UNIT-1 : INTERVIEWING AND NOTE TAKING

UNIT STRUCTURE

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain how to prepare for an interview
- describe how to formulate questions for an interview
- compile an interview for print media
- differentiate between language for print and audio-visual interview
- outline the process of note taking

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of the course on English for Media Studies. In this unit you will learn about the use of English language in the context of interviews. It is said that good reporting is about 80% interviewing. As such interviews play a very important role in news gathering, apart from being stand alone pieces of newspaper publication or TV and radio programmes. And the success of an interview depends on the capability of the interviewer to ask questions. Rather we can say that the kind of answers we get depends on the kind of questions that are asked.

In this unit we will not go into details about what an interview is, since this topic has already been discussed at length in Course 3, Unit 4. Here we will deal in detail with the role of language in conducting a successful interview and how a slight maneuvering of language to rephrase a question can bring forth a completely different answer. We will also learn about how an interview can be presented in the print media to make it an interesting piece to read.

And the first step towards a good and fruitful interview is proper and detailed planning. So let us begin this unit by learning how to prepare for an interview.

1.3 INTERVIEW

1.3.1 WHAT IS INTERVIEW?

An interview is a conversation between an important person and another or others who want to know about his actions, programmes, policies, etc. It is an objective based inter-personal communication between two individuals. An interview demands direct interaction with the objective of eliciting information, which is not available from the written records or other sources.

Getting interviews can be rather difficult for the interviewer. The person, whom the interviewer would like to approach, may be reluctant to part with important information. The interviewer is often confronted with two different kinds of problems.

(a) He is aware of the fact that the public has the right to know about something and he, the interviewer, is one of the primary persons for getting it for them. He faces the problem of living up to the expectation of his readers.

(b) He is also aware of the fact that the interviewee is not legally bound to disclose any information to him.

In such situations, the interviewer has to play different kinds of roles to suit the situation. At times, he becomes a flatterer; he flatters the interviewee to extract important information from him. At other times, he becomes a bully forcing the information out from him. Yet at other times, he becomes something like your most-obedient-servant whom the interviewee would oblige with pieces of information. Hence, there is the need for a variety of approaches and techniques to interview a person.

1.3.2 PREPARING FOR INTERVIEW

The first step in preparing for an interview is to know well about the interviewee and the subject you are going to discuss with him. Once the initial research is done, prepare a list of possible questions so that you are not at a loss during the interview and don't miss out on important topics. Properly phrasing the questions is as important as the question itself. If you do not use the right combination of words for phrasing the questions, then you might not get answers that satisfy the purpose of the interview.

PHRASING THE QUESTION

As you might already know from your reading of Previous Courses Unit , there are two types of questions :

- ✓ **Open - Ended Questions**
- ✓ **Close - Ended Questions**

Open – Ended questions are those that leave a lot of scope for the respondent to speak his/ her mind. They elicit answers that are more exploratory and flexible. Very often in answer to such questions, the respondents reveal much more than they intend to or they realize they are revealing. It also provides scope to the respondent to avoid giving a direct answer to a controversial issue by twisting the answer.

e.g.

- What is your response to the allegations made against you?
- What is your take on the music of the North-East?
- Please tell us briefly about the inception of your political career.
- As a leading sports organizer would you tell us about your achievements?
- Tell me something about your childhood and the memories you cherish.
- Would you share your experiences on working in the international arena?
- A lot of changes have come up in the musical scene of the state. Do you feel that these changes augur the beginning of an era of decline for the music industry of Asom?

Close – Ended Questions are those which elicit specific responses. Usually they are answered by a simple yes or no or very pin pointed specific response.

e.g.

- Have you been able to make any arrests so far?
- Who is your favourite sports personality?
- Name five items in your closet you can't do without.
- Are you in support of the statement made by your teammate?
- Why did you leave the Congress and join BJP?
- Who is the prime suspect in this murder case?

- Which was the first film in which you were involved as a music director?

