

**Institute of Distance and Open Learning  
Gauhati University**

**Master of  
Communication & Journalism**

**Paper VIII  
Electronic Media**

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**Unit 1**  
**Introduction to Electronic Media**

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**1.1 Introduction :**

By now you must already have been acquainted with the various concepts of mass communication and media system. As you know, we have various communication tools, from folk or traditional to the new media. All these communication tools are active and we can utilise them for different purposes in different ways. Now this age is an age of new media. Internet and computer mediated communication has improved our way of information dissemination. But, still the electronic media, such as radio, television etc., dominate the world of mass communication. Though computers and the Internet have also come to be included in the electronic media, considering its characteristics, we can separate this media

as new media. So, in this paper we are not going to discuss the computer and the internet as a part of electronic media.

## **1.2 Objectives :**

In this paper we will discuss the different aspects of the electronic media. In the first unit, we are going to introduce you to the electronic media, its various types, characteristics, etc. After going through this unit you must be able to -

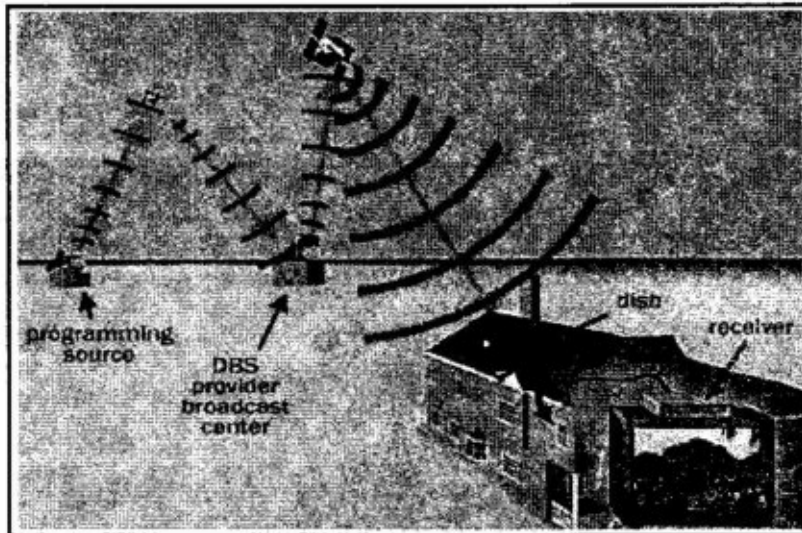
- explain the basic concepts on electronic media
- discuss various types of electronic media
- enumerate its differences with other media
- name the characteristics of the different electronic media

## **1.3 Introduction to Electronic Media :**

As you know, media is the plural form of medium. Media is the communication tool or the channel of communication. The channels of mass communication are called as mass media. Electronic media is one of the most influential, attractive and powerful mass media and it is considered to be one of the most flourishing industries today. Technically, electronic media is a kind of media that uses electronics or electromechanical energy for the end user. In other words, it helps the audience or the receiver to access the content in a form that has the audio and the visual and what is transmitted from a single point can be accessed at several points. This is in contrast to static media (mainly print media), which are most often created electronically, but do not require electronics to be accessed by the end user in the printed form. The primary electronic media sources familiar to the general public are better known as video recordings, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, CD-ROM, etc. Most of the new media are



in the form of digital media. However, electronic media may be in either analog or digital format. Any equipment used in the electronic communication process, such as television, radio, etc., may also be considered electronic media.



#### 1.4 How is the Electronic Media Different from Other Media?

Though this is the age of the electronic media, still traditional folk media and print media are very popular among the mass audience. Folk or traditional media are tools of a special nature. Their special nature is derived from the fact that they have no grammar or literature, yet they are nurtured through oral and functional sources. In a total perspective, folk media provide channels for expressing socio-ritual, moral and emotional needs of a society or societies to which they especially belong.

Unlike the other media like print or electronic, folk media is the most intimate form of communication and they command an immense variety of forms and themes to suit the communication requirements of the masses. They are local and live, and capable of establishing a direct rapport with the audience. The appeal of Folk media is

quite personal because it has got a direct influence on the people. As in the case of colloquial dialects, the familiar format and content of mass media gives much clarity in communication. The numerous and different forms of mass media can be exploited to cater to the needs of the people for immediate and direct rapport. The folk media is so flexible that new themes can be accommodated into existing forms. They are flexible to accommodate new themes. On the other hand, the electronic media is very much complex in nature. It is purely a technology based communication system, but the folk or the traditional media is live, local and flexible.

Print media is one of the oldest and still most effective. This medium is also particularly very popular to reach the target audience for advertisers. The different types of print media give a plethora of options for people to reach a varied bracket of users. So, be it newspapers or magazines, every medium has its particular advantages, a thing which should be considered to be of utmost importance by all advertisers and clients. However, print media also has its own disadvantages. Among them we can easily print out the following disadvantages-

- The cost incurred can sometimes be high considering the medium you choose
- The shelf life of any particular print medium is limited. Newspapers for example, are in the public eye only for a day
- This medium may not always give you a narrow reach. Electronic media, on the other hand, can target a global audience
- There is a limitation in terms of the kind of people who may actually read your message. The particular newspaper may not actually be accessible every time to your target group, which means, your message may be missed! The visuals in the

electronic form, however, can be reproduced and used at an appropriate occasion if stored.

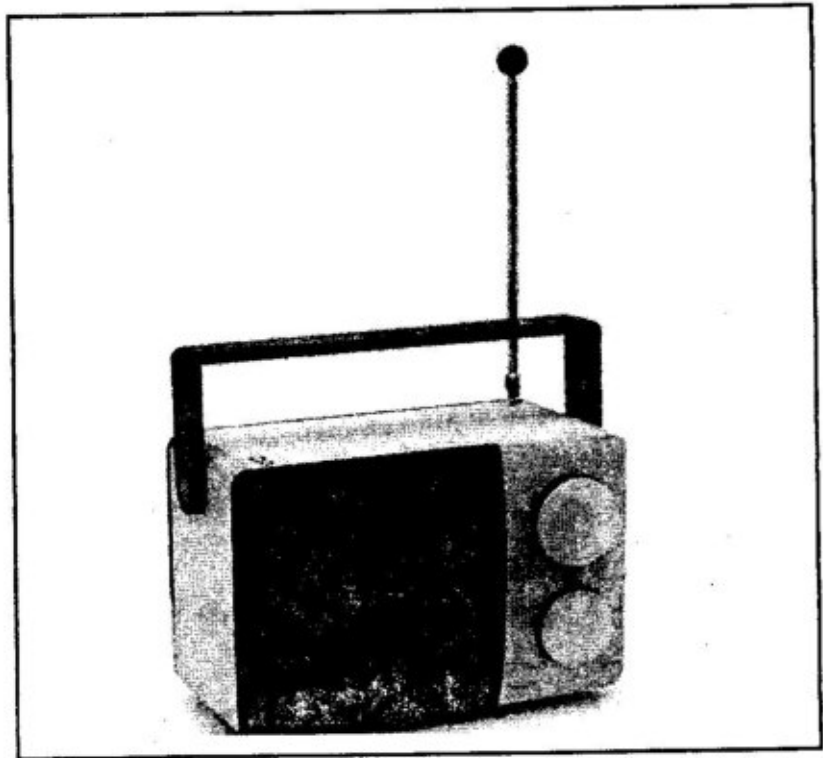
## **1.2 Types of Electronic Media :**

We can divide the electronic media as -

- a) Audio Media, e.g.- Radio, Cassette, Cassette Player, Audio CD etc.
- b) Visual Media, e.g. - Still Photograph
- c) Audio-Visual media, e.g.- Film, Television, Video, etc.

Radio and Television are recognised as the most popular electronic media globally. As an audio media radio is the most vibrant mass communication tool. It provides not only education and information, but also entertainment. On the other hand, as a visual media, photography has become a people's media. With the invention of the digital photography, it has become not only a handy and comfortable media to preserve our moments, but also it has become one of the important needs of our lives. As an audio visual media, we can say that television is the most attractive mass media now. Now, let us discuss radio and television, as the most important types of electronic media.

Radio is a mass communication media through which a message can be sent to a large number of people at the same time. In the year 1896, an Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi made a machine, latter called the 'radio', which was made capable for transmitting human voice from one place to another without the two ends being connected by a wire. Hence, the name wireless transmission id derived. Another important aspect of it was that what was transmitted from one point could be received at multiple points. An Indian scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose is also closely associated with the invention of the radio waves.



We all know that the 'Radio' is basically a technical instrument used to listen to programmes sent from a radio station. Therefore, we can also define radio, as a mass medium that works on the transmission of signals by modulation of electromagnetic waves. Electromagnetic radiation travels by means of oscillating electromagnetic fields that pass through the air and the vacuum of space. Information is carried by systematically changing (modulation) some property of the radiated waves, such as amplitude, frequencies or phase. When radio-wave pass through an electrical conductor the oscillating field induces an alternating current in the conductor. This can be detected and transformed into sound or other signals that carry information

Photography is a universal means of communication and a valuable tool in many fields. From the moments of a family event to the Big Bang picture or a satellite picture of the moon or the earth, photographs can record not only

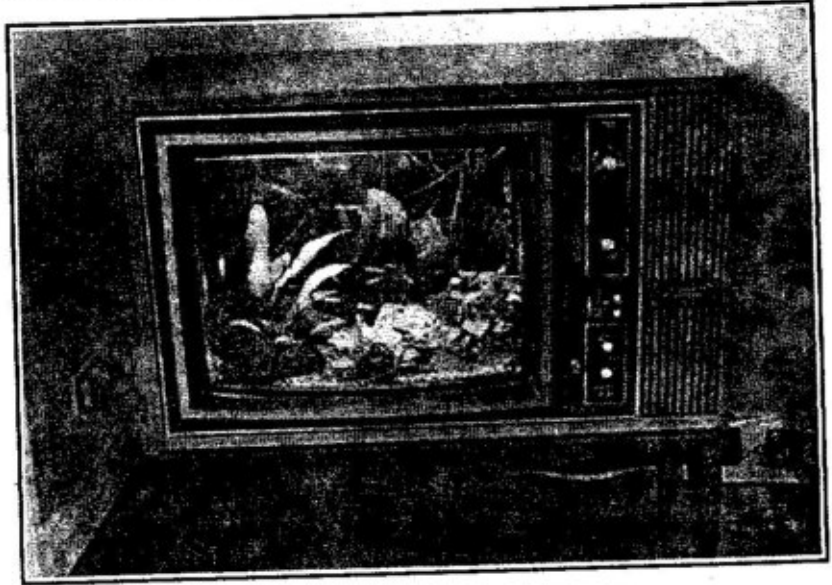
what human being see, but also so many subjects, which are beyond our range of vision. Though we usually discuss that photography is the process of making pictures by means of the action of the lights, and in that sense it is a scientific invention, the most important point is that, photography is not only a science but also a major art form. Peter Rose Pulham opines: "If photography is used merely as a technical process to record some visual fact, it is an appendage to science. However, if it is used as an expression of emotions that is personal to each individual...it becomes art." Pulham, one of the great photographers in the world, wanted to say that photography is not only a technology to record a situation, but it is an art that can record the emotion and expression of the nature with the help of this scientific technology. We can define photography as a method of recording the image of an object by the action of light, or related radiation, on a sensitive material.

The word photography has been derived from the Greek words photos means "light" and graphos or graphein means "to draw". The term is generally accepted as referring to any method of producing a visible image by the action of light. The use of the term photography was suggested and also first used by the scientist Sir John Fredrick William Herschel (1792-1871) in a letter dated 28th February, 1839 to Willium Henry Fox Talbot (1800- 1877).

Television virtually emerged from radio and set the foundation of what is known today as the main source of mass media and communication. Television has had a profound impact on the people because of the combination of sound and images in it to create a sense of reality that the audience can identify with and relate to.

