

CONTENT

No.	Lesson	Writer	Vetter	Page No.
01	Editing- An Introduction	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
02	Principles of Editing	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
03	Qualities of Editorial Staff	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
04	Responsibilities of Editorial Staff	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
05	News Room & News Desk	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
06	Editing Process	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
07	Headlines	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
08	Page Make-up	Sh. M. R. Patra	Sh. S. K. Singh	
09	Editing for Radio & TV	Sh. S. K. Singh	SH. M. R. PATRA	
10	Linear & Non-linear Editing	Sh. S. K. Singh	SH. M. R. PATRA	

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Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: A Unit: I Lesson: 1

INTRODUCTION TO EDITING

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LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall discuss about the various aspects of editing. Specifically, we shall focus on sub editing. We shall also briefly discuss about photo editing. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

1.0 *Objectives*

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Presentation of Content
 - 1.2.1 Editing- An Overview
 - 1.2.2 Sub Editing- An Overview
 - 1.2.3 Aspects of Sub Editing
 - 1.2.4 Photo Editing
- 1.3 Summary
- 1.4 Key Words
- 1.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 1.6 References/Suggested Reading

1.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Have an Overview of Editing
- To Have an Overview of Sub Editing
- To Know About the Various Aspects of Sub Editing
- To Know About Photo Editing

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Reporters and correspondents write the news stories. Most of the time reporters and correspondents are in a hurry. So there is every chance of mistakes in the news stories. Most of the time reporters provide the 'body' of the news stories. But it is the sub editor who puts 'soul' to the news stories. What sub editors do is called *editing*. It is also known as *sub editing*, *subbing* or *copyediting*.

Commonly, editing is understood as *dotting the i's and crossing the t's*. Many people think of editing as only an act of correcting the grammatical or factual mistakes in news stories. This is, however, just one aspect of editing.

Editing, in fact, is the soul of journalism. It involves many things such as:

- *Deciding what will and what will not be published,*
- *Making the selected stories palatable and presentable, and*
- *Shaping it to project the publication's policies and philosophies.*

Editing is done to:

"Improve news stories or to change badly written news stories into readable ones."

While editing:

"The sub editor cares about the language, he cares about clarity of thought and of grace of expression, he cares about the traditions of journalism and the tastes of the reading public".

In this lesson we shall discuss about some broader aspects of editing.

1.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Editing- An Overview*
- *Sub Editing- An Overview*
- *Aspects of Sub Editing*
- *Photo Editing*

1.2.1 EDITING- AN OVERVIEW:

What is editing? Why is editing done? Who does editing? These are some of the questions that come to the minds of beginners in the field of editing. Let us try and find answers to these basic questions.

Editing is the process of improving the hurriedly written news stories and other write-ups in to readable shape. Editing in newspaper terminology is called *copyediting*, *sub editing* or *subbing*. The term *copy editor* is used in the U.S.A. while the term *sub editor* is used in the UK and many other countries including India.

Editing is done with specific motives of checking and improving the following: **Punctuation, Spelling, Sentence Structure, Subject and Verb Agreement, Proper Word Use, Clarity, Point of View, Redundancies, Inconsistencies, Dialogue, Flow, and Format.**

In simpler terms, editing is done to improve news stories grammatically, structurally, style-wise, factually, and in terms of readability.

And sub editors or copy editors do the editing. It is often thought that editors do editing. No, the editor does not do editing. The sub-editor is the *unsung craftsman* who works hard to improve the write-ups of the reporters. And the reporters' names appear with the news stories. Sub editors do not get any credit for their hard work.

While reporters get the entire credit and acknowledgement in the form of by-lines, accolades, applause, appreciation and even awards, the sub editors toil away in the newsroom. Reporters and correspondents take to the center stage while sub editors man the backstage.

Editing, or sub editing, as it is popularly known, includes many activities. These are **arranging, reducing, adding, translating, selecting, checking and adapting of news and other materials for publication.**

COPY: Copy is nothing but written pieces - news stories, articles, features, etc.- coming to a newspaper's newsroom from different sources - reporters, correspondents, stringers, freelancers, news agencies, feature agencies, assigned writers, etc. With newer technologies like *telex*, *fax*, *teletext*, *modem*, etc., more copy reaches newsrooms more easily today. These need to be screened to select the necessary stories.

In addition to processing copy, writing headlines and moving copy to the production department, sub editors are also involved with certain aspects of

production like composing, layout etc. which is usually done on the computer. Automation has made the job of sub editors easier.

But computers and other machines cannot replace sub editors (proof readers and layout artists are almost extinct now). This is because of certain talents that sub-editors have including the ability to edit copy and writing headlines. These two abilities require **sound judgment, scholarliness, varied exposure and experience, memory, motivation, curiosity, imagination and skepticism.**

1.2.2 SUB EDITING- AN OVERVIEW:

Sub editing or copyediting is the process by which an editor makes formatting changes and other improvements to text. Copy, in this case a noun, refers to material (such as handwritten or typewritten pages) to be first corrected and improved upon, and then composed (as in typesetting) for printing. A person who performs the task of copyediting is called a sub editor.

The sub editor's job may be summarized in the 5 Cs: To make the copy **clear, correct, concise, comprehensible, and consistent.**

Copy editing or sub editing typically means correcting spelling, punctuation, grammatical and semantic errors; ensuring the typescript adheres to the newspaper's own style; adding headlines, sub headlines, information graphics, blurbs and so on. These elements must be taken care of before the typesetter can prepare a final proof copy.

The sub editor is also expected to ensure the text flows, i.e., reads well. The job of a sub editor is to produce copy that *makes sense* and is *fair* and *accurate*, and that it *will cause no legal problems for the publisher or editor*. Newspaper sub editors are sometimes responsible for choosing which news agency copy the newspaper will use, and for rewriting it according to their house style.

In many cases, a sub editor will be the only person other than the reporter to read an entire text of news stories before publication. Newspaper editors often regard their sub editors as their **newspaper's last line of defense.**

A sub editor may abridge or shorten text, which is also called "cutting" or "trimming." This means reducing the length of a news story or article, either to fit publishing limits, or to improve the material. This may involve simply omitting parts of the text, but sometimes it is necessary to rewrite parts of the news story or the entire news story to accommodate missing details. Some abridged texts are only slightly shorter, but others may be reduced dramatically.

Changes in the profession

Traditionally, a sub editor would read a printed or written text, such as a manuscript, marking it with handwritten proofreader's marks for correction. Nowadays, the text is usually read on a computer display and corrections are made directly to the text. Increasingly, a copy editor marks up the text using XML or a similar coding scheme and is involved in preparing text for online publication, not just for printing.

The spread of desktop publishing means that many sub editors perform design and layout work that was once left to production crews for printed publications. As a result, the skills needed for the job are shifting; technical knowledge is sometimes considered as important as writing ability, particularly within journalism as compared with book publishing.

Traits, skills and training

Besides an excellent command of the language, sub editors need a broad general knowledge to spot factual errors, good critical-thinking skills so that they recognize inconsistencies, diplomatic skills to help them deal with writers, and a thick skin when diplomacy fails. They must also set priorities so they can balance striving for perfection with working deadlines.

Many sub editors have a college degree, often in journalism, English, or communications. Copyediting or sub editing is often taught as a college or university journalism course, though the name of the course varies. News design and pagination (page design) are often taught in such classes.

Most newspapers and many other publishers give candidates for sub-editing jobs a test or a try-out. These vary widely and often include general items such as general knowledge, current events, acronyms, and punctuation, and skills such as headline writing, infographics editing, and journalism ethics.

1.2.3 ASPECTS OF SUB EDITING:

When inexperienced and experienced reporters, correspondents and stringers file their stories, understandably, they lack a uniformity of style and readability. Reporters often work in great hurry and under pressure.

Hence, errors are bound to creep in and it calls for a scrutiny of the copy. The success of any newspaper depends largely on the efficient and judicious selection of news stories and other editorial material. While advertisement is the backbone of the newspaper industry, people buy newspapers for its news more than its advertisements. So the divergent readership must be treated to a variety of news diet to command their loyalty. Thus giving as much news within the space allotted becomes imperative which is the main function of editing.

WHAT IS EDITING?

The editing process begins in a newspaper with the News Editor or a Chief Sub editor sorting out the copy to eliminate reports that could not be accommodated and planning the next day's page.

Only newsworthy stories get selected and are passed on to the Sub editors who check the grammar, syntax, facts and figures and logic, polish up the language and condense for economy of space. Copy is edited to highlight the 'news sense' and to impart uniformity of style.

HOW TO EDIT A COPY:

Read the story once before you edit, a second time while you edit and a third time after you edit. On the first reading, if you find any ambiguity, contradiction or structural flaw, summon the reporter to demand a clarification or bring it to the notice of the News Editor or chief sub on duty. When the story has no glaring problem, it is fit to edit.

A news story is divided into two parts: the lead (the 'intro'), which introduces the story and the body, which elaborates the lead. While the lead tells briefly who, what, where, when, why and how of the story, the body elaborates, details, and explains it.

The lead is normally written in less than 35 words and should be crisp and concise.

Since World War II, the 'inverted pyramid' style of news writing has come into vogue. This technique places the most significant information at the top and then places the remaining details in the descending order of importance. Each succeeding paragraph should add an essential detail without being dependent in content or style on what follows. The inverted pyramid style has the following advantages:

- i. The structure of the story remains intact even when paragraphs are deleted from the bottom for space shortage.
- ii. A busy reader could skip over many stories in a short time by just reading the lead paragraph.
- iii. It helps the sub editor to give the headline by reading the gist of the story in the Lead.
- iv. It is easy to change the order of paragraphs or insert a paragraph or two.

The chronological style, which is narrating the story in the sequence in which it happened, has none of these flexibilities, and often the most important part of the story may come at the end, putting the reader's patience on trial.

If the most important point in a story is buried in the last paragraph, it needs to be rewritten and brought it to the lead. In case there are more points fighting for prominence, the point that has more reader appeal is chosen.

If the second paragraph does not support the lead, rewrite it. The third paragraph should further develop the second paragraph and the lead. Ideally, each paragraph should not exceed three sentences. And direct quotes add flavour to the story.

REWRITING:

Rewriting is done for the sake of clarity and highlighting the right news point, but taking care to avoid inadvertent tampering with the facts or the original meaning. Stories are also rewritten to add punch to the lead and enliven a human-interest story.

HEADLINES:

Headlines catch the eye of a reader in search of something interesting in a newspaper. After scanning the headlines, a reader settles down to read the story in detail.

LEADS:

In the journalistic parlance, the word 'lead' is used in three or four different senses. The story with the biggest headline on the front page of a newspaper is called the lead story and in the order of priority the main stories are called Lead I, Lead II, Lead III or First Lead, Second Lead, Third Lead and so on.

In the second sense, it refers to the first two or three paragraphs of a story. It is also called the 'Intro' (short for introduction).

Reporters often use the term in the sense of a clue to a story, upon which they work, probe, research and develop to make it a complete story.

News agencies use the term in the sense of a device for updating developing stories of changing the emphasis of the story in the light of unfolding events.

Examples of developing stories that need updates are political conventions, budget proposals, an air crash or a train mishap, floods or bandhs.

Early reports of the Bhopal gas tragedy put the figure of casualties at a particular number, which doubled and trebled by the hour till it crossed a thousand by the midnight hour. Early *dak* editions carried the modest figures and looked stupid the next morning. Even early city editions could not tell the magnitude of the disaster which the late city editions captured.

LANGUAGE:

Words are the building blocks of writing. So, pay special attention to words, and the way they are constructed into a sentence. Misplacement of words could distort the meaning. Punctuation marks are meant for clarity and readability, and too many of them will clutter the story.

1.2.4 PHOTO EDITING:

Photos give a face-lift to the page, but they have to be edited to match the layout, often cropping unnecessary portions. A competent photo editor does not waste space but trims the picture to highlight its message or meaning, action or the unique angle in which it is shot. The picture often adds news-value to the story and breaks the monotony of the page.

By suitably editing, the photo editor brings the centre of action into the middle of the picture, conferring a dramatic value to the page. It is job of the photo editor to select the best photograph, which tells the story on its own.

A good photographer has a strong visual sense to foresee a picture before he shoots. He instinctively sets the aperture of the camera for the lighting on the location and is ready for action.

A news event could be shot from different angles and the seasoned photographer would know the best angle to shoot from. The difference between an awards-winning photograph and a pedestrian photograph is one of the angle and composition.

The photograph illustrates an event, lending depth and meaning to the story and a message of its own. Usually, the photographer is given only an idea to work with, and is expected to create an appropriate picture, to back up the story.

CAPTIONS:

Caption writing is the art of blending words with pictures. Captions explain the who, what, where and why of the picture. But a photograph or photographs when accompanied by a story needs no separate caption.

With the advent of computers, graphic illustrations could recreate the original sequence of a news story. Time and again, such illustrations have been used for depicting stories of space travel, mountaineering expeditions, assassinations, fire, train or air mishaps, bank robberies, etc.

COMPUTER APPLICATION IN PHOTO EDITING:

The latest technology enables the negative to be scanned, the contrast adjusted, and the picture cropped on the computer video display terminal as required. Now days digital cameras are

computer compatible and there is no need to develop or print photos. The photos can directly be taken to the computers for the necessary improvements or changes.

Then, the image is directly transferred to the page, making sure that the reproduction is of a high quality. An important aspect of this method is that picture quality in terms of tones; density and colour sharpness could be reproduced to near perfection.

1.3 SUMMARY:

- News is something that interests, excites or concerns people. News not only interests but also at times excites and at times concerns because it may be a mishap or a tragedy. John B. Bogart of the New York Sun defines News thus: *When a dog bites a man, that is not news; but when a man bites a dog, that is News.*
- News may be broadly divided into hard news and soft news. News that has a great importance and impact on the life of a nation or people or news that has great significance or affects life of many people is termed hard news. And news that interests people but without great significance is called soft news. Every newspaper carries a mix of hard news and soft news daily.
- There are seven news determinants or attributes upon which news is judged and selected for publication. They are Impact, Unusualness, and Prominence, which form the primary criteria and conflict, proximity, timeliness and currency, which form the secondary criteria.
- Characteristics of good news writing are: Accuracy, Attribution, Balance and Fairness, Brevity, Clarity, Readability, Human interest, and Sharp observation.
- In the journalistic parlance, the word 'lead' is used in three or four different senses. The story with the biggest headline on the front page of a newspaper is called the lead story and in the order of priority the main stories are called Lead I, Lead II, Lead III or First Lead, Second Lead, Third Lead and so on.
- Editing to a layman is *dotting the i's and crossing the t's*. Many people think of editing as only an act of correcting the mistakes in a story. Editing involves many other things such as deciding what will and what will not be published and making the selected stories palatable and presentable while shaping it to project the publication's policies and philosophies.
- A good sub-editor has a sharp news sense. He does not bring his own particular prejudices or interests into sub editing. His news sense is related to his

newspaper so that he can create exciting stories out of a mass of copy that he receives every day.

- A good sub-editor has an orderly mind and a cool head so that when he is faced with great piles of copy coming from all directions he will be able to cope with them without panicking. He has to get the facts clear and in sequence in his mind or on his copy pad. Otherwise they will not be clear and in sequence in the newspaper.
- A good sub editor should have sound judgment, scholarliness, varied exposure and experience, memory, motivation, curiosity, imagination and skepticism.
- The sub editor adds life and movement to the piece by substituting active verbs for passive verbs. He highlights the specifics and underplays the generalities. A sub editor adds colour to copy by using words creatively. He maintains both *brevity* (shortness) and *simplicity* so that readers can grasp the information and ideas more easily without reading long prose.
- The sub editor looks for ways and means to incorporate the canons of effective communication- *clarity*, *cohesiveness*, *completeness*, *conciseness*, *comprehensiveness*, *continuity*, etc., into the copy.
- Sub editors also have many other responsibilities including: *ensuring accuracy*, *cutting down unnecessary words*, *protecting and polishing the language*, *correcting inconsistencies*, *making the story conform to the newspaper's style*, *eliminating scandalous and libelous statements*, *making sure the story is readable and complete*.

1.4 KEY WORDS:

News: News is something that interests, excites or concerns people. News not only interests but also at times excites and at times concerns because it may be a mishap or a tragedy. John B. Bogart of the New York Sun defines News thus: *When a dog bites a man, that is not news; but when a man bites a dog, that is News.*

News Values: There are seven news determinants or attributes upon which news is judged and selected for publication. They are Impact, Unusualness, and Prominence, which form the primary criteria and conflict, proximity, timeliness and currency, which form the secondary criteria.

Lead: In the journalistic parlance, the word 'lead' is used in three or four different senses. The story with the biggest headline on the front page of a newspaper is called the lead story and in the order of priority the main stories are called Lead I, Lead II, Lead III or First Lead, Second Lead, Third Lead and so on.

Editing: Editing to a layman is *dotting the i's and crossing the t's*. Many people think of editing as only an act of correcting the mistakes in a story. Editing involves many other things such as deciding what will and what will not be published and making the selected stories palatable and presentable while shaping it to project the publication's policies and philosophies.

Copy: Copy is nothing but written pieces - news stories, articles, features, etc.- coming to a newspaper's newsroom from different sources - reporters, correspondents, stringers, freelancers, news agencies, feature agencies, assigned writers, etc.

Functions of a Sub Editor: The sub editor adds life and movement to the piece by substituting active verbs for passive verbs. He highlights the specifics and underplays the generalities. A sub editor adds colour to copy by using words creatively. He maintains both *brevity* (shortness) and *simplicity* so that readers can grasp the information and ideas more easily without reading long prose. The sub editor looks for ways and means to incorporate the cannons of effective communication- *clarity, cohesiveness, completeness, conciseness, comprehensiveness, continuity*, etc., into the copy.

Qualities of a Good Sub Editor: The ideal sub editor has the following qualities: a good sub-editor has a sharp news sense. He does not bring his own particular prejudices or interests into sub editing. His news sense is related to his newspaper so that he can create exciting stories out of a mass of copy that he receives every day. A good sub-editor has an orderly mind and a cool head so that when he is faced with great piles of copy coming from all directions he will be able to cope with them without panicking. He has to get the facts clear and in sequence in his mind or on his copy pad. Otherwise they will not be clear and in sequence in the newspaper.

Responsibilities of a Sub Editor: Sub editors also have many other responsibilities. These are: *ensuring accuracy, cutting down unnecessary words, protecting and polishing the language, correcting inconsistencies, making the story conform to the newspaper's style, eliminating scandalous and libelous statements, making sure the story is readable and complete.*

1.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Discuss the concept of editing giving suitable examples.
2. The concept of editing has changed over the last few decades. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
3. Discuss in brief the qualities of a good sub editor.
4. Discuss in brief the responsibilities of a good sub editor.

1.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

The Art of Editing by Baskette, Sissors, Brookes

Editing by T J S George

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Handbook of Editing by S K Aggarwal

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

Editing Techniques by S. Kundra

Annexure:

GLOSSARY:

And finally here is a glossary of terms that prospective sub editors should know well.

ABC: Audit Bureau of Circulation, which has the unenviable task of certifying, audited statistics on the circulation of a publication. This is a highly respected watchdog body.

Ad: An advertisement.

Add: Additions of any kind to news story. If copy sent down to the printing has to be supplemented by additional material, marking the new copy with the connotation “add to...” does this

Agate: 5½-point type.

Angle: An approach to a story, the slant given by the reporter.

AP: Associated Press.

Art: Any illustration or artwork.

Assignment: Duty given to a reporter.

Banner: A headline stretching across all the columns on the top of the front page, not to be confused with a *binder* which is a headline across the top of an *inside page*. A banner is also known as a *streamer*.

Beat: The exclusive territory assigned to reporter or a series of places visited by a reporter to gather news. Police stations, courts, the Municipal Council, etc. are examples of beats.

Bl : Reference to setting of copy in black or bold faces, which is heavier and darker than regular type.

Body: Part of a story that follows the lead.

Box: Matter enclosed in a border to make a box. Many modern boxes have only top and bottom borders.

Black and White: Photographs and illustrations in black or white.

Bleed: When an illustration or photograph runs (bleeds) into the edge of the page.

Blurb: Publicity material.

Boil down: Reduce or summarize a story to manageable proportions.

Border: Line rules used to form box in display.

Break: As in news break, when something new happens.

Bulletin: Brief dispatch containing major news. Usually no more than 40 to 50 words.

Byline: Signature on a story i.e. the name of the person who has done the story.

Caps: Capital letters.

C and lc: Capital and lower case.

Caption: Descriptive material accompanying pictures and photographs.

Case room: The area where the type cases are stored and the printers work.

Centre spread: The two pages in the centre fold of a newspaper.

Chase: Metal page form into which type is locked.

Clean copy: Copy without errors, well edited.

Clipping: Items clipped from newspapers for reference.

Copy: Universally known as the term for material written by journalists.

Copy desk: Where copy is edited, cut and headlined. Not to be confused with the proof room where typographical errors are checked in proof.

Copy editors: Sub-editors.

Copyholder: In proofreading, one holds proof of type matter and makes corrections while his partner holds the copy (hence the term) and reads it out loudly so corrections can be made.

