## UNIT STRUCTURE


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## 1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- describe the news writing language and style of the Indian English language media,
- identify the rules for writing news for print and cyber media,
- distinguish between news writing style for radio and TV.

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you have already learnt about the use of the English language for the different matters of the editorial page. In this unit you will learn about the use of English language in the context of news.

Although both editorial and news form parts of the same newspaper, the kind of language used is different; because news is news and editorial is views. Again, writing news for print media is different from writing news for audio and audio visual media and so is there a difference between writing for audio media and writing for audio visual media. This is mainly because in each case, the demands of each medium are different and so is the target audience. In this unit we shall learn about the rules of language and style to be followed while writing news for print media, cyber media, audio media and audio-visual media while consciously trying to understand the demands of each medium.

But before that, let us get a brief overview of the basic language usage and style followed by the English language media in our country.

## 1.3 LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF INDIAN MEDIA

English in India is a legacy from the British who colonized the country for almost two centuries and during this period their language permeated through some of the most important parts of the Indian society - the government, the media, the education system, the legal system, and gradually the social sphere in such a way that it became part and parcel of the Indian way of life even after the British were gone. Today, along with Hindi, English is also the official language of our country. India ranks third in the world after USA and the UK in respect of the number of English speakers.

The English press in India began serious journalism in the country even before the regional language press was started. Although today the regional language press has far outnumbered the English language press, yet its importance is no less. English language newspapers are published practically in all states. It has impacted not only the print media, but the broadcasting media as well. There are several English news channels as well as several outstanding media courses offered at various institutions, which focus on journalism in English. The Indian news market is today flooded with an increasing number of English language newspapers and news magazines. However, it is seen that while there are a few newspapers which have given the English language its due credit, there is a marked deterioration in the proper use of the English language by most Indian journalists. This is basically due to the lack of understanding of the subtleties and nuances and appropriate style in the use of this language on the part of the journalists.



***Queen's English:*** British English. The English language regarded as under the guardianship of the queen of England; hence standard or correct English.

Officially the English language followed in India is the **Queen's English**. However, it is seen that the language of the English language in Indian newspapers is a mixture of the Queen's English, American English and Indian English. If you regularly go through the newspapers, you will probably notice that misuse of words without understanding their proper

technical use and misspelling of common words is a familiar sight. In their use of English, the journalists often tend to forget that some words mean one thing in Britain and another in America. This causes immense confusion for the readers at times. Another visible trend is the tendency of the media to use very difficult words and complicated sentences as if to prove their command over the language. However, one needs to remember that the purpose of news is not to show off literary genius, but to give information to the readers. And this is to be done in the simple but correct language so that the reader does not have to hunt for words in the dictionary or read a paragraph twice in order to understand what is being written. Most Indian newspapers are seen to be lacking in lucidity, brevity and precision.

Let me, at this point, emphasize the importance of a **style book**. For any media organization, a stylebook is an absolute necessity. Only a good style book can help improve the presentation of news. All newspapers follow a Stylebook. Many newspapers use the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. All major news media in our country have their style books agreeing in most cases with the AP Stylebook but often differing in one way or other. Similarly book publishers, magazines, radio and TV newsrooms, all have Stylebooks. This helps maintain a uniform standard of style and usage for the media organization.



***Style Book:*** A booklet or list of rules stating a newspaper's preference, where there are choices, of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations and use of numerals

With the growing popularity of the English language media in our country it has become all the more important that the media lives up to the expectations. The English Language media in India has a lot to learn. It is very important that that the journalists are very thorough with the basic rules of grammar and spelling. A newspaper or new channel cannot afford to be casual about the use of language and if they are to acquire and retain the respect of its readers and audience, a very high standard of the use of English language has to be maintained.

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1



1. The English followed by the English language media in India is a mixture of which three types of English?

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2. What is a style book?

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3. Which Stylebooks do most newspapers follow?