Although every medium has some strengths and weaknesses, the most important point is that a lot depends on how the media is used. Television constitutes an important medium widely used to disseminate information

to its viewers. It has the unique feature of combining audio and visual technology, and is therefore considered more effective than radio. It serves multiple purposes of entertainment, information and education.



#### 1.6 Characteristics of Radio and Television :

##### *Characteristics of Radio :*

Already we have mentioned that, among all the mass communication tools, radio has a different type of influence on audience through its special characteristics. Like all the mass media, 'Radio' has its own characteristics. It has its own strength and weakness. But, it is important to understand what these are if we are to make the most effective use of it.

##### (a) **Blind Media :**

First of all it is a blind medium. It is the medium of sound, sound and sound only. It stimulates the imagination in the minds of the audience. As soon as he listens to a programme, the listener attempts to visualize what he hears. It makes picture or an



imagery of what is talked about in the minds of the listeners. The radio writer and commentator chooses his words so that they create the appropriate pictures in the listener's mind, and by doing so, he makes his subject understood and also ensures that the occasion is memorable.

**(b) Radio speaks to millions :**

Within the range of the transmitter radio signals can reach every home, village, town, city and country at the same time.

**(c) Radio lacks space :**

A news paper has the problem and adjustment of space. For example, there is a limit to the contents that can be printed in the number of pages that a newspaper is made of. It is not possible to increase or decrease the number of pages every day. The established convention is that newspapers are of standard size and a standard number of pages. In the case of radio, the limitation is that of time. A news bulletin, for example, will have to be completed within the given time and aired at the specific time slot every day.

**(d) Speed of Radio :**

The speed of radio is high. It has an immediacy which other media do not have to quite the same degree. Not only can it bring us today's news today, but today's news while it is happening.

**(e) Simplicity :**

The Radio is known for its simplicity. The basic unit comprising the radio is very simple in comparison to other media thereby creating a greater possibility for public access.

**(f) No Geographical location :**

Radio has no boundary. It can bring together those separated by geography or nationality. It has no territorial limits. It can also jump the barriers of illiteracy.

**(g) Cheap Medium :**

Radio is relatively a cheaper medium. Its capital cost and its running expenses are small both for the consumer/audience and for the broadcaster.

**h) Speaks to the individual :**

Radio speaks to the individuals. Radio is much more a personal thing, coming direct to the listener.

It may be mentioned here that though radio is dependent on sound alone, it has so many advantages than any other mass media. Unlike television Radio stimulates the imagination and leads to picturisation of the event in the minds of the listeners. In television, where the viewer is observing something coming out of the box, it does not stimulate the imagination of the viewer. In a sense radio is universal. It can leap distances and jump the barriers of illiteracy. It has an immediacy, which other media do not have to the same extent. Radio is flexible in comparison to the other media. A scheduled programme can be dropped at short notice and replaced with something more topical or more development of some urgency.

One of the major advantages of radio is that it permits us to do other things at the same time. Radio has no boundary. It can bring together those separated by geography or nationality. It has no territorial limits. It can also jump the barriers of illiteracy.



## **Characteristics of Television :**

Television possesses some distinct characteristics. Let us discuss some of them in the following :

### **a) Audio Visual Medium :**

Television is an audio-visual medium. It favours simultaneity of visual and auditory images. Viewers can hear what someone is saying and also see what is going on simultaneously.

### **b) Power of the Picture :**

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. This is said about the still pictures in the print media. You can then very well imagine the potential of pictures that can move. The elements of sound, colour and motion, lend television more credibility than other mass media. After all, television proves that 'seeing is believing'.

### **c) Mass Viewer :**

Television has a large, diversified, heterogeneous and anonymous lot of viewers. People belonging to diverse backgrounds, age groups, culture, religion, etc., can watch television. Therefore, it is not possible to measure the number of viewers of a particular programme at a particular time in a specific channel. And hence, viewers are considered to be anonymous.

### **d) Energy :**

Television needs electricity to be functional. That is why it is beyond the reach of many people living in the underdeveloped or developing countries. Television, however, can also be operated with batteries and this helps take the media even to far

flung areas that are not connected with the electric post. But this is still a rare feature in India because the batteries too need to be charged and recharged periodically and that is possible only if the village or the hamlet is linked to the power grid.

**e) More Expensive :**

However, compared to other media like newspaper and radio, television is an expensive medium. Television sets are normally bulky and therefore, not portable like radio and newspapers.

**f) Literacy is not a pre requisite :**

Meanwhile, Television can be accessed by anyone. One need not be a literate person in order to watch television.

**g) Glamorous Medium :**

Television is a glamorous medium. Visuals, colour, sound and motion make it a glamorous means of communication that entertain people.

**h) Immediacy & Live :**

Television has the potential to show viewers the actual processes of the events and happenings in real time. We have to wait for a day to read the news in a newspaper, but television has the ability to give us what we call 'live' news and do that 24 hours a day and seven days of the week.

**i) Powerful tool of Communication :**

Television is a potent tool of disseminating information. Not just through news and current affairs, but also through various other formats of

television programming, we get to know about things, people and places that we otherwise would never have known about.

j) **Medium of Entertainment :**

Television also provides entertainment to its viewers. People can relax after a hard day's work by watching television. Television is called a 'lean back' medium because unlike the newspapers or the internet, we need not concentrate deeply when we watch television.

**1.2 Let us Sum up :**

Electronic media is one of the most influential, attractive and powerful mass media and it is considered to be one of the most flourishing industries today. Technically, electronic media is a kind of media that uses electronics or electromechanical energy for the end user, i.e. the audience or the receiver to access the content inside his home. Though this is the age of the electronic media, still traditional folk media and print media are very popular among the mass audience. Unlike the other media like print or electronic, folk media is the most intimate form of communication and they command an immense variety of forms and themes to suit the communication requirements of the masses. The folk media is so flexible that new themes and content can be accommodated in them in the same old form. On the other hand, the electronic media is very much complex in nature. It is purely technology based communication system, but the folk or the traditional media is live, local and flexible.

We can divide the electronic media as -

- a) Audio media, e.g.- Radio, Cassette, Cassette Player, Audio CD etc.
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- c) Audio-Visual media, e.g.- Film, Television, Video etc.

Radio and television are recognised as the most popular electronic media globally. As an audio media, radio is the most vibrant mass communication tool. Photography is a universal means of communication and a valuable tool in many fields. Television virtually emerged from radio and also provided the grounds for the development of what is known today as mass media and communication.

### **1.8 Possible Questions :**

- 1) What do you mean by electronic media?
- 2) Discuss the various types of electronic media.
- 3) Enumerate the advantages of the electronic media.
- 4) What are the differences between print media and electronic media?
- 5) Write an essay comparing the best suitable electronic media for the rural masses. Justify your answer with suitable examples.
- 6) "If photography is used merely as a technical process to record some visual fact, it is an appendage to science. However, if it is used as an expression of emotions that's personal to each individual...it becomes art"- explain.

### **1.3 References/Suggested Readings :**

1. This Is All India Radio by U L Baruah
2. Broadcast Journalism by Cohler, Devid Keith
3. Audio-Visual Journalism by B. N. Ahuja
4. All About Photography by Ashok Dilwali
5. Broadcast Broadcast Journalism by Andrew Doyed
6. KKHSOU & IGNOU SLMs on Journalism & Mass Communication
7. Wikipedia free encyclopaedia online version

**Unit 2**  
**Writing for Electronic Media**

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  - 2.3.1 Writing for Radio**
  - 2.3.2 Writing for TV**
- 2.4 Development of Script for News and News-based Programmes**
  - 2.4.1 Script Writing for Radio and TV News**
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**2.1 Introduction :**

The electronic media today is an emerging medium having already made inroads into the people's homes, life and lifestyle. It has, in many ways, even surpassed the

presence or the spread and the reach of the print medium. Now, writing for print and the electronic medium differ in many ways. Writing for the electronic media demands a set of special skills, particularly because of the very nature of the medium. And good writing is very important for the success of the programme whether it is pure news, news-based or non-news entertainment programme. A script may be the least visible component of a radio or TV programme, but it is important. Hence, it is necessary to keep in mind that good programmes begin with good scripts.

## **2.2 Objectives :**

In this unit, we will discuss script writing for radio and television. After reading this unit you must be able to develop a basic idea of writing for the electronic media – the aspects of language and style and technique. After reading this unit, you must be able to –

- *discuss* the language and style for electronic media writing
- *write* scripts for news and news-based programmes for radio and TV
- *write* scripts for other kinds of programmes for radio and TV such as features, series and even fiction based shows

## **2.3 Introduction to Writing for Electronic Media :**

As we have already said writing for electronic media demands a special set of skills on the part of the script writer. Writing the way you would write for print media will not suffice in case of radio or TV. Whether it is news or non-news, a major part of this difference between writing for the print and the electronic media is based on the fact that the electronic media is technically very different from the print media and that the expectation of

the audience from this media is also very different. In radio and TV news, the scripts are supposed to be read out aloud by the newsreaders and not read silently by the consumer of news as it is in print and in the internet media. Similarly, in a radio or TV drama or talk show, the dialogues will be spoken by the characters or the talents on the show. On the other hand, in case of a novel or a drama in print, or for that matter an interview with say, a celebrity in a newspaper or a magazine, it is up to the reader to read the lines for oneself. Therefore, it is very important for you to understand this difference and acquaint yourself with the proper writing style for electronic media.

The pictures and sounds of TV and radio have the ability to convey an incredible amount of information and often with much greater impact than several pages of written text. Radio and TV, both being 'immediate media', have the great constraint of time as well. It is important or rather the rule in TV and Radio is that the script is written in a short and crisp manner using the most appropriate words. While in a newspaper you can write two columns for a news report, TV or radio can allow only a few lines for the same report. The established rule is that a TV or a Radio Report shall not exceed a few minutes and hence, the script cannot be the same as it is written for the print or the internet media. This necessitates that broadcast writing be concise, clear and to the point. In case of the visual medium television, it is also important that the writing complements the pictures, video and audio that accompany a story.

Again, electronic media is easier for listeners or viewers to absorb. But a person has to work much harder when reading. But the job of making things easy and comfortable for the listener lies on the shoulder of the script writer. That is another reason why the script writer needs to write simply and clearly.



Similarly, notwithstanding the fact that both TV and radio are electronic media, we must also understand that writing for radio and TV is not the same. While TV is a visual medium, radio is a medium of sound. The requirements of language and style for both these media are therefore different. Let us discuss the specifics separately for both the media.

### **2.3.1 Writing for Radio :**

The language of speech differs considerably from the language of the printed word and the language of speech that is accompanied by visuals. Whether you are writing for radio news or any other programme, one fact stands. The listeners do not get to read what is written; they only hear what is being said and that too without any scope for repetition. Therefore, the difference in the language of radio arises in terms of several elements – vocabulary, sentence length and structure, the density of distribution of information and the writer's intention and attitude to the subject and towards the listeners.

Writing for radio is a rather easy task provided we understand the nature of the medium and the nature of the audience we are dealing with. While writing for radio, it is important to bear in mind the varying spans of memory and the intellectual capacity of the listeners. If what is being said is not easily understandable, there is no way by which the listeners can seek explanation from anyone. Neither can we expect that the listener will have reference books ready at hand. When scripts are written without an eye for these vital factors, there is ample scope for confusion and misunderstandings. Moreover, unlike television, radio also does not even have the aid of visuals. Therefore, the chance of confusion is magnified. As such, enough care has to be taken to avoid such situations and present the news to the audience in a clear, simple and easily understandable way. And no amount of emphasis on clarity and simplicity can ever be an exaggeration.



A good radio broadcast has to be worded and addressed in such a way that the listener can be wooed to stay tuned throughout the programme. The subject or the phenomenon has to be described logically and comprehensively. A good radio write-up is written in words that create an appropriate atmosphere and concrete pictures in the listener's mind. The lack of visuals must be compensated by words and words alone.