Correspondent: A reporter who is out of town on duty, who corresponds with his head office.

Cover: Covering an event, that is, reporting it in full.

Credit line: To name the source of a picture, illustration, photograph; giving credit to the person responsible. A credit line is to a photograph what a byline is to a story.

Crop: Cutting out non-essential parts of a photograph to sharpen the visual impact.

Cross-heading: A headline in small type within set matter to highlight what follows.

Cub: An untrained newsman, a beginner, usually a reporter.

Cut: Removing portions of copy in order to tighten it.

Date line: The place from which a news story is sent and the date, as in *United Nations, New York, August 15*.

D/C: Double column

Deadline: The last minute to ready copy for an edition. Closing time.

Desk: The sub-editor's desk.

Drop: Used to indicate that a letter should be in larger type; it is the first letter in the first paragraph of a story and is set thus for purposes of effective display.

Drop headline: Headline in which the first line begins on the left and the others below it are away on the right of the alignment of its beginning.

Dummy: A drawing: usually freehand, outlining the position of news stories on a page, along with advertisements and illustrations.

Ears: Boxes on either side of the nameplate on page one of a newspaper that usually carries advertisements in India. In the West, they may carry the day's weather and the name of the edition.

Edition: Remake or revision of some of the pages of a news- paper, as in City Edition, Dak edition, also total run for any one issue of a paper.

Editorial: The editor's opinion or comment on events. It is invariably assigned a permanent position on the editorial page.

Em: A measurement of column width based on the square of M in a type usually 12 points (one sixth of an inch).

En: Half an em, also called a *nut* in the United States to avoid phonetic confusion.

Embargo: Mandatory deadline for the release of a story.

Exclusive: A story that is not carried by any other newspaper on a particular day; a scoop.

File: The act of dispatching copy to or from a news centre.

Filler: Small items used to fill out columns where needed.

Flush: Set copy without paragraph indenting.

Flash: A rarely used message of a few words describing a momentous event. It consists mostly of the place of filing, less than half a dozen words of text, the signature of the sender and the time sent.

Fold: Line at which newspaper is folded.

Follow-up: Further developments in a story. To chase or further work on the details of an earlier report.

Feature: A story of interest beyond and more than the news.

Font: Type of one size and style.

Forme: A page of type locked and ready for the press. See *chase*.

Galley: Narrow and shallow tray of metal in which set matter is put in column width.

Galley proof: Proof of set matter put in a galley.

Glossy: Shiny print (of photograph).

Handout: Written publicity material given by hand to journalists.

HO: short for Hold Over. Or Hold for release. Prepared and composed copy that could be used later.

Human interest: Story about human or emotional appeal, but not necessarily hard news.

Indent: Start matter at some distance away from the margin.

Insert: New matter added in body of story already sent for setting.

Italics: Typeface with characters slanted to the right, as contrasted to Roman, or upright, characters.

Jump: Continuation of a story to another page; also called *carry over*.

Jump line: The continuation line giving the succeeding or preceding page numbers.

Kill: Elimination of news material at any stage in the processing.

Layout: Arrangement of illustrations, page plans.

Lead: Beginning of a story, which may be a sentence, a paragraph or several paragraphs depending on the complications involved; also, the main story on page one. Also (pronounced 'led') thin metal strips used [to space out lines and paragraphs of set matter.

Legman: A reporter who gathers but does not write the news; one who runs around in the pursuit of news.

Lino: Linotype; a machine for setting type.

Late news: News that arrives too late to make the front page (or last page to go down to press) but is accommodated in the *Stop Press* column.

Leader: Editorial.

Libel: Any defamatory statement expressed in writing, printing or other visible form.

Logotype: Also called a *logo*, usually by printers. A single matrix containing two or more letters used together such as AP, PTI, UNI, etc. It is also another name for the flag, nameplate.

Lower case: Small letters.

Make-up: Assembling the newspaper in the composing room, art of putting set copy to make a page, artistically and effectively.

Mask: Cover picture over areas not needed.

Masthead: Statement, usually on the editorial page, giving information on the newspaper's ownership, place of publication etc. Sometimes confused with the nameplate.

Morgue: News library, also known as reference section.

Must: When this term is used on copy, it indicates that the story must be used. Only editors in authority can designate *musts*.

Nameplate: Paper's name given on top of front page.

Obit: Short for obituary. (Announcement of death of a person along with biographical details.)

Overnight: Also called overnight or overnighter, a story filed by a reporter or turned out by a rewrite man for the first edition of an afternoon newspaper of the following day.

Page proof: Proof of the page taken on paper by hand machine.

Pica: 12-point type, also a lineal measurement of 12 points. Also called an *em*.

Pix: Picture.

Play: The display given to a story or a picture. Most editors talk of playing a story, rather than playing it up or down.

Plate: A page of type cast in metal fitted in press for printing.

Point: Basic printing measurement, roughly equivalent to one seventy second of an inch. 72-point type roughly measures an inch in height.

Proofreader: One who reads proofs to make corrections in setting and sends it back for revision.

Puff: Publicity material, usually quickly thrown into the waste paper basket.

Pull: Proof, because proof is pulled (as by a roller over paper) from type.

Put to bed: When all pages have been locked up and the press is ready to print.

Quotes: Quotation marks. What an individual in his own words has said.

Rewrite man: A writer (usually a sub editor) for a newspaper or agency whose work consist in part of re-doing stories and in part of writing original copy for the reporters who turn in notes by telephone.

Retainer: Amount paid to retain use of correspondents (stringers) who may not necessarily be filing copy all the time.

Revise: Redoes copy incorporating corrections.

Run: A reporter's beat.

Running story: A chronological story of an event topped by successive leads as the news changes.

Run over: Another name for a *Jump*.

Round up: A comprehensive story, which may combine reports on the same subject from several sources.

Routing: Removing metal not needed and unwanted from non-printing areas of a plate.

S/c: Single column.

Schedule: List of assignments.

Scoop: An exclusive story for a newspaper for which a reporter lives laborious life.

See copy: Instruction to proof reader to see original copy.

Short: A short item, filler.

Shoulder: Usually for top line of headline, which is set in smaller type oil, one side (left) while the rest of the headline is set as usual.

Slug: Each story has a name, which is called a slug. The slug must be included with each page number. A story on President Carter may be slugged as Carter-1 Carter-2 etc. until the last page is marked Carter-last.

Space: Empty space between type lines.

Space-out: Instruction to printer to put more space between parts of set matter.

Spread: An elaborate layout. Any story that takes a headline big enough to be used at the top of an inside page.

Standing matter: Matter set and ready for use, often the leftover from a previous edition.

Stet: Used to indicate that matter originally cut should be used. Let it stay.

Stone: The platform or table on which the printer makes the page

Stringer: Correspondent of a newspaper who is not on the regular payroll but is paid for copy used.

Stick: About two inches type.

Syndicate: An organization that sells articles and features on behalf of many freelance writers. An agency.

Tailpiece: Usually paragraph with finishing touches, a joke at the end, something added on to enliven a column.

Tip: A small bit of information that could lead to a news story.

Top: Reference to a story 'that should go in a single column at the top of a page.'

Take: A page of copy, which may contain as little as one paragraph. There could be several 'takes' to a story.

Trim: To cut a story down to its essentials.

Type book: A book showing various families of type, which a press has, for use.

Wf: Wrong font, or wrong face that may have accidentally crept in type set in one particular face.

Yellow journalism: Publication specializing in stories that are sensational or grossly exaggerated and dealing generally with sex, crime and gossip.

Wire service: News agency.

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: A Unit: II Lesson: 2

EDITING PRINCIPLES

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall discuss about editing principles. Specifically, we shall focus on the editorial staff. We shall discuss about the principles of good news editing. We shall also discuss about some tips for better editing. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Presentation of Content
 - 2.2.1 Editorial Staff- The Silent Force
 - 2.2.2 Cannons of Good Editing
 - 2.2.3 Principles of Good News Editing
 - 2.2.4 Tips for Better Editing
 - 2.2.5 The Seven Deadly Copy Editing Sins
- 2.3 Summary
- 2.4 Key Words
- 2.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 2.6 References/Suggested Reading

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Know More About the Editorial Staff
- To Know About the Cannons of Good Editing
- To Know About the Principles of Good News Editing
- To Know About Some Tips for Better Editing
- To Know About The Seven Deadly Copy Editing Sins

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

Editors lead. They lead by example. Editors teach. The entire force of editorial staff working under the editor learns from him. Editors inspire. They are excellent man managers and motivate their subordinates. Editors challenge. They challenge the subordinates to achieve more. Editors support. Whenever the occasion arises, editors stand by their subordinates. Editors collaborate. They work jointly with subordinates on many assignments. Editors guide. They are like the guiding light that shows path to one and all. Editors also validate, listen, plan, trust.

The most important point here is that editors decide on certain principles and stick to them. Editors follow these principles and they also see to it that the entire editorial force follows these principles.

Some of these principles are universal in nature. Some principles are specific to certain newspapers. In this lesson, we shall discuss the various principles of editing.

2.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Editorial Staff- The Silent Force*
- *Cannons of Good Editing*
- *Principles of Good News Editing*
- *Tips for Better Editing*
- *The Seven Deadly Copy Editing Sins*

2.2.1 EDITORIAL STAFF- THE SILENT FORCE:

"Any fool can write. It needs a heaven born genius to edit".

"A good sub-editor is a creative artist".

Sayings and descriptions like these tell the story of editors, sub editors and other editorial staff. But this is only half the story. The truth is that members of the editorial staff are the hardest working people with the toughest job in a newspaper. They shoulder most of the responsibility and while they get brickbats for his mistakes, he gets no credit for doing a good job.

Like the make-up men in the green room of a drama company, the sub editor toils in the background, away from public gaze. He *gathers* and *selects* material,

puts them into shape, and presents them in an attractive manner. He improves upon the stories received from reporters, correspondents and other sources, clarifies, and makes the stories easier to understand. He also adds drama and excitement (when necessary) to make the stories more appealing and meaningful.

The sub editor can bring *artistry* and *elegance* to the pages. He is the live wire of a newspaper and *the impact of his pen or his fingers on the keyboard is felt on every word, every phrase, every headline and every inch of news that a newspaper carries.*

While being a creative artist, the sub editor is also a real craftsman. His task is to '*fashion the finished product*' every day, seven days a week and three hundred and sixty five days a year. Every single day the sub editor is involved in deft and high-speed operations involving detection and correction of all kinds of errors and imperfections and the composition of suitable headlines.

Often the sub editor is like a butcher who cuts stories. It has been accused, mostly by reporters, that the sub editor systematically destroys fine writing and faultless prose. This is a highly unwarranted charge and criticism. The sub editor's job is not to make stories fit in the available space. In fact, the sub editor is the 'solemn censor', and the 'news surgeon'. He is the polisher of other's writing. Often he transforms uninteresting writing into vivid and exciting prose. And the sub editor does this while facing two of his perennial enemies - time and space.

The ideal sub editor has the following qualities:

- A good sub-editor has a sharp news sense. He does not bring his own particular prejudices or interests into sub editing. His news sense is related to his newspaper so that he can create exciting stories out of a mass of copy that he receives every day.
- A good sub-editor has an orderly mind and a cool head so that when he is faced with great piles of copy coming from all directions he will be able to cope with them without panicking. He has to get the facts clear and in sequence in his mind or on his copy pad. Otherwise they will not be clear and in sequence in the newspaper.
- A good sub-editor has sound general knowledge. He must know about almost every thing. Book learning is not sufficient for this. Thus newspaper reading is essential. Reading a wide range of newspapers will not only keep him up-to-date

on events but also even give him sensitivity about the people whose very names are news.

- A good sub-editor is obsessed with accuracy. Because even the smallest mistake will damage the newspaper.
- A good sub-editor must work fast when the occasion arises. Such occasions will probably be quite often. The sub editor is tied to the clock. The perfect story means nothing if it misses the edition. The sub-editor will do himself harm, not any good, if he polishes a story to the extent that is disastrously late. He has to cultivate a capacity to know how much he can do and still get the story ready on time.
- A good sub-editor should write a bright, effective headline. The sub-editor who learns to write a good heading and write it quickly is an asset to any organization.
- A good sub-editor must have some knowledge of law as it applies to newspapers. He should know what he can say without actually libeling somebody or getting the editor hauled up before Parliament or some state legislature or court. He must be particularly careful against getting his editor involved in Contempt of Court and Contempt of Parliament.
- A good sub editor will maintain a sense of excitement about change.
- A good sub-editor approaches all stories with a healthy cynicism - not only about facts but the way they are interpreted. He exercises particular care about scandalous stories and works on the premise that in most cases there is another side to the story and it is the newspaper's duty to highlight it.
- A good sub-editor preferably is a master of some topic or other. He should cultivate an area of specialization and do better on that topic than anyone else on the news desk.

A good sub editor will write clearly, crisply and concisely. It involves coolness and orderliness.

2.2.2 CANNONS OF GOOD EDITING:

There are certain things that turn an average editor in to a good editor. These cannons of good editing include the following: **Precision, Sticking to Basics, Imagination, Convergence, and Critical thinking.**

PRECISION: If the information is not truthful, i.e., accurate, it's not journalism. Our job as editors is to ensure the accuracy of everything we handle.

STICKING TO BASICS: No matter how high tech things get, good copyediting requires the consistent, skilled application of fundamentals.

IMAGINATION: Great editing requires creativity and flexible thinking.

CONVERGENCE: The walls are coming down within and between media. You need to be able to operate in multiple domains.

CRITICAL THINKING: In journalism as in life, you will find that not every question has a clear, unambiguous answer — or even only one answer. You can expect to be challenged to think on your feet, to analyze ambiguous information, to find answers on your own, and to evaluate the credibility and utility of various sources of information.

2.2.3 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD NEWS EDITING:

The principles of Good News Editing are:

- Accuracy,
- Attribution,
- Balance and Fairness,
- Brevity,
- Clarity,
- Readability,
- Human interest, and
- Sharp observation.

ACCURACY:

The sub editor should be obsessed with accuracy because one mistake can destroy the reputation of a newspaper or magazine, and it takes just fraction of a second to make one. Checking and crosschecking names, figures, and verifying facts are of utmost importance. Always attribute the news to the source so that readers can judge its credibility. “ A highly

placed Defense Personnel, Finance Ministry Sources", etc. are attributions that help readers to arrive at their own conclusions, while steering clear of the suspicion that the reporter is giving his own version of the story.

BALANCE AND FAIRNESS:

Balance and fairness form the foundation of good editing. Balance is giving both sides of the picture, while fairness is not taking sides. It also means not providing support to political parties, institutions, communities or individuals, etc. through the columns of the newspaper. It is the attribute of a professional reporter and the duty of a sub editor to implement it.

BREVITY:

Brevity is a great virtue in journalism appreciated by readers and editors alike. It is telling a story, as it should be, without beating around the bush. It saves time and space and wins applause when consummated to perfection.

CLARITY:

Clarity is the ability to think clearly and translate it into paper - a quality that can take one to the higher echelons of media hierarchy. Readability has a bearing on sentence length and simple and forthright manner of expression.

READABILITY:

The average length of a sentence should not exceed 18 words, which is standard. It is not easy to read a sentence with more than 18 words. Beyond 25 words the sentence would be very difficult to read, though some accomplished authors have far exceeded the standard and yet remained readable because of their craftsmanship.

But beginners are advised to stay out of long-winding and complicated sentence constructions. The best way is to write news stories using simple words, short and simple sentences.

HUMAN INTEREST:

Using a style that arouses human interest is what the craft of editing is all about. Sub editors should see the events from the readers' point of view and write the news stories keeping the reader ever in mind along with his hopes, fears and aspirations. The sub editor should identify

himself with the proverbial common man who does not exist but represents the silent majority whom the journalist is duty-bound to defend and protect.

SHARP OBSERVATION:

Sharp observation is the hallmark of an ace communicator, particularly in the field of journalism. It recreates reality, imparts dynamism to reporting, heightens the reading pleasure and fine-tunes readers' perception.

2.2.4 TIPS FOR BETTER EDITING:

- *Here are few tips for better editing. Practicing these tips will help you to avoid errors while editing your newspaper.*
- *Don't rely on another person's figures.*
- *Remember that "officials" and "experts" may not always be credible and dependable.*
- *Always check a map when describing a site, route, etc. (Even when you think you know the area, and Especially when you don't know the area.)*
- *Make sure you have the complete name and the designation and title, etc.*
- *Double-check to make sure nothing important has been omitted, rearranged or deleted while editing copy.*
- *Always show any error you see to a supervisor immediately. (Especially headline errors. It may save you and your paper embarrassment.)*
- *Quick corrective action also may be important in defense against a lawsuit.*
- *Never disregard a question that has been raised: (By another reader, in or out of the newsroom; or by that small, sometimes indistinct voice in the back of your head. Listen to inner your voice)*
- *Always take a fresh look any time a question is raised.*
- *Never assume anything!*
- *Always follow the Rule of Fair Comment.*
- *A one-sided or one-source story is simply not a complete story and can never be an accurate one. The other side may provide important information that makes the story accurate.*
- *You can't know it all, so talk to the people who know more than you.*
- *Never rationalize or analyze to justify a result.*
- *Always make copy clear, unambiguous.*

- Always check and double check unusual spellings, tricky constructions of sentences, etc.
- Read (at least) once for content and effect.
- Read (at least) once for the mechanical errors like Grammar, Punctuation, etc.
- Always use all of the tools available to you: dictionary, stylebook, spell-checker, reference books, etc.
- Don't be too busy or too proud to check a fact.
- Remember the funnel effect. A large pool of stories sits atop a narrow editing path ending at the slot. The pressure of other stories as the copy goes through the funnel means your story is being read faster and faster, and there's less chance to fix it as the set deadline looms.
- Always beware of superlatives like "The biggest," "the best," "the smallest," "the worst," etc.
- Check for sources, assumptions, information that has been reported as fact.
- Look for possible inconsistencies, contradictions, etc. with your information.
- Find out if something has changed since that story was written?
- Always double-check all facts in photo captions.
- Always look at the photo when writing the caption.
- Always get another person to look at copy after you've edited it. (Especially if you altered the copy before you compose it.)
- Always look for an opportunity to discuss the headline; with the reporter or assigning editor, with a colleague. (Especially if the story is sensitive or complex.)
- Always read your own newspaper every day. Check what has happened to your stories. If there are changes made; ask why. You may learn something.
- Critical reading can enhance your awareness of style.
- Always dial any phone number you intend to publish after you've typed it into the story.
- Always go back and read the full sentence if you've changed a word or two in copy. Watch for subject-verb agreement, missing info, duplication, etc.
- Always be careful how you ask questions when checking a fact. Leading questions may lead you into trouble. Ask open questions that ensure complete, open answers.
- Never commit to print anything that you don't understand. If you don't know, what are the chances readers will?
- By doubting your own understanding, you may learn something. Find a better way to say it. Find a more accurate way to say it.
- Always match names, numbers in a headline with those in its story.

- Also, crosscheck facts in: *Captions, Charts, Infographics, etc.*
- Have fun, but don't lose focus.

2.2.5 THE SEVEN COMMON MISTAKES WHILE EDITING:

There are seven deadly copy-editing sins. And a bigger problem is that these mistakes occur very commonly. All copy editors try to be perfect. But we all make mistakes. Well, everyone's human. To be the perfect copy editor, take note of the following "deadly sins" as enumerated by veteran copy editors. Avoid them and you'll be a star on the news desk.

ARROGANCE:

This could also be described as selfishness. Sometimes your page layout, your efforts to be clever in your headline at the expense of clarity, etc., say loudly to the reader, "I don't care about you."

There are many variations on this: grouped captions that are unclear, typefaces or fonts that the reader can't read, photos that are too small, etc.

ASSUMPTIONS:

Very often sub editors assume that the reporter did the checking and cross checking, or that the photographer got the name right. Or they assume that someone else would take care of the planning because you were about to go on vacation. All such assumptions are very dangerous to say the least.

SLOPPINESS:

There are so many ways sloppiness or carelessness shows itself, but here are a few: no page number in a tease; a jump line that refers readers to the wrong page; a caption that says someone is in the photo when they clearly are not; a caption name that is different from the name in the story; a bad break in a headline that makes it difficult to understand. Avoid these kinds of blunders.

INDIFFERENCE:

Indifference is the opposite of being concerned. Indifference forces you to treat a great story as if it is just another daily feature by giving it a small headline. Or you display a piece of great art in a mediocre way.

A related problem area is sameness. Every page looks the same and is predictable, from the headlines to the size of the art to the basic layout of the page. Give your readers something to take away with that day's page: an interesting headline, a tease, a great crop on a photo, a helpful info box.

IGNORANCE:

When you are ignorant, you print a photo of the wrong MLA from your district because you haven't been paying attention. Or you decide that Mahatma Gandhi died on 2nd October because you never bothered finding out. Or you thought a television show was coming on that night when it had changed nights a month ago.

Readers always know these things, and you damage the newspaper's credibility when you show that you don't.

LAZINESS:

You didn't bother to check to see if there was additional information available in the office or elsewhere because it wasn't your job. Or you didn't finish up that advance page because your shift was up and you thought someone else could finish it for you the next day. Or you didn't bother looking up something in the stylebook because you're pretty sure it was right. Or you didn't want to check out the background of a story in the electronic library because you thought the copy chief would catch it.