It is important for you to remember that a good interview usually is a balanced blend of open and close ended questions put forth at the appropriate time. It is the expertise of the interviewer in maintaining this balance that determines the success of the interview. Sometimes when open ended questions do not elicit the desired response, the same question has to be rephrased to make it a close ended question which can trap the respondent into answering the question. At other time, the case may be the other way round. A respondent might outright refuse to answer a controversial close ended question. In such a situation the interviewer can shift to other topics for a while and come back to the same question after a while, having rephrased it as an open ended question.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1 : What are the different types of questions used in an interview?

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Q. 2 : Define Open ended questions and Close ended questions.

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ACTIVITY

1) List ten open ended questions you would like to ask in an interview with the captain of the Indian cricket team.

2) List ten close ended questions you would like to ask in an interview with a leading singer of Assam, say for e.g. Zubin Garg or Tarali Sarma

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_____

1.4 CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

Interviews can be either telephonic or face to face. We shall discuss both types of interviews here.

1.4.1 TELEPHONIC INTERVIEW

A direct approach to telephone interview is just to pick up the telephone and call the person. Tell the person what you want. “Hello is that Mr. Baruah? I’m Kalita from Times of India and I’d like to talk to you about your films”.

The trouble with such an approach is that the interviewer can always hang up. He may be irritated by your phone call and say “Sorry, at the moment I’m driving a car”. He may even say “Sorry. I’m tied up with something important” and before you can ask him “When can I call back Mr. Baruah?” he had already hung up.

Before you ring up the person, do a thorough job of research. Find out all you can about the person, using all available resources. After doing your home- work, you may like to ring up the person. Here are certain rules of telephonic interviewing behaviour:

- Greet the person with a ‘Hello’ and identify yourself by name and organization and immediately ask a question that is likely to produce an answer

- Be fair, honest and business-like; ask the questions that have to be asked.
- Note down the answers
- After the interview is over, run a check on whatever information has been gathered.

You will remember that you do not have all the time in the world. You have to meet the Editor's deadline for presenting your news story. You are aware of the fact that you will be given a maximum of two columns of a 15 cms frame to present your news story. Within that frame you have to give an 18 pt headline, a photograph of the interviewee of minimum 2 x 3 cms.

As a news reporter, you will require the skill to sift through the mass of information and construct a printable story complete with the relevant quotes and references within the prescribed length. Here is a news-story based on the films of ten time National Award Winner Jahnu Barua. Imagine that the news story was developed by Kavita of Times of India (TOI). The source of her information was a telephonic interview with the famous Film Director. Most of what Mr. Barua had informed Kavita is in quotes. These quotes will give you a fair idea of what questions Kavita had asked Mr. Barua.

I want a film on my dreams: Jahnu Barua
Inspired by legendary Japanese Director Akira Kurosawa, ten time National Award winner Jahnu Barua wants to make a film based on his dreams.
"Just like Kurosawa, may be some day I will also be able to give a shape to my dreams through cinema," says the veteran director Jahnu Barua of Maine Gandhi Ko Nahin Mara fame.

Kurosawa's Dreams (1990), acclaimed by critics all over the world, was based on eight of Kurosawa's dreams. The movie dealt with

subjects such as fears and insecurities of childhood, parents who are as olympian as gods, the seductive nature of death, nuclear annihilation and environmental pollution.

"My dream," Barua said, "is to turn the North- East into a united and peaceful region." Admitting it is a difficult task, he said, "My experiences of life has made me realise that nothing is impossible. I am a dreamer and I considered myself to be a lucky one".

He feels all human tragedies in the region can be avoided, "We should learn from our mistakes and stand together without losing one's identity", he added.
Terming North-East as the "best socio-cultural" part India he said the people there are "most humane"; he said the people should put their differences aside and compete with the rest of the world as one united team. "I always try to project the rich socio-cultural heritage and bio-diversity of the region through my films," said Barua.

His new film Har Pal starring Preity Zinta, Shiney Ahuja and Dharmendra, slated for a May release, has a major portion shot in Shillong.

The film is about a Khasi (a Meghalaya Tribal) girl and the music is based on North-East folk music. His next venture is Anjane Dost, a short 10-minute film which is part of a 10-movie series produced by a media group. The film is set in Mumbai and is about two strangers who gradually develop a relationship. Jahnu Barua also has one English and one Assamese movie on the cards. His other Hindi movie Butterfly Chase set in Jammu & Kashmir is also ready for release.

