  
**TELEVISION NEWS REPORTING AND ANCHORING**  
**(BAJMC-208)**  
**Unit – 2**  
**TV News Writing**  
by  
**Mr. Pushpendra Sachan**  
(Assistant Professor, BVICAM, New Delhi)  
2024

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**Unit 2- Chapter 1**

**Characteristics and Essentials of  
TV Language**

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**Characteristics of Television**

- The idea behind news writing is pretty simple: Keep it short and to the point. Anyone writing for a newspaper or website knows this.
- But that idea gets taken to a new level with it comes to writing copy for radio or television broadcasts. Here are some tips for broadcast news writing.
- Television programmes are not easy to be recorded by viewers. It may be practically impossible to record every programme which appears on your television. Therefore, television is generally identified as a transitory medium.

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**Characteristics of Television**

**EXPENSIVE MEDIUM**

- There is need to large amount of machinery and expertise needed to run a television station.
- We can write articles and stories and draw our own pictures. All we need will be paper, pen, drawing instruments and time.
- A television programme can never be made this.
- A television programme can never be made this easily.
- It requires lots of money, machinery and experienced people.
- Broadcast media in general and television in particular involves complex technology and organization.
- We will need crores of rupees to start a television station.

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**Characteristics of Television**

**News is essentially about people, events, surrounding people, and places.**

- **News is what affects readers directly.**
- Writing for television is different from writing for print, radio or the internet.
- This is because television is an audio-visual medium, and television writing must maximize the possibilities and avoid the limitations of the medium.
- In print, writing is the main element, and is supported by photographs.
- In television, one writes to be heard, not read, and the language used is only one of the elements of television.
- Language is used along with visuals and sound, which are the main elements, and must therefore support them rather than the other way round.

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**Characteristics of Television**

**MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF TELEVISION**

- AUDIO VISUAL MEDIUM
- DOMESTIC & INTIMATE MEDIUM
- LIVE MEDIUM
- MASS MEDIUM
- TRANSITORY IN NATURE
- EXPENSIVE MEDIUM.

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 **Characteristics of Television**

**Visual Dominance**

- Television is primarily a visual medium, and visuals often take precedence over spoken language.
- Use of images, graphics, and video clips to convey information and enhance storytelling.

**Editing Techniques**

- Quick cuts, transitions, and montage sequences are common to maintain viewer engagement.
- Editing helps control pacing, build tension, and emphasize key points.

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 **Characteristics of Television**

**Narration and Voiceovers**

- Narration is frequently used to guide the audience and provide context.
- Voiceovers contribute to storytelling, explain visuals, and connect different segments.

**Sound & Music**

- The use of music and sound effects is crucial for creating atmosphere and emotional impact.
- Background music helps set the tone, while sound effects enhance the viewing experience.

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 **Characteristics of Television**

**Scripting for Television**

- Scripts need to be concise and tailored to the limited time available.
- Attention-grabbing openings and clear, compelling storylines are essential.

**Non-Verbal Communication**

- Facial expressions, body language, and gestures play a significant role in conveying emotions and messages.
- Presenters and actors are often coached to use non-verbal cues effectively.

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## Characteristics of Television

**Commercial Considerations**

- Advertisements and sponsorships are integrated into the broadcast, affecting the overall flow and content.
- Commercial breaks and product placements are strategically placed.

**Camera Techniques**

- Camera angles and movements are used to create visual interest and convey information.
- Zooms, pans, and tilts are employed to focus attention and provide different perspectives.

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## Characteristics of Television

**Graphics and Text**

- On-screen graphics, text overlays, and subtitles are used to convey additional information.
- Headlines, bullet points, and statistics may be displayed to support the narrative.

**Live Broadcasting**

- Television often involves live broadcasts, requiring adaptability and the ability to handle unexpected events.
- Live interviews and interactions with the audience contribute to the immediacy of the medium.

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## Characteristics of Television

**Genre-specific Conventions**

- Different TV genres have their own language conventions (e.g., news, sports, drama, reality shows).
- Understanding and adhering to these conventions contribute to the effectiveness of the content.

