of writing in which the writer explains the significance and importance of a particular development or event. News stories are written on the basis of facts gathered from the spot or collected from several other sources. You would have seen that most news events are forgotten after they appear in newspapers.

But there are certain news events, which are of great importance in several ways. Besides, there are many issues on which if a particular development takes place, several avenues open up for further reporting.

For example Prime Minister Vajpayee's bus journey to Lahore is said to be an important break-through in normalizing relations between India and Pakistan. As is well known, there are numerous bilateral issues between India and Pakistan, which are waiting for solution. So, this visit of India's Prime Minister is believed to be of great importance. A write-up or news analysis of this event will explain to the reader the entire plethora of problems that could be tackled or the whole gamut of the pending matters between the two countries which could be sorted out by the goodwill that will flow from the Prime Minister's bus journey.

Again, issues relating women's empowerment with the passage of Women's Reservation Bill, or American President's visit to India, the 1998 nuclear test at Pokharn can be taken up for in-depth analysis.

1.2.6 STRUCTURE OF NEWS ANALYSIS:

A news analysis is generally done as follows: general introduction relating the news development, when and how it happened; why and due to what reasons it took place; putting it in proper prospective. Explaining the significance with historical perspective, quoting facts and figures, giving names; quotes, data and events, which led to the present development. Then, forecasting the possible future developments, the reasons of these developments, persons behind these developments, and the ultimate solution or the final shape of things to come as a result of the new turn of events. The writer generally does this write-up keeping in view the policy of the newspaper or magazine. However, often, these types of write-ups are done in an objective manner.

1.2.7 BACKGROUNDER:

As the newspapers strive to provide all kinds of information on all possible subjects of current interest. There are some issues, which remain in the news and are current for years. A backgrounder is meant to provide information on a subject in a chronological order. This enables the reader to put an issue in a proper perspective and to adequately comprehend the subject in the light of current development. Generally, a backgrounder traces the subject from the date when it first attracted the news media's attention. For example, if the President's rule is imposed in a particular state due to bad law and order problems, the backgrounder will give the

complete details when & have state came under President's rule. In the international perspective, if there is a coup in any country due to civil strife or some other reason, the backgrounder will explain the history of that nation, when earlier such exigencies took place. It will also explain the reasons for the current and the previous such emergencies and their results. Details about the life of the person who is responsible for the present situation will also be given. In case of earthquakes, floods or famines also, the backgrounders provide in a chronological order the earlier such happenings with lists of human lives lost, financial losses, properties other related losses.

1.2.8 HOW TO WRITE A BACKGROUNDER?

For writing a backgrounder of a particular problem, one will have to first explain the current development on it and then trace the earlier such events. This would be done in a logical and historical chronological order giving date, month and year of each related happening. Also, other details such as loses of human lives, properties, etc. will have to be given. In addition, how did the situation return to normal will also need to be given? These could be explained by giving charts, pictures or by other such visual materials.

The backgrounder is written in a simple language without indulging into fine points of prose. The purpose is to inform the reader about the historical and chronological information about the fresh developments of the happenings

1.2.9 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NEWS STORY AND BACKGROUNDER:

While the write-up on news analysis explains the significance, the cause and effect of an issue, the backgrounder goes to the history and chronology of the event. A news analysis writer could express his/her opinion, criticize, applaud or condemn the development; a backgrounder does not do so. The backgrounder is an unbiased, straightforward, simple, historical explanation of the issue or subject. While a backgrounder has to contain extensive facts and figures statistics, tables, and graphs and pictures the news analysis need not to do that in such a comprehensive manner. In news analysis only such facts and figures as are necessary to explain the significance of the event or issue or the development.

1.3 SUMMARY:

- News is anything that is new. News is a report of an event that has just taken place. News is a detailed account that provides information or description. The event is usually recent, fresh or not known earlier.
- Legendary American editor, Joseph Pulitzer, once said that news should be: *Original, Distinctive, Romantic, Thrilling, Unique, Curious, Quaint, Humorous, Odd, and Apt-to-be talked about.*
- News has certain ingredients. The major characteristics of news are: Timelines, Proximity, Prominence, Consequence, Human interest, Unusual events like mysteries, Conflict, Tragedies, etc.
- News writing is done with a view to providing information that is correct, objective, fair, balanced, accurate, precise, and to the point. It is a skilled craft. It can be acquired by dint of hard work, dedication, understanding, sustained and prolonged practice over a period of time. It also involves asking relevant questions; checking, counter-checking, crosschecking, and double-checking information. It requires the capability of fairly and impartially analyzing and interpreting information so collected.
- Generally a news story answers the following six questions: **WHO** is or are involved? **WHEN** did the event take place? **WHERE** did the event take place? **WHY** did it take place? **WHAT** did actually take place? And **HOW** did it take place? These questions are known, as the five **W's** and one **H**.
- The structure of writing a news story is the "inverted pyramid structure". The inverted pyramid structure of news means that the news will begin with the most important information. The structure is as follows: First paragraph: Most Important point; Second Para: The second important point; Third Para: The next important point; Fourth Para: The next important point; Fifth Para: The next important point.

1.4 KEY WORDS:

News: News is a report of an event that has just taken place. News is a detailed account that provides information or description. A news story is a fair, accurate, concise, balanced account of a current event that is of interest to a majority of people.

Ingredients of News: The characteristics of news are: Timelines, Proximity, Prominence, Consequence, Human interest, Unusual events like mysteries, Conflict, and Tragedies.

Writing News Stories: News provides information that is correct, objective, fair, balanced, accurate, precise, and to the point. The art and craft of news writing can be acquired by dint of

hard work, dedication, and sustained and prolonged practice over a period of time. It also involves asking relevant questions; checking, counter-checking, crosschecking, and double-checking information. It requires the capability of fairly and impartially analyzing and interpreting information so collected. News stories should: Interest people directly; Make interesting reading; Concern what people are interested about.

Structure of a News Story: Most news stories follow the inverted pyramid structure. The inverted pyramid structure of news means that the news will begin with the most important information. This is known as the "lead" or "intro". The subsequent parts would be developed in logical order to support the lead. That is, the second most important fact comes next, then the third, and fourth and so on. Normally, the story is written in short paragraphs.

Name Lead: When the person(s) mentioned in the news is/are important.

Question Lead: When what one says is crucial for the news item.

Short Lead: Conveys the most important part of the news in three/four words-'Nehru is dead'.

Negative Lead: *No possibility exists of any survivors in the train accident that occurred yesterday.*

Suspended Interest Lead: When there is no particular focus in the story yet it deserved to be told. It is also known as a "Featurised lead".

Question Lead: The first sentence raise important questions, e.g. who is responsible for the mess o Delhi roads?

Direct Quotation Lead: when the first paragraph begins with a quotation from a speech or statement made by a V.I.P.

Contrast Lead: A lead, which compares the two different situations to bring out the focus. For example: *What marks the easy-going attitude of the government servants is hard to comprehend when one looks at pending case in courts.*

1.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Define news in your own words. Discuss the concept of news giving suitable examples.
2. The concept of news has changed over the last few decades. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
3. Discuss how news is written. Discuss the the various news structures.
4. What is a news analysis? Discuss in detail siting examples.
5. What is a backgrounder? Discuss in detail siting examples.

6. What are the differences between a news story and a news analysis? Discuss in detail siting examples.
7. What are the differences between a news analysis and a backgrounder? Discuss in detail siting examples.

1.6 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

- ***Reporting*** by Charnley
- ***Active Reporter*** by James Lewis
- ***Professional Journalist*** by John Hohenberg
- ***Professional Journalism*** by Patanjali Sethi
- ***Professional Journalism*** by M.V. Kamath
- ***News Writing*** by George Hough

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE PAGE MAKE UP

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LESSON STRUCTURE

Newspapers form a very credible, highly multifarious mass medium. Newspapers primarily provide information. But in addition to informing, they also entertain us, educate us, and they persuade us. Newspapers use words as their major tool. But they also use visuals and layout for communicating. In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of newspaper designing and lay out. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Presentation of Content
 - 2.2.1 Concept of Newspaper Make up
 - 2.2.2 Principles of Newspaper Make up
 - 2.2.3 Visualizing the Total Page Concept
 - 2.2.4 Guidelines for Newspaper Make up
 - 2.2.5 Traditional Concepts of Newspaper Make up
 - 2.2.6 Contemporary Concepts of Newspaper Make up
 - 2.2.7 Front Page Make up
 - 2.2.8 Inside Page Make up
 - 2.2.9 Editorial Page Make up
 - 2.2.10 Make up of Sports Pages
 - 2.2.11 Make up of Life Style Pages
 - 2.2.12 Tabloid Newspaper Make up

2.2.13 Recent Changes in Newspaper Make up

2.2.14 Designing for the Market

2.2.15 Magazine Make up

2.3 Summary

2.4 Key Words

2.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

2.6 References/Suggested Reading

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

One of the most important changes in the newspapers and magazines is in the recent times has been in the designing and page makeup. Gone are the days of shabby-looking newspapers and dull magazines. Newspapers and magazines of today are sleek, well designed and well packaged. Style of presentation has become as important as the substance or content of these printed media. So it is important to be familiar with the various aspects of page make up. In this lesson we shall broadly discuss the following:

- *Newspaper page makeup,*
- *Basics of page makeup,*
- *Total page concept,*
- *Designing various pages,*
- *Magazine page makeup.*

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

In today's highly image-oriented times, every body is thriving to have a distinct personality. This is more important in the highly competitive world of newspapers, which face competition from newspapers, magazines, and television. So there is an urgent need to package newspapers well to attract more and more readers. While the content of newspaper is important, the presentation style or page makeup is equally important.

More than 50 years ago, in 1947, *John Edward Allen*, a prominent newspaper designer, had predicted about the future of newspapers in his book '*Newspaper Designing*'. He had said that newspapers in the year 2000 would

- Have fewer and wider columns,
- Have indexes on the front pages giving a preview of the inside pages,
- Have *more and better pictures,*

- *Have more colour*

John Edward Allen's predictions have been surprisingly true. Now we have many newspapers doing just what John Allen had predicted. Most newspapers have more colour and more pictures. Many have wider columns and quite a few newspapers have brief contents on the front page. Also newspapers (and also magazines) are trying to blend the verbal content (words) and the visual content (pictures and other illustrations) perfectly.

In fact, as many recent studies reveal, the maximum amount of changes in newspapers have been in the areas of *format, design, sectioning, and graphics*. All these efforts are geared towards giving the readers a well-guided tour through the vast amount of information that newspapers contain these days.

2.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

As in most other fields, the reading habits of newspaper readers are also changing fast. No longer people read newspaper front-to-back. Most people do not have time for that kind of extensive *beginning-to-end type* of reading.

Readers have less time and newspapers have more pages. They want the gist of the important stories. The days of linear (front-to-back) and systematic way of reading are over. People these days read newspapers the way they watch television. They go through the pages stopping only when something interesting catches their eyes. It is just like channel surfing on television. Such reading habits have forced critics to say that we don't have readers any more. We have only scanners who scan through newspapers.

And with competition among newspapers increasing up (though price cuts, etc.), and television and magazines trying to take away newspaper readers, newspapers are becoming more reader friendly and are trying to serve impatient readers with attractive designs or make up. We shall discuss about all these aspect in detail in this lesson. The lesson content shall be presented as follows:

- *Concept of Newspaper Make up*
- *Principles of Newspaper Make up*
- *Guidelines for Newspaper Make up*
- *Modular Make up*
- *Mixed Concept of Newspaper Make up*
- *Front Page Make up*

- *Inside Page Make up*
- *Editorial Page Make up*
- *Make up of Sports Pages*
- *Tabloid Newspaper Make up*
- *Recent Changes in Newspaper Make up*
- *Magazine Make up*

2.2.1 CONCEPT OF NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKEUP:

When the editorial staff of newspapers arranges new stories, photographs and other editorial content on a page, it is called make up. This process helps make newspapers more attractive and reader friendly as the news content and other related material is arranged in an orderly and easy to-read manner. The objective behind page makeup is to help people read faster and thus be able to read more.

Newspaper page makeup also aims at communicating through appearance and arrangement of the entire design. This is in addition to communicating through words and pictures. The contents of a newspaper are so arranged that the resulting design or pattern connotes or communicates something beyond the meaning of the words and pictures.

Such arrangements give some newspaper a serious or sober look. Some newspapers have a classic look. Some others have a modern or contemporary look. The design or arrangement of some newspapers attracts elderly people. Some appeal to the young. Some newspapers appeal to the academic-oriented. Classic or old fashioned, modern or progressive, these kinds of personalities for newspapers can be created through thought makeup and designing.

And thus while newspaper people are concerned about the content of the paper, they are equally concerned about the orderly and attractive arrangement of the editorial content and about creating an appropriate personality.

OBJECTIVES OF NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKEUP: A newspaper is a collection of many news stories, features, articles, editorials, pictures etc. When these are haphazardly arranged, it becomes confusing and difficult for the readers. So the primary objective of newspaper makeup is arranging news in an orderly and convenient-to-read manner. Secondly, makeup also should try and create a distinct personality for the newspaper. Thirdly, newspaper makeup should be more exciting to the reader. This is because the newspaper is competing with other media that are highly visual, dramatic and attractive.

2.2.2 PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN IN NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKEUP:

Designing a newspaper page is a graphic art form. It involves certain principles of graphic designing. These principles are: *Balance, Contrast, Proportion and Unity*.

Balance means *equilibrium* or a *state of rest*. It deals with the *visual weight* of the various elements of a newspaper page like the news stories, visuals, etc. Balance in newspaper means that the pages should not be top heavy, bottom heavy or side heavy, etc. It means that the pages should not be extremely heavy in any section and extremely light in another. The things that make a page heavy are headlines, visuals, and the size of the stories, the use of boxes and screens, use of bold text, etc. Balance in newspaper design is achieved by visually weighing the elements on both sides of a page. It does not require precise mathematical weighing. A properly balanced page has all the elements (headlines, pictures, etc.) so distributed as to give a pleasant look to the page.

Formal or symmetrical balance involves placing equal-sized objects on either side of a page to form a mirror image. This kind of a design may be unbalanced from top to bottom. However, most newspapers use the informal balance. Here the two sides and the top and bottom halves are not mirror images of each other, but there is a feeling of equilibrium.

Contrast in designing means the use of two or more elements that are dramatically different from each other. This difference could be in *size, shape, shade, colour*, etc. So a headline set in lighter types is in contrast with a bold headline. A bigger picture contrasts smaller pictures. And black and white is in contrast with colour.

Contrast helps in highlighting certain elements. For example a picture surrounded by body text would stand out on the page. The ultimate objective of contrast is to achieve a pleasant look for the newspaper pages. However, too much of contrast makes a page unattractive and harsh.

Proportion is the principle of comparative relationships in terms of length, size, shape, etc. For example, a square shape is rarely used in designing, as it is dull and uninteresting. It is also monotonous as all the sides are equal. Unequal proportions are usually more attractive than equal proportions. Accordingly, the most widely used shape in designing is the *rectangle*. And this is the reason why the outer shape of the newspapers, the shape of most news stories, the shape of all photographs are always rectangular. The most common proportions used in newspapers are the 2:3 and the 3:5 proportions.

The principle of unity concerns the effect that a page design has over the readers. A newspaper page should create a *single impression* rather than multiple impressions. A single impression makes a page pleasant and interesting. Unity on a newspaper page can be achieved

by visually weighting all the stories and pictures and then shifting the placement until a satisfactory arrangement has been found out.

Harmony, rhythm, and direction are the other design principles that are considered while designing a newspaper page. Newspaper page makeup has always been a tough task as the makeup people do not have much time for planning and they always work under the pressure of a deadline. Also manual makeup, either through arrangement of composed material or the cut and paste method, is time taking. However, these days page makeup has become much faster and easier because of computers. Many software packages (like the *Quark Express*) have been specifically created for this purpose. So makeup people can change the placement and arrangement by pressing a few keys.

2.2.3 TOTAL PAGE CONCEPT:

Although we have discussed about the basics of newspaper page makeup, it may be difficult to visualize the structure of a page. To overcome this difficulty, there are two things beginners can do. The first one is to take a newspaper page and draw thick block lines around each story on the page. You can see the design now. To be able to critically analyze different types of page makeup repeat this practice for different newspapers.

The second method is to copy the design of a newspaper page on to a plain sheet of paper. First draw very thin and light lines with the help of a pencil marking the columns. Then mark the space covered by the stories and pictures on the newspaper page on to the plain paper. Fill the complete sheet and you will have a newspaper page design. Now collect different design styles from different newspapers for your reference. You can create new page designs from these design ideas.

2.2.4 GUIDELINES FOR NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKEUP:

Here are some guidelines for newspaper make up:

- Front-page makeup starts by indicating the amount of space that the nameplate will take. A nameplate usually appears at the top center. Some newspapers (like the *Punjab Keshri*) have the nameplate at the top left corner of the front page. Some People call it the, *masthead* and some others call it the *flag*.
- Often stories are assigned numbers. So the headline and the allotted number of the story should be put on the page in the space marked for the story.

- The number of columns should also be indicated (S/C for single column, 2/C or D/C for two columns, 3/C for three columns, etc.).
- In case of single column stories; a straight, downward pointing arrow is drawn to mark the depth or height of the story.
- In case of multiple column stories a continuous arrow covering all the columns may be drawn to show where the story is continued.
- *Carryovers* or *jumps* should be marked properly along with the page number to which the story is to be continued.
- Pictures, cartoons, and other visuals should be properly labeled. The most common practice is to put a large cross (X) covering the entire space to be taken by the visual.
- Boxed items are also properly marked by drawing rectangles. These are then labeled with the word 'box'.
- Column rules, special marks, etc. are to be used judiciously only to distinguish columns from each other or to highlight some part of the story.

2.2.5 TRADITIONAL PAGE MAKEUP:

Many newspapers have been using certain traditional page makeup practices for decades or more. The main characteristics of such traditional makeup are:

- Nameplates are always placed at the very top of the front page.
- No news story is placed on top of the nameplate, i.e., all stories are placed below the nameplate.
- Bigger headlines are placed at the top with smaller one placed below.
- The most important story is placed at the left-hand-top-corner of the front page. In the western newspapers, the most important story is placed at the right-hand-top-corner.
- Date lines are placed at the beginning of the story.
- Mostly a large picture or illustration is used singly at the top of the page. When more visuals are used, they are also placed in the top half of the page. Newspapers designed using the traditional makeup practices usually are gray in the bottom half with no or few pictures.
- Inside pages also have pictures placed in the top half.
- In the traditional makeup practices column rules are used to distinguish columns. Also cutoff rules are used to mark the end of stories and thus separate them.

- Traditional makeup practitioners use formal balance where the left and right sides are balanced. Thus the pages often are top heavy.

2.2.6 CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKEUP:

For many years newspapers used traditional makeup practices. However, with changing times and changes in tastes of people and changing design practices, many newspapers are adopting modern design concepts. Another major reason was the new technologies of newspaper production, particularly better printing technologies and the use of computers.

Newspapers are using three basic modern makeup concepts these days. These are: *Modular, Grid and Total Page Design.*

MODULAR MAKEUP: This concept is the oldest among contemporary approaches. Here stories are arranged in modules. Stories of similar type are grouped together into separate units or modules. A module could have a single story also.

Often each module is enclosed in a box or a lot of white space is used around each module to separate one module from others. A module clearly separates the story or group of stories inside it from others. This way the entire page is divided into a number of modules. Each module can hold one, two, or more number of stories. One benefit of the module system is that it is relatively easy to change the stories inside a module, as required in case of late-breaking stories.

The modular concept is easy to implement as it can fit into any style of make up. The modules are usually marked on the outside with thick lines. Use Of white space around modules makes them more attractive.

GRID CONCEPT: The grid concept is an extension of the modular concept. A grid is a *pattern of intersecting lines forming rectangles of various sizes and shapes.* In a newspaper, the column space (space separating columns and the spaces separating stories (at the top and the bottom) are used to form the grids. Grid lines are used to divide a newspaper page into very clear-cut portions. Stories are usually composed into either vertical or horizontal shapes.

The division of space on a page is always unequal both sideways and vertically. This gives a contemporary look to the page as opposed to the traditional and formally balanced pages. Here the placement of stories is on the basis of their importance. Thus each story gets a chance of being seen.

TOTAL PAGE CONCEPT: The total page concept, like the previous two also divides the pages into the different rectangular portions. But it is much more exciting as it involves *dramatization of content presentation*. This overcomes the basic problem of the grid concept which the mostly dull.

Although dramatization is one of the most important features of the total page concept (TPC), these days the news stories decide the format. Spectacular or dramatic news stories demand dramatic presentation, while sober news stories demand sober treatment. In total page concept, the page is divided into broad portions that are pleasingly proportional. Only rectangles are used here. Rectangles of various sizes, shapes, weights (shadowed or screened) provide the required differentiation for an attractive total design. TPC does not use odd shapes. It also does not use artificial devices like stories shaped round, oval, triangular, etc.

However, TPC uses a lot of white space to enable the different stories to stand out without competing with each other for attention. Another attention getting device is the use of large stories and photographs for dramatic impact.

THE MIXED CONCEPT: Many newspapers today are adopting a mixed approach. They combine the best elements of the grid concept, the modular concept and the total page concept. This gives them complete flexibility in terms of arrangement of stories and visuals on the paper.

TRADITIONAL VS. CONTEMPORARY MAKEUP PRACTICES: Most newspapers are now slowly changing their old and the so-called established principles of makeup. One of the changes is the use of capital letters to set headlines. Research has proved that lines set in mixed cases are much easier to read than uppercase letters.

Another such old rule was that the most important stories on a page should be placed at the top. Newspaper makeup in the early days was oversimplified to help readers find the most important stories by putting them at the top. This kind of placement of stories, however, lends to the belief that stories placed at the bottom are unimportant. Now newspaper people want the readers to read the entire page. The importance of the stories is not to be judged by the placement or position, but from the size of the story, the size of the headlines, and the treatment given to the story (boxes, screens, etc.).

Another point of contention is the placement of the nameplate of the newspaper. Some newspapers want to place other important matter at the top and move the nameplate somewhere else. However, the nameplate has got strong connotations and associations. And the best place for the nameplate is at the top. Also placing of the nameplate at any other place could complicate the entire make up process.

However, on very rare occasions, when there is an all-important story and it demands complete prominence, then it may be placed above the nameplate. Some newspapers have eliminated the ear panels. They put the nameplate on the top left corner.

As for headlines, the traditional makeup practitioners thought of headlines as large display type faces placed at the top of the story. However, in the modern practice, particularly with horizontal rectangular stories, the headlines may be placed at the left or right of the story. This gives a modern and contemporary look to the page.

Other contemporary makeup practices also include elimination of column rules and the use of white space to separate or distinguish columns. Also eliminated are cut-off rules that were used to separate stories at the top and bottom. The use of such rules (lines) makes the already gray pages even darker. Use of white space, instead of these lines, brings *lightness* to the pages and makes the pages much more inviting with less *black*.

Another modern practice is the reducing of the number of columns on a page. In India, newspaper like *The Hindu* and the *Jansatta* (Hindi) use six columns on a page, instead of the traditional eight columns. Some western newspapers use only four columns. Also headlines are no more centered. They are 'flush left'. This gives a free form appearance to the page.

It is the same in case of body text, which again is set flush left and ragged right, just like manual type writing. Another feature of modern makeup is the extensive use of sub-headlines. Sub-headlines break the monotony of the gray mass of body text.

An important development in modern makeup is the dramatic treatment of pictures, and the use of larger pictures. This adds to the look of the paper. Also the shape of the pictures used these days is usually vertical or horizontal and rarely square shaped.

2.2.7 FRONT PAGE MAKEUP:

In the past, front-page makeup was old-fashioned, artificial, unattractive, and inflexible. The reasons behind this were unplanned and haphazard placement of stories and photos, and non-adherence of any design principle. Modern front-page makeup is highly functional, well-designed, attractive and very flexible. The front page is the showcase of a newspaper. Thus it

should be easy to read, attractive and inviting. It should be orderly. And it should have a distinctive personality of its own.

One way of getting a well-designed front page is to use the *principle of artistic dominance*. Front pages, being showcases, carry a lot of important stories, which compete with each other for attention. This kind of a situation is confusing for the readers. So the front page has to have a *point of dominance*. It could be a story, a story with accompanying picture, or a group of similar stories clubbed together. Dominance can be achieved by way of size, shape, and placement, etc.

In India, the traditional method of front-page makeup places the most important story in the top-left corner followed by the second important story in the top-right corner. The next most important place is the bottom-left or hanger story followed by the bottom right corner. This is called the Z-pattern. In the West the traditional pattern of story placement is C-shaped and the places in order of importance are top right, top left, bottom left, and bottom right.