Laziness is one of the worst offenders in the field of sub editing.

INFLEXIBILITY:

You can't possibly change that front page because it's late in the night. Or, you have that page all done, why are they asking for another information graphic on it now? Or you resent having to work a later shift. Or you don't feel comfortable working in Sports.

Inflexibility often creates problems for the newspapers. So avoid it. By doing extra things, even though these things are not assigned to you, one gets opportunities to learn newer things.

6.3 SUMMARY:

- Editing to a layman is *dotting the i's and crossing the t's*. Many people think of editing as only an act of correcting the mistakes in a story. Editing involves many other things such as deciding what will and what will not be published and making the selected stories palatable and presentable while shaping it to project the publication's policies and philosophies.
- A good sub-editor has an orderly mind and a cool head so that when he is faced with great piles of copy coming from all directions he will be able to cope with them without panicking. He has to get the facts clear and in sequence in his mind or on his copy pad. Otherwise they will not be clear and in sequence in the newspaper.

- A good sub-editor has a sharp news sense. He does not bring his own particular prejudices or interests into sub editing. His news sense is related to his newspaper so that he can create exciting stories out of a mass of copy that he receives every day.
- The sub editor adds life and movement to the piece by substituting active verbs for passive verbs. He highlights the specifics and underplays the generalities. A sub editor adds colour to copy by using words creatively. He maintains both *brevity* (shortness) and *simplicity* so that readers can grasp the information and ideas more easily without reading long prose.
- The sub editor looks for ways and means to incorporate the canons of communication- *clarity*, *cohesiveness*, *completeness*, *conciseness*, *comprehensiveness*, *continuity*, etc., into the copy.
- Sub editors also have many other responsibilities including: *ensuring accuracy*, *cutting down unnecessary words*, *protecting and polishing the language*, *correcting inconsistencies*, *making the story conform to the newspaper's style*, *eliminating scandalous and libelous statements*, *making sure the story is readable and complete*.

6.4 KEY WORDS:

Editing: Editing to a layman is *dotting the i's and crossing the t's*. Many people think of editing as only an act of correcting the mistakes in a story. Editing involves many other things such as deciding what will and what will not be published and making the selected stories palatable and presentable while shaping it to project the publication's policies and philosophies.

Copy: Copy is nothing but written pieces - news stories, articles, features, etc.- coming to a newspaper's newsroom from different sources - reporters, correspondents, stringers, freelancers, news agencies, feature agencies, assigned writers, etc.

Functions of a Sub Editor: The sub editor adds life and movement to the piece by substituting active verbs for passive verbs. He highlights the specifics and underplays the generalities. A sub editor adds colour to copy by using words creatively. He maintains both *brevity* (shortness) and *simplicity* so that readers can grasp the information and ideas more easily without reading long prose. The sub

editor looks for ways and means to incorporate the canons of effective communication- *clarity, cohesiveness, completeness, conciseness, comprehensiveness, continuity*, etc., into the copy.

Qualities of a Sub Editor: The ideal sub editor has the following qualities: a good sub-editor has a sharp news sense. He does not bring his own particular prejudices or interests into sub editing. His news sense is related to his newspaper so that he can create exciting stories out of a mass of copy that he receives every day. A good sub-editor has an orderly mind and a cool head so that when he is faced with great piles of copy coming from all directions he will be able to cope with them without panicking. He has to get the facts clear and in sequence in his mind or on his copy pad. Otherwise they will not be clear and in sequence in the newspaper.

Responsibilities of a Sub Editor: Sub editors also have many other responsibilities. These are: *ensuring accuracy, cutting down unnecessary words, protecting and polishing the language, correcting inconsistencies, making the story conform to the newspaper's style, eliminating scandalous and libelous statements, making sure the story is readable and complete.*

6.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

5. Discuss the principles of editing giving suitable examples.
6. The principles of editing keep evolving as time passes. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
7. Discuss the principles of news editing.
8. What are the major points one should remember while editing? Discuss in detail.

6.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

Reporting by Charnley

Active Reporter by James Lewis

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Professional Journalism by Patanjali Sethi

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

News Writing by George Hough

ANNEXURE 1

REFERENCE LIBRARY:

Reputed newspapers have reference libraries, which are, so to speak, a set of tools for the deskman. The following books and clippings are a must for any newspaper:

- *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary,*
- *The Oxford Encyclopedic Dictionary,*
- *The International Who's Who,*
- *India's Who's Who,*
- *Times Atlas,*
- *Stylebook,*
- *Roget's Thesaurus,*
- *Encyclopedia Britannica,*
- *World Yearbook,*
- *The Constitution of India,*
- *Law of the Press by D. D. Basu, and*
- *A library of clipping files*

ANNEXURE 2

MISSPELLED WORDS:

The common abuses of language include spelling, grammar and usage. Many a times misspelled words are found on newspaper pages. This is because the sub editor's inability to recognize the incorrect spellings.

Here is a list of commonly misspelled English words: accede, accommodate, admissible, accumulate, alleged, allotted, allotment, balloon, battalion, benefiting, blond (noun, adj. for male), blonde (noun for female), buses (vehicle), caliber, caress, chaperon, cigarette, clue, commitment, consensus, consul, descendant, dietitian, diphtheria, disastrous, divisive, dissension, drunkenness, embarrass, employee, feud, fraudulent, fulfill, gaiety, gaily, gauge, goodbye, grammar, guerrilla, hangar (aircraft shelter), hanger (hanging device), harass, hemorrhage, homicide, idiosyncrasy, impostor, impresario, indispensable, inauguration, inflammable, innocuous, inoculate, irresistible, kidnapped, largess, liaison, lightning, likeable, mantel (shelf), mantle (covering), marijuana, medieval, mementos, miniature, minuscule or miniscule, missile, mold, naphtha, occasion, occurred, panicked, pantomime, papier-mâché, parallel, pastime, penicillin, percent, percentage, permissible, persistent, personnel, playwright, politicking, preceding, presumptuous, principal (main), principle (concept), privilege, procedure,

prostate, publicity, quandary, queue, questionnaire, recommend, reconnaissance, restaurant, restaurateur, rock'n'roll, sacrilegious, siege, separate, sizable, skillful, soothe, soybean, specter, stationary (not movable), stationery(writing material), subpoena, supersede, swastika, syrup, theater, thrash (punish or beat), tumultuous, vacuum, veterinarian, vice versa, vilify, warranted, weird, wield, wondrous.

Good sub editors check and recheck all words about which they have doubts.

QUALITIES OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

The work of a good editor, like the work of a good teacher, does not reveal itself directly. The editorial staff does not get any credit. So he or she has to be generous, sensitive, tactful, modest, patient, imaginative, and unfailingly tuned in or up-to-date with the latest information. He or she has to find joy in helping other people (reporters) bring their writings to a state of something like perfection.

In this lesson we shall discuss about the qualities of the editorial staff. Specifically, we shall focus on the qualities of sub editors. We shall briefly discuss about the qualities of editors and news editors. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Presentation of Content
 - 3.2.1 Editorial Staff- An Introduction
 - 3.2.2 Qualities of Good Journalists
 - 3.2.3 Qualities of Editorial Staff
 - 3.2.4 Qualities of Sub Editors
- 3.3 Summary
- 3.4 Key Words
- 3.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 3.6 References/Suggested Reading

3.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Know More About the Editorial Staff
- To Know About the Qualities of Good Journalists
- To Know About the Qualities of Editorial Staff
- To Know About the Qualities of Sub Editors

3.1 INTRODUCTION:

A really, really good copyeditor is hard to find! Some are good at factual correction but not at language styling. Some are brilliant prose polishers but lousy at factual details.

Some qualities that make a good editorial staff are: knowledge of grammar and good writing skills, attention to detail, awareness of consistency issues, sensitivity to the reporter's or author's style, professional vocabulary, ability to follow instructions and ask the right questions, timeliness. Also essential are qualities like: the ability to visualize news stories and newspaper pages.

In this lesson we shall discuss about the qualities required to become a good editorial staff.

3.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Editorial Staff- An Introduction*
- *Qualities of Good Journalists*
- *Qualities of Editorial Staff*
- *Qualities of Sub Editors*

3.2.1 EDITORIAL STAFF- AN INTRODUCTION:

Let us start with an introduction to the various editorial staff. Here we shall concentrate on editors. The rest of the editorial staff shall be briefly covered.

EDITORS:

Editors are overall in-charge of preparation of the writing of others (reports articles, features, etc.) for publication. They may supervise a range of functions, from planning content to preparation for printing. They make long-range plans, consider ideas, give assignments,

schedule coverage, order illustrations and photographs, have copy composed, read and correct galley proofs, and correct final proofs.

The specific activities of editors vary depending upon the nature of the publication or newspaper for which they work. It is possible that the title "senior editor" in one organization refers to a person who must edit news stories, while the same title in another organization refers to some body who assigns work to other editorial staff, selects material, or gives directions. A minimum of a Master's degree is required, and a specialization in journalism or in the social sciences is preferred for an Editor. Depending upon into which area of specialization one wishes to enter, additional areas of study may be required.

OTHER EDITORIAL STAFF:

There are many types of editors. Some editors handle managerial or administrative tasks, while most editors do editing related work. Editors usually work for organizations as a regular employee. There is considerable overlap between editorial duties as one moves between demands of book, journal, and news publishing. However, there will also be duties that are unique to each of those areas.

A *managing editor* is responsible for the content and quality of the publication. Managing editors ensure that staff reporters and freelance writers complete their assignments on time. They check on the art layouts, they proofread materials, and they sometimes write materials themselves. Managing editors also have managerial and budget responsibilities. Managing editors are found in the worlds of books, journals, and newspapers.

An *acquisitions editor* works in the publishing sector. Acquisitions editors deal with authors whose book manuscripts he or she is interested in publishing. If the publishing house also publishes or distributes journals, the acquisitions editor will work with the editors of those journals.

Contributing or guest editors work temporarily for journals or newspaper publications and may have their names featured on the publication masthead. One recent example is Shashi Tharoor working as Guest Editor of The Times of India on Sundays. A contributing editor may receive a regular salary, an honorarium, or no compensation.

Copy editors edit for the overall correctness (both factual and grammatical), style, structure, or tone after a news reports or articles have been accepted for publication. News stories and articles often have to be revised, corrected, polished, or improved for clarity. But the amount of copyediting varies from one news story to another, and from one publication to

another. However, if it is agreed that a reporter or author's style is to remain "untouched," then the copy editor will review the material only for grammatical and spelling errors.

A good editor publishes important, useful, and original works that contribute to an existing body of knowledge or expand knowledge and insights about a discipline. But this gatekeeper role is most important in the field of newspapers.

Photo editing is very different from text editing and is found in all publishing areas. Because images range from the very powerful to the purely informational, selecting the best photograph to illustrate a particular piece takes skill. A good picture editor contributes immensely to the publication process. Just as a copy editor can improve the quality of the news stories and articles, a good photo editor can improve the quality of the illustrations through judicious selection of photos and other illustrations.

3.2.2 QUALITIES OF GOOD JOURNALISTS:

Newspaper organizations hire journalists. Whatever you want to become beyond that - copy editor, designer, visual journalist, and reporter - is fine. But if you are a good journalist, your success is virtually guaranteed.

To be a journalist is to tackle one of the toughest - and sometimes most thankless - jobs. To get hired or to move ahead in the business is even tougher. Here are some qualities of good journalists:

PASSION FOR WORK:

If you work for a newspaper, you must care about news. You must be conversant in what the news of the day is. Are you following the major stories locally and nationally? What are some of the issues that your newspaper finds important enough to devote considerable space and reporters' time to? In what ways do you think your newspaper serves your readers?

Your boss will ask you those questions and more. And then the executive editor will ask you even more detailed questions. They try to determine if you have a commitment to journalism. It's not enough to work at a newspaper. You must immerse yourself in it.

A SOLID EDUCATION IN THE BASICS:

Here the basics mean copyediting, reporting, grammar, style, spelling, headline writing, and news decision making. It will help if you have some design or computer skills, or at least know

some design concepts. But if you don't have those skills, you should try and learn more about designing and other related things.

However, too much emphasis on technology does not always bring good results. It's important to remember that this technology is merely a tool with which to practice our craft.

EXPERIENCE:

Whether it's an internship, or a stint with a local newspaper, there is no substitute for prior experience when you look out for a job. Recruiters rarely look at marks or grades on resumes. They look for experience that's going to help that person make a smooth transition into the pressure-filled world of a daily newspaper.

CREATIVITY:

Your covering letter and your resume will tell a lot about you. If you are applying for a job with a focus on design, ditch the standard resume form and show what kind of skills you have.

If you are applying for a standard copy-editing job, make sure your covering letter includes information about skills and experience relevant to the job. Prove in that letter what sort of an asset you would be for the newspaper.

Creativity - whether in headlines, captions, art ideas or design - is an extremely attractive trait in copy editors.

Along those same lines, try to send your very best, most creative work. Don't just send clips. Make sure they are special clips.

FLEXIBILITY:

Not everyone can get a job in a major newspaper right at the beginning. Use entry -level positions to find out how things work in a newspaper. Absorb as much knowledge as you can and be willing to work on just about anything your editors ask you to. The more you show your flexibility, the more valuable you become. You also show everyone that you can be trusted to do a variety of jobs.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL:

Most covering letters and resumes are casually written. These are often full of errors in terms of style and grammar. In such cases you may not get hired. This is because first impressions are

extremely important, so check, check and check your resume and covering letters again and again.

CURIOSITY:

Do you know what's going on in the world and in your locality? Do you know about trends in the journalism world? Can you put things into historical context? If you work on a local desk, do you still read about the latest international happenings? Are you curious enough about design to investigate trends and advances in that area? In other words, do you have curiosity about things around you, or things that you know will help you in your career?

Curiosity will lead you on an information search. With increased information level and higher awareness, you will get better jobs and faster promotions.

COMMON SENSE:

This is the tricky characteristic that usually separates good journalists from average journalists in the copy desk world. Common sense the ability to think better and think faster, so that you can make informed decisions. Common sense is being able to make decisions that are the right decisions. Common sense is having an intuitive sense.

In addition to the above characteristics, anticipation and preparation are two things that can turn average copy editors into brilliant copy editors. Keep your ears and your eyes open and your brain busy thinking ahead, and you'll surely succeed as a journalist.

Additionally, a journalist must possess certain basic qualities to be a successful professional. Integrity of character, commitment to the truth and the reasoning power are quintessential to building credibility. A good perception and interpersonal skills to elicit news would stand him in good stead in reporting.

3.2.3 QUALITIES OF EDITORIAL STAFF:

A talented reporter writes to build his own image and that of his institution. An alert mind and a sense of curiosity are important assets to him, no matter what is his beat. Besides these qualities, he must develop certain specific qualities to excel in his field. These are discussed below.

A NOSE FOR NEWS:

The editorial staff's primary job is to polish news. But quite often, most of the material before an editorial staff member may just be publicity matter or advertisements in disguise. Therefore, a sub editor must check his material.

The golden rule in both reporting and editing is to go by the reader's interest. Most of the time, a sub editor will be working on routine stories. But a keen-eyed editorial staff looks for something unusual that may be lurking under the ordinary. His sharp sense of observation may help him gather amusing sidelights of interest to his readers and develop an exciting news story.

DEVELOPING CONTACTS:

A friendly and affable nature helps develop sources that could provide precious information, clues, or other material for both the reporter and the editorial staff member. The ability to win the confidence and respect of the potential sources is an asset of the newsman.

People may hesitate to talk on sensitive matters, especially to a reporter on the investigative track. They may like to reveal but they are afraid of the consequences. There could be informers of the underworld. What may be at stake for them could be their jobs or their lives.

BE OBJECTIVE AND FAIR:

The editorial staff member must be a sharp observer of events, presenting the facts in a balanced and objective manner. How does one maintain balance and objectivity?

The sources must be quoted except when they want to remain anonymous. And ensure that the story is balanced, by giving adequate coverage to all the sides of the subject. Also ensure that the information one presents is true by counter checking.

Do not adopt an indifferent attitude seeing each event afresh, unconnected to any previous events or expectations or future possibilities.

CLARITY OF EXPRESSION:

Clarity of thinking leads to clarity in writing, and however complex and specialized the subject; the editorial staff member should have the gift for simplification, reducing it to the layman's language. Explain difficult terminology and simplify government press notes, notorious for burying the new points.

3.2.4 QUALITIES OF A SUB EDITOR:

Here we shall discuss some of the essential qualities of a good sub editor. These are also essential qualities for other deskmen like Chief Sub editor or News Editor, etc.

CALMNESS: Never be excited or perturbed when major stories break. Your calm nerves are important in objectively assessing the news and according it the priority it deserves. Remember, you are dealing with history in the making of which assassinations; collapse of governments, natural calamities and the triumph and tragedies of people play a part.

JUDGMENT: The ability to take quick and right decisions is quintessential to producing a vibrant newspaper.

FAIRNESS: The newsmen's fairness is the credibility of the newspaper, the absence of which will affect its circulation.

QUICK GRASP: The mental faculty to size up the situation as events unfold and the ability to find the right words to express it is a must.

KNOWING YOUR READER: A good newspaper has a mind of his own, even as the readership has a collective mind of its own; when the two are like-minded, a healthy relationship is established. Hence, the ability to see a story from the reader's point of view makes a great deskman.

POSITIVE SKEPTICISM: While the gullible accept anything at the face value, an experienced deskman cultivates a healthy skepticism to spot the source of potential errors.

KNOWLEDGE: A good general knowledge and familiarity with names of people, cities and capitals of the world, currencies of countries, politics global and national, business, academics, art and culture help edit copy meticulously.

MEMORY: A sharp memory facilitates recall of the past events and puts news in perspective.

Finally, a sub editor should be aware of the extent of freedom and the reasonable

restrictions. Also he should be fully knowledgeable about the Acts and laws pertaining to the Press. Specific areas where subeditors should be more cautious are *carelessness in editing, libelous statements, Contempt of Parliament and Contempt of Court, right of privacy, plagiarism and copyright infringement*, etc

3.3 SUMMARY:

- The deskmen along with reporters are basically the eyes and ears of the society. To play this role, they must be committed to the society; they must use the power of the pen for the well being of the society.
- A journalist's primary job is discovering the new. The ability to find news is called nose for news. Also a reporter must check his material and swift the news from publicity.
- A friendly and affable nature helps develop sources that could provide precious information, clues, or other material for the reporter in search of a story. The ability to win the confidence and respect of the potential sources is an asset of the newsman.
- The deskmen must have sharp sense of observation. This will help them in presenting the facts in a balanced and objective manner.
- Clarity of thinking leads to clarity in writing, and however complex and specialized the subject; the deskmen should have the gift for simplification, reducing it to the layman's parlance. Explain difficult terminology and simplify government press notes, notorious for burying the new points.
- The sub editor is the guardian of accuracy, style, balance and fairness, intelligent presentation of news and good taste. A good sub editor makes priceless contribution by making a newspaper or a magazine worth reading. Journalism textbooks describe him as: A gatekeeper of the news; A image-builder of the newspaper's reputation; A surgeon who performs news surgery; A priest who conducts a happy marriage between speed and efficiency; and The tailor who cuts stories to the size
- Some of the essential qualities of a good deskman (sub editor / Chief Sub editor / News Editor) are: Calmness, Judgment, Fairness, and Quick Grasp.
- A sub editor should be aware of the extent of freedom and the reasonable restrictions. Also he should be fully knowledgeable about the Acts and laws pertaining to the Press. Specific areas where subeditors should be more cautious are *carelessness in editing, libelous statements, Contempt of Parliament and Contempt of Court, right of privacy, plagiarism and copyright infringement*, etc

3.4 KEY WORDS:

Objectivity and Fairness: The deskmen must have sharp sense of observation. This will help them in presenting the facts in a balanced and objective manner.

Clarity of Expression: Clarity of thinking leads to clarity in writing, and however complex and specialized the subject; the deskmen should have the gift for simplification, reducing it to the layman's parlance. Explain difficult terminology and simplify government press notes, notorious for burying the new points.

Sub Editor: The sub editor is the guardian of accuracy, style, balance and fairness, intelligent presentation of news and good taste. A good sub editor makes priceless contribution by making a newspaper or a magazine worth reading.

Qualities of a Sub Editor: Some of the essential qualities of a good deskman (sub editor / Chief Sub editor / News Editor) are: Calmness, Judgment, Fairness, and Quick Grasp.

3.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Write in detail about the qualities of a journalist.
2. Discuss the major qualities of a good editor.
3. What are the major qualities of a good sub editor? Discuss.