Apart from knowing what to say and how to say it, it is also important for the writer to know what not to say. The narration of a radio script must never be padded out. Padding means filling out a sentence, narration etc., with superfluous matter. Unnecessary words must strictly be avoided. It must be the rule to NOT bring in irrelevant contexts and topics in the script. Remember that writing to the point is an essential of radio writing. One dull, irrelevant patch of radio narration that wanders off the main track can cost the radio station the attention of the listener.

One of the most important aspects of writing style for radio is that it is conversational. Write as if you are talking to a friend. This is the best way to communicate effectively and establish a rapport with the listener thereby ensuring that the listener is hooked onto the programme.

The importance of brevity and precision in broadcast writing cannot be overstressed. In radio, every programme is assigned a limited time-slot. No programme can exceed that time-limit and has to be duly concluded within that duration. In the same way, it cannot be concluded earlier than the scheduled time. And it is important to remember that even a few seconds matter in Radio because most of the programmes are slotted for a few minutes only. The script has therefore, to be timed accordingly.

We will discuss more in detail about writing for radio in the subsequent sections where we will deal specifically

with writing style for radio news, news-based programmes and other fiction and non-fiction programmes.

### **2.3.2 Writing for TV :**

The television writing style, as we witness today, has evolved gradually over the years. Like radio, the writing style for TV is also conversational. However, this style again is developed in a way to serve the special requirements of the television medium. Please note that in writing for television, visuals are as important as the words. Therefore, every TV script has to be shaped to support and complement the visuals and vice-versa. Hence, visuals generally being subject to availability, the writing is often tailored to match the available video.

The beginning of any good TV programme – whether it is a newscast, commercial, soap opera, chat show or a documentary – lies in the formulation of a good script. And the key to writing a good script lies in internalising the basic dictum that all good TV programmes are made using the principles of dramatic fiction. Common audiences do not realise that the same qualities that make a dramatic script as exciting are indeed the ingredients that can make a commonplace news story dynamic. But then, this knowledge is invaluable for a TV scriptwriter – no matter what programme he is writing for.

The most important factor in television script writing is the time factor. A feature film can take the liberty of running anywhere between one and half hours to three hours. A play can be of one hour, two hours or even three hours. A book can be of any number of pages. A news story in the print media or the internet can be longer. But TV programmes are bound by inflexible time slots. A programme which has been assigned a slot of, say, 30 minutes cannot exceed that allotted 30 minutes by even half a minute. And within those 30 minutes the programme also has to accommodate the periodic insertion of

commercial breaks, channel and network IDs, promos and credits. To accommodate these elements, the script has to be carefully fashioned or broken down into dramatic units. Every unit has to be written with exact calculation of time so that it can be told within the exact time slot.

Every script, irrespective of whether it is a news bulletin script, documentary script, promotional programme script, a soap opera or even a script for a commercial, is a slave to the clock. And it is within the inevitable constraints of time that the plot is woven. The expansion of the plot outline, filling it out with the actual narration/dialogue/synchronizing it with the corresponding visuals, music and other graphical elements is itself the script.

Writing for television is actually all about storytelling. In drama, documentary etc, the storytelling is obvious and visible even to the viewers. But this concept of storytelling is fast catching up on news also. In fact, today good news scripts tell a story effectively. Television journalism is all about people and how events affect them. To convey this successfully, the story must have a logical flow. Therefore, each script must have a beginning, a middle and an ending. The best way to tell the story is to first present the problem and then either show how it is being resolved or explain why it cannot be resolved.

As mentioned earlier, in television, 'writing' is not an isolated job. It can be viewed more as an exercise in the production process. Writing does not mean only writing the words. It involves blending the words within the structure of the story and the other elements. The written words therefore must not confuse or muddle up the storytelling effort but facilitate it. How this can be done effectively will be discussed in detail in the subsequent units where writing for news and other programmes will be dealt with separately.

## **2.4 Development of Script for News and News-based Programmes :**

In this section, we will discuss script writing for news and news based programmes for radio as well as television. News is a genre in itself and therefore its requirements are also different. The typical style and language of news is what separates news from other programmes. So, let us discuss about writing news for radio and TV.

### **2.4.1 Script Writing for Radio and TV News :**

In the previous sections we have already discussed the characteristics of the broadcast medium which make it different from print. The most important difference is that people absorb news through a different sense when they listen to it than when they read it. Be it TV or radio, broadcast news is the spoken word medium. In other words, broadcasters are talking to people, telling them the news. People get their news via their cars. Therefore, writers of broadcast news, whether in radio or TV, must understand that words and sentences must be constructed in such a way that they are accurate and clear. The story should be easy to read, conversational and understandable. And the best way to tell whether a story is good enough for broadcasting is to read the story out aloud. Keep in mind that the script must be written to inform and never to impress.

Brevity is not the soul of wit alone. It is also the soul of broadcast journalism. The language and style of the news should be such that it conveys the thrill and excitement, the urgency and pathos of a given event. In other words, it is important to put the emotion into the script as much as it is necessary. And this is not possible with long winding, complicated sentences and stories that run into several paragraphs or pages. Moreover, broadcast news is constrained by time and hence there is no other choice other than brevity and precision.

The element of immediacy is one of the biggest assets of the broadcast news media. And the effort to give up-to-the-minute report must be complemented with a script that makes the news sound fresh and timely.

One important part of a broadcast news story is the sound bites gathered during interviews. No scriptwriter can ignore the sound bites while writing the script. Every script must weave the written words and the sound bites in the right balance to produce a good news story.

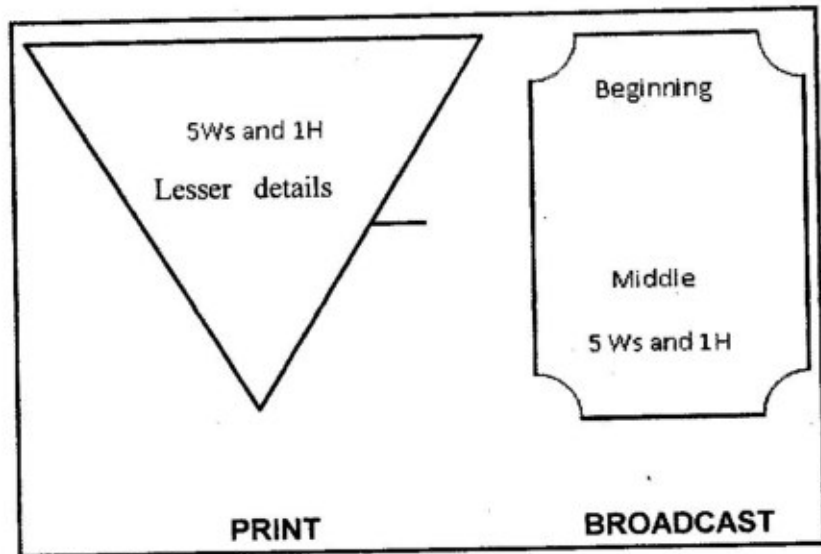
Let us now acquire a basic understanding of the structure of radio and TV news and rules for writing each of them.

### **TV News :**

As far as the general structure of a television news story is concerned, most news channels follow a definite pattern. However, unlike the inverted pyramid style of a print news story the TV news story follows a straight line or chronological order. All news stories have a beginning, middle and an ending. In the beginning the story is introduced, in the middle it is developed and in the conclusion the story is wrapped up by either the voiceover or in the form of a piece-to-the-camera (PTC) by the reporter.

Normally, first there is an anchor lead-in where the news anchor introduces the story. Then there is the background narration (giving full details of the event) which complements the visuals shown. This is interspersed with sound bites or just visuals that speak by itself or by a PTC by the reporter.

The five Ws and one H are answered in any story. However, the sentences of broadcast media are much smaller than the print media news stories. The script writer follows the rule of giving one idea per sentence.



Writing Styles for Print and Broadcast Media

Normally, the formula for TV news story can be condensed into the acronym **WHAT**.

- W What Happened?
- H How did it happen?
- A Amplify the intro
- T Tie up loose ends

The script writer/reporter should closely consider the following points while writing the script:

- Decide on the key points of the story that need to be highlighted
- Go through the hand out materials, such as the press release, properly so that one can decide on the 'angle' of the story apart from getting valuable background information.
- Check out if the relevant visuals are present and if the visuals are not adequate think over how to manage with the existing footage.

- Keep an eye on the time allotted because it is the time available for the news story which is the key factor in deciding the content of the news story.
- After considering the above mentioned points, write the anchor lead and then the narration in a way that allows the insertion of the soundbites and PTCs in the right places.

**Here are a few rules to follow while writing news for television :**

1. Write in conversational, informal style.
2. Be specific, simple and direct. Avoid flowery language.
3. Be brief. Each sentence, ideally, should contain only one idea or image.
4. Choose words that are familiar to everyone in the audience. Do not use technical jargons unless absolutely necessary.
5. Write in present tense and active voice.
6. Grab the audience's attention by writing a strong lead.
7. The fewer figures the better. Round off wherever possible, except in cases where the exact number is significant.
8. Avoid abbreviations, except in cases where the abbreviation is more popular or better known than the full form.
9. Identify all people clearly. Be careful while using attribution. Don't end a sentence with attribution. It should always come at the beginning of the sentence. (Example: Don't write ".....", the Prime Minister said. Instead write The Prime Minister said, ".....")



10. Do not begin a story with a person's name unless the person is famous. Use a "qualifier" to introduce the person. Include the name later. (Example: Chairperson of the company, Prakash Das)
11. Use complete name in the first reference, thereafter use just the last name or first name.
12. Use direct quotes carefully and sparingly. It is better to use sound bites. If sound bites are not available on tape, and it is unavoidable to use a direct quote, then set it off with such phrases as: "In the words of..." "As he put it..." or try to paraphrase as much as possible.
13. If age must be mentioned, the age has to come before name. (Example: The victim, 21-year-old Rob Roy.)
14. Remember that the script will be read live by the newsreader. So, please take care to avoid errors in writing the script. A news script with grammatical errors is difficult to read and could land the news anchor in very awkward situations.
15. Spell out figures from one to eleven. Use numerals for 12-999. Use hyphenated combinations of numerals and words for figures above 999. (Example : 33- thousand.) It makes reading easier for the newsreader and prevents mistakes in reading.
16. Underline words that require special emphasis or words that may be difficult to pronounce. In case of difficult pronunciations, particularly in case of names of people and places write down the pronunciation also beside the word.
17. Never split words or hyphenated phrases from one line to the next. It can easily confuse the newsreader who is reading at first sight.



### **Radio News :**

Radio news is briefer than even TV news. The same story that may take up 10 column-centimetres in a newspaper and may run for 60 – 90 seconds or even more on TV, may not be longer than 30 – 40 seconds in radio. Radio news is often just a little more than headline news. Only the barest necessary information is told in a radio news story. Unlike the print news story where the writer can often unleash his creativity and sum up with an unconventional lead, or the TV news where the writer can often create a dramatic, suspense or add a teaser and even a sensational anchor lead-in, such chances are indeed remote in radio news. Anything redundant simply goes to the dustbin. The structure of the radio news, complete with soundbites and narration, is called a **wrap**. This is because the reporter or writer wraps words or sentences around one or more soundbites. The sentence that precedes the soundbite is called the lead-in because it leads the listener into the soundbite by putting the soundbite into perspective. The soundbite, whenever it is present, must essentially add only necessary information and must not repeat what the reporter says before or after it.

The lead-in must preferably be a blind lead-in, i.e., a lead-in which does not put out the signal that a soundbite follows. It should be written in such a way that even if the soundbite was removed, the story would flow smoothly. It makes the story useful for use in other format as well and helps prevent embarrassing situations in times of technical problems when the soundbite tape does not play on time. Care has to be taken that the soundbite does not repeat what is in the lead-in. The last few words of the soundbite is called the out cue.

A radio script must be written to include the details of the position of the lead-in, the length of the soundbite and the outcue so that the newsreader knows from the script as to when to open the microphone and continue the story.

