



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE: JLS 822**

**COURSE TITLE: PUBLICATION LAYOUT AND DESIGN**

<b>COURSE GUIDE</b>
-------------------------

**JLS 822  
PUBLICATION LAYOUT AND DESIGN**

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Published by  
e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)  
URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2008

ISBN: 978-058-629-6

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to JLS 822: Publication Layout and Design. It is available for students in the post graduate Journalism programmes. The course deals with the major task of sub-editing as a major aspect in publishing. Sub-editing refers basically to copy preparation. Before a newspaper or any other publication is printed, a sub-editor (also referred to as copy editor) works on it to ensure that it meets the required standards. The main pre-occupation in this course therefore is to examine the work of the sub-editor that is layout and design, and the skills that enhance the quality of sub-editing.

This course guide provides you with the necessary information about the contents, process, and materials with which to read and understand the subject matter of the course. It is designed to guide you in planning your study so that you can get the best out of this course. The guide also specifies the amount of time you are required to spend on each unit of the assignments. It also gives you some guidance on your Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA). You are advised to attend the tutorial classes to discuss your difficulties with your tutorial facilitators.

## **What You will Learn in the Course**

Publication layout and design is the major task in sub-editing. Sub-editing refers basically to copy preparation. The course exposes students to the skills of copy preparation, which in turn, is a basic step in publishing. Before a newspaper or any other publication is printed, a sub-editor (also referred to as copy editor) works on it to ensure that

- (a) It fits the space allowed for it;
- (b) It has the appropriate style and flair;
- (c) All the loose ends are tied up neatly;

The process of sub-editing is also referred to as “subbing”, and the office of the sub-editor is usually referred to as the sub-desk. The sub-desk ensures good and proper headlining, proper handling of copy and attractive design to make the publication excellent. In this course, our main pre-occupation is to study the work of the sub-editor, that is, layout and design, how the work is done, and the skills that enhance the quality of a sub-editor’s work.

This Course Guide is designed to show you what you will be doing in this course and to prepare you for the tasks you are expected to accomplish. It is important for you to read the Course Guide carefully and to be very familiar with its contents. This will enable you to get your work properly done and to get the best out of the course.

## Course Aims

The aims of this course are to:

- (i) Present the various stages in the layout and design of a publication;
- (ii) Present the skills required in the task of sub-editing; and
- (iii) Enable you achieve high quality publications in the layout and design.

## Course Objectives

- (i) At the end of this Study Guide, you should be able to:
- (ii) Define copy preparation;
- (iii) Identify the stages in copy preparation;
- (iv) Discuss the history of print publishing; and
- (v) Describe the stages, and techniques of sub-editing; and
- (vi) Prepare the layout and design of a publication of your own.

Ensure that you study each unit of the course carefully and thoughtfully. Although the course has been simplified to make it easy for you to understand, you may come across word that you may not readily understand or remember. In such cases, use your dictionary. If you have questions, note them down in writing so you can ask questions whenever an opportunity arises. You need to concentrate as well.

## Working through this Course

Ensure that you study each unit of the course carefully and thoughtfully. The tables of contents, objectives, introduction, etc are all part of what you are expected to study. Do not overlook them. Although the course has been simplified to make it easy for you to understand, you may come across word that you may not readily understand or remember. In such cases, use your dictionary. If you have questions, note them down in writing so you can ask questions whenever an opportunity arises. You need to concentrate well.

## Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

1. Course guide
2. Study units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment File
5. Presentation Schedule

## **Study Units**

JLS 822 is a 3-Credit Unit 700 Level course for Postgraduate Journalism Students. There are a total of six modules in this course. Each module is broken down into five units. Therefore, you will find a total of thirty units in this course text. Some units are more in depth than others, depending on the nature of what is being discussed. The six modules in this course text are as follows.

1. Module 1:Introduction to Copy Preparation
2. Module 2:Print Production
3. Module 3:Criteria for Sub-Editing and Sub-Editing Lingua
4. Module 4:The Process of Sub-Editing
5. Module 5:Techniques and Phases of Sub-Editing
6. Module 6:Typography, Casting Off, Headlines and Layout

Each module starts with a description of the units contained in it, and each unit is preceded by a table of contents, an introduction, a list of objectives and the main content (including Self-Assessment Exercises, SAEs). At the end of each unit, you will see at least one standard Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA) which you are expected to work on and submit for marking.

## **Textbooks and References**

Certain books have been recommended in this course. At the end of each unit, you will see a list of reference materials which were consulted while this course text was being prepared. If you want more information, you can consult the texts, but if you cannot get them, do not worry because the most important information you need for this course is already in the course text, read them whenever you are directed to do so before attempting any exercise.

## **Assessment**

There are two aspects of the assessment for this course; the tutor marked assignments and a written examination. The answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) are not meant to be submitted, but they are as important as the Tutor-Marked Assignment Questions. SAE gives you an opportunity to assess yourself and know the extent to which you understand a given topic. Work on them carefully and use them to assess your mastery of the topic. Tutor-Marked Assignments are to be answered and submitted for marking. Answer and keep them in your assignment file for submission and marking. The work that you will submit to your Tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total score.

## Tutor-Marked Assignment

You will find Tutor-Marked Assignment at the end of every unit in this Course Text. Remember to answer them as instructed, and to keep them in your assignment file for submission. They will be marked and used to score you. However, in this Course Guide, there is no Tutor-Marked Assignment Question, but they are from Unit 1 of Module 1 to Unit 5 of Module 6.

## Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for publication Layout JLS 822 will be for three hours duration and will carry 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions, which reflect the kind of self assessment exercises and the tutor marked problems you have previously encountered. All aspects of the course will be assessed. You should use the time between completing the last unit, and taking the examination to revise the entire course. You may find it useful to review your self assessment exercises and tutor marked assignments before the examination.

## Course Marking Scheme

The following table lays out how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments 1-4 (the best four of all the assignments submitted)	Four assignments, best three marked out of 10% Totaling 30%
Final examination	70% of overall course score
Total	100% of course score

## Course Overview/Presentation Schedule

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assessment (End of unit)
	Course Guide		
<b>Module 1</b>			
1	Introduction to Copy Preparation	Week 1	Assignment 1
2	What is Copy Preparation?	Week I	Assignment 1
3	Methods of Copy Preparation	Week 1	Assignment 1
4	The Computer and Copy	Week 2	Assignment 1



	Preparation		
5	The Stylebook	Week 2	Assignment 1
<b>Module 2</b>			
1	History of Print Production	Week 3	Assignment 1
2	Raw materials for Printing	Week 3	Assignment 1
3	Type Composition	Week 4	Assignment 1
4	Methods of Printing	Week 4	Assignment 1
5	Desktop Publishing	Week 5	Assignment 1
<b>Module 3</b>			
1	Accuracy and Style	Week 5	Assignment 1
2	News Values	Week 6	Assignment 1
3	Speed and Headlines	Week 6	Assignment 1
4	Defamation Laws and Conventions	Week 7	Assignment 1
5	The Subbing Lingua	Week 7	Assignment 1
<b>Module 4</b>			
1	Copy Sources and the Copy Taster	Week 8	Assignment 1
2	The Editor, Chief of Staff and News Editor	Week 8	Assignment 1
3	The chief Sub and his Deputy	Week 9	Assignment 1
4	The Chick Sub and stone Sub.	Week 9	Assignment 1
5	Catchline, Magazine and Sub Editors Musts	Week 10	Assignment 1
<b>Module 5</b>			
1	Techniques and Phases of Sub Editing	Week 10	Assignment 1
2	First Reading	Week 11	Assignment 1
3	Second Reading	Week 12	Assignment 1
4	Third Reading	Week 12	Assignment 1
5	Fourth Reading	Week 13	Assignment 1
<b>Module 6</b>			
1	Typography	Week 13	Assignment 1
2	Casting off and headlines 1	Week 14	Assignment 1
3	Headlines 2	Week 14	Assignment 1
4	Layout 1	Week 15	Assignment 1
5	Layout 2	Week 15	Assignment 1
	Revision	Week 16	
	Examination	Week 17	
	Total	17 Weeks	

## **How to Get the Most of this Course**

The things you need for this course are in two broad categories, namely material and non material. The material things include

A quiet place devoid of noise and other distractions, where you can sit and do your work every week:

- (i) A layout sheet, which you can get from any media near you, but if you cannot get one, do not worry. Get some foolscap sheets and plain sheets of paper ready;
- (ii) A pencil, a sharpener an eraser, a ruler, a black/blue and red pen;
- (iii) Files for your assignment if you have access to a computer, good, but if you don't have access to one, do not worry;
- (iv) A good English dictionary, especially Oxford Advanced Learners or any other good one. A dictionary that teaches British English rather than American English is strongly recommended

The non-material things which you need for this course include:

- a) Three continuous, uninterrupted hours weekly;
- b) Self-discipline and commitment to excellence;
- c) Honesty (the best policy).

## **Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials**

There are 15 hours of Tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignment, keep a close watch on your progress. And on difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must send your tutor marked assignment well before the due date. They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone or e-mail if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- a) You do not understand any part of the assigned readings;
- b) You have difficulty with the self assessment exercise;
- c) You have a question or a problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only way to have face to face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course

tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will gain a lot from participating actively.

## **Conclusion**

This course is a practical one. It is therefore important for you to ensure that you attempt all the assignments for maximum benefit. It is also an opportunity to update your skills, particularly in the area of desktop publishing.

## **Summary**

Due to the practical nature of this course, what you get out of it depends largely on you. This Course Guide has attempted to equip you with the information you need for a fruitful experience in the course. Publication Layout and Design is a course which prepares you for sub editing tasks such as subbing, layout, design, and print production.

We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

<b>MAIN COURSE</b>
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Course Code	JLS 822
Course Title	Publication Layout and Design
Course Developer/Writer	Dr. Ogu Sunny Enemaku University of Lagos
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Published by  
e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)  
URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2008

ISBN: 978-058-629-6

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## **MODULE 1**

### **INTRODUCTION TO COPY PREPARATION**

Unit 1	Introduction
Unit 2	What is Copy Preparation?
Unit 3	Methods of Copy Preparation
Unit 4	The Computer and Copy Preparation
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#### **UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION**

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3.2	Why Must Copy be Prepared?
3.3	Who Prepares Copy?
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, three things will be focused upon:

- The definition of copy
- Why copy must be prepared
- Who prepares the copy

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define and explain what copy means
- discuss why copy needs to be prepared
- identify those responsible for preparing copy.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 What is Copy?**

Newspapers, magazines, books and other published materials are made up of different items or materials such as news, opinion articles, editorials, features, cartoons, pictures, letters, tables, diagrams and many others. Many of the materials were written at different times for different purposes, but brought together by an author or an editor to form a single publication and to perform certain functions. Such materials for publication usually come in different forms, shapes and sizes, based on several factors, including the background of the contributors, the specification of the editor and the purpose they are meant to serve, among others. Many times, these materials are solicited for or commissioned, but newspaper and magazine editors often receive a plethora of unsolicited materials, some of which they eventually publish. Collectively, all the materials that are received for publication are referred to as 'copy', irrespective of their nature, where they have come from, how they were obtained and their state at the time they came in.

When materials meant for publication come in, they are usually, like raw materials that need to be processed. Just as food must be prepared before it is eaten, copy must be processed or prepared before it becomes good enough to be served to readers. Or to use an example from the petroleum industry, they are like crude oil which must be refined and made suitable for use. Crude oil in its natural state cannot be used to accelerate a car's engine; it cannot be used to keep a lamp aglow; and it cannot be used to fuel a cooker. It must first go to a refinery or a petrochemical plant where it undergoes various forms of refining and transformation before it becomes a final, usable product. Similarly the materials we see in published books, magazines, newspapers and other published works are the refined version of some earlier forms of 'crude' stuff. They all came in at first in different forms and states as copy. They were then processed by people who are skilled in editing, proof reading, etc, and become what you see them to be.

Some publications are made up of maps, graphs, figures and other types of illustrative materials. All these are part of copy. They are worked upon as part of the process of publishing. Copy, therefore, does not refer to plain text alone. It refers both to text and all other materials like diagrams, pictures that are brought in to be worked upon for the purpose of publication.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Take any published material of your choice (e.g. newspaper, book, magazine, etc), imagine and write down the different types of copy that you believe were used to produce it.

### **3.2 Why Must Copy be Prepared?**

When beans, yam, cassava and other food items are harvested on the farm and brought home, they are not served raw. How would you like chewing groundnuts along with the pods, unwashed, and neither boiled nor roasted? What about swallowing coconut straight from the tree? You may not be able to, even if you wanted to give it a try. The same applies to most to most other food items. They are not devoured the way nature provided them. Instead, they are processed by having their skins or covers removed, then cooked, fried, boiled, dried or roasted. After this, they are ready for serving. In a similar way, the various materials submitted for publishing are not ready to be published. They need to be worked upon to change them from ‘raw food’ to ‘processed food’, or from raw materials to finished products.

Imagine what happens when beans is served the way it came from the farm without any form of processing! The raw beans in their pods, without processing, are not an appropriate meal. Even a starving man may not agree to eat it in its raw form. For the food to become a delicacy, it must be processed. Similarly, for the copy to become an acceptable publication, it must be worked upon.

Copies may come in handwritten forms as drafts, as poorly written manuscripts or as manually typed scripts. Some are full of errors, omissions, or are simply not properly written. Such materials cannot be served the way they are to esteemed readers. They must first be worked upon or processed, to bring them to a level or standard that the reader can enjoy. Remember that materials are not gathered simply for the purpose of being gathered. They are gathered for the benefit of the reader, and unless the reader can derive benefits from the materials, the publication cannot be said to be successful. This is the essence of copy preparation. It is simply like preparing raw food so that it can become a delicacy.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

If unedited materials from different people are “served” to you, list three feelings that you will have and at least one reaction that you will put up.

### 3.3 Who Prepares Copy?

A number of things happen between the time a material is submitted for publication and the time the final version comes out. In a newspaper, all the activities within this chain (from draft to printed copy) are collectively referred to as *copy flow*. During copy flow, different people work on the draft or 'raw material' with a view to making it refined, better, or more appropriate. They may add, subtract, rework, amend or do other things, which they believe, are necessary to make the copy into what it is supposed to be, or to put it in a better stead to perform the function it is meant to perform. All these and many more are the tasks or responsibilities of those who prepare copy for publication.

The first person to work on the copy is the writer or reporter. He or she is the one that covered an event and wrote a news report on it. He or she could be the one that conceived the idea of a feature article, did a research on it and has written it for publication. He or she may even be the prospective author of a book! All the materials needed for the book have been gathered, and a manuscript has been developed. It is usually a satisfying experience to produce a material for publication, tedious as the experience might be. It is usually like the relief a mother feels after she is delivered of a 'bouncing' baby.

Now the copy is in. If it is a newspaper or magazine, the news editor or line editor works on it. For example, if it is a sports story, the sports editor is the line editor that will work on it. If it is a feature article, the features editor is the line editor that will work on it. If it is a book, an appropriate editor is assigned the task of working on it. The idea here is that apart from the originator of the copy, somebody else at this juncture, works on it. Two good heads, they say are better than one.

The subeditor (otherwise called the copy editor) performs the ultimate task in copy preparation. His desk is the final quality control post before the material is published. As a result of this, it is usually assumed that copy is prepared by the sub-editor. This, to a large extent is true, but in reality, he works with the writer, reporter and other assistants. In some media houses, the subeditor reports to the chief subeditor. This depends on the size and structure of the publishing organization. Some larger publishing houses may have structures that are more complex than this, while smaller or more compact publishing outfits have structures that are as simple as what has just been described.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Draw a sketch to show the various people who, you think participate in copy preparation in a medium - sized publishing outfit.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

When you see a newspaper, magazine or a book that has been published, remember that it all started as a copy or a draft. In that form, the materials could not be offered to readers. It was raw. To make it suitable for readers, it was prepared, edited and made to fit a specified standard, style or taste. After this was done, the copy editor or chief subeditor confirmed that the material was ready for publication and then it was sent forward for the purpose of getting it published.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have looked at what ‘copy’ means, why copy must be prepared, and who prepares copy. It was explained that copy refers to the various materials that are sent in or submitted for publication. The examples of food and petroleum were used to show that like many other things in life, copy must be prepared before it is served to readers if it to serve its purpose. It was emphasized that materials for publication are not published the way they are, but are processed by designated people to make them suitable for serving to readers. It was also explained that the process of making materials ready for publication is referred to as copy preparation. In addition, it was explained that various people are involved at different stages of preparing copy for publication, but that the most notable people, apart from the originators of the copy, are copy editors, otherwise known as subeditors.

Finally, it was mentioned that because publishing organizations differ on the basis of their size and structure, there are usually variations in the designation of the final person that works on copy before it is ready for publication. While in smaller and less complex publishing houses, copy preparation ends at the desk of the subeditor (otherwise known as the copy editor), in bigger and more complex publishing set ups, the subeditor still reports to a more senior person usually designated as the chief subeditor.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Describe the various processes that a copy passes through from the time it is submitted as a draft to the time it leaves the subeditor’s desk or the chief sub editor’s desk as the case may be.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Akinfeleye, R.A. (1987). *Essentials of Modern African Journalism: A Premier*. Lagos: Miral Printing Press.

Sellers, L. (1968). *The Simple Subs Book*. Oxford: Pergamon.

## **UNIT 2     WHAT IS COPY PREPARATION?**

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Meaning of Copy Preparation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to this second unit which is a continuation of our discussion of copy, but from a different angle. Now that we know what ‘copy’ means, it is important to also know what ‘copy preparation’ is all about. That is, what exactly does copy preparation involve? When people are said to be involved in copy preparation, what exactly is it that they are doing? This unit focuses on the meaning of copy preparation and what it entails.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of copy preparation
- discuss what copy preparation entails.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Meaning of Copy Preparation**

Copy preparation refers to the handling, processing or treatment of copy after it has been submitted by the writer or reporter. Remember that somebody originated copy at the on set. It may be the reporter, author, a freelancer, feature writer or an aggrieved reader or any other person. Copy preparation involves a number of activities. These involve the following, among others:

- Copy tasting,
- Reading and reading copy,
- Re-arranging (or rejigging) copy,
- Re-writing copy,
- Cutting and trimming copy,
- Writing headlines.

## **Copytasting**

This is the very first step in copy preparation. Once a material is received, it is 'copytasted' to see if it should be accepted or rejected. This involves taking a decision on whether that particular material is suitable for the publication or not. If a material is rejected at this first stage, it dies a natural death. If it is considered acceptable, then a decision needs to be taken on which section of the publication it can be considered for. For example, a decision may be taken on whether it is a news material that should go into the pages earmarked for news, or whether it is for the metro section, or the fashion section of the publication. Although this is the very first and preliminary stage, here many materials fail to make it. Some of such materials are adjudged to be unsuitable for publication, so the issue of where they should be inserted does not even arise. Some may be considered to be the kind of materials that are usually used in a given section of the publication, but their standard may be too low to be used. So they are discarded straight away. They are like still born children that die even before they are able to open their eyes.

Those who handle copytasting differ from one publication to the other, but generally they are referred to as 'copytasters'. A copytaster who processes copy that comes in from news agencies (such as News Agency of Nigeria, NAN, Reuters, Agence France Press, etc) is usually referred to as a cable Editor or Telegraph Editor. Different types of names are used for different types of copytasters.

Due to shortage of staff and other considerations, sometimes the task of copytasting is done by the chief sub and copytasters are not employed. This is the case in many newspaper houses in Nigeria and many other developing countries in Africa and Asia.

## **Reading and Re-Reading Copy**

After copy has successfully scaled through the first stage called copytasting, it now faces a new challenge. This second challenge involves reading and re-reading copy. There are three main reasons for reading and re-reading copy. These are:

- (a) For the purpose of adding anything that may have been left out;
- (b) Removing any unnecessary or inappropriate material that is still contained in it;
- (c) Generally making it refined.

Most times, a single material needs to be read over several times, and in most cases, no matter the number of times the material is read, there is



still room for addition, subtraction and refining. If a material is not read through several times, missing gaps may go undetected, and certain unwanted materials may be published. Similarly, certain inappropriately presented materials may not be noticed. This underscores the need for copy to be read and re-read several times. It reduces the chances of errors and omissions.

### **Re-Arranging (or Rejigging) Copy**

Often, copy needs to be re-arranged (or rejigged) to make it more meaningful or more logical. This may involve moving some portions (e.g. lines, paragraphs, sentences, phrases, words, etc.) away from where they were originally. While some are moved forward, others may be moved backwards. It is like “juggling”, but the main aim is to ensure that copy is excellent, appropriate and suitable.

### **Re-Writing Copy**

Sometimes, the whole copy or portions of it may need to be re-written. There are different reasons why they may be re-written. These include the need to make them more explicit or more meaningful; to make them conform with the publication’s house style; to make them fit into the available space, and so on and so forth. Sometimes, re-writing helps to bring out the meaning or message of the copy more forcefully. At other times, re-writing is meant to help a writer who has a very good idea but is unable to communicate such ideas as perspicuously as possible.

### **Cutting and Trimming**

Sometimes copy is too big and needs to be cut or trimmed to avoid boring the reader. At other times it has nothing to do with boredom but space. Perhaps the available space is small and copy needs to be cut and trimmed so it can enter. Sometimes the story is cut, and the concluding part (or its continuation) is carried in the next edition. Some books (or other publications) are serialised in newspapers and magazines. This means that the copy is cut into several “bite sizes” (or acceptable lengths) and published in a number of successive editions of a newspaper or magazine.

### **Writing Headlines**

Most people read newspapers because of catchy headlines. This is true of Nigerians as it is true of people of other countries. Take a look at the following headlines. Ten are from Nigerian newspapers while five are from Indian newspapers.

***Headlines from Some Nigerian Newspapers***

1. Lagos Landlords Fear Asian Tsunami (New Age, Thursday, January 6, 2005)
2. Govt Uncovers 200 Illegal Airstrips (The Guardian, Thursday, February 17, 2005)
3. Swiss Government Ready to Return N60B Abacha Loot (The Guardian, Thursday, February 17, 2005).
4. New IG Hits Tafa Balogun Hard (Sunday Punch, February 6, 2005)
5. Imam's Body Intact 10 yrs After Burial (Sunday Sun, January 2, 2005)
6. No going back on Strike- ASUU (The Punch, Wednesday, February 23, 2005)
7. Switzerland Returns \$458m Loot in March (The Punch, Thursday February 17, 2005)
8. World Class Scientist Promises Support for ABU (Weekly Trust, December, 11-17, 2004)
9. Anyim, Zwingina's Houses Escape F.C.T Demolition Squad (Vanguard, Friday, July 23, 2004)
10. This Minister is Our Problem-NFA (Vanguard, Friday, July 23, 2004)

***Headlines from Some Indian Newspapers***

1. Parveen Babi Found Dead at Home (Sunday Express, 23 January, 2005)
2. 300 Die in Satara Stampede (Indian Express, Wednesday, 26 January, 2005)
3. Nepal King Shuts Doors On India ( The Times of India, Thursday, February 3, 2005)
4. Surface –to-Air Missile Trishul Test- Fired (The Free Press Journal, Thursday, January 20, 2005)

## 5. Mumbai Brushes Up on Geography as Atlas Turns Bestseller (Bombay Times, Thursday, February 3, 2005)

Most people think that catchy headlines are written by the reporters, but in reality, that is not true. It is not the duty of reporters to write, craft, carve or cast headlines. Copy editors are the ones that are trained to perform the function of writing appropriate headlines for copy. Headline writing (or “casting” as it is called in journalistic terminology) is one of the important tasks that subeditors perform in the process of copy preparation.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Close this unit and then in your own words explain what you believe copy preparation is all about.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Copy preparation is all about making copy suitable for publication, putting into consideration various factors such as the audience, nature of the material and available space, among others. Copy preparation ensures that there are no missing links, and that the reader is not given unnecessary and inappropriate copy. Without copy preparation, many readers would stop reading because of boredom, errors, missing links and other distractions.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have examined the meaning of copy preparation. It was explained that it involves several activities that are meant to make copy appropriate or suitable for publication. Some of the activities in copy preparation discussed in this unit include: (a) copytasting, which was described as the very first and basic step in copy preparation (b) reading and re-reading, which is used to identify the aspects of the copy that require further attention (c) re-arranging (or rejigging) which is used to improve the way some parts of the copy are arranged so as to make them more meaningful (d) re-writing, cutting and trimming are used to enhance the quality of the copy and (e) writing headlines (or headline casting) is used to flag down the attention of the potential readers. It was explained that contrary to popular beliefs, reporters are not the ones that determine the headlines. Headlines, it was explained, are written or cast by copy editors who are trained to perform that function.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List and discuss the six main tasks that are carried out during copy preparation.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER REFERENCES**

Berner, R.T. (1982). *Editing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Okoye, I. (2000). *Newspaper Editing and Production in the Computer Age*. Lagos: Mbeyi and Associates.

## **UNIT 3     METHODS OF COPY PREPARATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Methods of Copy Preparation
    - 3.1.1 Manual Method of Copy Preparation
    - 3.1.2 Computerised Copy Preparation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A common saying in Nigeria is that there are many ways to kill a rat. A rat can be killed by running after it and hitting it with a hard object, or by setting a trap for it, or by using poison. Even among the rat poisons, there are various types. One is called 'kill and dry'. This is very popular because after killing the disturbing rat, it dries it, thereby ensuring that no offensive odour oozes out of the dead rat.

Just as there are many ways to kill a rat, there are also many methods of copy preparation. In this unit, we shall take a look at the two most popular methods of copy preparation.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the different methods of copy preparation
- explain the advantages and challenges associated with the methods of copy preparation
- apply a method of copy preparation.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Methods of Copy Preparation**

There are two main methods of copy preparation, namely the manual method and the computer-assisted method. Before the advent of computer-assisted copy preparation, the manual method was the vogue. Various forms of it existed, and they were popular among those who used them. The manual method became so popular because it was

apparently the only method that existed, and it was considered as being reliable, resilient, affordable and easy to use. For a long time, this perception persisted. Then came the computer. Computer was not initially designed for copy preparation, but being dynamic and highly adaptable, the computer was adapted for the task of copy preparation. Then the perception of manual copy preparation began to change. Some of the problems earlier unnoticed with manual copy preparation became obvious, while the few problems that had earlier been noticed became magnified. The end of an era was in sight

With the advent of computer-assisted copy preparation, the story and influence of manual copy preparation has changed. For a long time, the manual method of copy preparation survived alongside the computer-aided method. Each publishing outfit depended on the resources available to it, adopted one or a combination of the two methods of copy preparation. But now, the manual method is being gradually discarded in favour of the computer – assisted method which is faster, more precise and more economical to use.