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 **Unit 2- Chapter 2**

**News Writing  
Concepts and Elements**

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 **News Writing**

- All journalism should be a flow of information between the journalist and the reader, listener or viewer, in the broadcast media it is of vital importance that the reporter - through the newsreader or announcer - actually speaks to the audience.
- It may be that you are broadcasting to millions of people, but you must write your story as if you are telling it to just one person.
- You should write as if someone you know personally is listening.
- Picture a favorite uncle or aunt, cousin or brother and imagine that you are speaking to him or her.
- Your style must, therefore, be conversational and as far as possible simple.

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 **News Writing**

- Remember also that, unlike a newspaper story, your listeners or viewers cannot go back on the bulletin to hear again something they have missed.
- Nor can their eyes jump around within a story or a page searching for the information they want.
- In broadcasting the words and sentences are heard once only, one after the other, and all the information must be presented in such a way that it is understandable straight away.
- This is often called a linear flow of information because it goes in a line in one direction You must help your listeners and viewers by presenting information concisely and logically.
- You must always remember that by switching on a radio or television set, the listeners are inviting you into their homes, their workplaces and their cars.

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## News Writing

- Write and speak as if you were talking to them as individuals, face-to-face. In practice you should remember all you have been told about writing the basic news story.
- Be concise, up-to-date, stick to the main point, use the active voice, don't start with quotes and don't overload.
- Keep it short and simple(KISS).
- You should not try to get too much information into any sentence.
- Although you use the inverted pyramid style of story writing, you may only be able to use one or two concepts (ideas) per sentence.

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## News Writing

- You cannot get as much detail into a radio or television story as you can into a newspaper story.
- You cannot expect your listener to understand the Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How? of a story all in the first paragraph or even the first two paragraphs.
- Although as a good journalist you should not leave any essential questions unanswered.

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## PRINCIPLES OF WRITING

### Fundamentals of TV reporting – Reporting skills, Ethics for TV reporting

- Professional electronic journalists should accept and understand that they operate as trustees of public and should, therefore, make it their mission to seek the truth and to report it fairly with integrity and independence.
- Professional journalists should stand fully accountable for their actions.
- The purpose of this Code is to document the broad paradigms accepted by the members of the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) as practice and procedures that would help journalists of electronic media to adhere to the highest possible standards of public service and integrity.

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**PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

- News channels recognize that they have a special responsibility in the matter of adhering to high standards of journalism since they have the most potent influence on public opinion.
- The broad principles on which the news channels should function are, therefore, as stated hereinafter.
- Broadcasters shall, in particular, ensure that they do not select news for the purpose of either promoting or hindering either side of any controversial public issue.
- News shall not be selected or designed to promote any particular belief, opinion or desires of any interest group.

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**PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

- The fundamental purpose of dissemination of news in a democracy is to educate and inform the people of the happenings in the country, so that the people of the country understand significant events and form their own conclusions.
- Broadcasters shall ensure a full and fair presentation of news as the same is the fundamental responsibility of each news channel.
- Realizing the importance of presenting all points of view in a democracy, the broadcasters should, therefore, take responsibility in ensuring that controversial subjects are fairly presented, with time being allotted fairly to each point of view.
- Besides, the selection of items of news shall also be governed by public interest and importance based on the significance of these items of news in a democracy.

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**PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

- Always remember the golden rule of news writing i.e. K.I.S.S. – Keep It Short and Simple. And you can keep your news writing short and simple by using the words used in daily conversation amongst us.

**INVERTED PYRAMID**

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Impartiality and objectivity in reporting:**

- Accuracy is at the heart of the news television business.
- Viewers of 24 hour news channels expect speed, but it is the responsibility of TV news channels to keep accuracy, and balance, as precedence over speed.
- If despite this there are errors, channels should be transparent about them. Errors must be corrected promptly and clearly, whether in the use of pictures, a news report, a caption, a graphic or a script.
- Channels should also strive not to broadcast anything which is obviously defamatory or libelous.
- Truth will be a defense in all cases where a larger public interest is involved, and in even these cases, equal opportunities will be provided for individuals involved to present their point of view.
- This also applies in cases where television channels report on those holding public office, though by virtue of doing so, no person can claim immunity from scrutiny from or criticism by news channels.