Both the Z-pattern and the C-pattern produce top-heavy front pages. Presently, stories are placed on the basis of size and other treatments like boxed stories, stories encircled by white space, large sized stories, or stories of different shapes. And stories can be placed anywhere and the readers can find them easily and there is no need to follow the Z- pattern or C-pattern. Other guidelines for an exiting and more readable front page include:

- *Creation of an open page with lot of white space between columns, between stories, pictures, etc.*
- *Using a news summary rather than having many small stories on the front page.*
- *Making the bottom half as interesting as the top half by using larger pictures, boxed stories, etc.*
- *Avoiding too many boxes, lines and other attention getting devices (like asterix marks, screens, etc) that pull the reader's away from the stories.*
- *Using clearer, easy-to-read typefaces.*
- *Incorporating a sense of freshness and vitality to the page by making small changes to the basic format on different days.*
- *Creating an elegant but different look by having columns of different widths.*
- *Use of simpler nameplate.*

2.2.8 INSIDE PAGE MAKEUP:

Inside pages almost always have advertisements. As ads bring revenue, they are given priority above news. In fact, it is the ads that are first placed on the pages. The remaining space or the 'news hole' is left for the editorial matter. As the number and total space taken by advertisements each day are different, makeup personnel have to deal with different amounts of space everyday. This makes the job of a page makeup artist very difficult.

Inside pages cover a variety of content. And the editorial content decides the design pattern within the available space. One of the techniques adopted for inside page makeup is creating of a *center of visual impact* (CVI), which is usually the most important story on a page. The other stories are arranged around this center of visual impact in accordance with their editorial significance.

The structural position of advertisements also needs to be considered for bringing about a harmonious blend between the advertising and editorial content. Often makeup personnel have no or little control over the placement of advertisements. But it is wise to consult with the advertising department and suggest about advertising placement on the pages in such a way that allows proper designing of editorial content on these pages.

2.2.9 MAKEUP OF EDITORIAL PAGES:

The editorial page is often shabbily made-up. But *life* can be injected into editorial pages. This is despite the content-wise sober and serious nature of the editorial pages. The techniques of brightening editorial pages include:

- *Setting the editorials in larger types than ordinary body type used for news.*
- *Setting editorials in wider columns.*
- *Boxing editorials and other stories or articles.*
- *Use of more white space.*
- *Placing the masthead at a lower position (removing it from the top left corner where it doesn't compete for attention with the editorials).*
- *Using photographs on the editorial page. This may be not a traditional practice but it would enhance the 'look' of the page.*
- *Use of flush-left and right-ragged style of setting to make it distinct from other pages.*

But the problem with an editorial page is that, content wise it remains the same always. Being rigid in structure, it never varies on a day-to-day basis. So it looks boring. However, makeup

personnel can plan three or four slightly different alternatives for the editorial page to be used on different days, which will the monotony.

2.2.10 MAKEUP OF SPORTS PAGES:

With wide variety of editorial content and photographs, one expects the makeup of sports pages to be exciting. But this is not always the case. This is because the large number of sports stories often create problem for the makeup people.

The best solution here is the grid concept. Use of photographs in large sizes and with careful cropping can enhance the look of the sports pages. But smaller photos cluttered together make a page look unattractive and repulsive. Also sports photos can be cropped to exciting shapes and enlarged to emphatic sizes.

2.2.11 MAKEUP OF LIFE-STYLE & FEATURE PAGES:

The life style pages and the feature pages strike a balance between serious and sober topics, the hard new and soft news, and always try to involve the readers. Such pages also serve those readers who only scan newspapers by having a lot of quotes, subheads, and boxes and also by breaking stories in to small segments.

The key to successful feature page designing include the following steps:

- *Stop the reader,*
- *Sustain his/her interest, and*
- *Surprise them.*

Doing all three things every day of the week is difficult. But still designers try to achieve this by using certain techniques. The first such technique is the *center of visual impact (CVI)*. This could be text matter dominant position a large or prominent photograph or an illustration. This center of visual impact attracts the attention of the reader and sustains it. Other techniques include use of *modules*, use of *wider columns*, use of *informational graphics*, use of *colour*, etc.

2.2.12 MAKEUP OF TABLOIDS:

A tabloid is half the size of regular newspapers (broadsheet). Many small newspapers (mostly evening newspapers) are brought out in this size. Many publishers, particularly- in the western countries, are bringing out tabloids in large numbers. The reasons behind this are:

- *Maintainability and Portability* (ease of handling),
- *Design Possibilities* (can be experimented with many patterns and designs),
- *Advertising Potential* (people buy more full page ads in tabloids), and
- *Departmentalizing* (separating news and features into separate segments).

Tabloids use more design strategies than regular broadsheet newspapers. One of these is the use of lesser number of columns. Tabloids use three, four or five columns. In tabloids, four column pages are most readable and most attractive. However, some tabloids use three or five columns also.

Style wise tabloids fall in between newspapers or magazines. Most tabloids adopt a mixed style by having both newspaper and magazine formats for news and feature pages respectively. Often tabloids use the center pages together as one page. This is called the *center spread*. Some use it for showing the most important feature while others use it for advertisements.

2.2.13 RECENT CHANGES IN PAGE MAKEUP:

Newspapers started to experiment more with typography and designing only in the 1960's. This trend caught up in India only the 1980's. Slowly newspapers started experimenting with new styles, smaller headlines, larger photographs, etc. As a result of the better designing practices, today one rarely sees a newspaper in which the pages are unbalanced. In present day newspapers, types are rarely mixed up. Stories and articles are never lost in a mass of gray types. Most newspapers today have clean, orderly and organized pages.

Let us see what makes a newspaper attractive visually. It should excel in packaging the contents in an easy-to-find, and easy-to-follow style. It should offer surprises to the reader, in spite of the highly formatted structure of its pages. It should combine a magazine look with the traditional newspaper orientation.

It should have informational graphics like sketches, diagrammatic representations, graphs, charts and computer generated graphs. This can sometimes make lengthy descriptions unnecessary. It should have a lot of colour. It should experiment a lot. This is what *USA Today* did when it was first published on September 15, 1982. This newspaper changed the whole concept of newspaper page makeup the world over. It was loved by its readers, and hated or ignored by its competitors. But *USA Today* created a strong graphic awareness among readers and newspaper people alike. In India, *The Times of India* is trying to do something like this and it has introduced colour, they experiment a lot with their page makeup. They also give more photos. And its competitors are following it. The Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Telegraph and many other newspapers including regional newspapers have also changed their design and makeup practices.

A few years ago newspapers paid little attention to the way they looked. *Designing* was not practiced. Page makeup meant putting text, and visuals together on pages. Now things have changed. Television and magazines have changed all this. Readers have *become more* demanding being aware of graphic sophistication. And today newspapers have started doing a lot to improve their look. These include:

IMPORTANCE TO EDITORIAL CONTENT OVER ARTISTIC DECORATION:

Readers look for information and other editorial content in newspapers. So information should be presented in such a way that the reader's requirements are fulfilled. A well-designed newspaper presents information through a series of visual signals like headlines, text, photos, charts and graphs, maps, blurbs or at-glance-summaries, etc.

GOOD DESIGN IS NOT MERE DECORATION: Newspaper design should emphasize the information content, as its primary goal is to communicate or express rather than impress. Boxes, columns, column lines, headline size, colour backgrounds (screens) and other visual elements are not mere ornamentations. These help guide the reader through the maze of information. For example, column lines separate stories; boxes, colour backgrounds, etc. make stories stand out by attaching significance to them. Good newspaper designs present information in the most organized and visually appealing form.

PAGE ARCHITECTURE: This is the internal space management of the pages. This helps in giving the pages a cleaner look.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS: Most newspapers use only photographs. However, other visuals like sketches, charts, maps, graphs, computer graphics, etc. can be more useful than just photographs.

LEGIBILITY: The information content of newspaper pages should be easy to read, Designers need to choose type faces, type sizes, lines, spacing, etc with legibility in mind.

SURPRISE: A well-designed newspaper page stops the reader and surprises him. And this surprise could come in the form of larger photographs, dramatic use of colour, etc. Surprise on newspaper pages delights the reader and makes the routine job of reading newspapers

interesting. Newspaper page makeup has evolved from simply putting the stories and pictures together within the available space to a highly intricate graphic art. And the factors that have contributed to this evolving are:

- Changing tastes of readers
- Graphic designing and
- Technical advancements like the advent of computers, and
- Better printing presses.

2.2.14 DESIGNING FOR THE MARKET:

“Design the newspaper for the market it serves, understand the readers – their reading habits, preferences, life styles – and design accordingly”, was the advice of Richard A. Curtis, design editor of the *Miami News* in 1978. Now, after more than twenty-five years, the advice still stands good. In fact, in today’s market driven situation, there is an urgent need to study the reading habits and design tastes of readers before choosing makeup or design patterns. The Times of India calls it self a *product* and it is designed to suit the readers of today. Some of the design practices in this direction are:

SIMPLICITY IN PAGE MAKEUP: Simplicity is perhaps the most important feature of designing and makeup of newspapers today. In this regard, the **KISS** rule (*Keep It Simple and Short*) applies to makeup.

A newspaper page contains a few elements like the text, the headlines, visuals, lines, boxes, colour and white space. These elements need to be *integrated* together in such a way that it makes finding and reading the stories easier. And things like fancy typefaces, tricky type setting, crowding of stories, etc. make newspaper pages more complex and slow down the reading process.

DESIGN TO COMMUNICATE: The sole objective of newspapers is to communicate. Thus designing or page makeup should also have the same objective. To be able to communicate effectively, page makeup should be developed from the content.

2.2.15 MAGAZINE MAKEUP:

Magazines are different from newspapers and other mass media in a unique way. Magazines are considered more than a storehouse of a variety of articles, stories and features. This ‘extra’

factor comes from the personal relationship built between the magazine and its readers. Both magazine editing and makeup is done towards encouraging and maintaining this relationship, which is hard earned and takes a long time to be established.

PERSONALITY OF A MAGAZINE: Modern magazines exist in a visual age they compete with the highly visual and entertaining medium of television. Now the emergence of the *Internet* has added to this competition. And readers of today have been converted into more of “viewers’ who rely on images for their information and entertainment. And with everything becoming so much image-oriented, we can safely modify Marshal McLuhan’s ‘*Medium is the message*’ into ‘*Image is the message*’. With readership and understanding dependent on the visual aspects of presentation, magazine editors and designers must be experts in the art of communicating by means of pictures, layouts and other such means.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN MAGAZINES: While photographs are the most important illustrations for a magazine, there are many other visual elements too. We use black and white, colour, and duotone photographs with different types of treatments or special effects. We also use pencil sketches, line drawings, watercolours, oil paintings, etc. Other illustrative devices include charts, bars, maps, graphs etc.

FUNCTIONS OF ILLUSTRATION: Using the illustration can have five functions. These are: *Attracting Attention, Illustrating a Point, Telling a Story by Itself, Telling a Story Along With Other Illustrations, and Give Visual Relief to a Design.* Any illustration usually accomplishes one or more of these purposes.

USE OF COLOUR IN MAGAZINES: Almost everything on a magazine page; from text, visuals, borders, etc. can be in colour. But colour for colour’s sake is not a good practice. For example, body text in colour does not have as much of contrast as black body text. Certain practices in the use of colour adopted by designers include:

- Use of color for display types (headlines, subheads, etc);
- Use of colour for lines and borders to separate and dramatize the stories,
- Use of colour for typographical *dingbats* like initial letters, etc;
- Use of duotone photos instead of black and white photos;
- Colour enhancements of graphs and charts, etc.;

- Use of coloured screens.

VISUAL PERSONALITY FOR MAGAZINES: A magazine to be successful needs to find out its target audience and provide the content needed by the audience in the way they want it. As different magazines are directed at different audiences, they should have different personalities. According to the audience it is directed at, a magazine could be conservative or traditional, modern, action-oriented, classical, fashionable, etc.

Here designers look for what is called the 'intensity of interest' on part of the audience members. For technical magazines or other serious magazines, the readers want more information and less entertainment. So 'flashy' designs are avoided in such magazines.

In case of film magazines or fashion magazines where the readers want more of entertainment and less of information, then the magazine should be 'dynamic' in physical appearance to be able to get reader attention, keep them interested, and to create a long-lasting impression.

The visual personality of a magazine depends on many factors. One is the use of colour, how much colour and in what manner colour is used. The second consideration is the number and variety of illustrations. Another factor is the type of paper used. Although it is a technical aspect, but type of paper plays an important role in creating the personality.

REDESIGN: In a world where everything is changing, magazines also need to change to adapt to changing times and changing audiences. Such changes could be cosmetic and superficial which keep old readers while attracting new readers. Sometimes bold changes are also brought about. Many magazines have undergone change or redesigning in the past two decades.

These include the *Time*, *Ms*, *Esquire*, *Fortune*, etc. In India, the *India Today* has been making and subtle changes while *The Week* recently underwent a drastic and complete design overhauling. This redesign trend was in full force in the 1990s and will continue in the times to come. One of the most important redesign practices is the increased emphasis on providing more 'graphic power' for the pages. But this is not done at the cost of editorial content. In fact, improving editorial quality also has got equal (may be more) emphasis and efforts.

THE FORMAT: This is one thing that remains constant over a long period of time. Format includes the size and shape of the magazine. The different magazine formats are:

- Miniature: 4" x 6",

- Books: 6" x 9",
- Basic: 8½" x 11",
- Pictorials: 10½" x 13",
- Sunday Supplement: 11" x 13".

The most common among these is the basic 8½" x 11" format. This size can be cut without any wastage, is easy to handle. It also allows dramatization of picture sizes and other elements.

MAGAZINE COVERS: A magazine front cover is the most important page. It is like the magazine's face, it creates the all-important first impression and is the primary indicator of the magazine's personality. Magazine covers are not changed for long periods of time unless of course there is a complete editorial personality reshaping.

A magazine cover could be a self-cover printed on the same paper as the inside pages and printed along with the other pages. But mostly magazines have separate covers (printed on usually glossy papers and separately from the other pages). Magazine covers set the tone for its personality. It has to draw the attention of the readers, tell something about the contents of the issue by showcasing the major articles or features published. It should help the magazine stand out from the clutter in magazine stands.

The front cover also contains continuing characteristics that identify it from issue to issue. At the same time, it has to be flexible enough to accommodate subtle changes in every issue. A magazine cover could be 'type only' with no illustration or it could be a combination of type and illustration. Whatever the practice, a magazine cover should not be cluttered with a lot of elements. It should not also have a 'light' or 'loose' look. By blending type elements, visuals and white or coloured-space the page should look inviting.

DESIGNING CONTINUING PAGES: These pages are relatively constant in terms of format. These include the content page(s), the editorial page, letters page and the pages with continuing features or columns. While these pages have fixed formats, efforts should be made to break the monotony with simple changes in the makeup in different issues.

ESTABLISHING THE PAGE STRUCTURE: A magazine may have fixed or flexible page structures. The page structure refers to the 'type page' (space inside the margins), the number of columns, the column widths, etc. Magazines usually have two, three or four columns. Many magazines today

do not use a fixed number of columns for all pages. For different pages they use different number of columns. Also a lot of *bleeding* (illustrations intruding into space of text matter and vice versa) is done.

ESTABLISHING TYPOGRAPHICAL POLICY: The most important consideration for selecting typefaces for magazines is ease of reading (legibility and readability). Traditional magazines used fixed typefaces and this policy provided continuity. But contemporary magazines use a wide variety of typefaces, sizes, and variations to give different looks for different stories or article. Other practices include use of dingbats (decorative type device like stars, bullets, and raised or drop letters).

Basic steps in magazine page layout are:

- *Determining the exact amount of space available for a story or article,*
- *Deciding how many columns to be used,*
- *Determining the space to be used for the text and the visuals respectively,*
- *Designing and positioning display types for headlines etc,*
- *Positioning body text and illustrations,*
- *Deciding what typographical devices to be used.*

Earlier makeup personnel designed through the various stages of layout. They drew thumbnail sketches, made roughs, created comprehensive layouts, and finally made the artwork, which was ready for printing. But now computer have made the layout job much easier. Any kind of effect in layout can be created just by pressing a few keys or at the click of the mouse.

2.3 SUMMARY:

- Most newspapers today have more colour and more pictures. Many newspapers have wider columns and quite a few newspapers have brief contents on the front page. Also newspapers (and also magazines) are trying to blend the verbal content (words) and the visual content (pictures and other illustrations) perfectly. Maximum amount of changes in newspapers have been in the areas of *format, design, sectioning, and graphics.*
- Make up is the arrangement of new stories, photographs and other editorial content on a page. Makeup makes newspapers more attractive and reader friendly as the news content and other related material is arranged in an orderly and easy to-read manner. Newspaper

page makeup aims at communicating through appearance and arrangement of the entire design.

- A newspaper is a collection of many news stories, features, articles, editorials, pictures etc. When these are haphazardly arranged, it becomes confusing and difficult for the readers. The primary objective of newspaper makeup is arranging news in an orderly and convenient-to-read manner.
- Manual makeup, either through arrangement of composed material or the cut and paste method, is time taking. However, these days page makeup has become much faster and easier because of computers. Many a software packages (like the *Quark Express* have been specifically created for this purpose.
- Earlier most newspapers used traditional page makeup practices. The main characteristics of such traditional makeup are: Nameplates are always placed at the very top of the front page, No news story is placed on top of the nameplate, i.e., all stories are placed below the nameplate, Bigger headlines are placed at the top with smaller one placed below,
- In the modular concept stories are arranged in modules. Stories of similar type are grouped together into separate units or modules. A module clearly separates the story or group of stories inside it from others. This way the entire page is divided into a number of modules. Each module can hold one, two, or more number of stories.
- A grid is a *pattern of intersecting lines forming rectangles of various sizes and shapes*. In a newspaper, the column space (space separating columns and the spaces separating stories (at the top and the bottom) are used to form the grids. The division of space on a page is always unequal both sideways and vertically.
- The total page concept divides the pages into the different rectangular portions. It is much more exciting as it involves *dramatization of content presentation*. Spectacular or dramatic news stories demand dramatic presentation, while sober news stories demand sober treatment. In total page concept, the page is divided into broad portions that are pleasingly proportional.
- Many newspapers today are adopting a mixed approach. They combine the best elements of the grid concept, the modular concept and the total page concept. This gives them complete flexibility in terms of arrangement of stories and visuals.
- A newspaper to look visually attractive should excel in packaging the contents in an easy-to-find, and easy-to-follow style. It should offer surprises to the reader, in spite of the highly

formatted structure of its pages. It should combine a magazine look with the traditional newspaper orientation.

- In newspapers, information should be presented in such a way that the reader's requirements are fulfilled. A well-designed newspaper presents information through a series of visual signals like headlines, text, photos, charts and graphs, maps, blurbs or at-glance-summaries, etc.

2.4 KEY WORDS:

Page Makeup: A newspaper is a collection of many news stories, features, articles, editorials, pictures etc. When these are haphazardly arranged, it becomes confusing and difficult for the readers. Here page makeup plays an important role. Makeup is the arrangement of news stories, photographs and other editorial content on a page. Makeup makes newspapers more attractive and reader friendly as the news content and other related material is arranged in an orderly and easy to-read manner. Newspaper page makeup aims at communicating through appearance and arrangement of the entire design.

Objectives of Page Makeup: The primary objective of newspaper makeup is arranging news in an orderly and convenient-to-read manner. Secondly, makeup also should try and create a distinct personality for the newspaper. Thirdly, newspaper makeup should be more exciting to the reader.

Traditional makeup concepts: The main characteristics of traditional makeup are: Bigger headlines are placed at the top with smaller one placed below, The most important story is placed at the left-hand-top-corner of the front page. In the western newspapers, the most important story is placed at the right-hand-top-corner, etc.

Contemporary makeup concepts: With new technologies of newspaper production, particularly better printing technologies and the use of computers; newspapers of today are using three basic modern makeup concepts these days. These are: *Modular, Grid and Total Page Design*.

Modular Makeup: This concept is the oldest among contemporary approaches. Here stories are arranged in modules. Stories of similar type are grouped together into separate units or modules. A module could have a single story also.

Grid Concept: The grid concept is an extension of the modular concept. A grid is a *pattern of intersecting lines forming rectangles of various sizes and shapes*. In a newspaper, the column space (space separating columns and the spaces separating stories (at the top and the bottom) are used to form the grids. Here the placement of stories is on the basis of their importance. Thus each story gets a chance of being seen.

Total Page Concept: The total page concept, like the previous two also divides the pages into the different rectangular portions. But it is much more exciting as it involves *dramatization of content presentation*. In total page concept, the page is divided into broad portions that are pleasingly proportional.

Makeup of Tabloid Newspapers: Tabloids use more design strategies than regular broadsheet newspapers. One of these is the use of lesser number of columns. Tabloids use three, four or five columns. In tabloids, four column pages are most readable and most attractive. However, some tabloids use three or five columns also. Style wise tabloids fall in between newspapers or magazines. Most tabloids adopt a mixed style by having both newspaper and magazine formats for news and feature pages respectively.

2.4 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What is newspaper page make-up? Discuss the principles of design newspapers.
2. Discuss the various types of page make-up with suitable examples.
3. Throw light on make-up of tabloid newspapers.
4. Discuss with suitable examples the magazine page make up.
5. Discuss in detail how front pages of newspapers are designed.
6. Discuss in detail how editorial pages of newspapers are designed.
7. Discuss in detail how inside pages of newspapers are designed.

2.5 REFERENCES (SUGGESTED READINGS):

- o Baskette Floyd K, Sissors Z. Jack and Brooks Brain S. (1982); "The Art of Editing" published Macmillan Publishing Company, New York and Collin Macmillan Publishers, London.
- o Teel Leonard Ray and Taylor Ron (1985); " An Introduction of Journalism: Into the Newsroom", Published by Prentice Hall of India Private Limited, New Delhi.
- o George, T.J.S. (1 989); "Editing - A Handbook For Journalists" published by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

FEATURE WRITING

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Newspapers primarily provide information. But in addition to informing, they also entertain us, educate us, and they persuade us. Newspapers carry news. In addition newspapers also carry a wide variety of write-ups. One of the important write-ups is the feature. In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of features. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Presentation of Content
 - 3.2.1 Features: An Introduction
 - 3.2.2 Features and News stories Distinguished
 - 3.2.3 Feature Writing
 - 3.2.4 Structure of a Feature
 - 3.2.5 Types of Features
 - 3.2.6 Finding Subjects for Features
 - 3.2.7 Photo Features
- 3.3 Summary
- 3.4 Key Words
- 3.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 3.6 References/Suggested Reading

3.0 OBJECTIVES:

Features are among the most liked and most read write-ups in both newspapers and magazines. Features, at a basic level, inform us. But they do so in a highly entertaining and often informal manner. Unlike news stories, editorials, and articles, features are not serious and sober in tone. Features try to touch our hearts through informal structures and extremely readable styles. In this lesson we shall discuss about the various aspects of features. The objectives of this lesson are:

- *To know what is a feature?*
- *To know the difference between features and news stories*
- *To know how to write a feature?*
- *To understand the structure of a feature.*
- *To understand the various kinds of features.*
- *To know about photo features.*

3.1 INTRODUCTION:

Most newspapers and periodicals in India until 1947 were pre-occupied with political reporting and opinion writing. It is only in the mid-fifties that newspapers showed interest in subjects other than politics and economics. With the expansion of educational infrastructure, social activism and cultural revival; the newspapers and periodicals started showing interest in areas of peripheral concern to the readers. Thus were born writings on educational, informative and entertainment subjects.

These writings took the shape of leisure and light reading materials. These were packed with information, education, enlightenment and entertainment. These writings make newspapers and magazines interesting. In addition, features tell the readers as to what is happening beyond the news. These help create public opinion and prove to be a good leisure and informative readings material.

3.2.1 FEATURES- AN INTRODUCTION:

A feature is a write-up on a subject, which is of concern and interest to a common reader. It is not a news story, though it may be based on a news item. A feature is done interestingly. A feature is meant for light reading. Features aim at informing, entertaining, educating, enlightening and also guiding, instructing. Features cover subjects of popular interest.

3.2.2 FEATURES vs. NEWS STORIES:

Some times, a feature is similar to a news story. But generally, a feature gives the reader facts in an interesting form adapted to rapid reading. The facts are amplified by observation, study and interviews. While the news story gives the facts, a feature dramatizes and supplements them by providing detailed information that will appeal to the reader's imagination. It differs from a news item, as *it is longer, has more details, follows a more informal pattern.*

A feature is full of emotions, imaginations, etc. It fascinates, attracts, charms, educates, and entertains. A news story only informs. Features are full of variety, and impart knowledge. It illuminates and interprets.