### **3.1.1 Manual Method of Copy Preparation**

Under the manual method of copy preparation, copy comes in handwritten or typed, and the sub editor reads through manually to ensure correctness (in names, titles, dates, etc.). He also checks through for correct spellings and ensures that the story conforms to the “housestyle” of the publication.

The subeditor using the manual method also subs edits (or subs) the copy, line after line, sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, page after page, etc to ensure that it fits the available space as specified by the layout. He then writes a headline that fits the allocated space and checks each paragraph of copy to ensure correctness. He completes the page as quickly as possible to meet the deadline. It is said that in publishing, there are no lifelines; only deadlines to meet.

Manual copy preparation is laborious and time consuming. Sometimes it could be very boring too. Imagine yourself trying to read through different items, submitted by different people, under different circumstances. But that is not all. The subeditor tries to ensure that the items make sense to different people from different backgrounds, living in different places under different circumstances. It can be really tasking. Yet, the subeditor must meet the deadline. In publishing, meeting the deadline is a compulsory task, and sometimes, a subeditor who works manually may end up compromising quality in an effort to beat the deadline. But quality should not be compromised, if the readership is to be maintained and even expanded. So the task of the

subeditor working manually is not easy. He must run against time and still keep the quality high.

One of the difficult tasks for a subeditor working manually is re-arranging (or rjigging) copy. Sometimes the sequence of copy is so illogical that nothing short of total re-arrangement would suffice. The most important point may be hidden somewhere in the copy. The subeditor has to discover it and bring it to the fore. At other times, the opening statement may be so weak that it needs to be moved elsewhere if not totally expunged. These are difficult tasks for a subeditor working manually. The fact is that people think and write in various ways. Some people write the way they think, while others, after this initial step, go back to logically re-organise their thoughts which they have committed into writing. But it is not everybody that does that. In any case, if every copy brought for publication is superb and appropriate, then the subeditor will soon lose his/her job!

Cutting and trimming could also be difficult if done manually. The subeditor often needs to get copy re-typed several times, and if this is done manually, it could be stressful, boring and tedious. And come to think of it: manual typewriters have not been completely phased out, at least, as at today. So there is a possibility that somebody somewhere is laboriously struggling to prepare copy, aided, perhaps by an ancient manual typewriter!

### **3.1.2 Computerised Copy Preparation**

As mentioned earlier, computer – assisted sub-editing is faster, more, efficient and precise. All the tasks performed by the subeditor working manually are still performed, but this time not manually but using a computer.

Copy can be inputted directly into the computer by a reporter or writer, and even by an operator who is not necessarily a journalist. This is the trend among up-to –date publishing houses in different parts of the world. The text can be typed or scanned as the case may be, and a digital camera or scanner can be used to input graphics.

The basic principles that guide manual sub-editing still guide computerised sub-editing. These are:

Conciseness- which simply means using a few words to express an idea instead of using a multiplicity of words.

Accuracy of expression- which implies that an expression should say exactly what it is meant to say. For example, does dowry mean the same thing as bride price? If they imply different things, do not

use one in place of the other. Does rustication mean something different from expulsion? If it does, why should they be used interchangeably? Are ‘boy friend’ and ‘fiance’ synonymous? If they are not synonymous, why should they be used interchangeably? Does ‘girl friend’ mean the same thing as ‘fiancee’? If they mean different things, avoid using them interchangeably.

As a subeditor works on any copy (whether manually or computer – assisted) the following questions run through his mind:

Is this the most appropriate way to express this idea or is there a better way of expressing it?

If there is a better way, why am I not using it?

Is this word correct in this context?

Will my readers understand this word, or is there a more familiar alternative that I can use?

Why should I use this word if the alternative is easier for the reader to understand?

Would it be better to shorten the words? That is, should I reduce the number of words? If I reduce the number of words, will I still be properly understood, or will I be misunderstood?

In subbing on computer, the “sub-ed” must remember to always save the work. This is particularly so because of frequent power outage in Nigeria. The original copy must also be saved. The new version of copy should have a different name, to avoid confusing the old and the new. This is very important because if the work is not saved and there is power outage, the work will be lost, and the sub ed will have to start all over.

Even when using a computer, the subeditor should not rely on computer for everything. For example, while spelling checks on computer may be very useful, sometimes it is important to cross-check for correctness of the spellings as the computer may not be familiar with certain forms of spellings, personal names and names of places.

Some publications prefer British spelling and grammar to the American variety and vice versa. The sub ed needs to be sensitive to this preference, adjusting the computer spelling and grammar check accordingly, so that all corrections will reflect the variety preferred.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**



Discuss any two constraints that a Nigerian subeditor using computer-assisted copy preparation is likely to face. How would you advise that such constraints be handled?

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

There was a time when one could become a successful sub editor without knowing how to use a computer. He or she relied on the assistance of a competent typist. But that era is over. To be a successful subed today (or to even qualify as a “cub” subed) one needs to be very competent in the use of appropriate subbing computer applications.

The use of the computer in subbing is not just for fancy (fanciful as it is), it is also a quality control mechanism and it helps the subed to meet his deadlines. It is evident; therefore, that computer-assisted subbing is an innovation that has come to stay. If anything, it will continue to expand and improve, and those who fail to take advantage of the immense opportunity it offers will lose out at the end of the day.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has examined the two main methods of copy preparation, namely manual copy preparation and computer-assisted copy preparation. It was explained that the manual method was the first to emerge, and that it was considered to be reliable, affordable and easy to use. It was therefore embraced warmly. Over time, however, the computer arrived. It was adapted for copy preparation, and users discovered that it had several advantages over the manual method that had been the vogue. It was realised that the manual method of copy preparation that had been in use was actually laborious, time-consuming and even boring. Gradually, everybody has moved to computer-assisted copy preparation. Computer-assisted subbing, it was explained, is more efficient, less tedious and even more dynamic as it can be used to accomplish a variety of tasks. Most publishing houses have moved forward with the new technology and subeditors as well as publishing houses that are yet to embrace the new innovation may very soon be left behind.

Since computer-assisted copy preparation has become very important, it is necessary to devote more time to it. The next unit, therefore, will take a more detailed look at computer-assisted copy preparation.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- 1) Discuss the two main methods of copy preparation as well as their advantages and disadvantages.
- 2) Which do you prefer, and why?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Hodgson, F.W. (1984). *Modern Newspaper Practice*. London: Heineman.

Okoye, I. *Magazinology*. Lagos: Mbeyi and Associate.

## **UNIT 4 THE COMPUTER AND COPY PREPARATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Computer and Copy Preparation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Although we have, in the last unit, discussed computer-aided copy preparation under methods of copy preparation, in this unit we shall discuss in greater detail the issue of computer in copy preparation. This is because the topic is so important that we cannot dismiss it hurriedly. Copy preparation is at the heart of print production, and if it is properly handled, chances are that other things will fall into shape. But if copy preparation is poorly handled, the outcome will be poor quality production that no one will be proud to identify with.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- explain how computer-assisted subbing is done
- describe the various tasks that the computer assists the sub-editor to accomplish.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Computer and Copy Preparation**

As mentioned in the previous unit, the computer facilitates more efficient, fast and precise copy preparation. The computer has indeed, revolutionised every aspect of human life, and any journalist or aspiring journalist without computer skills will find it difficult to fit in, especially on the subdesk and in the task of subbing.

The sub desk is a quality control post, and a subeditor who competently uses the computer will produce better quality copies at a faster speed. Such a subeditor attracts more respect than one who cannot use the computer but relies on a secretary to input copy into the computer and effect all indicated changes.

In many media houses in Nigeria today, copy is filed in through computer and a sub editor who cannot use a computer is considered to be anachronistic (outdated). With a computer, the subeditor performs the following and other subbing tasks that are expected of him.

### **Editing for Clarity (Ensuring that Copy is as Clear as Possible)**

Sometimes copy contains several ambiguities. After reading through it, the sub-editor may wonder what the main point is all about. He may spend some time trying to get a proper understanding of the issue and the way it is presented. The final reader out there does not have the time and patience to do this. He may simply dismiss the article and even the publication. To avoid this type of negative reaction from esteemed readers, the sub desk works hard to eliminate all forms of ambiguity. Take a look at the expressions below and you would notice that some are unclear because of high sounding words, while some expressions are either literary or out dated that a present-day speaker of English may not easily understand them. The duty of a subed includes simplifying or reworking parts of the expression which create lack of clarity. The examples of unclear expressions include the following among others:

- a) As soon as the coast is clear, those committed to unwitting passions than the prompting of their hearts will find solace in the paradise of folly.
- b) Government decision is to grant perpetual annuity based on longevity of commitment to the actualization of civil reforms.
- c) Both the ecclesiastical and sacerdotal functions of a priest must be discharged as a mark of celestial obeisance; not ethereal compulsion.
- d) If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels would have been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces.
- e) The man actually transited on account of *asphyxia*, consequent upon the fracture or dislocation of the cervical vertebrae; not witchcraft as supposed by the blind crowd in the village.

### **Editing for Correctness of Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation**

The way copy is punctuated conveys various meanings. Take a look at the following sentences, which look alike but have different meanings:

- (a) The man whose son lives in London is coming.
- (b) The man, whose son lives in London, is coming.

The difference between the two sentences above lies in the punctuation. The meanings of the sentences are different on account of that. While the first sentence is talking about a certain man whose son lives in London, the emphasis of the second sentence is on the man himself; not the fact that his son lives in London. The phrase 'whose son lives in London' in the second sentence is described as a parenthetic insertion. It provides gratuitous information. That information is not integral. It is not too important. It is by the way, or so to say. With or without that information, the meaning of the second sentence is complete. But in the first sentence that expression (i.e. whose son lives in London) is an integral part of the sentence, and if it is removed, what that sentence implies changes.

The duty of the sub-editor, among other things, is to ensure that the meanings of expressions in copy are clear, and that the right meanings are conveyed.

English, like any other language, has rules that guide usage. The sub-editor ensures that copy complies with the rules of usage. Expressions that do not comply with the rules of usage offend the sensibility of readers and the sub-editor works towards ensuring that all such offensive expressions are eliminated from copy. Take a look at the following expressions and imagine how offensive they could be to a reader who is knowledgeable in English grammar:

- (a) This woman whose son won the award is himself a diligent student some years ago.
- (b) When people talk about light failure in Nigeria, their should also talk about paying their bills prompt
- (c) His Father is an alumnus of the National Open University of Nigeria.
- (d) I have being to Ibadan twice this year.
- (e) These past few years I have not seen the gentleman that controlled traffic at the juncture.

Spelling errors are also a serious kind of problem, and they can be highly embarrassing. There are some publications that have spelling

errors even in the caption. The blame naturally goes to the sub-editor. To avoid this embarrassment, he/she diligently subs the copy to eliminate spelling errors, some of which may qualify as typos. Take a look at the spelling errors in the following sentences:

- (a) Soldier runs amorc, kills people at Ibadan.
- (b) The National Open University does not provide accommodation for students.
- (c) The Nigerian High Commissioner in Lagos traveled to his country's capital, Niamey, yesterday for consultation.
- (d) The National Ecumenical Centre, Abuja, is adjacent to the National Mosque.
- (e) Alumni associations help to develop their almer mata.

### **Editing for Style (Ensuring that the Appropriate House Style is Used)**

Style is a very important thing in publishing. There are various definitions of style, but the baseline is that style differentiates one thing from another. One style may be appropriate in one context but inappropriate in another. So style is not just about correctness but also about appropriateness. It is because of the importance of style that publishing houses maintain house styles that distinguish them from other publications.

The subed ensures, among other things, that the style of copy complies with the housestyle. Areas in which copy style diverges from the housestyle are amended before copy is finally approved.

### **Editing for Word Economy**

Word economy simply involves ensuring that words are used as carefully and as skillfully as possible, to avoid the use of very many, meaningless words. Take for example the expression below:

- (a) If it were to be me, I will take the matter before a court.

The above sentence can be more appropriately rendered as:

- (b) If I were you, I would take the matter to court.

Also look at the following sentence:

- (a) The man explained that the daughter of his uncle's son had gained admission into the university.

The sentence can be better rendered as:

- (b) The man reported that his cousin's daughter had been admitted into the university.

### **Editing Pictures, Cartoons, Graphs, etc. and Ensuring that They have Appropriate Captions**

Pictures play a very important role in good publications. In addition to providing evidence, they communicate more vividly and add aesthetic value. They provide a break from the monotony of text, and enable the reader to relax while still getting informed or educated. But errors in the use of pictures and other illustrative materials create both distraction and frustration. Indeed, any publication that has so many of such errors will possibly be held in disdain by readers.

Have you ever seen a picture and wondered why a better caption was not used? The query goes to the sub desk. It is the duty of the subed to ensure that all illustrative materials, including photographs, cartoons, graphs, and others are properly edited and correctly captioned. Wrong captions are particularly embarrassing, but again and again, some publications have had to apologise to readers over the use of wrong captions. Sometimes the people in the photograph are wrongly identified. At other times, the order of identification is changed in error, so that instead of identifying the personalities in the picture from the left as indicated, it is done from the right or vice versa. The wrong events or occasions are even identified sometimes. These are things which the subed checks before certifying copy ready.

Have you ever stumbled on a photograph and wondered why it was used at all? Do you think that a better option, if any, should have been used? If yes, then you thought like a sub-ed. The difference is that while you probably thought about it casually, he does it professionally before you. Since he will be blamed if there is a problem with the pictures, he thinks more deeply than you about it and goes ahead to ensure that something positive is done to remedy the situation.

### **Ensuring that Background Information that Put Stories in Proper Perspective are Provided**

There are some copies that readers may not readily understand unless the antecedents are well explained. For example, if there is a copy that reports that somebody has been buried, the reader first needs to be told or reminded of the death. If tears are reported to have flowed down a person's cheeks at last, the reader will need to know or be reminded of what transpired earlier on. If such background information is not

provided the reader may not have a clear understanding of the present situation.

The subed ensures that the background information that will enhance readers' understanding is provided. For example, it could be explained that the person had died a few days earlier, and the circumstance of his/her death could be summarized for those who are either unaware of the death, or have forgotten the exact circumstance. If such backgrounds are not provided, some copies would appear incomplete or out rightly misleading.

### **Ensuring that Copy Fits into the Allocated Space**

In the layout of any publication, spaces are provided for specific items. If the space is for a picture, the size is specified. If it is for a text, a graph, etc, the space allocated is specified. The subed ensures that copy aligns with the space specification so that no copy takes more than or less than what is specified. The next time you read a newspaper, magazine, book or other publications and realise that there are no wastages in the way space is used, remember that a sub ed somewhere has done his/ her job well. If the publication is a newspaper or a magazine, there is likely to be a space allocated to news. This space is called 'newshole'. The subed ensures that copy for news fits into the newshole and that nothing encroaches on the newshole.

In the past (when copy preparation was done manually) there was a long list of editing symbols used by subeditors in copy preparation. Students were taught to know and use such symbols in copy preparation exercises. The use of computers has removed that need, and most sub desks no longer use such symbols. Consequently, most up-to-date journalism training institutions no longer make students to study and apply those symbols in copy preparation. This, as has been explained, confirms that the computer has eliminated some of the stressful aspects of journalistic study and copy preparation work.

Computer has reduced publishing to a work that can be done at the desk. A whole package known as Ventura (or Desktop Publishing, DTP), along with others, is available, and you are encouraged to learn how to use DTP as a way of boosting their skills and subsequently, their worth.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Take a copy of a newspaper, magazine, book or any other publication. Look for at least five errors and imagine how such errors probably occurred and how they could have been avoided.



## 4.0 CONCLUSION

As in many other areas of life, the computer has made copy preparation relatively easier than was the case when manual copy preparation was the vogue. There are many advantages of computer – assisted copy preparation, and I would like to encourage you to familiarise yourself with appropriate computer packages (such as DTP) to enhance your value and efficiency.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Copy preparation is no longer as stressful as it used to be – thanks to the computer which now assists the copy editor to do his work more efficiently, faster and with greater precision.

This unit has looked at how the computer has contributed to the improvements in copy preparation and how copy preparation has become a lot easier than was the case previously. It encourages you to take advantage of available computer training programmes and packages to improve his knowledge and skill in computer – assisted copy preparation.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List and discuss six of the editorial tasks that a subeditor can carry out with the help of a computer.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Hodgson, F.W. (1984). *Modern Newspaper Practice*. London: Heineman.

Okoye, I. *Magazinology*. Lagos: Mbeyi and Associate.

## **UNIT 5 THE STYLEBOOK**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Stylebook
  - 3.2 Journalistic Style
  - 3.3 Housestyle
  - 3.4 Stylebook Errors
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Style is a very important thing in publishing. Style is that element that distinguishes one thing from the other; one publication from the other and one discipline from the other. Each publication or profession wants to be unique; to stand out of the crowd. There are many things that go into the making of style, and style is not merely aesthetic. It is functional. Journalistic style of writing, for example, is different from other forms of writing because of what is called the inverted pyramid. When writing a news story, a journalist is expected to follow this style.

Most of the rules that guide journalistic writing are contained in the journalistic stylebook.

This unit introduces you to the stylebook, a guideline that enables journalists, including subeditors, to maintain consistency. You will also be exposed to common stylebook errors so that they can be avoided.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what the stylebook is all about, and why it is important
- discuss some stylebook errors, and how to avoid them.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Stylebook**

Each publication tries to maintain some consistency in its style. As stated in the introduction, style is that distinctive characteristic that sets a discipline, a profession, or a person apart from others. The way journalists write is different from the way doctors or lawyers write. While doctors use a lot of medical expressions, lawyers' writings contain many Latinate legal expressions. Journalists, because they are writing for a very large and diversified audience, make efforts to simplify and clarify their writing. One does not require specialized training to be able to understand journalistic writing. Even when a journalist is writing on a highly specialized subject, the emphasis is on simplifying the language so that people can understand. Readers do not need to always keep a dictionary handy when reading articles in newspapers. That is part of journalistic style. There are words or sentence structures that are not conventional. The stylebook codifies all these so that journalists can understand and comply.

The stylebook is also used in training people in a specified profession, this time journalism, so that an aspiring professional would know what is permissible or not. It is this that gives successive generations of professionals a distinct colouration, based on their profession. However, the stylebook is not cast in stone. As times change; some elements in the stylebook are weathered. The changes may be radical or very slow, depending on the general orientation of the profession in question. The legal profession is largely believed to have a very strong tradition which is not disposed to dramatic changes. Even when some legal expressions can be translated from the original tongue in which they are couched, they are left the way they were met, to preserve the original spirit.

In the year 2004, Alfred Opubor, a Nigerian Professor of Mass Communication raised an alarm over certain deviations from journalistic style by Nigerian newspapers. He complained that there was an excessive use of high-sounding words by some columnists, and that this caused distractions for newspaper readers. He added that even as a professor, there were many words used by Nigerian newspaper columnists that he did not understand, and that often, he avoided reading such articles. Professor Opubor's position was based on the fact that there is an expected standard. Where there are no standards, people can act or write the way they want. But where there are standards, a person's performance can be measured against those standards. That is what the stylebook is all about. It is a standard by which different forms of journalistic writing can be assessed.

Just as there are general disciplinary or professional standards, there are also in-house standards which are meant to protect and preserve the uniqueness of publications. These in-house standards reflect the style of the publications. In Nigeria, for example, when the Guardian newspaper started, its style was to avoid using people's title when referring to them. Each person was addressed by the first name and surname without titles such as Chie, Engineer, Architect, Pastor, Barrister, Alhaji, Hajiya, etc. That was their style, but it later changed. When they used that style, it distinguished them from other publications that used people's titles when referring to them. Apart from the use of titles, there are other elements of style, for example, some publications may decide to use a person's full names, no matter how many those names may be, while others may decide to use the first name and the surname only.

Take a look at the following names, for example:

1. Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari  
or
2. Chief Olusegun Aremu Okikiola Obasanjo

Instead of:

3. Alhaji Shehu Shagari  
or
4. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo

Style may also be reflected in spelling. Some publications may choose to adopt British spelling while others may choose American spelling. These are just examples. There are many other elements of style.

Style operates at different levels, but we shall look at two of them, namely journalistic style and house style.

### **3.2 Journalistic Style**

Journalistic style refers to the copy style used by newspapers and magazines. The style of news writing is usually different from the style of essays, letters and other forms of writing. Journalists usually adopt what is called the inverted pyramid style in writing news. All the rules that guide the presentation of copy by journalists are referred to as journalistic style. As mentioned above journalistic style is different from the writing style in other professions.

To ensure consistency, the various rules that guide journalistic copy preparation are collated and made available to journalists. This may be

done at different times by different people. The book that contains guidelines on style is called the *stylebook*. One such stylebook in journalism is Stylebook published by the News Limited.

It should be noted that style is not all about correctness or incorrectness. It is about what is acceptable (or conventional) and what is not. A sentence may be grammatically correct but stylistically unacceptable.

### 3.3 Housestyle

Apart from the general journalistic style of copy preparation, a particular media house may have specific rules that guide the preparation of copy. This is called the housestyle and it differs from a particular media house to another. The example given earlier about the avoidance of people's titles by The Guardian is a good instance of a housestyle. The housestyle of one publication may accept something that the housestyle of another publication does not accept. This confirms that style is not a matter of correctness but a matter of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

As a way of ensuring consistency and compliance with housestyle, publications usually issue a stylesheet which contains their housestyle. This makes it easy for new staff, interns and others to know the housestyle and comply with it in copy preparation.

### 3.4 Stylebook Errors

Stylebook errors simply refer to things that are not acceptable in journalistic style of copy preparation, but which find their way through. The subeditor tries to ensure that such "errors" are eliminated from copy in the process of sub-editing (or subbing) them, but often, some still manage to get published.

Below are a few examples of stylebook errors.

<b><u>UnacceptableForm</u></b>	<b><u>AcceptableForm</u></b>
1. <u>9</u> students were in the bus	<u>Nine</u> students were in the bus
2. The event took place yesterday Evening	The event took place Sunday evening
3. Segun Oyedepo, a multi-talented chief has bagged a University degree	Segun Oyedepo, a talented holder of a Chieftaincy title, has obtained a degree

4. Chief (Dr.) Alhaji Nweke Okechukwu declined to make comments	Chief Nweke Okechukwu Did not make any comment
5. Des Barbara, more committed to unwitting pleasure than the prompting of his heart, has embarked upon a trip to South Africa.	Des Barbara has traveled to Sun city, South Africa

There are several other stylebook errors against which sub-eds wage ceaseless wars. They are so stubborn that they keep resurfacing, but continuous vigilance by the sub desk helps to check them to a very large extent. When stylebook errors get published, those who understand the workings of a media house know that they escaped the scalpel of the sub desk. Stylebook errors are part of the reasons why sub-eds work persistently on copy. They are like weeds. One of the ways in which they can be tackled is through training and re-training of staff, ensuring that the sub desk is strengthened and equipped to identify and remove them while still meeting deadlines.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Check through two of tomorrow's newspapers and identify at least five stylebook errors in each of them.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

A copy editor must be very familiar with the stylebook as well as the housestyle of the publication before he/she can properly carry out his/her duty. Since his/her duty is to, among other things, enforce compliance with both the journalistic stylebook and the publication's housestyle, his/her first task must be to master both (in any case, a person who has not mastered journalistic style is not likely to get appointed as a subeditor). If he/she had mastered journalistic style but not the housestyle of the particular publication, he/she must, as a master of duty master the latter before he/she takes on the assignment of ensuring that reporters' and other writers' copies comply.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have looked at the stylebook, which we said is a set of rules guiding copy preparation. It was explained that style is very important in publishing since it brings out the uniqueness of each publication. Style as it relates to publishing, it was explained, operates

at different levels and comes mainly in two forms (i) journalistic style which is general and applicable to the preparation of copy for all journalistic publications and (ii) Housestyle, which is the preferred style of a particular publication. It was also explained that style is not a matter of correctness or incorrectness, but a matter of preference. Style, among other things ensures consistency. Examples of some stylebook errors were considered in this unit.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the following:

- (a) The style book,
- (b) Journalistic style,
- (c) Housestyle,
- (d) Stylebook errors.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Akinfeleye, R. A (1987). *Essential of Modern African Journalism: A Premier*. Lagos: Miral Printing Press.

Butcher, J (1996). *Copy Editing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Daily Times of Nigeria Press (1982). *Style Handbook*. Lagos: DTN Press Plc.

The News Agency of Nigeria (1982). *Stylebook*. Lagos: NAN.

## **MODULE 2**

### **PRINT PRODUCTION**

Unit 1	History of Print Production
Unit 2	Raw Materials for Printing
Unit 3	Type Composition
Unit 4	Methods of Printing
Unit 5	Desktop Publishing

### **UNIT 1 HISTORY OF PRINT PRODUCTION**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
	3.1 Early Forms of Written Communication
	3.2 The History of Print Production
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

According to historians, a good understanding of history is a sine qua non if humanity is to build upon foundations laid by previous generations. If there is any modern-day activity that has a rich historical foundation worth exploring, it is printing. Printing is particularly important because it is an exclusively human activity. While non-humans, particularly primates, are involved in some other activities that human beings carry out, there is no evidence to confirm that non-humans, no matter how intelligent they may be, are involved in printing. Printing, therefore, can be said to be a product of man's superior intelligence, and because printing requires a great deal of intelligent work, it is a domain that is reserved for human beings. It is in the light of this that this section explores the historical origins of the art and science of printing.

To properly appreciate how printing became what it is today, it is important to look at its past. In this unit, we shall look at the history of print production. This will enable us to better appreciate present trends and future prospects.



## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- outline the history of print production
- discuss the contribution of printing to human civilisation.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Early Forms of Written Communication

Before the advent of printing technology, there were various ways in which communication in 'writing' was consummated. The classical instance as described in the Bible (Exodus 31: 18) offers an excellent example. God reportedly gave to Moses, the leader of the Jews in the era of the Exodus, two tablets of stones on Mount Sinai in the wilderness of Persia as the Israelites migrated en masse from Egypt where they had suffered untold hardship. The two tablets of stone containing God's testimony inscribed by His own hands were handed over to Moses who, in turn, read them to the people. It is evident that in the days after this classical instance, etching letters on stones and other hard surfaces became popular. The problem, however, was that although this method ensured that the texts survived for long periods, mass circulation was difficult because the letters had to be carefully etched by diligent craftsmen.

Formal written communication later began, with the invention of the ink, and scribes took over the duty of writing. The scribes wrote long scripts on broad sheets called the scroll which could be rolled up at both ends. At this point, the status of 'writing' as a skill for a few skilled craftsmen gradually began to change. There are accounts of original scripts containing valuable information which were discovered much later.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What was the main disadvantage of the early forms of written communication that preceded printing?

### 3.2 The History of Print Production

There are various accounts relating to the invention of printing. One account traces it to the development of papyrus in Ancient Egypt, from a sea plant that grew on the banks of the River Nile. It is believed by many writers that this was the first type of 'paper' that ever existed. The word *paper* is believed to have gotten its name from 'papyrus', the main

ingredient in the first ‘paper’ known to man. Papyrus was processed and used as the equivalent of modern day paper as scripts were written on it.

Some schools of thought trace the production of the first hand-made paper to Ts’ai Lun, a Chinese philosopher. The first paper mill in Europe is believed to have been built in Spain 300 years after the coronation of Emperor Charlemagne in Rome. He was coronated in 800 AD. The mill was said to have been built by the Arabs. By 1495, Britain had built the first paper mill in England.

Two important things need to be remembered about the early forms of paper. Firstly, they were hand made, and this did not encourage mass use because what was produced was highly limited in quantity. The 500 mills in Germany around 1800, for example, were reported to be capable of producing only a total of 1,250 tonnes of paper. Secondly, early paper was produced largely from cotton rags. It was much later that wood, as an essential ingredient for paper production, was discovered.

Germany gave the world the first paper – making machine in 1803, and this revolutionised paper making as more paper was produced, making its use more popular and cheaper.

In Nigeria, the printing of the first newspaper dates back to 1859 when the Revd. Henry Townsend an Abeokuta – based clergyman, printed *Iwe Irohin Fun Awon Ara Yoruba Ati Egba*. His main purpose was to encourage people to form the habit of reading. Reading, of course, is a very important way of getting information. Reverend Henry Townsend considered it very important to encourage people to form the habit of seeking for information through reading.

Until 1440, everything that was read was hand-written. But in 1440, Johannes Gutenberg, a German, invented the separate movable type. The word ‘type’ simply refers to a letter, number or any other character used in printing. Gutenberg’s invention was a watershed in the history of printing for the following reasons:

- (i) It removed the tedium associated with hand written form as printers could now use the same type repeatedly
- (ii) It became faster and cheaper to produce materials for reading

Although modern printing has gone far beyond the use of the “type” that Gutenberg gave to the world, his initial invention provided a basis for further development of the type. Today, various forms and sizes of type exist, and it is now much easier to produce large volumes of reading materials, including books, journals and newspapers, among others. A

typical computer today has a multitude of types, some of which will be listed later.

Before the present forms of printing were developed, many other forms had existed, starting from the type that Gutenberg invented. Some of the forms that had existed include the following:

### **Sheet Fed Machine**

This was introduced in 1860 and involved the use of a self-acting flat bed machine which mechanically damped and inked the stone. The machine was in use until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was called sheet fed because of the way it worked. Sheets of paper were fed by what was called the sheet grippers attached to the cylinder which rotated and pressed the sheets to enable them make contact with the stone. The stone itself was fixed in a bed which moved under a cylinder.

### **Web Fed Machine**

This was introduced in 1908. It was basically an adaptation of a press designed for printing lithographic designs on tin plate. It had two cylinders. To one was attached a plate which was damped and inked mechanically, and the other carried the sheet. It had a capacity to print both black and white and several other colours. This was later replaced by rotary. Both utilised metal plates.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

What disadvantages do you think humanity would have suffered if the replication of reading materials had depended solely on the craftsmanship of artisans who etched letters on tablets of stones?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Printing technology has come a long way. From the initial humble beginning during which period human beings were expected to manually manipulate the printing process, printing developed to a level where machines mechanically facilitated the process. This stage lasted for a considerable time, and today it is being gradually replaced by a system by which computers facilitate the process of printing. This makes the process of printing less stressful, more efficient and with a capacity to quickly produce very many neat copies.

## **5.0 SUMMARY\_**

This unit started by taking a look at how printing evolved from the time paper was first used till now. Although very many different types of printing processes had existed, we have concerned ourselves with the description of only a few of them.

Like paper production, which started as a manual process, printing has also evolved through manual process to mechanical process and now computer – aided process. Although computers have generally taken over from mechanical forms of printing, traces of mechanical forms of printing still abound, especially in developing nations. Gradually, computers will take over, and printing is expected to become less tedious, faster and more efficient.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Describe major landmarks in the development of printing, explaining two of the machines that have been used.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Baskette, F.K and Scissors J.Z. (1976). *The Art of Editing*. New York: Macmillan.

Evans, Harold (1974). *Editing and Design*. London: Heinemann.

## **UNIT 2     RAW MATERIALS FOR PRINTING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Raw Materials for Printing
  - 3.2 Paper
    - 3.2.1 Briefly Calendered Paper
    - 3.2.2 Super Calendered Paper
  - 3.2 Ink
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A lot of preparation precedes printing. A published author may complain about the long period it took for his/her manuscript to be printed or published. This is not strange, considering the preparation that needs to be made before a material is printed. Part of the preparation for printing involves assembling the required materials. In this unit, we shall throw the search light on the two most important materials that are required for printing.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

list and discuss the two main raw materials that are used in printing.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Raw Materials for Printing**

There are two main raw materials for printing. These are:

- (a) Paper, and
- (b) Ink

Paper and ink do not automatically translate into print. They pass through various processes, but in this unit our concern is not the processes, but these two raw materials without which it is not possible to print.

#### **3.2 Paper**

As discussed in an earlier unit, paper is now produced from wood, although it was initially developed from a plant that grew along the banks of River Nile in Egypt. Paper is vital to printing, and it comes in different shapes, sizes and colours. For our present purpose, we shall look at two different types of paper used in printing. We shall discuss them under two broad headings, namely the Briefly Calendered paper and the Super Calendered paper.

### **3.2.1 Briefly Calendered Paper**

This refers to newsprint, the type of paper that is used in the production of most newspapers. It is one of the two paper products that do not pass through what is called 'stock preparation'. The other paper product that does not pass through stock preparation is tissue paper. Take a piece of newsprint in your right hand, and a piece of tissue paper in your left, hand. Use your right thumb and your left thumb, as the case may be, to check the texture of the two types of paper in your hands, and you would realise how close they are, texture-wise. Thereafter, hold a piece of 'normal' printing paper in your hand and try to feel its texture. You would realise that in terms of texture or refinement, both newsprint and tissue paper are behind other types of paper. This is because both newsprint and tissue paper are only briefly calendered.

Newsprint is less glossy than other types of paper. Most other types of paper, during production, pass through a set of rollers called the "calender stack", to adjust their surface finish. Newsprint is only briefly calendered, making it cheaper and less refined than other types of paper. Its surface is less fine and more absorbent than the surface of other types of paper.

Newsprint usually comes in large reels and is usually one of the main items on which media houses expend money. To a very large extent, Nigeria has failed to establish itself as a producer of newsprint, in spite of the large forests that we have. Under the regime of General Muhammed Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon (1984 – August 1985) there was a policy to reduce the importation of newsprint and concentrate on the local one that was produced at Jebba, Oku Iboku and Iwopin. The policy led to shortage in the supply of newsprint, and many media houses complained bitterly about it because they argued that the policy was meant to punish them since the locally produced one was not enough for all the users in terms of both quantity and quality.

Still under the military, one of the ways in which government fought some media houses was to confiscate their stock of newsprint, making it difficult or impossible for those media houses to print their publications

as and when due. But this was an unlawful, dictatorial practice, and many media houses cried out against it.

Printing is not possible without paper because most of the functional printing in mass communication is done on it.

### **3.2.2 Super Calendered Paper**

This is a glossy form of newsprint. It goes through the calender stacks several times more than the newsprint and comes out more refined and with less absorbent surface. It is more expensive than the conventional newsprint, and most times, newspapers and magazines use them only for coloured pages such as those used for advertisements, advertorials, special projects, etc. It must be quickly added that some types of paper used for printing magazines are not in the category of super-calendered paper. They are chemically polished types of paper which are usually more refined and more expensive than the super-calendered type of paper.

On a general note, there have been calls by environmentalists that more of the paper used in printing should be recycled to reduce the impact of paper production on the environment. The production of paper involves the felling of trees, and it is believed that the rate of tree felling is faster than that of tree planting. It has also been suggested that all nations should embark on afforestation programmes to ensure sustainable environmental development. In Nigeria, it is apparent that there is still much to be done in the area of tree planting, environment development and recycling of paper. All these need to be done to preserve the environment and ensure steady supply of paper in future generations. Unless this is done early, there is no guarantee that future generations of Nigerians will continue to have access to the quality and quantity of low cost paper that we have today. And if the supply of paper is not guaranteed, it means that printing is threatened.

Printing is mostly associated with educational development. As any nation develops educationally, its need for printing increases. Similarly, large volumes of printed matter are usually identified with educationally progressive societies. This means that printing both facilitates educational development and is also an index of it. One of the ways in which any society can enjoy this two-way benefit is to ensure steady and uninterrupted supply of paper which we have identified as an important raw material for printing.

## **3.3 Ink**

Ink is the second essential ingredient in printing. The kind of ink used in printing is not the water-based type used in pens and biros, but the vegetable oil-based type. It comes in cans, and when the cans are opened the ink is usually semi-solid.

The type of ink used in printing is made up of the pigment (which produces the finished work), the vehicle solvent (which spreads the pigment about and into the desired places) and the binder (which dries up the ink).

It is believed in some quarters that in future, there will be greater shift to the use of oil-based inks in the lower end of the print production industry.

Without ink printing cannot take place because, it is only when ink is stamped or impressed on paper that printing can be said to have taken place. As in the case of paper, a major challenge for Nigeria as a nation is to ensure the sustainable production of high quality ink for the print industry. If high quality paper is available at an affordable price and printing ink is not readily available at affordable price, the printing industry is still at a disadvantage. Unfortunately, Nigeria, being largely a consumer society, depends largely on imported ink for the print industry to survive. This trend needs to be reversed so that Nigeria's printing industry will not depend on the vagaries of importation.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Imagine and discuss at least five things that could happen if Nigeria cannot get enough paper and ink for the printing industry.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Paper and ink, till date, remain the two main ingredients in printing. As a regional power, Nigeria needs to be able to produce these two in abundant quantity and excellent quality so that it will not need to expend scarce foreign exchange on importing them. Nigeria, indeed, has the capacity to produce, both for local consumption and also for export. But the industry needs to be developed and nurtured to attain that height.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Both paper and ink are required for printing. Paper comes in two main forms, namely the briefly calendered form (newsprint) and the super-calendered form (polished paper). The third category, which is not



machine glazed but chemically polished, is more expensive and not as commonly used in newspapers and magazines as the newsprint.

For Nigeria, which has one of the most vibrant media systems in Africa to maintain its leadership role, it is advisable to develop the local capacity in paper and ink production. It is also important to build large forests to ensure the steady supply of wood as well as sustainable environmental development.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the two main raw materials used in printing and their importance to national development.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Barton, Frank (ed) (1975). *The African Newsroom*. Zurich: International Press Institute.

Dimkpa, Prince (1997). *Media Management in Nigeria*. Lagos: Org Communication Consultants.

Okunna, C.S. (1999). *Introduction To Mass Communication*. Enugu: New Generation Press.

## UNIT 3 TYPE COMPOSITION

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Type Composition
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Both the type, and its composition are important elements in print production. This unit focuses on type composition, but the type itself constitutes the take-off point.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain type composition and its associated elements.

### 3.0 Main Content

#### 3.1 Type Composition

As explained in unit 2, the word ‘type’ refers to a letter, number or any other character used in printing. Type composition simply refers to the process of bringing different “types” together to form a reading material or text. The types, as individuals, convey no meaning, but brought together and arranged in various forms, they convey meaning. If for example, the following types exist individually, we see no meaning in them:

*Example 1:* G D O I V L O E

But when they are properly composed, they may read something like this:

*Example 2:* I LOVE GOD

In modern terms, type composition simply refers to the process of feeding materials into the computer, following the copy editor’s

instructions and arranging them in a proper, meaningful way. After the compositor or typesetter has done these, he prints out a proof, which is simply a sample of what is going to be printed. Usually, the proof comes out with a number of typographical errors which the proofreader works on.

There are various kinds of types or typefaces, and they are grouped into different families or classes, based on shared identity. The conventional classification of types yields the following categories:

- (a) Modern
- (b) Old style
- (c) Sans serif
- (d) Script
- (e) Venetian.

But the average computer has over 37 fonts from which the compositor may select, depending on the instructions he receives and his judgment on how best the instructions can be carried out. The fonts that are common on the computer include the following among others:

- i) New Times Romans
- ii) Arial
- iii) Tahoma
- iv) Georgia
- v) Arial black
- vi) Arial Narrow
- vii) Book Antiqua
- viii) Bookman old style
- ix) Century Gothic
- x) Comic Sans Ms
- xi) Courier New
- xii) Enstrangelo Edessa
- xiii) Franklin Gothic Medium
- xiv) Garamond
- xv) Guatami
- xvi) Haettenschweiler
- xvii) Impact
- xviii) Latha
- xix) Lucida Console
- xx) Lucida Sans Unicode
- xxi) Mangal
- xxii) Marlett
- xxiii) Microsoft Sans Serif
- xxiv) Monotype Corsiva
- xxv) MS Outlook

- xxvi) MV Boli
- xxvii) Palatino Linotype
- xxviii) Raavi
- xxix) Shruti
- xxx) Sylfaen
- xxxi) Symbol
- xxxii) Trebuchet Ms
- xxxiii) Tunga
- xxxiv) Verdana
- xxxv) Webdings

While some of these fonts are variants of others, some are special and are on their own.

A simple exercise which you can do to get to know these fonts better is to type a short piece on the computer, and to change it repeatedly from one font to the other. This way, the peculiarities and differences of the various fonts will be better appreciated.

During type composition, various types are used in the “right” proportion, using the subeditor’s judgment as communicated to the compositor. What is uppermost in the mind of the copy editor as well as the compositor is readability. “How readable is this stuff to the reader?” the copy editor and the compositor ask. This is their primary concern, but that is not all. In addition to readability which is a basic concern, other things are achieved during type composition and these include the following among others.

**(a) *Harmony***

The types selected must cohere (go together) smoothly. Some combinations may look odd or inappropriate. They can even distract the reader. Both the copy editors and the compositor are desirous of achieving unity among the types selected during composition.

**(b) *Style***

Style or uniqueness can be achieved during type composition. The compositor thinks of how best to make the print distinct, unique and appealing.

**(c) *Colour***

Colour, for now, does not simply mean black, red, yellow, green etc. It refers, instead, to the emotion or the mood that is created. A colourful

composition is one that conveys the message vividly and creates a desired mood.

The aim of most type compositors is to achieve readability and then add the above qualities so that the work can be attractive and appealing to the reader. A well-composed work should have such visual appeal that even from afar; the reader's attention can be flagged down and retained. The phrase "typographical pluralism" is often used to describe a well-composed work that combines different types and achieves a beautiful pattern.

Among the many "tools" available to the compositor is space. He uses different types of space along with the selected types in different point sizes to create different effects as the need arises.

The compositor can be likened to a sculptor who works diligently on a statue to give the best possible expression to an idea. Although the idea of how the publication should look like has come from the copy editor, it is the duty of the compositor to ensure that this is achieved. This is even better appreciated when it is remembered that in the past, type composition was done manually. At that time, the type compositor physically selected types and arranged them in a way that maximum effect, in line with the copy editor's vision, could be made. The "craft" of the type compositor in physically selecting and arranging the types was changed when the process was mechanised. He needed then to manipulate machines in order to compose type. But machines did not take away his creativity. Instead, he was aided to express his creativity better and faster. Today, computers have come to his aid, giving him an array of choices to select from. But in making those choices, he must still bear in mind that readability is still the principal thing. He also remembers that readability is not enough, since many other things, including many other printed matter, are trying to get the attention of the very reader he needs. So, he goes into his creative arsenal, aided by the computer, to select the most cohesive pattern that can project beauty, class and harmony, thereby helping both to get and also to keep the much – needed attention of the reader.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

- (a) Write a half-page article on type composition.
- (b) Change the font three times and write down your observations on the fonts.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Have you ever listened very carefully when a wedding cake is being cut? The cutting of a wedding cake is usually presided over by the person who baked the cake, and most times, the baker takes time to explain the various ingredients that were combined to produce the sumptuous delicacy. Some of the ingredients, standing alone, are either sour or bitter. Some, for example raw egg, are even repulsive. But when combined in the right proportion, they produce a delicious cake that both the guests and the newly wedded couple would love to savour.

The work that is done in type composition is like mixing the ingredients that produce a cake. There is a right proportion, and when this is achieved, harmony, style and colour result. When it is not achieved, the opposite will manifest.

Type composition is a very important aspect of printing. A good compositor or typesetter who handles the job excellently and in line with the subeditor's instructions promotes the publication and advertises his or her own skills. This, in turn, opens up a world of opportunities for both the publication and the staff that have worked on it.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have looked at type composition. Type, it was explained, refers to the individual characters, letters, numbers, etc, which are selected and combined to form a printed work. The process of selecting and combining the different characters or types is called type composition. The types are composed because standing alone, they cannot convey the desired meaning, but when selected, combined and arranged in a given way, the desired meaning is conveyed. The eight conventional classifications of type as well as some of the common fonts on computer systems were also listed. It was explained, among other things, that proper type composition brings about readability, harmony, style and colour, all of which enhance a publication. The term 'typographical pluralism' was used to refer to a well-composed piece that combines different types and achieves a beautiful pattern.

Space, which is one of the tools that a typesetter or compositor uses, was also mentioned, and it was explained that the work of a typesetter or a compositor is akin to that of a sculptor who carefully sculpts a pre-designed figure. Both the compositor and the typesetter, work carefully to execute the instruction of the sub editor.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss type and its various kinds.
2. What is type composition meant to achieve?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Butcher, J. (1966). *Copy Editing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Evans, H .(1974). *Editing and Design*. London: Heinemann.

## **UNIT 4     METHODS OF PRINTING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Methods of Printing
    - 3.2.1 Lithography
    - 3.2.2 Offset
    - 3.2.3 Gravure
    - 3.2.4 Screen Process (or Silk Screen Printing)
    - 3.2.5 Electrostatic Printing
    - 3.2.6 Laser Printing
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

There are many methods that students use for reading. Some students read hard all - year round, but some read very hard only a few weeks or days to tests or examinations. Some read through their notes and textbooks before each lecture, while others read through all the day's work before retiring to bed at night. The results of all these are not always the same.

Similarly, various processes and procedures go into printing. These give rise to different methods of printing as further influenced by the equipment used. Of course, the results are not always the same.

In this unit, five methods of printing are discussed. These are akin to the diverse methods of reading and the different results that emanate from them.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

identify and discuss various methods of printing.



### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Methods of Printing

There are various methods of printing or printing processes. In this unit, we shall take a look at the five most common types. These include the following:

- (i) Lithography
- (ii) Offset
- (iii) Gravure
- (iv) Screen process (otherwise known as silk-screen printing)
- (v) Laser printing

Generally, printing may be done manually (hand-printing) or through the use of machines (machine-printing). In hand printing, when types are selected they are arranged the way they are to be printed and the appropriate type of ink is put on them. Thereafter, they are impressed on paper. This process is slow, tedious and cannot be used for commercial purposes. Most of the printing jobs in which this method is used are small scale productions. The method takes more time and human effort, and extra care is taken to avoid errors that could mar the work.

After the printing, the types can be rearranged in the preferred order for future use or taken to the galley.

Machine printing, on the other hand, is the more efficient, faster and cost-effective method of printing involving the use of machines. This method involves the preparation of plates. It is from the plates that the impressions are produced. The process requires much skill and it is generally more complex than hand printing.

Comparing hand printing with machine printing is like comparing manual farming as used on many Nigerian farms with mechanised farming. Manual farming is more labour-intensive and time consuming. At the end of the day, the output is smaller, while mechanised farming is less labour intensive and faster, with higher output at the end of the day. Many people have discovered that mechanised agriculture is better and more profitable, and if they can afford it, they switch from manual to mechanised agriculture. The same scenario applies in printing. As soon as people in the printing business have sufficient funds to acquire the required facilities, they transit from manual to mechanised printing because of the accruing benefits and advantages.

However, hand printing has not completely disappeared. Many small scale printers still utilise manual printing techniques for various reasons.

Some of the reasons often proffered for the resilience of manual printing in Nigeria include low funds, epileptic power supply, need to take advantage of cheap labour and the need to accommodate small scale productions, among others.

The five methods of printing discussed below involve machine printing, because generally machine printing is more popular and more advisable than hand printing. The difference among the five methods lies in the processes involved. This is why these methods are more often referred to as printing processes rather than methods of printing.

### **3.1.1 Lithography**

This involves printing from a smooth surface of a metal plate which has been treated such that the ink used sticks to the design being printed. The first lithographic press (which was then hand – operated) was used in 1798 by Alloys Senefelder. By 1869, R. Hoe and Co had developed a power-driven lithographic press.

The lithographic press operates a photomechanical process involving the transfer of images. Its speed is high and it is relatively cheap to set up. It is generally cost – effective and the quality of work produced is good. However, the machine requires constant maintenance, and the lithographer needs proper training to be able to handle the machine. The types must be properly arranged before plates are made since it is very expensive, if not outrightly impossible, to consider effecting corrections on the plates.

### **3.1.2 Offset**

This is an indirect process of printing as opposed to the direct (letterpress) method. It involves taking a photograph of the page to be printed and placing the negative, over a plate. The light – sensitive plate is exposed to some ray of light through spaces on the negative, thereby hardening the letters. The non-printing surface is washed away and the printed plate is soaked in water and later in ink. The inked letters are impressed on a rubber blanket which then prints on paper.

### **3.1.3 Gravure**

This is a printing process in which images are transferred from ink-filled depressions in a surface to the printing paper. It is often used in the printing of photographs and artistic works because of its ability to reproduce excellently. It has a high degree of fidelity, and can thicken or coarsen as the need may be. However, the cost of initial plates may be high, while the printing cylinders require a longer preparation time.

It must be noted, however, that it can produce up to 25,000 copies per hour, but the minimum number of runs is usually 5,500. Since it is usually used for photography and artistic work, it is also most commonly known as photogravure. It is also known as “intaglio”.

### **3.1.4 Screen Process (or Silk Screen Printing)**

This involves the use of a stencil. The stencil itself is a light (thin) sheet (or layer) of cardboard (or metal) in which holes are cut in a shape such that a designed pattern (figure, letter, etc.) is produced when a brush, with pigment, is run over. Through an embedded mesh screen, ink is forced to the surface of whatever object on which printing is to be done. The screen is usually silk, nylon, metal mesh or dracon. If the printing involves different colours, a separate stencil is produced for the different colours.

### **3.1.5 Electrostatic Printing**

In this process, the web, without touching, is passed over devices that put an electric charge on the areas to be printed on the paper. It then passes through a chamber with ink dust floating in it. The dust is given an opposite electric charge so that it is attracted to the printing areas. The web is then heated in a giant microwave oven to bake the dust onto the paper. If more than one colour is used, the web is passed through other chambers containing the appropriately coloured ink dust.

### **3.1.6 Laser Printing**

This is a more advanced and more modern version of electrostatic printing. It is a process aided by a computer joined to the photocopier. The photocopier itself is the most universal form of electrostatic printing. The computer translates digital instructions from DTP (Desktop Publishing) computers into graphical information. Instead of using a strong light to etch the graphical information onto the electrostatic drum (or rotary press), the information is etched more accurately by a laser beam driven by its own computer.

The laser itself, according to *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary* is a device that produces a narrow, intense and highly controlled beam. Laser beam, over the years, has been deployed to solve many problems, including health problems, warfare, and several others. The utilisation of laser beams in printing is a highly welcome development because it has greatly improved the quality of printing jobs and advanced the frontiers of printing technology.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Write short notes on the following:

- a. Lithography,
- b. Offset,
- c. Gravure,
- d. Screen Process.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Printing technology has passed through various phases, giving rise to various methods or processes. Interestingly, new phases do not automatically wipe away the practices and methods associated with earlier phases. Therefore, the processes and methods of various phases thrive simultaneously. For example, although laser technology is now in use in printing, the earlier methods still exist side by side. Each printing organisation evaluates its needs Vis-a-vis the challenges of the jobs it has to execute and the resources available to it. Thereafter, it decides on which printing method or process to utilise. It is no surprise, therefore, that some printing organisations utilise a particular method for certain categories of jobs while using another process or method for other categories of jobs. This is allowed, provided the client that commissioned the job or the reader gets value and is satisfied.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

From the initial time-consuming and less efficient manual approach to printing called hand printing, printing has developed through various machine-aided processes. Each process has tried to improve on the preceding processes, but older processes or methods of printing have not been completely obliterated. The older methods are still in use because of the varying needs of printing organisations and their clients as well as the resources available to them.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List and discuss five methods of printing.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## UNIT 5     **DESKTOP PUBLISHING**

### CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Steps in Non-DTP Publishing
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    - 3.1.2 Text Composition/Compugraphics
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    - 3.1.5 Printing
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- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Desktop Publishing, otherwise known as DTP is a modern method of publishing that has revolutionised the process of publishing. To appreciate what DTP has contributed to the process of publishing, it is very important to start by looking at what publishing entailed before DTP. We shall do that in this unit. The disadvantages of the pre-DTP system will also be examined as a way of setting the stage for the discussion of the DTP innovation. Finally, the benefits of DTP, obvious as they appear to be, are discussed to make us better appreciate the need to embrace this innovation in publishing. These are our main tasks in this unit.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain what desktop publishing is all about  
discuss what publishing was like before the introduction of DTP  
list the contributions which DTP has made to publishing.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Steps in Non-DTP Publishing**

Publishing without DTP technology involved the following basic steps:

#### **3.1.1 Preparation of Script, Manuscript or Text**

Depending on what is being published, a script, manuscript or text needed to be prepared. If it was a newspaper, for example, the report filed in by a reporter, which had been edited and approved for publication needed to be typed on text composers. Remember that most of the reporters filed in hand-written reports which were edited and later typed, may be on a manual typewriter. At best it was an electronic typewriter. Depending on the exigencies of the moment, some reports were hurried to the text composer even without having been typed.