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Ensuring neutrality:**

- TV News channels must provide for neutrality by offering equality for all affected parties, players and actors in any dispute or conflict to present their point of view.
- Though neutrality does not always come down to giving equal space to all sides (news channels shall strive to give main view points of the main parties) news channels must strive to ensure that allegations are not portrayed as fact and charges are not conveyed as an act of guilt.

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Reporting on crime and safeguards to ensure crime and violence are not glorified**

- Television news has greater reach, and more immediate impact than other forms of media, and this makes it all the more necessary that channels exercise restraint to ensure that any report or visuals broadcast do not induce, glorify, incite, or positively depict violence and its perpetrators, regardless of ideology or context.
- Specific care must be taken not to broadcast visuals that can be prejudicial or inflammatory.
- Equally, in the reporting of violence (whether collective or individual) the act of violence must not be glamorized, because it may have a misleading or desensitizing impact on viewers.
- News channels will ensure that such reconstructions will not cross boundaries of good taste and sensibility..

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Depiction of violence or intimidation against women and children:**

- As an elaboration of Point 3, news channels will ensure that no woman or juvenile, who is a victim of sexual violence, aggression, trauma, or has been a witness to the same is shown on television without due effort taken to conceal the identity.
- In reporting all cases of sexual assault, or instances where the personal character or privacy of women are concerned, their names, pictures and other details will not be broadcast/divulged.
- Similarly, the identity of victims of child abuse and juvenile delinquents will not be revealed, and their pictures will be morphed to conceal their identity

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Privacy:**

- As a rule channels must not intrude on private lives, or personal affairs of individuals, unless there is a clearly established larger and identifiable public interest for such a broadcast.
- The underlying principle that news channels abide by is that the intrusion of the private spaces, records, transcripts, telephone conversations and any other material will not be for salacious interest, but only when warranted in the public interest.
- However, it is also understood that the pursuit of the truth and the news is not possible through the predetermined principle of prior permission; hence door stepping individuals or authorities for the purpose of newsgathering may be used only in the larger purpose of public interest.

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Privacy:**

- Further, in the case of minors, in any broadcast that intrudes on their privacy, the channel should attempt, where possible, to seek the consent of the parent or legal guardian.
- However, the defense of the premise of privacy cannot be misconstrued as the denial of access, and this applies to all individuals, including those in the public eye and public personalities.
- It does however apply in its entirety, as per the provisions mentioned above, to their children and kin who are minors.

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 **PRINCIPLES OF WRITING**

**Endangering national security:**

- In the use of any terminology or maps, that represent India and Indian strategic interests, all news channels will use specific terminology and maps mandated by law and Indian government rules. (The depiction of the map of the territory of India will reflect official guidelines, as detailed in official literature).
- News channels will also refrain from allowing broadcasts that encourage secessionist groups and interests, or reveal information that endangers lives and national security.
- However, it is in the public interest to broadcast instances of breach of national security and loopholes in national security and reporting these cannot be confused with endangering national security

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 **Principles of Self Regulation**

**Sting operations:**

- As a guiding principle, sting and under cover operations should be a last resort of news channels in an attempt to give the viewer comprehensive coverage of any news story.
- News channels will not allowed and sleaze as a means to carry out sting operations, the use of narcotics and psychotropic substances or any act of violence, intimidation, or discrimination as a justifiable means in the recording of any sting operation.
- Sting operations, will also abide by the principles of self regulation mentioned above, and news channels will ensure that they will be guided, as mentioned above, by an identifiable larger public interest.
- News channels will as a ground rule, ensure that sting operations are carried out only as a tool for getting conclusive evidence of wrong doing or criminality, and that there is no deliberate alteration of visuals, or editing, or interposing done with the raw footage in away that it also alters or misrepresents the truth or presents only a portion of the truth.

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 **Principles of Self Regulation**

**Viewer feedback:**

- All News Channels will on their website, create provision to receive consumer feedback.
- Further any specific viewer complaints will be responded to.
- In the event any news channel gets a specific complaint if found to be true it will admit to the same on air and will respond in fullness and fairness to the viewer.
- In the event, a viewer/body perceives prejudice by any specific report carried by the News channel, it will respond in fullness and without impartiality to the viewer.