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## ACTIVITY

1. Take up 5 regional and national English language dailies and analyze the language used by each. Find out which English is used by these dailies. If required, consult journalists from these dailies to draw a conclusion.
2. Watch two major English news channels and try to identify which English they use.
3. Read any English language newspaper and note down ten instances each of the use of Indian English, American English and British English.

## 1.4 LANGUAGE AND STYLE FOR PRINT AND CYBER MEDIA

Now that you have been told about the basic features of the Indian English Language Media, let us now individually go into news writing style for print, cyber, audio and audio-visual media. In this section we shall deal with language and style for print and cyber media. Since in both print and cyber media the basic form is the written word, we shall deal with both these media together in the same section. Also, here we shall only talk about Hard News. Writing for Soft News has been dealt with separately in other units in this course.

In your Course 2, i.e., on news, you have already learnt about the basic structure of a news story. It consists of three main elements

1. Headline
2. Lead
3. Body

Hard news does not have any conclusion.

Let us now begin with the language and style for writing headlines.

**The Headline:** Writing a good headline is not as easy as it seems. The headline identifies the reader's area of interest and introduces, precedes and summarizes a news story. The significance of a headline is great. Most people merely glance at the newspaper headlines and arrive at judgements based on this. As such, the headline has to be good and appropriate.

Good vocabulary is very important to writing headlines. Constructing sentences within the structure of the headline requires on the part of the sub-editor a precise knowledge of the meanings of many words and a keen sense of their connotations apart from a simple vocabulary of many words. Attention has to be paid to both denotations and connotations of words and words have to be examined using their exact meaning and special meanings in the light of their immediate context. We have listed below with examples a few guidelines which you can follow to very good effect while writing headlines:

**1. Build the headline around a strong verb**

Use active meaningful verbs to give colour and spice to the sentence. Avoid adjectives. E.g.:

- Hike in prices of essential items **flayed**
- Dravid **scales** 10K mark
- Beltola report may be **tabled** on Wednesday

**2. Drop articles and helping verbs wherever possible**

Consciously avoid the use of a, an, the, is, are, were in the headlines. They make a sentence longer without serving any purpose. Even without their use, the meaning is clear. E.g.:

- (A) Boy dies in (an) accident
- North Indians (are/ were) attacked in Mumbai.
- (The) Meghalaya Police launches crackdown on NSCN ultras.
- Chinese (have a) hand in Lhasa violence: Dalai Lama.
- Sonia to (will) address rally in Beneshwar.

**3. Use present tense and future tense**

The most important characteristic of news is timeliness. So, try to avoid the feel of the past. Use words that imply present tense and future tense as far as possible.

- Ceasefire offer confuses (not confused) contractors.
- Hailstorm lashes (not lashed) Guwahati, 2 die
- Gilani says (not said) ‘sacrifice’ of Kashmiri people won’t go waste
- China to compensate Lhasa victims

**4. Use active voice**

Headlines demand the active voice rather than the passive. Active voice helps cut out extra words and extra weight which exhausts the headlines. It also helps give the feel of the present.

- Panel submits report on monument protection (better than 'Report on monument protection' submitted by panel)
- Mumbai police trains State cops (is better than 'State cops trained by Mumbai police')
- Speeding coach kills Airport worker (is better than 'Airport worker killed by speeding coach')

**5. Do not over abbreviate**

Although headlines permit limited space, do not in any case use arbitrary or rare abbreviations. Headlines need to be understandable, so only better known abbreviations should be used.

- UGC sanction helps Assam Varsity get a facelift *is acceptable.*
- CPM call to forge Third Front *is acceptable.*
- KDJA biennial meet held *is not acceptable. Spell it out as* Kamrup District Journalists Association.
- Golden Jubilee of PXX concludes *is not acceptable*. *Spell it out as* Puwati Xahitya Xabha.