A feature is different from a news story in a number of ways; a news item is a report of an event, an occurrence or a current topical development. Often, a feature is born out of a news story. It contains more facts, elaborate background, interpretations, explanations elucidations of point not include in the news item. News story involves routine writing while a feature is special kind of write-up.

A news item generally incorporates all those points, which can be gathered on the spot, in a short span of time before the deadline of publication, whereas features are written at leisure, after adequate observation and inquiry. A news item is fresh only for a short period, but the feature remains fresh for quite sometime, its "life" is much longer.

3.2.3 FEATURE WRITING:

How is a feature written? The technique of writing a feature is different from that of a news story. A news story has two main components the lead and the body. A feature also has a third component, the conclusion or end. The lead should consist of an introduction to the subject. The body should elaborate on it and the conclusion should sum it up. The feature writer has far greater flexibility than a news reporter. We will further dwell on these parts of the feature in the following paragraphs.

THE LEAD: The lead or the first paragraphs of the feature is very crucial. Therefore, the feature writer has great latitude in selecting and his lead choice is indeed limitless. The lead may be any one of the following types or a combination of two or more of them. The main objectives of the lead paragraphs are to attract the reader's attention, hold it and make him read the feature.

THE BODY: Feature writing is not very different from any other descriptive or narrative writing. The body of a feature article is developed logically and smoothly. A feature should conform to

the basic principles of good writing, that include unity, coherence and readability. Although the feature writer may have a greater space at its disposal than a reporter he/she should present his/her material with brevity and elegance avoiding superfluous words as well as clichés and maintaining a high standard of writing.

By exercising literary ingenuity the feature writer can make even a simple and ordinary incident into a vital happening. Generally, while the news reporter only informs; the feature writer informs, entertains and educates.

THE CONCLUSION: A news report does not need a conclusion, but a feature often does, though not always. The conclusion may be a summing up of the contents of a feature, or a climax as in a short story or a cutback or a flashback to the lead.

3.2.4 STRUCTURE OF A FEATURE:

We can represent the structure of a feature as follows:

Intro

Elaboration.

Elucidation.

Interpretation.

Narration: Facts with Examples Experiences.

Happy ending: Drawing Lessons.

Further possibilities,

Conclusion.

3.2.5 TYPES OF FEATURES:

There are several types of features. However, popularly features can be categorized as:

- *News Features,*
- *Background Features,*
- *Historical Features,*
- *Anticipation Features,*
- *Personality Features*
- *Sports Features*
- *Science Features*
- *Travel Features*
- *Human-interest Features.*

This list is not an all-inclusive one. In fact, there is hardly a subject on which a feature cannot be written. A boy trying to cross a busy street, a cat waiting to catch an elusive rat, a nurse at work in hospital, a vegetable vendor in the street, people in unusual professions, personal accounts of travel, reminiscence of the past, etc. In fact, any subject can be turned into a feature.

A feature has no specific length. It can be as short as four paragraphs or as long as 40 paragraphs. Here we discuss some different types of features in detail.

HUMAN INTEREST FEATURES: The human touch is perhaps the most vital quality in a feature. For example:

“An exciting new life will begin on Tuesday for three-year-old Indira from Andhra Pradesh when she flies to Beirut with her French foster-mother Miss Eliance Magnan, a musician. Her unknown mother had left Indira in the care of a children’s home in Hyderabad without a stitch on her body or a name to go by. But, unlike other unfortunate foundlings, she will escape a life of wait and drudgery. Fate has been kind to her”.

PERSONALITY FEATURES: The stories of eminent men and women are worth telling. Human interest in eminent personalities, whether living or dead, is always great. Features can be written on their lives and work, their achievements and their unique contributions. Personalities who would make excellent feature subjects include Everest hero Tenzing Norgay, Scientist Har Gobind Khurana or Dancer Sonal Mansingh, film actors Ashok Kumar, Devanand, Meena Kumari, etc.

FEATURES ON UNUSUAL PEOPLE: The world is full of ordinary persons whose extraordinary life and work can make good features. An example was of a feature on a German couple, Heribit and Maike Frank, whose chance encounter with a craftsman in Mysore led them to quit their plum jobs and create a ‘Little India’ in their home town of Munchening, Germany.

TRAVEL FEATURES: Travel fascinates most people even though they may be prevented by lack of money or time from visiting as many places as they may want to. Travel features satisfy a basic human desire to know more about the world we live in.

“After a three-hour drive along winding mountain roads, with deep valleys on one side and huge menacing boulders jutting out of the rocks on the other, we arrived at snow-covered

Nathu Lal to be greeted by a thin fleeting cloud of mist. The cloud passed by swiftly to reveal three Chinese climbing down the slope on the other side of the barbed wire-fence put up by our troops to demarcate the boundary.”

INTERPRETATIVE FEATURES: These are intended to inform and instruct the reader about the background and significance of political, economic, social and religious issues. For example Bahai's faith, Brahma Kumaris Vishawvidyalaya, Sai Baba Temple, Ajmer Sharif etc.

SCIENCE FEATURES: Features to popularize science by explaining a scientific development in simple language for the lay reader fall into this group.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE (HOW TO?) FEATURES: These are designed to tell the reader how to make, repair or collect things, Sort of 'do-it-yourself' articles.

MISCELLANEOUS FEATURE SUBJECTS:

The list of subjects that lend themselves to feature treatment is endless, ranging from mundane activities like cooking and gardening to unusual trades and professions, from fashion and good grooming to bird watching and mountaineering, from pen friends to life at Antarctica and living with snakes or rearing a lion cub at home.

3.2.6 SUBJECTS FOR FEATURES:

As stated earlier, subjects for features are countless. If you are a person with intimate perception, rich imagination, unlimited curiosity and intense desire to write on all kinds of topics, there is no dearth of subject or writing in any language. Read your daily newspaper carefully. Better, scan two or three different papers.

Most news items from distant parts of the country lend themselves easily for feature stories. In a country like India, almost every conceivable thing can be spun into a readable feature. The success stories of the National Literacy Mission's work, the unknown lad who bagged the role of "Little Buddha", India's exploding population that presents a gloom scenario; are all good subjects for features.

All newspapers and magazines need good features. Good features add to the personality of the magazine/newspaper. Well-written features on the subjects' dear to the common reader

sell magazines and newspapers. A good feature is remembered, preserved and referred to again and again.

The feature appearing on the last page of the International Herald Tribune or on the third page of The Statesman, New Delhi, are avidly read and re-read. The Sunday magazines of daily newspapers in most languages publish features regularly.

3.2.7 PHOTO FEATURES:

Generally, words make features. And photographs make photo features. Well composed, conspicuous, adequately planned and consciously taken pictures tell the story fully and completely. As the saying goes: a picture is worth a thousand words. Five, six or more pictures with thoughtfully written captions present a story quickly, interestingly, charmingly, which get imprinted in the minds of the readers.

Good photo features are hard to come by now days. But India Today has reputation of using excellent photo features; colour pictures enliven the subject, which etches into one's memory. Life magazine from the U.S. is one such publication, which is known for its photo features. The *number of magazines* in all-important Indian language newspapers, which publish photo features, is also fast increasing.

3.3 SUMMARY:

- Features are a different kind of write-ups. Unlike news stories, editorials, and articles, features are not serious and sober in tone. Features try to touch our hearts through informal structures and extremely readable styles.
- A feature is meant for light reading. Features aim at informing, entertaining, educating, enlightening and also guiding, instructing. Features cover subjects of popular interest.
- Generally, a feature gives the reader facts in an interesting form adapted to rapid reading. The facts are amplified by observation, study and interviews. While the news story gives the facts, a feature dramatizes and supplements them by providing detailed information that will appeal to the reader's imagination. It differs from a news item, as *it is longer, has more details, follows a more informal pattern.*
- A feature is full of emotions, imaginations, etc. It fascinates, attracts, charms, educates, and entertains. A news story only informs. Features are full of variety, and impart knowledge. It illuminates and interprets.

- Some times, a feature is similar to a news story. But generally, a feature gives the reader facts in an interesting form adapted to rapid reading. The facts are amplified by observation, study and interviews. While the news story gives the facts, a feature dramatizes and supplements them by providing detailed information that will appeal to the reader's imagination. It differs from a news item, as *it is longer, has more details, follows a more informal pattern.*
- The structure of a feature is as follows: Intro, Elaboration, Elucidation, Interpretation, Narration (Facts with Examples Experiences), Happy ending (Drawing Lessons), and Further possibilities, Conclusion.
- There are several types of features. These are: *News Features, Background Features, Historical Features, Anticipation Features, Personality Features, Sports Features, Science Features, Travel Features, Human-interest Features, etc.*
- Well composed, conspicuous, adequately planned and consciously taken pictures tell the story fully and completely. As the saying goes: a picture is worth a thousand words. Five, six or more pictures with thoughtfully written captions present a story quickly, interestingly, charmingly, which get imprinted in the minds of the readers.

3.4 KEY WORDS:

Features: Features are light reading pieces. Features inform us. But they do so in a highly entertaining and often informal manner. Unlike news stories, editorials, and articles, features are not serious and sober in tone. Features try to touch our hearts through informal structures and extremely readable styles.

Personality Features: The stories of eminent men and women are worth telling. Human interest in eminent personalities, whether living or dead, is always great. Features can be written on their lives and work, their achievements and their unique contributions.

Features on Unusual People: The world is full of ordinary persons whose extraordinary life and work can make good features.

Travel Features: Travel fascinates most people even though they may be prevented by lack of money or time from visiting as many places as they may want to. Travel features satisfy a basic human desire to know more about the world we live in.

Interpretative Features: These are intended to inform and instruct the reader about the background and significance of political, economic, social and religious issues.

Science Features: Features to popularize science by explaining a scientific development in simple language for the lay reader fall into this group.

Practical Guidance (How to?) Features: These are designed to tell the reader how to make, repair or collect things, Sort of 'do-it-yourself' articles.

Photo Features: Well composed, conspicuous, adequately planned and consciously taken pictures tell the story fully and completely. As the saying goes: a picture is worth a thousand words. Five, six or more pictures with thoughtfully written captions present a story quickly, interestingly, charmingly, which get imprinted in the minds of the readers.

3.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What is a feature? Discuss.
2. Write in detail about the various types of features.
3. What are the various types of features? Discuss in detail.
4. Discuss in detail about personality features and human-interest features.
5. Discuss in detail about science features and how-to-do features.
6. Discuss in detail about travel features or travelogues.

3.4 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

Features with Flair, *Brian Nicholls*, 1972, Vikash Publishing House,

Basic Journalism, *Rangaswami Parthsarathy*, Macmillan India Ltd.

Professional Journalism, *M.V. Kamath*, Vikash Publishing House, New Delhi.

The Professional Journalist, *John Hohenberg*, Oxford and IBH, New Delhi.

Active Reporter, *James Lewis*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi.

REVIEWING

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Books, films, and TV programmes form an important part of our lives. Media educate us, they entertain us, and they also inform us. In this lesson we shall discuss about reviewing such content. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

4.0 Objectives

4.1 *Introduction*

4.2 *Presentation of Content*

4.2.1 *Film Reviewing*

4.2.2 *Book Reviewing*

4.2.3 *TV Programme Reviewing*

4.2.4 *Examples of Film Reviews*

4.2.5 *Examples of Book Reviews*

4.3 Summary

4.4 **Key Words**

4.5 **Self-Assessment Questions**

4.6 **References/Suggested Reading**

4.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson, we will discuss about the art of reviewing. Specifically, we shall focus on the following:

- *How to Review Films*
- *How to Review Books*
- *How to Review TV programmes.*

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

Newspapers and magazines provide a wide range of editorial material. The most important material, of course, is news. Also there are articles, editorials, features, etc. In addition, there are reviews. Many different kinds of things are reviewed in newspapers and magazines. These include films, books, and TV programmes.

Many readers are interested to know about forthcoming films, books, and TV programmes. Reviews provide advance information about these. In addition to providing advance information, reviews also provide analysis.

In this lesson, we shall discuss about reviewing films, books, and TV programmes.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson is divided in to three parts. These are as follows:

- *Film Reviewing*
- *Book Reviewing*
- *TV Programme Reviewing*

In addition, there are some examples of film reviews and book reviews.

4.2.1 FILM REVIEWING:

Reviewing a film is a highly creative and innovative job. It is very easy to view a film, but very difficult to review it. A film is a rare combination of beauty and brain. It is a focused observation of people, i.e., characters, events, issues, and manners. It is a harmonious synchronization of a variety of components put in a reasonable, logical and judicious manner.

Writing a film review is a skilled art and craft because many elements are working simultaneously at a given point of time. Thus film review is a process of deep observation analysis and interpretation of the film. It involves minutely viewing the film and meticulously commenting on it. It also involves predicting the probable impact of the film on the society.

In order to review a film, the author should have deep knowledge of the theme and subject covered in the film, about its producer, director and other top performers and technicians and their previous works. The following steps may be treated as useful tools for writing a good film review.

- The very first thing that is to be noticed minutely and observed meticulously is the *story*. What the story is about? Whether the story is logical, sensibly arranged, natural or just of a routine nature? This needs to be addressed in the review.

- The reviewer must see whether the film is up to the mark, whether it is up to the expectation of the audience.
- He should minutely observe whether there is anything new, innovative, and original in the film.
- He should point out whether it is a creatively intellectual piece of work.
- The reviewer should be able to find out whether it is socially, politically, and culturally relevant.
- He must discuss the merits and demerits of the film.
- How is the film from technical point of view i.e. how is the direction? How has the director handled the theme? How is the production and other technical aspects? How are the dialogues, its literary level and stylistic approach? The reviewer is supposed to look into all these.
- A film is incomplete without dialogue. He must critically comment on the dialogue.
- Then he is expected to deeply analyze and interpret the cinematography of the film.
- The casting, location, editing, music, lyrics, and the business of the film are indispensably important factors while reviewing a film.
- The review must compare the film with previous such films of like nature. For example, an art film can be compared with an art film or a commercial film can be compared with a commercial film. Similarly, a low-budget film can't be compared with a high-budget film even if the themes are similar.
- There is a variety of film audience. But broadly speaking, the audience may be categorized as general and film expert as *mass and class*. A good reviewer has to cater to both these types of audience. So the intro should always be focused on general audience. The content should be focused on experts if the reviewer is writing for a specialized film magazine or periodical. Reversibly, the content should be focused on general audience if the review is written for a popular newspaper or magazine. But in all cases, the reviewer should focus on making the review highly readable.
- The reviewer should also try to look into the fact as to how effective the film is.
- The reviewer must follow basic principles of sources, medium, message and receiver.
- Lastly the review must contain creative, constructive, productive, and reformatory comment. It should not be written with a view to looking down upon the work of the producer or director.

4.2.2 BOOK REVIEWING:

Book review is also an art and craft. It is a process of deep reading, analysis and interpretation of the book. It is a technique of minutely studying the book and meticulously analyzing and interpreting the book. It involves predicting the probable impact of the book on the society.

Reviewing a book is a matter of practice. Constant and continuous reviewing practice leads to more perfection. It goes on improving through trial and error method and gets a professional touch after a prolonged effort. Now the question arises as to why a book is reviewed. What is the purpose?

The answer is that books are reviewed with a view to helping the readers know about the ins and outs of the book. The purpose of book review generally speaking is to expand its circulation and readership in a desirable proportion. But if a book is not up to the mark, than the reviewer has to highlight this element also even if it adversely affects its circulation (sell) and readership.

Now another question arises as to who can review a book. What should be the standing and the status of the reviewer? The answer is that simply the reviewer should have the desirable knowledge of the subject and theme covered in it, about the author, his specialization, his reputation and his previous works. Again a question arises as to what is the right time to review a book. When a book should be reviewed?

The answer is that the book should be reviewed before it comes to the market after it reaches the stand. As far as the issue of placement of a book review is concerned, generally it is published either in the feature page or as special columns or pages for book review as far as a newspaper is concerned. In magazines and journals, generally, the book review is published in the last section.

TYPES OF BOOK REVIEW:

There are no well-defined types of book review. But on the basis of derived deductions, it may be categorized into the following types.

- A specialist reviewing a book for a specialized magazine or specialized newspaper,
- A specialist reviewing a book for a popular newspaper or magazine,
- A generalist reviewing a book for a popular newspaper or magazine,
- A generalist only reporting a book as to what the book is about.
- A newspaper or magazine only highlighting the cover of the book, i.e., its title, author's name, publisher's name and price.

In fact the last two types should not be categorized as book reviews in true sense, but as introductions to books. But due to lack of space and specialist book reviewers, this trend is very popular these days even in prominent magazines like *India Today* and *Frontline*.

HOW TO REVIEW A BOOK?

Some of the book reviewers only go through the blurb or the few descriptive words inside the cover jacket of the book written in bolder letters (or in different colour) and in bigger point size. Such reviewers know the author only from the blurb of the cover jacket. But this is the unhealthiest trend of reviewing a book. Some of the reviewers write a book review only by reading another review on the same book. This is yet another undesirable trend of reviewing a book.

But due to the increasing influence of market forces, i.e., the pressure of book selling, these trends are on the rise. In fact, a book reviewer has a very big responsibility. His writings can make or mar the circulation and readership of the book. So he should at least read the book two times. One reads a book the first time to know as to what the book is all about. That means to go through the book as a reader. Then one reads it a second time, to look into the book as a critic. Other striking features of reviewing a book is as mentioned below:

- A book reviewer must highlight what the book is about.
- The reviewer must mention whether it is up to the expectation.
- He must find out if there is anything new, or creative in the book.
- Then the reviewer must assess its merits, demerits, literary level, stylistic approach and technical aspects.
- The reviewer should point out whether the book is a scholarly piece of work.
- He should observe whether it is socially relevant.
- He must deeply study as to how the work is as compared to the works of similar type of past. For example, a general-interest book cannot be compared with a special-interest book.
- The reviewer should try to predict the probable impact of the book on the society.
- There are two kinds of readers. One is general. The other is specialist. A good reviewer has to cater to both the types of readers. So the content should be focused on both the general audience and the specialist. If it is written for a specialized newspaper or magazine then it can have some serious treatment. Similarly, the content should be lighter and not too serious if it written for a popular newspaper or magazine.

- The reviewer must interpret how effective is the book especially from the point of view of information, awareness, education and entertainment etc.
- The fundamental principles of writing are also applicable to book reviewing.
- Finally the review must contain creative, constructive, productive and reformatory comment. It should not be written with a view to just looking down upon the work of the author.

4.2.3 TV PROGRAMME REVIEWING:

Like book reviews, TV programme reviewing is also a matter of practice. Constant and continuous reviewing leads to more perfection. It goes on improving through trial and error and gets a professional touch after a prolonged effort. It is also a skilled art and craft where deep observation, analysis and interpretation are equally important.

Generally, television programme reviewing does not help the viewers know about the programmes well in advance and decide about watching it, because it is published after the programme is already broadcast. Thus, it neither helps the viewers nor the producers. It may help the producers do better in their next such programmes.

But in western countries, specially in the US, the reviewer gets an opportunity to view the programme well in advance and the review is also published well in advance. Thus the review helps the viewers decide whether to watch the programme or not. This attempt, however, has been made in India, too, but only partially. For example, the video magazine "News Track" produced by "India Today" was regularly reviewed well in advance. Its cassettes were sold separately and were regularly telecast on TV. It reached the viewers well in advance and helped them decide whether to watch the programme or not. The reviewer must keep the following points in mind while writing a TV programme review.

- The reviewer must highlight as to what the programme is about.
- The reviewer must look into the fact whether the programme is up to the mark?
- He should find out whether there is anything innovative, creative or new in the programme.
- Then he should assess its merits and demerits - from production point of view and content point of view. The reviewer should see the performances of the characters, direction and other technical aspects.
- The reviewer should point out whether the programme is a good piece of work.
- He should look into the fact whether the programme is socially relevant and important.

- He should investigate as to how the work is as compared to the work of the past of like nature. For example, a general-interest programme cannot be compared with a special-interest programme.
- The reviewer should try to visualize the probable impact of the programme.
- There are different types of viewers of television programmes as TV reaches a wide range of places and people. A good reviewer has to cater to all types of viewers. So the content should be in the lighter vein and should use enjoyable tone and writing if it is written for popular newspapers or magazines. Similarly, the content should be somewhat serious in treatment and sober in nature if it is written for a specialist media magazine or professional journal.
- The reviewer must find out as to how effective is the programme from the awareness point of view - whether there in conceptual, linguistic, audio and visual clarity, continuity, conciseness, credibility correctness, and completeness.
- The fundamental principles of writing are also applicable to the TV programme reviewing.
- Finally, the review must contain creative, constructive, productive and reformatory comment. It should not be written with a view to tarnishing the image of the programme producer intentionally.

4.2.4 EXAMPLES OF FILM REVIEWING:

Sarfaroosh

Reviewer : Vinayak Chakravorty (Pioneer)

An Aamir Khan release is always special for the buffs. If not anything else, his penchant for quality sets apart Bollywood's most discerning khan from the rest of the pack. Debutant director Mathew Matthan brings Aamir back in action after a long gap.

This time the khan dons a diametrically opposite action image from the street-smart tapori of *Ghulam*. *Sarfaroosh* are your quintessential *masala fare*. It is pulp fiction delving into the realities of inter-border terrorism, raising a few questions. But to Matthan's credit, he spares us any synthetic preaching about *desh prem* or cardboard-cutout villains, the traps that most "terrorism" films fall into.

At the center of it all is the protagonist, Ajay (Aamir Khan), whose life will never be the same after some terrorists kill his brother and reduce to a paraplegic state his father, who agreed to testify against them in court. It has the familiar ring of a vendetta saga! Not quite. Ajay does become an ACP, and his motive is to wipe out terrorism, all right.

But his battle is not a personal one. Rather, Matthan uses Ajay's obsession to take us through the gripping maze of the underworld that rears terrorism. The narrative weaves fiction

into facts, with Vikas Sivaraman's camera superbly trailing the action through the dunes of Rajasthan border villages in to the squalid underbelly of Mumbai. Though the outcome is predictable, Matthan's taut screenplay holds your attention till the very end.

Aamir Khan does breathe in believability to his role of a tough law keeper. He makes up with histrionic potential and a strong screen presence what he lacks physically - to look tough. Sonali Bendre as the romantic interest in the film had done her job as far as this film is concerned much before its release - whetting a popular interest about the film. If you have been seeing the TV promos of the lissome Bendre babe in wet and body-clinging red chiffon, you know what I mean.

Heading a strong supporting cast a Naseeruddin shah as the Pakistani Ghazal singer who operates as an arms smuggler on the sly. Matthan's Primary objective vis-à-vis the character is to explore the plight of Mohajirs. But the character needed a bit more meat. The surprise packet here is Mukesh Rishi. Often dismissed as a glorified stuntman by critics, Rishi comes up with a controlled performance as the upright cop, Salim.

A Bug's Life
Reviewer: Meenakshi Rao (Pioneer)

It takes you by surprise, it cajoles your interest and, in the end, it leaves you gushing with abandon - what an unexpected winner, what perfection, and what an effort! Walt Disney's bugs may have lost the release date race to DreamWorks' *Antz*, But wasn't it the tortoise who won in the end?

There is just one word to describe *A Bug's Life* - Beautiful. These enchanting ants colonize your affections, and no, they are not the ones who bug you every time you drop a morsel in your kitchen. But more than the ants and much more than the fable of and Ant Island terrorized by non-working and gluttonous grasshoppers, it is the breath-taking colours that sweep you of your feet.

If you do manage to somehow withstand them, you have no way but to pay obeisance to the utmost detail that the film unit's graphics department has gone into. You feel you are in another world altogether, a world that will make you shed your animosity to bugs of all kinds.

A take-off on an Aesop fable, *A Bug's Life* is almost real. Ignore 'almost'. And in case you dragged your feet all the way to the cinema hall, kick yourself for yourself for your stupidity and skepticism. Animation is no more just for children. It has matured to adulthood - without losing its childlike appeal.

4.2.5 EXAMPLES OF BOOK REVIEWS:

Crime Against Working Women
Author: Prabhat Chandra Tripathy, APH Publishing, Rs.700

The worlds over women form an impressive percentage of the workforce today. This was unthinkable even in the early quarter of this century. Not unusually, along with this change of social trend, especially in India, entered special rights for women some of which were encroached upon.