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 **Principles of Self Regulation**

**Sex and nudity:**

- News channels will ensure that they do not show, without morphing, nudity of the male or female form.
- Channels will also not show explicit images of sexual activity or sexual perversions or acts of sexual violence like rape or molestation, or show pornography, or the use of sexually suggestive language.

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 **Principles of Self Regulation**

- All news channels will keeping with the principle of due accuracy and impartiality, ensure that significant mistakes made in the course of any broadcast is acknowledged and corrected on air immediately.
- Corrections should also be scheduled in such a way that they attract enough viewer attention and are not concealed.
- This, like the other principles, must be observed in spirit, and not just in letter, to avoid any compromise to the reputation of the news broadcasting industry in India

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**TV NEWS Packaging**

- Structure, timing, and letting the interview breathe are all essential elements for ensuring a general TV or radio news package works.
- These are the packages where you introduce the audience to an issue and explore multiple elements of the story through interviewing different people.
- It's also important not to cram too much into an item, perhaps just three points.
- Try to avoid noddies (shots where you, the interviewer, nod and which are edited in later) and walking shots for TV, they are overused and boring.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

Try to think of original shots and sounds that will capture the attention of the audience.

**1: Clarity**  
Before you start, have a clear idea of how long your finished item is likely to be and roughly how much footage & Format of your interviewees you are likely to use.

**2: Format**  
Map out a structure for the piece and try to work out a likely order for the interview clips and which points they will address.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**3: Main points Try to limit yourself to three main points for one item.**

**4: Use of interviewees**  
Make sure each of these three points is addressed by a different interviewee.

**5: Review**  
Listen or watch the interview in full from start to finish at least once in order to re-familiarise yourself with the material, taking note of the time on the recording of each potential interview clip, the words that begin the clip and the words that end it.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**6: Coherence**  
When you have repeated the process for all the interviews in your piece, return to the structure you have mapped out and see if it is still coherent or if the order of interviewees needs to change.

**7: Strength**  
Try to put the strongest interview near the start of the piece.

**8: Selection**  
When you are selecting interview clips, choose ones which give opinion over ones which relay only information; information which is not controversial can easily be summarized by you in your linking commentary.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**9: Pace**  
 Try to leave a pause at the start and end of each clip. Life isn't breathless; neither should a radio or television package be.

**10: Clichés**  
 In television avoid using noddies and walking shots to illustrate your material. They are the mind-numbingly boring to look at and do not make best use of the medium.

**11: Editing**  
 Avoid cutting excessively from the answer (i.e., taking one part of three seconds from the start of an answer, three seconds from the middle and five from the end).  
 This sounds and looks unnatural, misrepresents the interviewee, and is excessively difficult to process for television interviews.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**12: Context**  
 Never take an answer from one question and use it in response to another. This is gross misrepresentation.

**13: Commentary**  
 When you are writing commentary to link the clips together, try to avoid using the same words at the end of your text as the interviewee says in the beginning of the clip i.e. : John Smith said he was delighted.. [John Smith] "I am delighted

**14: Summaries**  
 In TV and radio journalism, your package may often be mentioned in a news bulletin before its broadcast slot, in the form of a clip. When writing the introduction for that clip, avoid summarizing everything that is going to appear in the clip.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**15: Positioning**  
 In television reports, try to stick to the convention of alternate interviewees being on opposite sides of the screen. (First interviewee looking left to right, second right to left, third left to right etc.)

**16: Voices**  
 Try to avoid running two clips back to back without a commentary in between. Where this is unavoidable, for example in the case of vox pops, in radio try to alternate between male and female voices. The reason for this is to avoid confusion.

**17: Titles**  
 Always make sure that you have the correct title for your interviewee and the correct spelling of their name. This is particularly important for TV captions. If they have a particularly long job title, agree a shortened version before you return from the interview.

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 **NEWS WRITING**

**18: Ending**  
 Try to avoid ending a report on a clip of one of the interviewees. In TV this looks untidy. In radio, it complicates life for the studio presenter. It also gives one side or another of an argument the last word.