3.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

The Art of Editing by Baskette, Sissors, Brookes

Editing by T J S George

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Handbook of Editing by S K Aggarwal

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

Editing Techniques by S. Kundra

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: B Unit: II Lesson: 4

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall discuss about the roles and responsibilities of the editorial staff. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

4.0 *Objectives*

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Presentation of Content
 - 4.2.1 Perks of Being an Editorial Staff
 - 4.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of an Editor
 - 4.2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Editorial Staff
 - 4.2.4 Roles of a Sub Editor
 - 4.2.5 Responsibilities of a Sub Editor
- 4.3 Summary
- 4.4 Key Words
- 4.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 4.6 References/Suggested Reading

4.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Know More About the Perks of Being an Editorial Staff
- To Know About the Roles and Responsibilities of an Editor
- To Know About the Roles and Responsibilities of Editorial Staff

- To Know About the Roles of a Sub Editor
- To Know About Responsibilities of a Sub Editor

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

What we want in a copyeditor or any other editorial staff? We want expertise in grammar, usage, style, and experience/good judgment with when to apply standards. We also want excellent technical/organizational skills that help in delivering a very tidy package (readable news stories and attractive newspaper pages). Punctuality is another requirement. Then there is knowledge of the field, the readers, and ability to contribute effectively.

Armed with these qualities, the editorial staff performs certain roles and responsibilities. We shall discuss about these roles and responsibilities in this lesson.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Perks of Being an Editorial Staff*
- *Roles and Responsibilities of an Editor*
- *Roles and Responsibilities of Editorial Staff*
- *Roles of a Sub Editor*
- *Responsibilities of a Sub Editor*

4.2.1 THE PERKS OF BEING AN EDITORIAL STAFF:

Here are some reasons why being a editorial staff is so cool:

- *Your job profile changes constantly and you are never bored.*
- *You become a more interesting person. You can talk about Arafat, Agassi, Albright, and Aishyarya and sound like you know what you're talking about -- because you do.*
- *You have ample responsibility and power. You decide how the reader will perceive the news - how they'll perceive the world.*
- *You catch a dumb mistake before readers see it. Helping someone make a story better is a fantastic feeling.*
- *Newspapers never ask writers to edit, but they love it when editors write.*
- *You become an encyclopedia of useless information.*

4.2.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EDITOR:

The work of a good editor, like the work of a good teacher, does not reveal itself directly. It is reflected in the accomplishments of reporters and other writers. Good editors are generous, they are sensitive, they are tactful, they are modest, they are patient, they are imaginative, and they are unfailingly tuned in.

What then editors do?

- **Editors give assignments.**
- **Editors give deadlines.**
- **Editors give advice.**
- **Editors give limits.**
- **Editors give freedom.**
- **Editors give advice.**
- **Editors give praise.**
- **Editors give advice.**
- **Editors give criticism.**
- **Editors give hope.**

4.2.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDITORIAL STAFF:

Here we shall briefly describe the roles and responsibilities of the editorial staff:

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NEWS EDITORS:

- As the news editor what you do is important. You will be held accountable for what you do.
- Know what is in your section. Read your budget thoroughly when it arrives and discuss it in detail with your editors. Edit as many stories as you can that are on your front page and inside your section.
- Think of your readers. Are they being served?
- Know the area that your newspaper covers. Take an interest in the subject matter. Do your homework and find out as much as you can about the area that your newspaper covers. The more you know, the better prepared you are to serve the reader.
- Read your newspaper. Pick it up everyday and look at it to see what you did. Read other newspapers as well, to familiarize yourself with the current issues.
- Make contributions. You are empowered to contribute as much as your energy and knowledge and enthusiasm will allow. You can make a difference -- and should.

- Respect your fellow editors and reporters. Consider their reaction to every decision that you make. Earn their trust, not their suspicion. They are at your mercy, and you at theirs. You need each other, so be courteous and considerate, as you would ask them to be to you.

A SUB EDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The stories you are editing is your stories. Treat it with respect and care. Make no unnecessary changes, and no unnecessary cuts.
- If the story is overplayed or underplayed, speak up. Look for quotes or info boxes or graphics if there is time. A quick-thinking sub editor can give the news editor valuable information that makes the difference between an average newspaper and a great newspaper.
- Strive for great headlines, not serviceable ones. Think about that again: They are the first things a reader sees. Are you happy with that first impression?

EDITORIAL STAFF'S GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Watch out for each other. Don't work in a vacuum. Be aware of what is going on and be prepared to sacrifice to help out in a crisis.
- Ask for help. Don't shoulder a burden at the risk of committing a mistake or short-changing the readers. Help is plentiful and available.
- Know your newspaper. Know your editors, reporters, news artists and photographers. Find out who the people are who have direct bearing on your job on a consistent basis.
- Pay attention to the details. A misspelled word in a news story will mar that story forever.

4.2.4 ROLES OF SUB EDITORS:

The sub editor is the guardian of accuracy, style, balance and fairness, intelligent presentation of news and good taste. A good sub editor makes priceless contribution by making a newspaper or a magazine worth reading. Journalism textbooks describe him as:

A gatekeeper of the news;

A image-builder of the newspaper's reputation;

A surgeon who performs news surgery;

A priest who conducts a happy marriage between speed and efficiency; and

The tailor who cuts stories to the size

However, he gets all the blame and seldom any credit and destined to remain anonymous.

DUTIES OF A SUB EDITOR:

A sub editor does the following things:

- *Polishes up the language by removing rough edges from the copy and making it readable;*
- *Fine-tunes the copy to the style of the newspaper (the style is a matter of uniformity of capitalization, spelling and avoiding pitfalls in usage in conformity with the newspaper stylebook);*
- *Simplifies the language to make it reader-friendly;*
- *Tailors story length to space requirements;*
- *Corrects factual errors;*
- *Detects fraud or plant. A plant is falsehood in journalistic garment to promote somebody's interest or to discredit somebody;*
- *Ensures balance and fairness and objectivity in the stories. In case of a controversy, both sides get equal space;*
- *Guards against legal trappings like defamation, libel, sub-judice, and copyright violations. The reports or news stories should not defame a person by use of pejorative, or deal with matters under judicial consideration or use-copyrighted material without permission;*
- *Rewrites and restructures stories extensively when necessary. But normally sub editing ('subbing') involves looking for errors in spelling and grammar;*
- *Implements the editorial policy of the newspaper. A newspaper may back a political party and anything hypercritical of the party may not find a significant place in its display*
- *Maintains good taste;*
- *Shuns sensation;*
- *Deletes taints of publicity (puff); and*
- *Follows the golden rule "when in doubt cut".*

The sub editor is responsible for every word that gets printed.

4.2.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUB EDITOR:

The sub editor is like a diamond cutter. He uses his talents and qualities to remove the flaws and shapes the raw pieces (news stories, features, etc) by way of refining and polishing. A sub editor searches for shortcomings in the copy, meticulously scans for flaws and inaccuracies. And he or she searches for the optimal utilization of the 'words'.

He has to have vast vocabulary, an ability to select the right words for the right situation and an ability to play with words to be able to put life into the written pieces.

The sub editor should know when to prune (take out) the useless, the redundant, and the unnecessary cards. He or she adds life and movement to the piece by substituting active verbs for passive verbs. He highlights the specifics and underplays the generalities. A sub editor adds colour to copy by using words creatively. He maintains both *brevity* (shortness) and *simplicity* so that readers can grasp the information and ideas more easily without reading long prose.

The sub editor looks for ways and means to incorporate the cannons of effective communication- *clarity, cohesiveness, completeness, conciseness, comprehensiveness, continuity*, etc., into the copy.

If the above description makes you think that sub editing is boring, monotonous and is like correcting language notebooks of students, then you are wrong. Sub editing is exciting as it shapes all kinds of stories and the sub editors come to know about these stories much before others.

Often sub editing is considered to be a craft because it involves certain routine and mechanical activities like correction, rewriting, etc. While being a craft, sub editing is also an art. It involves mental and intellectual capabilities of the sub editor. And it has been rightly said:

"Because sub editing is an art, the most important ingredient, after training and talent, is strong motivation. The copy editor must care. Not only should a copy editor know the job, he or she must love it. He or she should love every story, every edition, every day. No art yields for less than maximum efforts. The copy editor must be motivated by a fierce professional pride in the high quality of editing".

As it is clear from this quote, the number one requirement to become a good sub editor is *training*. Quality number two is *talent* (which obviously can be developed by training) and the third requirement is *motivation*.

And one gets to learn and practice the art and craft of sub editing at the copy desk in the newsroom. Copydesk or news desk is the place where all the copy is gathered and processed. It is called the backbone of the newspaper. And only those

people who are equipped with qualities like curiosity, discretion and cynicism excel here.

The copy desk is the place where most newspaper people start their career. It is a place of great and controlled learning. It offers great scopes for growth with opportunities to rise higher to positions of responsibility and respectability. One gets continued chances to accumulate wide-ranging information from thousands of stories one reads and edits. Sub editors get opportunities to continually *probe*, *question*, and *authenticate*. While developing an unerring eye for errors, misspelled words, factual faults, one also improves the ability to discern.

The first and foremost responsibility of the sub editor is to ensure accuracy of the news stories. This is because a newspaper that is inaccurate loses both its credibility and readers. While reporters have more responsibility about accuracy of stories, sub editors also share this responsibility. Sub editors often question the reporters to check the accuracy and verify facts. From names of persons and places (checked from telephone books and City Directories etc.), sub editors have to check a wide variety of facts.

Sub editors also have many other responsibilities. These are: ***ensuring accuracy, cutting down unnecessary words, protecting and polishing the language, correcting inconsistencies, making the story conform to the newspaper's style, eliminating scandalous and libelous statements, making sure the story is readable and complete.***

Often stories have strong and unnecessary adjectives and adverbs. These need to be taken out. For example, instead of using 'very interesting', we can do well with just the word 'interesting'. Again a word like 'destroyed' is sufficient and there is no need to use 'totally destroyed'. Also meaningless phrases need to be weeded out.

The sub editor has the responsibility of polishing the language. Reporters are almost always busy and in a hurry, thus they do not pay much attention to the language. Sub editors need to work on the stories and polish the language. Also a sub editor has to recognize inconsistencies and remove them.

Sub editors also need to be on the look out for scandalous and libelous elements in the story. These should be detected and removed. Otherwise, such things may lead to controversies or court cases later on.

Finally, the sub editor makes certain the story is readable. Good and readable writing has the following characteristics.

- *It is precise.*
- *It is clear.*
- *It uses transitional devices that lead the reader from one thought to the next (from one sentence to the next or from one paragraph to the next) and providing continuity.*
- *It appeals to the reader's senses.*

Preciseness or brevity is achieved by using the right, exact or appropriate words. Simple sentences and correct grammar result in clarity. The 'pace' of a story can be maintained by varying the length of the sentences. Short and snappy sentences are easy to read and make a story fast paced. Long sentences slow down the reading.

Employing these principles one can improve the story's readability and acceptability. Good editing can complement good writing. Poor editing, on the other hand, can make a story worse or may even destroy it.

A sub editor needs to have a thorough understanding of newspaper writing styles, or story formats. The most widely used news formats are Inverted pyramid approach, Narrative approach, Chronological approach, and Personalized approach.

The inverted pyramid story has three parts - i) the lead, ii) support and supplement to the lead, and iii) details in descending order of importance. The lead in this format provides answers to six questions - who, what, when, where, why, and how (5 W's and one H).

The narrative approach has been borrowed from magazines. In such news stories information is given in the story telling format. This approach is used "to hold the reader's interest and stimulate some imagination to see, feel, and understand the news".

The personalized or first person approach is used rarely for news stories. If the reporter is there on the spot when something is happening, he can give a first person account in the news story.

The chronological approach is the second most used format after the inverted pyramid format. Instead of giving information in the descending order of importance, events are chronicled as they had happened. It usually starts with a summary lead and then moves on to list out what happened first and what happened next.

Knowledge of the story formats will help the sub editor in polishing the stories. Finally, here are five basic rules for editing which are part of the sub-editor' responsibilities. These are:

1. While processing any story the sub-editor ensures the length and style laid down by the Newspaper is followed.
2. To mark the copy with typesetting instructions so clearly and carefully that there is no possibility of confusion or misunderstanding in the composing room.
3. To ensure that everything that needs to be checked has been checked. These include names, places, titles, dates and anything else that could possibly go wrong.
4. To write a headline that fits - both the story and the space available.
5. To make sure that the edited copy is intelligible, easy-to-read and interesting.

4.3 SUMMARY:

- The sub editor is the guardian of accuracy, style, balance and fairness, intelligent presentation of news and good taste. A good sub editor makes priceless contribution by making a newspaper or a magazine worth reading. Journalism textbooks describe him as: A gatekeeper of the news; A image-builder of the newspaper's reputation; A surgeon who performs news surgery; A priest who conducts a happy marriage between speed and efficiency; and The tailor who cuts stories to the size
- Some of the essential qualities of a good deskman (sub editor / Chief Sub editor / News Editor) are: Calmness, Judgment, Fairness, and Quick Grasp.

4.4 KEY WORDS:

Sub Editor: The sub editor is the guardian of accuracy, style, balance and fairness, intelligent presentation of news and good taste. A good sub editor makes priceless contribution by making a newspaper or a magazine worth reading.

Qualities of a Sub Editor: Some of the essential qualities of a good deskman (sub editor / Chief Sub editor / News Editor) are: Calmness, Judgment, Fairness, and Quick Grasp.

4.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Write in detail about the responsibilities of an editor.
2. Discuss the major qualities of a good reporter.

4.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

The Art of Editing by Baskette, Sissors, Brookes

Editing by T J S George

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Handbook of Editing by S K Aggarwal

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

Editing Techniques by S. Kundra

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: C Unit: I Lesson: 5

NEWS ROOM AND NEWS DESK

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall start with a broad organization of news processing in newspapers. Specifically, we shall focus on newsrooms. We shall also discuss about news desks. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

5.0 *Objectives*

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Presentation of Content
 - 5.2.1 Organizational Structure of Newspapers
 - 5.2.2 Newsroom
 - 5.2.3 News Desk
- 5.3 Summary
- 5.4 Key Words
- 5.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 5.6 References/Suggested Reading

5.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Know More About Organizational Structure of Newspapers
- To Know About the Newsroom
- To Know About the News Desk

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

Newspapers are called the fourth estate. Newspapers are called mirrors of the society. Newspapers inform, they educate, and they also educate. Too much emphasis is placed upon the accuracy and fairness of newspapers. Most newspapers, except the tabloids, have a more restrained style of reporting that depends on factual checking and accuracy.

Most newspapers are dependent on credibility to increase readership. Credibility is questioned because of anonymous sources; errors in facts, spelling, and grammar; real or perceived bias; scandals involving plagiarism and fabrication; etc. Editing helps overcome these problems by making the material error free.

Different newspapers have different but specific styles. Editing helps in maintaining uniformity of style. In addition, editing ensures the structures of the different write-ups are proper.

Editing related work is done in the editorial department. Specifically editing of news is done in the *newsroom* on the *news desk*.

In this lesson we shall discuss the organizational structure of newspapers with specific reference to the editorial department. The specific focus will be newsroom and news desk.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Organizational Structure of Newspapers*
- *Newsroom*
- *News Desk*

5.2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF NEWSPAPERS:

Organizational structure of any organization represents the division of work and activities in the organization. It shows how different activities are linked. It indicates the distribution of work related activities according to specialization. It also refers to the hierarchy, authority, structure and relationships in the organization.

Newspapers have four major departments: Editorial Department, Advertising Department, Circulation Department, and Printing Press. The additional departments are: Administrative Department, Accounting Department, Personnel Department, Legal Department, and Public Relations Department, etc.

Let us make one thing clear before we discuss about the organizational structure of newspapers. There are a wide variety of newspapers. The differences are in terms of size

(broad sheets and tabloid size), content, periodicity, time of publication, and most importantly the circulation. So there is no standardized organizational structure for newspapers. Accordingly, there are certain variations in terms of the staff employed, the hierarchy, etc.

The recent technological innovations adopted in the field of newspapers also have brought about some drastic changes. For example, the post of *proofreader* has almost been abolished. Page make-up artists are also fast becoming extinct.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT:

The editorial department looks after the major content of newspapers. This department handles news, articles, features, and editorials, etc. The Editor heads this department. In some newspapers the top post is either Chief Editor or Editor-in-Chief.

The editorial department is divided into several sections like News Section, Views Section, Photo Section, Computer Section, etc. The News Section is generally divided into *News Room* and *Reporter's Room*. News Editor heads the *News Room* and it consists of many other staff like Deputy News Editors, Chief Sub Editors, Senior Sub Editors and Sub Editors. They are all mainly responsible for editing news under the leadership of News Editor. All these personnel usually sit around the news desk.

The *Reporter's Room* or *Bureau Wing*. The *Reporting Wing* is headed by Chief Reporter and it consists of staff like Senior Reporter, Sports Reporter, City Reporter, Principal Correspondent, Senior Correspondents and Correspondents. On the other hand, Chief of the Bureau heads the *Bureau Wing* and it also consists of Special Correspondents. The job of all of them is collection of news.

Then there is the *Views Section*. It is further divided into Editorial Wing, Article Wing, Feature Wing and Review Wing. The Editor, the Resident Editor, the Executive Editor, the Associate Editors (or Deputy Editors), and the Assistant Editors work in this wing.

Photo Editor or *Chief Photographer* heads the *Photo Section*. *Computer In-charge* heads the *Computer Section* and there are several other computer operators to support him.

The other departments of a newspaper are:

- *Advertising Department*
- *Circulation Department*
- *Printing Department*
- *Administrative Department*
- *Accounting Department*

- *Personnel Department*
- *Legal Department*
- *Public Relations Department*

Among the other departments, the Advertising Department looks after collecting advertisements, so that the newspaper gets good revenue. The Circulation Department looks after circulation or distribution of the copies of the newspaper. The Printing Department takes care of the mechanical or the production aspects of newspapers. These include printing plate preparation, printing, cutting, folding, etc.

The Administrative Department obviously looks after the general administration. Billing, financial collections, receipts and expenses are taken care of by the Accounting Department. Recruitment, training, promotions, transfers, retirements, etc., are looked after by the Personnel Department. The Legal Department takes care of legal problems like defamation, libel, etc. Finally the Public Relations Department tries to create and sustain a positive image for the newspaper.

5.2.2 NEWS ROOM:

The newsroom is the nerve centre of the entire activity in a newspaper. In a news agency, however, the News Desk edits and composes the news stories in newspapers.

At the top of the editorial hierarchy of newspapers is the Editor or an Editor-in-Chief who plans and directs the day-to-day operations, supported by a team of News Editors, Chief Sub editors (chief subs), Senior Sub editors and Sub editors (subs).

We have already discussed that the news section is divided in to two parts: the reporters' room and the newsroom. But it is not always so. Some times there is only one room and the reporters sit in one half while the editorial staff related to news occupies the other half.

In fact the reporters' room or section is also called the Bureau. The Bureau Chief or a Chief Reporter heads it.

The reporters are concerned with news writing. They go to the field to cover their *beats* (the specific areas or institutions, etc. assigned to them). They come back to the newspaper office to write their stories.

These stories are then handed over to the newsroom.

The news editor heads the newsroom. He has a battery of editorial staff working under him. These include associate editors, deputy editors, assistant editors, chief sub editors, senior

sub editors, and sub editors. In smaller and medium size newspapers, there are few such designations. In most of the newspapers, the chief sub editors and sub editors are there to assist the news editor.

5.2.3 NEWS DESK:

The News Desk usually operates in shifts and a chief sub editor heads each shift. Ideally, in a newspaper, it is the News Editor who plans editing and directs page making. But it is the chief sub helps implement his decisions. So while news editors head the newsrooms, chief sub editors head the news desk.

In a news agency, News Editors and chief subs look after the smooth functioning of the News Desk. They plan and write 'leads'. They also write updated versions of developing stories.

How A NEWS DESK WORKS:

Stories come to the news desk after an "assignment" editor or the news editor selects them. There are three basic methods of handling news copy once it gets to the desk.

In the traditional method, the chief sub editor or acting chief assigns these news stories to various sub editors on the basis of their expertise. This method works like a self-regulating system. The sub editors try to edit and empty the "in" basket (normally these days this is an electronic file, queue, folder). This makes for more efficient flow. But it also intensifies the workload inequity between the faster people and the slower people.

At some papers, a group of sub editors are given entire pages to deal with. Here one does not edit stories at random, and does not get assigned a variety of stories for a variety of pages. But a group of two, three or four sub editors get all the stories to be published on a specific page.

At the news desk the sub editor needs to learn what size of headline the story will get; whether the story needs to be trimmed (or sometimes padded out); etc. If there are photos, there will be captions to be written. There might be some graphics to be created, edited, or at least proofread. And padding out a story might mean pulling out a quote or an interesting passage and setting it in larger, "display" type.

First the text matter of news stories or the body copy is edited and composed. Next the headline and other display matter like sub headlines; blurbs, info graphics, etc., are decided by the sub editors. These are then composed and designed by the layout person, or "page designer."

Layout or arrangement of the textual and visual matter on newspaper pages is traditionally the job of the news desk. The news editor or deputy editors or assistant editors supervise the page make up process. The editorial staff is responsible for the news judgment behind the lay out. These days, especially at newspapers using advanced designing software packages, there is a "design desk". Sometimes, sub editors do the layout on less-important "inside" pages or on sections other than the main news section (editorial, sports, business).

A word about the news editor: The news desk is a subset of the newsroom, meaning the news editor outranks the news desk chief. Sometimes there is no copy desk chief -- the news editor heads both the newsroom and the news desk.