The author has undertaken painstaking research. He describes the social position of women right from Vedic times down to the present day. Being well acquainted with the legal implications and safeguards he gives concrete and viable suggestions.

This book could be an important addition to any legal library. Would also interest women who prefer to know exactly where they stand under certain circumstances.

THE ART OF A LAWYER (EDITED)
Editor: Chief Justice Dr. B. Malik
The University Book Agency, Rs. 550

Almost all professions, say for instance a teacher's instructor's or any other have at some point of time touched the life of every human being. The legal profession one usually meets at a point of crisis.

A good lawyer may either make or break your life. Just getting through the law course examination with excellent grades is not enough. Practical examples and tips are the vital features, which can make a brilliant lawyer.

The book contains excellent articles by judges from India, Pakistan, England and America covering a gamut of topics like the manner of cross-examination, the opening address, the closing speech, the five functions of lawyer, the writing judgement, humour in court and the art of cross-examination by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

NOTE: These examples are very short in term of number of words. Reviews often run into thousands of words. The number of words of a review depends on the requirement of the publication for which you are doing the review.

4.3 SUMMARY:

- Many readers are interested to know about forthcoming films, books, and TV programmes. Reviews provide advance information about these. In addition to providing advance information, reviews also provide analysis.
- Reviewing a film is a highly creative and innovative job. It is very easy to view a film, but very difficult to review it. A film is a rare combination of beauty and brain.
- Writing a film review is a skilled art and craft because many elements are working simultaneously at a given point of time. Thus film review is a process of deep observation analysis and interpretation of the film.
- The very first thing that is to be noticed in a film minutely and observed meticulously is the *story*. What the story is about? Whether the story is logical, sensibly arranged, natural or just of a routine nature? This needs to be addressed in the review.
- Book review is a serious art and craft. It is a process of deep reading, analysis and interpretation of the book. It is a technique of minutely studying the book and meticulously analyzing and interpreting the book. It involves predicting the probable impact of the book on the society.

4.4 KEY WORDS:

Film Reviewing: Reviewing a film is a harmonious synchronization of a variety of components of the film put in a reasonable, logical and judicious manner. Writing a film review is a skilled art and craft because many elements are working simultaneously at a given point of time.

Book Reviewing: Books are reviewed with a view to helping the readers know about the ins and outs of the book. The purpose of book review generally speaking is to expand its circulation and readership in a desirable proportion. But if a book is not up to the mark, than the reviewer has to highlight this element also even if it adversely affects its circulation (sell) and readership.

4.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What is a film review? Discuss the various elements of reviewing a film.
2. Review an art film, which you have seen recently.
3. Review a commercial film, which you have seen recently.
4. Throw light on the entire process of reviewing a book.
5. Review a book, which you have read recently.
6. Discuss briefly about TV programmes review.
7. Review any TV programme, which you have seen recently.

4.6 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING:

Kamath, M.V. (1981)- Professional Journalism

Shrivastava, K.M. (1995)- Radio & Television Journalism

Pant, N.C. & Kumar Jitendra (1990)- Dimensions of Modern Journalism.

PHOTO EDITING

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Newspapers are information-oriented. But in addition to informing, they also entertain us, educate us, and they persuade us. Newspapers carry news. In addition newspapers also carry a wide variety of photographs. Photos provide the visual break in the clutter of words. In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of photo editing. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Presentation of Content

5.2.1 Photo Selection

5.2.2 Photo Cropping

5.2.3 Photo Enlarging

5.2.4 Photo Reducing

5.2.5 Photo Sizing

5.2.6 Photo Retouching

5.2.7 Photo Reproduction

5.2.8 Photo Insetting

5.2.9 Photo Grouping and Clubbing

5.2.10 Photo Caption Writing

5.2.11 Types of Photo Captions

5.2.12 Photo Features

5.3 Summary

5.4 Key Words

5.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*

5.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

5.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson we shall discuss about the various aspects of photo editing. The objectives of this lesson are:

- *To know what is Photo Selection?*
- *To know what is Photo Cropping*
- *To know how to do Photo Enlarging?*
- *To know how to do Photo Reducing?*
- *To know how to do Photo Sizing?*
- *To know about Photo Retouching.*
- *To know about Photo Reproduction.*
- *To know about Photo Insetting.*
- *To know about Photo Grouping.*
- *To know about Photo Caption Writing.*
- *To know about Photo Caption Writing.*
- *To know about Photo Features.*

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

Photographs have become an integral part of print media. For more than one hundred years, print media have been publishing photographs. What was once a revolutionary novelty has become one of the most common and indispensable elements of modern journalism. With a few exceptions, editors inquisitively look for the best photographs to illustrate dozens of stories. Their aim is to turn out newspaper or magazine pages with an attractive and effective mix of bold headlines, masses of type and eye-catching images.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

While the glamorous TV is having an edge over all other media, the print media are concentrating on juicy scandals and scoops, reporting with elegant photographs for their survival. A picture enhances the meaning of a news story, feature or article. It gives the visual dimension to an event. And what is more important is that seldom or never does a picture err.

Raghu Rai's photo depicting typical female anxiety on the face of the former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, while she was waiting for a Russian dignitary, won applause from the readers. Raghu Rai, a well-known Indian photographer, won President's Gold Medal for

outstanding photography. Well, now the question arises as to what is actually meant by photo editing.

Photo editing is an art and craft for effective communication. In this lesson, we shall discuss about the following: selection, cropping, enlarging (or blowing up), reducing, sizing, retouching, reproduction, inseting, grouping, clubbing, etc.

- *Photo Selection*
- *Photo Cropping*
- *Photo Enlarging*
- *Photo Reducing*
- *Photo Sizing*
- *Photo Retouching*
- *Photo Reproduction*
- *Photo Inseting*
- *Photo Grouping and Clubbing*
- *Photo Caption Writing*
- *Types of Photo Captions*
- *Photo Features*

5.2.1 PHOTO SELECTION:

Selection of a photo is an extremely vital and job. This is because valuable space is wasted if the picture does nothing more than depicting a scene that could be described more efficiently with words. There is an old saying that '*a photograph speaks more than thousand words*'. This saying is not necessarily true always.

If the picture adds nothing to the readers understanding of a story, it should be rejected. On the other hand some pictures capture the emotion or flavour of a situation more vividly than words. In other situations, words and pictures provide perfect compliments.

A creative and capable picture editor, experienced in visual communication, can provide the guidance necessary for successful use of pictures. Smaller papers without the luxury of full-time picture editors can turn to their photographers for advice, but often the news editor or copy editor must make such decisions. When that is necessary, an appreciation for the importance of visual communication is essential for good results.

The selection procedure of a journalistic photograph differs from newspaper to newspaper; some allow the photographer to make the decision, the picture he or she submits to

the desk are the only ones considered for publication. This procedure may assure selection of the picture best in technical quality, but that picture may not be the best to complement the story.

A photo editor working closely with both the photographers and copy editors should have a better understanding of the story and be able to make the best selection.

5.2.2 CROPPING:

It is process of cutting the unwanted part of a photograph. Earlier photographs were either totally selected or totally rejected. But in the present era, some photographs are selected, but only their relevant and related parts are used and rest is cropped.

5.2.3 ENLARGING:

It is also called blowing up. Sometimes, some photographs are originally very small. But since they are so relevant and valuable that they need to be enlarged or blown up. So it depends on the importance of the photograph and its degree of news value.

5.2.4 REDUCING:

It is the reverse of enlarging. These days both newspapers and magazines are running through space crisis. Thus, depending on the relevance, importance and degree of news value, some photographs are reduced. These days even a group photograph is used in single column by reducing them.

5.2.5 SIZING:

The sizing of a picture should be preferably determined by the value of the photograph. It should not be determined by the space available. Too often, newspaper editors try to reduce a photograph to fit a space and destroy the impact of a photo in the process. Common sense should dictate that a picture of fifteen individuals would be ineffective if it appears as a two-column photo. More likely, such a photo will require three or even four columns of space.

Many skilful photo editors are acquainted with the fact that, when sizing photos, the biggest danger is making them too small. If the choice is between a two-column photo and a three-column photo, the rational photo editor opts for the larger size. Pictures can be too large, but more often they are damaged by making them too small.

Another alternative may be available. Modern production techniques make it easy for the editor to publish a two-and-one-half-column photo. Text to the side of it is simply set in a wider measure to fill the space. Sizing of any picture is very significant job, but sizing of pictures in

multiple photograph packages is especially significant. In such packages, one photograph should be dominant. These multiple pictures allow the photo editor a lot of flexibility that may not be available in single-photo situations.

If a photo editor selects a photo of a harried liquor store clerk who has just been robbed and a photo of the outside of the store where the robbery occurred, he or she has only three options.

- Give equal space to the two photos. This is the least desirable option since neither picture would be dominant and consequently, neither would have eye-arresting effect.
- The outside shot should be made dominant and the close-up of the clerk may be given secondary position. This would work, but the dominant picture, which merely serves as a locator, would have little impact. The impact of human emotion, evident in the clerk's face, would be diminished.
- The facial expression should be made dominant with good sizing and the outside shot should be made as small as possible. The outside shot, standing alone, would look ridiculous if used in that size. But used in conjunction with another, larger photo, it would work well. Dramatic size contrast is an effective device to use in multi-picture packages. A photo editor trained in visual communication understands the usefulness of reversing normal sizing patterns for added impact.

5.2.6 RETOUCHING:

Retouching is a process of toning down or eliminating extraneous distractions within the frame. Retouching can improve some pictures. It can be accomplished with an airbrush, an instrument that applies a liquid pigment to a surface by means of compressed air.

Retouching can also be done by brushing on a retouching liquid or paste or by using retouching pencils of varying colours. Retouching should be done so minutely and meticulously that the meaning and content of the picture are not changed. Retouching a picture to change its meaning is unethical as changing a direct quotation to alter the meaning of a speech.

5.2.7 REPRODUCTION:

There are mainly four mechanical processes of reproduction. These processes are

- *Metal engraving,*
- *Plastic plates,*
- *Screened positives,*
- *Windows and photo negatives.*

The method to be used is directly related to the page make-up and printing technology used by the newspaper or magazine.

5.2.8 INSETTING:

Insetting is an innovative and creative way of photojournalism. For example, when there was a massacre in Gujarat, the people who were killed are shown in the picture. But at the same time, a map of Gujarat is inserted in the picture indicating where is that particular places where the killings took place.

Another example of inseting is that when a debate in Parliament is going on and along with that picture if the photograph of the Parliament is also inserted, then it is called inseting. Yet another example is that if a person is brutally murdered whose face in the picture is not identifiable, and then a clear and distinct picture of that person is inserted. This is also inseting.

5.2.9 GROUPING & CLUBBING:

When two or three or more photographs are joined without overlapping one another, then it is called grouping.

When two or three or more photographs are joined in such a manner that they overlap one another partially, then it is called clubbing. It is done in a very creative, imaginative and innovative way with a sense of graphics. The photojournalist moves through four steps in handling a story:

- *Idea generation*
- *Planning*
- *Observation*
- *Writing Captions*

The photo journalist develops an idea or concept, decides on the appropriate lenses, speed and aperture and selects locations from where to shoot; decides when to shoot, and then does the darkroom work that will enhance the story. For a feature, the photojournalist moves carefully and deliberately through these stages on a breaking news event, the thinking and the decisions come quickly, seemingly and instinctively.

More significantly, pictures can also lie. Does the picture tell the whole story or only part of it? Does it distort, editorialize, mislead? Does it omit important details or include details that create an erroneous impression?

The point was raised by James Russell Wiggins, former editor of the Washington Post" during a lecture at the university of North Dakota (reported in "Editor and publisher, February 22, 1969):

"The camera can be a notorious, compulsive, unashamed and mischievous liar."

A picture may be striking and it may be narrative. But if it conveys a false or distorted impression it would be better left unpublished. Picture editors often can show subjective judgment in the selection of pictures. Suppose an editor has four or five pictures of a public figure. Some editors will select the picture showing the figure more favorably; others will pick one depicting him less favorably.

5.2.11 PHOTO CAPTION:

It is the short description of photographs published in a newspaper or magazine or any other journal. If a photograph is accompanied with a story, then the job of caption writing becomes much easier. But if there is no story with the photograph, then caption needs to be written in a comprehensive way. More importantly, a picture editor can help control the photographic image with a photo caption.

The primary purpose of the caption is to get the reader to respond to the photo in the manner intended by the photographer and the picture editor. First of all, the readers concentrate on the focal point of the picture, then glances at the other parts. Lastly, they turn to the caption to confirm what they have seen in the picture. The caption provides the answers to question of who, what, where, when, why and how, unless some of these are crystal clear in the picture.

The photo caption interprets and expands upon what the picture says to the readers. It may point out the inconspicuous but significant. It may comment on the revealing or amusing parts of the picture if these are not self-evident. The photo caption helps explain ambiguities, comments on what is not made clear in the picture and mentions what the picture fails to show if that is necessary. The ideally suited caption is direct, brief and bright. It is a concise statement, not a news story. If the picture is accompanied by a story, the caption does not duplicate. It should, however, contain enough information to satisfy the readers who will not read the story. Ideally the photo and its caption will induce the readers to go through the story.

Normally, the photo caption with a story is limited to two or three lines. Even when the photo relates to the story, the caption should not go beyond what the photo reveals. Nor should the facts in the caption differ from those in the story.

Moreover, the caption writer must examine the cropped picture, not the original one. The caption has to confine itself to the portion of the picture, the reader will see. If the caption says a woman is waving a handkerchief, the handkerchief must be the picture.

The following are some precautionary measures for writing a caption.

- Use present tense to show immediacy. This is especially applicable to the English language.
- Identify the photograph correctly. Wrong identification of a person in a picture is considered an insult to that person. Hence, double-check the photo with the caption. The wrong person pictured as "the most-wanted fugitive" is a sure way to invite libel.
- Don't comment. Don't write that the girl is beautiful or ugly. But if she is smiling, then you must say as to why she is smiling.
- When something is crystal clear and transparent in the photograph, then it needs no caption. But something is complicated, and then it needs to be repeated even in the caption.
- Be specific rather than general. Don't say an old lady. Just write a lady, 65. Don't say a voluminous book. Just say a 1000 page book.
- While explaining the pictures of persons, it should be written in bracket (from left) rather (from left to right).
- Typography used in the photo caption should be different from body i.e., it may bigger or smaller in point size (than the body type), bolder or differently coloured.
- Because the readers know you are referring to the photograph, so avoid writing like "as shown in the picture" or "the picture above shows".
- There is a time lag between photo taking and photo publishing. So the caption should be updated. For example, three persons were found killed after an earthquake according to photo, but later it was found that five persons were found killed, then the caption should tell about five persons.
- If the picture is exceptional or exclusive, then credit must be given to the photojournalist in the caption as *credit line*.
- The mood of the photo caption should match the mood of the picture. For example if a carnage or massacre has taken place, the caption should also be written in a serious tone. Moreover, the caption for a feature photo may stress light writing.
- Don't editorialize. The caption should not judge whether somebody is happy or troubled.
- Check, crosscheck and recheck the photo and the caption.
- The caption should describe the event as shown in the picture, not the event itself; otherwise the readers will be confused if you describe action, which is not there.

- Caption writing differs from newspaper to newspaper. Some newspapers use one style for captions with a story and another style for captions on pictures without a story (called stand-alone or no-story). A picture with a story might call for one, two or three words in boldface caps to start the caption. In standalones, a small head or catch line might be placed over the caption.
- News agencies and syndicates send the same photographs to different newspapers. Some papers only reset the caption supplied with the pictures. Most, if not all, such captions should be rewritten to add to the story told in the picture and to indicate some originality on the papers part.

5.2.12 TYPES OF PHOTO CAPTION:

Photo captions may be broadly classified under two types, i.e., functional and structural. The functional photo captions may be classified as:

- *Null caption*
- *Identification caption*
- *Mechanical caption*
- *Commentary caption*
- *Creative caption*
- *Cumulative caption*
- *Exploratory caption*
- *Satirical caption*

The structural photo captions may be classified as:

- *Horizontal caption and*
- *Vertical caption*

NULL CAPTION: When the photograph is self-explanatory and it does not require any caption, then it is called null caption. For example, many a time, a well-known cricketer Sachin Tendulkar is shown in action, but there, is no need to write who he is.

IDENTIFICATION CAPTION: When in a photo caption, the personalities or places are only identified, then it is called identification caption.

MECHANICAL CAPTION: When the photo is simply explained like hard news, then it is called mechanical caption. For example, RJD Chief Laloo Prasad meets SJD Chief Mulayam Singh Yadav.

COMMENTARY CAPTION: This kind of caption is mixed with comment opinions and views. Such captions are generally found with featured news or features or articles etc.

CREATIVE CAPTION: This type of caption is written in a creative and innovative manner. The type of caption is generally found with features or any other type of creative write-up.

CUMULATIVE CAPTION: This relates to photo feature. When there is a series of pictures (and the captions of the pictures are written in the list indicating the numerical position of each picture, then that collection of caption are called cumulative caption,

EXPLANATORY CAPTION: When the picture is without the story then the picture needs details or explanation. It includes the entire background of the story very briefly so that the readers can comprehend the picture.

SATIRICAL CAPTION: When the caption is full of satire and sarcasm, it is called satirical caption. This type of caption is used for features, columns, or cartoon-type of pictures. Now as far as structural caption is concerned, it is either horizontal or vertical. Earlier, there was no concept of vertical caption. But with the advancement of information technologies and printing technologies, there have been graphical and typographical revolutions. This has resulted in new experiments like vertical captions.

HORIZONTAL CAPTION: Horizontal caption is written in the bottom of a picture. This type of caption is written in as many columns as the space taken by the photograph. This is a traditional style of placing the caption.

VERTICAL CAPTION: This type of caption writing is a new experiment in the world of photojournalism. Here, the caption is written on the right hand side of the photograph and it runs vertically rather than running horizontally. It is generally half-column matter vertically running with either one-and-half-column picture or two-and-half column picture or so on.

5.2.13 PHOTO FEATURE:

Photo is an integral part of a feature. Seldom does a feature go without a picture. Pictures enhance the liveliness of a feature. But photo feature is altogether a different aspect. When photographs dominate a feature both qualitatively and quantitatively, then it is called photo feature.

In photo features, more space is occupied by picture than by written words. It is more a visual communication. It is such a skilled art and craft that picture speaks more effectively and dominantly. Here, the presentation of visual reality establishes an immediate bond of believability and familiarity with the reader of the printed page. Photo feature sometimes can tell

a story without words. It is just one of the allied arts that newspapers employ to heighten the force of the written words.

Several Indian newspapers published photo features when Mrs. Indira Gandhi died covering her life from childhood till her death. Similarly many newspapers published photo features when Princess Diana died, covering her life from the beginning to the end with the help of photographs. Thus photo features though not a regular phenomenon, are sometimes used to break the monotony of routine feature write-ups. But now the trend is catching up. But somehow good photo features are few and far between. *India Today and Front Line* have a reputation of using excellent photo features. Life magazine from the US is one such international publication, which is known for its photo features.

5.3 SUMMARY:

- Photo editing is an art and craft for effective communication. In this lesson, we shall discuss about the following: *selection, cropping, enlarging (or blowing up), reducing, sizing, retouching, reproduction, inseting, grouping, clubbing, etc.*
- Selection of a photo is an extremely vital and job. This is because valuable space is wasted if the picture does nothing more than depicting a scene that could be described more efficiently with words. There is an old saying that '*a photograph speaks more than thousand words*'. This saying is not necessarily true always.
- A creative and capable picture editor, experienced in visual communication, can provide the guidance necessary for successful use of pictures. Smaller papers without the luxury of full-time picture editors can turn to their photographers for advice, but often the news editor or copy editor must make such decisions.
- The selection procedure of a journalistic photograph differs from newspaper to newspaper; some allow the photographer to make the decision, the picture he or she submits to the desk are the only ones considered for publication. This procedure may assure selection of the picture best in technical quality, but that picture may not be the best to complement the story.

5.4 KEY WORDS:

Null Caption: When the photograph is self-explanatory and it does not require any caption, then it is called null caption. For example, many a time, a well-known cricketer Sachin Tendulkar is shown in action, but there, is no need to write who he is.

Identification Caption: When in a photo caption, the personalities or places are only identified, then it is called identification caption.

Mechanical Caption: When the photo is simply explained like hard news, then it is called mechanical caption. For example, RJD Chief Laloo Prasad meets SJD Chief Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Commentary Caption: This kind of caption is mixed with comment opinions and views. Such captions are generally found with featured news or features or articles etc.

Creative Caption: This type of caption is written in a creative and innovative manner. The type of caption is generally found with features or any other type of creative write-up.

Cumulative Caption: This relates to photo feature. When there is a series of pictures (and the captions of the pictures are written in the list indicating the numerical position of each picture, then that collection of caption are called cumulative caption,

Explanatory Caption: When the picture is without the story then the picture needs details or explanation. It includes the entire background of the story very briefly so that the readers can comprehend the picture.

Satirical Caption: When the caption is full of satire and sarcasm, it is called satirical caption. This type of caption is used for features, columns, or cartoon-type of pictures.

Horizontal Caption: Horizontal caption is written in the bottom of a picture. This type of caption is written in as many columns as the space taken by the photograph. This is a traditional style of placing the caption.

Vertical Caption: Here, the caption is written on the right hand side of the photograph and it runs vertically rather than running horizontally.

5.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What is photo editing? Discuss the importance of photo editing.
2. Discuss in brief the various elements of photo editing.
3. What do you mean by photo caption?
4. Discuss the various requirements for writing photo captions.
5. What is a photo feature? Discuss the role of photo feature in print media.

5.6 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

- Baskette, Sissors and Brooks (1982)- **The Art of Editing.**
- Ray and Ron (1985)- **An Introduction of Journalism: Into the Newsroom.**

M. A. Mass Communication (2nd year)

MEDIA WRITING MMC 201 Lesson: 6

ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

This lesson is structured as follows:

- 6.0 *Objectives*
- 6.1 *Introduction*
- 6.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 6.2.1 *Article- An Introduction*
 - 6.2.2 *Article Writing*
 - 6.2.3 *Types of Articles*
 - 6.2.4 *Editorial Writing*
- 6.3 *Summary*
- 6.4 *Key Words*
- 6.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 6.6 *References / Suggested Reading*

6.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson, you will be exposed to the following aspects of articles and editorials:

- *An Introduction to Article*
- *Article Writing*
- *Types of Articles*
- *Editorial writing*

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

Any newspaper is a collection of news stories, features, editorial(s) and articles. A news story provides hard news. It provides information in a straightforward manner. A feature appeals to the emotions. It covers all kinds of topics and provides the information in an interesting and easy-to-read manner. A feature tries to entertain while informing. Editorials provide the newspaper's point of view. Articles, on the other hand, provide the point of view of individual writers.

Like editorials, articles also analyze and interpret. Articles provide arguments and counter-arguments. An article goes to the root cause of an event or happening and provides background information. Then it describes the present situation and finally peeps into the future also. In this lesson, we shall discuss about both articles and editorials.

6.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Article- An Introduction*
- *Article Writing*
- *Types of Articles*
- *Editorial writing*

6.2.1 ARTICLES- AN INTRODUCTION:

An article is a glorified and dignified form of an essay written in a journalistic manner with topicality (or current ness), innovation and social relevance. It is written on serious burning and timely issues like foreign policy, international issues, constitutional reforms, women's Bill, industrial policy, economic policy, land reforms, imposition of article 356, review of articles 85, etc.

An Article comes from the mind whereas a feature is the product of author's heart. Reversibly, an article appeals to the mind whereas a feature appeals to the reader's heart. The subject expert writes an article, i.e., here the author is authority, whereas generalist may write a feature. An article is a serious form of write-up whereas a feature is an interesting, entertaining, enlightening and light form of write-up. Feature is a special form of presentation full of high communicability and creativity written on a given subject, which is of concern and interest to common readers.

An article is generally published on the editorial page of a newspaper, whereas feature is mostly published in Saturday and Sunday magazines of a newspaper. As far as weeklies and

fortnightlies are concerned, a good example for article is “*Economic & Political weekly*”, “*Yojana*”, “*Kurukshetra*”, etc; whereas features are generally found in “*Readers’ Digest*”, “*Sarita*” etc.

There is no hard and fast format for article writing. It has three important parts, i.e., intro, body and conclusion that may be sometimes presented in a pyramid form or may be in a cylindrical form or may be of any other type.

6.2.2 ARTICLE WRITING?

In order to write an article the following steps should taken:

- (i) Selection of the topic,
- (ii) Collection of the material,
- (iii) Gate keeping,
- (iv) Evaluation,
- (v) Presentation.