**19: Answers**  
 If you are editing an interview as a stand-alone item, try to put as much of the non-controversial information in the intro or lead-in to the item and always remember to make sure the intro ends with a question and the piece begins with an answer to that question.

**20: Options**  
 For stand-alone interviews, always give an option of an early ending, with a shorter duration and the right outwards. This will help the production team in case more urgent news breaks or they need to cut back your item.

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 **Unit 2- Chapter 3**

**Writing for Visuals**  
**Simple News stories, Writing Intros / Opening, Headlines & Closing / Concluding**

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 **Writing for Television**

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 **Writing for Visuals**

- Making television news is a more complicated process than producing radio news - which can often be done by one person.
- Television always involves several people, performing specialist tasks such as **camera operating, scriptwriting, bulletin presenting, directing, studio managing, lighting and sound mixing.**
- Television also involves two simultaneous methods of presenting information - sound and vision.
- Of the two, vision is usually the most effective in giving details quickly.

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 **Writing for Visuals**

- For example, you could take several minutes to describe a crash scene which can be understood from a ten-second film segment.
- The words in television usually support the pictures, not the other way round.
- That is why television reporters usually write their scripts after they have edited the videotape (or film).
- You usually have to write your script so that the words match the pictures which are on the screen.
- This requires good language skills, especially in simplifying complex language.

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 **More Characteristics...**



- Resourceful
- Organized
- Ability to be a team player
- Willingness to accept criticism
- Flexibility
- Writes well
- Knows news

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**The Process of Television Journalism**

- Television journalism consists of the broadcast of either packaged news or live news.
- A packaged news story is one, which is explored, shot, edited and most importantly, broadcast after the event has happened.
- A live news story is one which captures and broadcasts the action of an event as it happens.
- Depending on whether a journalist is preparing a packaged or a live news story, there is a certain well-defined process to be followed.
- The processes of packaged news reporting and live news reporting are described below.

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**The Process of Television Journalism**

**Packaged News Stories**

The word 'package' refers to a complete product. In other words, a news package is a story, which has been carefully scripted, shot, edited, and thus given a final shape, which contains all the elements of a finished product. The steps involved in the making of a news package are as follows.

The reporter gets information about a potential news story from a source. This source may be an individual or an organization.

Experienced reporters build up a network of reliable sources over time, and depend on them for the first vital leads to a story.

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**Stages of Television News**

- There are various stages of a TV news and you should be aware of all of them.
- Writing is involved in almost all these stages at different levels.
- Many news pieces may not pass all the stages but unless you know all of them, you would not be able to decide which stage is fit for which news piece.
- Following are the stages of a TV news.

**Breaking News or Flash**  
**Dry Anchor Read**  
**Anchor-Live**  
**Anchor-Visuals**  
**Anchor-Byte**  
**Anchor- Package**



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 **Stages of Television News**

**Breaking News or Flash:**

- When you receive an information from your source which has news value for your audience, you decide to present it as soon as possible.
- At this stage, the news will be of one or two lines. The purpose of the breaking news is to make your viewers aware of the latest happenings immediately.

**Dry Anchor Read:**

- Dry anchor read means that the anchor or news presenter reads the news only without any visuals.
- This normally happens in the case of breaking news situation.

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 **Stages of Television News**

**Anchor-Live:** If the news is in developing stage, the news bulletin producer may decide to take the live or telephonic interview of the reporter after anchor read.

- If visuals are available, they can be used along with 'live' or 'phone link' of the reporter.

**Anchor-Visuals:** When the news related visuals come into the newsroom, the anchor reads the news and the appropriate visuals are played over that.

- Here the purpose is to present the news in a concise manner.

**Anchor-Byte:** If there are some bytes relevant to the news item, it is also often attached with the anchor read.

- The bytes may be of the persons involved in the event or reaction of prominent personalities on that event.

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 **Stages of Television News**

**Anchor-Package:**

- The culmination of all the above stages is the package. In this, there are voice over, appropriate visuals, relevant bytes and PTC.
- The package is supposed to present a full picture of the event.
- So far as writing the news scripts of the above stages is concerned, the basic underlying principles remain the same.
- You must have read about the inverted pyramid style of news writing.
- Always remember to follow that. It is very important to understand the news worthiness of the raw information before starting the writing.