"I always believe that we as film makers have a social responsibility," says Barua.

A recipient of a number of international film awards, Barua was conferred with the Padmashri in 2003, for his out standing contribution to Indian cinema. His Halodhiya Choraye Baodhan Khai (catastrophe) won the President's Swarna Kamal award for the best feature film in 1987. Hkhagoroloi Bohu Door (It's a long way to the sea) also brought him the Swarna Kamal Award for best director in 1996.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : Imagine that you are Kavita of Time of India News Service. Here is the transcript of the telephone interview that you had with Jahnu Barua. Some of the questions as well as the answers are left out. Read the transcript carefully and supply the missing bits of questions or answers and write them down.(TOI= Kavita; JB= Jahnu Barua)

TOI : Hello, Is that Mr Jahnu Barua ? I' m Kavita from Times of India News Service.

JB : Yes. What can I do for you?

TOI : Can you give me a few minutes of your precious time? I know how busy you are.

JB : Anything you want to know?

TOI : If you don't mind my asking Mr. Barua, who has been your greatest inspiration behind your success as a film director?

PB : Well, I must name _____

(i) _____

Just like him, may be some day I will also be able to_____

(ii) _____

TOI : Can I ask you Mr. Barua: What _____?

JB : My dream is to turn the North East into a united and peaceful region.

TOI : But don't you think that it is rather challenging?

JB : Well, (iii) _____

TOI : There has been so much of human tragedies in this region.

JB : (iv) _____

TOI : What is your impression on the North East?

JB : The North East has a rich socio- cultural heritage. As a film maker, I always try to (v) _____

TOI : What do you think about the social responsibility of film makers

JB : (vi) _____

TOI : Thank you. Mr. Barua. It was nice talking to you.

1.4.2 FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW

Face-to-face interview is simply conversation and, therefore, the rules of conversational behaviour are very much applicable even in face-to- face interviews. Paul Grice (1975[1],1978[2]) offers a set of maxims that are generally followed in conversation. The maxims are merely strategies and precepts that are helpful to keep a conversation going. These maxims include :

(a) The maxim of co-operation. This maxim implies that both the interviewer and the interviewee must co-operate in getting the information across.

(b) The maxim of quantity. This maxim implies that the person must make his contribution as informative as (but not more informative) than required. Being informative would presume giving someone new or unpredictable knowledge when occasion arises

(c) The maxim of quality: This maxim implies that the interviewee must be truthful. He should not say what he believes to be false, or that which lacks adequate evidence.

(d) The maxim of relation: This maxim implies that the information has to be relevant to the topic under discussion.

(e) The maxim of manner: This maxim implies that the person must

avoid ambiguity of expression and must to brief and to the point. Besides, the presentation must be orderly.

These are general rules of conversation. However, it is possible to identify some more practical rules for persons to conduct interviews. These could include:

(a) Before interviewing a person, get as much information about him/her as possible.

(b) Open gently. Let the interviewee get warmed up. Unless you are on deadline, save your tough question.

(c) Be a good listener. Forget yourself. Don't try to impress your interviewee with your knowledge or your accent.

(d) If the interviewee stops talking, don't interrupt. He may be thinking of something useful for the topic.

(e) Get anecdotes. Assemble all the descriptive material you can handle.

(f) Look for non- verbal cues. Follow up gently with a remark, a question, to encourage comment.

(g) Play to the ego of the person without being too obvious about it.

Most of us are familiar with the interview session of the Chief Minister (Amrish Puri) and a TV reporter (Anil Kapoor) in the Hindi feature film *Nayak*. It is one of the most frequently telecast feature films famous for the TV interview, You will recall how smugly the CM breezes into the studio, leafs through the election manifesto with the aims of an I know-it-all interviewee until the bombshell drops in the form of TV footage of violence in the city and the CM's voice at the background ordering police officials to be lenient to some party or the other who had helped him. The CM in the interview studio is stunned into silence. What do you think of this interview? It gives us food for thought as to the limits that an interviewer must take note of the 'Lakshman rekha' of probing questions if any.