SELECTION OF THE TOPIC:

For writing an article, the first and foremost step is to select a topic. The topic should be current, socially relevant, and innovative and issue based. It may come out from the lead stories of the front page.

COLLECTION OF THE MATERIAL:

After selection of the topic, relevant material should be collected from various conventional sources and non-conventional sources. One may plan to interview some important and relevant personality, one plan to talk to the important sources or consult various books from the library.

GATE KEEPING:

This involves three processes. First there is selection of the relevant and the related material of the subject. Then there is rejection of some other portion of the collected material. Some of the materials are outright rejected as these are felt to be of no use.

EVALUATION:

After the selection of the related, relevant and useful material, it is evaluated as to how much importance should be given to which parts, which aspects and which issues in accordance with

the journalistic requirement of the subject or theme of the article. What should be the actual length of the article and to which column or page or section or newspaper or journal it should be sent, is also decided in the evaluation process.

PRESENTATION:

While writing an article, you should pay attention to some of the elementary points of presentation. First of all, you should understand the importance of words in a write-up. Words in a write-up or article are like bricks in a house. So the selection organization and presentation of words are extremely important.

For that you need “*Word Power*”. You should know lots of “*synonyms*” and “*antonyms*”. Know the proper use of the word and syntax. Secondly, you should keep an eye on (a) clarity, (b) conciseness, (c) continuity, (d) correctness, (e) commonness, (t) credibility, (g) completeness.

Clarity: There should be conceptual and linguistic clarity in the article you are going to write. For bringing about clarity in your article, first of all you should yourself understand the subject or the theme through and through. If you don’t understand something, you can’t simplify it. Moreover, the language should also be plain and simple and should be easily understandable to common readers.

Conciseness: Before writing an article, you should keep in mind that verbosity is not the basis of a good article. “*Small is beautiful*”. So use short words, short sentences, short paragraphs and the whole article should be short, brief and concise. Very long and lengthy articles are not considered to be readable or communicable and are going to be against professional desirability today.

A decade back, articles were written in 1500 words or 2000 words or 2500 words. But now the size is preferably reduced to less than 1000 words coupled with photographs, cartoons or some other elegant looking visual dimensions or graphical presentations. William Shakespeare has thus aptly remarked: “Brevity is the soul of the wit.”

Now a very pertinent question arises as to what should be the size of an article? Can it be written in 100 words, 200 words or 300 words? The answer to this question is that there should not be “*head-cut instead of hair-cut*.” It should not kill the identity of the story. It should not do away with the gist or the essence of the story.

Moreover, it should care for other aspects also like credibility, commonness and completeness. Thus, your article should not be too long or lengthy that it becomes dull and dismal and it should not be too short or small, that the personality or identity of the story is lost.

Continuity: Continuity is none-the-less significant in article writing. It means flow. It indicates maintaining a link between first sentence and second sentence, between second sentence and third sentence, between one paragraph and another paragraph. That is to say that your whole write up should be so properly interwoven that the ideas should not appear to be scattered or fractured or divided.

Even if there is a break in paragraph, there is continuity assuming the fact that only the direction of the idea is changing. Maintaining continuity is not a child's play. It is a Herculean task. It does not come through preach alone. A lot of practice is required.

Constant and continuous practice leads to more and more perfection in maintaining continuity of your article. It goes on improving through trial and error method and gets a professional touch after a prolonged effort. So do not use very long and peculiarly unpopular or old-fashioned words, which fail to arrest your readers throughout your write-up. Thus *“don't throw your readers to the dictionary, otherwise your readers will throw you out of your job.”*

But this does not mean you should avoid consulting dictionary. Being a professional, you should always look up the dictionary and enrich your words power as I have already mentioned in the very beginning of this lesson. Again maintaining continuity and thereby not throwing your readers to the dictionary does not mean you should avoid using new or technical words. You must use new or semi-technical or technical words if there is no substitute of its appropriateness. But new or semi-technical or technical words should not be clubbed in plenty in one or two paragraph.

On the contrary, you should scatter new or semi-technical or technical words throughout your article. Moreover, you should again keep in mind of not throwing your readers to the dictionary, while using new words. You use the new or uncommon words in such a way that your readers should directly comprehend the meaning of that word through your usage there. In other words, you should donate new or technical words to your readers along with your new and innovative ideas. Many a time, several readers learn many new words directly from newspapers or magazines.

Correctness: Correctness is equally important while writing an article. If your article carries some wrong information or is full of factual errors, then your love labour will be lost even if your interpretation is minute and analysis is meticulous. Factuality is the elementary aspect of our journalism, despite the fact that it has emerged as the biggest Casualty today. I will just give you an example as to how a mistake of a comma can make remarkable difference, e.g.,

The king says the trader is foolish.

This means that according to the king, the trader is foolish. Now let us play a little with commas. Just put one comma after the king and one comma after the trader and see the remarkable difference. Now the sentence says:

The king, says the trader, is foolish.

Now by inserting just two commas, the meaning of the sentence is totally reversed. That means now it is according to the trader that the king is foolish.

Commonness: Commonness is the core of any communication. That is to say that communication will not take place without commonness. In fact the word communication has been derived from the Latin word “**communis**” which means commonness of understanding. Thus communication will take place only when the frame of reference of both the source and the receiver is common. So while writing an article, you must try to read the pulse of your readers. You must try to know the psychology of your readers. Before writing your article, you must raise these questions,

- *For whom are you writing?*
- *What is your target audience?*
- *What are the interest, inclination, attitude, aptitude, mind-set and mentality of your audience?*

In fact, knowledge of the audience is more important than the knowledge of the subject. You may be subject expert. But due to lack of knowledge of your audience, you may fail to communicate. Thus, know your audience, know the level of the audience and then write accordingly. Supposing, you all know Hindi and English. But if I write this lesson excellently in French language, then will it be useful for you? 'No' is the definite answer, because French is not common between you and me. What to speak of article writing; audience research has become an internal part of media planning even when you are launching a newspaper or a magazine. Media spend lot of money these days on such matters. So, while writing article, you should spend at least much time (if much money is not available) on these inevitable matters.

Credibility: Credibility is inevitable in an article. You can't think for commendable piece of write-up without credibility. But the question is to how to make your article credible? If you write thousands of excellent articles, then your next article itself carries high level of credibility. That means your name has been established and it is the name, which sells, it is the name, which provides credibility or believability to the piece of write-up.

This is called source credibility, which comes from long, constant and commendable contributions. Many a film viewer presumes that this particular film must be worth-viewing if that particular hero is there or if that particular heroin is there or if that particular character is there. Similarly many a time, even the readers presume that this particular article must be excellent if the writer is his favorite one. Thus, this type of credibility relates to the image of the source, which you can't develop overnight. So right now forget about this aspect of credibility for you, as you are a cub journalist.

There is another angle of source-credibility also. Sources raise the credibility of your article. That is to say that if you mention the reliable and right source in your article, it will definitely raise the credibility of your writing work. For example if you write in your article that according to the Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, *"the university is going to be modernized in no time and several new and job-oriented courses of international importance will be started soon."*

Then these words of DU VC will raise the credibility of your article. On the other hand, if you write that somebody in the DU campus was of the opinion that DU will be taken over by the State Government. This statement does not have any credibility as somebody in the Campus stated it. Similarly, interview raises the credibility of your article. If you incorporate an extensive and intensive interview of relevantly high personality in your article, then its credibility becomes much higher.

On the other hand, picture also adds to the credibility of your article. If you are writing an article on a famous tourist spot and add related, relevant and appealing picture, then it tremendously enhances the visual dimensions of your article leading to increase in the credibility level of your article.

Moreover, if you are referring to a bribe case in your article and there is a photograph of the incidence also then its credibility becomes multiple. Similarly examples raise the credibility of an article. Data, chart, diagram, visual illustration, etc. raise the credibility of your article.

Moreover, quotations and references raise the credibility. Credibility is also dependent on clarity, conciseness, continuity, correctness, etc.

Completeness: An incomplete message does not ring bell, even if it is a 30- page write-up. A complete message appeals to the mind and heart even if it is a 60 second ad. It is the completeness of the message, which leads to reception of it; the way source intended it to be received. It is only on the basis of completeness that crystal clear conclusion of some interpretation or thought comes out. So completeness in an article is indispensable.

Completeness means covering almost all the probable aspects of the issues undertaken for analysis. So while writing an article don't consider a few variables. Then there will be polarizations in your article. For example, if you are analyzing the performance of a university in your article, then don't only take students' version. But also take teachers' viewpoint, non-teaching staff 's way of thinking, parents and guardians outlook and administrators point of view.

And then make any conclusion. Good or bad is always a relative term. So also compare the performance of that university with several other equally old universities of equal nature and status. If you conclude the performance of a university as very bad or good or very good or excellent on the basis of above parameters, then only completeness will be reflected in your article. Other than above elementary points, there are some golden rules, which must be kept in mind while writing an article. Those rules are following:

If doubt, cut it out If doubt, find it out If doubt, stick to the hand-out:

Any time you find anything doubtful in your article, then cut it out. But if something is so inevitable and indispensable, without which your article becomes senseless or meaningless or directionless, then you must find it out. In case of some legal controversies, always stick to the handout.

Don't present your ignorance:

Some of the authors have got into the undesirable habit of always using I like, I think, I mean, I know, etc. This style should be avoided in an article as far as it is possible. Don't write I think. Since it is your article, so it is well known to everyday that it is your thought. Sometimes, if you get some first hand information directly, then 'I' may be used, but miserly. For example, if you are an eyewitness of a train accident in which you were also traveling, then you may use 'I'

miserly in narrating to that accident. Even in this type of article, you may sometimes write “*this author was amazed.....* or “*this author was bewildered.....* etc.

Be a voracious reader:

You must read a lot while writing. Even if you don't write, read voraciously. Writing comes automatically. You must select good and bad article writers. Collect several pieces of good articles and read them regularly and voraciously. This will help you a lot in article writing sooner or later.

Think originally:

Many article writers have a tendency to think originally in their mother tongue and then they translate it into English or Hindi. This leads to a fractured or scattered or broken kind of a write up. So try to think originally in the language in which you want to write. Moreover, if conceptually also you are an original thinker, then your article will be more arresting, more sequence-wise and finally crystal clear, absolutely concise, flow-orientated, credible and logically concluded.

Check, crosscheck and double check:

While you are using some inevitable points and issues in your article, you are not very sure about the accuracy, factuality and authenticity of that editorial matter. Then you must check, cross, crosscheck and multi-check it.

Give uncompromising attention to legal safety: While writing an article, you must be extremely careful about the subject matter and the treatment you give to it. Other wise, it may lead to some legal controversy. If the article violates the Official Secrets Act or infringes the Copyright Act or leads to any kind of slander or libel, then the punishment to writer, editor and even publisher may turn out to be extremely painful and economically distressing. So look before you leap as and when you come across any legal issues.

6.2.3 TYPES OF ARTICLES:

Article is broadly classified into three types:

- *General,*
- *Special, and*
- *Research-oriented*

General Articles:

A general article is usually published on either Sunday Magazine or op-ed page or editorial page (except central article) or any other page. It is written on current burning topic of general interest. The writers also belong to a group of general intellectuals. The general articles again may be of different kinds like informative, educative, analytical, and satirical, etc.

Special Articles:

Special articles are published on special place and are written on special topics by special writers. Generally this type of article is published on the central place (i.e., just opposite to the first editorial) of the editorial page. It is written on specific topics of national and international importance by nationally or internationally important personality. Though the status of the writer depends on nature of the newspaper - local, regional or national. But even if the newspaper is local. The writer is not a general one, but special one. The special article broadly speaking may be educative or analytical.

Research-oriented Articles:

As far as research article is concerned, it is written after a prolonged research by team. This article is not written like orthodox research paper having intro, objectives, methodology, hypothesis, data collection, data analysis, etc. But objective, methodology, data analysis and inferences are directly or indirectly reflected in a research article. This type of article may be analytical or inferential or both.

6.2.4 EDITORIAL WRITING:

An editorial of a newspaper is the comment of the newspaper on current or burning topics. A newspaper should be known for its news. But it is generally known for its views. Foreign correspondents especially are aware of how often they quote the major newspapers of the country they are assigned to.

While news is sacred and opinion free and possibly profane, it is the opinion, evidently, that counts. News frequently is transient, but views have the aura of a certain permanency about them. Today's news may be tomorrow's garbage, but today's view can remain fresh for a long time to come. Though only a few read editorials, the latter form and nurture public opinion, especially opinion of the elite that alone frequently counts.

M. V. Kamath is of the opinion that a good editorial can incite action, inspire deeds subvert legislation, stir revolution, There are editorials and editorials. Long ones and short one, pompous ones and perceptive ones, thoughtful ones sand-titillating ones, editorials that are hard-hitting as well as caressing, inspiring as well as denigrating, editorials, in fact, that reflect as wide a range of human emotions as are known to man.

Many of us think the editor alone writes that editorial. It is a one-man show. But this is no true. T.J.S. George in his book *“Editing: A Handbook For Journalists”* has stated, *“Today, editor is one who does not edit.”*

Thus, there are batteries of *“editorial writers”* also called *“leader writers”* who write anonymously, but obviously under the guidance and direction of the editor to whom, of course, all opinion is attributed.

The editorial writers consist of Chief Editor (or Editor-in-Chief or Editor), Resident Editor, Executive Editor, Associate Editor, Deputy Editor and Assistant Editor. Thus, it is a combination of specialization of several subjects and issues. The Chief - Editor (or Editor-in-Chief or Editor) assigns different topics and issues to these editorial writers and gives them certain instructions specialty the deadline and word limitation.

Geoffrey Parsons, former chief editorial adviser of the *New York Herald Tribune* once said:

“ The richer the writer’s background, the larger his ability to stimulate thought about anything. A good editorial writer addresses the largest classes ever reached a teacher, philosopher or critic..... He cannot know too much, if he is to hold their attention.

An editorial is an instant comment on the most burning and current topic. A good newspaper editorializes the most important events (that generally comes from the first or second lead stories) within three days.

An editorial is generally published on the extreme left side of the central middle page of the newspaper called *“editorial page”*. The setting of editorial matter may be different from double column to three columns in different newspapers, though it is generally in D/C setting. Sometimes, an editorial is also front-paged in exceptionally extreme cases.

The purpose of editorial writing is to express newspaper’s viewpoint and persuade the readers positively. A well-known editor *Arthur Brisbane* believed that the purpose of editorial writer is four-fold: *he could teach, attack, defend and praise.*

He explained this further. Teaching is the most important and the most difficult. Attacking is the easiest and most unpleasant though sometimes necessary. The defending of good causes, of the weak against the strong of the new idea against the ridicule is important and usually neglected by editorial writers. While writing an editorial, the fundamental principles of writing and golden rules are strictly adhered to.

The format and structure of an editorial is “*cylindrical*.” Sometimes, it may be “*homogeneously cylindrical*” and sometimes it may be “*heterogeneously cylindrical*.” Moreover, you should also follow certain codes while writing an editorial. According to the code of ethics explained by the U.S. National Conference of Editorial Writers, “Editorial writer, like the scientist, must pursue truth no matter where it leads if he is to be faithful to his craft and to his society.”

The basic points of this code are:

- The editorial writer should present facts honestly and fully.
- He should draw objective conclusions from stated facts basing them upon the weight of evidence and upon the considered concept of the greatest good.
- He should never be motivated by personal interest.
- He should realize that he is not infallible and should give voice to those who disagree with him in a public letters column and by other suitable devices.
- He should review his own conclusions and correct them should he find them based on previous misconceptions.
- He should have the courage of well-founded conviction and never write anything that goes against his conscience. Where editorial pages are product of more than one mind, sound collective judgement can be achieved only through sound individual judgements. Therefore, thoughtful individual opinions should be respected.
- He should support his colleagues in their adherence to the highest standards of professional integrity.

6.3 SUMMARY:

- A news story provides hard news. It provides information in a straightforward manner. A feature appeals to the emotions. It covers all kinds of topics and provides the information in an interesting and easy-to-read manner. A feature tries to entertain while informing. Editorials provide the newspaper's point of view. Articles, on the other hand, provide the point of view of individual writers.

- Like editorials, articles analyze and interpret. Articles provide arguments and counter-arguments. An article goes to the root cause of an event or happening and provides background information. Then it describes the present situation and finally peeps into the future also.
- An editorial of a newspaper is the comment of the newspaper on current or burning topics. A good editorial can incite action, inspire deeds subvert legislation, stir revolution, There are editorials and editorials. Long ones and short one, pompous ones and perceptive ones, thoughtful ones sand-titillating ones, editorials that are hard-hitting as well as caressing, inspiring as well as denigrating, editorials, in fact, that reflect as wide a range of human emotions as are known to man.
- There are batteries of “*editorial writers*” also called “*leader writers*” who write anonymously, but obviously under the guidance and direction of the editor to whom, of course, all opinion is attributed.
- An editorial is generally published on the extreme left side of the central middle page of the newspaper called “*editorial page*”. The setting of editorial matter may be different from double column to three columns in different newspapers, though it is generally in D/C setting.

6.4 KEY WORDS:

Clarity: For bringing clarity in your article, first of all you should yourself understand the subject or the theme through and through. If you don’t understand something, you can’t simplify it. Moreover, the language should also be plain and simple and should be easily understandable to common readers.

Conciseness: Before writing an article, you should keep in mind that verbosity is not the basis of a good article. So use short words, short sentences, short paragraphs and the whole article should be short, brief and concise. Very long and lengthy articles are not considered to be readable or communicable and are going to be against professional desirability today.

Continuity: Continuity means flow. It indicates maintaining a link between first sentence and second sentence, between second sentence and third sentence, between one paragraph and another paragraph. That is to say that your whole write up should be so properly interwoven that the ideas should not appear to be scattered or fractured or divided.

Completeness: Completeness means covering almost all the probable aspects of the issues undertaken for analysis. So while writing an article don’t consider a few variables.

6.5 SELF- ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What do you mean by an article? Discuss its various types.
- 2 Differentiate between an article and a feature.
3. Discuss the various types of an article?
4. What steps will you follow while writing an article?
5. What is an editorial? Discuss the purpose of writing an editorial.
6. Who writes an editorial in a newspaper? Discuss it briefly.

6.6 REFERENCES & SUGGESTED READINGS:

- Kamath, M.V. (1995) - **“Professional Journalism”** published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.,
- George, T.J.S. (1989) - **“Editing - A Handbook For Journalists”** published by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

SCRIPT WRITING FOR RADIO AND TV

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Radio and television, the two components of electronic media, have transformed journalism, information-dissemination, and entertainment by changing the communication patterns around the world.

Social scientists and thinkers described the coming of radio as the dawn of a new age. This was considered as important as the inventions of the wheel, the printing press and the steam locomotive that have marked important stages in the progress of human civilization.

Television, like most inventions was the combination of earlier technological developments and not the creation of single creative effort. The history of television can be traced to the developments of radio, motion pictures, photography and the moving camera.

Whereas because of satellites and cable television, there has been exponential growth in television broadcasting during the closing decades of twentieth century, radio has somewhat lagged behind as a mass communication medium. However, it still has a larger reach among the common men and is making inroads into urban audiences through FM channels.

In this lesson, we shall discuss about writing for radio and TV. We shall also focus on the types of radio and TV programmes. This lesson shall be structured as follows:

7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Presentation of Content

7.2.1 Characteristics of Radio

7.2.2 Types of Radio Programmes

7.2.3 Writing for Radio Programmes

7.2.4 Guidelines for Radio Talks

7.2.5 Types of Television Programmes

- 7.2.6 *Script Writing for Television Programmes*
- 7.3 *Summary*
- 7.4 *Key Words*
- 7.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 7.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

7.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To Understand the Characteristics of Radio,*
- *To Know about the various Types of Radio Programmes,*
- *To Understand Writing for Radio Programmes,*
- *To Know the various Guidelines for Radio Talks,*
- *To Know about the various Types of Television Programmes,*
- *To Understand Script Writing for Television Programmes.*

7.1 INTRODUCTION:

Lionel Fielden, the first Controller of All India Radio, in a talk on *Broadcasting as a Career*, in 1938 said:

“Broadcasting deals with every subject under the sun, the man who makes a success of it must be in the best sense of the, word a dilettante, he must take interest in, and know some thing, about every thing. The programme staff of a broadcasting station is in the same position as the editor of a newspaper who can make an exciting column out of a dull item of news, or a film producer who can twist a boring story into a first rate picture. The first necessity of those who wish to join the programme staff of broadcasting is precisely this infinite quality of being able to make bricks without straws, or if you like to put in another way, a special type of creative imagination. A radio programme should therefore have elements of intellectual curiosity and imaginative ability.”

Public Service Broadcasting is one of the main objectives of radio, and also of television broadcasting in our country. Sir John Reith, the first Director General of BBC felt that broadcasting might be the determining factor in the future of India. According to him:

“The service must not be used for entertainment purposes alone. Broadcasting has a responsibility to bring into the greatest possible number of homes in the fullest degree all that is best in every department of human knowledge, endeavor and achievement. The preservation of a high moral tone- and avoidance of the vulgar and the hurtful- is of paramount importance. Broadcasting should give a lead to public taste rather than pander to it.”

7.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

In this lesson, the content shall be presented as follows:

- *Characteristics of Radio,*
- *Types of Radio Programmes,*
- *Writing for Radio Programmes,*
- *Guide lines for Radio Talks,*
- *Types of Television Programmes,*
- *Script Writing for Television Programmes.*

7.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RADIO:

The biggest limitation of radio is that it is entirely dependent on sound only. It is a shared medium. Also there are no visual elements on radio. However these problems can be overcome to a great extent. Enriching the programmes with a wide variety of sounds and music can solve the limitation of radio being 'sound only'.

Radio programmes need to be 'intrusive' to solve the problem of being a shared medium. Variations of voice in terms of modulations in tone, pitch, and volume can make listening to radio a rich and fulfilling experience.

Radio listening is often described as 'theatre of mind'. And effective and attractive programmes can be made using rich imagination. Good radio programmes almost always are 'simple' and follow the seven C's of communication- *clarity, conciseness, continuity, correctness, credibility, commonness, and completeness*. These principles also hold true for television programmes.

7.2.2 TYPES OF RADIO PROGRAMMES:

There are many types of Radio Programmes. These include:

- *News, views, reviews,*
- *Interviews, short talks, plays and skits,*
- *Musical programmes,*
- *Announcements*

In Spoken-word programmes, the emphasis is on using simple language, but simple language does not mean a language devoid of embellishment, ornamentations or an extension of

meaning. In a discussion it is better to leave the conclusion open. The limit of the media can only alert (but not alter).

Interviews can be of many types. They can be arranged to bring out facts on a major event (situational), present a personality profile, and can also be achievement oriented. It can be just a technique of assessing public opinion on a limited subject.

Feature is the most sophisticated and modern art of a very ancient form of story telling. It should have the unity of purpose and should not be diffused and rambling. Feature is a programme on a single theme or a subject composed and presented in a dramatic manner. How to give concrete shape to a feature? The best way is to prepare a run down script consisting of a statement, an analysis and resolution with necessary music and sound effects.

The three tools of any dramatic presentation at any time, which take forward a programme, are *speech*, *sound effects* and *music*.

Each tool has a purpose, personality and meaning of its own. Use the right tool in the right place for the right duration. Use specific effects to depict different actions, to establish locale or scene or an atmosphere or a background to heighten and accentuate a mood.

Radio Documentary is a factual authoritative presentation of an event, idea, a development, problem or issue in an artistic form with more than one speaker. It relies strictly on 'contribution from the horses mouth, i.e., from primary sources. Most socioeconomic problems lend themselves to documentary treatment.

Popular science programmes should not be equated with hard-core science. These programmes are aimed at the common listener. Thus they should be imaginatively presented to sustain the interest. These programmes should not attempt to give too many facts, nor give the facts without putting them into a meaningful perspective.

In planning popular science programmes, efforts must be made to project relevant aspects with which a large number of people are concerned. In programmes directed to youth and women listeners, emphasis should be on eradicating outdated customs, rituals and superstitions.

The programmes of rural listeners should be functionally relevant. The hardcore information has to be presented in simple and interesting ways so that it reaches home effectively. A quiz is a question-answer programme, which can have various formats. It should basically aim at satisfying the desire for information by involvement of our listeners.

7.2.3 WRITING FOR RADIO PROGRAMMES:

Writing for radio is a complex and a difficult process. In the field of literature there are a variety of forms, which a writer can attempt; the novel, the short story, the essay, the poem, the drama. Each one has its definite pattern. Radio writing has likewise evolved into various forms.