**6. Use subject**

Mention the subject in the headline wherever it is known. If the name is known, then use the name, otherwise another title that identifies the subject. However, if the person is not very well known by name, then the title should be used for better identification. Use of Active voice automatically brings on the necessity of using the subject. Eg,

- Government sanctions Rs. 60 lakh for pisciculture in Asom (is better than Rs. 60 lakh sanctioned for pisciculture in Asom)
- Sonia Gandhi to address rally in Beneshwar (is better than Congress President to address rally in Beneshwar)
- Enquiry Commission blames Govt. for cataract tragedy (is better than Govt. blamed for cataract tragedy)

**7. Use of quotation marks**

When certain parts of direct speech are significant enough to be used in the headline, then it is put in quotes. Unlike the use of double quotes in the main body of the news story, in the headline only single quotes are used. At times when a certain word or phrase is used in some special way, then also quotations are used.

- 'Appoint local youths in gas cracker project'
- 'Development council not to be alternative to ST status'
- Protest rally against 'corrupt' officers
- English to make way for 'Panglish': Experts
- Rabha Hasong Cultural Festival to 'foster unity'.

**8. Use of punctuations**

One has to be very careful while using punctuations in the headline as they can have special use in the headline apart from their normal use. The 'period' or 'full stop' for instance is not used at the end of the headline. It may be only used in abbreviations to make them more understandable. For eg.

- Govt. losing crores of rupees every year

Comma is used as a substitute for 'and' in order to save space. It is also used to separate two clauses. For eg

- Salaries of CM, Speaker, MLAs hiked
- Accident on highway, two people die

The hyphen can be used to link two separate words in a headline

- Asom: We'll oppose IOC-AOD merger

The question can be used in special ways too.

- What's common between *Race* and Amul Butter?
- Asom going the Maharashtra way?

The colon also has special use, for instance in attribution. It can also be used as a space saving device.

- Guwahati master plan will be finalized within 45 days:GDD
- Sarala Das: A tribute
- Bush to the common man: Fools all.

**The Lead:** After the headline comes the lead. The lead serves as the intro to the news story. As such in most hard news stories, the lead contains the most important information and summarises the story. It usually contains the most important of the 5 Ws and H. Such a lead is called the summary lead. A good lead does not normally exceed 35 words. So a lead has to be very precise and pin pointed, and the language crisp and easily understandable. The lead should always contain the subject. Depending upon the amount and kind of information to be given, the lead can be written in one or two sentences. Here is an example.

*Two rebels of the banned Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) were killed in an encounter with police at Umkiang in the Jaintia Hills on Thursday.*

This lead has enumerated the *'what', 'where', 'when'* and '*how'* elements very clearly in just 25 words.

Here is another example :

*Forest Minister Rockybul Hussain today made an appeal to the members of the State Assembly to contribute Rs. 1 lakh from their funds for extensive aforestation programmes in their respective constituencies.*

In this lead the elements of '*who*', '*what'* and '*where*' have been summarized.

While writing the lead it is always important to find the appropriate verb to use. **Always use action verbs** to give the reader the best picture of what happened. Consciously avoid weak verbs and vague words.

For instance never say 'A fire ***occurred*** in Fancy bazaar on Monday night'. ***Occurred*** is a very vague word. Instead use a verb that will

describe what the consequence of the fire was. 'A devastating fire **damaged/ gutted/** about 200 shops in Fancy Bazaar on Monday night' is a much better sentence for a lead.

Again how the *'when'* element or the time element is expressed needs to be taken care of. If you are using the perfect form of the verb in the lead, like has/ *has been awarded, has/ has been damaged,* has/ *has been killed* , *has emerged* etc, then the when element need not be mentioned. Eg

*Assam **has emerged** as one of the major beneficiaries of the new Centrally-sponsored scheme 'Multi-sectoral Development Programme' for Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs). Assam **has been ear-marked** a whopping Rs. 703.60 crore.*

But if the past tense of the verb is used in the lead, like awarded, damaged, killed, emerged etc, then the time element is required. Eg

*Assam **on Tuesday emerged** as one of the major beneficiaries of the new Centrally-sponsored scheme 'Multi-sectoral Development Programme' for Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs). Assam **was earmarked** a whopping Rs. 703.60 crore.*

Apart from the summary lead there are various other types of lead which you have already been told about in your Course 2. They all follow different style and vary depending upon the kind of story and the individual style of the person who writes the story.