**A Sample Radio News script adapted from BBC News :**

The following are samples of New Script. Each script is written for a presenter to read out. And it is important to note how the same story is read out and how they can have an impact on the audience. The point at which a sound clip is played, and the presenter stops reading, is marked by **Audio insert NAME**: The words at the beginning (**IN WORDS**) and end of each clip (**OUT WORDS**) and the length in minutes and seconds (**DURATION**) of the clip are shown so the presenter knows when to start reading again.

**Radio 4 :**

Tony Blair has said remarkable progress is being made in Afghanistan and Britain is committed to supporting the country. He was talking after meeting the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, in the capital, Kabul. Mr. Blair said the people of Afghanistan deserved to live in a proper democratic state.

Audio insert NAME : AFGHAN BLAIR

IN WORDS : Our commitment...

OUT WORDS : ...challenges with you.

DURATION : 0'11"

The Iraqi government has rejected claims from an international human rights group that the trial of Saddam Hussein was unfair. Human Rights Watch said, among other things, key evidence hadn't been disclosed to the defense in advance.

Dozens of Palestinians have converged on a house which they believe is under threat from Israeli warplanes. This is the second time in recent days civilians have been urged to act as human shields at the homes of militants in Gaza. On Saturday, Israel called off a planned air strike.

The American technical stock exchange, Nasdaq, has launched a takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange. Nasdaq is trying to challenge the dominance of its main rival, the New York Stock Exchange.

Health unions have criticised proposals for NHS hospitals to be able to advertise for patients. The Department of Health has warned trusts not to spend too much on marketing their services. Doctor Laurence Buckman, from the British Medical Association, rejected the idea.

Audio insert NAME : NHS BUCKMAN

IN WORDS : Patients want...

OUT WORDS : ...care for patients.

DURATION : 0'09"

Environmental protesters are blockading a big Shell petrol station in Birmingham. They say they're angry that the impact of the oil giant's work on the environment - and also the way they believe it treats people in third world countries.

**Radio 5 Live :**

Tony Blair has said remarkable progress is being made in Afghanistan and Britain is committed to supporting the country. He was talking after meeting the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, in the capital, Kabul. At a news conference, Mr Blair said the people of Afghanistan deserved to live in a proper democratic state. He gave this pledge:

Audio insert NAME : AFGHAN BLAIR

IN WORDS : I want to

OUT WORDS : with you

DURATION : 0'23"

A former Russian security agent remains in a serious condition in hospital in London, where he's being treated, under police guard, for the effects of poisoning. Alexander Litvinenko, an outspoken critic of President Putin, was taken ill after meeting a contact at a sushi bar. The Sunday Times reporter, David Leppard, told Five Live Mr Litvinenko was keen to tell his story even though he was seriously ill.

Audio insert NAME : RUSSIA LEPPARD ACT

IN WORDS : I was told...

OUT WORDS : .....my interview with him.

DURATION : 0'20"

A police officer who was seriously injured when his patrol car overturned in Leeds on Saturday morning has died. The 36 year old officer was responding to a call when the accident happened.

Dozens of Palestinians have converged on a house which they believe is under threat from Israeli warplanes. This is the second time in recent days civilians have been urged to act as human shields at the homes of militants in Gaza. From the town of Beit Lahiya, here's Alan Johnston.

Audio insert NAME : GAZA JOHNSTON

IN WORDS : The owner...

OUT WORDS : ...Saturday night.

DURATION : 0'35"

Rescue teams searching for two ice climbers missing in the Cairngorms overnight say they may have been caught in an avalanche. The pair, both from the Aberdeen area, had been climbing in the Coire ant Sneachda (PRON: CORRY AN SNECHDA) area yesterday. The alarm was raised when they failed to turn up at a meeting point.

Environmental protesters are blockading one of the main Shell petrol stations in Birmingham. They say they're angry that the impact of the oil giant's work on the environment - and also the way it treats people in third world countries.

Let us now discuss a few rules for writing good radio copy.

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

- Keep sentences short and use only simple vocabulary so that the listener is not forced to ponder over the meaning of a word and ends up not listening the news.
- Do not give too many statistics, unnecessary ages, middle names, addresses.
- Round off large figures. For instance, change '4789' to 'almost five thousand' or '28.6%' to 'nearly 29%'.
- Repeat the names of persons in the story instead of using he she or they whenever there is the slightest chance of misunderstanding.
- Avoid the use of words like "former", "latter", "respectively" as there is no scope for the listener to refer back to the original comment.
- Use indirect speech instead of direct speech.

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

- Do not use confusing and complicated words and technical jargons. Say 'Parliament' instead of 'The House' or 'Prime Minister' instead of 'Premiere'. Use words that common people can understand.
- Be careful in your use of homonyms (words with

different meanings and spellings but similar pronunciations) as they can confuse the listener. For instance, 'Capitol' can be easily confused with 'Capital', 'peace' with 'piece', 'pore' with 'pour', 'higher' with 'hire' and so on.

### **3. Avoid Redundancy :**

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

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

Unlike the print media, radio can report news with more immediacy. Radio cannot delay a news story by a day; and in these times of round the clock news, it is not possible to delay by even a few hours. So, the use of the Present Tense is more appropriate. Also use active voice as they use verbs that give sentences more power.

### **5. Avoid initials :**

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

## **6. Use official job titles :**

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

## **7. While referring to yourself, use I, and not we.**

### **2.3.1 Script Writing for Other News based Programmes for Radio and TV :**

News based programmes in broadcast media can be of different types —**Newsreel, News Flash, Features and Current affairs Programmes** which may include panel discussions, interviews/ talk shows or audience-based discussions. Let us deal with each of these one by one.

#### **Newsreel :**

Newsreel is a programme, generally of 15 minutes duration, and has no fixed structure. It consists of different items – spot reports, comments, interviews and extracts from speeches all linked together by a narration. It can be compared to a train consisting of several bogies linked to each other. The bogies in the newsreel however, are all different. It is therefore very difficult to have a fixed style of writing for newsreel. However, it is essential that the general rules of writing news are followed while writing for newsreel too. The skill of the writer is tested when he writes the linking narration between the different items. Since all the items are different, to keep the newsreel flowing smoothly, the links have to be written in a way to give a smooth transition from one to another. It is important that the scriptwriter arranges the different items in such a manner as one flows from the other. TV newsreel is almost obsolete now, but is an important component in radio programme content.



### **News Flash :**

News Flash is used only for communicating extremely urgent and important information which cannot wait. Examples of news flash can be a major disaster, an accident, the news of the sudden death of a very important person, fall of a government, etc. A news flash can interrupt any other programme to give the '**breaking news**'. It consists of not more than two or three lines. Whether it is in radio or on television, in these two/three lines, the newscaster gives the crux of the incident, stating hard facts - what has happened, when and where it happened and who was involved. It sounds much like the lead of a print media hard news story.

### **Features :**

Writing for features is normally more difficult than writing news. This is so because there are rules that govern the writing of hard news, but feature stories depend upon the reporter's storytelling ability. Particularly, in radio, feature is a very creative form where all possible radio forms meet - music, poetry, voices, etc. In a feature, the work centres around writing the script, building a strong storyline, clear visual images, and skilfully unfolding the sequence of events. Here are a few things that you can keep in mind and a few steps to follow which can help you write good features for both TV and radio.

#### **Step 1 :**

**Identify the USP of the feature story** - why should the viewer/ listener find the story interesting. Look for a theme that will appeal to most people. This could be a struggle against adversity, selfless work for a good cause, or something really funny or unique.

#### **Step 2 :**

**Write to suit the medium** - when writing a feature for



radio remember that radio is all about 'sound'. There are no visuals that can attract people to your programme. So, this has to be made up with the help of appropriate words. While writing for TV, make sure to write so as to complement the visuals. Never write sentences for which you have no visuals to show. However, also make sure that you don't simply describe what is being shown. Instead try to interpret the visuals in a gripping style. A news story can be driven by facts, but a feature story must have compelling words. Otherwise there is no reason to have a feature in the first place. Consider the mood you want to build with the feature, and use words to build the story around them. In a TV feature, do not write profusely. Every visual need not necessarily have a corresponding narration. Let the visuals breathe and speak for themselves as much as possible.

**Step 3 :**

**Let the feature story tell itself** — Ask your interviewees specific questions that relate to what you need for the feature and encourage them to speak openly. Create dynamic and active interviews. Talk to the subjects while walking around an environment providing a backdrop of visuals and sounds that have significance to the story. Listening to people going about their lives tells a great story without the reporter doing a thing.

**Step 4 :**

**Craft the feature story to build curiosity.** Lead the viewers gently through the story using as few words as possible. Introduce the main subjects of the feature story in such a way that get viewers are compelled to care about them. Present the challenges they face, then reveal the resolution or what is left to be done. The reporter's job is to get the audience engrossed in the story.

### **Current affairs Programmes :**

Current affairs may include panel discussions, interviews/ talk shows or audience-based discussions etc. Writing for current affairs programmes is very different from writing a feature or a documentary or a news bulletin. There is a difference in the approach to writing for the different programme formats on both TV and radio.

Current affairs programmes are programmes like talks, discussions, interviews that are arranged on some current or contemporary issue or event. They provide a forum for all shades of opinion on outstanding national and international issues.

During a discussion programme generally three to four specialists discuss a given topic with one of them moderating. Generally it is the moderator who writes the script for the programme. The script is a very simple one. Usually the following points are covered in the script:

- a. The introduction, normally containing the significance of the topic, will be discussed
- b. An introduction of the experts who will take part in the discussion
- c. A general outline of the aspects of the topic which will be discussed
- d. The possible questions which will be put to the experts
- e. A brief summary

In case of such a programme, the written script cannot be followed accurately since it cannot be foretold exactly on what lines the discussion will advance. Therefore, the moderator is also generally an expert on the topic who can put in questions and comments spontaneously as the discussion progresses. The introduction is followed from

the script, but as for the summary, only a tentative summary can be prepared in advance. But the summary that is finally worded depends on the course and outcome of the actual discussion.

#### **2.4 Script Writing for Non-news/Entertainment Programmes :**

In the previous sections we have discussed script writing for news and news-based programmes. Now, in this section we will discuss non-news programmes like documentaries and entertainment programmes. Well, when we say entertainment programme, a whole lot of programmes come under this category and it is practically not possible to discuss each category in a single unit. Therefore, we will talk just about one programme category which dominates the television space - drama. But, let us first start with documentary.

##### **2.5.1 Documentary Scripts :**

The production technique and sequence for a feature and documentary are almost the same. The radio documentary at times loses its points of difference with a radio feature. The difference between the documentary and the feature is that the documentary is always non-fiction. But the feature need not just be non-fiction, at times it can be pure journalism.

A documentary is a programme devoted to covering a particular topic in some depth, usually with a mixture of commentary, sound and pictures. In documentary the emphasis is on collection of factual material. It is, however, more than a mere presentation of the facts. A documentary should be an in-depth examination and consideration of an issue from a number of angles, including interviews with, and debates between, people with opposing views on a central issue.

A radio documentary is different from a TV documentary due to the fact that in a TV documentary visuals tell much of the story. The documentation is done visually and most visuals are self-explanatory. Words are written only to explain what cannot be shown, interpret visuals that are not self explanatory and to link visuals to tell the story. Normally, there are two scripts written for a TV documentary – a pre-shoot script or shooting script and a post-shoot or final script. The shooting script is the conceptual map for the shooting journey. It is written after the initial research when the writer/ director has decided what to do. But once the team is out for shooting, many news facts are stumbled upon, many new angles emerge. On the other hand, some visuals which were initially expected may simply not be available. Once the shooting is complete, the writer then gives final shape to the script. The final script is the re-written and modified version of the shooting script and uses the same elements as the shooting script. The format is also the same – narration and other audio elements like music, sound effects etc. on one side of the page and the visuals and other visuals like graphics etc. on the other half of the page. A sample script is furnished below.