If the publication was a book, the would-be author most probably returned a final copy of the manuscript, typed on a manual typewriter or an electric typewriter. Remember the steps in copy preparation which was discussed in module one. The materials for publishing are now passing through the final stages of copy preparation.

#### **3.1.2 Text composition/Compugraphics**

Whether handwritten or typed, the material to be published needs to be further processed on the text composer or the compugraphic system so that the galleys can be produced. The galley is a continuous sheet on which the text has been typed in long columns. The galley proofs are proofread at this point for correctness, preparatory to further processing.

#### **3.1.3 Page Layout**

The galley, as mentioned above, is continuous sheet on which text has been typed in long columns. After the proofs have been okayed, the long sheet needs to be divided up and pasted on a card board paper to form pages on the basis of the original page plan. This is what the page layout at this point means. We can call it page making because the galleys are

being made into pages. In the process of making the pages, each story, article, picture, cartoon, etc, is fitted into the space allocated for it. This becomes a camera-ready artwork.

### **3.1.4 Linotronics**

Negatives need to be produced at this point from the camera-ready artwork. Care is taken before this time to ensure that there are no errors, because it is time-consuming and costly to begin to think of corrections at this time.

### **3.1.5 Printing**

At this point, the negatives will give birth to reading materials. From the negatives the required numbers of copies are mass-produced. The publication has put to bed.

### **3.1.6 Sorting, Stitching and Binding**

The material that has just been printed needs to be sorted or arranged the way they are to be distributed. If it is a book, the materials sorted and arranged may need to be stitched and guillotined (i.e trimmed at the edges with a very sharp machine) for binding. Materials that are not to be bound may need to be stapled (for example magazines and small books)

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

To publish without using Desktop Publishing, DTP, several processes must be followed. Discuss the processes involved in non-DTP publishing.

### **3.2 Disadvantages of Non-DTP Publishing**

The non-DTP approach to publishing has a number of setbacks, principal among which is the long-winding processes involved. As explained earlier, copy has to be prepared satisfactorily, then on to the composition of text so that the galley proofs can be obtained and proofread for correctness. Thereafter, the final proofs would be used to make up the page, ensuring that pictures, texts, graphics, etc are properly fitted. After that, the negatives of the pages need to be produced through the linotronics process before mass printing of the copies can be done. It is after this is done that the copies can be sorted, arranged and bound, depending on the type of publication.

Since the processes involved in non-DTP publishing is long, it is broken down into various small-sized tasks performed by different people. This



means that many hands are involved in the process of non-DTP publishing. This translates into higher overhead cost.

The time required for non-DTP publishing is also long because each person in the production chain has to complete his/her task and pass it on to the next person. Any delay within the chain could affect the final completion time. Yet, in publishing there are so many deadlines to meet, and any loss of time has adverse consequences.

Mention must also be made of the fact that non-DTP jobs do not come out as tidy as jobs done by DTP. This is because when DTP is used, the computer itself helps to achieve accuracy and neatness, making the printed work to come out with more sharpness.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

In addition to the few disadvantages of non-DTP publishing discussed in this unit, think of three more disadvantages, write them down and discuss with somebody who knows something about DTP.

### **3.3 Desktop Publishing**

Desktop publishing (DTP) is the exciting fusion of the technologies associated with digital typesetting and electrostatic printing. Recall that in unit 4 electrostatic printing was discussed. Digital typesetting, on the other hand, refers to a computer-aided method of setting the types, preparatory to printing. The fusion of the technologies behind the two gave birth to DTP. Desktop publishing may have become the catalyst for a worldwide re-thinking of the way text and images are handled. It has certainly expanded and changed the publishing industry. First, too much emphasis on the gee-whiz gadgetry of DTP may distract you from the essential fact. Machines will only do what their operators allow them to. In other words, many DTP machines are capable of quite remarkable feats of typography, but unless their operators understand how to use type properly, the resulting publications will be a disappointment.

With DTP the entire processes in publishing can be accomplished in a short time using the computer. Let us see how it works.

#### **3.3.1 Preparation of Script, Manuscript or Text**

With the DTP, a reporter or an author does not need to pass through the laborious process of writing in long hand, typing manually or on an electronic typewriter. The report or whatever it is, can be put into the computer straight and saved. This includes photographs, graphs and other illustrative materials. There are digital cameras from which

photographs can be downloaded into the computer system. Photographs and other illustrative materials can also be scanned into the computer where they are edited or processed further. This removes the delays associated with typing in long hand, typing, retyping, etc. Similarly, the delays associated with waiting for the photograph to be printed are removed.

An interesting aspect of the computer is its ability to help the writer detect some of the errors that would have gone unnoticed. This makes it easy for the reporter or author, to reduce the errors that are likely to be in the work.

### **3.3.2 Text Composition/Compugraphics**

With the DTP the need to wait for compugraphic work is eliminated. Once the materials are put into the computer and saved, they can be worked upon directly. If proofs are needed for the purpose of proofreading, they can easily be printed out, and whatever corrections are needed can easily be effected. This helps to save both time and energy.

### **3.3.3 Page Layout**

This is easily done on computer with accuracy and precision. Physical cutting up and pasting of the galleys on the cardboard to form pages is eliminated. Any form of cutting and pasting can be done on computer with maximum accuracy and precision.

### **3.3.4 Printing**

If the publisher decides to print directly from the computer or to produce negatives through the linotronics system, the computer is a ready companion. For printing jobs that are simple, straight forward and not too voluminous, the publisher may wish to print directly, but if the demands of the job are more complex, the computer is programmed to offer maximum support and assistance. This removes the stress and even nightmare that publishers often pass through in the process of getting their works out at the required time.

From the foregoing it is evident that DTP makes the publishing job easier to handle and less complex. However, it is appropriate to dedicate the next section of this unit to re-examining the special advantages that DTP has over the conventional publishing processes.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Compare the steps in non-DTP publishing as discussed in 5.1 with DTP as discussed in 5.3. What gains do you think publishing has made from the introduction of DTP?

#### **3.4 Benefits of DTP**

Although the benefits of DTP are obvious and have been mentioned in passing in this unit, there is need to now take a second look at them for better elucidation. There are very many of such benefits, but only a few will be highlighted here.

##### **3.4.1 Simplification of the Process of Publishing**

As previously explained, the entire process of publishing can now be consummated at the desktop without a need to move papers and other materials from desk to desk. The process has been so simplified that with proper training, a few people can accomplish with greater efficiency and effectiveness tasks usually handled by many people.

##### **3.4.2 Interactiveness**

DTP is such an interactive process that a user finds help readily available as the need arises. A user is prompted by the computer, and the response to such promptings guides the computer in providing further assistance to the user. Tasks which a user cannot understand are explained by the computer, thereby providing further education, enlightenment and mentoring. It is rare for a user to get to a cross-road without any form of support to get out from the computer system.

##### **3.4.3 Speed**

The speed of the computer is amazing. The computer easily performs tasks that could take human beings a long time to accomplish in a few seconds. This fast forwards production time, making it possible for jobs to be delivered on time. The time gained can be converted into other profitable uses.

##### **3.4.4 Storage and Retrieval**

With DTP, a large volume of materials can be stored in the system and retrieved for future use as the need arises. For example, instead of manually storing story files, pictures, etc, they can be safely and conveniently accommodated on the computer system and retrieved for use at the appropriate time.

### **3.4.5 Neatness and Beauty of Final Print**

The final output of the printed work is supposed to be neater and more beautiful, all things being equal. The accuracy and precision of the computer are supposed to eliminate redundancy and other elements that can affect neatness. The variety of types, fonts, etc, that are available on the computer also gives those utilizing DTP an opportunity to create or enhance beauty through an intelligent combination of various visual elements for aesthetic enhancement.

### **3.4.6 Cost-Effectiveness**

Using DTP can save a lot of costs. For example, by reducing the number of people working to get a task accomplished, or by reducing the number of man- hours required for a given task, the publisher is able to save cost on personnel. This saving can then be invested in staff welfare and other things to enhance profit. Human errors are also drastically reduced by the ability of the computer to provide prompts as the need arises. So although it may initially appear expensive to use DTP, on the long run, it is more cost-effective.

### **3.4.7 On-line Dissemination**

It is easier and more convenient to upload the published matter on to the Internet for wider dissemination if DTP is used in publishing it. If a matter is published using a process that does not involve computer typesetting, the material would still need to be computer-typeset before being put on the worldwide web. But since DTP is computer-based, the materials are steps ahead in terms of their readiness to be uploaded to the net.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Considering the initial capital outlay that may be required for DTP, why would you still recommend it to publishers?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

DTP is changing so rapidly that during the time between when these notes are written and when they are published, any machinery and programs mentioned could be obsolete. But simply put, DTP is a computer-aided method of publishing from start to finish, without the previous manual and cumbersome process. With the computer, the text can be typeset, edited and printed without much stress. It saves both cost and time, and it is generally more flexible. Using this system, a number of tasks can be performed in a short time with excellent results. With the

immense benefits offered by DTP, it is accepted as a technology that has brought a revolution into publishing and which most upwardly mobile individuals, organizations and nations across the globe will embrace.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The main focus of this unit has been Desktop Publishing, DTP, but to make it easy to understand what DTP is all about and what benefits it has brought into publishing, the unit began by examining the conventional steps and processes in non-DTP publishing. Thereafter, the disadvantages inherent in non-DTP publishing were analysed. DTP itself then came under the searchlight. Its benefits were also analysed. The benefits include simplification of the total process of publishing, neatness of productions and ease of storage and retrieval, among others.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain what DTP is, and why it is more advantageous than the previous methods of publishing.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **MODULE 3**

### **CRITERIA FOR SUB-EDITING AND SUB-EDITING LINGUA**

Unit 1	Accuracy and Style
Unit 2	News Values
Unit 3	Speed and Headlines
Unit 4	Defamation Laws and Conventions
Unit 5	The Sub-Editing Lingua

## **UNIT 1                      ACCURACY AND STYLE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Accuracy
  - 3.2 Style
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION\_**

As discussed in module one, sub-editing is a very important aspect of print production, and sub-editing is a major assignment that will determine the eventual outlook of a publication. But subbing does not depend on the whims and caprices of the subeditor. There are various criteria that guide the subbing process. In this unit, we shall discuss two of the criteria that are used for sub-editing. The two criteria to be discussed in this unit are Accuracy and Style.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

discuss Accuracy and Style as two of the broad criteria with which journalists and professional writers operate.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Accuracy

Sellers are right when he says in *The Simple Subs Book* that accuracy is more important than genius. What Sellers means is that no matter how gifted and talented a writer is, accuracy is a basic requirement? If a talented reporter becomes better known for his figurative expressions than for his accuracy in figures, description, etc, then there is a problem. This is not an attempt to suppress genius or creativity. Rather, it is an attempt to place the basic truth above every other thing, including personal gifts. Most newspaper readers, it is believed, buy newspapers primarily because they want to know the truth; not just to know how talented reporters are. If a reporter is so talented that he places fiction or imagination above the truth, then there is a major problem for the publication, because readers will insist on the truth, and if they cannot get the truth in your publication they will opt for other publications that can tell the truth the way it is.

In Nigeria, a major national newspaper lost most of its readers in the 1990s when, under the military, it suppressed the truth and dished out fiction to please the military leaders. Readers protested by avoiding the newspaper, and its market dipped. When military lost its grip on power, the publication, tried as much as it could, but failed to regain the confidence of the people. This newspaper which used to be the toast of advertisers is now a caricature of itself. Advertisers prefer to patronize publications that have a large readership, but this publication's readership, instead of growing, has continued to shrink because it was perceived to have compromised accuracy and truth on the altar of patronage and inaccuracy.

Similarly, in the early 1990s some magazines emerged in Nigeria and served sensationalism as truth to unsuspecting readers. It was one scoop after another; all lies, inaccuracies, falsehood, etc. Initially the market grew, when readers had not known the in secret. But as soon as people realised what they had been paying for, they stopped being fooled any further. Most of those publications of the early 1990s are now off the newsstands. That is what inaccuracies, exaggerations, hyperboles, etc can do to newspapers and other news publications.

If ten people died in an incident, do not add to or reduce from the figure. Say it the way it happened. Do not 'garnish' the story. Aim for accuracy.

If newspaper readers were more interested in genius or creativity rather than accuracy or the truth, they would most probably go for the writings of Wole Soyinka, Chinosa Achebe, Ben Okri, Akachi Ezeigbo, etc,

instead of reading the dailies. It is because they want to know the exact situation on the ground; the undiluted truth, that they look into the pages of newspapers and magazines.

Without accuracy nothing else matters. Newspapers are, or should be, about telling the truth, no matter how much someone may want it suppressed.

Newspapers are also about telling the truth with style. But style is worthless if the subs who polish stories and top them with dazzling headlines fail to spot errors – or even write in a few errors of their own.

Every error, even so called ‘little errors’, diminishes a newspaper or a news report. Let us say you see a demonstration: a few hundred half-hearted marchers, no violence. Next day you read about ‘3000 demonstrators’ and wild scuffles’. Or you are listening to the National Assembly and hear a member deliver a mild and highly technical appraisal of a minor aspect of Government economic policy. Next day the heading says “Senator blasts Government”. What do you think? You are likely to reason like this: I know that these accounts are wrong because I have first hand knowledge. Therefore, how many other things are wrong in this publication that I don’t know about?

There are, of course, limits to subs’ ability to check copy for accuracy. They often must assume the reporter has it right until they find any inconsistencies – the same barrister’s name spelt differently in separate paragraphs, for instance. They may then suspect the whole story or they may flick back looking for other inconsistencies and loose ends. They are entitled to do so. When a story leaves the subs’ table it should be as accurate as they can reasonably make it.

Apart from their passion for conventional accuracy, subs should also be skeptical. This means that they should worry about ‘balance’ and “other side’. For these things, too affect the credibility of a story. Be careful about ‘scandals’ and major political crises’ and disasters’. Are they really those things or just ‘fusses’ and ‘rows’ and ‘setbacks’? If a reporter files seventeen paragraphs about an old woman being evicted from her Federal Housing Authority flat, and the only source is the woman, remember that there may be another side. If there isn’t, at least let the Authority confirm the story in print or be quoted as having nothing to say. Then the story becomes credible and there are no loose ends.

Be careful of ‘mad bulls’ rampaging through city streets. They might have been just a few frightened steers.



Look out for exaggeration – the florid, the ‘beat-up’. An Abeokuta man who kept non-venomous snakes left a cage open and his pets got out. All were recovered; no harm was done. A reporter filed a story which began:

*“Frantic housewives snatched up their children and rushed them inside yesterday as deadly serpents slithered through the street of Abeokuta”.*

As a sub, you must put yourself in the reader’s place. Ask, ‘Would I believe that? Wouldn’t I want to know the other side to the story? Who are these ‘observers’ and ‘experts’ and ‘sources’ I am reading about?’

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

As a newspaper reader, would you prefer accurate reports to exaggeration or the other way round? Give reasons for your answer.

## **3.2 Style**

We have just explained that accuracy is a basic thing which every news publication must achieve and continuously maintain if it is to satisfy its esteemed readers. But while accuracy is basic, many readers ask for something more than just the basic. They ask for style. Most times, even though they do not ask, they are happy and appreciative when they see it. ‘How do they show their appreciation?’ you may ask. They show their appreciation of style by staying with the publication that has it and turning their back on those publications that lack it.

Readers want more than just an accurate newspaper. Why not a **bright** as well as a **right** newspaper? Nothing stops a newspaper from being both.

Subs must be able to write clearly and simply. They need the ability to weigh and sort facts (and not become flustered when there are too many facts). Most of all they have to ‘see’ a story in its proper order. No matter how dramatic a story may be, it has to unfold simply and logically.

After badly written copy, the most common stylistic fault is bad structure: that last paragraph which should be the second paragraph; the second paragraph which should be the fourth.

The sub’s mind must run through the logical and fundamental questions. What happened? Where? To whom? When? Why?

The stronger a story the less ‘interpretation’ it needs. It would be absurd, for instance, to say something like, ‘In a shocking move yesterday, the President announced he would resign ...’

Of course it is shocking. There is no need to say so. The first news point is not the shock but the resignation. We see stories written like this every week. That does not make them desirable. They amount to improper style.

Reporters in a hurry often produce confusing copy. They write so long sentences the reader forgets what the main point was about. Clause after clause joined by ‘and’ and ‘which’. Why not simply delete the superfluous words and replace those ‘ands’ with full stops (the most under-used of all punctuation marks)? Suddenly you have three clear sentences.

Then there are cliches. **Nothing** saps the freshness from a story faster. ‘Industry grinding to a halt’, ‘top level talks’ (it would be news if the president had low level talks) ‘bitter debate’. We read these phrases, or hear them on TV, and are left feeling that nothing new has happened. Only the names have changed. Why can’t industry just **stop**?

Although we had discussed style in an earlier module, we will have a lot more to say about writing style in later modules. But remember this point always: when subbing, put yourself in the reader’s position. Would you be bothered to read on after such a confused intro? Would you be bothered to sort out that complicated sentence in your mind? Would I yawn or wince on reading about industry ‘grinding to a halt’? If you get one ‘yes’ to these or similar questions, go back and re-write. Also take note of expressions such as bilateral talks, high-powered delegation, landslide victory, unprecedented achievement, mammoth crowd, etc. Most times, they have lost their meaning and have therefore become effete, false and boring. Avoid them because they do not add any value to your style. Instead, they take something away. Sometimes they add a negative thing to how readers perceive your writing.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Get a copy of today’s newspaper (Any one of your choice). Write out at least, ten expressions which you feel do not add any positive value to the style of the writer.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Both accuracy and style are very important criteria in subbing. The subeditor looks out for any expression that is inaccurate and either strives to make it accurate by replacing it, or recasting the entire expression. As a writer or reporter, it is your duty to be as careful as possible in these matters. But if you are not that careful, the sub-ed's scalpel will always feast on your copy. And if you are the sub-ed, your task becomes more challenging: other people's inaccuracies and stylistic errors (like those of reporters, columnists, etc) are dumped at your doorstep if you fail to detect and correct them. So there is no escaping blame in this matter. "Prevention", "they say", "is better than cure".

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, our main preoccupation has been accuracy and style as criteria in subbing. It was explained, with relevant examples, that inaccuracies and stylistic errors can make a publication to lose its readers. Accuracy, it was explained, is more important than genius, because if a genius' writing lacks accuracy, it becomes fiction, and newspaper readers know that the best place to read fiction is not inside the newspaper. They pay to read accurate news stories, so in fairness, serve the readers only accurate information. Style is very important because like accuracy, it determines readers' attitude to your publication. A good or lively, colourful style presents the message vividly, while a poor style leaves the reader with several unanswered questions.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What are the main differences between accuracy and style, and why are both of them criteria for subbing?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 2 NEWS VALUES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 News Values
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In deciding on the news items to publish and where to publish them in the available newsholes, a number of items are put into consideration. The decision itself is called news judgment, while the factors put into consideration in arriving at the decision are the news values. In this unit, we shall consider the news values that influence news judgment.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain what is meant by news values and news judgment.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 News Values**

So many things happen each day of the week, but not all of them get into the news. What then is it that makes some developments, activities or occurrences to get into the news while others do not? The difference between the events that become news stories and those that not become news stories lies in the news values. In other words, news value refers to those things that make a given occurrence to have value or to be news worthy and make others to be of little or no news value. Conventionally, for any thing to be newsworthy, it must have the following characteristics or news values:

##### **(a) Timeliness, Immediacy or Currency**

An event that has just taken place is likely to have more news value than one that occurred several weeks ago. The older an event becomes, the less its news value. In selecting items to report, journalists look out for

the ones that are oven-fresh. The fresher the occurrence, the more its news value. A murder that occurred this morning is likely to be more newsworthy than one that occurred several months back. Just as the news reporter looks for fresh events to report, the news editor who is confronted with news judgment uses timeliness, immediacy or currency to determine which items gets into the available news newshole and which should not make it. Just as economists believe that human needs are insatiable, so it is with news reporters and editors. Since there are so many news items and the available space is limited, choice has to be made, and the more recent events are usually given more consideration than others. A news item becomes stale when much time has passed since it occurred or everybody has already known about it.

As a way of ensuring that news items meet this criterion, journalists normally plan for on-coming events in advance. Somebody is assigned in advance to cover predictable or scheduled events so that news from such events can be served to readers while still fresh. In addition, some journalists are on standby so that as an event unfolds, it can be reported. Still, some journalists go out 'sniffing' for news. That is why journalists are often referred to as newshounds. They go out there looking for what has just happened or what is about to happen so they can quickly report it. In this sense, they are like the hounds on the trail of some game. Once, they 'sniff' a newsworthy occurrence, they 'bark' so the public will take note, or take action

Like the scout boy, journalists are always ready, because they must serve news that is oven-fresh and not stale.

### **(b) Oddity or Strangeness**

Most time, the news value of an event is enhanced if it strange, abnormal or odd. A normal or routine event does not have as much news value as one that is strange. If a plane lands at the airport, its news value may not be as high as that of a plane that makes an emergency landing on water. Why? Simple: everyday, planes land, hundreds of thousands of planes land in different airports in different parts of the world. So regular are the airport landings that they become a routine. Nothing intriguing any longer, but planes do not make emergency landing on water every day. They do so once in a long while. The incidents that make planes to make emergency landing on water are extremely rare, so when they occur, they attract greater attention. But if such emergency landings on water become so regular that they get into the news everyday, their news value would also reduce. The more frequent, usual or normal an occurrence gets, the less its news value.

**(c) Proximity or Nearness**

While timeliness refers to proximity in time, nearness refers to physical proximity. While an event happening at Bonny Camp is likely to be of greater interest to a student of the National Open University of Nigeria, NOUN, events taking place at Cuffee Parade, Bombay, India, may not really be his immediate concern. Why? Bonny Camp is closer to him and to his interest than Cuffee Parade, Bombay, India. A robbery incident near ones's neighbourhood is likely to be of greater interest to him/ her than an event or an occurrence in another part of the city or in another city entirely.

**(d) Prominence**

The prominence of the people involved in an event also contributes to its news value or news worthiness. An event that involves a nation's number one citizen is likely to be of greater news value than other events. That is why organizers of events usually invite the high and mighty in the society as guests. The presence of such distinguished guests or VIPs, makes such events to be conventionally more newsworthy. The death of a VIP is also usually more newsworthy that that of an average citizen.

Who then is a prominent citizen? Is he the bus conductor that is ubiquitous? The market woman who sweats it out all day long to eke out an existence? No. The prominent person may be a top government official, a politician, an accomplished academic, a popular musician, etc. Many average Nigerians die daily of HIV/AIDS, but when Fela Anikulapo Kuti died of it, it had a very high news value. It was reported both locally and internationally because of Fela's prominence in the society. The same thing happened when the son of former South African President, Nelson Mandela, died. It was a major news event because the son of a prominent person was involved. Prominence operates in the form of a hierarchy at different levels. Even among the prominent, some are more prominent than others. The president of Nigeria is more prominent than the Governor of Kogi State, for example. The Kogi State Governor, in turn, is more prominent than the Local Government Chairmen in the state. Meanwhile, at the international level there are some world leaders who are more Prominent than the Nigerian leader and so would be considered to be more newsworthy than our own president. We can find good examples in the American President and the British Prime Minister.

The level of a person's prominence determines how newsworthy events around him/her are.

**(e) Magnitude**

The magnitude of an event also determines its news value. A mild event attracts mild attention and so its news value is low. But if the magnitude is gargantuan, the news value will be higher. For example, the Asian Tsunami that swept through Asia in December 2004 was considered more newsworthy than a mere ocean surge in Lagos, Nigeria, because of the different levels of magnitude of the two events. If a postgraduate student at the National Open University of Nigeria buys a private jet, the development will have more magnitude than if he merely bought a Mazda 626. Indeed, journalists may not report that the student has bought a Mazda, but the moment he buys the private jet, he is in the news. The magnitude of what was bought makes the difference.

If the Governor of a state has a cold, it may attract little or no attention, but let him be bedridden because of a strange ailment. Journalists will go to all extents to report the Governor's ailment, the likely cause, the likely consequences, etc. If he is down for only a few days, the magnitude is not too much, but let him be bedridden for several weeks, and you will see "magnitude" at work. In addition to daily reports, news analyses, editorials, op eds, etc, will be written. Experts will be interviewed and their comments on the Governor's ailment will be published.

A car accident is not likely to enjoy the kind of publicity that a plane crash will enjoy. Similarly, the appointment of a new school principal may not attract the kind of publicity that the appointment of a Vice Chancellor for the National Open University will attract. When the roof of a house is blown off by a windstorm, the magnitude may not be as much as when fire ravages a villa. That is how magnitude works. The more the magnitude of an occurrence, the higher the news value of it.