However, interviewing for the radio is slightly different. Three types of interviews are used for radio interviewing:

(a) Spot interview

(b) Field interview

(c) Studio interview

A brief description of each type follows:

(a) Spot interview: Spot interviews are usually brief and limited in scope. A radio or a TV reporter confronts you with a microphone and asks you at the site of an event in this case, a fire accident. “Do you suspect that the fire is not an accident?”

(b) Field interview: Field interviews can be longer than spot interviews. A reporter may interview the chairman of the Education Board in his office on the results of the HSLC/AHM examinations, a farmer in his sugarcane field and so on.

“This year there is a noticeable improvement in the performance of rural students. What do you think could be the reason?”

(c) Studio interview : Studio interviews are fairly formal. Most of you are familiar with Tim Sebastian’s interviews titled ‘Hard Talk’. The CM’s interview in the feature film “Nayak” referred to earlier belongs to this category.

In TV interviews all the three types exist. However, the essential part of a TV script is that the visual component is very important, It becomes equally important to blend the audio and video components so as to leave a harmonious impact on the viewers.

1.5 TEXT OF INTERVIEW

Once the most difficult and challenging part of the interview, i.e., the actual interviewing process is over, it is now time for a less challenging yet

equally important stage. This stage is to make the interview ready for presenting to the readers. Even a very well conducted interview may not make interesting reading if it is not presented to the readers in an attractive manner. Just like it is important to properly garnish a well cooked meal before serving, so is good presentation important to a well conducted interview.

We should always remember that the readers will be looking out for engrossing reading material in a newspaper or magazine which is full of yards of readable stuff. So, the catch is to grab the reader early and compel him to hold on till the end. As such the introductory paragraph of the interview has to be gripping. If it is a personality based interview, you can write a few lines about the interviewee and introduce him/ her or a certain aspect of his/ her personality to the readers in such a way that the reader cannot help but read on. The length of the introduction can vary depending upon requirement and space available. While some intros can be very long some can be of just 2-3 lines. Read for instance this intro to an interview on singing sensation **Angaraag Mahanta** by **Priyanka Sharma** published in The Sentinel's Sunday Magazine *'Melange'* on 23rd March, 2008.

His stupendous performance in the recent SAARC festival was the latest one in his list of accomplishments adding one more feather to his cap; his voice is fresh and virgin radiating a lot of energy and weaving a magical web for the audience — already he has significant fan following in his homeland Assam, and now he is all set to rule the hearts of all Hindi music lovers making his foray into Bollywood.

Yes, he is Angaraag Mahanta, the new musical sensation of nature's very own land - Assam. He has already made his friends go crazy with his evergreen hit number, Mon Mur Udi Gusi Jai from his Assamese album, Jonaaki Rati.

After a span of three years of performing in music concerts, in places and platforms as diverse as New Zealand, Kenya, Jodhpur Folk International festival and SAARC concert – Angaraag, popularly known as 'Papon' among his fans across the country, has now chalked out plans for making his presence felt among Hindi pop music lovers.

Besides providing scores for many regional films in Assam, Angaraag, son of the famous singer duo of Assam, Khagen Mahanta and Archana Mahanta, has also composed music for the feature film The Last Monk *that has been screened in various film festivals across the globe.*

Well-versed in Indian classical music and traditional music of Assam, the 32-year-old singer cum composer speaks about life and his musical career with Priyanka Sharma. Following are the excerpts of the interview:

Now read this intro, which gives a very brief opening to the interview.

This week we speak to the Assam Association Delhi Secretary and NEDFi representative in Delhi, Manoj Das. A multi faced personality he speaks about life outside Assam, NEDFi and the Assam Association Delhi which is turning dreams into realities for the Assamese population of Delhi.

On the other hand, if the interview is based on say, an issue of current relevance, it would be more appropriate to introduce the issue first and the respondent simultaneously.

Here we have as example an intro to an interview of an important person on issues of national importance. Notice how both the issues and the interviewee have been skillfully introduced to the readers.

At a time when it is increasingly difficult to find a lucid thinker on India's foreign policy, ***Brajesh Mishra****, India's former National Security Advisor, is a treat to meet.*

Mishra, who was against the India-US nuclear agreement, now tells rediff.com *Managing Editor* ***Sheela Bhatt*** *that the United Progressive Alliance government should go ahead and sign the deal. His current stance is at variance with his earlier views over the matter and the views of the Bharatiya Janata Party, which still opposes the deal.*

He was linked to the BJP after his retirement from the Indian Foreign Service. Today, he stands alone in the saffron crowd owing to his support for the deal.