A radio documentary script is more of narration. Since, there are no visuals to show, the narration has to be so picturesque that the listeners can actually 'see' the story in their minds as they hear the narration. The writing has to compensate for the lack of pictures. To the narration are added relevant interviews and lots other audio actualities like music, scraps of songs and dramatized bits of dialogue for effect and generating interest. In radio there is no pre and post version of the script. There is only one script – sometimes made at the beginning of the production process and at other times towards the end. In the first case, in the full script combining all the elements is made, the appropriate audio actualities and interviews are recorded and fitted into the right places

along with the narration as indicated in the script. In the second case, at first a broad conceptual outline is made. Then, the actualities are recorded. Finally, the script is written putting appropriate bits of narration to synchronise with the actualities.

### **2.5.2 Drama Scripts :**

Let us start with dramatic scripts which include serials, teleplays/ radio plays. It is a genre completely different from news or feature or documentary. It is purely fiction and a distinctly creative job. A dramatic script is indeed a complex creation, but if we examine it at the very basic level, we find that it is nothing but just a story told with pictures and sound (in case of TV) and sound alone (in case of radio). The script invariably begins with a simple story idea. The simple idea is then elaborated to make a detailed plot outline. Once the storyline is in hand, it is important to carefully think out a way to tell the story. Each story must have enough reason for the listener/ viewer to sit through the entire episode. And that is exactly what is established through the plot.

TV drama and radio drama are distinctly different from each other in terms of concept, content and presentation format. Radio in India has always been more of a rural medium. The emergence of the urban FM is only a recent phenomenon. In India, radio is still synonymous with All India Radio which is the public broadcaster and the most preferred medium of the rural people. Radio drama therefore is mostly sprinkled with the rural touch. Rural themes in rural settings form the staple of radio drama. It is mainly non-commercial in its objective and deals with socio-economic issues for the rural audiences. At most times, it becomes a medium for informing people about different Government schemes for the rural people and motivating them to avail the schemes. Health, hygiene and other social issues are regular themes of radio

dramas. Keeping in mind the target audience, radio dramas are always very simple in form and content. Dialogues are always very simple and written to help the rural audiences identify with the characters.

A radio drama can be of single episode or serial of several episode. If it is a serial of several episodes, it is first important to divide the concept into the number of episodes you have planned. Say, you have decided on a 52-episode serial. In that case, divide the concept into 52 episodes. In two or three lines, write down what happen in each episode. Now elaborate the concept of each episode to take the story forward. The script of a radio drama reads much like the script of any regular drama – dialogues of the characters written against the names of the characters. Normally a radio drama has one main plot and one or two sub-plots to take forward the story. Too many sub-plot are avoided as it an aural medium – too many sub-plots can be confusing for the listener. Due to the lack of visual element, dialogue is the most important part of the radio drama. Therefore, it is important to weave the visual elements into the dialogues itself. For instance, if Pankaj is leaving for school and is saying goodbye to his mother, in television the dialogue would be “Bye Ma” because that would be visible from his school uniform. But in radio this dialogue would not suffice. Here, Pankaj would have to say “Bye ma, I am going to school” or some other dialogue which would indicate that he is going to school. Audio actualities are also very important in radio drama. Background sounds that give the feel of the settings have to be adequately indicated in the script itself. For instance, the sound of passing vehicles in the background will indicate that the characters are on or near the street. The sound of utensils and pressure cooker whistles signify the character’s presence in the kitchen etc.

If you have started to feel that writing radio drama is a complex job, let me tell you that it is rather easy compared



to writing drama for TV. Especially, if you are writing for a daily soap, you will know how painstaking it is to write episode after episode for years, without letting your audience lose interest, ensuring that every day, in every episode the audience returns to your serial after every commercial break. Before you start writing drama for TV, irrespective of whether it is a daily soap or a limited episode serial, you must remember that television is a commercial medium. It is all about cut-throat competition. If the programme does not get you enough TRP, your programme simply does not exist.

Commercial breaks are an absolute fixture, an inseparable element in TV programming. Every programme script must necessarily be written with commercial breaks consciously in mind. To accommodate the commercial breaks - usually there are two commercial breaks in a 30 minute episode - the episode is broken up into three parts. First part comes before the first commercial break; second part comes after this break. The second part is followed by the second commercial break and finally comes the third part after the second break. Depending on the popularity of the serial, the commercial breaks may take up a total duration of anything between 6 to 10 minutes...sometimes even more. Lets say, our serial has two breaks each of 3 minutes, then 6 minutes is taken up by commercials. The remaining 24 minutes can be equally divided to make three act of 8 minute each. Writing out episodes in this way is called the three-act model. Each of these 8 minutes have to be written in such a way that it resolves the conflict which started at the beginning of the act and the act ends with a new suspense so that the viewer may come back to the episode after the commercial break. And each episode has to end with suspense so that the viewer tunes into the same channel the next day to see what happens next.

A daily soap has a main plot or story line and several sub-plots which add to the suspense and interest of the



viewer. In a daily soap it is essential to weave sub-plot within sub-plot within sub-plot to keep the story running and the credit of the scriptwriter lies in doing this skilfully so that while new sub-plots come up, the main plot does not get lost. In limited episode serials, there are not too many sub-plots. In some cases, there is just the main plot with another one or two sub-plots.

As in radio drama, so in TV drama also, character development and dialogues are an important element. No plot would move forward without good dialogues and interesting characters. It is important to take time to develop the lead characters, because it is these characters which will make or break the story. Lead characters should have a history or a background which drives their actions and shapes their personality and circumstances. And all these details should leak out slowly as the story progresses. Each of these characters should have mannerisms, personality traits and even favourite phrases unique to them and which helps the audience to identify them through association.

Writing good dialogue can be a major challenge. If you want to write well, you must also have a craze to watch television. Listen carefully to how characters speak. Not just on TV, listen to how people talk in real life - in a restaurant, in the shopping mall, at parties! Even listen to how you yourself talk. Record your conversations over the day with different people. At the end of the day go back and listen to the recorded conversations. You will notice, how natural the conversations were...how spontaneous and probably most sentences were not even complete yet communication was clear. So, when you write the dialogues for your serial, you need to arouse the same atmosphere. Write in a conversational manner. Do not use words which you will not use in your own normal conversations with people. Read out the dialogue aloud and listen to it. Even if a single word sound is too formal or literary, simply get rid of it.

When you are writing for characters from different regions, give attention to accent and dialect which is unique to the particular region. Do not repeat dialogues unless the characterization demands it. Dialogues should not repeat information which is already there on the screen. Keep dialogues as short as possible. Long speeches can irritate the viewer. Dialogues need not necessarily be used everywhere. When an expression can make a better impact, dump the dialogue.

### **2.5 Let us Sum up :**

After going through the sections of this unit you have seen how the electronic Media has made inroads into people's homes and everyday life. It has, in many ways, surpassed the print medium. You have also seen that writing for print and writing for the electronic medium drastically differ from each other in various ways. One thing is clear that writing for the electronic media demands a set of special skills on which depends the success of the programme whether it is pure news programmes, news-based or non-news entertainment programme. A script may be the least visible component of a radio or TV programme, but it is important. Hence, it is necessary to keep in mind that good programmes begin with good script writings and by now, I hope, you have developed a basic idea of writing for the electronic media – the aspects of language and style and technique.

### **2.6 Possible Questions :**

1. What do you mean Script writing for the electronic media?
2. What are the differences between writing for radio and writing for television?
3. What is Radio Scrip Writing? Try to develop a radio script on an incident that has taken place in your locality.

4. What is the difference between news scrip writing and non-news script writing?
5. Try to write two scripts one on a drama and another on a documentary.

**2.7 References / Suggested Readings :**

1. Video Production by Vasuki Belavadi, Oxford University Press
2. Writing for Radio and TV, Krishna K Kedia, Cyber Tech Publications
3. Television and Radio Announcing, Stuart Wallace Hyde, Allyn and Bacon
4. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school\\_report\\_6180944.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report_6180944.stm)

### **Unit 3**

#### **Tools of Electronic Media**

##### **Contents :**

- 3.1 Introduction**
- 3.2 Objectives**
- 3.3 Tools and Equipments for Electronic Media**
- 3.4 Camera**
- 3.5 Shots and Camera Movements**
- 3.6 Editing**
- 3.7 Let us Sum up**
- 3.8 Possible Questions**
- 3.9 References / Suggested Readings**

##### **3.1 Introduction :**

This is the era of modern technology. The older methods of providing information, such as the traditional media and newspapers are gradually losing their importance. Electronic media is much easier to access, and they can process more information and reach more people in less time because of the advances in today's technology. In the previous units you have seen that the radio is one of the best inventions in the world of electronic media. And then, there is the television, which is a vast media. It has the ability to bring together diverse groups of people. But the production of programmes for the electronic media is not an easy task. It is not like writing an article for the print media. Here, everybody has to know about the equipments and tools, which are used in production. Let

us discuss a few important concepts about the technical part of programme production in this unit.

### **3.2 Objectives :**

In the earlier units we have discussed different aspects of electronic media, such as the basic concepts of electronic media, its various types, characteristics of different types and also writing for the electronic media. After the end of this unit, you will be able to

- *name* of the various tools and equipments of electronic media
- *discuss* the camera and its various types
- *explain* the basic shots and the camera movements
- *enumerate* the concept of linier and non linier editing

### **3.3 Tools and Equipments for Electronic Media :**

For audio and audio-visual production, lots of equipments are needed. The devices or the tools have been changing and are being upgraded day by day due to the advancement of the technology. In this section, we will discuss a few equipments, which are used for electronic media production.

#### **Camera:**

A camera is a device that records images, either as a still photograph or as moving images known as videos or movies. The term comes from a Latin word - *camera obscura*, which means a "dark chamber". It is an early mechanism of projecting images where an entire room functioned as a real-time imaging system; the modern camera evolved from the camera obscura. We will also discuss camera and its types in the next section.

### ***Light and Lighting equipment :***

In a very technical term, light is the electromagnetic radiation that can produce a visual sensation. Lighting or illumination is the deliberate application of light to achieve some aesthetic or practical effect. Lighting includes use of both artificial light sources such as lamps and natural illumination of interiors from daylight. Daylighting is often used as the main source of light during daytime in buildings given its low cost. In the time of studio production, we use artificial lights. Key light, fill light and back light – these three lights are used in a studio for good recording. Here, we should remember that without light we cannot take any photograph, whether it is still or movie.

### ***Sound Recorder :***

Sound Recorder is an audio recording instrument. Sound recording and reproduction is an electrical or mechanical inscription and re-creation of sound waves, such as spoken voice, singing, instrumental music, or sound effects. The two main classes of sound recording technology are analog recording and digital recording. For good quality of sound recording we need a studio where the acoustics are done by a specialist in that. In simple words, it is to make the interiors sound proof so that the noises from outside do not disturb the audio being recorded inside the studio. In a recording studio, we need a recording device such as a tape or memory, microphone, mixer, etc.

### ***Computer :***

As we have mentioned in the first unit, though computer is a form of electronic media, but the communicationists categorise it as a new media. We are not going to mention about computer as a new media. But it is true that now computer makes electronic media production an easy task. In a very simple way we can say that the computer is one

of the most powerful innovations in human history. With the use of computers, people are now able to perform a staggering amount of computations at dazzling speeds. Information can be crunched, organized, and displayed in the blink of an eye.

#### ***Editing equipment :***

For editing an audio or audio visual material, we need lots of instruments. Earlier it was edited in a linier mode, which includes cutting, pasting, joining magnetic tapes. But this is the age dominated by modern technologies. So, in non linier editing, computer is the primary equipment. It must be added by some extra hardware and software to make it a suitable non linier workstation. We will discuss about editing in a later section.

#### **3.4 Camera :**

The word Camera has been derived from Latin, which stands for a room, a light proof dark room. Basically, a camera is just a light tight box with a small hole in it. In fact, it is relatively simple to build a camera using a cardboard box, some black tape and some tinfoil or a small piece of aluminum from a drink can. Unfortunately, pinhole cameras-that is what they are called - are not particularly sophisticated and your mates won't be too happy when you ask them to keep perfectly still for 20 minutes while you capture that party atmosphere with the box in which your shoes came in. That is how a pin-hole camera is made.