**(f) Consequence**

The consequence of an event simply refers to what happened or what is likely to happen because another one had happened. How many people were sacked because of the decision of the Central Bank of Nigeria to raise banks' paid-up capital to N25B? What are the likely consequences of the Federal Government's deregulation policy? What are the likely consequences of the sack of the Minister of Education? Consequences are among the things which journalist put into consideration in deciding the value of a news item. If the consequences are likely to be enormous, then the news value is higher, but if the consequence is mild or negligible, the news material cannot lay claim to a high news value.

**(g) Human Interest**

Some stories derive their value from the fact that human interest is involved. Human beings, including newspaper readers, have feelings and emotions, and these affect or influence their reaction or attitude to news stories. In selecting news stories therefore, editors also look at stories that are likely to elicit human emotional response. Some of the news stories we read in newspapers and magazines may not qualify for publication as news, using the criteria we have so far discussed, but from the human angle, they have a value and so they are published. Such news items may involve a baby rescued from an accident in which adults died, a man who wept because a life-long dream was actualized, an 80-year old man who decides to go back to school and obtain a certificate, a pregnant woman who delivers the first baby in a new year, etc. Human interest is a very important factor in news judgment.

It is reasoned that all news need not be 'hard' or business-like. There should be some that will elicit a smile, laughter, giggle, sigh, tears, etc. These add variety, which, in popular parlance, is the spice of life. When next you buy a newspaper, go through the news pages carefully and identify the stories which are likely to have been selected on the basis of human interest.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Get two separate newspapers. Try and identify which of the news values you think was used to select each of the stories. That is, which news value seems strongest in the different news stories in the newspapers?

**4.0 CONCLUSION**

Editors and other news media workers do not select news stories for publication haphazardly. The selection of news items is based on set criteria otherwise called news values. A story is selected for publication if in the editor's opinion it is newsworthy, and it is the news values that determine whether a certain news story is newsworthy or not. The news values include oddity or strangeness, timeliness, proximity, prominence, magnitude, consequence and human interest. Any news story that does not have any of these is not likely to be news worthy. It must be added that a single news story does not need to have all of them. A news story may lack one value and have another; it may be low in one and high in one. The editor and his team then sit down to think like this: all factors considered, is this story worth publishing? If it is considered not newsworthy, it will be 'spiked', that is, deleted or discarded. A journalist whose stories are regularly spiked needs to do a self-



assessment to find out what is wrong with the news values in his story. That way, he can improve on his news gathering and reporting.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, our focus has been on the factors which editors consider when selecting stories for publication from the pool of news stories available. We have seen that there are factors otherwise called news values, against which editors assess news stories before they are published. A news story, it was explained, should not be ordinary. That is, it has to be novel, strange or odd. An ordinary, run-of-the mill event is not likely to have a high news value. A publishable news story also has to be current or timely. The event is supposed to be a recent one, not one that is stale or happened a long time ago. Proximity is also another news value. An event that happens near the base of the readers has a higher news value than one that happens in a location that is far away from where the readers are. The prominence of the people involved in the activity or event is also very important. The more prominent the people behind the news event, the more newsworthy the story become. The magnitude of the event is also very important. Is it a small scale event or a gargantuan one? This will also affect the news value of the story. The consequence or aftermath of the event also matters. The greater the likely consequence, the higher the news value of such a news story. Human interest is also another news value; all news stories do not have to be 'hard'. There should be stories that focus on human foibles, weaknesses, conditions, etc. Such stories are selected on the basis of what is called human interest. They may make us cry, laugh, hiss, etc. These kinds of stories confirm that all said and done, we are all mortals.

Each news story does not have to contain all these at once. The editor must be able to satisfy himself that the story has sufficient value, based on the foregoing criteria. If for any reason he feels that the news story lacks sufficient value, the story is as good as dead. A wise reporter looks out for events that are likely to have news value as this will enhance the chances of his/her stories getting published.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

News judgment is not based on the whims and caprices of the editor. What are the factors that give news stories value?

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## **UNIT 3      SPEED AND HEADLINES**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Speed
  - 3.2 Headlines
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Time is one thing that is always in short supply as far as journalists are concerned. A journalist has a lot to do to ensure that his news story gets into the next edition of the newspaper. If there is a delay, nobody waits for him because the newspaper must be on the street tomorrow morning even if the editor dies. Yet, like every other human being, the journalist has only twenty-four hours in each day. To meet the constraint imposed by time limitation, the journalist must speed up his work. In this unit; we shall look at speed, which is one of the tools available to a sub editor. We shall also look at those beautiful things called headlines, and how the subeditor struggles to bring them out as brief and sharp as they usually are.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- to expatiate on time consciousness which is a basic requirement in journalism generally and sub-editing particularly
- to explain the importance of quality in spite of speed
- to explain the role of the subeditor in headline casting and the principles that under girds the process.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Speed**

Although the subeditor has a lot of work to do in ensuring that materials for publication meet an expected standard, the production of a newspaper cannot be delayed unnecessarily because of a the sub editor. A subeditor who forms the habit of delaying production will soon be on

his/her way out of job because no publisher would like to keep a staff who delays output. The publisher is only interested in one thing: results. The first result he/she sees is the copies of the publication on the newsstands. If he does not see this as regularly as he expects, he concludes that somebody is not doing his/her job. If he/she is told that it is the sub editor, he/she wonders why the fellow cannot get his/her work done in good time. He/she is not bothered by how tedious the sub-ed's work is. After all others are producing results, and sub editing, to him/her, is not the hardest work in the world.

Remember that the subeditor ensures quality work. He/she is not concerned with the quality of his/her own work alone. He/she strives to ensure the quality of the work done by other departments since he/she will be criticized if the publication does not come out well as it should. Those who know how the process works, especially his/her professional colleagues, understand that he/she is supposed to be the quality control post. So they blame and criticise him/her when things go wrong. Conscious of this fact, he/she works very hard to ensure that his/her work-and others'- are thoroughly and properly done- good enough for the reader who is also a king.

These two tasks – speed and quality - are by no means easy. But he must accomplish them. The subed can be compared to three people. First, he is like a pilot in the airplane's cockpit. There is a number of equipment that is to be used and monitored. All of them are to be correctly and properly used and monitored. None should be at the expense of the other. But unlike the pilot who is surrounded by others who are there to assist him both on ground and in the air, the sub ed is on his own. In fact, others are impatiently reminding him of the deadline for the publication to put to bed. Just as you don't appeal to a woman in labour to hold for a while before putting to bed, the sub ed does not ask those waiting to print to keep waiting endlessly. He must complete the work on time and the work must be as thorough as possible.

All news stories are subbed to a deadline. Given another half hour the subs might be able to write better headings and polish stories more. But they haven't got another half hour. The perfect story is useless if it misses the edition. It is worse than useless if it delays the edition. Most subbing is thus a compromise; doing your best in a fixed time. But your best as a subed must be good enough if you are to command respect. When a big story breaks right on edition time, the first imperative is to get it in even if it is not world perfect. But then you still need to try and make it as perfect as possible under the prevailing circumstance.

Then, between editions (and this is the real adrenaline-producing stuff of journalism, the story is polished, background, expanded, re-intruded

(perhaps six times), so that by the final edition it is near flawless. But, to repeat, the first thing to do is to **get into print**.

Perhaps one way to appreciate the difficulty facing the sub ed is for you to sub the story below and to do it very well within five minutes, bearing in mind that even a one-minute extension is intolerable.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

*Sub the story below within five minutes (Check the time to see how well you will fare).*

The detained Minister of Education, Professor Ayo Adesina. And all those involved in the N50 million bribery scandals will face trial soon.

There are also indications that the Senate President Chief Adolphus Nwagbara have been interrogated by officials of the EFCC. A source made this known to global news in Lagos. The Source stated that EFCC REPORT on bribery saga was strong and extensive, adding that, “the government’s main concern now is how to manage this whole affair in such a way to look as if the executive arm is stirring the honest net”.

Apart from the Minister, the list of those involved includes many members of the national assembly. Reliable sources however yesterday that the senate president, 2 senate committee chairmen and a member of the house of reps have so far been questioned. One of the sources told our correspondent that president Olusegun Obasanjo had asked the EFCC to arrest all those concerned with the scandal. The source which spoke in confidence said the EFCC, chairman, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, briefed the president on the commission’s preliminary findings yesterday evening.

Obasanjo was said to have given the proviso that whoever has no case to answer should not be detained unduly, but that there should be no scare cow.

### **3.2 Headlines**

Apart from having a flair for writing eye-catching and accurate headlines, the sub desk must also produce headlines that comply with the instruction sheet precisely. In a well-designed page, there is light and shade, symmetry, a clean cut or modular look, strength, but not typographical chaos – and a delicate use of that most under-used of the layout man’s tools: white space. White space is very important, and an intelligent use of it will go a long way in enhancing the page. So, if the chief sub wants a heading shy (short) or flush (filling the line right out)

there is, or should be, an aesthetic reason. On a well-designed paper one badly shaped heading can ruin a page, or an effect. The instruction sheet from the layout sub should also specify the length of the story. It must fit the space allotted.

As discussed in a previous unit on headlines, headlines are very important in any publication. Among other things, the headline is an opportunity to sell the publication. It helps to flag down the attention of the reader. On the other hand, it can put the reader off if it is not done the proper way. When there are problems with the headline, all eyes are on the sub desk. The integrity of the sub desk is always at stake and in Nigeria; sub-eds have often caused heartache for reporters, especially during the dark days of military rule. A reporter writes an innocent-looking story and the sub ed. puts an alarming headline to sell the publication. As the publication hits the street, security agents are astonished and even overwhelmed with rage, even when they have not carefully studied the entire news report. Their conclusion is simply based on the headline. The security agents mobilize to raid the media house and they have just two people in mind. First the person whose by line they saw in the publication, that is, the reporter that filed in the story. The next is the editor. God help these two people if the security agents meet them at work. Often, they were arrested and thoroughly beaten up because the subed wrote a sensational headline that is not faithful to the spirit of the news report. The headline failed to portray the main intention of the report; instead, it created panic where there should have been none.

Overzealous as many security operatives are, they are unaware of the internal dynamics of the newsroom. They assume that the reporter who wrote the story is the culprit and must be brought to book along with his editor in a most crude manner. In the whole drama, the subed goes free. At least he escapes being beaten by security officials, and his reporter as well as the editor takes the undeserved beating. Thank God that era is over in Nigeria. But this demands greater care and responsibility from the sub desk and all those involved in newspaper production, whether as reporters, sub-eds, editors, etc.

‘Why would a headline be different from the content of the story?’ one may ask. There are various reasons, but the most prominent is that because of the rush to beat deadline, the sub perhaps was not patient enough to read through diligently and decipher the nugget as well as the details of the story before casting the headline. Another factor may be difficulties with interpretation. A number of times in the past, I have given the same passage to students in the same class and asked them to read and interpret to the hearing of everybody. What amuses me at such times is the diversity of interpretations. It is possible for two or more

people to read the same report and understand it differently. In fact, the same person, reading the same news report at different times within a short interval may change his/her minds on what the appropriate topic, title, heading or headline should be. So one would not be too surprised if in casting a headline, there is a slight difference between the main content and the eventual headline.

However, as a professional, the subed should be conscious of where the problem is likely to arise from, and to find ways of blocking such holes. Familiarity with a story can be a source of intrusion. Even before reading the story, perhaps the subed is familiar with what happened. If he is not careful, this prior knowledge may find its way into what the reporter has written, giving rise to unintended but avoidable errors in headline casting.

## **SELF EXERCISE ASSESSMENT 2**

*Read the passage below and suggest three appropriate headlines*

Slowly but steadily, doing business by telephone and the Internet is catching on in Nigeria, with the banking system leading the way.

The adoption of electronic payment, otherwise known as e-payment, enables customers to deposit money, buy, sell, pay taxes and do a host of other businesses from the comfort of their homes or offices.

Generally, only a limited number of people use electronic commerce, which involves using Internet applications such as email and instant messaging.

Electronic transactions started in the United States in the 1960s. In Nigeria however, Valuecard and Smartpay, introduced card-based system of carrying money in the 80s.

Probably the most widely used electronic payment system today in the country is Flash- Me- Cash, a product of First Atlantic Online Limited, a subsidiary of First Atlantic Bank Plc.

Flash-Me-Cash can be used easily to transfer money, make payment for satellite decoder bill, Internet shopping and buy recharge cards..

The system also allows those who are not account holders to buy Flash-Me-Cash cards and use them to do business.

Our correspondent gathered that over 220,000 Nigerians currently use Flash-Me-Cash platform to transfer money each month.

As at 2004, no less than N300 million worth of transaction took place monthly on the platform.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Just as speed is an essential element in sub-editing, the quality of the work done is also very important. The work includes casting of headlines among others.

Headlines are particularly important because anything that is wrong with them is wrong with the entire publication. They are very conspicuous, and the errors in them are easily noticed by readers. A headline should be truthful and it should be able to flag down the attention of the reader. False or inaccurate headlines can ridicule the publication and create problems for the entire staff of the publication, especially the reporter and the editor. At the end of the day nobody is spared if the publication is sealed up legally or by the use of crude force.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have looked at the need for speed in sub-editing. It was explained that tedious as the sub-ed's work may be, it still has to be done with speed because there is a deadline to meet. We have also looked at headlines which, it was explained, helps to flag down the attention of the reader. It was advised that the sub ed should be extra vigilant to avoid errors and to ensure that the integrity of the publication with the reading public is not tarnished.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain why both speed and quality must be achieved by the Sub Editor in headline casting.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4     DEFAMATION LAWS AND CONVENTIONS**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Defamation Laws and Conventions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

It is very important for reporters as well as sub editors to be familiar with defamation laws. This will help to keep them and their publication from lawsuits. One of the problems that the West African Pilot, a publication of the late Rt. Hon (Dr) Nnamdi Azikiwe had was frequent defamation suits. The publication did not quite get out of the trouble.

To avoid such problems, this unit will focus on defamation laws and how a sub editor can avoid running foul of them.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list and explain Nigeria's defamation laws
- identify ways to avoid lawsuits that could arise from breaches.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Defamation Laws and Conventions**

The law of defamation exists to take care of violations of people's reputation. Every citizen is supposed to value his/her reputation. The law backs citizens up so that their hard-earned reputation is not needlessly damaged by others, including journalists. Simply put, defamation refers to injury to one's reputation which tends to expose the person to odium, hatred, contempt or other negative things. Such negative things have the capacity to induce evil opinion and to deprive one of confidence and friendship in society. The defamation law tries to ensure that one's reputation in the eyes of the public is not damaged. The difference between defamation and privacy is that while defamation

relates to how others perceive you, privacy has to do with your personal sense of self-esteem.

Defamation is a generic term, and there are two broad ramifications, namely Libel, which is written defamation, and slander, which is spoken defamation. You would agree that as people concerned with print production, our main concern should be libel.

Libel occurs when one's reputation is injured in writing. There are two types of libel. The first is libel per se, that is, self evident libel that requires no further proof. On the other hand, libel per quod refers to libel by innuendo or insinuation. Further proof is required in this case. There is also a difference between civil libel (tort) and criminal libel. The latter is considered as a crime against the state, while the first deals with breaches involving individuals or organizations. The first one (criminal libel) is the basis of the law of sedition.

In law, libel is considered as a personal thing, and only the offended person is entitled to sue; his friends, colleagues, associates, family, etc, cannot sue on his behalf.

There are four essential ingredients in libel. These are:

**(a) Publication**

This means that the offending matter must have been published. If it is not published, (within the accepted meaning of terms), then a case of libel cannot be proved.

**(b) Identification**

This means that the offended person must have been identified in the offending publication. Identification can be per se or per quod. If it is per se it means that further proof is not required because it is evident. If it is per quod, it requires further proof because, it is implied or through an innuendo. This applies in the case of cartoons and other forms of indirect reference.

**(c) Harmful Effect**

This refers to the effect of loss of reputation. The effect may be loss of friends, being disowned by colleagues, ostracism or loss of other privileges, consequent upon the publication of the offending libelous material.

**(d) Third Party**

A third party must be involved in libel. This means that apart from the person who published the libelous material and the person claiming to have been libeled, somebody else must have read the publication. This implies that his opinion of the person libeled would have been affected by the publication.

Where any of the above is missing, the case cannot be won.

A reporter should know the defamation laws. A sub should know them better. Once subs have let defamation through, only God can save them. Below is a fearful defamation (and possible contempt) that ought never to have left the subs' table.

*A 34-year-old labourer who murdered two people in an Abuja hotel last year was committed for trial yesterday.*

The man was on trial for the deaths. He may be **charged** with murder, but he is, of course, innocent until proved guilty. This story has convicted and defamed him.

Subs should also be thoroughly conversant with the conventions of their particular outlet. Some papers refuse to report bomb hoaxes, for instance. Most Nigerian publications are not careful with stories which may needlessly embarrass innocent people. For instance, if a 14-year old footballer died from an accidental kick on the head, it would be unfair to publish the name of the other 14-year-old who accidentally kicked him. In Nigeria, there are no restraints in publishing such stories with all the details, perhaps because many Nigerians, when offended, simply turn to God without approaching the courts for redress.

In many societies, the euphemism for a suspected suicide is: 'Police say there are no suspicious circumstances'. Back here at home, reporters go ahead and report that somebody committed suicide, even before police investigations are completed. A few months ago, a national newspaper reported that a Makurdi- Benue State-based, pools betters had committed suicide because he discovered that a rich man in that town was going out with his wife. The newspaper alleged that on a previous occasion, the man had caught his wife with the man, but that because of persistent appeals, he warned both his wife and the man to desist from their immoral relationship, a plea which was not heeded. The paper added that being a very gentle and peace-loving man, the man may have ended his own life to end the persistent embarrassment. The man, according to the publication did not leave a suicide note behind. How then did the reporter know the real cause of the action. Your guess is as

good as mine: speculation. In some other countries, the woman would most probably have dragged the reporter and the publication to court for libel and other related charges.

One major source of potentially libelous publications in Nigeria stems from some of the law enforcement agencies. When suspects are arrested for crimes ranging from armed robbery through drug trafficking to rape and related offenses, they are paraded before journalists, some times in handcuffs, to show the world that the law enforcement agencies are doing their work. This is in spite of the fact that suspects are presumed to be innocent until the contrary is proved. After such 'parades' journalist publish the photographs of the suspects with all kinds of stories. Sometimes, they are portrayed as the criminals who did this and that. Some other times, their opinions are not sought. Some of the suspects have bullet wounds and other physical signs of torture.

Any publication that portrays suspects as criminals risks libel charges. Sub eds as well as reporters need to watch out for this.

### **Malice as a Factor in Libel**

Malice refers to wrongful intention which the law presumes to accompany an unlawful act, including libel. Malice does not necessarily mean personal spite or ill will. It may exist even though there is no spite or desire for vengeance in the ordinary sense. Any indirect motive other than a sense of duty is what the law calls malice. It means making use of the occasion for some indirect purpose. For example, in a case involving Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and the defunct National Concord, it was noted that in spite of opportunities which the newspaper had to make corrections, it did not do so. This was seen as an evidence of malice.

### **Defences for Libel**

#### **(a) Justification or Truth**

These, according to lawyers, are complete defences in a libel suit provided there is no malice. If what was published was the truth, then the reporter as well the sub and other colleagues charged have nothing to fear. The onus lies upon the aggrieved party to prove that there is falsehood and malice in the publication. It must be noted, however, that if the publication published the words complained about out of context, the plea of justification will not be tenable.

### **(b) The Defence of Fair Comment/Criticism**

This exists under certain conditions. But first, what is fair comment? In the case of *Gyang versus Ilyasu* (1977) fair comment was defined as ‘... the dispassionate expression of opinion based on facts correctly stated’. Similarly, in a case involving one Williams and the defunct *West African Pilot* as reported in the *All-Nigeria Law Report*(1961) page 866, it was held that in a defence of fair comment ‘ the facts on which the comment is based must be truly stated, otherwise, the question whether the comment is fair or is honestly made cannot arise’. An example here will drive home the point. Let us assume that without justification, a newspaper reports that a married male university lecturer had a love affair with a female student. The report is libelous, and the defence of fair comment will not be available to the newspaper if the basic facts of the love affair cannot be established as true.

In another case involving Benson and *The West African Pilot*, it was held that the publication of defamatory remarks is libelous, even when attributed to an identifiable source.

### **(c) The Defence of Absolute/ Qualified Privilege**

If a reporter reports what is said in a law court (even if it is defamatory), he is not liable, provided that the report is fair, contemporaneous and not malicious. This provision of the law is meant to facilitate the free flow of information- usually from official sources, to the public.

Reporters also enjoy qualified privilege when covering proceedings at the parliament. In the Nigerian case, this applies to journalists covering the National Assembly as well as the Statehouses of Assembly nationwide.

### **(d) Unintentional Defamation**

In law, this constitutes a complete but conditional defence. The publication must prove that the alleged libel was unintentional and that no malice was intended.

### **(e) Defence of Apology**

If a publication apologises and retracts the story, the case of libel may not be established. In some cases, some money is paid as was the case of *Akintola versus Anyiam* some years ago. To prevent the embarrassment and odium that usually follows retraction and apology, it is very important for reporters and sub eds to ensure that libelous materials are not published.

**(f) Accord and Satisfaction**

Rather than await court trial, a publication may approach the offended party for peaceful settlement. When an accord is reached between the parties and they are satisfied, it constitutes a defence in a case of libel.

**(g) Statute of Limitation**

This requires that action on libel must commence within six years of defamation. After that, the allegation may become void

**(h) Mitigation**

If your publication is found guilty of libel, a plea can be made for the mitigation of sentence. The most common plea is retraction and apology. The publication retracts the libelous publication and goes ahead to apologise. This is like eating one's words. It is better to avoid this kind of situation. Reporters and sub-eds need to scrutinize the contents of copy to avoid this unsavory situation at the end of the day.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Read through any newspaper of your choice for the next three days. Identify news stories in the newspaper that could lead to cases of libel.

**4.0 CONCLUSION**

Libel cases are not pleasurable. Both the litigant and the defendant expend time, energy and other resources into winning the case. And both sides cannot be winners simultaneously. Reporters and sub-eds can avoid this unnecessary waste of resources by being a little more careful in the writing and subbing of news stories.

**5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has looked at libel, which is a major challenge for publications worldwide. The example was given of The West African Pilot, a prominent Nigerian newspaper whose demise was attributed to a litany of libel cases, many of which it lost, with attending damages and legal charges.

Libel was defined as a form of defamation. Defamation itself refers to injury, to one's reputation, which tends to expose the person to odium, shame, contempt, disgrace, hatred, etc. Libel specifically refers to written or published defamation and it is actionable in law. The main ingredients in the case of libel include publication, identification,

harmful effect and third party. These must be proved before a case of libel is established.

The defenses available in a case of libel include justification or truth, fair comment or criticism, absolute or qualified privilege, unintentional defamation, defence of apology and retraction, accord and satisfaction etc. To mitigate the sentence of libel, a guilty party must be able to satisfactorily plead retraction and apology, and convince the court that no malice was intended.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Although libel is a major challenge, it is not altogether unavoidable. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 5 THE SUBBING LINGUA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Subbing Lingua
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Every profession, trade or vocation has expressions that are peculiar to it. Such expressions may be totally different from those used by other people or they may have special meanings as used by people in the profession. In Nigeria, for example, if a policeman says ‘area’ he means to inform his colleagues that he is one of them, and so they will accord him certain privileges to which other people are not entitled. Such expressions have different names. Generally, they are known as registers or jargons. They are also called lingua (which simply means language).

In this unit we shall focus on printing lingua, that is, the expressions regularly used by people involved in printing, especially subeditors.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list printing lingua expressions
- list explain printing lingua expressions
- use correctly some printing lingua expressions.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Subbing Lingua**

Subbing, like printing is an old craft. Many of its phrases and traditions go back to the monasteries of Europe. The language of subbing is rich and singular. ‘Fudge’, for instance, is not something chocolate: it is the Stop Press. A plate is not what we use for eating food, but a metal or other material used in printing. “Putting to bed” does not mean giving birth, but the printing of a newspaper. Find below some of the expressions used in sub-editing, and their meaning:



**A****A Copy,**

n., material to be added to a story already in type at a point indicated on an accompanying proof. Copy should carry its original catchline plus the “A copy” numbering. Example: add murder/A copy I, add murder/A copy 2. Other additions at different points follow the same pattern with B copy, C copy and so on

- accent,** n., emphasis or main angle of story; also characteristic quality or manner of speech; also mark placed over vowels in many foreign words, most commonly French. These require special typesetting facilities for letterpress; they can be added by hand in offset and gravure preparation.
- add,** an addition to story already submitted or processed. Used in a catchline of the copy for identification (note use under A copy).
- ADP,** Abbreviation of Automatic Data Processing.
- Adsans,** Typeface with high legibility on small body, hence widely used and suitable for classified advertising and editorial statistical material.
- agency,** n., wire service organisation that collects news, film and/or photographs (usually worldwide) and sells a service to subscriber publishers or broadcasters. Examples: AAP, Reuter, Associated Press, United Press International, Tass, AFP, Press Association (UK). Also a company processing advertising material. Also, abb. For news agency (one word), a retailer of printed newspapers.
- Air,** n., white space in a newspaper or magazine layout. Hence, 'to give air' is to increase the amount of space.
- airbursh,** n., small pressure gun shaped like a pencil that sprays paint to give tone effects on artwork. Hence, v., to add tone by use of airbursh.
- All cap,** instruction to printer that material, such as a headline, is to be set entirely in capital letters.
- all right reserved,** a general copyright warning to others against using exclusive material.
- Alphameric,** adj., computer-age codes that include letters and figures. Also: alphanumeric.
- alterations,** n., corrections to typesetting proofs.
- Ampersand,** n., the symbol for 'and' (&).

**Arrowhead,** n., decorative type ornament to direct the eye to an adjacent space or to another page.

**art,** n., illustrative material of all kinds, including repros, in an advertisement or an editorial page, especially for offset or gravure reproduction. Also called artwork.

**Artist,** n., one who originates illustrative material or touches up artwork or photographs submitted by others.

**art paper,** n., a coated paper with a high finish.

**ascender,** n., that portion of a letter extending above the x-height typically the top of the stem in b,d,f,h,k, and t.