5.3 SUMMARY:

- The major departments of a newspaper are: Editorial Department, Advertising Department, Circulation Department, Printing Department, Administrative Department, Accounting Department, Personnel Department, Legal Department, and Public Relations Department
- The editorial department is headed by Chief Editor or Editor-in-Chief or Editor and is divided into several sections like News Section, Views Section, Photo Section, Computer Section, etc. The News Section is further divided into News Room and Reporter's Room.
- Advertising Department looks after collecting advertisements, so that the newspaper gets good revenue. The Circulation Department looks after circulation or distribution of the copies of the newspaper. The Printing Department takes care of the mechanical or the production aspects of newspapers. These include printing plate preparation, printing, cutting, folding, etc.
- At the top of the editorial hierarchy of newspapers is the Editor or an Editor-in-Chief who plans and directs the day-to-day operations, supported by a team of News Editors, Chief Sub editors (chief subs), Senior Sub editors and Sub editors (subs).
- The news editor heads the newsroom. He has a battery of editorial staff working under him. These include associate editors, deputy editors, assistant editors, chief sub editors, senior sub editors, and sub editors. In smaller and medium size newspapers, there are few such designations. In most of the newspapers, the chief sub editors and sub editors are there to assist the news editor.

5.4 KEY WORDS:

Newspapers: A newspaper is a periodic publication containing news, information and advertising. It is usually printed on low-cost paper called newsprint. It may be general or special interest, most often published daily, and sometimes published weekly.

Editorial Department: This department is headed by Chief Editor or Editor-in-Chief or Editor and is divided into several sections like News Section, Views Section, Photo Section, Computer Section, etc. The News Section is further divided into News Room and Reporter's Room. News Editor heads the News Room and it consists of many other staff like Deputy News Editors, Senior Sub Editors and Sub Editors.

Functions of the Other Departments: THE Advertising Department in a newspaper looks after collecting advertisements, so that the newspaper gets good revenue. The Circulation Department looks after circulation or distribution of the copies of the newspaper. The Printing Department takes care of the mechanical or the production aspects of newspapers. These include printing plate preparation, printing, cutting, folding, etc.

Editorial Hierarchy of Newspapers: At the top of the editorial hierarchy of newspapers is the Editor or an Editor-in-Chief who plans and directs the day-to-day operations, supported by a team of News Editors, Chief Sub editors (chief subs), Senior Sub editors and Sub editors (subs).

Newsroom: The news editor heads the newsroom. He has a battery of editorial staff working under him. These include associate editors, deputy editors, assistant editors, chief sub editors, senior sub editors, and sub editors. In smaller and medium size newspapers, there are few such designations. In most of the newspapers, the chief sub editors and sub editors are there to assist the news editor.

News Desk: In a news agency, News Editors and chief subs look after the smooth functioning of the News Desk. They plan and write 'leads'. They also write updated versions of developing stories.

5.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. Write a short note on the organizational structure of newspapers.
2. The organization of newsrooms in newspapers has changed in the recent times. Discuss about these change in detail.
3. Describe how the news desk of a newspaper functions.

5.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

The Art of Editing by Baskette, Sissors, Brookes

Editing by T J S George

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Handbook of Editing by S K Aggarwal

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

Editing Techniques by S. Kundra

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: C Unit: II Lesson: 6

PROCESS OF EDITING

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

The lesson structure shall be as follows:

6.0 Objectives

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Presentation of Content
 - 6.2.1 Editing Process: An Overview
 - 6.2.2 Stages of Editing
 - 6.2.3 Writing Leads
 - 6.2.4 Correcting the Language
 - 6.2.5 Editing News Agency Copies
- 6.3 Summary
- 6.4 Key Words
- 6.5 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)
- 6.6 References/Suggested Reading

6.0 OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- To Have an Over view of the Editing Process
- To Know About Stages of Editing
- To Know About Writing Leads
- To Know About Correcting the Language
- To Know About Editing News Agency Copies

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

Newspaper offices receive news stories and other editorial material from different sources. Reporters, correspondents and stringers are the own sources newspapers. People in the vicinity of the newspaper send their news releases directly to the newspaper office. And a major chunk of stories come through the news agencies. News stories also come in different forms- from hand written, type written, or computer printout. News also reaches the computer terminals directly from News agencies or others.

Everyday news stories and other material that reach newspaper offices in different forms are edited so that these can be published.

In this lesson we shall discuss about the editing process. We shall start with the process of selection of news stories. We shall also discuss about the sub-processes of sub-editing.

6.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- o *Editing Process: An Overview*
- o *Stages of Editing*
- o *Writing Leads*
- o *Correcting the Language*
- o *Editing News Agency Copies*

6.2.1 EDITING PROCESS- AN OVERVIEW:

Two methods are adopted for handling the stories received- the traditional manual method and the mechanized method of editing.

TRADITIONAL METHOD OF EDITING / COPY PROCESSING:

In the traditional method, sub editors mark the corrections on the pages. Standard editing symbols are used for this purpose (stories are usually typed in double or triple space so that corrections can be marked. The sub editor then writes the headline of the story.

Then this copy reaches the composing room. The compositor is usually given such instructions about the types faces to be used, the size in which the headline is to be set, the number of columns the story would appear in, or whether the story is to be boxed etc.

Once the story is composed or typeset, a proof is taken. Proofreaders compare the original story from the manuscript and the proof corrections are marked using proof reading marks. These symbols are very similar to editing symbols. Now the compositor makes these corrections.

The traditional manual method is time consuming and repetitious. The story is read by so many people. But this has a benefit as more times a story is read; more errors are detected and corrected.

MECHANICAL METHOD OF COPY PROCESSING:

The mechanical method of copy processing involves such equipment as the optical character recognition (OCR) machine (also called the *optical character reader*) and the video display terminal (VDT). The OCR first came in the 1970s in the West. Reporters typed their stories on electronic typewriters on bond paper using carbon-film ribbons. These stories were then scanned by an optical character reader and directly fed into a computer.

The OCR method eliminated typing the stories a second time. It also created certain problems. Reporters were required to produce neatly typed stories. Sub-editors were not happy with OCRs, as the scanned stories were difficult to edit. This method eliminated two intermediaries - compositors and proofreaders. It was, however, not very efficient. Often mistakes remained in the stories. And when low priced video display units entered the market, OCRs became obsolete.

The video display terminal (VDT) is the most efficient mechanical device for sub editing. Here stories can directly be taken from news agencies and correspondents (through modem). Everything can be seen on the screen of the VDT. From writing, sub editing, proof reading to composing and lay out- everything can be done on the VDT screen. Highly efficient computer software packages have further increased the efficiency of the VDT. Now most big and small and medium sized newspapers use the VDT.

6.2.2 STAGES OF EDITING:

Experienced editors divide the editing process into three stages:

- (i) Read the story,
- (ii) Edit it thoroughly, and

(iii) Read the story again.

Sub editors mostly skip the first step or just scan the story to get the gist of the news. This is a big mistake, as *intelligent editing decisions* cannot be made unless the sub editor has read the story and has understood it fully. Also he has to understand the style in which the story is written. Such understanding can be achieved only with thorough reading.

Some sub editors skip the third step. If the edited story is not reread, then some mistakes may go undetected. And as we know it is only human to err. Such errors can be avoided if the story is reread. Unfortunately, the pressure of deadline forces sub editors to skip either step-one, or step-three, or both.

An alert sub editor looks out for mistakes. The most important thing is to check the facts for accuracy. In fact, good sub editors double check. Reporters always work under pressure of time and may forget to put a dateline. The sub editor inserts a dateline.

The sub editor also sees that the 'intro' or 'lead' answers the five **W's and One H**; *what, when, where, who, why, and how*. He tightens some loosely written paragraphs.

He also combines smaller paragraphs or breaks longer paragraphs into smaller ones.

As the reporters are on the site of the events they are reporting, they see and hear everything. So what they write may have too much of details which would be confusing and difficult to understand for the readers.

The sub editor is always on the look out for such writing and improves upon it by clarifying everything and deleting the confusing part. Sub editors often take out offensive statements, quotes or remarks.

6.2.3 WRITING LEADS:

The lead or intro is the most important element of a news story. It is the window to a story. Because the quality or readability of the lead determines whether the reader would read further or skip the story. The lead should be short. So that it arouses and sustains interest. The Bible has perhaps the best ever written introduction:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth".

Here is a lead that tells an entire story in itself. This classic lead was used during World War-II:

"Today the Japanese fleet submitted itself to the destinies of war - and lost".

News story leads not only give information, they also move us emotionally. When hundreds of students died in an explosion in a school in Texas, one newspaper gave this lead:

"They are burying a generation today".

Often the intro or lead becomes too lengthy as reporters try to pack a lot of information into it. But the sub editor finds out what details can be left out while the lead still gave enough information. Simple and short sentences are used in place of long and complex sentences to simplify long and cluttered intros. Minor details can be put in the body and this will shorten the leads.

A good lead is brief. Other than brevity it should contain some other qualities. It should inform and summarize. It must be straightforward. It sets the mood, the pace and the flavour of the story. It also guides and provides direction. The sub editor has to avoid the clichéd leads that are boring because they are used too often. For example: *Quick action by two alert policemen was credited with saving the life of aor Police and paramilitary forces staged a massive man hunt today for a man who had ...* The say nothing leads give no information. A popular saying in the field of sub editing is "leads should not mislead".

Another type of lead is the *illogical lead*. Here is one example: *"Three small brothers died last night in a fire that burned their house while their father was at work and their mother was visiting a neighbour".* It could be revised as follows *"Left unattended, three small brothers perished in a fire last night that burned their home. Their father was at work and their mother was visiting a neighbour."*

Sub editors often have to deal with leads that contain excessive identification. *"Former Assistant Secretary, Cultural Affairs and now Secretary, External Affairs Jamwant Mehra said today...."* Such over identification leads to confusion and clutter.

Similar problem is faced when a lead has too much statistics. *"At seven pm yesterday, 70 persons fled a three story building at 17, Nariman Point, west of Ville Parle, when a carelessly discarded cigarette caused a short-circuit and resulted a*

huge fire accompanied with dense smoke". This could be revised as: "Seventy people escaped unhurt from a three story building in Nariman Point that caught fire last evening. The fire was caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette".

Other such misleading leads include ones with over attribution or under attribution. *"Notorious gangster Harbhajan Singh, suspected to be involved in many cases of abduction, contact killing and ransom, was arrested last week after a six hour long shootout, according to Delhi Police Chief Sasank Mathur and Deputy Chief Prahlad Varma"*. Such over-attribution is unnecessary and confusing.

On the other hand a lead like *"All children under the age of five should be vaccinated"* does not provide any attribution at all. In fact, the attribution of health officials should have been the lead, as it would have lent credibility to the story. Reporters can get away with these kinds of leads. But the sub editor has to find out such leads and refine and polish them.

6.2.4 PROTECTING THE LANGUAGE:

Newspapers and magazines are media of mass appeal. The printed media also have more credibility. They play a significant role in the development or deterioration of language. And the sub editor plays an important role in protecting the language against abuse.

GRAMMAR:

Grammatical problems can destroy a newspaper's credibility among its educated readers. Grammatical errors can destroy otherwise clear writing or distort the meaning of sentences. The subject of grammar is so vast that it cannot be possibly covered in this lesson.

USAGE:

We often use words not to express but to impress. Frequently we use long phrases where a simple word would be sufficient. Examples of word-clutter include:

Biologists who study genetics (geneticists),

A bolt of lightning (lightning),

Great number of times (often, frequently),

All of a sudden (suddenly),

Unmanageable mob (mob),

At which time (when),

*As in the case of (like),
Basic fundamentals (basis or fundamental),
Called attention to the fact (reminded),
Combine into one (combine).*

There are thousands of such examples of cluttered words that are used frequently in newspaper. Often reporters don't use precise words or wrong words. For example, some reporters often write, "compose" when they mean, "comprise", "affect" when they want "effect". They use "credible" for "creditable".

Words are precision tools. And every time they are misspelled or misused, they lose their value. Other than use of wrong words, subeditors also face *misuse of adjectives, clichés (affixed his name for signed, in the wake of, death and destruction, racially troubled, jam-packed, confrontation, no immediate comment, cautious optimism, etc), jargons, slang, foreign words, etc.*

6.2.5 EDITING NEWS AGENCY COPIES:

News agencies form the major source of news for any newspaper. A news agency collects news and other news related material from several sources - from its own staff reporters, feature writers, and photographers; from stringers and correspondents based in far off places; and finally through exchanges with other (foreign) agencies. News agencies provide material in two ways - through the teleprinter and directly to the computers of newspapers and other subscribers. Earlier, news agencies also used postal services and personal couriers.

In case of the teleprinter service, the stories are received on paper roles. The individual stories are separated, categorized (as local, national, international, sports, financial, etc) and sent to the respective desks.

Sub editors edit these stories using the sub editing marks, write a headline, give instructions about the number of columns, type size of body text and headline and other special instructions like boxing of the story, etc. This copy is then sent for composition or type setting. The sub editor (or a proof reader) checks the proof before it is sent to the layout artist and finally for printing.

In the modern VDT method, there is no paper involved. Stories from the news agencies are directly fed into the computer. According to the desk assigned, sub editors 'call' their stories to their terminals and do the editing on the screen. There

is no need for typesetting, proof reading etc. And the sub editor can do all these things on the screen itself.

Stories from news agencies come either set in upper case letters or lowercase letters. In case of uppercase stories, the sub editor assumes that the story is in lowercase and then marks the appropriate upper case letters for capitalization. All news agency stories contain special slugs or identification marks - both above and below the story. The sub editor rounds off these marks indicating these portions need not be composed.

6.3 SUMMARY:

- Generally a news story answers the following six questions: **WHO** is or are involved? **WHEN** did the event take place? **WHERE** did the event take place? **WHY** did it take place? **WHAT** did actually take place? And **HOW** did it take place? These questions are known, as the five **W's** and one **H**.
- The structure of writing a news story is the "inverted pyramid structure". The inverted pyramid structure of news means that the news will begin with the most important information. The structure is as follows: First paragraph: Most Important point; Second Para: The second important point; Third Para: The next important point; Fourth Para: The next important point; Fifth Para: The next important point.
- Lead could be of several types: *Name Lead*: When the person(s) mentioned in the news is/are important; *Question Lead*: When what one says is crucial for the news item; *Negative Lead*: No possibility exists of any survivors in the train accident that occurred yesterday; *Suspended Interest Lead*: When there is no particular focus in the story yet it deserved to be told; *Direct Quotation Lead*: when the first paragraph begins with a quotation from a speech or statement made by a VIP; *Contrast Lead*: A lead, which compares the two different situations to bring out the focus. For example: What marks the easy-going attitude of the government servants is hard to comprehend when one looks at pending case in courts. Other leads are *descriptive lead*, *parody lead*, *chronological lead*, *staccato lead (stop and start lead)*, etc.

6.4 KEY WORDS:

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

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

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

6.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

9. Discuss the process of editing giving suitable examples.
10. The concept of lead has changed over the last few decades. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
11. Discuss how lead is written. Discuss the various types of leads.
12. What is a style sheet? Discuss in detail.
13. Discuss how headlines are written. Discuss the various types of headlines.

6.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READING:

The Art of Editing by Baskette, Sissors, Brookes

Editing by T J S George

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Handbook of Editing by S K Aggarwal

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

Editing Techniques by S. Kundra

HEADLINES, SUB-HEADLINES AND LEADS

WRITER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

VETTER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

LESSON STRUCTURE

Editing is the soul of journalism. Often people think that editing involves only making copy error-free and readable. However, editing is much more than these two things. It involves a wide range of skills. Also editing has many aspects.

In this lesson we shall discuss about some of these skills. Specifically, we shall focus on news story headlines. We shall briefly discuss about sub-headlines, news lead or intro, and editing articles and features. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

7.0 Objectives

- 7.1 *Introduction*
- 7.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 7.2.1 *Headlines*
 - 7.2.2 *Sub Headlines*
 - 7.2.3 *News Lead or Intro*
 - 7.2.4 *Body of News Story*
 - 7.2.5 *Editing Articles*
 - 7.2.6 *Editing Features*
- 7.3 *Summary*
- 7.4 *Key Words*
- 7.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 7.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

7.0 OBJECTIVES:

Sub editing is like cooking. In this context, noted journalist T. J. S. George once wrote that sub editors are like master chefs. They take all that is supplied by reporters, news agencies and other sources. Then they sift, and cut and mix these materials. They rewrite some of these.

They write headlines and sub headlines. They decide the placement, the size and display of each news story. Sub editors also work on other material like articles and features.

The objectives of this lesson are:

- *To Know More About Headlines*
- *To Know About Sub Headlines*
- *To Know About News Lead or Intro*
- *To Know About Body of News Story*
- *To Know About Article Editing*
- *To Know About Feature Editing*

7.1 INTRODUCTION:

Sub editing is thankless job. A sub editor Works as hard, and may be harder, than even reporters. But their labour is unseen, unheard, and unhonoured. But still the job of sub editors is important to print media organizations. Sub editors polish what ever is served to them. They give the final shape to most of the material that reach newspaper and magazine offices.

Sub editors job is almost Herculean. It involves many tasks that sub editors do every day.

These include:

- *Ensuring accuracy by checking facts.*
- *Checking for and removing grammatical mistakes.*
- *Ensuring simplicity of language and clarity in presentation.*
- *Eliminating verbosity.*
- *Following editorial policy and maintaining organization's style.*
- *Being uncompromising about fairness, good taste, and legal safety.*
- *Rewriting stories.*
- *Deciding story size, headline size and font, use of boxes and background screens, etc.*
- *Some times deciding photos and other visual material.*
- *Writing photo caption.*
- *Completing every thing before deadline.*

In addition, sub editors also write headlines and sub headlines. Also in addition to news stories, they edit features and articles.

7.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The content of this lesson is presented as follows:

- *Headlines*
- *Sub Headlines*
- *News Lead or Intro*
- *Body of News Story*
- *Editing Articles*
- *Editing Features*

7.2.1 NEWS STORY HEADLINES:

The primary task of a sub editor is to correct and refine copy. This means checking copy for *accuracy, clarity, conciseness, tone and consistency of style*. The second most important task of the sub editor is to write headlines.

A headline is the window to the accompanying story. It first attracts the attention of the readers, holds their interest, and tells them about the story. A headline should:

- *Attract the reader's attention,*
- *Summarize the story,*
- *Depict the mood of the story,*
- *Help set the tone of the newspapers, and*
- *Provide adequate typographic relief.*

The points mentioned above are the functions of headlines. Not all headlines accomplish all these functions. But good headlines perform as many functions as possible.

Good headlines attract reader's attention by focusing how the reader's life can be affected. "*Income tax rate to remain unchanged*", "*Government announces extra DA*", etc. are examples of this approach.

Another approach is to highlight the magnitude of an event as in this lead: "*Earthquake in Nicaragua kills 15,000*". Some times headlines are clever and unusual like this one: "*Thief caught eating*".

Headlines help summarize the story: "*India Pakistan sign treaty*", "*US declares war on mafia*", "*CBI initiates fresh probe*". While such headlines are not very original and creative, they serve the basic purpose of telling the reader what the story is all about.

Some times headlines set the mood of stories: "*The easy way to change your car's oil*", or go "*Bald and Beautiful*", or "*It is a whole nude ball game*".

Headlines can also set the tone of a newspaper. A newspaper with such headlines as "*Police hunt for jilted lover*", "*Super model caught in a hotel*", can only of sensational nature.

Different stories require different approaches. Good sub editors develop the ability to find out the best approach.

Headline styles: Most headlines are set in a single line or *deck*. But increasingly headlines are being set in two and even three decks. The most used headlines styles are the hanging indentation, the inverted pyramid, and the pyramid.

XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXX

Hanging Indention (Right aligned)

XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX

XXXXX

Hanging Indention (Left aligned)

XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXX

Inverted Pyramid

XXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Pyramid

Some times the headline is longer than the story. Some tabloid newspapers also use more than ten decks for the headlines.

The different types of headlines are:

- A **kicker** headline is a short line of display type, usually in half or less point size than the headline and placed above the main part of the headline. Some newspapers call the kicker as the **eyebrow** or the **tagline**.
- A **stet** headline is a standing headline which is used continuously issue after issue. "Today in history" is an example of a stet headline.
- A **reverse plate** headline is set in reverse i.e. the letters are printed in white on a black background.
- A **reverse kicker** is a line set in larger type sizes and placed above the main headline. It is also called a **hammer** or **barker**.
- **Banner** headlines spread across all the columns of a front page. These usually shout the news about and are used while covering very, important stories.

WRITING THE HEADLINE:

While readers read the headline first and then read the story, sub editors do just the opposite. They read the story first and then write the headline. Writing headline involves two steps:

- Selecting which details to use, and
- Phrasing them properly within the space available.

Good headlines, like good sentences, have a subject and predicate (verb), and a direct object. For example: "Flood hits Assam".

Here is a list of suggestions about headline writing.