Talks and plays appear to be major ones, but there are scores of other types, each having a variety of brands. Talks may be of so many kinds - interviews, speeches, forum discussions, sermons, and unscripted round-table discussions.

Again the innocent appearing sermons or addresses on religious or moral subjects can, of course, be educational as well as political. Then there are specific talks for different age groups and professional groups; for women, farmers, and industrial workers.

Likewise news could be given different formats: straight news, news analysis, commentaries, spot-renderings, flashbacks, etc.

Writing for radio must be precise and properly proportioned. It is not easy to be simple, direct and brief. One has to develop the skills of writing with brevity and to the point, and resist the temptation of writing prolonged scripts, talks, features or dramas. The time factor is all-important. It does not help if the script is long and complicated.

The proper use of words, the right mode of delivery, style is equally important. It is an art to produce rich effect by familiar words and to sustain interest. Through radio programmes we want to tell something or the other. The art of telling something, say, a story, is an old one, mastered by few. The words used must be such that they can show, point out, announce, declare, with rich effect, without visual aids. In the choice of words, one must exercise judgement and aptness. Usually the words used, should be specific and concrete.

Words are symbols, and when properly used and understood they are carriers of exact meaning. Words, when uttered, describe something with a certain amount of expression, of feeling, reflecting the personality of the talker, resulting in some effect, achieving certain ends. Since we are restricted only -to the aural sphere (listening), the familiar words have an important bearing. Pronunciation is a science and the 'right words must be uttered properly if we want to create appropriate effects.

Script writing for radio has to be in conversational style. It means writing for the ear. Newspapers obviously, are written for the eye, which essentially means that if readers do not understand something they can return the paragraph or sentence and read it again.

In broadcast news, on the contrary, people hear the words just once. So, broadcast copy must be written clearly. Thoughts must be expressed quickly with brief, crisp sentences. Broadcast writers must write the way most people speak. Short words are often easier to

understand than long ones and, crucially for broadcast news where time is precious they take less time to deliver.

Long sentences should be avoided while writing script for radio news. The sentences as well as paragraphs should be short. Sentences that produce information overload should be avoided. The sentences should be broken into parts for, easier understanding. Also attempts should be made to reduce the number of details in one sentence. Avoid sentences that are longer than 16-18 words. Long sentences should be split into shorter ones.

Apart from giving scripted stories, an important part of a radio reporters' job is to give voice-dispatches, which have become an essential part of radio bulletins. Broadcast news must present a sense of immediacy.

Use present tense verbs, particularly present progressive verbs; which suggests on-going action adds to the immediacy. Such instances which are quite common on TV these days are called "breaking news". This essentially means news is being reported at the time it is developing. Such news items are quite common during election result broadcasts or important happenings.

Apart-from news script writing much would also depend on how the newsreaders present the news bulletin. Eminent newsreader and radio broadcaster Melville de Mello had raised news reading to a level of professional competence, which remains unmatched so far. Such newsreaders can be an asset to any broadcast organization.

7.2.4 GUIDELINES FOR RADIO TALK:

Here are some guidelines for writing radio talks:

- A radio talk must be written in the everyday colloquial language. If it is not, it tends to sound - Heavy. Write as you speak using the conversational format.
- Avoid difficult constructions, complex sentences and the passive voice.
- Try to be personal. Frequent use of 'I' and 'You' in a radio script always helps in building identification and rapport helps.
- Avoid loading the script with too much information. Considering that the listener can neither see you nor turn back to what you have already said, he will enjoy listening to you only if it is simple and easy to understand.
- Don't clutter up your talk with figures. If figures are necessary, they should be rounded off. Figures by themselves mean very little. Comparative figures, or figures which are translated into an image are more effective.

- There is no harm in repeating. Ideas register better on the radio when they are conveyed in more ways than one.
- On an average, a talker can comfortably deliver between 100 -and 120 words in a minute. Regulate the length of your script accordingly.
- For perfect delivery, mark pauses and -stresses in your script.

7.2.5 TYPES OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES:

At whatever level we might consider- information, education, cultural impacts - television has become central to the contemporary society. With the exponential expansion in the number of TV sets, channels and broadcasting infrastructure, television is no longer confined to urban areas. Its rapid proliferation in most of the rural areas makes it almost an ubiquitous mass medium of communication. It is therefore essential to develop an understanding of TV programmes and the way these are produced. The different types of TV programmes are:

INFORMATIVE PROGRAMMES:

- *News and Current Affairs:* These include News bulletins, direct coverage of proceedings of important events, news magazines, interviews, panel discussions, news features and news magazine programmes. An excellent example or news magazine is the one-hour Sunday News Programme on Star Plus channel with includes important events of the week, in-depth analysis and interviews with the personalities involved in making of the news events.
- *Sports*
- *General Information:* Environment issues, Human-interest stories and consumer affairs, women's representation and protection of their rights, science and technology, economic policy etc.

ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES:

Being primarily devoted to entertainment, television uses a lot of *film-based programmes* in addition to *serials, soaps, dramas, comedies, plays, light and popular music, game shows, talk shows*, etc.

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES:

- Educational Programmes including Open University and distance learning programmes (UGC and IGNOU programmes on Doordarshan),

- Social & Development Programmes: Health, Fitness and hygiene, agriculture and rural development, public service messages.
- Cultural Programmes: Programmes related to language, literature, art, theatre, cultural heritage are included in this category.

7.2.6 SCRIPT WRITING FOR TELEVISION PROGRAMMES:

The essential difference between a radio script and a TV script is that the visual component is very important in the TV script. Equally essential is the careful blending of both the audio and video components - so as to leave a harmonious impact on the viewers. Script for TV contains the entire details of the programme, including the characters, the dialogues with the specific voice modulations, tone and style. Scripts also include details of situation, scene, shot divisions, location or studio details, the basic actions, the- music, songs, etc.

When a script is prepared in the visual form, is called “story board”. Before scripting for TV programmes, it is essential to research the subject, visit various locations and sites and have a feel of the general environment and atmosphere. This exploration of all aspects including requirement of the crew and duration of their stay, logistics, costs etc. need to be adequately undertaken. This exercise is called *recce*.

The primary objectives of *recce* are to enable the writer, to develop the outline properly and also as to have a proper idea of the phases of programme production.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SCRIPT:

- *Should be simple and clear,*
- *Should be developed logically,*
- *Should maintain the overall purpose of the programme,*
- *Should be able to create and sustain the viewer’s interest.*
- *Should not be too long and too heavily loaded with content,*
- *Should be based on proper and authentic research inputs.*
- *Should have appropriate pace and rhythm and give occasional respite during the programme,*
- *The script should allow the visuals to ‘breathe’ and ‘speak for themselves’*
- *Narration and other -oral contents should not overshadow the visuals.*

PLANNING FOR SCRIPT WRITING:

Planning for TV scripts involves two stages. These are setting objectives and preparing a basic framework. Now let us discuss these in detail.

Setting Objectives:

- Determining target audience with specific respect to “Need Assessment” (or any other research),
- Meeting director, producer, clients, subject experts and discussing overall content.
- Doing library/academic research to find more about the subject or topic.
- Finalizing the content
- Deciding the visualization- kind of treatment in accordance to tone, format, length, load and budget.
- Actual script writing

Framework for a Brief:

- Deciding an appropriate subject
- Deciding a specific topic
- Determining the target audience- primary, secondary and tertiary.
- Setting the objective- whether the programme is to inform, educate, entertain, or persuade, or any combination of the above.
- Deciding the content- what, how much, in what way.
- Finding out the level of knowledge of target audience.
- Determining the format and style (docu-drama, drama, documentary, animation, etc.)
- Deciding duration or length

STEPS INVOLVED IN SCRIPT WRITING:

The scriptwriter plays a key role in TV programme production. He transforms the ideas into content and presents it in the language of TV, i.e. the language of pictures, words, sounds, and electronic effects.

- Analysis of content and specification of themes and sub themes.
- The content is arranged in a sequential manner.
- Selection of the most suitable format for presentation.
- Preparation of the storyboards / camera script shot division.
- Specification of programme length.
- Preparation of the content draft.
- Pre-testing and modifying the draft.

- Finalizing the script.

7.3 SUMMARY:

- The various radio programmes are: News, views, reviews, interviews, short talks, plays and skits, musical programmes, and announcements.
- The tools of dramatic presentation on radio are *speech*, *sound effects* and *music*. Each tool has a purpose, personality and meaning of its own. Use the right tool in the right place for the right duration. Use specific effects to depict different actions, to establish locale or scene or an atmosphere or a background to heighten and accentuate a mood.
- Radio is an audio medium. But enriching the programmes with a wide variety of sounds and music can solve the limitation of radio being 'sound only'. Radio programmes need to be 'intrusive' to solve the problem of it being a shared medium. Variations of voice in terms of modulations in tone, pitch, and volume can make listening to radio a rich and fulfilling experience.
- *Radio and television are two major components of electronic media. Both these media have become so pervasive that they directly touch our lives and provide us with information, entertainment and education.*
- *Whereas radio symbolizes the majesty of the spoken word, in television programming both video and audio are equally important.*
- *The language used for radio programme should be simple and direct; difficult words and long sentences must be avoided.*
- *In television programmes script should allow the- visuals to 'breathe' and 'speak' for themselves. Narration should not smother or overshadow the visuals.*

7.4 KEY WORDS:

Aspects of Radio: Radio listening is often described as 'theatre of mind'. And effective and attractive programmes can be made using rich imagination. Good radio programmes almost always are 'simple' and follow the seven C's of communication- *clarity, conciseness, continuity, correctness, credibility, commonness, and completeness.*

Radio Interviews: Radio interviews try to bring out facts on a major event (situational), present a personality profile, and can also be achievement oriented. Radio interview can be just a technique of assessing public opinion on a limited subject.

Radio Features: Radio feature is a sophisticated of story telling on radio. A feature is a programme on a single theme or a subject and is presented in a dramatic manner.

Radio Documentary: Radio Documentary is a factual authoritative presentation of an event, idea, a development, problem or issue in an artistic form with more than one speaker. It relies strictly on 'contribution from the horses mouth, i.e., from primary sources. Most socioeconomic problems lend themselves to documentary treatment.

Writing for Radio: Writing for radio must be precise, simple, direct and brief. One has to develop the skills of writing with brevity and to the point, and resist the temptation of writing prolonged scripts, talks, features or dramas. The proper use of words, the right mode of delivery, style is equally important. It is an art to produce rich effect by familiar words and to sustain interest.

News and Current Affairs: These include News bulletins, direct coverage of proceedings of important events, news magazines, interviews, panel discussions, news features and news magazine programmes. An excellent example or news magazine is the one-hour Sunday News Programme on Star Plus channel which includes important events of the week, in-depth analysis and interviews with the personalities involved in making of the news events.

Entertainment Programmes: Being primarily devoted to entertainment, television uses a lot of *film-based programmes* in addition to *serials, soaps, dramas, comedies, plays, light and popular music, game shows, talk shows, etc.*

Educational Programmes: Educational Programmes include Open University and distance learning programmes (UGC and IGNOU programmes on Doordarshan).

7.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What are the different types of radio and TV Programmes?
2. Explain the essentials of a radio talk.
3. Write a short note on the type of language used in radio programmes.
4. What is the essential difference between-a radio and a' TV script? Discuss.
5. Explain briefly the programme production model for TV.

7.6 REFERENCES / SUGESTED READING:

- **Basic Course in Programming;** Staff Training Institute, AIR Programme Circular, 48 (1979).
- **Broadcasting as a Career;** Station Director, AIR, Bhopal.
- **The Presenter's Script and Programme;** DECU, ISRO, Ahemdabad.

WRITING FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Advertising plays an important in business and management today. It helps organizations in creating and sustaining positive images for organizations and their products. Advertising provides information and is image-oriented. Thus a major part of advertising is communication. Advertising communication takes place through both verbal and visual modes. In this lesson we shall discuss the various aspects of advertising writing. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 8.0 *Objectives*
- 8.1 *Introduction*
- 8.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 8.2.1 *Preparation Before Writing Advertising Copy*
 - 8.2.1.1 *Creating Connections*
 - 8.2.1.2 *Human Wants*
 - 8.2.1.3 *Idea Generation for Advertising*
 - 8.2.1.4 *Idea to Copy*
 - 8.2.2 *Characteristics of Good Advertising Copy*
 - 8.2.3 *First Steps of Advertising Writing*
 - 8.2.4 *Features of Good Advertising Copy*
 - 8.2.5 *Functions of Advertising Copy*
 - 8.2.6 *Appeals in Advertising and Copy Writing*
 - 8.2.6.1 *Emotional Appeals*
 - 8.2.6.2 *Rational Appeals*
 - 8.2.6.3 *Selecting Appeals*

- 8.2.7 *Writing Copy for Print Advertisements*
- 8.2.8 *Writing Copy for Printed Publicity Materials*
- 8.2.9 *Writing Copy for Radio*
- 8.2.10 *Writing Copy for Television*
- 8.3 *Summary*
- 8.4 *Key Words*
- 8.5 *Self- Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 8.6 *References/ Suggested Reading*

8.0 OBJECTIVES:

So far, in the previous chapters, we have discussed about writing for print media and electronic media. Here we shall discuss about writing for advertising. After going through this lesson, you will be acquainted with the following:

- *Characteristics of good advertising copy,*
- *Functions of Advertising*
- *Copy appeals in Advertising,*
- *Writing Copy for Print advertisements,*
- *Writing for Publicity Material,*
- *Writing for Radio Advertisements and*
- *Writing for Television Advertisements.*

8.1 INTRODUCTION:

We do not hire Blacks,

We do not hire Women,

We do not hire Hispanics,

We do not hire Asians,

We do not hire Jews,

We do not hire the Disabled,

We do not hire Whites.

.....WE HIRE PEOPLE.

This is the copy of an advertisement by an American company *Federal Express* conveying the message that they hire good people regardless of their race or colour, etc. The copy of this ad

tells this fact in an interesting and novel way. It attracts our attention, creates our interest and sustains suspense, and finally delivers the message powerfully with a punch.

Copy is the written text material of printed advertisements. It is the spoken words of a radio advertisement. In case of TV ads; copy is all the words used whether in the written or spoken form. In this lesson we shall discuss about the various aspects of advertising copy writing.

Advertising is a form of story telling. Advertisements tell a variety of stories. But unlike grandmother or grandfather's stories, advertisements don't have morals. Instead, they have messages. To convey the message effectively, ads use *words to tell* and *pictures to show*. In this lesson we shall concentrate on the words or copy.

Print ads and printed publicity material have printed words while audio and audio-visual ads have spoken words supported by written words. All these words - whether printed or spoken - constitute the 'copy' part of advertising. Advertising copy almost always seems to be a combination of smart phrases, catchy words and nice-sounding slogans. Thus many think advertising copy writing is just playing with words. No doubt advertising copywriters play with words. But behind all that smart word is a lot of planning and hard work.

8.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

Advertising has become a very important tool of running businesses and of marketing. A major part of advertising communication takes place through verbal content or words. In this lesson we shall discuss about advertising writing. The content presentation of this lesson shall be as follows:

- *Preparation Before Writing Advertising Copy*
- *Creating Connections*
- *Idea Generation for Advertising*
- *Characteristics of Good Advertising Copy*
- *First Steps of Advertising Writing*
- *Features of Good Advertising Copy*
- *Characteristics of good advertising copy,*
- *Functions of Advertising*
- *Copy appeals in Advertising,*
- *Writing Copy for Print advertisements,*
- *Writing for Publicity Material,*

- *Writing for Radio Advertisements and*
- *Writing for Television Advertisements.*

8.2.1 PREPARATION BEFORE WRITING ADVERTISING COPY:

Before you sit down to write copy, think about the job in front of you. All advertising situations are different. They involve different products that compete directly or indirectly with many competitors. They try to persuade prospective customers who are spread over wide geographic areas and have little in common. Also advertising uses a variety of media.

On top of everything are the wide variety of goals or objectives of advertising. Some times ads want to inform, some times they try to create awareness, some other times they try to create brand differentiation or brand loyalty. Some other ads try to educate us. Most advertisements, however, try to persuade us. So the job of writing advertising copy is difficult.

8.2.1.1 CREATING CONNECTIONS:

Advertising copy writing is complex. Now let us try to make it little simple. If you analyze a few ads that you like, you would find that these ads establish some kind of a connection between the product and you. This connection, almost always, is an unexpected but relevant one. So before we start to write copy, we should try to establish this '*unexpected but relevant connection*' between the product and the target audience.

The Federal Express advertisement discussed in the beginning of this lesson is a very good example of this kind of connection. But how does one find such connections? We can get such 'connections', if we try to find them. This requires information about the product, the competitors, the market and the audience. We can get this information from research. Research about the product features (physical and functional), the competing brands, the need and wants of the audience etc. provides a deep insight into the problem at our hand.

This information, invariably, answers questions like what we should be telling our audience and how we should be telling. Information collected through research provides an insight, which in turn provides us with a way to sell. This is called the advertising strategy. The advertising strategy is the broad mode of how to make more people accept and buy the product Advertising strategy answers the following questions:

- Who or what is the competition?
- Whom are we talking to?
- What do we want to prospect to know, feel, or understand?

- What is the best way to reach the prospect?

Answers to the above questions make the job of a copywriter much easier. These, provide him the basic 'premise' or 'boundary' to work. Accordingly, different strategies are used for different situations. These include the *claim strategy* (Sprite bujhaye pyas, Believe in the best, Better than the best, We bring good thongs to life etc.), the *unique selling proposition (USP) strategy*, *the brand image strategy*, *the product positioning strategy*, etc.

8.2.1.2 UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NEEDS:

Once you finalize a strategy, the next step is to link it with the basic human needs and wants. These include:

- Want for material things (Luxury items etc.)
- Want to be popular, attractive (cosmetics, health and beauty products etc.)
- Want for enjoyment through comfort and convenience
- Need to create a happy family situation (travel, entertainment, etc.)
- Need to have power (fast cars etc.)
- Need to avoid fear (alarm systems, insurance, fire extinguishers etc.)
- Need to emulate or follows those whom one admires.
- Need to have new experiences.
- Need to maintain good health.

The above-mentioned list is not an exhaustive or complete one. But it covers many basic human wants and needs. Needs are the forces or motives that drive us to action or buying of products. So advertisers try and cater to these basic wants and needs.

8.2.1.3 ADVERTISING AND IDEAS:

Getting an effective strategy is a good beginning. This usually leads to the big idea. An idea is the central theme that establishes the unique connection, which we discussed earlier. Once we get the idea, it is then followed by creative execution i.e. writing the copy and getting the visuals, etc. Here is an example. The advertising strategy used in the Maggi Noodles ads was '*product positioning*'. Here the brand has been positioned as a great time saver unlike the other snack options available. The idea developed from this strategy is that Maggi was a "two minutes snack". A series of TV ads had been created around this idea. Similarly, the Maggi Hot and Sweet Ketchup also used the '*product positioning strategy*'. This brand has been positioned as

'different' or unique from others. So it is natural the slogan of the TV ads of Maggi Hot and Sweet is: 'Its different'.

8.2.1.4 IDEAS TO WORDS:

Now let us forget advertising copy writing for some time. Let us concentrate on something we all are familiar with - news stories. News stories have the following characteristics:

- *News stories are written with specific audiences in mind.*
- *News stories put large amount of information into limited space or time (as in radio and TV news).*
- *The head lines and introductions (leads) of new stories are written to attract the reader and give them a gist or summary of the news.*
- *News stories get readers involved.*
- *They possess substance i.e. factual information.*

Also news stories are written keeping readers' ease in mind. News stories use simple words, simple sentences and short paragraphs. These make easy reading. Again shortness and simplicity attract readers to start and stay with the news stories.

Now let us come back to advertising copy. If you compare the both you will find a lot of similarities. So, we can say "advertising copy is written for specific audiences, distilling large amount of information into limited space, using brevity (shortness) and simplicity, in such a way that it involves the audience and provides them facts in an interesting way".

8.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD ADVERTISING COPY:

We all have our favorite persons. They are *fun to be with, charming, conversational, friendly, empathetic, single minded and purposeful, provocative, sincere, and unconventional.*

Do we get such people in real life? May be they are there in the reel (filmy) or fantasy life. It is rare to get such persons. However, a good advertisement has to have all or most of these characteristics. Only then it would succeed in persuading people. Now let us discuss these characteristics

FUN AND CHARMING: Advertising copy often uses humour and smart word play. This is not done to impress people. Rather the objective is to express or convey the message in an interesting way.

CONVERSATIONAL: Advertising copy often reads or sounds like a conversation between two people. Most of the times a casual tone and common words are used as in case of everyday conversation. This leads to familiarity and better acceptance of the message.

FRIENDLY: Never ever advertising copy antagonizes or is rude. The tone and approach of ad copy is always friendly. The words always try to create a bond or relationship, often giving us friendly suggestions and advise.

EMPATHETIC: After reading or watching some advertisements, we often feel, “hey, this ad is talking about me and my problem”. This ability to understand the prospective customer’s problems and trying to solve these problems creates a strong rapport with the audience.

SINGLE MINDED AND PURPOSEFUL: Advertising copy never rambles. It does not stray from its purpose. Advertising copy is the result of well throughout planning and it emphasizes what it must emphasize. Also advertising copy is goal-oriented. Whatever be its objective, to inform, to make people aware, to create brand differentiation or loyalty, it always tries to succeed.

INVOLVING: Advertising copy provides new information, new experiences, and new feelings. Also advertising copy is written in an interesting way. All these involve the audience.

PROVOCATIVE: Advertising copy often leads the audience to think. It could provoke such thoughts, like “hey, I never know about that”, or “Is not that something new?” or “I never thought about it that way!”

SINCERE: Advertising copy is mostly truthful and sincere. These elements make advertisements believable.

UNCONVENTIONAL: This characteristic of advertising copy is about the approach and treatment. Advertising copy often uses innovative, novel approaches to convey the message. This adds to the acceptability of the copy and the message.

8.2.3 FIRST STEPS OF ADVERTISING COPY WRITING:

No words come to mind! This is one of the most common complaints of copywriters, established or new corners alike. Given a free hand, one can write reasonably well. But writing advertising copy involves many limitations. Also one faces the constraint of time while writing advertising copy. Faced with such daunting problems and constraints, copywriters often go blank in the mind. This often happens when one has blank paper in front. This disease is called the *blank paper anxiety* or *writer's mental block*.

How does one overcome this problem? Let us try the following tricks. You are not getting any words. Well, what about starting with pictures? No, you don't have to draw or paint. Just think about some relevant picture or visual. And describe the picture on paper. This way you will get some words, which could lead to more words.

Still no good words are coming? Try this then. Pretend that you don't know anything about the product. Ask questions to your self about the product, about the prospective customers, about their buying habits, about the use pattern of the product etc. If you have a partner, ask him. Ask some questions and write down the answers. And you will get some words on paper.

If asking questions about just the product does not help, then ask questions about the competitors. Make fun of the competitors. Many great advertisements have been created this way. One example is the Captain Cook powdered salt where this brand has been compared with the Tata salt.

Some times none of the above methods work. Now let us discuss what experts have to say. Writing experts claim that people find it difficult to write because same basic problems in their approach to writing. People believe that nothing is worth putting on paper unless it is in the final shape. Many people think that good writing is always spontaneous and writers get into a writing mood and the words just flow from the pens as in case of poetry.

These beliefs are pure nonsense. What people often forget is that writing is not just a means of recording our thoughts on paper. It is also a method of creating new thoughts. And good writing always involves rewriting and lots of it. So before you set out to write, keep the rules aside. Forget about grammar, punctuation, spelling, cohesion, etc., for the time being. You can think about these things once you finish the first draft. Just remember the first draft is for your eyes only. So forget about the rules and start writing.

To begin with explore. And get some words on paper. In the beginning do not think about writing great advertising copy. Just write what comes to your mind. Collect the basic information. Try and give it some shape. You can develop a conversation may be between two users of the

brand, between a user and a non-user, may be between an expert and potential users, or even between the product and the consumer. Or try and develop what an expert's view would be, or what a satisfied customer's views are?

Try as many methods as you can. These different methods provide you a lot of 'options'. And as you go along writing, you would overcome your anxiety and fear, and thoughts would flow more easily. More importantly if you write down everything that comes to your mind, you would not forget anything. You will have all the options on paper.

All these methods are part of what is called the 'pre-writing' stage. This stage involves 'free writing' - free from rules, free from fear and anxiety and free from the burden of writing great advertising copy.