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 **Anchor-Package**

- The Anchor-package has two parts. The first part is the anchor-link or intro of the news.
- Here you inform your viewers about the main news and give the basic information.
- You should not infuse too much information in the intro because it may confuse the viewer.
- You should just include one or two key points in the sentence. Normally, the intro consists of two or three sentences.
- The second part is the body of the package. Here, the visuals and bytes are used and the complete story is presented for the viewers.
- There are some VOs (voice over) over which visuals are laid and bytes are inserted between two VOs to move the story forward.
- You should start with the best of the visuals you have, and your story should flow naturally.
- It is ideal to write TV news script according to visuals

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 **PCR and MCR**

- The two control rooms from where the news programmes are finally controlled.
- They are Production Control Room i.e. PCR and Master Control Room i.e. MCR.
- PCR is the control room from where the co-ordination between the output team and technical team is done and production of the news programmes is controlled.
- In the PCR of a TV news channel, you would find huge machines and many TV monitors.
- All members of the output team right from the producer to switcher and sound engineers are present in the PCR during the show.
- PCR controls the audio-visual elements of news programmes.
- It coordinates the switching from camera to camera and manages all the 'live' elements of the news bulletin.
- It also controls the studio and communicates with anchor.

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 **PCR and MCR**

- Master Control Room (MCR) is the final technical hub from where the signal is transmitted to the satellite for broadcast.
- MCR usually has video monitors, satellite receivers and transmission equipments.
- Nowadays, almost all the TV news channels have state-of-the-art equipments.
- You would find computer broadcast automation equipments which can record the programme as well as play it back.
- In any 24x7 TV news channel, the MCR works round- the-clock and is controlled by Master Control Operators.
- The MCR is responsible for monitoring quality as well as accuracy of the on-air product.

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PCR and MCR

- An important task of MCR is to run the commercials.
- Master Control Operators are supposed to keep tab on duration of the whole programme.
- In every rundown, commercials are put in advance. Content and commercials are managed within duration of the programme.
- If the MCR team finds the content part too lengthy, they remind output team i.e. rundown producer to cut it short.

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News in Now days

- 'Live' elements have become a vital part of television news in recent times.
- Earlier news bulletins used to be recorded well in advance but now almost all the bulletins are 'live'. And apart from the 'live' news bulletins, there may be many other 'live' elements are added into it.
- Suppose, the news of a terrorists attack comes in, then immediately reporters are roped in to give 'live chats' and elaborate the news.
- There are two advantages of this - authenticity of that news item increases and it becomes 'interactive'.
- Many a times, when a news channel airs a bulletin on any social issue, phone lines are kept open to take reactions of the audience.

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News in recent times

- Almost on all TV news channels, you will find debate-discussion programmes on different social or political or economic issues.
- In such type of programmes, you will find many experts expressing their views 'live'.
- Sometimes, the audiences are also brought into the studio. While 'live' guests and audience can make the programme or news item interesting and happening but there can be a flip side too if at times the guests and audience start abusing each other using objectionable remark

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**News Feature:**

- Writing for news feature is different from hard news scripts. Normally the feature writer has the liberty to show his/her writing skills and creativity.
- It is built around a news point and it contains those elements which can attract the viewers.
- As feature writing is more a show of skill, it does not follow any set pattern.
- Each feature writer can develop his/her own style.
- Moreover, the style may differ from subject to subject But there are some points which should be kept in mind while writing the news feature scripts.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**What Are Feature Stories?**

- ❖ Feature stories are human-interest articles that focus on particular people, places and events.
- ✦ Feature stories are journalistic, researched, descriptive, colorful, thoughtful, reflective, thorough writing about original ideas.
- ✦ Feature stories cover topics in depth, going further than mere hard news coverage by amplifying and explaining the most interesting and important elements of a situation or occurrence.
- ✦ Feature stories are popular content elements of newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites, newsletters, television broadcasts and other mass media.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Exploring the angles of the story:** Before writing, it is imperative to find out all the possible angles of the story.