In an exclusive two-part interview, Panditji, as Mishra is known in his inner circle, lays out the nuances, in his inimitable style, on issues like the India-US civil nuclear deal and prospects of stability in Pakistan. The Prime

Minister's Office will be pleased to read the way Mishra supports the deal using his unique blend of experience and wisdom.

Once the intro is done, the rest of the presentation is basically kept similar to the actual interview. Only some corrections may be made in the language to make it appropriate for publication. Verbal interviews are usually kept very colloquial for ease and comfort of both the interviewer and the respondent and also to build up a rapport between the two. This is also important for maintaining an easy flow for the interview. While some newspapers and magazines, prefer to remove this colloquialism while publishing to make it sound more formal, while others choose to keep up the original flavour of the interview to give more credibility and appeal to the entire exercise. You will get an idea about this in some sample interviews given for your reference.

If the interview is a stand alone, then the only way to present is a question-answer format. But if it is supposed to form part of a news story or feature, then the reporter or editor can decide whether it is to be put entirely in direct speech, or completely in indirect speech or to use a combination of both.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4 : What are the different ways in which an interview can be used in the print media?

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Q. 5 : What is a stand alone interview? What do you mean by an interview intro?

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ACTIVITY

1) Interview a local lady entrepreneur in your town. Then write down the interview for publishing in a local newspaper.

2) Write two different intros for this interview. Keep one intro short and crisp and the other one a little long and detailed.

1.6 LANGUAGE FOR AUDIO-VISUAL INTERVIEW

In the previous sections, we have mainly talked about interview for print media. With the growth and growing popularity of the audio-visual media, interviewing for this media has also become as important as that for print media. But interviewing for this media is a little more challenging as compared to that of interviewing for print media. Also, due to the difference in the demands that both these media pose, some differences arise in case of interviewing too.

While the basic rules of interviewing remain the same, the main difference is seen in case of language and in presentation. Another important fact to be noticed is the time factor. Print media interviews can go on for as long as the interviewer and the interviewee can afford and till the interviewer is satisfied that the purpose of the interview has been achieved. This is not possible in case of audio-visual media as they have to be fitted into a particular time slot. Also the chronology and flow of questions have to be properly maintained in case of audio-visual media. More and thorough preparation is required and there is less room for mistake. The interviewer's presence of mind is very important as although questions can be decided in advance, the exact chronology will depend on the way the interviewee answers the questions. As such, completely new questions may emerge as the interview progresses. Print media interviews are more flexible and mistakes are admissible as these can be covered up easily in the final

presentation. Also the exact set of questions can be prepared beforehand and handed over to the respondent for answering.

When we are conducting an interview for the audio-visual medium, we have to consciously remember that we are being heard and being seen by a mass audience. What we are saying is either being transmitted live to the audience or is being recorded for transmission later after necessary editing. Unlike print interview, there is no separation between the interviewing stage and the presentation stage. The interview will be presented as it is taken. In case of recorded interview, there is scope for editing, but that is minimal and done only when absolutely necessary. Too much editing derails the flow of the interview.

So, the bottom line is preparation – detailed and thorough preparation. The topic is to be properly researched and all questions are to be prepared in advance. Only decision to be taken on the spot is when to ask which question and how to react to what answer. Even the rough chronology of the flow of questions has to be preplanned.

Special care has to be taken regarding the language used during the interview. It will differ depending on the kind of interview it is and the kind of show it is meant for. For instance, if it is a celebrity interview for a talk show, the language will be much more informal and casual. An interview with the Prime Minister on a news channel regarding an issue of national importance, on the other hand, will be in a more formal language. However, 'formal' here does not mean the language as it is used in writing. It will be formal in the sense of being official. But the style will be colloquial and not like that of a written interview.