- *Draw your headline from information at the top of the story.*
- *If the story has a punch ending do not give it away in the headline.*
- *Build your headline around key words.*
- *Build the headlines on words used in the story.*
- *Emphasize the positive unless the story demands the negative.*
- *Use active verbs. Maintain neutrality.*
- *Follow the rules of grammar.*
- *Try to arouse the reader's interest.*
- *Make the headline easy to read.*
- *Abbreviate only when necessary.*
- *Verify the accuracy of the headline.*

- See there is no double meaning.
- Use short and simple words.
- Avoid overused words.
- Make the headline specific.
- Never exaggerate.
- Make the headline complete in itself.
- Never start a headline with a verb.
- Use present tense as much as possible.
- Do not use "is" and "are" in headlines.
- Do not use common names in headlines.
- Do not use unnecessary words.
- Do not use double quotation marks in headlines.
- Do not write headlines after reading the story only once.
- Do not use slang in the headline.
- Do not write question headlines for news stories.
- Do not mislead.
- Do not repeat words.
- Do not use full stops in headlines.

One final suggestion given to newcomers to sub editing is to enjoy the process of headline writing. It is a creative activity. *Somerset Maugham* once said, "you can not write well unless you write much". Similarly good headline writing comes after long practice. Certain practices that need be avoided while writing headlines are *overstating, commanding, editorializing, sensationalizing, stating the obvious and boring the readers*.

7.2.2 NEWS STORY SUB-HEADLINES:

Sub headline are supplementary to headlines. Also sub headlines are used only when needed. Only when the headline cannot tell the required part of the news sub headlines are used. As the name implies, sub headlines play a supporting or supplementary role to the headline.

Most of the news stories are routine in nature. Such news stories do not have much detail to offer. Thus they are small in size, ranging from single to a maximum of three columns. Such stories usually do not need sub headlines.

But there are some news stories that are very detailed in nature. These stories could be multi-faceted or complicated in nature. Also such stories have many important points or pieces of information that need to be given right at the beginning. These kinds of news stories use sub headlines in addition to headlines.

7.2.3 NEWS STORY LEADS or INTRO:

Writing the lead or the introduction is the most challenging job of a news writer. Leads are divided into two kinds: *direct lead* and *delayed lead*. Hard news stories take a direct lead while soft news and features take a delayed lead.

Direct lead answers *Who, What, When, Where, Why and How (the five W's and an H)* in the first two paragraphs, whereas delayed lead delays it to raise the curiosity of the reader. Direct lead is written within a word limit of 35 words, whereas Delayed Lead has no such limit.

Consider the following examples:

Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in Prime Minister at 5.30 pm. in Rashtrapati Bhawan today. He becomes the 13th Prime Minister since Independence.

The various elements here are:

Who: Atal Bihari Vajpayee

What: was sworn in as the 13th Prime Minister

When: at 5.30 today

Where: in Rashtrapati Bhawan

Why: (implied)

How: (not given)

Focus: Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Direct Lead/Single-element

Example: 2

Congress President Sonia Gandhi has promised the people that her party would work for communal harmony and better relations with the country's neighbours, if her party is elected to power. She was addressing an election rally in New Delhi's Boat Club lawns today.

Focus: Sonia Gandhi,

Direct Lead

Two-element story:

- i) Promises communal harmony
- ii) Promises better neighborly relations

Example: 3

Finance Minister Yeshwant Sinha sprang a surprise by making three novel proposals in the Union Budget presented to Parliament on Friday. Business houses generating 500 jobs a year will be granted a 50% tax rebate and business houses adopting 10 backward villages will be totally exempted from taxes.

According to new measures to be taken up soon, business houses will be allowed to purchase 50% of shares in metro rails for rapid expansion of infrastructure.

Focus: Budget (an event larger than the finance minister).

Direct Lead / A three-element story.

Example: 4

He looked at the watch. It's 9 am. It was the most hectic time of the day in his career spanning 30 years. He believed in punctuality and fixed the habitual latecomers. He believed in intelligent hard work and fired sloppy managers. He believed in the power of imagination and sidetracked those without. He admired good workmanship and amply rewarded those dedicated team members who produced wonders for the company. That was his story till yesterday.

Honing the lead:

The lead or intro is the window to a story. It is the most important element of a story. Because the quality of the lead determines whether the reader would read further or skip the story. The lead should be short. So that it arouses and sustains interest.

One good example of a short lead is "Are nudes prudes". The Bible has perhaps the best ever written introduction: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*". One classic lead used during World War-II was, "*Today the Japanese fleet submitted itself to the destinies of war - and lost*". When hundreds of students died in an explosion in a school in Texas, one newspaper gave this lead - "*They are burying a generation today*".

The intro or lead mostly becomes long as the reporter tries to pack everything into it. But the sub editor finds out what details can be left out while the lead still gave enough information. Using simple and short sentences in place of long and complex sentences can simplify long and cluttered intros. Also taking out minor details, which can be put in the body, can shorten lead.

A popular saying in the field of sub editing is "leads should not mislead". A good lead is brief. Other than brevity it should contain some other qualities. It should inform and summarize. It must be straightforward. It sets the mood, the pace and the flavour of the story. It also guides and provides direction.

Sub editors often have to deal with leads that contain excessive identification. "*Former Assistant Secretary, Cultural Affairs and now Secretary, External Affairs Jamwant Mehra said today....*" Such over identification leads to confusion and clutter.

Similar problem is faced when a lead has too much statistics. "*At seven pm yesterday, 70 persons fled a three story building at 17, Nariman Point, west of Ville Parle, when a carelessly discarded cigarette caused a short-circuit and resulted a huge fire accompanied with dense smoke*". This could be revised as: "*Seventy people escaped unhurt from a three story building in Nariman Point that caught fire last evening. The fire was caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette*".

Other such misleading leads include ones with *over attribution* or *under attribution*. "*Notorious gangster Harbhajan Singh, suspected to be involved in many cases of abduction, contact killing and ransom, was arrested last week after a six hour long shootout, according to Delhi Police chief Sasank Mathur and Deputy chief Prahlad Varma*". Such over attribution is unnecessary and confusing. On the other hand a lead like "*All children under the age of five should be vaccinated*" does not provide any attribution at all. In fact, the attribution of health officials should have been the lead, as it would have lent credibility to the story. Reporters can get away with these kinds of leads. But the sub editor has to find out such leads and refine and polish them.

Lead could be of several types:

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

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

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

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

Suspended Interest Lead: When there is no particular focus or a kind of an interesting twist this kind of lead is used. It is also known as a "Featurised lead".

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

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

Contrast Lead: A lead, which compares the two different situations to bring out the focus.

For example: *What marks the easy-going attitude of the government servants is hard to comprehend when one looks at pending case in courts.*

Then, there are other leads such as *descriptive lead, parody lead, chronological lead, staccato lead (stop and start lead)*, etc.

7.2.4 BODY OF NEWS STORY:

The technique and style of writing a news item is generally called the "inverted pyramid". Although over the years several innovations and changes in news writing styles and techniques have taken place, most news stories still follow the inverted pyramid design, style and techniques. The inverted pyramid structure of news means that the news will begin with the most important information. This is known as the "lead". Lead is also called "intro" or introduction as it introduces the news story.

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

The other styles of news story writing are:

- *Chronological style*

- o *Reverse Chronological style*
- o *Suspended-Animation style*

Chronological style of news writing is adopted when the chronology or order of events is more important. Reverse-chronological style of news writing is adopted when in the beginning we want to present what happened finally at the end and then go back to the beginning of the event. The suspended-animation style of news writing is adopted when maintaining the curiosity of the readers is more important.

The sub editor also tightens some loosely written paragraphs. He also combines smaller paragraphs or breaks longer paragraphs into smaller ones.

As the reporters are on the site of the events they are reporting, they see and hear everything. So what they write may have too much of details which would be confusing and difficult to understand for the readers.

The sub editor is always on the look out for such writing and improves upon it by clarifying everything and deleting the confusing part. Sub editors often take out offensive statements, quotes or remarks.

7.2.5 EDITING ARTICLES:

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

Articles, like editorials, analyze and interpret. It provides arguments and counter-arguments. An article goes to the root cause of an event or happening and provides background information. Then it describes the present situation and finally peeps into the future also.

But it is not necessary that an article follow this past-present-future course. An article may start with a peep into the future and then cover the past and present. It may start with the present situation, go to the past and then look into the future. Also it is not necessary that an article should deal with the past or predict the future. Articles have the following purposes :

- To analyze the present.

- To interpret a trend.
- To provide some important information.
- To predict the future.
- To present a point of view.

Articles appeal to the head. Article writers analyze and interpret things and events. They try to rationalize. There is no place for humour and such emotions in articles. Articles are sober, serious - both content and treatment wise.

The basics of editing that apply to article include: ***Consistency, conciseness, completeness, and continuity.*** These are equally needed in an article as in a news story, feature or editorial. Another element that is an absolute essentiality for articles is ***credibility.*** Thus, most often only established experts write articles.

Article editors see to it that all the relevant information is there to make the article concrete and complete. An article must be believable also. Article editors try to incorporate all relevant facts, source credibility, authentic research; original quotes are few things that make an article believable.

Article editors try to see that an article has a definite beginning (lead or introduction), a body, and an end (conclusion). The basic format used for articles are:

- o Chronological format, (past-present-future),
- o Reverse chronological format (future-present-past), and
- o Flashback format.

Article editors see to it that the article has the relevant *details, statistics, claims,* and *counter-claims* in the body to present, project and promote their point of views. The body of an article is where claims are supported and defended while opposing viewpoints are attacked.

7.2.6 EDITING FEATURES:

Features differ from news stories in terms of scope and intention. While a news story presents facts in a direct manner, a feature can cover any aspect of an event

and in a manner as to make it interesting. A news story informs while a feature appeals to the emotions of the readers. The feature always has a subjective treatment and is rarely objective.

All feature stories are not directed at the same type of readers and not all features are intended to achieve the same purpose. Different features are written to appeal to different people in different situations. But there is not much of difference when it comes to editing the different types of features.

So first let us see what are the different types of features? Most features can be classified into one of the following groups:

- *The strange features*
- *The personality features*
- *Opinion features*
- *Seasonal features*
- *The supplement features*
- *Arts features*
- *How-to-do-it features*

Feature editors should understand that many feature stories are *climactic*, that is, they build toward a convincing ending. And this ending often is the most important part of the entire feature.

Feature editors see to it that the tone of the feature is personal. Probing for the hidden angle helps bring out the subtle feelings that are usually unexpressed.

The way a feature appeals to the reader is through his senses. And the best way to do this is through a careful choice of words. Select each word so that its connotative value will make the reader sensually aware. Feature editors should be careful about this also.

The goal is to enable the reader to identify with the things or events the feature is about. That is to feel what it is like to be poor on Diwali day, to sense the elation of coming home after a long time, and to experience any of a thousand other events vicariously by reading about how others have experienced them. Feature editors see to this angle also.

Feature editors select words that lend connotative strength to the feature whenever possible. Such words are called "*picture words*". For example, words like 'vehicle', 'car', 'four-wheeler', etc. create hazy pictures in our minds. But words like 'a battered Ambassador' create a definite and crystal clear picture in the minds of the readers.

8.4 SUMMARY:

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

- Lead could be of several types: *Name Lead*: When the person(s) mentioned in the news is/are important; *Question Lead*: When what one says is crucial for the news item; *Negative Lead*: No possibility exists of any survivors in the train accident that occurred yesterday; *Suspended Interest Lead*: When there is no particular focus in the story yet it deserved to be told; *Direct Quotation Lead*: when the first paragraph begins with a quotation from a speech or statement made by a VIP; *Contrast Lead*: A lead, which compares the two different situations to bring out the focus. For example: What marks the easy-going attitude of the government servants is hard to comprehend when one looks at pending case in courts. Other leads are *descriptive lead*, *parody lead*, *chronological lead*, *staccato lead (stop and start lead)*, etc.

8.4 KEY WORDS:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

14. Define news in your own words. Discuss the concept of news giving suitable examples.
15. The concept of news has changed over the last few decades. Do you agree? Discuss in detail.
16. Discuss how news is written. Discuss the various news structures.
17. What is a news analysis? Discuss in detail citing examples.
18. What is a backgrounder? Discuss in detail citing examples.
19. What are the differences between a news story and a news analysis? Discuss in detail citing examples.
20. What are the differences between a news analysis and a backgrounder? Discuss in detail citing examples.

8.6 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING:

Reporting by Charnley

Active Reporter by James Lewis

Professional Journalist by John Hohenberg

Professional Journalism by Patanjali Sethi

Professional Journalism by M.V. Kamath

News Writing by George Hough

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: D Unit: II Lesson: 8

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE PAGE MAKE UP

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LESSON STRUCTURE

Newspapers are a printed mass medium. Newspapers use words as their major tool. But they also use visuals including photographs, graphs, charts, computer graphics, drawings, etc. All these elements, words and visuals, are combined in the shape of layout or page make up. This process of preparing layouts or doing page make up is called designing. In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of newspaper page make up. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

8.0 Objectives

8.1 *Introduction*

8.2 *Presentation of Content*

8.2.1 *Newspaper Page Makeup- An Overview*

8.2.2 *Basics of Page Makeup*

8.2.3 *Designing Various Pages of Newspapers*

8.2.4 *Magazine Page Makeup*

8.2.5 *Style sheet*

8.3 *Summary*

8.4 *Key Words*

8.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*

8.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

8.0 OBJECTIVES:

Newspapers and magazines of today are well designed and well packaged. With changing audience tastes and availability of technology, style of presentation or page make up has become as important as the substance or content of these printed media. In this lesson we shall discuss the following:

- *To understand the Concept and Process of Newspaper Page Makeup,*
- *To know more about the Basics of Page Makeup,*
- *To know more about Designing Various Pages of Newspapers,*
- *To understand the Concept and Process of Magazine Page Makeup, and*
- *To understand the Concept of Style Sheet.*

8.1 INTRODUCTION:

A newspaper is a collection of many news stories, features, articles, editorials, pictures etc. When these are haphazardly arranged, it becomes confusing and difficult for the readers. So the content of a newspaper needs to be arranged in an attractive and easy-to-read manner. This arrangement is called the newspaper page layout or page design. The process of achieving this is called designing. Here are the objectives of page make up:

- *The primary objective of newspaper makeup is arranging news in an orderly and convenient-to-read manner.*
- *Secondly, makeup also should try and create a distinct personality for the newspaper.*
- *Thirdly, newspaper makeup should be more exciting to the reader. This is because the newspaper is competing with other media that are highly visual, dramatic and attractive.*

Newspapers of today have undergone many changes in the past few years. Newspapers now have fewer and wider columns. Newspapers now have indexes or contents on the front pages giving a preview of the inside pages. Newspapers now have more and better pictures. Newspapers now have more colours. Most newspapers have more pictures. Many have brief contents on the front page. Also newspapers (and also magazines) are trying to blend the verbal content (words) and the visual content (pictures and other illustrations) perfectly.

In today's highly image oriented times, every body is thriving to have a distinct personality. This is more important in the highly competitive world of newspapers, which face

competition from magazines, television, etc. So there is an urgent need to package newspapers well to attract more and more readers.

In fact, the maximum amount of changes in newspapers has been in the areas of *format*, *design*, *sectioning*, and *graphics*. All these efforts are geared towards giving the readers a newspaper that looks good.

8.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

Reading habits of newspaper readers are changing fast. No longer people read newspaper front-to-back. Most people do not have time for that kind of extensive *beginning-to-end type* of reading.

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

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

- *Newspaper Page Makeup- An Overview,*
- *Basics of Page Makeup,*
- *Designing Various Pages of Newspapers,*
- *Magazine Page Makeup, and*
- *Style Sheet*

8.2.1 NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKE-UP- AN OVERVIEW:

Newspapers are concerned about the content of the paper. They are equally concerned about the orderly and attractive arrangement of the editorial content and about creating an appropriate personality. This arranging of text and visuals is called page make-up.

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

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

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN APPLIED TO NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKE UP:

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

Balance: Balance means *equilibrium* or a *state of rest*. It deals with the *visual weight* of the various elements of a newspaper page like the news stories, visuals, etc. Balance in newspaper means that the pages should not be top heavy, bottom heavy or side heavy, etc. It means that the pages should not be extremely heavy in any section and extremely light in another. The things that make a page heavy are headlines, visuals, and the size if the stories, the use of boxes and screens, use of bold text, etc.

Balance in newspaper design is achieved by visually weighing the elements on both sides of a page. It does not require precise mathematical weighing. A properly balanced page has all the elements (headlines, pictures, etc.) so distributed as to give a pleasant look to the page.

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

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

pictures. And black and white is in contrast with colour. Contrast helps in highlighting certain elements.

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

Unity: The principle of unity concerns the effect that a page design has over the readers. A newspaper page should create a *single impression* rather than multiple impressions. A single impression makes a page pleasant and interesting. Unity on a newspaper page can be achieved by visually weighting all the stories and pictures and then shifting the placement until a satisfactory arrangement has been found out.

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

VISUALIZING THE PAGE DESIGN:

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

The second method is to copy the design of a newspaper page on to a plain sheet of paper. First draw very thin and light lines with the help of a pencil marking the columns. Then

mark the space covered by the stories and pictures on the newspaper page on to the plain paper. Fill the complete sheet and you will have a newspaper page design. Now collect different design styles from different newspapers for your reference. You can create new page designs from these design ideas.

8.2.2 BASICS OF NEWSPAPER PAGE MAKE-UP:

Here are some basic guidelines for newspaper make up:

- Front-page makeup starts by indicating the amount of space that the nameplate will take. A nameplate usually appears at the top center. Some newspapers (like the *Punjab Keshri*) have the nameplate at the top left corner of the front page. Some People call it the, *masthead* and some others call it the *flag*.
- Often stories are assigned numbers. So the headline and the allotted number of the story should be put on the page in the space marked for the story.
- The number of columns should also be indicated (S/C for single column, 2/C or D/C for two columns, 3/C for three columns, etc.).
- In case of single column stories; a straight, downward pointing arrow is drawn to mark the depth or height of the story.
- In case of multiple column stories a continuous arrow covering all the columns may be drawn to show where the story is continued.
- *Carryovers* or *jumps* should be marked properly along with the page number to which the story is to be continued.
- Pictures, cartoons, and other visuals should be properly labeled. The most common practice is to put a large cross (X) covering the entire space to be taken by the visual.
- Boxed items are also properly marked by drawing rectangles. These are then labeled with the word 'box'.
- Column rules, special marks, etc. are to be used judiciously only to distinguish columns from each other or to highlight some part of the story.

Here are some more important points to remember while designing:

Importance to Editorial Content over Artistic Decoration: Readers look for information and other editorial content in newspapers. So information should be presented in such a way that the reader's requirements are fulfilled. A well-designed newspaper presents information through

a series of visual signals like headlines, text, photos, charts and graphs, maps, blurbs or at-a-glance summaries, etc.

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

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

Choosing the Right illustrations: Most newspapers use only photographs. However, other visuals like sketches, charts, maps, graphs, computer graphics, etc. can be more useful than just photographs.

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

Surprise: A well-designed newspaper page stops the reader and surprises him. And this surprise could come in the form of larger photographs, dramatic use of colour, etc. Surprise on newspaper pages delights the reader and makes the routine job of reading newspapers interesting. Newspaper page makeup has evolved from simply putting the stories and pictures together within the available space to a highly intricate graphic art. And the factors that have contributed to this evolving are:

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

DESIGNING FOR THE MARKET:

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

India calls it self a *product* and it is designed to suit the readers of today. Some of the design practices in this direction are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8.2.2 DESIGNING VARIOUS PAGES OF NEWSPAPERS:

Newspapers contain many different types of content. There are many different types of news. Then there are editorials, features, articles, etc. In addition to the text material, there are a sizeable amount of visuals also. Newspapers are usually divided into several segments for accommodating the wide variety of material.

First there is the front page. It is the window to a newspaper. So a lot of importance is given to designing this page. The other important pages are the editorial page and the sports pages. The other pages are business pages, pages for local news, pages for regional news, pages for national news, pages for international news. With increased emphasis on entertainment, there are leisure and entertainment pages. Finally, there are the special pages that come daily, weekly or fortnightly. Now we shall discuss briefly about designing of some of these pages.

FRONT PAGE MAKEUP:

In the past, front-page makeup practice was very traditional. It was old-fashioned. It looked artificial and unattractive. Unfortunately front-page makeup in the earlier days was highly inflexible. The reasons behind this were unplanned and haphazard placement of stories and photos, and non-adherence of any design principle.

Modern front-page makeup is highly functional, well-designed, attractive and very flexible. The front page is the showcase of a newspaper. Thus it should be easy to read, attractive and inviting. It should be orderly. And it should have a distinctive personality of its own.

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

Guidelines for an exiting and more readable front page include:

- *Creation of an open page with lot of white space between columns, between stories, pictures, etc.*
- *Using a news summary rather than having many small stories on the front page.*
- *Making the bottom half as interesting as the top half by using larger pictures, boxed stories, etc.*

- *Avoiding too many boxes, lines and other attention getting devices (like asterix marks, screens, etc) that pull the reader's away from the stories.*
- *Using clearer, easy-to-read typefaces.*
- *Incorporating a sense of freshness and vitality to the page by making small changes to the basic format on different days.*
- *Creating an elegant but different look by having columns of different widths.*
- *Use of simpler nameplate.*

INSIDE PAGE MAKEUP:

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

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

MAKEUP OF EDITORIAL PAGES:

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

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

- Use of flush-left and right-ragged style of setting to make it distinct from other pages.