**Assignment,** n., job allotted to a reporter with a briefing by the chief of staff (or news editor).

**author's marks,** n., correction on a typesetting proof made by the author as distinct from the proofreader.

**author's** n., proof passed by the author as free of error.

**proof,** Sometimes abbreviated to 'authors.

## **B**

**Backgrounding,** n., giving the reader, by interpolation, information that makes today's report more understandable; briefing a reporter on the events leading to a statement, happening or assignment.

**back of the book,** n., pages behind the centre.

**bad break,** n., inappropriate placement of a hyphen to break a word at the end of a line; also, inappropriate point at which to turn the balance of story to another page.

**bad letter,** n., broken damaged type that prints unevenly.

**bad spacing,** n., space between words distributed unevenly along a line of type.

- balance,** n., arrangement of items and illustrations on a page so that text and pictures on one section counterbalance a mass of type matter on the other; also effect of presenting differing viewpoints on a topic with apparently equal emphasis.
- Bank,** n., one line of a headline; also, a reserve of material (fillers and stories held over from a previous edition or issue) for future use; also, a thin writing or typing paper.
- banner,** n., headline extending across the top of a page; also sometime, the masthead of a newspaper.
- baseline,** n., imaginary line on which the primary letters (e,n, x and so on) align at the bottom.
- Baskerville,** n., a serif typeface still commonly used, especially for text material in book publishing.
- bastard measure,** n., type set to a width different from that of the basic column or multiple of it.
- batter,** v., to destroy a word or words in which a serious or legally dangerous error has been found too late for re-setting, usually a desperate last-resort measure when the page plates are on the press ready to run. Hence, ‘a batter’ (n.) the scar that results in the printed page.
- Baud,** n., measurement of the rate at which information can be transferred electronically along a wire. One baud is equal roughly to one word a minute: hence a 100-baud system would carry 100 words a minute.
- Beard,** n., the space between the foot of a letter and the bottom edge of the type on which it is cast.
- beat,** n., an exclusive story; also, a time advantage (as to have a two-hour beat on a rival); also, US equivalent of a ‘round’.
- beat-up,** n., and v., lightweight facts given undeserved urgency, prominence or apparent importance; hence beat-up merchant, journalist who develops a reputation for this practice.
- bed,** n., part of the printing press that carries the type form or plate. See also: Put to bed.

- Ben Day,** n. and adj., process of placing a shading pattern on line engravings or type.
- BF,** abb. Boldface Type.
- big on body,** Adj. said of a reporter's story; also, boldface type.
- Black,** n., a carbon copy of a reporter's story; also, boldface type.
- blanket,** n., rubber-surfaced sheet clamped around the press cylinder in offset printing and transfers the image from the plate to the paper.
- Bleed,** v., to extend a picture over the edge of one or more margins of a printed page; hence, n., a bleed, the effect of that action.
- Bleed through** n., and v., ink so heavy that it shows distinctly on the reverse side of the sheet.
- Blind keyboard,** n., a phototypesetting term referring to a keyboard that does not produce a 'hard' or visible record of what is being typed.
- blob,** n., a large black dot used for emphasis or to introduce a number of highlight points from an announcement. More commonly known as a bullet.
- Block,** n., a process engraving by which photographs and other tonework can be reproduced in letterpress printing.
- Blocklines,** n., caption or explanatory material that complements and is printed adjacent to a photograph.
- blow up,** v., to enlarge a photograph; also to overdramatise a report.
- Blurb,** n. and v., paragraph or short item promoting a current or pending feature article or activity; hence, to publish such material.
- Blurb lines,** n., brief extract picked out of a feature article and given special display and type treatment to attract the reader's eye; also known as Teaser Lines.

<b>Bodoni,</b>	n., widely used serif typeface:
<b>body,</b>	n., the balance of a story after the introduction..
<b>body type</b>	n., type in which most text – other than advertisements, headlines and prominent introduction --is set.
<b>bold,</b>	adj., the blacker version of a typeface. Also known as boldface, blackface, accent face.
<b>book,</b>	n., the dummy or completed issue, particularly of a periodical. Hence, ‘front of the book’ and ‘back of the book’.
<b>border,</b>	n., ornamental rules. Used most often to outline boxes.
<b>box,</b>	n., a report enclosed by lines or rules.
<b>bracket,</b>	n., the square form is usually kept to enclose interpolated fact or reminders. See also Parentheses.
<b>break,</b>	n., and v., end of a paragraph; direction to copytaker to commence a new sheet; the point in a page or story where a report is interrupted to continue on another page; an advantage over a rival; first release of facts for publication; rupture of paper tape.
<b>break line,</b>	n., last line of a paragraph.
<b>bridge,</b>	n., proofreader’s mark showing that words or letters are to be joined together.
<b>brief,</b>	n., a filler or short item; v., to discuss with a reporter the aims and expectations in a proposed assignment.
<b>Broadsheet,</b>	n. and adj., a page taking the full size of a rotary press plate, hence a newspaper of that size (about 36 cm x 56 cm) such as <i>The Age</i> , <i>The Herald</i> , <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> .
<b>broken word,</b>	n., a polysyllable word hyphenated at a natural break to turn into the next line.

- bromide,** n., positive photographic film used as hard copy in paste-up for photoset publications; also, positive photographic copies; hence (v.) to effect that result.
- bury,** v., to place in part of the paper where an item will attract little attention.
- buster,** n., a headline with too many characters and spaces to fit the given line measure.
- busy,** adj., a page filled with interesting material to produce a lively appearance.
- byline,** n., the line (usually after the headline) crediting the author or authors of the report: 'By John Smith' or 'By out industrial writer' or 'From our Canberra bureau'. Hence, byline (d) material.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Without using the notes above, list and explain ten items in the subbing lingua.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

As you would have noticed from the above list which is actually very brief, there are very many expressions in printing lingua. They have been built up over several years. A person desirous of making a career in subbing needs to get familiar with these and other expressions in printing lingua so that he/she will not be entirely lost when in the midst of printing professionals.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This chapter has focused on printing lingua which simply refers to the special expressions used by sub editors and other print workers. There are very many of such expressions, and the ones listed above are not exhaustive. They are meant to stimulate your interest so that you will look for more of them and make efforts to get familiar with them.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain the meaning of the following expressions:

- i) Blanket

- ii) BF
- iii) Air
- iv) ADP
- v) Accent
- vi) Back of the book
- vii) Blow up
- viii) Baseline.
- ix) Batter
- x) Blob

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## **MODULE 4**

### **THE PROCESS OF SUB EDITING**

#### **UNIT 1**



Unit 1	Copy Sources and the Copy Taster
Unit 2	The Editor, Chief of Staff and News Editor
Unit 3	The Chief Sub and His Deputy
Unit 4	The Checks Sub and the Stone Sub
Unit 5	Catchline, Magazine and the Sub Editor's Must

## **UNIT 1 COPY SOURCES AND THE COPY TASTER**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	How Copy Enters the Subbing Line
3.2	The Copy Taster
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Although sub-editing is an activity, there are various processes involved in it. The process begins as soon as copy enters the subbing line. To lay a solid foundation, we shall begin by looking at how copy enters the subbing line. Thereafter, we shall, in this unit, look at the process through which copy passes when it gets to the copy taster.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to explain:

the sources from which copy enters the subbing line  
analyse the function of the copy taster in the process of sub-editing.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 How Copy Enters the Subbing Line**

There are various ways through which copy enters the subbing line. In addition to the conventional routes with which journalists of the last

millennium were familiar, advances in science and technology have opened a few more gateways. Below are some of the routes:

- (a) Most often, reporters' copy will have been keyed directly into a computer by the reporter. These days, with the ubiquity of computers and computer skills, this is the normal practice. The days are over when reporters were expected to submit handwritten copies. These days, the reporter types his report into the computer and does some preliminary proofreading to eliminate errors such as those of punctuation, spelling, repetition, malapropism and others that may occur in his report. It must be emphasized that what the reporter does here is not just to type in the report anyhow and go. He must add value by making preliminary corrections on his report. This, in addition to removing a source of stress for the sub ed, also helps to establish the reporter's reputation. If his copy is full of avoidable errors and omissions, his reputation is at stake, but if the copy is well written and properly proofread by the reporter himself, errors are minimized and the reporter gradually establishes his reputation as a good writer.

It is important for every reporter to have taken basic courses in newswriting and reporting. It must be observed that although the ideal thing is to have reporters formally trained in news writing and reporting before they commence their career in journalism, many practising Nigerian reporters did not have such a privilege when they started their journalistic career. While some entered with SSCE or its equivalents, others had higher qualifications in disciplines other than journalism. It is essential for all such people to be given the opportunity to learn the rudiments of news writing and reporting. Sometimes, however, instead of the reporter waiting passively and endlessly to be given the opportunity, he seizes the initiative and looks for avenues to get himself trained. Training is very important and will go a long way in enhancing the quality and style of copy. A well written copy is a sub-ed's delight.

- (b) Phone room copy is dictated by reporters on assignment or contributors who work outside the office. Media houses have reporters, special correspondents, freelance writers and other people outside the newsroom environment who file in reports regularly or periodically. Such people usually phone the newsroom and dictate their news reports. Such reports are written down as they are dictated, and they form part of the copy that are subsequently passed on to the copy taster. In the present era, GSM has become a veritable means of getting copy into the subbing line because the earlier impediments caused by the dearth of telephone lines and high cost of

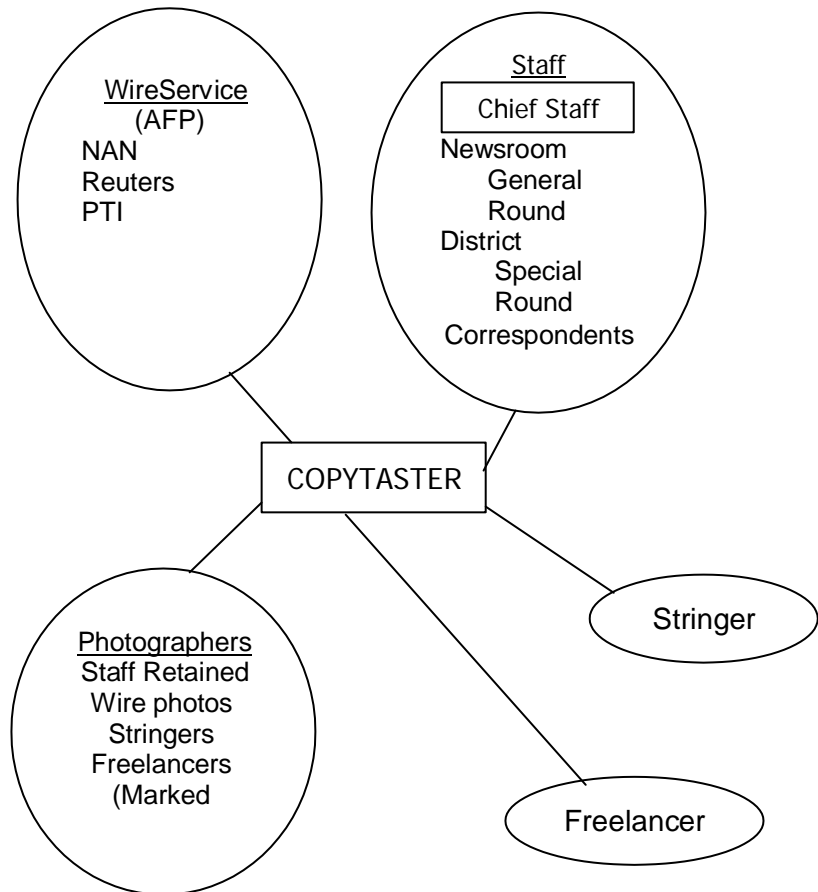
owning a telephone have been significantly reduced. Before the advent of the GSM, owning a telephone line was a rare privilege in Nigeria. Most times, even those who had the money to pay for telephone lines had to wait patiently for a long time to get one because the lines were in short supply. Consequent upon the dearth of telephone lines and services, it was difficult and sometimes very unpleasant to try sending reports by telephone. Thank God that that era is now over. Virtually every news source can now access GSM phones, sending in reports from sundry places. A book has been published on how GSM enhances news reporting in Nigeria. The GSM has indeed, changed the face and nature of news reporting in Nigeria. The GSM is therefore a very important route through which copy enters the subbing line.

- (c) Some copy may come in on paper or flash up on a computer terminal, depending on the source. Some news reports are written manually (this is now rare, and it is not encouraged) or typed and then submitted. Such are the ones on paper. Some are even downloaded from the Internet and passed on to the sub desk (A good journalist evaluates the credibility and reliability of his sources and double checks before he uses materials sourced from the internet to avoid inaccuracies and inconsistencies that may jeopardize his integrity and that of his publication) Some are sent in by news agencies, wire services, etc, on paper, and the subs sit down to work them into the format preferred by the publication. Some come in via the computer where intranet or other forms of computer network exist. The work is easier if the material flashes up on the computer. This is because the sender or whoever puts it on the network would have done some preliminary work. This does not however give the sub the leverage to rest on his oars as that could spell doom for his work. He must still work copiously and diligently on the copy as if nothing at all has been done on the material. He must still treat it as a raw stock or raw stuff deserving the highest level of attention and diligence.
- (d) The sub may have to key it into the system if it has not been keyed in. Handwritten materials or even typed items that are not yet keyed in need to be keyed in, sometimes by the sub, if deadlines are to be met. Here, the sub may not be able to claim that it is somebody else's duty. Perhaps the person to key it in is very busy on an equally important assignment and time is going. The sub rises to the occasion to save the situation. Overseas and interstate copy comes by direct input, fax, telex or teleprinter. Again the copy may have to be keyed in. Some older teleprinter machines, where they exist, print

only capitals. There are other important situations that may make it imperative for the sub to participate in keying the news stuff into the system.

The diagram below is meant to illustrate how copy gets into the subbing line.

*Sources of Information for the Copy Taster*



**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Discuss three of the routes through which copy enters the subbing line.

**3.2 The Copy Taster**

No matter how the item for publication came in, it has now entered the subbing line. The copy taster is the first filter in the system. Copy tasters discard or ‘spike’ (the term is still used even though copy is no longer hung on a vertical, metal spike in case it is needed to fill a hole or provide background information) that which could not rightfully find a place anywhere in the paper. They may decide that some items are more suitable for separate sections like sports, property, business, etc. and

direct them there. They find errors of fact or presentation in copy. Factual errors can be checked directly with the reporter or referred to the chief of staff.

No matter where or how a piece of copy originates, it should be channelled through the copy taster. It is also the copy taster's job to 'discover' stories. By 6pm a morning newspaper has some idea of what will be on its first three pages, but there will always be stories no one knew about or thought about. When copy tasters strike these stories, they make much noise. The editor's attention is caught. Suddenly a story from page three has moved to page five. In its place goes the 'scoop' from Abuja that the copytaster has 'discovered'.

Copy tasters obviously must know their newspaper: its readers, its values, and its style. They must be able to 'see' – visualise – copy in the newspaper. A copy taster whose judgment is thought poor, or whose wits are considered slow, is a burden. Tolerance is scarce. There is simply no time.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

If you were to *copytaste* for both *The Guardian* and *The Sun*, describe the kind of materials you would reserve for the each of the publications.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Copy can enter the subbing line through a variety of routes. The reporters would have keyed in copy directly; some copy is dictated by phone and some may come in by paper or flash up on the computer terminal. In addition, some may have to be keyed in by the sub. These are the most common routes.

The Copytaster is strategic in the publication process. No matter the routes through which copy enters the subbing line, the copytaster is expected to *copytaste*, just as he is also expected to 'discover'. To be effective, he is expected to have an in-depth understanding of his publication's housestyle and audience, among other things.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Copy comes into the subbing line through a variety of routes. As a result of advances in science and technology routes unknown to previous generations of journalists are now open and are being utilized by modern journalists. No matter the route through which copy enters the subbing line, the copytaster is expected to, as it were, sample it before it fully enters the long and arduous system of getting it published for the reading public.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the routes through which copy enters the subbing line and the role of the copytaster.

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## **UNIT 2 THE EDITOR, CHIEF OF STAFF AND NEWS EDITOR**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Editor

- 3.2 Chief of Staff and News Editor
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Most readers know the editor as the main brain behind their favourite publications. But in addition to the editor, there are several other professionals whose inputs are very essential in the process of publishing. This unit examines the specific roles of the Editor, the Chief of Staff and the News Editor in the process of sub-editing. Although these professionals play several roles in the process of getting materials published, this unit will focus more specifically on their roles in the process of sub-editing.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the roles of the editor in the process of subbing
- explain the roles the chief of staff and news editor in the process of subbing.

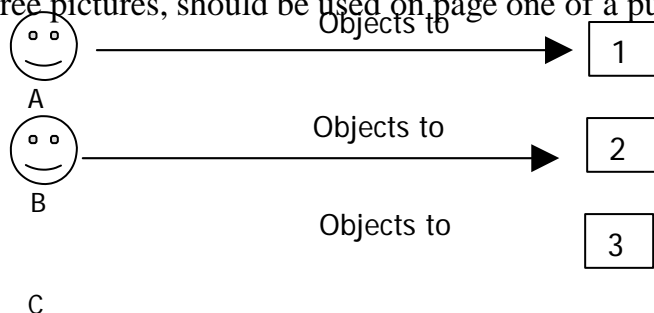
## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 The Editor

An editor is somehow an embodiment of the roles of a copy taster, sub editor and writer. His role in the subbing process involves some part of these other roles. No wonder then that the editor is the best-known among print media professionals. When people assume that the editor does it all, they are in part knowingly or unknowingly acknowledging the primacy of the role played by the editor.

In addition to any other role that the editor plays in the subbing process, he is the final adjudicator of what goes where. Newspaper, like anything creative, cannot be run by committees.

Committees tend to compromise; to create camels instead of thoroughbred horses. The diagram below depicts a scenario that may be experienced if a three-member committee were to determine which, out of three pictures, should be used on page one of a publication.









If every member of the committee objects to the use of the available pictures, there is a stalemate and the publication may not see the light of day. At best, a picture which is not necessarily the best, is used. The decision-making process itself is difficult and even cumbersome. Remember that newspapers operate by deadlines. To avoid delays in the decision-making process which could, in turn, affect the publication's ability to meet deadlines, the editor has a discretion. He co-operates with every other person in the process, but when the chips are down, his discretion is what matters. He is the one who the publisher, the law enforcement agencies and the public hold responsible when things go wrong. He is the ultimate gatekeeper.

In playing his role in the subbing process, the editor has to be brave enough to make mistakes: use a picture too strongly or run a story too lavishly. Only by the making of these mistakes does a paper evolve. If the editor is too timid to dare, neither he nor the publication will grow. As an editor, you try a new form of layout for sound reasons. If the layout doesn't quite work, you discover where the scheme failed. Next time you may get it right. You have refined the process; and the range of the paper's style has been broadened. The paper is evolving. This is not trial by error per se. It is bold, decisive and well-informed decision-making.

### **3.2 The Chief of Staff and News Editor**

To better understand the role of the Chief of Staff and the News Editor in the subbing process, it is appropriate to have an understanding of their roles in the daily process of newsgathering. The Chief of Staff and the News Editor are the people who usually decide what is to be story. By virtue of their training and experience, they know where to expect certain news items from as well as the competence of their reporters. Accordingly, they assign the most appropriate reporters to cover unfolding stories. They assign reporters to jobs and decide what not to cover. Since they are experienced and knowledgeable, they can be relied

upon to take the right decision, and usually, their decisions are not questioned. To ensure that the publication is on top of the news, they talk to various news sources at the seat of power, in business, commerce and industry, the military and other places. For example, Aso Rock will not be an intimidating place to them; the National Assembly is a familiar territory, they know key operators at the Nigerian Stock Exchange, etc. They may have an inkling of what is news in advance and capitalize on this to get the best out of the situation for their publication. With that at the background, let us now see what they do in the subbing process.

In subbing, they are surrogate copy tasters. It can be argued, and rightly so, that indeed everyone on the backbench is a taster. What then is so special about the role of the Chief of Staff and News Editor in the subbing process? The Chief of Staff and News Editor have the job of checking that stories are written as properly as possible. What is proper in one context may not be proper in another context. They know the difference and insist that copy should be properly written. Unlike a sub, they can say to a reporter: I know the facts about that story. I know how you outlined it to me and it could have been written much better. This confidence is derived from their pre-copy or regular role as discussed earlier. Before copy comes in, they have a very good idea of what to expect, and as copy comes in, they look to see if those expectations have been met or if there has been a compromise. If they are satisfied, good. But if they are not satisfied, copy must be reworked to comply with expected standards. As it were, their hands are expected to always be on the throttle. Their roles therefore go a long way in ensuring that we get the kind of stories we get in the publications.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What exactly does the Editor, Chief of Staff or News Editor do in the process of subbing?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Editor, Chief of Staff and News Editor, constitute an important hierarchy in the gatekeeping process. Collectively, they ensure that readers get value for their time and money and that the publication does not run aground as a result of litigations and readers' protests. This they do in the subbing process by ensuring that copy complies with expected standard, and the gate is closed against non-compliant copy. Using the powers conferred by their positions, they ensure that both professional and in-house standards as are upheld, and as often as necessary, they cause copy to be reworked to maximum satisfaction.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

To ensure speedy and efficient decision-making, newspapers are not run through the committee system. Instead, specific people are entrusted with various tasks that relate to gatekeeping and quality control. Prominent among these are the Editor on whose desk the buck stops as well as the Chief of Staff and the Editor, both of whose function in the subbing process is to ensure that copy complies with expected professional and in-house standards. Their general roles in the news gathering process put them at a vintage position to enforce compliance with expected standards in the subbing process.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the roles of the Editor, Chief of Staff and News Editor in the subbing process.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 3 THE CHIEF SUB AND HIS DEPUTY

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Chief Sub and His Deputy
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

## 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the Chief Sub Editor (Chief Sub, for short) is known to be in charge of newspaper production. But that is not really all there is to know about the Chief Sub. In the process of subbing he plays certain roles. So important is the role of the Chief Sub in the subbing process that he is even assisted by a deputy. This unit examines the role of the Chief Sub and his deputy in the subbing process.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain the role of the Chief Sub and his deputy in the subbing process.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Chief Sub and His Deputy

After the copy taster, the Chief Sub is the next filter in the subbing process. Since available newshole is limited, a story needs to be competitive to get in. Part of the Chief Sub's duty is to meticulously check and cross-check to be sure that a story is good enough to enter the available newshole. Usually, the inside pages of a newspaper have an earlier deadline than the outside pages (i.e. front page and back page, and since the newshole in the outermost pages is smaller than that in the inside pages, the competition to get into the outer pages is stiffer. Late copy is eligible for the outer pages, but it must be very strong to secure a space. Let us study copy one, two and three below to determine which gets into the outer pages. They all came in at the same time - in time to get into the outer pages.

#### Copy One

SEAFARERS  
Isiaka Adams

The Federal Government has been urged to ensure adequate and prompt release funds to the Joint Maritime Labour Industrial Council to enable the Council execute its mandate of capacity building in the maritime labour sector.

Similarly, all the necessary support required by JOMALIC to embark on capacity building towards making Nigeria a seafarer-exporting nation to world merchant ships should be made available to the council.

According to a group of concerned seafarers, under the aegis of the Nigerian Merchant Navy Officers, the Water Senior Staff Association and the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, the idea of making the country a seafarer-exporting nation had almost gone into the oblivion?

“There is the idea of making Nigeria have enough seafarers for the Nigerian cabotage and for revenue generation as it is in the Philippines. What is the Federal Government doing about it or has it gone permanently into oblivion? We the maritime unions are saying no. It should not”, the group stated.

The seafarer observed that five years ago, the NMNO, the WTSSA, the Nigerian Shipping Federal Manager, Prince Sokari George, and the MWUN jointly formed a directorate used as the enforcement organ to improve the welfare of the seafarers.

The statement reads, “The directorate that floated a monitoring unit then could not do much until the advent of the JOMALIC Act 2003. With the advent, the seafarers breathed an air of relief that their messiah had finally emerged’.

According to the group, the demise of the Nigerian National Shipping Line, the Nigerian National Fishing Company, and the Nigerian National Shrimps Company, heralded the untold sufferings of the seafaring profession as the capacity building programmes of these parastatals died with them.

It noted that although the maritime industry still continued, the training and development programmes were completely lost leading to the dearth of trained seafarers.

“Therefore, there are practically few trained seafarers to man vessels that exist within the nations maritime, owned by foreign businesses men or foreign partners, who make tremendous profits through slavish conditions of service and introduction of modern day slavery”, the group noted.

It observed that a series of meetings and conferences had been held and references made to the seafarers and the profession, which culminated in the first African seafarer conference recently in Abuja, where many issues as they affected the seafarers were discussed and resolutions passed.

The group expressed the fear that as was the case with the previous meetings and resolutions, the necessary implementation might not come and the whole idea might be “imprisoned in the conference halls without any effect on the people and the nation”.

It advised that rather than confine the funding of JOMALIC to Maritime Authority and the Nigerian Ports Authority, a special purse should be created for capacity building and training programmes of the council in order for the good intentions of the government to have the desired effects.

The seafarers noted that only well-funded capacity building programmes could guarantee that the Nigerian seafarers would comply with the International Maritime Organisation’s Standard Training Certificate for Watch Keeping 1995, which had stopped in the country long ago.

### **Copy Two**

**U.S.**  
OOL

All frayed nerves over the closure, last week, of major foreign missions in Lagos will cool down today as the United States (U.S.) Consulate reopens. Full consular services will begin tomorrow.

The American Embassy in Abuja, which confirmed the development to *The Guardian* yesterday, expressed regrets for the discomfort the closure had caused.

Dr. Rudolph Steward, the Information Officer at the U.S. Embassy had on Saturday said the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. John Campbell, would address the press tomorrow.

A statement by Steward yesterday read: “The United States Consulate in Lagos will reopen on June 20 with full consular services beginning on Tuesday, June 21.

“We regret any inconvenience to the public caused by the closure. We would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding, assistance and co-operation provided by the relevant Nigerian authorities’.

It was not clear at press time whether the reopening of the American Consulate in Lagos would result in a similar action by the other missions, which cited the U.S. action for closing shop.