**The Body:** This is the main part of the news story where the details are provided. You must have already learnt in Course 2 of your programme that Hard news stories follow the **Inverted Pyramid structure**. So, accordingly the more important details are to be placed in the early part of the story and the less significant details are placed towards the end. Always remember that hard news stories do not have a conclusion. They simply end. Here are a few rules of grammar and usage which are to be followed while writing the body of a news story.

1. Always use very simple language and short sentences. Avoid the use of complicated words, metaphors, figures of speech. Explain technical jargons.

2. Write in active voice wherever possible. It makes sentences shorter and direct. Eg:

   *Journalists in Assam have expressed concern over the killing of 17 scribes in 25 years with no culprit being booked so far. Journalists' Working Committee secretary Prakash Mahanta said this on Thursday while addressing a meeting over the murder of a journalist at Morajhar in Nagaon district on April 1.*

3. Spell numerals up to 9 and beyond that write in numerals. Eg:

   ***Five** persons, including **three** children, died and more than **12** were taken ill after they reportedly consumed poisonous mush-room in Golaghat district on Thursday.*

   However if the numeral is part of a proper noun, then this rule will not apply. eg:

   *2 Mountain Division, 18 Park Street, 4 kings Vacuum*

4. Identification that follows a name, viz., age, address, job description or other information are to be set off by paired commas. Eg:

   *Altogether 18 cadres belonging to various banned outfits formally renounced the path of violence before **Major General Jatinder Singh, General Officer Commanding (GOC), 2 Mountain Division,** today at Dinjan Military Station in Dibrugarh district.*

5. While reproducing speech directly, place it within double quotes unlike in the headline where it is placed in single quotes. Sometimes you can write full sentences in direct speech or also write just significant words or phrases in direct speech. Eg:

*After the IIMs, it is the IITs' turn to propose a fee hike, citing the need to improve their* ***"economic health".***

***"There is a proposal to hike the fee. But the final decision will come from the government,"*** *IIT-Delhi director Surendra Prasad said on Tuesday.*

6. The time element in a news story is very important. News stories about events that have already taken place are written in the past tense. As such they use active verbs like elected, injured, killed, damaged, awarded etc. or passive verbs like was elected, was injured, was killed, was damaged, was awarded etc

*The strategy group of the Unified Command, headed by Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi today* ***reviewed*** *the law and order situation in the state to evolve measures to deal with the situation.*

*All Assam Students' Union(AASU) leaders today* ***met*** *Governor, Lt. General (Retd) Ajai Singh and* ***discussed*** *with him the issues connected with sealing of Indo-Bangla border, Majuli island……*

*The President of the Sports Club of Guwahati Pankaj Kalita* ***was killed*** *after he* ***was attacked*** *with sharp weapons……*

In stories where the actual time of an event is not known or is not important, the present perfect form of the verb is used. Say, *has been named, has said, has announced* etc. e.g.

*The Asian Development Bank* ***has projected*** *that India's GDP growth will moderate to 8% this fiscal from 8.7% in 2007-08.* (Today/ yesterday/ on Monday etc are not mentioned.)

Present tense is often used in order to emphasize timeliness. E.g.