#### ***Types of Camera :***

Cameras can be classified in a number of ways; for example,

##### **a) Types of Camera based on function :**

1. Still
2. Movie



b) Types of Camera based on technology:

1. Analog
2. Digital

c) Types of Camera based on format:

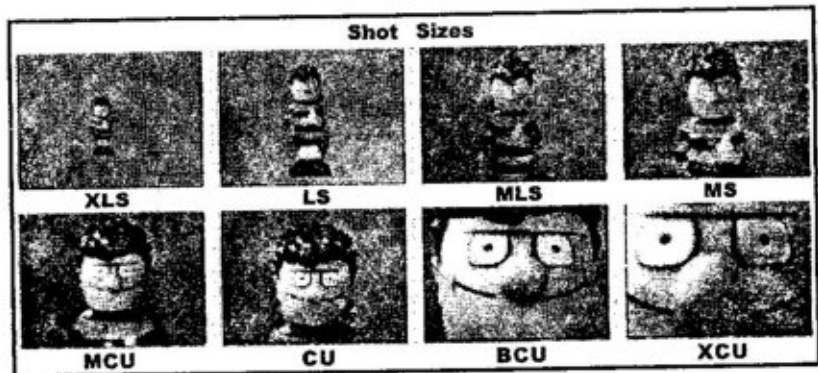
1. Still
  - a. Range finder (RF)
  - b. Single lens reflex (SLR)
2. Movie
  - a. Celluloid
  - b. Video

### **3.5 Shots and Camera Movements :**

Before going to handle a camcorder or movie camera, you must know what a shot is. Shot is basically a pictorial material recorded by a movie camera. The following are the eight basic shots used in videography.

- extreme long shot (XLS or ELS)
- long shot (LS)
- medium long shot (MLS)
- medium shot (MS)
- medium close up (MCU)
- close up (CU)
- big close up (BCU)
- extreme close up (XCU or ECU)

These shot descriptions are part of the basic dialogue which takes place between the editor and other people involved in post production. Let us discuss the concepts behind each of these and their uses in different situations and environment. Let us discuss the basic shots in brief.



**1. Extreme Long Shot (ELS) :**

An extreme long shot is the widest, most comprehensive and view possible of a location or event. It is a very wide field of view in which the camera takes in the entire playing area. The principal subject or subjects are small in relation to the background and tend to compete with the surroundings for the viewer's attention.

**2. Long Shot (LS) :**

It is also called the establishment shot. It is the opening picture of a programme or scene or any movie. It is slightly closer field of view than the extreme long shot. But the subject remains dominated by the much larger background area.

**3. Mid Long Shot or (MLS) Long Mid Shot :**

If our subject is a person, and if he is standing in a background, then the mid long shot can be got. The image size in MLS is shorter than long shot. The mid long shot is up to the knee or in between the knee and the feet from above. It is used to show a person or persons with the background.

**4. Mid Shot (M/S) :**

It defines any camera perspective between long shot and

close up, whereby subjects are viewed from medium distance. A mid shot is close enough to the subject to show detail, yet far enough to show what the subject is doing. It shows both the person and person's performing on an action. The image size in an M/S is up to the waist of a person from the above.

#### **5. Mid Close-up (MCU) :**

In MCU the image size is up to the chest of a person from above. It is also commonly used in TV news especially in case of capturing images of a statement being made, shooting interviews and speeches. Generally, the newsreaders and the anchors of the many television channels are composed in this shot.

#### **6. Close-up (CU) :**

Close-up is mainly used for interviews. Here, the subject becomes the primary focus of interest within the shot. Only a small portion of the background is visible. In this shot, we see just the head and shoulder of the interviewee or the interviewer.

#### **7. Big Close-up (BCU) :**

The image size in BCU is the face, i.e. the forehead and the chin of a person. During interviews it may be used, while the person is in a state of deep emotion or thinking. It also serves to show small objects or documents closely, enough to read any printed matter or to show a small object clearly on the screen, which is referred to

#### **8. Extreme Close-up (ECU) :**

In this shot the camera goes even closer, i.e. the shot is even tighter, sometimes to show only a particular part of the body organ, such as, the eyes or the lips or the fingers.

Here, we are going to discuss some other classification of shots, which are use along with a basic shot, as discussed above. These shots are classified under the person or subject present in the scene.

**1. Single shot :**

When a single person is seen on the shot it is known as single shot. Presenter's introduction, a statement by a VVIP is generally covered in this type of shot.

**2. Two shot / three shot :**

When two persons or three persons are seen on a shot, the shot is commonly two shot or a three shot respectively. Generally in a panel discussion or in interview this type of shot is used.

**3. Over the Shoulder Shot (OSS) :**



In over the shoulder shot (OSS), one person is partly seen from the back as suggestion and with reference to his back shot other/s are seen prominently. Means in OSS, a shot of one actor taken over the shoulder of another actor. In OSS, the relation between two sets of people is established. One person, who is back to camera, is kept in suggestion and other/s are given prominence. An OSS shot is used when two characters are interacting face to face. This is commonly used in interview like programmes

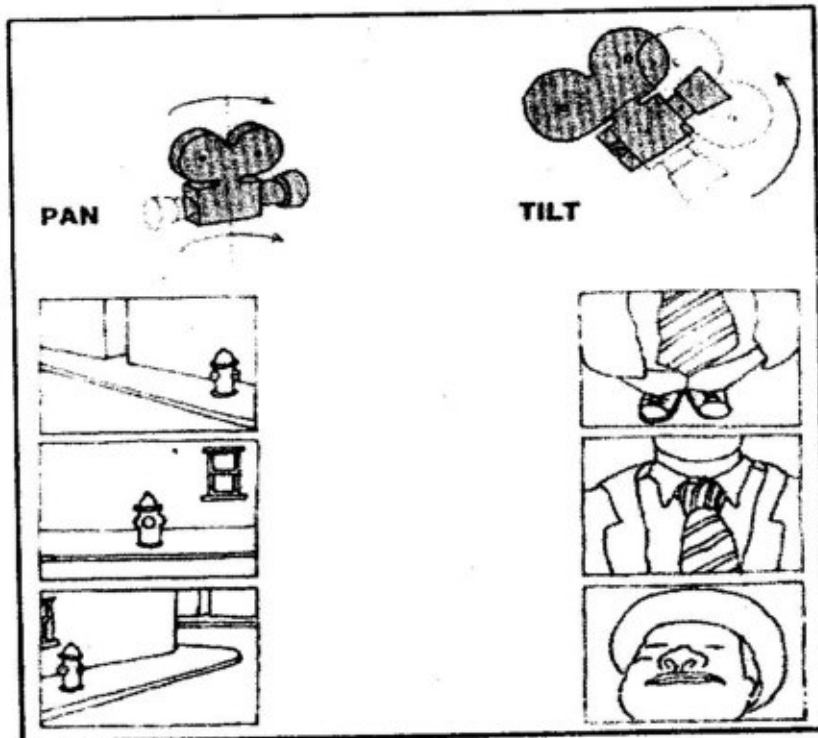
to establish the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee.

### Camera Movements

We have already a discussion on different types of shots in different situations. Along with various types of light without whose help the camera cannot be in function especially in indoor shooting. After getting the knowledge on grammar of shots, we are ready to discuss on the camera movement.

As the basic criterion of video is 'Moving pictures', the camera has to move there are generally two types of cameras movements.

One is to change the place of the camera itself. Means the entire camera and pedestal can be moved about. The second type of camera movement is to move the camera without displacing the camera itself. The camera head alone moves atop its stationary pedestal.



### 1. PAN :

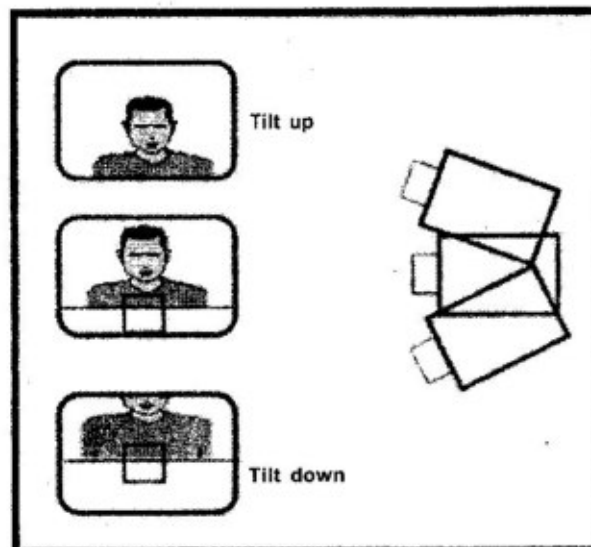
Pan is the horizontal camera pivot right to left or left to right, from a stationary position. It follows a subject, re-directs viewer's attention from one subject to another, shows relationship between subjects, and scan subjects too large to fit into one shot.

Command : *Pan right* and *pan left*

### 2. TILT :

Tilt is the movement of the camera on its vertical axis; down or up, from a stationary position. When the camera is moved upwards, it is tilt-up and the reverse is tilt-down. It follows movement, contrasts differences in size between two subjects or gives viewer point of view sense of a subject's height.

Command : Tilt up and tilt down.



### 1. ZOOM :

In zoom operations, only the lenses of the camera moves. Actually Zoom is variance of focal length, bringing subject

into and out of close-up. Lens capability permits change from wide-angle to telephoto or vice-versa in one continuous move.

A zoom lens gets its name from its ability to move closer to or farther from the subject being photographed. 'Zoom out' means the opposite move further away or to 'wider' from the subject.

Command : Zoom in and Zoom out.

### **3.1 Editing :**

Editing is an important task of any kind of audio visual-editing. In electronic media, the different portions of a production have been taken in a haphazard manner. It is not possible to take the shots or record any sound in a sequence that is prepared in the script. It needs lots of money, and it may be a lengthy process. Therefore, in the time of production, the producers record the audio visual materials in a way, which is comfortable to them. After completion of the production part, the audio visual materials need to be edited for the final production. In this portion, we are going to discuss the visual editing in detail.

Visual editing is not only a technical process but also an artistic way of compilation of visual footage to produce a new edition. Deleting, compilation, retaining and combination are part of the artistic process whereas the technical process consists of copying the various footages in video tape or a CD, or other media for final delivery. Now, we will have a discussion on the concept of visual editing quickly and different stages of production along with a brief description of celluloid editing and video editing. Here we will get the necessary knowledge on linear and non linear editing.

According to wikipedia, film editing is an art of storytelling



practiced by conjoining a few shots together to form a sequence, and the subsequent connecting of sequences to form an entire movie. Film editing is the only art that is unique to cinema and which separates filmmaking from all other art forms that preceded it. However, there are close parallels to the editing process in other art forms such as poetry or novel writing. It is often referred to as the "invisible art", since when it is well-practiced, the viewer becomes so engaged that he or she is not even aware of the work of the editor.

Editing is the process of organizing and transforming recorded material into a document that delivers a message. At its simplest, video editing means placing one shot after another to create an organization that makes sense while it presents information or a story. At the next level of complexity, editing achieves that organization and presentation invisibly. The audience perceives the programme as a simple continuous flow, without noticing that it is carefully built up, one piece at a time, of many separate units of picture and sounds. At its most sophisticated, editing does more than organize information and present it invisibly. It does those jobs with style, with an emotional character that touches viewer's feelings as well as their minds.

There are different ways to edit the visuals. Film splicing is one of the processes. Film is edited by cutting sections of the film and rearranging the shots. The process is very straightforward and mechanical. In theory, a film could be edited with a pair of scissors and some splicing tape although in reality a splicing machine is the only practical solution. A splicing machine allows film footage to be lined up and held in place while it is cut or spliced together. Whereas the linear process for video editing is another important one which is very simple procedure. In linear editing, video is selectively copied from one tape to another. It requires at least two video machines connected

together where one acts as the *source* and the other is the *recorder*. The present day is the digital age. In this method, video footage is recorded in a computer hard drive and then edited using specialized software. Once the editing is complete, the finished product is recorded back to tape or optical disk. But sometimes in some situations multiple cameras and other video sources are routed through a central mixing console and edited in real time. Live television coverage is an example of live editing.