- At the same time, you can not include all the angles of the issue in a single story because it will become too long.
- So you will require to choose a couple of angles which you find more appropriate than others and around which you would like to narrate the story.

**Proper research about the story:** You must research properly about the subject which is the basis of your script.

- Research may include talking to the people having expertise in the subject, sourcing as much information about it as possible and trying to find any previous feature story on the same subject by any other news organisation.
- This will help you to structure your script.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Writing script according to the mood of the story:**

- You should remember that being a feature story, it has not to be written necessarily in the inverted pyramid style.
- Here you are telling a story to the viewer and your goal is to give them a real feel of the subject.
- You must stick to the theme and mood of the story in your writing.
- There is no need to describe those things which are not relevant to the story.
- You can add colour, drama and punch in the story but these should fit in your theme.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Documentary:**

- Documentary is also a longer format. A documentary is a result of very hard work and it demands a lot of time, energy and resource to be mobilised.
- A good documentary is written skilfully, catches people's attention and touches their feelings and communicates efficiently.
- A documentary is much more and much different than a news report but just like the news, your documentary should be able to connect with the viewers.
- New York Film Academy says, "Documentaries are real, with real people and dealing with real issues that are powerful and hit us at our core."
- Let your writing reflect those deep, moving messages and capture your audience emotionally.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Documentary:**

- Therefore, before writing documentary script, you should have a clear and precise idea of your subject.
- You must have the understanding of how the story will be delivered.
- In fact, before writing a documentary script, you must complete your research, collect the required data and shoot the interviews, etc.
- Once you have all the materials, you can filter the required ones and start writing the script of the documentary.
- You must remember that writing is an art and you need to practice regularly in order to improve your artistry.
- Also, every artist has his/her unique style and creativity, similarly, every news writer has his/her own style of expression.
- You should study the writing styles of others but try not to copy anyone but to develop your own style.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Bulletins**

- After gathering all inputs, the output team plans and prepares news bulletins.
- Now-a-days, almost all the television news channels in India work round-the-clock.
- Normally bulletins are of half an hour duration. Hence, a proper 'rundown' is prepared for a particular bulletin.
- Rundown is the order of news items in which they are sent on air.
- Since in every news channel particular automation software runs the bulletin, rundown has much importance.
- Usually every top of the hour headlines run. All the big and important news items are accommodated in the headlines.
- After the headlines, the bulletin goes according to the run order.
- Even within a bulletin, there are many formats in which the news is broadcast.

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 **Writing News Feature and Documentary**

**Few important formats are following:**

- **STD/PACKAGE:** In this format, anchor has to read only the anchor-link and rest of the news is run in the packaged form.
- **STD/Visuals:** Anchor reads the whole news and visuals are played.
- **STD/GFX:** Anchor reads the news and graphics are played.
- **STD/SOT:** This format is used if someone's version i.e. 'byte' is to run.
- Anchor gives brief introduction and then the 'byte' is played.

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 **Bulletins**

- Apart from general bulletins, some specific shows and bulletins are also telecast.
- Sometimes, they are categorized according to their subject like-sports show, business bulletin, crime show, entertainment show, etc.
- News channels also have discussion shows and documentaries on various issues.
- Usually, a half-an-hour bulletin comprises of three segments. The segments are divided by commercials which are the major 'bread-and-butter' or revenue earning sources of TV news channels.
- The first segment of the news bulletin is generally kept big.
- Rundown producers along with MCR people manage the duration of the news content and scheduled commercials.

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**TV vs other media**

- The evolution of the television news is as important a milestone for humankind as was the postal system which offered the first proof of global connectivity.
- The television news industry has become prominent, expanding its reach to every house through television sets in recent years.
- The television rating system holds the power to affect the structure of the television news industry.
- Such a rating system massively impacts the advertisement volumes attracted by the news channels.
- Notably, the viewership of news channels is now divided among various spectrums, from DTH to online platforms.
- However, the rating system just assesses the DTH viewership with limited sample size, without keeping up with the rapidly changing landscape and nature of the television news industry.