*Refusing to lie down, Avian Flu, that bounced back in parts of West Bengal for the second time in a month, broke out in*

*Jalpaiguri district prompting the aurhorities today to order mass culling.*

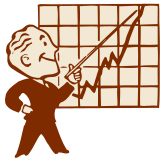
*In a bid to boost the production of bamboo, considered to be an important cash crop, the National Bamboo Mission is training about 30 farmers of Golaghat, Sivsagar and Jorhat districts at a compositor training centre here.*

For news stories that speak about events that will take place in the future are expressed by the use of the auxiliary verb will – *will come, will speak, will arrive etc. e.g.*

*The Young Men's Christian Association(YMCA)* ***will organize*** *contests for school students, women and its members at the St. Joseph's Parish Hall, Panbazar on March 30.*

*Prime Minister Manmohan Singh* ***will reach*** *Guwahati on a two day visit to the North East on April 20.*

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2



1. Enlist five basic rules for writing a good headline?

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2. Enlist five basic rules for writing a good lead?

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3. Enlist five basic points to be kept in mind while writing the body of a news story?

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4. What is the maximum word limit for a good lead?

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**ACTIVITY**

1. Compare three good newspapers and compare the headlines on the first page of each. Note whether the rules for writing headlines are being followed by these newspapers.

2. Cut out 20 reports from different newspapers without the headlines. Write your own headlines for these reports following all the rules. Now compare the headlines given by the newspaper and the ones you have given. Which are better and why?

3. Take one regional daily and take up all the news stories on the first page. Convert all headlines and leads written in passive voice to active voice.

4. Read five news reports and note down the main points like who what, when, where etc. Now rewrite the reports in your own way following all the rules.

## 1.5 LANGUAGE AND STYLE FOR RADIO

In the previous section we have learnt about writing for the print and cyber media. We shall now talk about writing for the audio media. At the very beginning, let us understand that the demands of the print media and the audio media are different. It has to be remembered that unlike the print and cyber media, the audience do not get to read what is written, they only hear what is being said, that too without any scope

for repetition. So there is ample scope for confusion and misunderstandings. As such, enough care has to be taken to avoid such situations and present the news to the audience in a clear, simple and easily understandable way. Here are some guidelines which can help you write good, effective radio copy.

**1. Write for the ear rather than the eye.**

Keep sentences short, vocabulary simple. Don't give too many statistics, unnecessary ages, middle names, addresses. Round off large figures. For instance change '4789' to 'almost five thousand' or '28.6%' to 'nearly 29%'. Repeat the names of person s in the story instead of using he, she or they whenever there is the slightest chance of misunderstanding. Avoid the use of words like former, latter, respectively as there is no scope for the listener to refer back to the original comment. Use indirect speech instead of direct speech.

**2. Avoid confusing words and statements.**

Do not use confusing and complicated words and technical jargons. Say 'Parliament' instead of 'The House' or 'Prime Minister' instead of 'Premiere'. Use words that common people can understand. Be careful in your use of homonyms (words with different meanings and spellings but similar pronunciations) as they can confuse the listener. For instance 'Capitol' can be easily confused with 'Capital', 'peace' with 'piece', 'pore' with 'pour', 'higher' with 'hire' and so on.

**3. Avoid redundancy**

Too frequent repetition of details can be very boring and irritating for the listener. Repeat only when the situation demands. Do not say 'Five rhinoceros were killed by poachers in Kaziranga National Park last night. The remains of the five rhinos which were killed last night were found in the bush this morning'. Instead, it would sound better this way – 'Five rhinoceros were killed by poachers in Kaziranga National Park last night. The remains of

the rhinos were found in the bush this morning.'

**4. Use present tense and active voice**

Unlike the print media, radio can report news with more immediacy. Radio cannot delay a news by a day. So the use of the Present Tense is more appropriate. Also use active voice as they use verbs that give sentences more power.

**5. Avoid initials**

Except in case of very well known abbreviations like say BJP, UNICEF, GMC, ISI, NGO, MP, MLA etc, do not use abbreviations. Replace them with a recognizable title and then follow it with a qualifying phrase like 'the teacher's association', 'the militant group' etc.

**6. Use official job titles.**

Use only official job titles and never casual references. Say 'fire fighters' instead of 'firemen', 'police officers' instead of 'policemen' etc.