### ***Linear Editing***

In the above section we have discussed the film editing. This is primarily based on the celluloid film editing. Now-a-days, celluloid films are also transferred to the computer and edited in the non linear format. Here, we are going to discuss the video editing formats. To edit the recorded video footage, we can adopt two different ways. One is the linear format and other is the non linear format. The first one is the earlier format. Now second format is most popular with the advents of the computer and software. Linear editing is the process of selecting, arranging and modifying the images and sound recorded on videotape whether captured by a video camera, generated from a computer graphics programme or recorded in a studio.

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

### ***Non linear Editing***

Non-linear means that the recording medium is not tape and editing can be performed in a non linear sequence - not necessarily the sequence of the programme. In practical terms, it allows insertions into the edited story at any time without having to rearrange the sequence. In

linear-editing, it is not possible to insert a portion without disturbing the following portion. It describes editing with quick access to source clips and record space –usually using computer Disks to store footage. Non-linear editing for film and television postproduction is a modern editing method which involves being able to access any frame in a video clip with the same ease as any other.



In nonlinear editing, the shots from the source tape are loaded into the computer. This process is called *digitizing* or *capturing*, and involves converting any non digital video or audio material to digital form and then recording it on the computer's hard drives. Hard drives give you instant, *random access* to any part of the footage (you do not have to "rewind" to get from the end of the footage to any other part-the drive head can move there in a tiny fraction of a second).

Video and audio data are first captured to hard disks or other digital storage devices. The data is either recorded directly to the storage device or is imported from another source. Once imported, they can be edited on a computer using anyone of a wide range of software.

Already, we have discussed various types and methods of editing. Linear video editing is now an out dated way. With the advent of personal computers and other important tools of editing, now the editing process of the video footages became easier. The following are the stages of non linear editing.

### ***Capturing video :***

In the process of capturing the video, we have to transfer the analogue visual images to the memory or the digital devices. To capture a visual image we need two types of elements in non linear editing. One is hardware and other is the software. With the help of the capturing card, i.e., the hardware required capturing the visual we can store the images in the hard drive of the computer.

### ***Editing :***

After completion of the storage the images, we have to open the edit menu of the software. There we can assemble the shots in a sequence and after that in the process of final mix, we have to add sounds, sound effects, visual effects, etc. Now let us discuss the editing of audio visual images.

First of all we should know that there are five types of edit. These are -

- i) action edit
- ii) screen position edit
- iii) form edit
- iv) concept edit and
- v) combined edit

### ***Final mix :***

After editing the video footages in the timeline of the system, an editor has to prepare for the final mix of the

production. In the time of editing, the main task of the editor is to build up a sequence of shots according to the script. The editor has to cut and paste the shots to build up the sequence. One thing always should be remembered that one shot cannot go after any shot. There should be matching shots. Means the next shot should be related with the previous shot. In the final mix period, before finalizing the audio track an editor has to finalize the visual effects.

### **3.1 Let us Sum up :**

For audio and audio-visual production, lots of equipments are needed. The devices or the tools have been changing and upgrading day by day due to the advancement of the technology. The word Camera has been derived from Latin, which stands for a room, a light proof dark room. Basically, a camera is just a light tight box with a small hole in it.

There are eight basic shots used in videography. These are -

- extreme long shot (XLS or ELS)
- long shot (LS)
- medium long shot (MLS)
- medium shot (MS)
- medium close up (MCU)
- close up (CU)
- big close up (BCU)
- extreme close up (XCU or ECU)

Editing is the process of organizing and transforming recorded material into a document that delivers a message. At its simplest, video editing means placing one shot after another to create an organization that makes sense while it presents information or a story. To edit

the recorded video footage, we can adopt two different ways. One is the linear format and other is the non linear format.

### **3.2 Possible Questions :**

1. What do you mean by tools of electronic media? Discuss a few equipments, which are used for electronic media production.
2. What is shot? What are the differences between shots and sequences? Enumerate the basic shots.
3. What is camera? Name the various types of camera.
4. 'Editing is not only a technical task, it is an art' - explain.
5. What is the difference between linear and non linear editing?
6. Write the steps of non linear editing.
7. Write the short notes of the following-
  - a. Camera
  - b. Light
  - c. Sound Recorder
  - d. Over the Shoulder Shot (OSS)

### **3.3 References / Suggested Readings :**

1. Before the Headlines by Chandrakant P. Singh
2. Broadcast Journalism by Cohler, David Keith
4. Video Production Handbook by Gerald Millerson, Jim Owens
5. Techniques of TV productions by T G Millerson
6. Introduction to TV Production by Alan Wartzel
7. KKHSOU & IGNOU SLMs on Journalism & Mass Communication.

## **Unit 4**

### **Electronic Media Production**

#### **Contents :**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

#### **4.2 Objectives**

#### **4.3 Television Production Process**

##### **4.3.1 Writing**

##### **4.3.2 Pre Production**

##### **4.3.3 Production**

##### **4.3.4 Post Production**

#### **4.4 Bites**

#### **4.5 Voice Over**

#### **4.6 Let us Sum up**

#### **4.7 Possible Questions**

#### **4.8 References / Suggested Readings**

#### **4.1 Introduction :**

As mentioned earlier, electronic media production is a complex process involving many complicated stages. The images and the other things that you see in your home television set are not very easy to produce, even if they appear so simple and easy flowing in front of your eyes. It is not just the language skill or journalism traits that are pre-requisites to the making of any such programmes or news features for any electronic media. As an electronic media professional, one needs to be equally equipped with



technological skills and to handle equipments that control and surround every stages of the whole affair. An electronic media production is not just the understanding of the camera and its operations, or editing software and their usage. It is also about producing the right sound, music and voice using proper modulation and pronunciation techniques, producing technically acceptable pictures using various composition techniques and using proper lighting mechanism, and also about making optimum use of language ability. This is an exhaustive list.

Therefore, it is very much essential to have a composite understanding of each and every aspect of this complex process that would put you at ease while on the job.

#### **4.2 Objectives :**

In the previous units you have been told about the various aspects of electronic media production. This last unit will deal with some other aspects related with electronic media production which could be covered in the earlier units.

After going through this unit you must be able to-

- *comprehend* the pre-production activities of an electronic media production
- *discuss* the post production works of the same
- *differentiate* between a voice over and a bite
- *analyze* the other aspects of audio-visual production

#### **4.3 Television Production Process :**

Television production is not only a complex process but also an extended one. It calls for a good amount of human resources as well as various types of machines to have just one programme made. The entire process of television production can be understood in terms of the various stages that the production process goes through before the final

product is delivered on the TV screen at our homes. Any kind of television production involves four main stages, viz. Writing, Pre-Production, Production and Post production. Whether it is a documentary, soap-opera, music video or the likes, these four stages are important and must be carried out thoroughly in order to have a quality product. Each of these stages is interdependent with each other and interlinked at the same time.

#### **4.3.1 Writing :**

This is the first step which begins soon after the idea is conceived and finalized by the core production team. Actually before the script is developed the shape of the programme is required to be decided first. According to the need of the programme the script is developed. Either a writer is hired for the purpose or else the producer himself writes the script. The writer, in consultation with the producer or the director, does the appropriate research and develops a possible content outline, one or more creative concepts and a treatment.

#### ***Importance of Research :***

For all media production, whether a documentary or corporate production, research is an important factor. For corporate production, it is essential to know the corporation's policies, people, objectives or their audience, whether it is for prime time or other time or the likes. Ascertaining these is very much essential as it acts as the guideline for shaping the programme. These back grounds help to classify the media product; such as informational, motivational or instructional or entertaining.

The research becomes all the more important if the purpose is to make a documentary. As you all know that documentaries are meant to be factual and objective. Also the duration of a documentary is more than any other non-fictional product like news, features, etc. Hence, more

data is required to make a documentary. This calls for more attention to be rendered towards research works than any other activities. A good documentary maker would, in fact, devote more time in collecting facts sometime extending to years together.

Many a times it may happen that the producer may begin the production work with a different perspective or viewpoint about a topic or issue or problem. But after proper study the entire concept regarding the conceived issue may get changed. And then the producer may have to begin all over again with a different and more relevant perspective in mind. Hence, the importance of researching for documentary may be emphasized again and again. One needs to collect and go through all the available facts and materials regarding a topic which help him not only to understand the topic better, but also to give direction to the topic and arrive at certain consensus about the subject.

Hence, it may be said that research is pre-requisite to documentary making and in effect for making all kinds of electronic media production. Depending upon the gathered facts the script writer may come out with three things before writing the script, a content outline, a creative concept and a treatment for the project.

***Content Outline :***

Content outline is required to be developed, especially when doing a complex or heavily instructional projects like documentary or Docu-feature. Content outline refers to the process of selecting the requisite facts for the programme. It means arranging of facts in a structured pattern for the purpose of presenting in the programme through the process of inclusion and non-inclusion of gathered data. It offers an idea about the final contents in a programme. This is important as on the basis of this outline the visual ideas are drawn.

### ***Creative Concepts :***

Visual ideas are mostly drawn from the content information. They provide the means for most effectively communicating the messages in visual terms. Creative concept is the rough idea about the look of the film or the programme. More often than not, a creative team is assigned for the purpose. The members of the team engage in a brain storming session in which they come out with a number of possible creative concepts. This is an extended process through which ideas are drawn and finally one idea gets approved out of all the possible ideas. In general, the producer himself plays the role of a decision maker even though on many occasions, the director's consent is also taken into consideration.

### ***Treatment :***

On the basis of the approved creative concept the treatment of the film is developed. Treatment means scene by scene narrative description of the programme that elaborates on the visual concept. This actually provides a detailed description about how each scene would look like. Many a times it is seen that the producer (or the director) also goes to the extent of arriving at a shot by shot visual description that perfectly tells about how each and every shot would finally appear in front of the audience. It also explains where and how any visual effect would be lent.

Once, all these aspects are carried out in the perfect manner the writer may now be able to write the script. He would make a draft of the script which will be shown to the producer or the director, whoever has assigned him the job, for approval. When the producer or the director approves of the script then it may be taken as the final copy or may be done necessary changes according to the producer's wishes after which it is accepted as the final draft.

However, mention may be made here that in case of news (hard and soft) or any kind of simple production many of the above mentioned stages get weeded out or may not be required. Because in case of news one cannot go with a pre-conceived mind, with a prepared script in hand and expects events to unfold in the expected manner. The news is always sudden and the script is written on the basis of the facts of the event and on the importance of the particular story on a given day. Same is the case with a soft news item or feature stories. But for an elaborate production work these stages are must and the more detailed each stage is, the finer the ultimate product would be.

#### **4.3.2 Pre-Production :**

The Pre-Production activities begin soon after the script is ready. It is the period of planning after the script is approved and before actual shooting begins. It involves considering everything that needs to be arranged before shooting begins. More of the time is spent on planning and this is better because the more you plan, the better is the chance of programme being of good quality. During pre-production, the programme manager and the Director work in coordination. Every creative decision the director takes will have financial implications or vice-versa. The first aim of the pre-production period is to finalize the budget and the contracts.

The pre-production activities would include the following activities:

##### **a) Script Breakdown :**

Script breakdown actually means breaking down the script according to—

- The number of different days the story involves
- The number and type of locations needed

- The number of scenes that must be shot in daylight
- The number of scenes that must be shot at night (or early morning or late afternoon)
- The number and type of characters (those with speaking roles) required
- The number of extras (without speaking roles) required
- The clothes/costumes and other props each character will require in each scene

From this script breakdown exercise the Producer and the Director can take decisions on matters like the exact location (s) where the film/documentary will be shot and the cost of location hiring, the schedule for the shooting crew and actors on each locations, transport needed for all personnel to and from the locations, etc. It also helps to decide on matters like catering needs for all personnel during shooting accommodation, where necessary at distant locations, etc. In short, the logistics are decided at this stage.