MAKEUP OF THE SPORTS PAGES:

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

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

LIFE STYLE AND FEATURE PAGES:

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

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

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

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

MAKEUP OF TABLOID NEWSPAPERS:

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

- *Maintainability and Portability* (ease of handling),
- *Design Possibilities* (can be experimented with many patterns and designs),
- *Advertising Potential* (people buy more full page ads in tabloids), and

- *Departmentalizing* (separating news and features into separate segments).

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

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

8.2.4 MAGAZINE PAGE MAKE-UP:

Magazines are considered more than a storehouse of a variety of articles, stories and features. There is a personal relationship built between the magazine and its readers. Both magazine editing and makeup is done towards encouraging and maintaining this relationship, which is hard earned and takes a long time to be established. Let us now consider some important point with regard to magazine make-up

Personality of a Magazine: Modern magazines exist in a visual age they compete with the highly visual and entertaining medium of television. Now the emergence of the *Internet* has added to this competition. And readers of today have been converted into more of “viewers” who rely on images for their information and entertainment.

And with everything becoming so much image-oriented, we can safely modify Marshal McLuhan’s ‘*Medium is the message*’ into ‘*Image is the message*’. With readership and understanding dependent on the visual aspects of presentation, magazine editors and designers must be experts in the art of communicating by means of pictures, layouts and other such means.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Miniature: 4%" x 6",
- Books: 6" x 9",
- Basic: 8½" x 11",
- Pictorials: 10½" x 13",
- Sunday Supplement: 11" x 13".

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

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

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

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

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

Establishing the Page Structure: A magazine may have fixed or flexible page structures. The page structure refers to the 'type page' (space inside the margins), the number of columns, the column widths, etc. Magazines usually have two, three or four columns. Many magazines today do not use a fixed number of columns for all pages. For different pages they use different number of columns. Also a lot of **bleeding** (illustrations intruding into space of text matter and vice versa) is done.

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

Basic steps in magazine page layout are:

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

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

8.2.5 STYLE SHEETS:

Newspapers adopt certain rules and practices to avoid inconsistencies in their columns. These rules are called the *newspaper style*. It is usually codified in the form of *stylebooks or style sheets*.

Adherence to style makes newspaper writing clear, concise, and most importantly free from irritating inconsistencies. This way reader will not find 'good bye' in one story and 'good by' in another. Or they will not find ***Shree M. R. Patra*** in one story, ***Sh. M. R. Patra*** in another, ***Mr M.R. Patra*** in a third story and ***M.R. Patra*** in yet another.

In USA, The Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI, now defunct) jointly developed 'style rules' and most American newspapers follow these rules. Such rules are developed by most news organizations. In India, AIR, Doordarshan and major newspapers have their own stylebooks.

Style rules include guidelines about identifications, trade names, religion, death stories, disasters, disputes, financial news, percentages and numbers, sports and games, synonyms, etc. Such rules help maintain consistency in the entire story in the entire newspaper and in all issues.

8.3 SUMMARY:

- Make up is the arrangement of new stories, photographs and other editorial content on a page. Makeup makes newspapers more attractive and reader friendly as the news content and other related material is arranged in an orderly and easy to-read manner. Newspaper page makeup aims at communicating through appearance and arrangement of the entire design. Different kinds of personalities for newspapers can be created thought makeup and designing.
- Balance means *equilibrium* or a *state of rest*. Unlike normal weighing, balance in designing deals with the *visual weight* of the various elements of a newspaper page.

Balance in newspaper means that the pages should not be top heavy, bottom heavy or side heavy, etc.

- Contrast in designing means the use of two or more elements that are dramatically different from each other. This difference could be in *size, shape, shade, colour*, etc. So a headline set in lighter types is in contrast with a bold headline.
- Proportion is the principle of comparative relationships in terms of length, size, shape, etc. For example, a square shape is rarely used in designing, as it is dull and uninteresting. Unequal proportions are usually more attractive than equal proportions.
- Unity concerns the effect that a page design has over the readers. A newspaper page should create a *single impression* rather than multiple impressions. Unity on a newspaper page can be achieved by visually weighting all the stories and pictures and then shifting the placement until a satisfactory arrangement has been found out.
- Manual makeup, either through arrangement of composed material or the cut and paste method, is time taking. However, these days page makeup has become much faster and easier because of computers. Many a software packages (like the *Quark Express* have been specifically created for this purpose).
- Earlier, front-page makeup used to be old-fashioned, artificial, unattractive, and inflexible. Modern front-page makeup is highly functional, well-designed, attractive and very flexible. The front page is the showcase of a newspaper. Thus it should be easy to read, attractive and inviting. It should be orderly. And it should have a distinctive personality of its own.
- Some guidelines for an exiting and more readable front page include: Creation of an open page with lot of white space between columns, between stories, pictures, etc., Using a news summary rather than having many small stories on the front page, Making the bottom half as interesting as the top half by using larger pictures, boxed stories, etc., Avoiding too many boxes, lines and other attention getting devices (like asterix marks, screens, etc) that pull the reader's away from the stories, Using clearer, easy-to-read typefaces.
- Many small newspapers (mostly evening newspapers) are brought out in the tabloid or half the size of regular newspapers (broadsheet). The reasons behind bringing out tabloids in are: Maintainability and Portability (ease of handling), Design Possibilities (can be experimented with many patterns and designs), Advertising Potential (people buy more full page ads in tabloids), and Departmentalizing (separating news and features into separate segments). Style wise tabloids fall in between newspapers or magazines. Most

tabloids adopt a mixed style by having both newspaper and magazine formats for news and feature pages respectively.

- Good Design is not Mere Decoration. Newspaper design should emphasize the information content, as its primary goal is to communicate or express rather than impress. Boxes, columns, column lines, headline size, colour backgrounds (screens) and other visual elements are not mere ornamentations. These help guide the reader through the maze of information.

8.4 KEY WORDS:

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

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

Balance: Balance is nothing but a *state of equilibrium* or a *state of rest*. It deals with the *visual weight* of the various elements of a newspaper page like the news stories, visuals, etc. It means that the pages should not be extremely heavy in any section and extremely light in another. Balance in newspaper design is achieved by visually weighing the elements on both sides of a page.

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

Proportion: Proportion is the relationship among various elements in terms of length, size, shape, etc. Unequal proportions are usually more attractive than equal proportions. Accordingly, the most widely used shape in designing is the *rectangle*. And this is the reason why the shape of the newspapers, the shape of most news stories, the shape of all photographs are always

rectangular. The most common proportions used in newspapers are the 2:3 and the 3:5 proportions.

Unity: A newspaper page should create a *single impression* rather than multiple impressions. This is the concept of unity. A single impression makes a page pleasant and interesting. Unity on a newspaper page can be achieved by visually weighting all the stories and pictures and then shifting the placement until a satisfactory arrangement has been found out.

Contemporary makeup concepts: For many years newspapers used traditional makeup practices. However, with changing times and changes in tastes of people and changing design practices, many newspapers are adopting modern design concepts. Another major reason was the new technologies of newspaper production, particularly better printing technologies and the use of computers. Newspapers are using three basic modern makeup concepts these days. These are: *Modular, Grid and Total Page Design.*

Makeup of Tabloid Newspapers: Tabloids use more design strategies than regular broadsheet newspapers. One of these is the use of lesser number of columns. Tabloids use three, four or five columns. In tabloids, four column pages are most readable and most attractive. However, some tabloids use three or five columns also. Style wise tabloids fall in between newspapers or magazines.

8.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

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

8.6 REFERENCES (SUGGESTED READINGS):

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5. Mencher Melvin (1990) - “Basic New Writing” Published by Universal Book Stall, New Delhi
6. Kamath, M.V. (I 995) - **“Professional Journalism”** published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.,
7. George, T.J.S. (I 989) - **“Editing - A Handbook For Journalists”** published by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

SUB EDITING MARKS (FOR TYPOGRAPHICAL CHANGES):

<u>e</u> /	Common sense decrees that every <u>A</u>	Add a letter
<u>c</u> /	A common gripe against <u>the</u> young	Delete or take out
<u>D</u> /	Never forget that the period	Delete and close up
<u>stet</u>	Don't strain to be <u>witty</u> or funny	Let all matter above dots stand
<u>i</u> /	Never stop trying to <u>find</u>	Correct the word marked
<u>O or X</u>	Insert period <u>X</u>	
<u>,</u> or <u>,</u> /	Insert comma <u>,</u>	
<u>:</u> or <u>:</u> /	Insert colon <u>:</u>	
<u>;</u> /	Insert semicolon <u>;</u>	
<u>'</u> or <u>'</u> /	Put in apostrophe or <u>'</u> single quote	
<u>"</u> / <u>"</u>	Insert quotation <u>"</u> marks <u>"</u>	
<u>!</u> /	Insert exclamation point <u>!</u>	
<u>-</u> / or <u>-</u> /	Insert hyphen -	
<u>(SP)</u>	Spell out	
<u>—</u> or <u>---</u>	Use one-em dash	
<u>—(em)</u>	Use two-em dash	
<u>()</u>	Insert (parentheses)	
<u>[]</u>	Insert [brackets]	
<u>P</u>	Begin a paragraph	
<u>no P</u>	No paragraph	
<u>run in</u>	Run in or run on	

Sub Editing Marks (For Editorial Changes):

- wf Wrong font
- lc Lower case letter
- C Capitalize letter
- sm.caps Set in small capitals
- rom. Set in roman type
- ital. Set in italic type
- lf. Set in lightface type
- bf Set in boldface type
- tr Transpose letters
- tr Transpose words the in line
- tr Rearrange words of order number in 3 2 4 1
- J Move to right J
- L Move to left L
- U Lower letters or words
- V Raise letters or words
- == Straighten line horizontally
- // Align type vertically
- C Close up
- # Leave some space
- eq # Equalize space between words
- Em quad space or indentation
- Indent number of em quads shown
- ld. Insert a lead between lines
- l/s Letter - Space
- J or L Push down a space which prints as a mark
- X or + or X Broken or imperfect type
- ~ Print AP as a ligature
- G Turn a reverse letter

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: E Unit: I Lesson: 9

EDITING FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA

WRITER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

REVIEWER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

9.0 Objectives

- 9.1 *Introduction*
- 9.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 9.2.1 *Editing for Electronic Media- An Overview*
 - 9.2.2 *Editing Process*
 - 9.2.3 *Editing Equipment*
 - 9.2.4 *Video Editing Software*
- 9.3 *Summary*
- 9.4 *Key Words*
- 9.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 9.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

9.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson are shall discuss the following:

- *To understand the Concept and Process of Editing for Electronic Media,*
- *To know about the Editing Process,*
- *To know about the Editing Equipment, and*
- *To know about the Video Editing Software.*

9.1 INTRODUCION:

Radio and television programme production starts with pre-production. It is the planning and development stage. This starts with writing of script. The script includes instructions and guidelines for the production of the programme. The next stage is production. Here all the material for the programme is recorded. Postproduction is the final stage in programme production. A major component here is editing. In radio and other audio productions, the sounds recorded during production are edited and dubbed if required. In television production, the recorded audio and visual material are pieced together through editing. Music is added. Extra verbal content is added through dubbing. But the most important component here is editing.

Why is editing done? The purposes of editing are: To arrange recorded material into a more logical sequence; To remove the uninteresting, repetitive, or technically acceptable portion; To compress the material in time, and For creative effect to produce new juxtaposition of speech, music, sound and even silence.

9.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

We shall discuss about the various aspects of electronic media editing in this lesson. The lesson content shall be presented as follows:

- *Editing for Electronic Media- An Overview,*
- *Editing Process,*
- *Editing Equipment, and*
- *Video Editing Software*

9.2.1 EDITING FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA- AN OVERVIEW:

For radio or television programmes or film, editing is an integral component. At a basic level, editing is the process of assembling and rearranging recorded audio-video materials in it a continuous and meaningful story.

Earlier, radio and TV programmes were recorded in a very sequential manner. But now there is no need for sequential order of audio sequence or video shots at the recording stage. This is taken care of at the editing stage.

Editing process enables the producer to physically assemble the audio/video segments into a complete and concrete message on audio or videotape.

GUIDELINES FOR EDITING:

Here are some guidelines to enable you to follow a smooth procedure while editing.

- Preview your prerecorded audio or video materials carefully and as many times as possible. This will help you in understanding the recorded material in a much better way.
- Make a proper *log sheet* and note down all important and precise details about the various shots, their duration, type, quality, etc. This will help you find and select shots easily later on.
- Spend some time to think about recorded materials and get familiar with the central theme, the objectives, possible styles and approaches, possible music, pace, the overall structure or organization, the beginning and end, etc.
- Take decisions about what is important and relevant for your programme and what is not.
- Discard all such footage that does not contribute to the theme of your programme. Look for any missing gaps and re-record or re-shoot some more essential material.
- Decide about the precise order and continuity of audio bytes, video shots, of sound and music, use of transitions, cut aways and reaction shots that can achieve a smooth flow and desired effect.
- You are now ready to edit actually. Estimate how much time you need for editing. Try to finish it in one go. While editing, stick to your final editing-script as far as possible. Avoid abrupt cuts, and remember the basic rule of progression of shots - LS, MS, then CU. Make good use of cut aways and reaction shots for television programme.

9.2.2 EDITING PROCESS:

The editing process takes place in several steps or phases both for radio and television programmes. These are:

- *Recording or shooting phase,*
- *Preview (Listening and Viewing) Phase,*
- *Decision - Making Phase, and*
- *Final or Operational Stage (Post Production Editing)*

RECORDING OR SHOOTING STAGE: Majority of audio or video editing related decisions are largely predetermined. These decisions are reflected in the way the material is recorded or shot. For example, to allow for convenient editing at the post-production stage, audio or video shots are recorded for just a few seconds longer than required. This helps in facilitating a desired transition and proper audio/video continuity while joining one shot to the next shot.

Similarly, some additional shots of the location are recorded. These include crowd shots, wide shots of streets, traffic, etc. These provide excellent editing opportunities and good transition. Recording ambient sound on the audio track is also very important to provide continuity and transitions.

PREVIEW PHASE: This phase is essentially concerned with the listening and viewing of the prerecorded audio/video materials for their quality and suitability. In this phase the producer is required to listen, view and mark the time durations of the audio or video shots from beginning to end and prepare a detailed 'log sheet'. A log sheet provides brief description of the shots and these are marked 'Good' or 'NG' (No Good).

DECISION-MAKING PHASE: Studying, listening and viewing the raw materials including the individual shots and sequences, the editor decides on the final shot sequence. Editors take such decisions in consultation with the director.

Finally an *edit script* is prepared. This indicates the order and continuity of shots, mixing of sound and music, use of transition - cut aways, reaction shots to ensure smooth flow. With a complete edit script; you are now ready for the final editing.

FINAL OPERATIONAL STAGE: The operational phase refers to the process in which the planned edits are actually executed using the edit script as a reference.

Today, a variety of models and types of editing equipment, including computerized and digital control units are available. These modern machines can perform the editing task with great speed, accuracy and precision. It is difficult to prescribe standard operation for all types of machines, because actual editing operation slightly varies from machine to machine.

The chart given on a later page shows the procedure for automatic editing. The operation system indicates the next step to follow by a flashing indication, while engagement of each mode is signaled by an electronic beep.

Depending on the particular editing technique followed, some of the steps shown here can be skipped. For example, if edit preview is not required, step 4 and 5 can be skipped.

In actual editing phase, it is always important to estimate your editing time in advance. Book for all facilities and machines you need and all tapes, log sheets and edit scripts must be kept ready by your side. Ideally, the editing task for a programme must be so planned that it can be accomplished in one go, without interruption.

Editing should not be noticeable. When final editing, the programme must appear to be quite natural preserving its rhythm, continuity, flow and flavour.

9.2.3 VIDEO EDITING EQUIPMENT:

Cuts-only video editing involves two video tape recorders, one or two monitors, and an edit controller. One videotape recorder, called the source deck, contains the original camera footage that is to be rerecorded. The other recorder, called the edit deck, is the machine on to which selected materials from the source deck are edited. One monitor shows the output of the source deck; the other shows the output of the edit deck. The edit controller is used to mark the editing points and cue the decks to execute the editing decisions.

Advanced editing can be achieved by incorporating other equipment like the switcher, which can generate transitions. The A-B roll uses two sources to supply one edit machine, special effects generator (SEG), and character generator (CG), which can generate graphics.

Computer assisted editing has changed the world of editing. One advantage of using desktop computer for editing is that the same computer can be used for graphic programmes, special effects, audio, shot logging and other production process. This makes postproduction more of a "one stop" process that is less time consuming than postproduction has been in the past.

9.2.4 VIDEO EDITING SOFTWARE:

Video editing software is application software that handles the editing of video sequences on a computer. It usually includes the ability to import and export video, cut and paste sections of a video clip, add special effects and transitions, and sometimes includes the ability to encode the video for creation of a DVD, Web video, mobile phone video or video podcast. Video editing software generally also allows for some limited editing of the audio clips that accompany the video or, at least, the ability to sync the audio with the video.

Lightworks, **Avid** and more recently, **Apple's Final Cut Pro** are pioneers in video editing software and have a great influence on how films and TV programmes are edited. These systems use custom hardware for video processing (video editing).

With the availability of video processing hardware, specialist video editing cards, and computers designed specifically for non-linear video editing, many software packages are now available to work with them. Some other video editing software are **Velocity** and **Adobe's Premier Pro**.

9.3 SUMMARY:

- Editing is the process that enables us to convert the raw audio and video material into finished programmes. It includes assembling and rearranging material-both while it is being recorded or already recorded material - in a continuous and meaningful flow. Good editing needs a lot of advance planning and sometimes takes more time than actual shooting or recording.
- The basic purpose of editing is to put a radio or television programme in a proper shape with clarity and continuity. Both for radio and television the editing process takes place in several steps - recording or shooting stage, review stage, decision-making stage, and the final operational stage. These days very sophisticated computerized and digital editing machines are available. These machines make the editing task easy, sleek, and precise.
- **Lightworks**, **Avid** and more recently, **Apple's Final Cut Pro** are pioneers in video editing software and have a great influence on how films and TV programmes are edited. These systems use custom hardware for video processing (video editing). Some other video editing software are **Velocity** and **Adobe's Premier Pro**.
- The purposes of editing are: To arrange recorded material into a more logical sequence; To remove the uninteresting, repetitive, or technically acceptable portion; To compress the material in time, and For creative effect to produce new juxtaposition of speech, music, sound and even silence.

- The editing process takes place in several steps or phases both for radio and television programmes. These are: *Recording or shooting phase, Preview (Listening and Viewing) Phase, Decision - Making Phase, and Final or Operational Stage (Post Production Editing)*
- Cuts-only video editing involves two video tape recorders, one or two monitors, and an edit controller. One videotape recorder, called the source deck, contains the original camera footage that is to be rerecorded. The other recorder, called the edit deck, is the machine on to which selected materials from the source deck are edited. Advanced editing can be achieved by incorporating other equipment like the switcher, which can generate transitions. Computer assisted editing has changed the world of editing. One advantage of using desktop computer for editing is that the same computer can be used for graphic programmes, special effects, audio, shot logging and other production process.
- Video editing software is application software that handles the editing of video sequences on a computer. It usually includes the ability to import and export video, cut and paste sections of a video clip, add special effects and transitions, and sometimes includes the ability to encode the video for creation of a DVD, Web video, mobile phone video or video podcast.
- Video editing software generally also allows for some limited editing of the audio clips that accompany the video or, at least, the ability to sync the audio with the video.
- **Lightworks**, **Avid** and more recently, **Apple's Final Cut Pro** are pioneers in video editing software and have a great influence on how films and TV programmes are edited. These systems use custom hardware for video processing (video editing).
- With the availability of video processing hardware, specialist video editing cards, and computers designed specifically for non-linear video editing, many software packages are now available to work with them. Some other video editing software are **Velocity** and **Adobe's Premier Pro**.

9.4 KEY WORDS:

Editing: Editing is the process that converts recorded audio and video material into finished programmes. It includes assembling and rearranging material-both while it is being recorded or already recorded material - in a continuous and meaningful flow. Good editing needs a lot of advance planning and sometimes takes more time than actual shooting or recording. The basic purpose of editing is to put a radio or television programme in a proper shape with clarity and continuity.

Editing Process: Both for radio and television the editing process takes place in several steps - recording or shooting stage, review stage, decision-making stage, and the final operational stage. These days very sophisticated computerized and digital editing machines are available.

Purposes of Editing: The purposes of editing are: To arrange recorded material into a more logical sequence; To remove the uninteresting, repetitive, or technically unacceptable portion; To compress the material in time, and For creative effect to produce new juxtaposition of speech, music, sound and even silence.