Barely 24 hours after the U.S. shut its missions, the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Russia, Italy and Lebanon made similar announcements.

The Federal Government had on Saturday threatened to launch a diplomatic offensive against the U.S. and some European countries that unilaterally closed down their missions in Lagos last week. A senior Foreign Affairs official had said that it was unconventional for the missions to have affected the closure without notification of the appropriate authorities in the host country (Nigeria).

It was learnt at the weekend that some disagreements between two security agencies of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), had been resolved in favour of the FBI's position.

It was said that the FBI had raised a security concern that an alleged threat by a militant group, the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), in the Lagos area, was serious enough.

But the CIA was said to have argued that it was not serious, the position tallied with the Nigerian government's position.

*The Guardian* learnt that the State Department had, however, argued that it was better to err on the side of caution, hence the closure.

The closure was earlier attributed to an *al-Qaeda* threat.

The Intelligence Department of the Nigerian Military and Police are, however, believed to be working on various leads to ascertain what caused the sudden shut down of eight countries' missions.

### **Insecurity**

OOL

*The Guardian* learnt that the armed forces and the police held separate meetings at the weekend in Lagos and Abuja with a view to working out a better strategy to tackle any possible security threat.

According to a source, the Presidency had to send signals to both the military and the police high commands to strengthen their security networks.



Defence sources told *The Guardian* that Naval personnel at the Western Naval Command had already been placed on the alert to check any act of terrorism that might occur through the water-ways leading to the Bar Beach at Victoria Island where all the embassies are located.

An intelligence officer who spoke to *The Guardian* on condition of anonymity confirmed the latest security steps by the Federal Government.

According to him: “Since the embassies were closed in such a manner, especially when they were citing security issues of mutual concern to their countries and the Federal Government, then we have to be on the red alert; that is our job”.

Also, the Acting Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, has ordered the deployment of mobile policemen and anti-bomb detector squads to Walter Carrington Crescent, Victoria Island, where many of the embassies are located.

Every vehicle that passes the street was screened at the weekend with sophisticated bomb detectors. The Force Public Relations Officer, Superintendent Emmanuel Ighodalo and the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ade Ajakaiye, in separate interviews with *The Guardian* assured of maximum security for embassies and citizens.

Meanwhile, the Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE) has urged the Federal Government to urgently address alleged threat to the nation’s security.

The elders who met in Ibadan, Oyo State, yesterday, urged the President to order a security red alert nation-wide to safeguard Nigeria’s territorial borders.

In a statement read to reporters at the end of the meeting by its Oyo State Secretary – General, Prof. Bayo Olateju, the council said:” as unsettling as the American intelligence reports on the predicted break-up or collapse of Nigeria before 2020, *Igbimo Agba Yoruba*, the other name for YCE, urges the President to take the report with a pinch of salt and remain even more resolute in his dogged belief in the unity and oneness of our dear country.

“YCE is aware of the orchestrated attempt, with subtle blackmail of some countries to paint Nigeria unsafe and unstable politically and economically at this time when the nation has never been safer.

“Their fear of the ‘September 11’ type of disaster in Nigeria is unfounded. Therefore we urge the President to re-assure them by

nipping in the bud those events which could have been unsettling to them and at the same time put security at red alert across the country and beyond”.

While commending the efforts of the government on debt forgiveness, the leaders also urged Obasanjo not to relent in his efforts at ensuring that Nigeria gets a substantial reduction in her indebtedness, particularly from the Paris Club and if possible outright forgiveness.

According to them, if the debt relief was granted, the government should brace up and plug all the drainpipes of corruption and run an open, accountable and participatory government.

“With the circles of debt now broken, they have their fate fully in their own hands as the country can now move forward unfettered by any debt burden” Olateju said.

### **Copy Three**

#### **ILLEGAL FINES: MOTORISTS ABANDON VEHICLES Kunle Adeyemi, Tobi Soniyi and Soni Daniel**

Excessive fines for traffic offences may have forced many motorists to abandon their vehicles at parking lots belonging to traffic control agencies in Lagos and Rivers States, investigations have revealed.

In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumped at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island.

In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents.

Many of the impounded vehicles in LASTMA’s parking lots are commercial buses.

Investigations showed that in some of the parks, officials demanded up to N5,000 from motorists before their impounded vehicles could be released. If a vehicle remained in the park over night, the fine could shoot up to N10, 000.

The traffic Act, however, provides that for each day that a vehicle impounded for a traffic offence remained in the park, the owner should pay a fine of N500 before he could reclaim it.

LASTMA’s spokesman, Mr. Sikiru Olusesi Azeez, who spoke with our correspondents, did not deny the allegation of inflated fines for offences.

But he noted that the agency had always warned motorists to promptly lodge complaints at the authority's headquarters in Oshodi any time they felt they were being extorted.

He noted that the statutory fine for any vehicle that stayed for more than 24 hours in the park was N500.

Azeez acknowledged, however, that charges levied by officials for the various offences could range from N1, 000 to N50, 000.

"For instance, a vehicle that is impounded for moving against the traffic will be released after the payment of N25,000; drivers whose vehicles are impounded for 'willful obstruction' will pay a fine of N5,000; bullion vans pay N50,000 each," he said.

The case is not so different with the task force and the police, especially traffic policemen who have been directed by the state police command to stop routine check of vehicle particulars.

Investigations showed that some traffic policemen demand as high as N5,000 from drivers for an offence as minor as jumping the traffic light.

The Federal Highways Act, Chapter 135, Section 20, states the condition under which a vehicle could be impounded as when it was driven in a way that it damaged any part of the highway.

But the Lagos State Traffic Act is more specific on this, Section 18 of the Act reads, "Where any motor vehicle is found plying or being driven or used on any highway within Lagos State without the necessary particulars, any police officer may impound the vehicle and cause the vehicle to be removed to a vehicle park."

On the recovery of such impounded vehicle, Section 19 states, "Any person entitled to the custody of a removed vehicle who, within 24 hours after the vehicle was impounded, tenders to the official in charge of the removed vehicle park where the vehicle is, following that is:

- (a) such evidence, that officer may reasonably require, of his entitlement to the custody of the removed which is in the park.
- (b) the necessary particulars in relation to that vehicle issued prior to the impounding of the vehicle;

shall be entitled on demand at the park and without payment of any fees, to have the vehicle delivered up to him at the park".

Sub-section 2 of Section 19 allows the vehicle owner to pay a fine only when the vehicle has been in custody for more than 24 hours. Immediately the fine is paid, the vehicle should be handed over to the owner.

Section 20 of the Act reads, “Where any removed vehicle is not claimed in accordance with section 19 within the period of two weeks specified under that section, the removed vehicle shall vest in the Lagos State Government”.

The Act stipulates another condition that can warrant impounding of a vehicle to be, “where a motor vehicle is stationary or abandoned on the highway or near private premises”.

Sub-section 5 states: “Where the vehicle was found not to have been abandoned, but left on the highway for an unreasonably long time with a view to eventual removal by its owner, the owner shall bear the cost of towing the vehicle to a removed vehicle park”.

Offences that may warrant impounding a vehicle include driving with a forged licence, driving without a driver’s licence, driving of any vehicle by a person under 18, driving an unlicensed vehicle, driving with forged vehicle particulars, and driving with fake number plates.

Others, such as driving an unregistered staff bus, causing obstruction on the highway, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol, disobeying traffic personnel or traffic lights attract a fine of N2, 000.

The vehicles impounded in Port Harcourt included assorted cars, buses, tankers, trucks, and motorcycles.

Our correspondents learnt that some of these vehicles were impounded over 10 years ago.

Impounding vehicles seems to be an oddity in the Federal Capital Territory, as our correspondents’ investigations showed that police divisions in Abuja were almost free of seized vehicles.

Except in a few and isolated cases vehicle involved in accidents were removed to the police station, others seen in most of the divisions were stolen but recovered, with the owners yet to be identified.

Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

Armed with a dummy and assisted by his deputy, the Chief Sub critically examines each copy to see if it can get a space and where. If the newspaper has two editions, the Chief Sub carefully selects what should be passed on to the deputy Chief Sub of the first edition, while copy for the inside pages of the second edition piles up. As soon as he is through with subbing for the first edition, he must proceed to sub copy for the inside pages of the second edition which have, by now, piled up.

Meanwhile, the Chief Sub is expected to constantly talk with the editor about the content and layout of pages one and three. When story to be used on page one is finally decided, copy is passed on to page one sub who will then cut and treat copy for the paper's shop window. He must also write appropriate captions and headlines to fit the artists' design. By now you would have realized that the Chief Sub does not work alone. He works in concert with the editor, the deputy chief sub and others to get the job done, but the chief Sub's work is not done yet. If copy is meant for an inside page it must be shown to the layout sub who designs the paper from page two onwards. Page one is usually designed by an artist.

The Chief Sub is usually expected to hand or 'feed' a story with an instruction sheet or its electronic equivalent to a table sub.

Having subbed the story and marked it up again for setting, the table sub will tell the deputy chief sub what the heading says. The deputy chief sub will, in turn, mark the gist of the heading on the layout.

The above description of the work of the Chief Sub and his deputy appears very brief and straight forward, but in reality their work is not. It is a breath-taking task which must be diligently carried out within the deadline.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

If you were a Chief Sub and you received the above three copy, explain what you would do with each of them.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Copy can enter the subbing line through a variety of routes. The reporters would have keyed in copy directly; some copies are dictated by phone and some may come in by paper or flash up on the computer terminal. In addition, some may have to be keyed in by the sub. These are the most common routes.

The Chief Sub and his deputy are gatekeepers in the true sense. They shut the door against weak and improperly written copy until it is good enough, and if it cannot be any better, it loses every chance of getting in. The Chief Sub, of course, cannot forget that he must feed copy and the accompanying instruction sheet or its electronic equivalent immediately. He can only rest when all copy is off the subbing line, but then it must be remembered that tomorrow's work is beckoning a few hours away.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The work of both the Chief Sub and his deputy are germane to the subbing process. Although the Chief Sub is most often associated with the production phase of his job, his role and that of his deputy in the subbing process are equally challenging. The two of them are part and parcel of the filtering process which produces a clean and readable newspaper. Like the editor, they have a copy of the dummy. The deadline for the inner page is shorter, and the copy that comes in after that must face the stiff competition of selection for the few available newsholes in the outer pages. Naturally, most of them do not make it, but are reserved for later editions if they are good enough. If they are not, they are spiked altogether. While the Chief Sub does his work, he must constantly communicate with the editor about the content and layout of the publication

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Describe the roles of the Chief Sub and his deputy in the subbing process.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Martins Oloja, Alex Olise and Iyabo Lawal "U.S. reopens Lagos Consulate, Govt Tackles Alleged Insecurity" *The Guardian* Monday, June 20, 2005 p1.

Isiaka Adams "Seafarers Canvass Better Funding for JOMALIC" *The Punch*, Friday, June 24, 2005 p22.

## **UNIT 4 THE CHECKS SUB AND THE STONE SUB**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Checks Sub and the Stone Sub
    - 3.1.1 The Checks Sub
    - 3.1.2 The Stone Sub
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary

- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Both the Checks Sub and the Stone Sub play important roles in the subbing process. In big media organizations both of them are employed, but many small media organizations try to find ways to reduce staff strength and cut overhead costs. In the process, they compress job roles so that the job of two people is sometimes done by one person. But ideally, the two positions are separate and distinct. The Stone Sub is also called the Revise Sub.

In this unit, we shall examine the role of both the Checks Sub and the Stone Sub in the process of subbing.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the different roles played by the Checks Sub and the Stone Sub in the subbing process.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Checks Sub and the Stone Sub**

#### **3.1.1 The Checks Sub**

When the table sub completes subbing work on copy, the copy goes on to the check or revise sub – if a paper is large enough to have one. Revise sub is another name for Check sub. As the names imply, this sub both checks copy and effects revisions where necessary to ensure that everything has been correctly and satisfactorily done. He looks out for all subsisting errors in the subbed copy. It must be stated that most Nigerian newspapers do not have a revise sub .Why? You may ask. The reasons are many and varied. Some Nigerian newspapers, as mentioned in an earlier unit, try to minimise expenses so they can break even and make profit. Some believe there is no point having a checks sub when some other sub can do the checks and revisions. Others believe that the money that should be invested in a Checks sub can be used to improve the benefits of the other subs. Some editors will simply tell you that their publications are not large enough to have a Checks sub, while some will tell you that there is a Checks sub who combines his work with other assignments. It must be noted, however, that whether there is a Checks sub or not, his work must be done. Simply put, even in publications that



do not employ a Checks sub, the work of the Checks Sub must be done by somebody who has a different designation. This confirms the importance of the Checks Sub's work.

As important as the Check sub's work is, he is not allowed to delay the progress of work because readers out there are waiting to read the newspaper. They cannot be kept waiting because other publications are waiting for them and may win them over permanently. Like a suitor, the publication must court the reader properly, and one of the proper ways is putting to bed at the right time. That way the publication can keep its readers. A paper that comes out late regularly has a bad reputation and may lose many readers and advertisers. Most of the money newspapers make comes from advertisements, and advertisers prefer to patronize publications that have high circulation figures. Conscious of this fact, the Checks sub checks quickly and diligently. Part of his training involves the skill to combine speed with diligence.

Copy cannot be needlessly delayed, but the job is vital.

The revise sub is out to detect and revise subbing errors. Accordingly, he must quickly check to ensure the following:

Those headings agree with copy. Sometimes, due to a subbing error, headings may be at variance with copy. The copy may be talking about the plans of the senate president to resign, while the headline may be talking about a senate president who has already resigned. The copy may be talking about an expected hike in the price of fuel, while the headline may be screaming that the prices have already skyrocketed. At other times, what the headline and the copy are talking about is entirely different and unrelated. The headline may be screaming about a plane crash in Greece while the copy talks about a collapsed bridge in Taraba State. The copy may be about the debt forgiveness granted Nigeria while the headline may be about a fresh plot to impeach Mr. President.

Are these kinds of errors possible? Yes. They are not just possible, but they are also real and happen in some Nigerian newspapers frequently. You want to know why? The reasons are many and varied, but the absence of Checks Subs may be a very important factor. This confirms the importance of the Checks sub. In the subbing process, he is to check for this and other kinds of errors and then revise them quickly.

When next you read the dailies and notice any of the errors, it is likely that the publication has no Checks sub or that the Checks sub has not done his work excellently. And when you read the

paper and they are devoid of these errors, it is likely that the Checks sub or anybody playing his role has worked very well.

That no mistakes have been written into the copy. There are many types of subbing errors that could be introduced into copy. These may include the following among several others:

***Spelling Errors:***

1. Mr Present explained this while presenting a state of the nation address to the Senate.
2. Governor Chris Ngige lost the case at the electing petition tribunal seating in Awka.
3. The Central Bank disproved the proposed merger
4. The milemum goals are achievable, the UN scribe explained
5. Nigerians have again been advised to brace up for hard times.
6. Lagoseans has been asked to challenge any LATSMA official found on federal roads in Lagos State.
7. National Open University of Nigeria was absolved of any wrongdoing
8. Secret courts are illegal in all Nigerian universities.
9. Mother-to-Shield transmission of HIV is a major health challenge
10. Eating apples is a healthy habit.

***Grammatical Errors***

1. The Governor of Oyo State say this yesterday at Ibadan
2. The Senators all agrees with Presidents move
3. Wives of military officers were advised to always supporting their husband
4. The lawyers argues that the decisions are ultra vires
5. Court processes are being abused according to the defence counsel
6. Physics are a very interesting subject.
7. Nigerian Ports is among the safest in West Africa
8. Condom using can prevents the spread of HIV.
9. In spite of eye witness accounts, the man claimed that he did not did it.
10. The driver said he did not knew of any offence he was said to has committed
11. He is the better of the two competitors.

These are just a few of the subbing errors that can occur. There are several other errors, including punctuation errors, wrong spelling of names, etc.

That crucial fact has not been cut. Sometimes, in the subbing process some vital facts may be cut. It is the duty of the Checks sub to detect such and have them revised. The cuts may have affected the date, time and venue of an event; it may have affected any of the five Ws and H (what, when, who, where, why and how). These are crucial, and the Checks sub has to get them corrected so that incomplete information is not disseminated to esteemed readers out there waiting hungrily and patiently for correct and complete information.

Many of the errors we see in newspapers are usually described as the printer's devil, but in reality it is not as if a ghostly figure is hiding inside the printer to create errors. Many of the errors are man-made. To err, in deed, is human. But the work of a diligent Checks sub can help to tremendously reduce, if not completely eliminate such errors. This underscores the immense respect accorded the work of the Checks sub, especially by large publications.

When the Checks sub is satisfied with the checks and revisions, copy is then sent to the compositors.

### **3.1.2 The Stone Sub**

The final person in the chain is the stone sub. His is the final bus stop, so to say, before copy leaves the subbing line. In modern production systems this person is sometimes called the make up or paste-up sub because, as the names imply, what he does is essentially making up or pasting. As the copy is set and the proofread galleys made up into pages by the compositors, the stone sub – if the table subs did not cast off accurately, cuts or expands, stones and headlines to fit the page design. Accordingly, the stones and headlines may get bigger or smaller, depending on the good judgment of the stone sub

The stone sub does not work in the newsroom, but with the printers. This is apparently the only sub whose work is in the printing shop. If you find a stone sub working in the newsroom instead of the printing shop, something may be wrong, and you are free to walk up to him and ask why.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Why does the Checks sub work in the newsroom while the Stone sub works in the printing shop?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Both the Checks sub and the Stone sub play important roles in the subbing process. Through the work of the Checks sub, errors and omissions introduced into copy in the subbing process are eliminated. It is from his desk that copy proceeds to the compositors with whom the stone sub works. The stone sub, on the other hand, works with the compositors in the print shop, ensuring, in the process, that make up or paste up is properly and correctly done. When these have done their work well, errors in the publication are likely to be minimal.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The Check sub works to ensure that headings agree with copy; that no mistakes have been written into copy, and that crucial facts have not been cut. If he notices that they have, he gets them reversed quickly and sends copy to the compositors. He is the last person in the subbing line to be seen in the newsroom as the stone sub works in the print shop. Rather unfortunately, many Nigerian newspapers have no Checks subs, but their roles are subsumed under some other designations.

As copy received from the Checks sub is set and the galleys made up into pages by the compositors, the stone sub cuts or expands stones and headlines to fit page if the table subs did not cast off accurately. This way, the newspaper comes out beautifully, correctly and at the expected time.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the main differences between the works of the Checks sub and that of the Stone sub citing relevant examples where necessary.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Evans, H. (1974). *Editing and Design, Book Three: News Headlines*. London: Heinemann.

----- (1978) *Picture on a Page*. London: Heinemann.

Herbert, S. (1969). *Pioneers of Modern Typography*. London: Lund Humphries.

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## **UNIT 5      CATCHLINE, MAGAZINE AND SUBEDITORS’ MUSTS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Catchline
  - 3.2 Magazine
  - 3.3 Sub Editors’ Must

- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit uses a single stone to, as it were, kill three birds. The unit focuses on the catchline, describing what it is and how it is done, and goes ahead to talk about the magazine which some people misconstrue as glorified newspaper. Finally, the unit presents a “must” list for Sub editors.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to explain what the catchline is and how it is done, explain the peculiarities of magazines as distinct from newspapers and describe the items on the “must” list for Sub editors.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Catchline**

Any copy saved into a computer must be carefully catchlined – the one-word label for each item which accurately denotes the story or piece.

In the following examples, each copy has been given a catchline:

***Example One***

Catchline: Confab

***Example Two***

Catchline:

Politburo

***Example Three***

Catchline:

Spillage

***Example Four:***

Strike

***Example Five:***

Ngige

***Example Six:***

## Alamiyeseigha

In the days of hot metal, the intro had to be on a separate folio because when the composing room supervisor received the copy he separated special settings such as headlines, intros, blocklines, or bastard settings to be set on machines equipped with specialised founts.

You can see that if the catchline had been changed halfway through the story its parts might never be united.

That is still true even if in electronic typesetting there is no metal type. Instead, there are photographically generated printouts which are cut and pasted on a page plan and rephotographed to make a printing plate.

Much of the work previously done by compositors is now carried out by the subeditor himself on a computer-terminal.

### **3.2 Magazine**

In this course text, there is no separate module allocated to magazines. But it is as well to understand that magazines are not simply prettied up newspapers. They are a different medium. They even have a slightly different language. For instance, the word 'catchline' disappears in favour of 'Running Head' .... it means roughly the same thing but emphasises that magazines are different.

### **3.3 Subeditors' Musts**

1. Be good reporters. They must have:

- news sense
- good literacy skills
- sources
- extensive vocabulary

2. Be expert in:

- grammar
- spelling
- punctuation
- media law

3. Have a design sense.
4. Understand typography.
5. Be numerate, so that they can:

cast off; and

fit:

- illustrations
- headlines
- boxes
- body copy

## **SELF EXERCISE ASSESSMENT**

Write a One-page article titled “Sub Editors’ Musts” for publication in the newsletter of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National Open University of Nigeria.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

By now you must have known what a catchline is and the fact that magazines are different from newspapers in a number of respects. You must have also become familiar with the list of ‘musts’ for Subeditors. It is importance to stimulate your imagination by trying, once in a while, to craft catchlines for the articles, reports, etc, which you read in newspapers and magazines. You can also try to think of the kinds of words that magazines would use in place of those used by newspapers to describe certain things which they apparently have in common. You may talk with sub-eds from Newspapers and magazines, if you have access to them, but this is not compulsory, for now. Also try and ask yourself why certain things are ‘a must’ for sub-eds. Try answering those questions yourself, and whenever you are opportuned to meet a sub ed, feel free to discuss such with him/her. That is part of learning.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has looked at three related things which are relevant to subbing. These are the catchline, the magazine as a distinct ‘personality’ from the newspaper and a list of ‘musts’ for sub editors. It is important to be familiar with these by discussing them whenever the opportunity arises.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

*The following two items of copy came in on line from overseas. Combine and reduce them to 200 words for the front of a morning paper.*

BALI, Oct. 11 – Authorities here have begun their biggest crackdown on the flourishing illegal Indonesian drug trade.



Police today swooped on dozens of hotels and beach cabins in a series of raids.

Bali residents say they have never seen so many police and soldiers on the Island. The police are working with two-way radios and in fast vehicles.

Many tourists and holiday makers have been stopped in the streets and asked to show their passports. Some have had their bags searched. An elderly American woman became hysterical in the main street of Denpasar after police shoved her into an open truck. She was later released.

Most of the raids have been around the main centre and capital, Denpasar. The authorities believe Bali is the main centre for heavy export trade in drugs, particularly to Australia. Marijuna was smoked openly by tourists in many parts of Bali.

More than 350 people, mostly Indonesians, have so far been held for questioning. They include some Americans and two Australians.

The Denpasar Police Chief, Colonel Ali Mahasha, said: 'We are very sorry if we have upset tourists. We do not want to do that because Bali is a great tourist resort. But we cannot have it becoming a centre for drug trafficking, criminals and other undesirables. The Indonesian Government is determined to stamp out the trade and the present police work will continue until all the offenders have been apprehended.'

A spokesman for the Australian embassy in Jakarta said an embassy official had visited both Australians in jail.

'They are in good health and we will naturally be watching the situation. But there is nothing more we can do at this stage', the spokesman said.

ADD cable story

PERTH ----- Mr. Fred Jones, father of Prudence Jones imprisoned in Bali said:

'This is terrible. My daughter doesn't even smoke cigarettes, let alone drugs. She went up there on a holiday with her girlfriend. We never thought this could happen.'

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Hodgson, F.W. (1984). *Modern News Practice*. London: Heinemann.

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Wheildon, C. (1986). *Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes*. Sydney, Australia: Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia.

## **MODULE 5**

Unit 1	Techniques and Phases of Sub-Editing
Unit 2	First Reading
Unit 3	Second Reading
Unit 4	Third Reading
Unit 5	Fourth Reading

### **UNIT 1      TECHNIQUES AND PHASES OF SUB-EDITING**

## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Techniques of Sub-editing
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Various techniques have been used by professionals over the years for subbing. These techniques, agree on general principles, but differ at the level of specific details. In this unit, we shall focus on the most widely-used technique, bringing out its details. While focusing on the techniques of sub-editing, the unit also peeps into the basic steps and stages of sub-editing in preparation for the contents of subsequent units.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module, you should be able to:

explain the basic techniques and phases of sub-editing.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Techniques of Sub-Editing

A technique of subbing which is highly recommended for first coming to grips with a piece of copy, is to read through it **four** times. The following is expected to be achieved during the readings:

##### *First Reading*

At the first reading, the sub is expected to get the feel of the story, its newsworthiness. He is also expected to weed out any defamatory bits, correct any literals as well as catchlines.

##### *Second Reading*

The second reading is meant to cast off copy and estimate by how much it must be cut or lengthened to fit the design of the page.

### *Third Reading*

At this stage the sub aims to see that the story is structured correctly, and if **necessary** to rewrite offending parts.

### *Fourth Reading*

Now the sub aims to nitpick and polish. He also checks variations from the stylebook.

This above four- step technique offers an insight into the series of decisions a subeditor often has to make in ten or twenty minutes. The processing of every item of copy involves a **mental process**. A series of judgments. Is anything important left out? Is it well written; does it flow? Is it clogged with bureaucratic jargons and impossibly long sentences? Are the news points in the right order? Would the first few points attract or repel?

Sellers in his *Simple Subs Book*, (pp. 15 – 16) pose essential questions for the sub. As he says, unless you get the right answers to all of them it is not a well subbed story.