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**TV vs other media**

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**TV vs other media**

- Television news casting, because of visual element in it, is a little more complicated.
- With the proper and clear language of the news and voice of the news reader one has to ensure that the newscaster is presentable.
- Dry stories (stories without visuals) are like radio news items with newscaster in view.
- Newscaster should not smile while giving sad news.
- If the bulletin ends with sad news the natural smile of relief that comes at the end on the lips of a newsreader looks odd.
- Normally the editor should avoid putting sad news at the tail of the bulletin.

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 **TV vs other media**

- The visual when it is there should match with the words.
- Matching of words with visuals sheds careful calculation of time and words and overall synchronization.
- This requires maximum care while giving news of an award winning ceremony.
- Care with the use of photographs cannot be emphasized.
- There have been instances when wrong visuals have been shown with a death story and the persons involved were members of Parliament.

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 **TV vs other media**

- Another major difference is in headlines.
- While in newspapers headlines are on the top of every story, in radio and television news headlines come in the beginning of the news bulletin.
- They are just three or four sentences.
- Each sentence dealing with a separate story in radio news bulletins headlines are some- times repeated at the end.
- This practice is used also in television news bulletins.
- Thus, there is no difference in the basic concept of news whether it is on radio, television or in a newspaper.
- The differences arise due to the characteristics of the medium.

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 **TV vs other media**

- Translation of news does not mean literal translation. It is basically rewriting the item in a different language.
- It, therefore, requires command over both the languages.
- In news translation care has to be taken that the meaning of the item does not change but the syntax should be changed according to the usage of the language in which the item is translated.
- Language should also be checked for readability and clarity. These are the general principles and apply to translation in newspapers, radio and television.

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 **BASIC RULES OF TELEVISION**

**PRINCIPLES OF WRITING FOR VISUALS**  
**/Television News Writing Structure**

**Use Simple Subject–Verb–Object sentence structures.:**

- The writer of TV news must be able to make complicated stories simple. In short, understanding must be immediate in the TV News Bulletin.
- The golden rule to follow is "never underestimate the viewers' intelligence or over-estimate their knowledge".
- Stick to short sentences of 20 words or less. The announcer has to breathe.
- Long sentences make it difficult for the person voicing the script to take a breath.

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 **BASIC RULES OF TELEVISION**

**CLARITY:**

- The first rule of TV news is that the story must be clear at once.
- Unlike the reader, the viewer has no second chance to go over the material. TV news is written on the wind.

**BREVITY:**

- Clarity comes not only from writing simple sentences but also from writing short ones.
- Long sentences cannot be read easily by the newscaster, and a viewer has a hard time following them.
- Every sentence that you write for broadcast should be short, simple and easy to understand.

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 **BASIC RULES OF TELEVISION**

- The average acceptable number of words per sentence in a TV copy is 13 to 14.
- TV news has been described as a headlines service. It is intended to give the viewer only an outline of the event.
- A good newspaper story ranges from hundreds to thousands of words.
- The same story on television or radio may have to fit into 30 seconds—perhaps no more than 100 words.
- If it is an important story, it may be 90 seconds or two minutes.
- You have to condense a lot of information into the most important points for broadcast writing.

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 **BASIC RULES OF TELEVISION**

**USE CORRECT GRAMMAR**

- A broadcast news script with grammatical errors will embarrass the person reading it aloud if the person stumbles over mistakes.

**PUT THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION FIRST**

- Writing a broadcast news story is similar to writing a news story for print in that you have to include the important information first.
- The only difference is that you have to condense the information presented.
- Write good leads. Begin the story with clear, precise information.
- Broadcast stories have to fit into 30, 60, or 90 seconds, broadcast stories are sometimes little more than the equivalent of newspaper headlines and the lead paragraph.

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 **BASIC RULES OF TELEVISION**

**WRITE THE WAY PEOPLE TALK**

- Sentence fragments—as long as they make sense—are acceptable.

**USE CONTRACTIONS**

- Use dont instead of do not. But be careful of contractions ending in -ve (e.g., would've, could've), because they sound like "would of" and "could of."

**USE PRESENT TENSE VERBS**

- except when past-tense verbs are necessary. Present tense expresses the sense of immediacy.
- The present tense is the most engaging tense in the language. It indicates that the action is still going on.
- Use past tense when something happened long ago.

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 **THANKYOU**

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