Stages of Editing: The editing process takes place in several steps or phases both for radio and television programmes. These are: *Recording or shooting phase, Preview (Listening and Viewing) Phase, Decision - Making Phase, and Final or Operational Stage (Post Production Editing)*

Recording or Shooting Stage: Majority of audio or video editing related decisions are largely predetermined. These decisions are reflected in the way the material is recorded or shot. For example, to allow for convenient editing at the post-production stage, audio or video shots are recorded for just a few seconds longer than required. This helps in facilitating a desired transition and proper audio/video continuity while joining one shot to the next shot.

Preview Phase: This phase is essentially concerned with the listening and viewing of the prerecorded audio/video materials for their quality and suitability. In this phase the producer prepares a detailed 'log sheet'. A log sheet provides brief description of the shots and these are marked 'Good' or 'NG' (No Good).

Decision-making Phase: Studying, listening and viewing the raw materials including the individual shots and sequences, the editor decides on the final shot sequence. Editors take such decisions in consultation with the director. Finally an *edit script* is prepared. This indicates the order and continuity of shots, mixing of sound and music, use of transition - cut aways, reaction shots to ensure smooth flow. With a complete edit script; you are now ready for the final editing.

Final Operational Stage: The operational phase refers to the process in which the planned edits are actually executed using the edit script as a reference. Today, a variety of models and types of editing equipment, including computerized and digital control units are available. These modern machines can perform the editing task with great speed, accuracy and precision.

Editing Equipment: Cuts-only video editing involves two video tape recorders, one or two monitors, and an edit controller. One videotape recorder, called the source deck, contains the original camera footage that is to be rerecorded. The other recorder, called the edit deck, is the machine on to which selected materials from the source deck are edited. Advanced editing can

be achieved by incorporating other equipment like the switcher, which can generate transitions. Computer assisted editing has changed the world of editing. One advantage of using desktop computer for editing is that the same computer can be used for graphic programmes, special effects, audio, shot logging and other production process.

Video-Editing Software: Video-editing software is application software that handles the editing of video sequences on a computer. It usually includes the ability to import and export video, cut and paste sections of a video clip, add special effects and transitions, and sometimes includes the ability to encode the video for creation of a DVD, Web video, mobile phone video or video podcast. Video editing software generally also allows for some limited editing of the audio clips that accompany the video or, at least, the ability to sync the audio with the video. **Lightworks**, **Avid** and more recently, **Apple's Final Cut Pro** are pioneers in video editing software and have a great influence on how films and TV programmes are edited. Some other video editing software are **Velocity** and **Adobe's Premier Pro**.

9.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What are the basic equipment for editing? Discuss.
2. What kind of preparation is required for editing? Discuss in detail.
3. What are the stages of editing? Discuss in detail.
4. *What are the different types of editing used for radio and TV? Discuss in detail.*

9.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:

- **Keith, Michael C & Krause, Joseph M. (1989) — “The Radio Station” published by Focal Press, Boston, London.**
- **Chatterji, P.C. (1993) — “ Indian Broadcasting”.**
- **Dilliard (190) — “Television Journalism and Broadcasting”.**
- **Bhatt, S.C. (1995) — “Broadcast Journalism”.**

Bachelor of Mass Communication (3rd year) EDITING (Paper: II)

Block: E Unit: II Lesson: 10

LINEAR & NON-LINEAR EDITING

WRITER: SH. SUSHIL K. SINGH

VETTER: SH. MIHIR RANJAN PATRA

LESSON STRUCTURE

In this lesson we shall focus on the various aspects of linear and non-linear editing.

The lesson structure shall be as follows:

10.0 Objectives

- 10.1 *Introduction*
- 10.2 *Presentation of Content*
 - 10.2.1 *Linear Video Editing*
 - 10.2.2 *Non-Linear Video Editing*
- 10.3 *Summary*
- 10.4 *Key Words*
- 10.5 *Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)*
- 10.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

10.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson are shall discuss the following:

- o *To know more about Linear Video Editing, and*
- o *To know more about Non-Linear Video Editing.*

10.1 INTRODUCTION:

The need for editing was realized in the early days of the filmmaking. In the beginning filmmaking involved only shooting. The early films were shot, processed and then projected at theatres. Real editing began later when shots and scenes were shot separately, were processed, and then cut and glued together in a particular sequence. Editing technology has evolved immensely since those early days.

When video editing started, it too began with physical cutting and splicing of tapes as in case of film editing. Video editing also has evolved a lot.

10.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:

The lesson content shall be presented as follows:

- *Linear Video Editing,*
- *Non-Linear Video Editing.*

10.2.1 LINEAR EDITING:

Linear video editing is the process of selecting, arranging and modifying the images and sound recorded on videotape. Until the advent of computer-based non-linear editing in the early 1990s "linear video editing" was simply called "video editing."

Television was basically a live medium until the introduction of videotape. Editing in live television production was done by switching from among two or more cameras. This was (and still is) accomplished using a video switcher. A switcher is an electronic device capable of handling two or more synchronized video inputs and combining them into a video output. A switcher can be used to perform cuts between video sources, or any number of longer transitions, such as wipes, fades and dissolves, with multiple sources.

Actual live television is still basically produced in the same manner. However, a lot of technical advances have taken place now. In the early days, the only way of airing the same shows again (and again...) before videotape was introduced was by filming shows using a *kinoscope* (essentially, a video monitor paired with a movie camera).

The primary motivation for the development of videotape was as a short- term or long-term archival medium. Only after a series of technical advances videotape editing has finally become a viable production tool on a par with film editing.

Originally videotape was edited by physically cutting and splicing the tape, in a manner similar to film editing. This was an difficult and time-consuming process. When it was used, the two pieces of tape to be joined were painted with a solution (of extremely fine iron filings suspended in carbon tetrachloride). This exposed the magnetic tracks, so that they could be aligned in a splicer designed for this task.

The disadvantages of physically editing tapes were many:

- Edited tapes could not be reused (in an era when videotapes frequently were, because of their high unit cost);
- The process required great skill, and often resulted in edits that would roll (lose sync); and,
- Each edit required several minutes to perform.

A system for editing Quad tape "by hand" was developed by the 1960s. It was really just a means of synchronizing the playback of two machines so that the signal of the new shot could be "punched in" with a reasonable chance at success. One problem with this and early computer-controlled systems was that the audio track suffered *artifacts* (i.e. a short buzzing sound) because the video of the newly recorded shot would record into the side of the audio track. A commercial solution known as "Buzz Off" was used to minimize this effect.

For more than a decade, computer-controlled Quad editing systems were the standard post-production tool for television. Quad tape involved expensive hardware, time-consuming setup, relatively long rollback times for each edit and showed misalignment as disagreeable "banding" in the video. That said, it should be mentioned that Quad tape has a better bandwidth than any smaller-format analogue tape, and properly handled could produce a picture indistinguishable from that of a live camera.

When helical scan video recorders became the standard it was no longer possible to physically cut the tape. At this point video editing became a process of using two video tape machines, playing back the source tape (or raw footage) from one machine and copying just the portions desired on to a second tape (the edit master).

The bulk of linear editing is done simply, with two machines and a device to control them. Many videotape machines are capable of controlling a second machine, eliminating the need for an external editing control device.

Video editing reached its full potential in the late 1970s when computer-controlled edit suite controllers were developed. These edit suite controllers could orchestrate an edit based on an edit decision list (EDL). These used *time code* to synchronize multiple tape machines and auxiliary devices. The most popular and widely used computer edit systems came from Sony, Ampex and the very first player in this field CMX. Systems such as these were expensive, (especially when considering auxiliary equipment like VTRs, video switchers and graphics generators). These were usually limited to high-end post-production facilities.

While computer based non-linear editing has been adopted throughout most of the commercial, film, industrial and consumer video industries, linear videotape editing is still commonplace in television station newsrooms and medium-sized production facilities, which haven't made the capital investment in newer technologies.

The widespread availability of videotape editing led to the music video boom of the 1980s

10.2.2 NON-LINEAR EDITING:

Non-linear editing for film and television postproduction is a modern editing method that involves being able to access any frame in a video clip with the same ease as any other. This method was in practice in the cut and glue world of film editing from the beginning but, in the world of analogue film, editing was a destructive process. It was also linear.

Non-linear, non-destructive methods began to appear with the first digital computers.

In non-linear editing, video and audio data are first digitized to hard disks. The data is either recorded directly to disk or is imported to disk from another source. Once on disk they can be edited on a computer using any of a wide range of software.

In Non-linear editing, the original source files are not lost or modified during editing. Professional editing software saves the decisions of the editor in an "Edit decision list" (EDL) (which can be interchanged with other editing tools). Many generations and variations of the original source files can exist without needing to store many different copies. This allows for very flexible editing. It also makes it easy to change cuts and undo previous decisions simply by editing the edit decision list (without having to have the actual film data in many different copies). Loss of quality is also avoided due to not having to repeatedly re-encode the data when different effects are applied.

Compared to the linear method of tape-to-tape editing, non-linear editing offers the flexibility of film editing, with random access and easy project organization. With the edit decision lists, the editor can work on low-resolution copies of the video. This makes it possible to edit both broadcast quality and high definition quality very quickly on normal PCs, which do not have the power to do the full processing of the huge full-quality high-resolution data in real-time.

The costs of editing systems have dropped such that non-linear editing tools are now within the reach of home users. Some editing software can now be accessed free as web applications, some, like Cinelerra, can be downloaded free of charge, and some, like Microsoft's

Windows Movie Maker and Apple Computer's iMovie come included if you buy the appropriate operating system.

A computer for non-linear editing of video will usually have a video editing card, video capture card for capturing analog video or a *FireWire* socket for capturing digital video from a DV camera, as well as video editing software. Modern web based editing systems can take video directly from a camera phone over a GPRS or 3G mobile connection, and editing can take place through a web browser interface, so strictly speaking a computer for video editing does not require any installed hardware or software beyond a web browser and an internet connection.

Various editing tasks can then be performed on the imported video before it is exported to another medium, or MPEG encoded for transfer to a DVD.

The first truly non-linear editor, the CMX 600, was made in the early 1970s by the CMX Corporation. It recorded and played back black-and-white analog video recorded on modified disk pack drives the size of washing machines. These were commonly used to store data digitally on mainframe computers of the time.

Various approximations of non-linear editing systems were built in the '80s using computers coordinating multiple laser discs, or banks of VCRs. Computer processing advanced sufficiently by the late '80s to enable true digital imagery, and has progressed today to provide this capability in software on personal computers.

Non-linear editing with computers as we know it today was first introduced by *Avid* in 1988 with the *Avid/1 editing machine*. It was the first in the line of their Media Composer systems. It was based on the Apple Macintosh computer platform (Macintosh II systems were used) with special hardware and software developed and installed by Avid. The *Avid/1 editing machine* was the first system to introduce modern concepts in non-linear editing, such as timeline editing and clip bins.

The video quality of the *Avid/1 editing machine* (and later Media Composer systems from the late 80s) was somewhat low (about VHS quality). This was because it used a very early version of a Motion JPEG (M-JPEG) codec. But it was enough to be a very versatile system for offline editing, and to revolutionize video and film editing, quickly becoming the dominant non-linear editing or NLE platform.

M-JPEG became the standard codec for NLE during the early 1990s. But it had many drawbacks. Its high computational requirements ruled out software implementations. This led to the extra cost and complexity of hardware compression/playback cards.

More importantly, the traditional tape workflow had involved editing off tape, often in a rented facility. When the editor left the edit suite he could take his confidential videotapes with

him. But the M-JPEG data rate was too high for systems like *Avid* on the Macintosh and *Lightworks* on PC to store the video on removable storage, so these used fixed hard discs instead.

The possibility of keeping your (confidential) content with you was not possible with these fixed discs. Editing machines were often rented from facilities houses on a per-hour basis, and some productions chose to delete their content after each edit, and then redigitise it again the next day, in order to guarantee the security of their content. In addition, each NLE system had storage capacity limited by its hard disc capacity.

These issues were addressed by a small UK company, *Eidos plc* (which later became famous for its Tomb Raider video game series). *Eidos* chose the new ARM-based computers from the UK and implemented an editing system, launched in Europe in 1990 at the International Broadcasting Convention.

Because it implemented its own compression software designed specifically for non-linear editing, the *Eidos* system had no requirement for JPEG hardware and was cheap to produce. The software could decode multiple video and audio streams at once for real time effects at no extra cost.

But most significantly, for the first time, it allowed effectively unlimited quantities of cheap removable storage. The *Eidos Edit 1*, *Edit 2* and later *Optima* systems even allowed the editor to use any *Eidos* system, rather than being tied down to a particular one, and still keep his data secure.

The *Optima* software editing system was closely tied to Acorn hardware, so when Acorn stopped manufacturing the *Risc PC* in the late 1990s, Eidos stopped selling the *Optima* system; by this time *Eidos* had become predominantly a games company.

Another leap came in the late 90s with the launch of video formats for consumer and, more importantly, professional use. With DV came *IEEE1394* (*Firewire* / *iLink*), a simple, inexpensive, accessible and native way of getting video into and out of computers.

The video no longer had to be converted from an analog signal to digital data - it was recorded as digital to start with - and *Firewire* offered a very straight forward way of capturing the signal without the need for additional hardware or compression.

With this innovation, editing suddenly became a more realistic proposition for standard computers with software-only packages. It enabled real desktop editing producing high-quality results with a fraction of the cost of other systems.

More recently the introduction of highly compressed HD formats such as HDV has continued this trend - making it possible to edit HD material on a standard computer running a software-only editing application.

Avid has held on to its market leading position, but faces growing competition in the form of other, cheaper software packages, notably *Adobe Premiere*, launched in 1992, and later *Final Cut Pro* in 1999.

These three competing products by *Avid*, *Adobe*, and *Apple* are the foremost NLEs. *Avid* is still considered the industry standard, with the lion's share of feature films, television programs, and commercials created with its NLE systems.

For example, *Avid* products - including technologies from its *Digidesign* audio division, and *Softimage 3D animation* subsidiary, were used in the creation of every film nominated in the Best Picture, Directing, Film Editing, Sound Editing, Sound Mixing, Visual Effects, and Best Animated Feature categories of the 77th Annual Academy Awards, held in 2006.

SOUND AND PICTURE QUALITY:

One of the primary concerns with non-linear editing has always been picture and sound quality. The need to compress and decompress video leads to some loss in quality. While improvements in compression techniques and disc storage capacity have reduced these concerns, they still exist.

With the more recent adoption of DV formats, quality has become an issue again: DV's compression means that manipulation of the image can introduce significant degradation. However this can be partially avoided by decompressing DV before making alterations and keeping the resulting video in an uncompressed format, thereby avoiding quality loss through recompression of the modified video images.

Ultimately it depends on the DV Codec being used. Sony's Vegas DV codec, for instance, has been touted as able to endure up to 50 generations of recompression (in the same codec) until compression artifacts become noticeable to the average human eye.

DVCPRO HD has been shown to endure five generations of recompression before perceptual changes occur; though, even 15 generations of recompression only displays modest compression-related loss under 3x magnification.

The range of user-friendly editing tools has given inexperienced people access to editing at high quality for the first time. While in the short term this may have negative consequences for

average programme quality, the wider pool of experienced users it creates will be a benefit in the long run.

10.3 SUMMARY:

Linear video editing is the process of selecting, arranging and modifying the images and sound recorded on videotape. This method reigned supreme until the advent of computer-based non-linear editing in the early 1990s.

The primary motivation for the development of videotape was as a short- term or long-term archival medium. Only after a series of technical advances videotape editing has finally become a viable production tool on a par with film editing.

The disadvantages of physically editing tapes were many: Edited tapes could not be reused (in an era when videotapes frequently were, because of their high unit cost); The process required great skill, and often resulted in edits that would roll (lose sync); and, Each edit required several minutes to perform.

The bulk of linear editing is done simply, with two machines and a device to control them. Many videotape machines are capable of controlling a second machine, eliminating the need for an external editing control device.

Video editing reached its full potential in the late 1970s when computer-controlled edit suite controllers were developed. These edit suite controllers could orchestrate an edit based on an edit decision list (EDL). These used *time code* to synchronize multiple tape machines and auxiliary devices. The most popular and widely used computer edit systems came from *Sony*, *Ampex* and the very first player in this field *CMX*. Systems such as these were expensive, (especially when considering auxiliary equipment like VTRs, video switchers and graphics generators). These were usually limited to high-end post-production facilities.

While computer based non-linear editing has been adopted throughout most of the commercial, film, industrial and consumer video industries, linear videotape editing is still commonplace in television station newsrooms and medium-sized production facilities, which haven't made the capital investment in newer technologies.

Non-linear editing for film and television postproduction is a modern editing method that involves being able to access any frame in a video clip with the same ease as any other. Non-linear, non-destructive methods began to appear with the first digital computers. In non-linear editing, video and audio data are first digitized to hard disks. Once on disk they can be edited on a computer

using any of a wide range of software. In Non-linear editing, the original source files are not lost or modified during editing.

Compared to the linear method of tape-to-tape editing, non-linear editing offers the flexibility of film editing, with random access and easy project organization. With the edit decision lists, the editor can work on low-resolution copies of the video. This makes it possible to edit both broadcast quality and high definition quality very quickly on normal PCs, which do not have the power to do the full processing of the huge full-quality high-resolution data in real-time.

The costs of editing systems have dropped such that non-linear editing tools are now within the reach of home users. Some editing software can now be accessed free as web applications, some, like Cinelerra, can be downloaded free of charge, and some, like Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker and Apple Computer's iMovie come included if you buy the appropriate operating system.

A computer for non-linear editing of video will usually have a video editing card, video capture card for capturing analog video or a *FireWire* socket for capturing digital video from a DV camera, as well as video editing software. Modern web based editing systems can take video directly from a camera phone over a GPRS or 3G mobile connection, and editing can take place through a web browser interface, so strictly speaking a computer for video editing does not require any installed hardware or software beyond a web browser and an internet connection.

Various editing tasks can then be performed on the imported video before it is exported to another medium, or MPEG encoded for transfer to a DVD.

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One of the primary concerns with non-linear editing has always been picture and sound quality. The need to compress and decompress video leads to some loss in quality. While improvements in compression techniques and disc storage capacity have reduced these concerns, they still exist.

The range of user-friendly editing tools has given inexperienced people access to editing at high quality for the first time. While in the short term this may have negative consequences for average programme quality, the wider pool of experienced users it creates will be a benefit in the long run.

A non-linear editing system (NLE) is a video editing (NLVE) or audio editing (NLAE) system that can perform random access on the source material.

10.4 KEY WORDS:

Linear Video Editing: Linear video editing is the process of selecting, arranging and modifying the images and sound recorded on videotape. This method reigned supreme until the advent of computer-based non-linear editing in the early 1990s.

Early Videotape Editing: Originally videotape was edited by physically cutting and splicing the tape, in a manner similar to film editing. This was an difficult and time-consuming process. When it was used, the two pieces of tape to be joined were painted with a solution (of extremely fine iron filings suspended in carbon tetrachloride). This exposed the magnetic tracks, so that they could be aligned in a splicer designed for this task.

Computers in Videotape Editing: Video editing reached its full potential in the late 1970s when computer-controlled edit suite controllers were developed. These edit suite controllers could orchestrate an edit based on an edit decision list (EDL). While computer based non-linear editing has been adopted throughout most of the commercial, film, industrial and consumer video industries, linear videotape editing is still commonplace in television station newsrooms and medium-sized production facilities, which haven't made the capital investment in newer technologies.

Non-Linear Video Editing: Non-linear editing for film and television postproduction is a modern editing method that involves being able to access any frame in a video clip with the same ease as any other. Non-linear, non-destructive methods began to appear with the first digital computers.

Process of Non-Linear Video Editing: In non-linear editing, video and audio data are first digitized to hard disks. The data is either recorded directly to disk or is imported to disk from another source. Once on disk they can be edited on a computer using any of a wide range of software. Compared to the linear method of tape-to-tape editing, non-linear editing offers the flexibility of film editing, with random access and easy project organization.

Non-Linear Video Editing Systems: The costs of editing systems have dropped such that non-linear editing tools are now within the reach of home users. Some editing software can now be accessed free as web applications, some, like Cinelerra, can be downloaded free of charge, and some, like Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker and Apple Computer's iMovie come included if you buy the appropriate operating system.

Non-Linear Video Editing Equipment: A computer for non-linear editing of video will usually have a video editing card, video capture card for capturing analog video or a *FireWire* socket for capturing digital video from a DV camera, as well as video editing software. Various editing tasks can then be performed on the imported video before it is exported to another medium, or MPEG encoded for transfer to a DVD. In Non-linear editing, the original source files are not lost or modified during editing.

Sound and Picture Quality: One of the primary concerns with non-linear editing has always been picture and sound quality. The need to compress and decompress video leads to some loss in quality. While improvements in compression techniques and disc storage capacity have reduced these concerns, they still exist.

10.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

1. What is linear editing? Discuss in detail.
2. What is non-linear editing? Discuss in detail.
3. Discuss in detail how linear editing is different from non-linear editing.

10.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:

- **Keith, Michael C & Krause, Joseph M. (1989) — “The Radio Station” published by Focal Press, Boston, London.**
- **Chatterji, P.C. (1993) — “ Indian Broadcasting”.**
- **Dilliard (190) — “Television Journalism and Broadcasting”.**
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