Here is an example from the popular talk show **'Walk the talk'** on NDTV 24x7 in February, 2004. 'Walk the Talk' host **Shekhar Gupta** spoke to Congress President **Sonia Gandhi**. Only a part of this interview has been provided here for your benefit. This interview being a classic example has also been quoted in *Essentials of Practical Journalism* by Vir Bala Agarwal. As you read through the interview, you may try to notice the ease of language used in the interview and how Shekhar Gupta is casually talking to his guest as he would talk to any other person. He is not simply asking questions, he

is making conversation.

Shekhar Gupta (SG): Since you know my guest today so well, let me first tell you about this remarkable setting. This is Swaraj Bhawan, part of the larger Anand Bhawan Complex in Allahabad, the home of the Nehru-Gandhi family, and my guest today, someone who carries that formidable dynasty on her slender shoulders, if I can put it like that.

Thank you for finding the time in the very busy election season

Sonia Gandhi: Very, very busy. In fact I have been touring Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and other states…only yesterday I was in Benaras, Badhoi, Mirzapur. And its going to carry on like this till the end.

Shekhar Gupta: Life changes a great deal. Let me go back to where it began, when did you first come to Anand Bhawan?

Sonia Gandhi: I came to Anand Bhawan in 1970 and that was when Indiraji dedicated Anand Bhawan and Swaraj Bhawan to the nation, in terms that it became a museum, open to the public. That was 1970, I had been married for two years, I was mother of a young baby, Rahul.

Shekhar Gupta: Tell me, what did you learn from your mother-in-law? She was a tough woman.

Sonia Gandhi: She was a very strong woman, but she had a very gentle side to her…..a side that, very few people know. She had an eye for detail. If somebody was unhappy or unwell, she would immediately notice and she would immediately do something about it. Perhaps by jotting down two lines. For instance, I remember when I got married, my mother came to the wedding and stayed for a month. And when she was going, it was obviously a sad moment for me. And my mother-in-law sent a little note to me: 'Hi Sonia, this is just to tell you that we all love you'. And that totally melted me. It gave me a lot of strength, that I am loved and cared for.

Shekhar Gupta: Do you have any recollections from the time of her responses to things that were happening in India which showed her character to you….something that made her angry, something that made her very determined?

Sonia Gandhi: She was at her best when faced with challenges. If she was pushed to the wall, there was pressure on her, she would come out

and really fight back

Shekhar Gupta: Give me some examples…..

Sonia Gandhi: When there was a split in the party…..

Shekhar Gupta: 1969

Sonia Gandhi: Yes, she came out and fought. I remember the elections for the president at that time.

Shekhar Gupta: Sanjeeva Reddy and Nijalingappa…..Reddy was the presidential candidate.

Sonia Gandhi: Yes, that was a time when she came out strongly and aggressively.

Shekhar Gupta: Was that the first time when you saw her as the iron woman as she came to be known as later?

Sonia Gandhi: Yes

Shekhar Gupta: And the Bangladesh war, do you recollect any of that?

Sonia Gandhi: Yes, Bangladesh war was a very exciting moment for all of us, we lived every moment of that crisis in our family. And I remember when Mujibur Rahman came to Delhi from London, there was a big reception at the airport, even though I was about to delivery my other child the next day, I made it a point to be there at the airport. There was such excitement. Etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 6 : Enlist the basic points of difference between a print media interview and a television interview.

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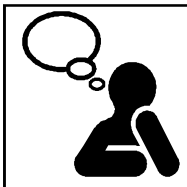
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Q. 7 : What kind of language should be used in a television interview?

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ACTIVITY

1) Watch an interview on a chat show on TV and note down the details of how the interviewer introduces the guest and how he takes forward the conversation with the guest.

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2) Prepare a list of questions for interviewing a local MLA on the developments of his constituency.

1.7 NOTE TAKING

Note- taking is an indispensable part of interviewing. For that matter, it is indispensable wherever a correspondent has to collect materials for a news-story either for the print media or for the electronic media.

1.7.1 NOTE TAKING FOR PRINT MEDIA

Note taking for the print media can be quite individualized. There are some reporters who after asking a question in the interview session take down everything that is uttered including the redundant expressions like ‘as a matter of fact’, “in the ultimate analysis”, not to speak of “you know”, “You see” etc.

Again, there are some reporters who prefer to listen to the interviewee with great attention. They take down only what they

consider to be relevant. Such reporters insist that they remember everything they hear.