The next step is rewriting. Advertising guru David Ogilvy once wrote a detailed description of a product in around 3,000 words. Then it took him some twenty rewritings to reduce it to about 30 crisp words. On many occasions, he wrote dozens and dozen of headlines for a particular advertisement and asked his colleagues to select the best. Good writing is like the act of polishing diamonds. More one polishes diamonds, more is the shine and brightness that comes out and the pieces become more beautiful. Similarly, the more we rewrite the more polished the advertising copy become. Rewriting or polishing involves the following things.

- Organizing the information properly.
- Cohesion.
- Liveliness
- Style.
- Grammar.
- Spelling.
- Punctuation.

8.2.4 FEATURES OF GOOD ADVERTISING COPY:

Noted British advertising expert David Bernstein devised a four-principle formula for effective copy writing. This is called the VIPS formula. This includes the following:

- *Visibility*
- *Identification*
- *Promise*
- *Simplicity*

VISIBILITY: A good advertisement draws the attention of the audience members (readers, listeners, viewers, etc.). Visibility makes an advertisement stand out from a clutter of ads. Legendary adman Leo Burnett once wrote the following about visibility, “Best attention comes from the entirely natural interest of the audience, built around the product advertised”.

Attention for attention’s sake and visibility for visibility’s sake are not effective enough. The ad might draw the attention but would not convey the selling message. And visibility should be related to the product and the audience. Using scantily clad beautiful models for pens, suitcases, tyre etc. don’t convey any selling message.

Albert Lasker, who is considered as the father of modern advertising, once said that, “If people do not read advertisement, they can not remember it. If they don’t remember it, they cannot act on it. It is as simple as that”. And visibility cannot only be generated through copy. The visuals, the logo, the layout, the white space (in case of print advertisements), and the music work towards generating visibility. The other audio components and the moving pictures in case of radio television advertisements perform similar roles. So copy and other elements should blend perfectly to achieve visibility.

IDENTIFICATION: Visibility in advertisements should be such that it should lead to identification. This element is all about building an association or rapport between the product and the audience. This can be achieved if you use the language of the prospective customers, if their problems are being addressed to, if the approach is friendly. This association or identification not only leads to immediate action on part of the audience (like buying the brand), it also helps in establishing a long-term relationship between the product and the audience. This is brand loyalty and most marketers try to achieve this.

PROMISE: A popular saying in the field of advertising goes like this, “people do not buy soap, they buy hope”. For soaps, the hope is that of beautiful, blemish less skin. For lipsticks, the hope is for beautiful and lustrous lips. If some one is buying a shampoo, he or she is buying the hope of long, dandruff free, shining hair. So while the audience hopes to get something from the product, it becomes very important for advertising copywriters to incorporate these ‘promises’ into the message. And promises don’t mean tall claims and exaggerations. A promise in an advertisement has to be believable so that the customer buys the product, uses it and stays loyal to it.

SIMPLICITY: One of the golden rules of writing, particularly writing for advertising, is the **KISS** rule. It stands for **KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE**. When things are simple, they are easy to understand. When things are not too long, they are easy to read and thus inviting. Simplicity and brevity (shortness) also help in sustaining the audience interest through the length of the advertisement. So no matter how complex the idea is, the writer has to find a way to express it in a simple manner. This kind of simple presentation requires simple words, short and simple sentences, short paragraphs, etc.

8.2.5 FUNCTIONS OF ADVERTISING COPY:

Before we discuss about the functions of advertising copy, let us discuss the functions of advertising. Advertising first has to **reach** the audience. The next thing it does it to **remind** the audience member in case they have forgotten. Then what advertising does is to **reassure**, particularly the loyal customers about the products good qualities. Advertising also **reinforces** i.e. strengthens the position of the product in the minds of the customers. Many times advertising also offers a **point of reference** to the audience. And finally most advertisements provide small **rewards**. These could be of the surprise of new and welcome information or the confirmation of long held viewpoints. And copywriters should try to incorporate as many of these R's in to the advertising copy.

8.2.6 APPEALS IN ADVERTISING COPY:

Human beings are described as bundles of wants. They have some basic needs, but their wants are many. These needs and wants are called the buying motives as they force us to buy things. Marketers find out about their needs and wants, and incorporate these into their products. These want satisfying features are now called the selling points. When these are incorporated into the advertising copy, they are called copy appeals.

A copy appeal can be defined as the '*basic use, service, or satisfaction*' that the product can give and that the advertisement attempts to present to the customer as a reason to buy. A copy appeal represents the blending of two concepts, *buying motives and selling points*; into a '*reason to buy*'. It relates the product's benefits to the purchaser's needs.

To understand the copy appeals and to be able to select the proper appeals requires a thorough knowledge of human psychology. The copywriter has to understand that an appeal works on the minds of the consumers emotionally, rationally or both ways.

Copy appeals are usually of two types-emotional and rational. Some times moral appeals are used - particularly in social advertising. Moral appeals are rarely used in commercial advertisements.

8.2.6.1 EMOTIONAL APPEALS:

Here is a comprehensive list of emotional appeals: *Ambition, Appetite, Avoiding, hard labour, Curiosity, Duty, Entertainment, Fear, Guilt, Happy home life, Health, Hero worship, Home comfort, Humour, Personal Appearance, Possession, Romance, Security, Physical attraction (Sex appeal), Social recognition, Social approval, Sports and Adventure, Style and beauty, Sympathy for others, Taste.*

8.2.6.2 RATIONAL APPEALS:

Now here is a list of rational appeals: *Cleanliness, Durability, Economy of purchase, Economy of use, Protection of others, Rest or sleep, Safety, Variety of selection, Dependability in quality, Dependability in use, Efficiency of operation or use, Enhancement of earnings, More leisure time.*

8.2.6.3 SELECTING APPEALS:

Now these appeals are not hard to understand. But if you want to be more proficient with copy appeals, here is what you can do. Analyze as many ads as you can. See what kind of appeals have been used. Make a list. You will find in many cases two or three or even more appeals are used. Also both emotional and rational appeals being used in combination. Rational appeals are directed at the consumer's practical and functional need for the product. Emotional appeals, on the other hand, are directed at the consumer's psychological, social or symbolic needs.

Both types of appeals are used in a variety of combinations for different products and situations. These appeals help in creating a personality for the product and also stimulating consumer interest, desirability and action. Advertising involves people by appealing to their problems, desires and goals, and by offering a means of solving their problems; satisfy their desires and helping them achieve their goals. Most products have a number of positive factors that could be successfully used as appeals to attract the protective buyers. The key to success, however, is to choose the appeals that are important to most of the consumers.

8.2.7 WRITING COPY FOR PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS:

Print advertisements have got two main elements, copy and visuals. The copy again has few sub parts. These include *headline*, *sub headline*, *body text*, and *slogan*. Here are the functions of the various parts of ad copy:

HEADLINE:

Promises the benefits

Initiates the selling message

Introduces the product

SUB HEADLINE:

Elaborates the promise

Supplements the headline

BODY COPY:

Amplifies the selling message thorough elaboration, discussion, and description

Provides proof of claim through examples and arguments etc.

Suggests actions to be taken.

SLOGAN:

Restates the entire selling message.

HEADLINES: There are a wide variety of headlines. Some present a new benefit, some offer existing benefits in a new way, some invoke curiosity, others provoke. One should remember, the following points while writing headlines.

- *It should use short and simple words.*
- *It should not use more than seven to ten words.*
- *Headlines should be inviting.*
- *It should preferably contain the primary product benefits.*
- *It should be interesting*
- *It should preferably include the brand name.*
- *It should contain an action verb.*
- *It should arouse curiosity so that the reader reads on.*
- *Along with the visual, the headline tries to tell the product story.*

SUB HEADLINE: Sometimes copywriters want to give a lot of information in the headline. However, lack of space doesn't permit this. So sub-headlines are used. Also sub-headlines are

used to supplement what has been said in the headline. Sub-heads are usually longer than the headlines. These elaborate upon the promise presented in the headlines. If the headlines put a question, the sub-headline answers it. The sub-headlines always provide the transition from the headline to the body copy.

BODY COPY: The functions of body copy are amplification, elaboration, explaining description, discussion, dialogue, arguments and counter-arguments etc. Depending upon the type of appeals used, the copy can be long (rational appeals) or short (emotional appeals). In certain cases, where emotional appeals along with big and eye catching visuals are used, no body copy is required at all. However, body copy supports the statement made in the headline. If a question is put in the headline, the body copy answers it. It always plays supplementary and complementary roles. Body copy often emphasizes the manufacturer's reputation, talks about the trial offers if any, provides proof, talks about guarantees and warranties. And finally it initiates action.

SLOGANS: This word is derived from an extremely difficult to pronounce word *sluagh ghairion* meaning battle cry. Slogans are short, catchy and usually sum up the product benefits in an easy to remember form. These are simple and roll off the tongue easily. Slogans are also extensively used in radio and TV ads. Sometimes slogans in radio and TV ads are put to catchy tunes in the jingle form.

Slogans are of two types - institutional and product oriented. Institutional or corporate slogans are slogans for companies. These slogans try to establish a positive and prestigious image for companies. This image is ultimately transferred on to the goods or services of the company.

For example the slogan for TATA is "A product from the house of Tata". They need not say that it is a quality product. Similarly the slogan of SONY is "Its a Sony". Corporate slogans last for a long time. Product slogans are also called hard sell slogans because these try hard to sell. These highlight the product features. Also product slogans are changed with the campaign. For example Coca Cola and Pepsi have used many slogans in their different campaigns.

COPY STYLE (COPY APPROACH):

Advertising copy has the job of creating images. For this reason, it has to have a style. The style complements the substance or facts. Most competing brands available in the market have little

differentiation. What distinguishes them is the style or approach in the copy. There are three basic copy styles or approaches - factual imaginative and emotional.

The factual approach deals with facts. Such ads talk about the product features - either physical features like size, shape, weight, fragrance etc. or functional features like have it works, cleans, etc. Here the facts are presented in a direct and straightforward manner. The imaginative approach presents facts in an imaginative manner. Here familiar things are presented in an unfamiliar way and unfamiliar thing are presented in a familiar way. This approach is adopted when there is not much facts or not much or product differentiation. The third approach uses emotions. Appeals such as love, hate, fear, guilt etc. are used in this approach.

8.2.8 WRITING FOR PUBLICITY MATERIAL:

Writing for advertising and publicity material have a lot in common. The basic objective in both cases is to persuade or motive. Be it a poster, pamphlet, brochure, catalogue, danglers or buntings, the objective is the same. The difference is in the amount of information presented, the amount of copy used, and the way the message is received from these publicity material.

POSTERS:

Posters are either the outdoor or indoor variety. Outdoor posters are bigger in size. These have very big visuals and very little copy. The copy in outdoors posters mostly contains a headline and a slogan. So the copy has to tell maximum part of the product story. Indoor posters are usually pasted or put indoors on walls.

People usually spend more time reading them. So these have more copy and less visual. All the principles of copy writing are applicable to posters.

PAMPHLETS:

Pamphlets are distributed with newspapers. When these are distributed at fairs or exhibitions or other public places, these are called fliers. These are usually small in size and printed on newsprint. However, pamphlets of the size of newspapers are prepared. Also pamphlets are sometimes printed on better quality paper. Being small in size and cheap on production quality (poor quality paper, poor printing and no visuals), these mostly get a cursory glance. So the need here is to tell the products story in less number of words. However, pamphlets are often packed with information. Unless this information is of great importance no one would read it.

One good feature of pamphlets is immediacy. These tell us what is happening now. Thus the need is to use the factual approach, simple language and less copy.

BROCHURES:

Brochures are usually in the booklet form. These multi page publicity materials have very high production quality. Brochures provide ample space for a lot of copy among other things like visuals etc. Thus the writing style is mostly descriptive or narrative. The approach could be factual or emotional.

LEAFLETS:

Leaflets are single sheet publicity material. These are much better than pamphlets in quality of paper and production. In some cases the quality of leaflets is as good as brochures. The basic difference is in the quantity of information and the elements like visuals. Depending upon the objectives, leaflets could have more visual content or more copy. Leaflets can be printed on one or both sides. The style is mostly descriptive and the approach is factual.

DANGLERS AND BUNTINGS:

These are point of purchase (POP) or point of sale publicity material. These are displayed in shops and other selling outlets. These help customers remember the brands when they come to make purchases. Danglers are single piece publicity materials that are dangled with the help of threads. These have very good production qualities and mostly are visual heavy. Buntings are a series of printed publicity material that are strung together with a thread. Bunting could have a single piece repeated in a series or multiple pieces arranged in different orders.

Both danglers and buntings are given a variety of shapes to make them attractive and eye catching. The copy content of danglers and buntings is very less. But the copy gets a lot of visual treatment.

8.2.9 WRITING ADS FOR RADIO:

The basic fundamentals of copy writing are the same for all types of advertisements, printed, radio, television or any other. The difference is in the format. For radio and television advertisements there are certain special requirements.

Radio is an audio medium. It is very personal and highly involving in nature. Radio is also a highly selective medium. Radio programmes are so prepared that these can pin point an age

group, an income group, an educational level, etc. The number of stations and services also helps this. This way radio can be selective in terms of geographic reach (local, regional national or international). Writing for radio advertisement should take into consideration the special and unique '*auditive impact*' of the medium. Here the messages are only heard. So the advertising scripts should be written for the ear only. The options available to a radio ad scriptwriter are the voice, sound effects and music. There is no scope for illustration or depiction. So a lot of descriptions and dialogues are used for radio ads. This calls for the use of dramatic language. Radio listening is a unique experience. It is a background thing. It is a shared experience and mostly it has a soothing influence. And listeners are not much attentive while listening to radio and particularly when the ads are on. So it is important to captivate the listeners' attention before delivering the selling message. This is more important for radio ads than on other media. So the need is to be *intrusive*. To intrude into the listeners' world, sound effects and musical flourishes.

Other devices used to capture and hold attention of the audience are:

- *Product in sound - Jingles*
- *Dialogues - Straight announcements*
- *Sound effects. - Symbolic character voice.*
- *Well-known voices. - Variety of musical styles.*
- *Humour. – Speed-ups and slow-downs of voices.*
- *Popular tunes. - Believability & Credibility.*
- *Real life interviews - Authoritative presentations.*

LANGUAGE IN RADIO ADS:

The language of radio ads should be natural and should use only words from the spoken vocabulary. Contractions like *here's, wasn't, don't*, etc. should not be used as far as possible. One very important feature of radio is immediately. So radio ads should use present tense. The rigidities and formalities of written language should not be followed while writing for radio ads. Radio does not offer any *refer back facility*. And the constraint of time does not allow for repeating the message many times. So the words and language used should be very simple.

Clarity should be given top priority. Complex sentences, awkward alignment of clauses, unexplained technical terms should be avoided as these confuse the listener. Also ambiguity and vagueness should be avoided. Another aspect of radio ad writing is the use of picture words. These words convey concrete images.

8.2.10 WRITING FOR TV ADVERTISEMENTS:

Television captures our imagination like no other medium. It *shows, tells* and it supplements the audio and visual elements by way of movements. It is the most visible of all media. Often it is considered to be a status medium. However, the most important attribute of television is that it comes closest to putting the viewer at the place or scene of events being shown on the TV sets.

Television is first and foremost a visual medium. This fact must be taken into consideration from the idea generation stage. This medium also requires a skillful blending between the visual and the verbal (words). Noted communication theorist Marshal McLuhan once said, "no other medium involves the audience so completely as television". And this involvement makes television the most powerful selling in the market place.

Television advertisements (also called TV commercials) have certain unique requirements. A TV ad puts in a span of 30 add seconds a little story that creates a mood, offers a slice of life, conveys a selling message, and invites action. While a lot of people are involved in the making of television ads, the copywriter is central to this team.

A television ad is written in the script form. Writing of scripts requires both verbal and visual thinking, while the copywriter has to pen down only words, but he has to also think about the visuals to be able to time and match the action. This is called *creative connection*. And coming up with such creative connections is what makes advertising copy writing all the more interesting and exciting.

8.3 SUMMARY:

- Copy is the written text material of printed advertisements. It is the spoken words of a radio advertisement In case of TV ads; copy is all the words used whether in the written or spoken form.
- Print ads and printed publicity material have printed words while audio and audio-visual ads have spoken words supported by written words. All these words - whether printed or spoken - constitute the 'copy' part of advertising.
- Advertising copy almost always seems to be a combination of smart phrases, catchy words and nice-sounding slogans. Thus many think advertising copy writing is just playing with words. No doubt advertising copywriters play with words. But behind all that smart word is a lot of planning and hard work.

- Advertising copy is written for specific audiences, distilling large amount of information into limited space, using brevity (shortness) and simplicity, in such a way that it involves the audience and provides facts in an interesting way

8.4 KEY WORDS:

Copy: Copy is the written text material of printed advertisements. It is the spoken words of a radio advertisement. In case of TV ads; copy is all the words used whether in the written or spoken form. Advertising copy almost always seems to be a combination of smart phrases, catchy words and nice-sounding slogans. Thus many think advertising copy writing is just playing with words. No doubt advertising copywriters play with words. But behind all that smart word is a lot of planning and hard work.

Idea: An idea is the central theme that establishes the unique connection, which we discussed earlier. Once we get the idea, it is then followed by creative execution i.e. writing the copy and getting the visuals, etc.

Visibility: Visibility makes an advertisement stand out from a clutter of ads. Visibility should be related to the product and the audience. Using scantily clad beautiful models for pens, suitcases, tyre, etc. don't convey any selling message.

Identification: This element is all about building an association or rapport between the product and the audience. This can be achieved if you use the language of the prospective customers, if their problems are being addressed to, if the approach is friendly.

Simplicity: One of the golden rules of writing, particularly writing for advertising, is the **KISS** rule. It stands for **keep it simple and short**. When things are simple, they are easy to understand. When things are not too long, they are easy to read and thus inviting. Simplicity and brevity (shortness) also help in sustaining the audience interest through the length of the advertisement.

8.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Discuss the various features of a good advertising copy.
2. Discuss the functions of advertising and ad copy.
3. Throw light on appeals in advertising and advertising copy.
4. How will you write copy for print advertisement? Discuss it.
5. Throw light on Radio advertisement giving suitable examples.
6. Throw light on TV advertisement giving suitable examples.

7. How Radio advertisements are different from Television advertisement? Discuss.

8.6 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

- ***Making PR Work*** (Sushil Bahl).
- ***Advertising and Public Relations*** (B. N. Ahuja and S.S. Chhabra).
- ***Lesly's Hand Book of PR and Communication*** (Edited by Philip Lesly).
- ***Public Relations: Principles, Cases, and Problems*** (More and Kalupa)
- ***The Practice of Public Relations*** (Fraser P. Seitel)

WRITING FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

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LESSON STRUCTURE:

Public Relations has become an important part of the corporate management today. It helps organizations in creating and sustaining relationships with all possible interest groups. PR helps in creating positive image for organizations. Most of the PR work is activity oriented. But a major part of PR is communication. Here the written word plays an important role. In this lesson we shall discuss the various aspects of PR related writing. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 9.0 *Objectives*
- 9.1 *Introduction*
- 9.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 9.2.1 *Fundamentals of Writing for PR*
 - 9.2.2 *News Releases*
 - 9.2.3 *Letters*
 - 9.2.4 *Memos*
 - 9.2.5 *Minutes*
 - 9.2.6 *Reports*
 - 9.2.6.1 *Characteristics of Reports*
 - 9.2.6.2 *Steps in Report Preparation*
 - 9.2.6.3 *Report Writing*
 - 9.2.6.4 *Visual Aids in Reports*
- 9.3 *Summary*
- 9.4 *Key Words*
- 9.5 *Self- Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 9.6 *References/ Suggested Reading*

9.0 OBJECTIVES:

So far we have discussed about various types of media writing. We have become familiar with writing for print media, electronic media, and writing for advertising. Here we shall discuss about writing for Public Relations. The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To understand the Fundamentals of Writing for PR*
- *To know about the News Releases*
- *To know about the Letters*
- *To know about the Memos*
- *To know about the Minutes*
- *To know about the Reports*

9.1 INTRODUCTION:

Today we are living in the age of telephone, computer, Internet, and many such highly sophisticated devices of communication. The world around us has shrunk into a "global village". We can reach people in far off places at the push of a button. Still, like in many other fields, writing is very essential to Public Relations. This is more important in case of Public Relations as communication is the most integral part of PR. The ability to write quickly, coherently, and effectively - along with the ability to communicate orally – distinguishes good PR practitioners from average ones.

In Public Relations, one is required to write news releases, reports, memos, minutes, letters, speeches, articles, etc. all the time. Also PR writers write for a wide range of purposes, and use a greater number of communication methods.

Few people are born writers. Writing, like many other things, requires patience and hard work. The more you write, the better you become at writing. Here let us discuss some of the basics of writing:

Writing Expresses Some Idea: This means thinking before writing. Writing requires ideas, and ideas require thinking. Ideas should: *Relate to the reader, Engage the reader's attention, Concern the reader, and Must be in the reader's interest.*

Prepare a Rough Draft and Rewrite: Many people think writing comes naturally to us. They also think that words come to the writer's mind freely. Actually, good writers are re-writers. First they prepare, a rough draft. This helps them in putting their thought on paper, organizing the

ideas. Basically the first draft provides a platform from where the writer tries to improve upon the written piece. Rewriting follows this, which is like polishing a rough diamond.

Simplify and Clarify: In writing, the simpler the better: This is because simple messages are understood by more people and thus are more effective. Simple and clear language, short words and short paragraphs help people read and understand easily. Finally, writing must be directed at a particular audience.

All the above point hold good for PR writing also. We shall discuss about PR writing now.

9.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

This lesson shall cover the various aspects of writing for PR. We shall start with the fundamentals of PR writing. Then we shall focus on writing news releases, memos, minutes, letters, etc. Then we shall concentrate on report writing in detail. The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Fundamentals of Writing for PR*
- *News Releases*
- *Letters*
- *Memos*
- *Minutes*
- *Reports*

9.2.1 FUNDAMENTALS OF WRITING FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Writing for Public relations is not much different from general writing. All the good rules and practices of general writing are applicable to public relations writing. However, public relations writers should remember the following:

- *Avoid big words.*
- *Be specific.*
- *Avoid extra words.*
- *Be simple.*
- *Avoid clichés.*
- *Be short.*
- *Avoid jargons.*
- *Be active*
- *Be organized.*

- *Be convincing.*
- *Be understandable.*

Welcome to the world of public relations writing. This is the world where in addition to planning, decision-making, implementation etc, your day is filled with meetings, minutes, letters, memos, reports, press releases, presentations and negotiations. To be successful in public relations, as in other professions, no other ability will be more valuable to you than the ability to put *ideas on paper*.

Now we know that the importance of writing in PR. Let us now study the different types of PR writing. The most important modes of written communication used by public relations personnel are:

- *News releases,*
- *Letters,*
- *Memos,*
- *Minutes, and*
- *Reports.*

We shall discuss about these tools of Public Relations now.

9.2.2 NEWS RELEASES:

A news release (often called the press release) is a simple document whose purpose is to disseminate information in a *ready-to-publish* form. News releases provide an opportunity to the organizations to get positive public exposure through the media. Many organizations use it extensively as it involves nominal expenses.

News releases usually present positive information. It tries to provide news that shows the positive sides of the organization to the customers, clients, or the community. Only on rare occasions it deals with controversial topics.

News releases are basic tools of publicity. Organizations can run a functional and quite effective Public Relations programme only with this basic tool. And news releases are the most common way of issuing information to the media.

TYPES OF NEWS RELEASES:

There are four basic types of news releases. These are:

- *The Advance or announcement*

- *The Backgrounder*
- *The Feature*
- *The Follow-up*

THE ADVANCE OR ANNOUNCEMENT:

This is the most common type of news release. Its purpose is simply to announce some event or activity. It is topical and time bound.

THE BACKGROUNDER:

Such releases provide detailed or in-depth background information on an issue, a product or an organization. These are usually serious in tone, longer in length and less time bound. Some times backgrounders are issued along with other forms of releases. The purpose of backgrounder is to help the reporter get better understanding and perspective of the topic or issue.

THE FEATURE:

While backgrounders are prepared & used mostly as support materials to major releases, feature types of news releases are prepared to be complete stories. The features cover a variety of topics and vary in length style & approach. These are more people-oriented and usually are dramatic and even humorous with a view to entertain while informing.

THE FOLLOW-UP:

This kind of news release, as the name suggests, is issued only after something has occurred. Like what happened in meeting, during an event, or these could cover the results of some plans and projects after they were implemented.

9.2.3 LETTERS:

Letters are one of the most important parts of PR communication. These are usually written to persons outside the organization. Letters carry the image of the organization and have the potential to create good will. PR related letters usually require a high degree of formality (as opposed to personal letters). Also PR letters often need to be detailed.