**7. While referring to yourself, use I, and not we.Spring and Fall:**



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3**

1. Mention the basic points to be remembered while writing for radio?

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2. How is writing for radio different from writing for print media?

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**ACTIVITY**

1. Pick up five news reports from today's newspaper and re-write them for radio.
2. Listen to a radio news bulletin; listen very carefully to the main news of the day. In all probability it will be covered by the newspapers also. Now read the news and note down the differences you have found between the newspaper report and the radio report.

## 1.6 LANGUAGE AND STYLE FOR TELEVISION

In the last section you have learnt about news writing for the audio media. Writing news for the audio visual media, i.e., TV is also similar to writing for radio. But in case of TV, a few additional things have to be considered keeping in mind the factor of audio-visual impact. TV news must be written in a simple, direct manner so a newscaster can read the copy easily and communicate effectively in a way that will help listeners and viewers understand complex issues and events the first time they hear it. All the rules (except point 1) that we have mentioned in the previous section on news writing for radio, also holds good for TV. Here are a few more guidelines which need to be kept in mind while writing for TV.

1. Radio news is written for the ear only. But you have to write TV news while remembering that what is said is complemented and supplemented with visuals. The script should allow the visuals to 'breathe' and 'speak for themselves'. A visual speaks much more than 100 words. So, what is obvious from the visual need not be repeated in the audio. Visuals should not smother the visuals. Give additional information.
2. There should be appropriate pace and rhythm and give occasional respite in the middle. The complete story should be developed logically.

3. The script should never be too long and too heavily loaded with content. Viewers often watch news in a hurry and want to gather more information in the least possible time.
4. The language should be simple and clear, and so should be the copy. Please remember that the presenter who will read out the news will be seen by the audience. Any discomfort felt by the presenter while reading will become evident from the expression on the presenter's face. The slightest of gestures get magnified on the screen.
5. The font size should be large enough; the font should be simple and never ornate. There should be enough white space between lines and on the sides, top and bottom.

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4



1. Mention the basic points to be remembered while writing for TV?

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2. How is writing for TV different from writing for radio?

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## ACTIVITY

1. Pick up five news reports from today's newspaper and rewrite them for TV.
2. Watch a TV news bulletin particularly paying attention to the lead stories of the day. In all probability it will be covered by the newspapers also. Now read the news and note down the differences you have found between the newspaper report and the TV report.

## 1.7 LET US SUM UP

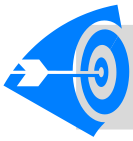
In this unit we have discussed about the language and style of the Indian English language media and the difference between writing for print media, audio media and audio-visual media. Here is a quick wrap of what we have discussed.

1. The English language media in India use a blend of the Queen's English, American English and Indian English.
2. Although basic principles of news writing remain the same, the language and style varies from newspaper to newspaper. Each newspaper has a style book which it follows to the core.
3. The basic of writing good news is keeping the language simple and sentences short.
4. Use of active voice, present and future tense, the subject and strong, action verbs add to the flavour of news.
5. Use of quotations and punctuation marks should be done appropriately and judiciously.
6. Abbreviations should be used to the minimum, confusing words and technical jargons should be avoided or explained in easy words.
7. Special care has to be taken while writing for radio and TV. Radio news should be written for the ear and TV news for both the ear and eye.
8. Radio and TV news have another aspect to it, i.e., the presenter. It has to be written keeping in mind the ease and comfort of the presenter.
9. In TV news the scripts should leave enough space for the visuals to fit in. Spoken words should never come in the way of visuals.



## 1.8 FURTHER READINGS


- **Essentials of practical journalism** — *Vir Bala Agarwal, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.*
- **News Writing –** *George A. Hough, Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.*

## 1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-1**

1) Indian English, British English and American English.

2) A stylebooks is a booklet or list of rules stating a newspaper's preference, where there are choices, of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations and use of numerals.

3) Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-2**

1) 5 important points to be remembered while writing a good headline are:

   a. Build the headline around a strong verb

   b. Drop articles and helping verbs like a, an, the, is are, were etc. wherever possible

   c. Try to avoid the feel of the past. Use present tense and future tense

   d. Use active voice. It helps cut out extra words and also helps give the feel of the present.

   e. Do not over abbreviate. Although headlines permit limited space, do not in any case use arbitrary or rare abbreviations.

2) 5 important points to be remembered while writing a good lead are:

   a. Contain the most important of the 5Ws and H in the lead.

b. Limit words within 30 to 35 words and use not more than 2 or three sentences.

c. Always use action verbs to give the reader the best picture of what happened.

d. A good lead will always contain a subject.

e. The language should be crisp and the sentences precise.

3) 5 important points to be remembered while writing the body of a news story are:

a) Always use very simple language and short sentences.

b) Avoid the use of complicated words, metaphors, figures of speech. Explain technical jargons.

c) Write in active voice wherever possible. It makes sentences shorter and direct.

d) Spell numerals up to 9 and beyond that write in numerals.

e) News stories about events that have already taken place are written in the past tense. As such they use active verbs like elected, injured, killed, damaged, awarded etc. or passive verbs like was elected, was injured, was killed, was damaged, was awarded etc.

4) 30 – 35 words.

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-3**

1) The basic points to be remembered while writing for radio are:

a. Write for the ear rather than the eye.

b. Avoid confusing words and statements.

c. Avoid redundancy

d. Use present tense and active voice

e. Avoid initials

f. Use official job titles.

g. While referring to yourself, use I, and not we.

2) In case of print media, the reader takes up an active role, i.e. he reads the news himself at his own pace, at his own convenient

time. If they do not understand a sentence or paragraph at the first attempt they can go over it again. However, unlike the print media, in case of audio media, i.e., radio, the audience does not get to read what is written, they only hear what is being said, that too without any scope for repetition. So there is ample scope for confusion and misunderstanding. As such while writing for radio, enough care has to be taken to avoid such situations and present the news to the audience in a clear, simple and easily understandable way. It has to be ensured that the audience head and understand every word, every sentence, without having to strain themselves. This is the difference between writing for print media and writing for radio.

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-4**

1) The points to be remembered while writing news for TV are:

   1. Radio news is to be written for both the ear and the eye taking care to balance both judiciously.
   2. Avoid confusing words and statements.
   3. Avoid redundancy
   4. Use present tense and active voice
   5. Use official job titles.
   6. There should be appropriate pace and rhythm and give occasional respite in the middle. The complete story should be developed logically.
   7. The script should never be too long and too heavily loaded with content.
   8. The language should be simple and clear, and so should be the copy.
   9. The font size should be large enough; the font should be simple and never ornate. There should be enough white space between lines and on the sides, top and bottom.

2) The basic difference between writing for radio and writing for TV is that radio news is written only for the ear while TV news

has to be written keeping in mind that the audience will not just hear it but also see it. So the script has to be written keeping a balance between the narration and visuals. What is said is complemented and supplemented with visuals. So, the script should allow the visuals to 'breathe' and 'speak for themselves'. A visual speaks much more than 100 words. So, what is obvious from the visual need not be repeated in the audio. Visuals should not smother the visuals. Instead supplementary information should be given.



## 1.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. The language used by the Indian English language media is a curious mixture of British English, American English and Indian English. Comment.
2. Do you feel that the Indian English language media makes up a total mess of the English language?
3. Among the news writing for print media, audio media and audio-visual media, which one do you think is the most challenging and why?
4. Compare news writing for print media with news writing for radio.
5. Compare news writing for print media with news writing for TV.
6. Compare news writing for radio with the news writing for TV.
7. What are the basic ingredients of a good radio news script?
8. What are the basic ingredients of a good TV news script?

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