Taking down notes in detail can sometimes spare us the burden of an extra phone call to double check something that ought to have been written down in the very first interview. Besides, it gives us a chance to review the interview later before finalizing the draft.

However, there are speakers who are rather verbose. You have to listen attentively to catch his strand of thought. While taking down notes, it would be more helpful to develop a personalized version of speed writing. If you are not good at short hand, you may have to develop your own abbreviations on symbols to be quick in taking down notes.

Let us assume that you are interviewing Team India's ODI captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni. You prefer to take down notes on what Mr Dhoni spoke in your own variety of short hand.

Reporter: Going by comments attributed to you the other day. if seems you are quite and angry young captain.
MSD : -not the type to run down anybody- the contribution of seniors- can't be neglected- I don't relate- having the best team for conditions expected- players who will win- I did give my views- every captain does that more so when all 5 selectors aren't on tour.
Reporter : But.....
MSD : Got misinterpreted- happened- dislike controversies- don't like- landed in one- didn't use 'senior' yet headline- I've been sharing dressing room with the seniors- excellent relations with them.

In the revised form the above two extracts of MSD would read as follows:
The following excerpts :

Q. *Going by comments attributed to you the other day, it seems you're quite an angry young captain...*

A. I'm not the type to run down anybody and, frankly, you can't ignore

the contribution made by the seniors... The seniors can't be neglected... Having said that, because of everything that's going around, I wish to emphasise that I don't relate to this business of seniors and juniors.. For me, it's all about having the best team for the conditions one is expected to face... It's about having players who'll win you matches, not seniors and juniors... I did give my views to the selectors (before the tri-series squad was picked), but every captain does that, more so when all five selectors aren't on tour.

But.....

(Interrupting) What I said got misinterpreted....It has happened... I don't like controversies and certainly don't wish to get into one myself... As it turns out, I've landed in one controversy.. I didn't use the word 'senior' anywhere in that interview (to a cricket portal), yet the headline and that... I've been sharing the dressing room with the seniors for quite a few years now... I have, I believe, excellent relations with them.

1.7.2 NOTE TAKING IN MEETINGS

1. Get a copy of the agenda of the meeting from the organizers.
2. Examine each item and get some background of the speakers and their approach to the problem
3. If handouts of speeches are circulated get hold of a copy
4. Take notes on key issues raised by different speakers.
5. Seek balance. Take down notes of both sides and also take down crucial quotes.
6. Think of the lead you are going to use to develop your news-story.

1.7.3. NOTE TAKING FOR THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA- RADIO

1. Use a conversational style of writing that is simple and lucid. Keep the sentences short. So that the listener can group the meaning easily. Use active voice.
2. The notes rephrased must be listenable as the written word must be readable. It follows the rules of good conversation
3. Radio news is spoken not read.

To illustrate the difference between two different types of note taking- for the print media and for the radio- the following extract is taken.

Print Media

Washington : Nuclear war between India and Pakistan would cause more than slaughter and destruction- it would knock a big hole in the ozone layer, affecting crops, animals and people worldwide, US researchers said on Monday. Fires from burning cities would send 5 million metric tonnes of soot or more into the lowest part of Earth's atmosphere known as the troposphere, and heat from the sun would carry these blackened particles into the stratosphere, the team at the University of Colorado reported. (TOI, April 9, 2008).

Electronic Media:

US researchers state that nuclear war between India and Pakistan is likely to cause more than slaughter and destruction. It will knock a big hole in the ozone layer. Consequently, crops, a nimals and people will be affected world wide. The researchers also report that fires from burning cities will send 5 million metric tonnes of soot or more into the lowest part of the earth's atmosphere known as the troposphere. Heat from the sun will carry these blackened particles into the stratosphere.

The language of print media illustrates the fact that note taking for print media requires the reporter to focus on what experienced journalists call “the five W’s” (who, what, when, where, and why). On the other hand, the language of the electronic media illustrates the fact that note taking for electronic media requires the reporter to focus on “four C’s”, namely clarity, correctness, conciseness and colour.

Another notable distinction between print and electronic media is that while print media prefers the use of the past tense. in the electronic media, the present tense is prefered. This is understandable because so far as print media is concerned, printing takes place only after the event had taken place.