While there are quite a few varieties of PR letters, they can be classified on the basis of the receiver's reaction. These are:

- *Pleased letters* (letters of promotion, approval, permission, award, etc.),
- *Displeased letters* (letters of denial, refusal, etc.)
- *Neutral letters* (Requesting for information, action, etc.)

Example-1

Dear Mr. xyz

You have been selected for a two-month training programme in our Software Development Section.

Because of your computer background, you should gain the necessary expertise soon enough.

Please report for the training on Monday, 14th of Oct. Your first assignment will be with Mr. B. Bhatia. He would help you familiarize with the procedure and introduce you to other personnel.

Our team in the Software Development Section works hard, yet they enjoy the informal atmosphere. We welcome you to our group and want you to feel at home from the very beginning of your training.

Yours

PQR

Example-2

Dear XYZ,

As we promised last week, here is the letter about our two-month training programme in Software Development.

This programme is highly advanced and is designed for people with basic training in computers.

Since you have very little exposure to computers, we could not accommodate you.

We appreciate your interest in our programme. And we would be able to accommodate you in the future if you do a basic course in computer.

Yours

PQR

Example 3

Dear XYZ

I was delighted to receive your invitation to visit your institution. This would have given me an opportunity to interact with young minds.

However, I am busy during the same period and also would be away for a few days. So I will not be able to come.

It was really an honour to be invited by your university.

Looking forward to visiting your university in the near future.

Yours

LETTERS CALLING FOR ACTION: These letters require a different format from the above letters. Such letters follow the *purpose, position, reasons and action (PPRA) framework*.

First paragraph (PURPOSE):

- State purpose of the letter
- Identify yourself.
- Show your connection with the subject

Second paragraph (POSITION):

- State your position
- Summarize your opinion on the matter
- In case of programmes or events, describe the position.

Third paragraph (REASONS):

- Give your arguments
- If there are many points use paragraphs for individual points.

Fourth Paragraph (ACTION):

- Talk about the action
- Mention the changes you suggest or improvements you want.

PR letters are written to maintain relationships, to provide information, to persuade the recipient to do something. The letter could induce cooperation or resistance depending on the content or the style of writing. While writing PR letters one should remember, "*facts speak loudest*". Also "*emotional outbursts are self defeating*".

One has to present criticism in a constructive manner, preferably suggesting a better alternative. It must also be remembered that letters convey not only through the words but also through the tone. Also the layout, the length of sentences, paragraphs should be simple and short. After you have finished, go through the letter again checking for tone, clarity and adequacy of content.

9.2.4 MEMOS:

Memos or memorandums are written messages exchanged by employees within an organization for passing information, instructions, suggestions, etc. Memos *inform, confirm,*

make decisions a matter of record, briefly and precisely transmit information which otherwise might be confused or forgotten.

MEMOS AND LETTERS COMPARED:

Memos differ from letters in more than just being intra-office communication devices. They are generally less formal-both in content and format. As they are addressed to colleagues, they often contain jargons or technical language that might not be understood by laymen. Memos are often sent to multiple readers as in case of the ones originating from the boss and meant for all the employees. Also memos are less detailed than letters.

HOW TO WRITE MEMOS:

Here are few tips regarding memo writing:

- *Indicate the subject, date, name of sender and receiver(s).*
- *Discuss only one subject.*
- *Be brief*
- *In case of problem situations, list out all the possible options and indicate the option you suggest or recommend.*

MEMO FORMAT:

Most organizations have printed stationary for memos. These usually have the headings TO, FROM, SUBJECT, DATE printed on them, In case there is no printed format, users usually type their own headings. Some organizations also use additional headings like DEPARTMENT, LOCATION, and COPIES etc.

GUIDELINES ABOUT MEMOS:

To: All readers

From: M.R. Patra

Date: 30.06.99

Subject: Memorandums

PAGE 1

The following suggestions will help you plan prepare memo. SPACING Memos may be single-spaced or double-spaced.

PARAGRAPHS: Paragraphs should be fairly short as letters. Long paragraphs are hard to read.

MARGINS: Leave at least one-inch margin on all sides

SIDE HEADINGS: While there are many varieties of side headings the all-capital variety used here is easy to read-. It immediately tells the reader about the content in the following section.

PAGE 2

Memorandum

30.06.98

SECOND PAGE IDENTIFICATION: The second page should be subject. The order may be as above-*subjects, page number, and date.*

SIGNATURE: No signature is required although some people sign the memos. A signature usually adds a friendly, personal touch.

TITLE: The writer of the memo adds his or her title (position) only when the readers do not know it. However, Mr., Mrs., Miss. etc are avoided in memos.

NEATNESS: As in all written communication, a neat and attractive appearance is psychologically conducive to the acceptance of ideas.

Example of Memo (1):

To: All readers

Date: 30.06.99

From: M. R. Patra.

Subject: ARRANGEMENT OF MEMOS

Please use single space in all memos. Single spaced memos save space and time.

Extra pages increases copying, filling & handling time & cost.

Your work would now look good.

Sample II:

30 June 1999

All readers

DIFFERENT MEMO FORMAT

It is not always necessary to follow the standard formats. You can have your own format.

Here the headings - To, From, Date, Subject etc. - are not used, The senders name can be given at the bottom. The date, subject and the person to whom it is directed are mentioned at the top without using the subheads.

You may not use side headings.

You are free to do your own thing, as memo is a mostly personal communication mode.

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING MEMO:

After preparing the initial draft of the memo, check for the following:

- Is the content of the memo courteous?
- Does the memo have the appropriate time and date?
- Is the content clear and complete?
- Are the actions desired clearly outlined?
- Does the message identify the benefit of complying with the writer's request or query?
- Is the message brief and concise enough?
- Are the sentences and paragraphs of appropriate length?
- Does the message contain sufficient details?
- And finally check the final draft for format, grammar, and punctuation and spelling.

TYPES OF MEMOS:

- *Request memos*
- *Inquiry memos*
- *Response memos*
- *Policy memos (Directives)*
- *Bad news memos*

9.2.5 MINUTES:

Meeting are held quite frequently in organizations and many topics are discussed, information exchanged and decisions are made. There is a need to record the proceedings of meetings. Minutes are a written record of important discussion and actions taken at meetings. Because of the necessity and importance of accurate record of meetings, the job of preparing minutes is assigned a responsible person. The recorder takes brief but exact summaries of discussion and actions. Only '*motions*' are required to be taken in full.

ELEMENTS OF A MINUTE:

Written minutes should contain the following:

- Date, time & place of the meeting
- Type of meeting
- Presiding officer (Name and designation)
- Members present (Name and designation)
- Approval or correction of the minute of previous meeting
- Report of individuals or committees
- Action on unfinished business from previous meeting
- Transaction of new business
- Appointment of committees
- Adjournment

In case of 'motions' taking place during meetings, the following should be recorded:

- The name of the person making the motion
- The exact wording of the motion,
- The name of the person seconding the motion.
- The result of the voting.

Usually reports are presented in the minute in the summarized form. Some important reports, including the treasurer's report, are attached to the minute.

ROUGH DRAFT OF A MINUTE:

The recorder of minute should write down the rough draft immediately after the meeting when the discussions, events and actions are still fresh in his or her mind. While there is no fixed format for minutes, writers often use side headings to identify the various sections of the minute. This rough draft is then submitted to the presiding officer and the people who made reports for approval.

THE FINAL MINUTE:

Once the rough draft is approved or corrected, the recorder prepares the final draft. Usually durable paper is used for writing or typing minutes. Also some organizations use special

coloured papers for minutes. The content details, names, dates, etc., need to be checked along with grammar, punctuation, etc. Usually past tense is used for writing minutes.

Example 1:

XYZ Company

Minutes of meeting of 30th June 1999

Place - Conference room

Time - 5.30 pm

Presiding officer - PQR Sinha

Members present - ABC Mittal and JK Bardhan

Approval of minutes of last meeting - The minutes of the meeting of 0 1 June were read & approved.

Treasurer's report - The treasurer reported that the fund were up by 2.5 lacs. Report accepted.

Report of committees- The membership committee reported that 270 new members had been enrolled. Report accepted with applause.

Unfinished business from previous meeting- None

New Business - The chairman suggested a publicity drive. A committee with ABC Mittal and MNO Shastri was formed to finalize a plan of action complete with a budget.

Time of next meeting - The next meeting will be held on 2nd August in the usual place.

Adjournment-The meeting was adjourned at 6.45 pm

(ABC Mittal)

Secretary

FORMAT 2

ABC Company

Minutes of meeting on 30.06.1999

Meeting no: 13

Date: 30.06.98

Time: 5.30 pm

Place: Conference Hall

Chaired by: ABC Mittal

Members present:

P.K. Sharma (Secretary), S.P. Sulvi, D.E. Bardhan, and P.S. Verma.

Members absent: M.M. Pati and R.K. Bandha.

Subject:

1. Meeting called to order at 5.30 pm- by chairman
2. Minutes of last meeting read & accepted
3. Treasurer's report: Balance 8.3 lacs Expenditure for this month 8.5 lacs; Funds raised 7.5 lacs; Present Balance 12.3 lacs
4. New membership committee: Headed by MM.Pati
5. Next meeting to be held on 01 August
6. Meeting adjourned at 6.45 pm

PK. Sharma
Secretary

9.2.6 REPORTS

A report is a written statement of the facts of a situation, project, study, process, or test. It includes information about how these facts were collected and ascertained, their significance, the conclusions that have been drawn from the collected facts. When required, recommendations are also given.

IMPORTANCE OF REPORTS:

Today we are living in the age of information. Information is key to all management function like decision-making & control. From assessing a situation to conducting studies and doing projects require writing of reports. Reports are needed to:

- *Record work done*
- *Assess a situation*
- *Test the validity of information*
- *Create new information & ideas*
- *Provide means of cross-fertilizations of ideas*
- *Indicate course of action to be taken as a result of work done*
- *Keep others- especially management informed of progress.*
- *Persuade readers to take action.*

9.2.6.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF REPORTS:

PR reports take many different forms. A PR report, by nature, is a compilation of organized information on a specific topic that is provided to one or more people inside or outside the organization who will use it for a specific business purpose. Like all reports, PR reports present verifiable data. Reports include the journalistic fundamentals of *who, what, where, why, and how*. The purpose of all PR reports is to inform or persuade.

There are seven characteristics of reports. These are *length, degree of formality, mode of distribution, frequency of submission, format, use of visual aids and method of assignment*.

LENGTH: Reports vary in length from one or two pages to hundreds of pages. Short reports are often in the memo format while long reports are detailed documents that focus on and analyse complex issues & problems.

DEGREE OF FORMALITY: Reports can be formal and informal. Informal business reports are mostly short, written in shorter time frames and cover less complex, day-to-day topics. These are written in a relaxed & informal style. Formal business reports are usually long, cover extensive research findings and always use formal language.

DISTRIBUTION: The mode of distribution or circulation could be to just one person, to many people within the organization (internal reports) or to people outside (external reports). External reports are sent to, customers, suppliers, consultant, financiers, and government officials and are always formal in nature.

FREQUENCY OF SUBMISSION: One-time reports deal with specific issues. Periodic reports, on the other hand, are issued weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual or according to an established schedule.

FORMAT: Many reports follow specific formats that can be completed by simply-filling the blanks on standardized forms. These are called 'form' or 'format' reports. Unlike other reports, narrative and detailed writing is not required for them. Inventory reports are best examples of 'format reports' as are most daily reports. Narrative reports don't have any standard format. The writer is free to choose any format that is suitable for the report.

USE OF VISUAL AIDS: Short informal reports don't use visual aids. These are mostly used by long, narrative reports. Visual aids range for simple tables, charts and graphs to complex computer generated graphics. Visual aids can be extremely effective to summaries, compare or emphasize important information.

METHODS OF ASSIGNMENT: Reports may be self-initiated or assigned. Again reports can be assigned specifically for one time use or on a periodic basis.

TYPES OF PR REPORTS: PR reports can be of many types depending upon the purpose:

Informative: Presents, explains, and interprets historical (background) and new information.

Study: Focuses on a problem and provides alternative solutions. Includes analysis and recommendations.

Analytical: Interprets and evaluates information and suggests solutions from an expert's perspective.

Status: Provides updates of a current situation, Status of plan or project and recommends solutions to potential problems.

Recommendations: Suggests a new procedure or polity, changing responsibilities, etc.

9.2.6.2 STEPS IN REPORT PREPARATION

Any report usually looks for answers to a few questions or problems. The report writer needs to state the problem as specifically, clearly and succinctly as possible. There are three ways of determining or identifying the problems or purpose of the report. These are:

- *By making a statement,*
- *Posing a question, and*
- *Through an infinitive phrase.*

STATEMENTS: The causes of employee satisfaction will be investigated as a means of increasing profitability of ABC Company. The feasibility of installing a word processing system will be investigated as a means of reducing operating costs of XYZ Limited.

QUESTIONS: Will investigating the causes of employee satisfaction help ABC Company increase its profitability?

Will the installation of a word processing system help reduce the operating costs of XYZ Limited?

INFINITIVE PHRASE: To identify the causes of employee satisfaction to increase profitability of ABC company. To investigate the feasibility of installing a word processing system to reduce the operating costs of XYZ Limited. In the above examples both the problem & solution (purposes) of the report have been identified.

The report problems have to be very clear & precise. Otherwise providing solutions to them could be a difficult job. Suggestions for formulating report problems are:

- *Review and analyze all available information*
- *Conduct a preliminary investigation*

IDENTIFYING READERS: An identified target or audience helps in focusing properly during the report preparation. You could know how much information is appropriate, what type of information is appropriate. Knowing the target audience also provides clue about the style & language of report writing.

LIMITING THE TOPIC: This step involves setting the boundaries of the topic. This identifies which areas to be covered and to what extent. One can limit the topic in several ways:

- Functional area : Marketing, Sales, Production, Promotion, etc.
- Time period: 1950's, 1960's or 1971-1990 etc.
- Geographic area: South, East, North, West, and Central etc.
- Product wise: Chemicals, Clothing, Cosmetics, etc.
- Problem wise: Lack of communication, Decreased production, Increased cost, etc.
- By characteristics: Size, Weight, Ues & other specifications

DEVELOPING AN OUTLINE: Once the problems are finalized, the audience is identified and the scope finalized, the next step is to make an outline of the report. This is a plan of action, which helps the report writer folow the right path so that only the relevant information is included. The organizational arrangement of the report could be:

Inductive: This kind of report moves from the known to the unknown i.e. for the specific to the general. Here the arrangement is introduction, presentation of data & facts and analysis

followed by summary, conclusion and recommendations. Most formal reports follow the arrangement.

Deductive arrangement: Here the report moves in the direction opposite to inductive arrangement i.e. from the unknown to the known or from the general to the specific. Thus the summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented first followed by the facts & analysis. This arrangement is used for informal reports and is useful for people who want only summarized information.

Chronological arrangement: This format arranges contents in the chronological manner i.e. from past to present, present to past (reverse chronological) or present to future. This arrangement is suitable for reports having historical significance.

DETERMINING METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION: The significance and value of a report depends greatly on the information contained in it. So the appropriate methods of collecting information gain significance. The various methods of data collection are not suitable for all situations. The report writer should consider the following points before choosing the methods:

- Intended uses of the report
- Nature of the topic
- Availability of information
- Financial and time constraints,

Data collection methods are usually categorized into two types - primary and secondary.

Primary data collection methods are:

- Observation
- Interview
- Questionnaire
- Surveys
- Company records (if any)

Secondary data sources are basically printed sources of information and include:

- *Books*
- *Magazines, journals & other periodicals*
- *Abstracts*

- *Other printed sources like reports, handbooks, directories, manuals, yearbook, encyclopedia, computer database etc.*

While collecting information, the report writer is required to use a systematic means of note taking. Some people use index and bibliography cards, some use hand written notes, photocopying etc. All the notes are indexed for easy of finding.

CATEGORIZING DATA: All the information collected is then categorized. This involves organizing the data in relevant categories that give significant meaning to the data.

TABULATING DATA: After appropriate categories have been finalized, the next step is to tabulate. Small amount of data can be handled manually. Large amounts of information require 'coding' and mechanical means of tabulation like the SPSS programme.

Statistical treatment of data is sometimes required. In such cases, the 'mean' (average of all numbers), 'mode' (the most frequently occurring number) and 'median' (the number in the middle of the series when arranged in a descending or ascending manner) are required to be calculated. Other statistical methods include the *pie chart, Chi-square test, T-test, etc.*

EVALUATION OF INFORMATION: Before starting interpretation, the information needs to be evaluated for the following:

- Validity
- Reliability
- Accuracy.

INTERPRETATION OF DATA: The next step is analyzing the data to assign meaning to it. This requires clear thought, a critical viewpoint and a judicial attitude. Here one has to avoid misleading and exaggerated information, faulty causes and effect relationships, personal and other bias etc. Interpretation involves pointing out the relationships, consistencies, inconsistencies, similarities and differences in the data. From these the report writer draws the conclusions. Conclusions are the logical answers or results of the problem posed in the report.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The final step is to suggest specific actions or alternatives. There is a logical link between information and recommendation. Information or facts support interpretations, interpretations support conclusions and support recommendations.

SUMMARY OF REPORT: One of the most neglected aspects of report writing is the summary. Being totally involved with the detailed report one often forgets to provide a brief summary to the reader. All readers might not be interested in all the details. For such reader, a brief summary should be included either at the beginning or at the end.

The summary provides an insight into the report. After reading the summary, the reader would read the report with an informed mind.

APPENDIX: This is a means of providing details on specific topics. Appendices are usually given at the end of the report. The material provided in the appendices usually is supportive to the main theme. These include:

Statistical tables

- Detailed results of experiments,
- Summaries of results obtained by others,
- Charts, maps, graphics & diagrams.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: For people interested in getting further information regarding specific topics covered in the report can look for the books and other printed material referred by the report writer at end of the report listed under the heading 'bibliography'. This also shows the extent of coverage on part of the report writer.

9.2.6.3 REPORT WRITING:

Now comes perhaps the most difficult part - the writing phase. People are often concerned about how to write. But now that we know what to write, let us discuss the 'how' part. But before that let us see what parts does a business report have. The parts of a formal PR report are:

1. Preliminary Parts

- Title page
- Table of contents.
- List of illustration (if any)
- Abstract (Synopsis or summary)

2. Body Parts

- *Introduction*
 - Background of the report
 - Statement of problem and purpose
 - Scope
 - Methodology
 - Limitations
 - Historical background (Through literature study)
 - Report organization (content chart)
- *Text*
 - Detailed background of topic
 - Detailed categorization
 - Detailed tables
 - Detailed analysis & interpretation

3. *End part*

- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Summary (if not given before)
- *Appendices part*
- Appendices
- Bibliography

So you are ready to start writing. If you want a one word 'mantra' then it is "simplicity". For effective writing there is no better tool than this mantra. Some people call it the KISS rule (Keep It Simple and Short). Here are the canons of good writing: *clarity, correctness, comprehensibility, conciseness, correctness, consistency, and completeness.*

Whether you follow the one word mantra of 'simplicity', or the seven canons of writing, your report would be able to convey the message effectively.

Here the key to success is to write a rough draft first. This needs to be checked for the above-mentioned 'cannons' and of course for grammar, spelling, punctuation etc. Then a final draft can be prepared.

9.2.6.4 VISUAL AIDS IN REPORTS:

A picture is worth a thousand words and so are visual aids. They save the report writer the trouble of doing a lot of detailed explaining. Among other functions of visual aids are:

- Playing a supportive or supplementary role to the text
- Pinpoint essential facts
- Highlight statistical relationship like trends, distributions, etc.

Also these aids add visual appeal and most importantly they help the reader to a quicker understanding. They various visual aids are:

- Tables
- Charts (Pie-charts, Bar charts, Time charts, Flow charts, etc.)
- Maps
- Graphs
- Drawings and photographs.

INTEGRATION OF TEXT AND VISUALS:

Communication becomes complete when the text and visuals are integrated. The text 'tells' and the visuals 'show'. Writing text to support the visuals or finding visuals to support the text can achieve the integration. Also placement of visuals plays an important role in integration.

9.3 SUMMARY:

- Communication is the most integral part of PR. Both oral and written communications are important in PR. The ability to write quickly, coherently, and effectively - along with the ability to communicate orally – distinguishes good PR practitioners from average ones.
- In Public Relations, one is required to write news releases, reports, memos, minutes, letters, speeches, articles, etc. all the time. Also PR writers write for a wide range of purposes, and use a greater number of communication methods.
- Public relations writers should follow a few guidelines. These are: *Avoid big words, Be specific, Avoid extra words, Be simple, Avoid clichés, Be short, Avoid jargons, Be active, Be organized, Be convincing, Be understandable.*
- A news release or press release is a written document that disseminates information in a *ready-to-publish* form. News releases are basic tools of publicity.
- There are four basic types of news releases. These are: *The Advance or announcement, The Backgrounder, The Feature, and The Follow-up.*

- PR Letters have a high degree of formality (as opposed to personal letters). Also PR letters often need to be detailed. PR letters are: Pleased letters (letters of promotion, approval, admission, permission, award, etc.), Displeased letters (letters of denial, refusal, etc.), and Neutral letters (Requesting for information, action, etc.).
- Memos or memorandums are hand written or type written messages exchanged by employees within an organization for passing information, instructions, suggestions, etc. *Memos inform, confirm, make decisions a matter of record, briefly and precisely transmit information which otherwise might be confused or forgotten.*
- Minutes are a written record of important discussion and actions taken at meetings. Because of the necessity and importance of accurate record of meetings, the job of preparing minutes is assigned a responsible person.
- A report is a written statement of the facts of a situation, project, study, process, or test. It includes information about how these facts were collected and ascertained, their significance, the conclusions that have been drawn from the collected facts. When required, recommendations are also given.

9.4 KEY WORDS:

News Release: News releases usually present positive information. It tries to provide news that shows the positive sides of the organization to the customers, clients, or the community. Many organizations use it extensively as it involves nominal expenses. Organizations can run a functional & quite effective Public Relations programme only with this basic tool.

The Advance or Announcement News Release: This is the most common type of news release. Its purpose is simply to announce some event or activity. It is topical and time bound.

The Backgrounder News Release: These are usually serious in tone, longer in length and less time bound. Some times backgrounders provide detailed or in-depth background information on an issue, a product or an organization. These are issued along with other forms of releases. The purpose of backgrounder is to help the reporter get better understanding and perspective of the topic or issue.

The Feature News Release: While backgrounders are prepared & used mostly as support materials to major releases, feature type of news releases is prepared to be complete stories. The features cover a variety of topics and vary in length style & approach. These are more people-oriented and usually are dramatic and even humorous with a view to entertain while informing.

The Follow-up News Release: This kind of news release, as the name suggests, is issued only after something has occurred. Like what happened in meeting, during an event, or these could cover the results of some plans and projects after they were implemented.

Letters: PR Letters carry the image of the organization and have the potential to create good will. Such letters usually require a high degree of formality (as opposed to personal letters). Also PR letters often need to be detailed. PR letters are: Pleased letters (letters of promotion, approval, admission, permission, award, etc.), Displeased letters (letters of denial, refusal, etc.), Neutral letters (Requesting for information, action, etc.)

Memos: Memos or memorandums are written messages exchanged by employees within an organization for passing information, instructions, suggestions, etc. Memos *inform, confirm, make decisions a matter of record, briefly and precisely transmit information which otherwise might be confused or forgotten.*

Minutes: Minutes are a written record of important discussion and actions taken at meetings. Because of the necessity and importance of accurate record of meetings, the job of preparing minutes is assigned a responsible person. The recorder takes brief but exact summaries of discussion and actions.

Reports: A report is a written statement of the facts of a situation, project, study, process, or test. It includes information about how these facts were collected and ascertained, their significance, the conclusions that have been drawn from the collected facts.

9.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What are the basics of writing for PR? Discuss in detail.
2. Writing for PR is different from other types of media writing. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
3. Discuss in detail how press releases are written. Give suitable examples.
4. Discuss in detail how memos are written. Give suitable examples.
5. Discuss in detail how reports are written. Give suitable examples.
6. Discuss in detail how minutes are written. Give suitable examples.

9.6 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

- ***Making PR Work*** (Sushil Bahl).
- ***Advertising and Public Relations*** (B. N. Ahuja and S.S. Chhabra).
- ***Lesly's Hand Book of PR and Communication*** (Edited by Philip Lesly).
- ***Public Relations: Principles, Cases, and Problems*** (H. Frazier More, Frank Kalupa)
- ***The Practice of Public Relations*** (Fraser P. Seitel)