***b) Selecting the Production Crew :***

For an elaborate production, a good number of people are required. However, for a simple production like news such elaborate arrangement is not necessary, only the camera man and the reporter are enough. But for a complex programme like an entertainment show, as many as minimum fifteen people are required. This may go further if it is a production crew of a film.

However, the basic requirement of human resources for making an electronic media production is as follows—

***1) The Producer :***

The producer is the ultimate authority on issues involving funding, project policy, and developing script. He is also

responsible for the production of the programme and is the ultimate authority in deciding on the approval and non-approval of creative decisions taken by the director. He is also responsible when it comes to making sure that all the activities are carried out in the true spirit right from the inception till the execution part of the programme.

He is assisted by a Line Producer, who is the right hand man, typically managing all aspects of a shoot, its preparation and sometime even in post-production activities when the producer is busy. Line producers are required especially for large, geographically dispersed and extended shoots.

## **2) Director :**

The Director is the leader of the production team and the creative authority on location during filming. The job of the director is manifold. He is rightfully termed as the captain of the ship as it is under his supervision or command that the creative out look of the programme is shaped by the entire production team. He works in close coordination with the Director of photographer who is responsible for holding the Director's visions into the camera's lens.

## **3) Production Manager :**

The Production manager looks after the shots, like scheduling resources such as, equipment, locations, crew, with less emphasis on creative aspects. His/her job expires after the production and has no role to play in the post production.

## **4) Assistant Director (AD) :**

The AD is the director's right hand man. He helps him arrange all aspects of pre-production activities. He is the closest ally of the Director who coordinates with the



clients, crew and also the talents on location or in the studio. He takes script notes, video shot logs etc.

**5) Production Assistant :**

The Production Assistant works for the Assistant Director, the Producer, the Production Manager or the Director. He is responsible for handling telephone calls, equipment rentals, mail, personnel pick-ups and deliveries and many other important production activities.

**6) Director of Photography (DP) or Videographer :**

DP is responsible to the producer and the director for entire visual look of a programme, including all camera work and lighting. He is the director's closest aesthetic partner as he understands what the director wants to achieve visually and uses his photographic skills to achieve this. In simple production like interviews the producer or the director performs the job of a DP himself.

**7) Camera Operator (s) :**

The Camera Operator (s) handle the camera under the command of the DP. However, he is not responsible for lighting, even though lighting forms an integral part of camera operation. For a single camera production DP himself would work as the camera operator. However, for multi-camera production the DP operates one camera and the other cameras are operated by camera operator(s)

**8) Gaffer :**

An electrician is called as the Gaffer. A Gaffer is DP's main assistant. He sets up lights, checks the fuses, connects the power cables and provides constant lighting and electrical expertise. He also acts as a camera assistant, pulling focus, changing batteries, setting up tripods and attaching other accessories.

**9) The GRIP :**

The Grip works mainly for the Gaffer. He assists him on matters like carrying cables, setting up stands, flags, silks, nets etc. He also renders hand in loading and unloading tools and equipments during setups. A Grip is mainly a labour assistant. A Dolly grip pushes or pulls the dolly on which the DP rides.

**10) Sound Recordist/Mixer :**

A sound recordist is responsible for recording the sound during shooting, and if the need be, any kind of off-the-shooting sound requirements. He is mainly responsible to the director for all sound recordings made for the programme. He also suggests the proper microphones and their placements during shoots.

A sound recordist's job is to ensure that the recorded sound is of best quality. He operates the Mixer to ensure that the sound levels are balanced and consistent in terms of tone and volume.

**11) Audio Boom Operator :**

An Audio Boom Operator is the assistant of the Sound recordist. He is responsible for attaching the mikes or holds them in boom in position during recordings. He also maintains mikes and batteries to ensure that they are in good working order when needed.

**12) Floor Manager :**

In case of studio shoots, a floor manager is the key person in the studio and coordinates commands ordered by the director. He acts as the director's voice on the studio floor. At the director's request, he cues talents, gives start and stop signals. He would also handle any general questions or problems that may arise in any general production.

**13) Technical Director :**

A technical Director is responsible for operating the video switcher or vision mixer. A vision mixer is used, especially for a Multi-camera shooting. In such elaborate production, the technical director needs to switch from one camera to another in case of an on-line programme. Of course, he does this under the director's command. Hence, technical director is an integral part of production activities.

**14) Make-up artist :**

Make up is must in order to appear in front of the camera. Even in a simple production like news which is supposedly factual, yet the anchors need some kind of touch ups in order to look appealing in front of the audience. We can do away with make-up artists in case of documentary films, if the film is thoroughly factual and emanates in the field.

**15) Editor :**

The editor is must for any kind of television production. The editor may be either hired or may be from in-house. Many a times both online and offline editors are required and also they may be two separate personnel. Either they are outsourced or considered from in-house personnel. The Editor puts the shots and the visuals in order as desired by the script and makes sure that the visuals are put together in a manner that the viewer gets a feeling that the whole show was shot in the same sequence as he sees. The quality of the product gets better with a good editor who is both an expert with handling the edit machine and also thinks in his own way.

**16) Graphic Artist :**

Computer animation and still graphic images are developed by the graphic artist. These images are mostly developed

in pre-production or post-production, but a graphic artist is sometimes required in live production as well when the images created need quick revision or updating before going on air.

Apart from these works the pre-production activities would also include -

- a) Auditioning and selecting actors for the programme, both professional and otherwise
- b) Determining logistical needs and arrangements
- c) Identifying and scheduling locations, confirming about their availability and obtaining permits and releases
- d) Ensuring availability of shooting equipments, studio and post production needs
- e) Budgeting
- f) Designing and creating artwork, animation and character generated titles
- g) Selecting music and stock footage
- h) Conducting pre-production meetings, and so on and so forth

#### **4.3.3 Production :**

Production work of a television programme includes going to the planned locations and shoot. This follows from the Pre-production stage in which entire preparation is done according to the planning.

The production work includes all the activities designed to produce the actual programme which may involve crucial acts like rehearsals with and without equipments, placing the sets on exact locations, the studios are done with requisite sets and props, the costumes are hired and brought in, graphics are done with, lights are placed in proper places, equipments are in place and so on and so forth. The production may be either indoor or outdoor or

may happen in the outside location or may be inside the studio floor. Depending upon the need of the program the place of shooting is prepared and shot.

It also calls for coordinating with the entire crew members who are on location for the purpose of shooting, managing them and ensuring at the same time that the right job is executed by them.

Once, all the materials are in place, the shooting schedules begins. It is a rigorous process. Many a times re-shooting is also done when the quality of the programme could not be achieved in the first phase of shooting. Moreover, the audio recording and shooting for visuals may be done in two separate stages, depending upon the need of the program. This calls for shooting in two distinct phases, starting with video followed by audio recording. In another word dubbing is carried out in the next phase of production.

#### **4.3.4 Post Production :**

This is the last and final stage of television production, but a very crucial one. It involves evaluating and editing the programme. The produced materials are arranged in sequence according to the need of the script. An editor is hired for the purpose who again works in close coordination with the director who provides the necessary guidelines. Many a times, it is not the Director but the Producer himself who takes the upper hand at the time of editing and would provide necessary guidelines to the editor.

About the different types of editing in vogue, we have already discussed earlier. However, just for a recap, there are two ways in which editing is done—Linear and Non-Linear editing process. Linear editing is tape-based editing and on the other hand non-linear editing is random editing or mostly computer based. Unlike linear editing, in case

of non-linear editing process the random access to shots are possible. Since, it is computer based editing, various editing software are available for the purpose.

Again editing may also be done in two different ways, online and offline, again depending upon the requirements of the programme. In case of live programme, online editing is done as against the offline editing which is done after the shooting process is complete in toto. Again, when the programme is shot at outside location, some kind of rough editing is accomplished on the spot itself. This is again called as online editing. Later on, in the studio, the rest of the editing is done in the studio edit suit for finer tuning of the program, known as offline editing.

Apart from the editing job, Post production stage is also marked by handling marketing of the programme, going on a publicity spree, following distribution and exhibition campaign of the finished product.

#### **4.4 Bites :**

In television, bites means the parts of a speech by a person shown in between a programme, like news, documentary, etc. In print media terms, bites would mean the direct quotes of a person used in the presentation of news. In printed form, the quote from a person is presented within inverted comma, whereas in case of electronic media it can be directly presented by showing the person delivering that particular line or lines of sentences.

Having bites in news or documentary is crucial as it lends authenticity to the information disseminated. The audience can assume that the information that they are receiving is credible or has not been cooked up by the reporter or the producer. The bites add value to facts as the audience can see for themselves the source of the information.

#### **4.5 Voice Over :**

Voice over means background narration found in any video programme. Voice over accompanies the visuals. While watching the evening news bulletin you must have observed that when individual news begins, the anchor first introduces you to the theme of the story by reading out the introductory paragraph, after which the actual news begins. The visuals would start pouring in accompanied by the background commentary narrating the meaning of the visuals. This voice is known as the voice over. Either the reporter himself would lend his voice to the story or a voice over artists would do the feat.

Voice-overs are integral parts of any story. The viewers need to be explained about the meaning of the visuals, hence the need of the background narration. Voice over makes the story complete.

However, a story may be run without any voice-over. If the story is a simple one and viewers are familiar with what has been shown through the visuals then dealing with such stories may not require any additional explanation along with the visuals. Such stories would have visuals accompanied by music or other kinds of sounds according to the need of the story. Even without any voice-over the visuals are enough to convey the actual meaning of the story to the viewers.

Nevertheless, an audio-visual story in a television screen should have both some kind of audio and video material, without which the story appears unattractive. Even though we get to see both audio and video materials in the television screen, yet television is predominantly visual medium. People get intrigued by seeing the action as it is happening, rather than listening to what has been narrated by another authoritative voice. Because of this character, the visuals become primary concern in a



television production. However, some kind of audio material is essential to go with the visuals, may be music, a sound track, or other sound effects to suit the visuals on screen etc.

#### **4.6 Let us Sum up :**

Television production is a complex process. It involves various stages viz. Writing, Pre-Production, Production and Post Production. All these stages are linked and are interdependent.

The writing means preparing the script for the programme. The script writing process begins just after the ideas are conceived, developed and approved. It is either the producer himself who writes the script or he would hire a writer for that purpose. The writer would do the necessary research and develop a possible content outline, creative concept and a treatment. This would be considered for producer's approval, after which the writer would actually start writing the script.

Once the script is finalized, the pre-production activities begin. The Pre-production activities of a television programme would include script breakdown, selecting the production crew, auditioning and selecting actors for the programme, determining logistical needs and arrangements, identifying and scheduling locations, ensuring availability of shooting equipments, studio and post production needs and so on and so forth.

The production work includes all the activities designed to produce the actual programme which may involve crucial acts like rehearsals with and without equipments, placing the sets on exact locations, if the studios are done with requisite sets and props, if the costumes are hired and brought in, if graphics are done with, if lights are placed in proper places, equipments are in place and so on and

so forth. The production may be either indoor or outdoor or may happen in the outside location or may be inside the studio floor.

The Post production stage is marked by evaluating and editing the programme. This stage also involves handling the marketing of the programme, going on a publicity spree, following distribution and exhibition campaign of the finished product.

#### **4.7 Possible Questions :**

1. Discuss the various stages of television production in brief.
2. What is the role of research in visual media production?
3. Briefly discuss the pre-production stage of electronic media production.
4. What do you understand by voice-over? How is it different from bites? Exemplify with examples.
5. Write a note on the various people involved in a television production.

#### **4.8 References / Suggested Readings :**

1. Before The Headlines, By C.P. Singh
2. Television Production Handbook, By Herbert Zettl, Thomson Press
3. Writing & Producing for Television and Film, By Esta De Fossard and John Riber