But so far as electronic media is concerned, news is broadcast concurrently with the event happening. For example, in a newspaper we will have an item “Police fired on hundreds protesters in a Tibetan area of western China, killing eight people, overseas activists groups said.”

The broadcast news story if related when the activist groups have made the statement will use the present tense. “Overseas activists have reported police firing on hundreds of protesters in a Tibetan area of western China, Killing eight people”.

In the context of note- making, it would be useful to state that with the emergence of what is known as *Internet Journalism*, the whole business of news production is fast changing. In this climate of rapid change, telephone, fax, pen and writing pad will give way to multi-media e-mail. On-line journalism is fast emerging and bringing almost a paradigm shift in the news business.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 8 : Name one notable distinction between print media and electronic media.

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.....

Q 9 : What are the four C's of note taking for electronic media?

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ACTIVITY

1) Attend a meeting where a noted dignitary has been invited and try to take down balanced notes of what he says.



1.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the basics of use of the English language for interviewing and note taking. You have been told about how to prepare for an interview, frame questions and ask the right questions at the right time. You have learnt that there are two types of questions – Open ended questions and Close ended questions and that the right combination of open and close ended questions make a good interview. You have also learnt about how to reproduce an interview in the print media giving a good and effective intro. You have also learnt about interviewing for the audio-visual media

and the kind of language to be used in such media. Since note taking is an inseparable part of interviewing, it has also been discussed in this unit.



1.9 FURTHER READING

1. Agarwal, Vir Bala (2006), Essentials of Practical Journalism, New Delhi : Concept Publishing House.
2. Hough, George A. (1995), News Writing. Houghton : Mifflin.



1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 : Open Ended Questions and Close Ended Questions.

Ans to Q. No 2 : Questions which are designed to draw exploratory answers are called Open ended questions. E.g.- How did you get into theatre?

Questions which elicit specific responses are called close ended questions. Usually they are answered by a simple yes or no or very pin pointed specific response. E.g. – Do you watch movies?

Ans to Q. No 3 :

1) Akira Kurosawa.
2) Give a shape to my dreams.
3) I am certain that nothing is impossible.
4) We should learn from our mistakes and stand together without basing our identify.
5) project this heritage through my films.
6) We, as film makers, have a social responsibility.

Ans to Q. No 4 : As part of news stories and features, as part of personality profiles, as stand alone interviews.

Ans to Q. No 5 : A stand alone interview is one which is in itself a self sufficient write up for a publication and not used as part of another news

story or feature. It is usually written in question-answer format.

Ans to Q. No 6 : The basic points of difference between print media interview and audio-visual media interview are:

Sl. No.	Print Media Interview	Audio-visual media Interview
1.	All questions can be prepared in advance	Many more questions can emerge as the interview progresses
2.	Chronology of questions can be changed later on during presentation	Chronology remains the same as during the interview
3.	Duration of interviewing is flexible	Duration of interview is pre decided depending upon the time slot allowed for telecast.
4.	Interviewing and presentation are done in two separate stages	There is no separation of these two stages
5	There is huge scope for editing	There is less scope for editing
6	Language is more written and formal	Language is colloquial and conversational.

Ans to Q. No 7 : Conversational and easy language should be used for audio-visual media interviews.

Ans to Q. No 8 : One notable distinction between print and electronic media is that print media uses the past tense and electronic media, the present tense.

Ans to Q. No 9 : The four C's of note taking for electronic media are clarity, correctness, conciseness and colour.



1.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q. 1. "A good interview should be a perfect blend of open ended and close ended questions". Discuss.

Q. 2. What is the significance of open ended questions and close ended questions in an interview?

Q. 3. You have been asked to interview the Chief Minister of you state. Prepare a list of ten open ended questions and ten close ended questions you would ask.

Q. 4. You have just interviewed your favourite actor. Write a brief intro for the interview.

Q. 5. What do you mean by spot interview?

Q. 6. Which maxims are helpful to keep a conversation going?

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words):

Q. 1. How is language and presentation of print media interview and Audio-visual media interview different? Why?

Q. 2. Interviewing for print media and interviewing for audio-visual media are not the same. Justify.

Q. 3. Discuss the main differences of note taking for print and electronic media.