**Are the facts right?** Are you absolutely sure that Mrs. Bisoye All-Well-Brown has two hyphens in her name? Was the Ondo state earth tremor as long ago as 1989? Don't look now, but does Macmillan, have only one 'l' or two? Are there really two letters in the correct spelling of Nassarawa or just one? Is Alhaji Shehu Idris the Emir of Zaria or just Sarkin Zazzau? Which of these two towns really hosts Kogi State University- Ayangba or Akungba? Was the late Alhaji Ahmadu Bahago the Emir of Minna or the Emir of Borgu? Does Ilorin have an Oba or an Emir? Has the President already made the pronouncement or he is expected to have made it by the time this newspaper hits the newsstands? Is Heipang Airport in Nigeria or in China? Is the Governor's first child really a boy or a girl? Did the Minister really say 'conclusively' instead of 'in conclusion'? Was he talking about the conclusion of the matter or the conclusive evidence in his possession? Did he talk about his position or the evidence in his possession? Really, how many times does letter's' appear in the word 'possession'? Did the captain of the team really say 'I bewitch, I can fly' or he said 'I believe I can fly'? The sub is to ensure that all these and other related facts are correctly stated.

**Are there any loose ends?** Have you started the reader off on a line of thought and left him dangling? Is every sequence brought to

a proper conclusion? Are there any facts **missing** which are necessary to a complete story?

Read through some of the examples below and see what such loose ends could cause.

### *Example One*

Insecurity  
OOL

*The Guardian* learnt that the armed forces and the police held separate meetings at the weekend in Lagos and Abuja with a view to working out a better strategy to tackle any possible security threat.

According to a source, the Presidency had to send signals to both the military and the police high commands to strengthen their security networks.

Defence sources told *The Guardian* that Naval personnel at the Western Naval Command had already been placed on the alert to check any act of terrorism that might occur through the water-ways leading to the Bar Beach at Victoria Island where all the embassies are located.

An intelligence officer who spoke to *The Guardian* on conditions of anonymity confirmed the latest security steps by the Federal Government.

According to him: “Since the embassies were closed in such a manner, especially when they were citing security issues of mutual concern to their countries and the Federal Government, then we have to be on red alert; that is our job”.

Also, the Acting Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, has ordered the deployment of mobile policemen and anti-bomb detector squads to Walter Carrington Crescent, Victoria Island, where many of the embassies are located.

Every vehicle that passes the street was screened at the weekend with sophisticated bomb detectors. The Force Public Relations Officer, Superintendent Emmanuel Ighodalo and the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ade Ajakaiye, in separate interviews with *The Guardian* assured of maximum security for embassies and citizens.

The elders who met in Ibadan, Oyo State, yesterday, urged the President to order a security red alert nation-wide to safeguard Nigeria’s territorial borders.

In a statement read to reporters at the end of the meeting by its Oyo State Secretary – General, Prof. Bayo Olateju, the council said:” as unsettling as the American intelligence reports on the predicted break-up or collapse of Nigeria before 2020, *Igbimo Agba Yoruba*, the other name for YCE, urges the President to take the report with a pinch of salt and remain even more resolute in his dogged belief in the unity and oneness of our dear country.

“YCE is aware of the orchestrated attempt, with subtle blackmail “by” some countries to paint Nigeria unsafe and unstable politically and economically at this time when the nation has never been safer.

“Their fear of the ‘September 11’ type of disaster in Nigeria is unfounded. Therefore we urge the President to re-assure them by nipping in the bud those events which could have been unsettling to them and at the same time put security at red alert across the country and beyond”.

### Example Two

**FINES  
ASD**

Excessive fines for traffic offences may have forced many motorists to abandon their vehicles at parking lots belonging to traffic control agencies in Lagos and Rivers States, investigations have revealed.

In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumped at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island.

In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents.

Many of the impounded vehicles in LASTMA’s parking lots are commercial buses.

Investigations showed that in some of the parks, officials demanded up to N5,000 from motorists before their impounded vehicles could be released. If a vehicle remained in the park over night, the fine could shoot up to N10,000.

The Act stipulates another condition that can warrant impounding of a vehicle to be, “where a motor vehicle is stationary or abandoned on the highway or near a private premise”.

Sub-section 5 states: “Where the vehicle was found not to have been abandoned, but left on the highway for an unreasonably long time with a view to eventual removal by its owner, the owner shall bear the cost of towing the vehicle to a removed vehicle park”.

Offences that may warrant impounding a vehicle include driving with a forged licence, driving without a driver’s licence, driving of any vehicle by a person under 18, driving an unlicensed vehicle, driving with forged vehicle particulars, and driving with fake number plates.

Others, such as driving an unregistered staff bus, causing obstruction on the highway, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol, disobeying traffic personnel or traffic lights attract a fine of N2,000.

The vehicles impounded in Port Harcourt included assorted cars, buses, tankers, trucks, and motorcycles.

Our correspondents learnt that some of these vehicles were impounded over 10 years ago.

Impounding vehicles seems to be an oddity in the Federal Capital Territory, as our correspondents’ investigations showed that police divisions in Abuja were almost free of seized vehicles.

Except in a few and isolated cases vehicle involved in accidents were removed to the police station, others seen in most of the divisions were stolen but recovered, with the owners yet to be identified.

Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

It is astonishingly easy to miss a vital point unless you check over your work carefully. One of many stories to illustrate this is of the young sub doing a tear-jerking, soul-searing rewrite of a lengthy agency court report. Strong men wept all over the building. The editor did everything short of giving him a raise. Then the next day the copy-taster took him aside, put a grandfatherly hand on his shoulder, and said it was a great job you did – but what was the result of the case?’ In his enthusiasm for the musical arrangements the sub had dropped the key line in the lyric.

**Is everything clear?** Has everything that needs explaining been explained? Will the story mean something to even the dimmest reader? (and there are a lot of dim readers about).

**Does it flow like honey?** In a famous editor's phrase, or does it stick in the craw? Never assume knowledge on the reader's part. Anything that causes the reader to pause, even momentarily, is bad. The sequence should be perfect, the facts blindingly simple. Nothing should jar – or cause the reader to look back to an earlier paragraph. If you can't make it flow like honey you are not yet a sub, but a mere processor of words.

Surveys show that most members of the cabinet are unknown to most readers, and therefore it is necessary to identify them every time they are mentioned.

**Can it be simplified?** If a story can be simplified further, there may be something wrong with it.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What is the sub expected to achieve during the first, second, third and fourth readings?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This is the place for subjective views on the future of print media. But this much is worth saying. Many Nigerians today no longer read newspapers because they prefer the radio which they can listen to even while driving, and television which is believed to offer better entertainment. We have been repeatedly told by concerned stakeholders that the reading culture in the country, including the reading of newspapers and magazines, is declining. Among the younger generation, the culture of reading newspapers is fast declining because of the alternatives provided by home movies, cable as well as non-cable, the Internet, FM radio stations, etc. It is unfortunate, indeed, because there can be no viable alternative to reading. The other media of mass communication have their own roles, but they cannot and should not exactly take the place of reading

The newspapers that survive the electronic era will be those that are well-written and well subbed. This brings to the fore the role of subbing in keeping readers in the current dispensation. Why should a reader, cross-aged and testy, chase bad words across a badly designed page when there are potent alternatives? The press is now obsessed with its 'credibility', or lack of it. This concern is good, but the press should be equally concerned with **style**.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**



This unit has dwelt on a four-step technique of sub-editing. The technique involves reading through copy four times to achieve four different but related objectives, one at each reading. The four objectives are:

- 1) At the first reading, to get the feel of the story and ascertain its newsworthiness and also to weed out any defamatory bits, correct any literals as well as catchlines.
- 2) At the second reading to cast off copy and estimate by how much it must be cut or lengthened to fit the design of the page.
- 3) At the third reading to see that the story is structured correctly, and if **necessary** to rewrite offending parts.
- 4) At the fourth reading to nitpick as well as polish and also check variations from the style book.

The posers to be considered during the readings were considered, while setting the stage for the actual readings.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Summarise the techniques of subbing discussed in this unit

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Sellers, L. (1968). *The Simple Subs Book*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Turnbull, A.T. and Baird, R.N. (1967). *The Graphics of Communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

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## **UNIT 2 FIRST READING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The First Reading

- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Three copies are presented in this unit for first reading along with guidelines on what is expected to be done during the readings.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify what is expected during the first reading
- do the first reading in the subbing process.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The First Reading**

Read the whole story, regardless of how much is to be used, to get the feel, the taste, of the copy. Read for sense, correct any glaring spelling errors or literals. You may strike flawless copy: it does happen. If you do not, your subconscious will already be working on what needs to be done to the story.

The first thing that must be considered is newsworthiness. If evening papers, television and radio have splashed a story about an assassination there would be no point in repeating it all the following morning. On the other hand, the story can be brought back to life by updating. That is to say, making sure the intro is angled on the latest developments in the hunt for the assassins or whoever sent them. Later in the story, the earlier stories about the actual event can be summarised.

While checking for news value, keep an eagle eye out for defamation. This requires a sound knowledge of the law as it affects journalism. On a computer, the corrections are made simply by deleting and inserting as required. But, the subbing occurs in a word processing file, never straight onto a page. We always have the original work retained on file.

To summarise this first reading: the sub must know his law and be aware of everything that appears in rival papers, TV broadcasts or radio news.

For this and subsequent readings, we shall use the copies below.

### **Copies for First Reading**

#### *Copy One*

Seafarers

I A

The Federal Government has been urged to ensure adequate and prompt release of funds to the Joint Maritime Labour Industrial Council to enable the Council execute its mandate of capacity building in the maritime labour sector. All the necessary support required by JOMALIC to embark on capacity building towards making Nigeria a seafarer-exporting nation to world merchant ships should be made available to the council. According to a Group of concerned seafarers, under the aegis of the Nigerian Merchant Navy Officers, the Water Senior Staff Association and the Maritime Workers Union of Nigerian, the idea of making the country a seafarer-exporting nation had almost gone into the oblivion.” There s the idea of making Nigeria have enough seafarers for the Nigerian cabotage and for revenue generation as it is in the Philippines. What is the Federal Government doing about it or has it gone permanently into oblivion. We the maritime unions are saying no. It should not”, the group not”, the group started. The seafarer observed that five years ago, the NMNO, the WTSSA, the Nigerian Shipping Federal Manager, Prince Sokari Judge, and the MWUN jointly formed a directorate used as the enforcement organ to improve the welfare of d seafarers. The statement reads, “The directorate that floated a monitoring unit then could not do much until the advent of the

-mf-

-Add 1-

JOMALIC Act 2003. With the advent, the seafarers breathed an air of relief that their messiah had finally emerged’. According to the group, the demise of the Nigerian National Shipping Line and d Nigerian National Fishing Company, and the Nigerian National Shrimps Company, heralded the untold sufferings of the seafaring profession as the capacity building programmes of these parastatals died with them.

It noted that though the maritime industry still continued, the training and development programmes were completely lost leading to the dearth of trained seafarer.” Therefore, there are practically few trained seafarers to man vessels that exit within the nations maritime, owned by foreign businesses men or foreign partners, who make tremendous profits through slavish conditions of service and introduction of modern day

slavery”. The group noted. It observed that a series of meetings and conferences had been held and references made to the seafarers and the profession, which culminated in the first African seafarer conference recently in Abuja, where many issues as they affected the seafarers were discussed and resolutions passed.

The group expressed the fear that as was the case with the previous meetings and resolutions, the necessary implementation might not come and the whole idea might be “imprisoned in the conference halls without any effect on the people and the nation”. It advised that rather than confine the funding of JOMALIC to Maritime Authority and the Nigerian Ports Authority, a special purse should be created for capacity building and training programmes of the council in order for the good intentions of the government to have the desired effects.

The seafarers noted that only well-funded capacity building programmes could guarantee that the Nigerian seafarers would comply with the International Maritime Organisation’s Standard Training Certificate for Watch Keeping 1995, which had stopped in the country long ago.

#

### *Copy Two*

**U.S.**  
**OOL**

All frail nerves over the closure last week of foreign missions in Lagos will cool off 2day as the American Consulate reopens. Full consular services will begin 2morrow. The American Embassy in Abuja, which confirmed the development to *us* yesterday, expressed regrets for the discomfort the closure had cursed. Doctor Rudolph Steward, the Information Officer at the American High Commission had on Saturday said the American Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. John Campbell, will address the press 2morrow. A statement by Steward yesterday reads: “The United States Consulate in Lagos will reopen on June 20 with full consular services beginning on Tuesday, June 21. “We regret any inconvenience to the public caused by the closure. We would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding assistance and co-operation provided by the relevant Nigerian authorities’. It was learnt at the weekend that some disagreements between two security agencies of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), had been resolved in favour of the FBI’s position.

It was said that the FBI had raised a security concern that an alleged threat by a militant group, the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), in the Lagos area, was serious enough.

It was not clear at press time whether the reopening of the American Consulate in Lagos would result in a similar action by the other missions, which cited the U.S. action for closing shop. Barely 24 hours after the U.S. shut its missions, the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Russia, Italy and Lebanon made similar announcements.

The Federal Government had on Saturday threatened to launch a diplomatic offensive against America and other European countries that unilaterally closed down their missions in Lagos last week. A senior Foreign Affairs officer has said that it was unconventional for the missions to have effected the closure with out notification of the appropriate authorities in the host country (Nigeria). But the CIA was said to have argued that it was not serious, the position tallied with the Nigerian government's position. *We* learnt that the State Department had, however, argued that it was better to err on the side of caution, hence the closure. The closure was earlier attributed to an *al-Qaeda* threat. The Intelligence Department of the Nigerian Military and Police are, however, believed to be working on various leads to ascertain what caused the sudden shut down of eight countries' missions.

#

### *Copy Three*

Motorists  
ASD

In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumbered at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island. In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents. Many of the impounded vehicles in LASTMAN's packing lots are commercial buses. Investigations showed that @ some of the parks, officials demanded up to N5,000 from motorist b4 their impounded vehicles could be released. If a vehicle remained in the park over night, the fine could shut up 2 N10k. The traffic Act, however, provides that for each day that a vehicle impounded for a traffic offence remained in the pack, the owner should pay a fine of N500 be4 the could reclaim it.

-mf-

-Add 1-

LASTMAN's spokesman, Mr. SHikiru OlusHesi AzSeez, who spoke with our correspondence, did not deny the allegation of inflated fines for offences.

But the noted that d agency had always warned motorists to promptly lodge complains at the authority's headquarters in Oshodi any time they felt they ere being extorted.

He noted that the statutory fine for any vehicle that stayed for more than 24 hours in the park was N500. Aseez acknowledge, however, that charges levied by officials for the various offences could range from N1, 000 to N50, 000.

"For instance, a vehicle that is impounded for moving against the traffic will be released after the payment of N25,000; drivers whose vehicles are impounded for 'willful obstruction' will pay a fine of N5,000; billion vans pay N50,000 each," he said. The case is not so different with the task force and the police, especially traffic policemen who have been directed by the state police command to stop routine check of vehicle particulars. Investigations showed that some traffic policemen demand as high as N5,000 from drivers for an offence as minor as jumping for traffic light.

The Federal Highways Act, Chapter 135, Section 20, states the condition under which a vehicle could be impounded as when it was driven in a ways that it damaged any pat of the highway. But the Lagos State Traffic Act is more specific on this Section 18 of the Act reads, "Where any motor vehicle is found plying or being driven or used on any highway within Lagos State without the necessary particulars, any police officer may impound the vehicle and cause the vehicle to be removed to a vehicle park."

On the recovery of such impounded vehicle, Section 19 states, "Any person entitled to the custody of a removed vehicle who, within 24 hours after the vehicle was impounded, tenders to the official in charge of the removed vehicle park where the vehicle is, following that is:

- a) such evidence, that officer may reasonably require, of his entitlement to the custody of the removed which is in the park.
- b) the necessary particulars in relation to that vehicle issued prior to the impounding of the vehicle;

shall be entitled on demand at the park and without payment of any fees, to have the vehicle delivered up to him at the park".

Sub-section 2 of Section 19 allows the vehicle owner to pay a fine only when the vehicle has been in custody for more than 24 hours. Immediately the fine is paid, the vehicle should be handed over to the owner.

Section 20 of the Act reads, “Where any removed vehicle is not claimed in accordance with section 19 within the period of two weeks specified under that section, the removed vehicle shall vest in the Lagos State Government”.

The Act stipulates other conditions that can warrant impounding of a vehicle to be, “where a motor vehicle is stationary or abandoned on the highway or near private premises”. Sub-section 5 states: “Where the vehicle was found not to have been abandoned, but left on the highway for an unreasonably long time with a view to eventual removal by its owner, the owner shall bear the cost of towing the vehicle to a removed vehicle to a removed vehicle park”. Offences that may warrant impounding a vehicle include driving with a forged licence, driving without a driver’s licence driving of any vehicle by a person under 18, driving an unlicensed vehicle, driving with forged vehicle particulars, and driving with fake number plates. Others, such as driving an unregistered staff bus, causing obstruction on the highway, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol, disobeying traffic personnel or traffic lights attract a fine of N2, 000.

-mf-

- Add 1-

The vehicles impounded in Portharcourt included assorted cars, buses, tankers, trucks, and motorcycles. Our correspondents learnt that some of these vehicles were impounded over 10 years ago. Impounding vehicles seems to be an oddity in the Federal Capital Territory, as our correspondents’ investigations showed that police divisions in Abuja were almost free of seized vehicles. Except in a few and isolated cases vehicle involved in accidents were removed to the police station, others seen in most of the divisions were stolen but recovered, with the owners yet to be identified. Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

#

In the next unit, we shall see how the copies are likely to look after the first reading.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Based on the discourse in this unit, do the first reading of the three copies in the unit

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The first reading is very important because it sets the stage for subsequent readings. Here, the sub feels the story, ascertains its newsworthiness, weeds out defamatory bits, and corrects any literals as well as catchlines.

The work done here has implications both for the integrity of the publication and the legality or otherwise of its contents. Chances are that if this reading is properly done, subsequent readings will be smooth and more sure-footed.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has focused on the first reading and what is expected to be done. It was explained that during this reading, the sub aims to get the feel of the story, ascertain its newsworthiness, weed out any defamatory bits, and correct any literals as well as catchlines. In addition to the guidelines for the first reading, copies that form the basis of this and subsequent readings are provided.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Summarise what is expected to be done during the first reading.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Akinfeleye, R.A. (1987). *Essentials of Modern African Journalism: A Premier*. Lagos: Miral Press.

Berner, R.T. (1982). *Editing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.



Isiaka Adams “Seafarers Canvass Better Funding for JOMALIC” *The Punch* Friday, June 24, 2005, p22.

Martins Oloja, Alex Olise and Iyabo Lawal “U.S Reopens Lagos Consulate, Govt Tackles Alleged Insecurity” *The Guardian*, Monday June 20, 2005, p1.

Kunle Adeyemi, Tobi Soniyi and Soni Daniel “Illegal Fines: Motorists Abandon Vehicles” *The Punch*, Friday, June 24, 2005, p1.

### **UNIT 3      SECOND READING**

#### **CONTENT**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content

- 3.1 Second Reading
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The copies that underwent first reading are now ready for second reading. In this unit, you will be taught what to do during this reading.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- do the second reading of the subbing process
- explain what the sub is expected to do at this stage.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Second Reading**

The second read-through is the time to cast-off and cut the copy to fit the layout. Modern computers show you exactly how long a story is.

The sub checks the copy length on the computer terminal, after instructing the machine to set the copy in the right type size. The computer will scroll the story back on the screen with a measure (i.e. length of story at a particular column width), having hyphen-justified the copy (i.e. split words where necessary to make them fit that column width). Then the juggling process begins, chopping paragraphs and changing words until the computer tells the sub the story will fit the space measured on the layout sheet.

### **Copies for Second Reading**

#### *Copy One*

Seafarers  
I A

The Federal Government has been urged to ensure adequate and prompt release of funds to the Joint Maritime Labour Industrial Council to enable the Council execute its mandate of capacity building in the maritime labour sector.

Similarly, all the necessary support required by JOMALIC to embark on capacity building towards making Nigeria a seafarer-exporting nation to world merchant ships should be made available to the council.

According to a group of concerned seafarers, under the aegis of the Nigerian Merchant Navy Officers, the Water Senior Staff Association and the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, the idea of making the country a seafarer-exporting nation had almost gone into the oblivion.

“There is the idea of making Nigeria have enough seafarers for the Nigerian cabotage and for revenue generation as it is in the Philippines. What is the Federal Government doing about it or has it gone permanently into oblivion. We the maritime unions are saying no. It should not”, the group stated.

The seafarer observed that five years ago, the NMNO, the WTSSA, the Nigerian Shipping Federal Manager, Prince Sokari George, and the MWUN jointly formed a directorate used as the enforcement organ to improve the welfare of the seafarers.

The statement reads, “The directorate that floated a monitoring unit then could not do much until the advent of the JOMALIC Act 2003. With the advent, the seafarers breathed an air of relief that their messiah had finally emerged’.

According to the group, the demise of the Nigerian National Shipping Line, the Nigerian National Fishing Company, and the Nigerian National Shrimps Company, heralded the untold sufferings of the seafaring profession as the capacity building programmes of these parastatals died with them.

It noted that although the maritime industry still continued, the training and development programmes were completely lost leading to the dearth of trained seafarer.

“Therefore, there are practically few trained seafarers to man vessels that exit within the nations maritime, owned by foreign businessmen or foreign partners, who make tremendous profits through slavish conditions of service and introduction of modern day slavery”. The group noted.

It observed that a series of meetings and conferences had been held and references made to the seafarers and the profession, which culminated in the first African seafarer conference recently in Abuja, where many issues as they affected the seafarers were discussed and resolutions passed.

The group expressed the fear that as was the case with the previous meetings and resolutions, the necessary implementation might not come and the whole idea might be “imprisoned in the conference halls without any effect on the people and the nation”.

It advised that rather than confine the funding of JOMALIC to Maritime Authority and the Nigerian Ports Authority, a special purse should be created for capacity building and training programmes of the council in order for the good intentions of the government to have the desired effects.

The seafarers noted that only well-funded capacity building programmes could guarantee that the Nigerian seafarers would comply with the International Maritime Organisation’s Standard Training Certificate for Watch Keeping 1995, which had stopped in the country long ago.

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A statement by Steward yesterday read: “The United States Consulate in Lagos will reopen on June 20 with full consular services beginning on Tuesday, June 21.

“We regret any inconvenience to the public caused by the closure. We would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding assistance and co-operation provided by the relevant Nigerian authorities’.

It was not clear at press time whether the reopening of the American Consulate in Lagos would result in a similar action by the other missions, which cited the U.S. action for closing shop.

Barely 24 hours after the U.S. shut its missions, the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Russia, Italy and Lebanon made similar announcements.

The Federal Government had on Saturday threatened to launch a diplomatic offensive against the U.S. and some European countries that unilaterally closed down their missions in Lagos last week. A senior Foreign Affairs official had said that it was unconventional for the missions to have affected the closure without notification of the appropriate authorities in the host country (Nigeria).

It was learnt at the weekend that some disagreements between two security agencies of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), had been resolved in favour of the FBI's position.

It was said that the FBI had raised a security concern that an alleged threat by a militant group, the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), in the Lagos area, was serious enough.

But the CIA was said to have argued that it was not serious, the position tallied with the Nigerian government's position.

*The Guardian* learnt that the State Department had, however, argued that it was better to err on the side of caution, hence the closure.

The closure was earlier attributed to an *al-Qaeda* threat.

The Intelligence Department of the Nigerian Military and Police are, however, believed to be working on various leads to ascertain what caused the sudden shut down of eight countries' missions.

### *Copy Three*

Motorists  
ASD

In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumped at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island.

In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents.

Many of the impounded vehicles in LASTMA's parking lots are commercial buses.

Investigations showed that in some of the parks, officials demanded up to N5, 000 from motorists before their impounded vehicles could be released. If a vehicle remained in the park over night, the fine could shoot up to N10, 000.

The traffic Act, however, provides that for each day that a vehicle impounded for a traffic offence remained in the park, the owner should pay a fine of N500 before he could reclaim it.

LASTMA's spokesman, Mr. Sikiru Olusesi Azeez, who spoke with our correspondents, did not deny the allegation of inflated fines for offences.

But he noted that the agency had always warned motorists to promptly lodge complaints at the authority's headquarters in Oshodi any time they felt they were being extorted.

He noted that the statutory fine for any vehicle that stayed for more than 24 hours in the park was N500.

Azeez acknowledged, however, that charges levied by officials for the various offences could range from N1, 000 to N50, 000.

"For instance, a vehicle that is impounded for moving against the traffic will be released after the payment of N25,000; drivers whose vehicles are impounded for 'willful obstruction' will pay a fine of N5,000; bullion vans pay N50,000 each," he said.

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The Federal Highways Act, Chapter 135, Section 20, states the condition under which a vehicle could be impounded as when it was driven in such a way, that it damaged any part of the highway.

But the Lagos State Traffic Act is more specific on this. Section 18 of the Act reads, “Where any motor vehicle is found plying or being driven or used on any highway within Lagos State without the necessary particulars, any police officer may impound the vehicle and cause the vehicle to be removed to a vehicle park.”

On the recovery of such impounded vehicle, Section 19 states, “Any person entitled to the custody of a removed vehicle who, within 24 hours after the vehicle was impounded, tenders to the official in charge of the removed vehicle park where the vehicle is the following that is:

- a) such evidence, that officer may reasonably require, of his entitlement to the custody of the removed which is in the park.
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shall be entitled on demand at the park and without payment of any fees, to have the vehicle delivered up to him at the park”.

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The Act stipulates other conditions that can warrant impounding of a vehicle to be, “where a motor vehicle is stationary or abandoned on the highway or near private premises”.

Sub-section 5 states: “Where the vehicle was found not to have been abandoned, but left on the highway for an unreasonably long time with a view to eventual removal by its owner, the owner shall bear the cost of towing the vehicle to a removed vehicle park”.

Offences that may warrant impounding a vehicle include driving with a forged license, driving without a driver’s license, driving of any vehicle by a person under 18, driving an unlicensed vehicle, driving with forged vehicle particulars, and driving with fake number plates.

Others, such as driving an unregistered staff bus, causing obstruction on the highway, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol, disobeying traffic personnel or traffic lights attract a fine of N2, 000.

The vehicles impounded in Port Harcourt included assorted cars, buses, tankers, trucks, and motorcycles.

Our correspondents learnt that some of these vehicles were impounded over 10 years ago.

Impounding vehicles seems to be an oddity in the Federal Capital Territory, as our correspondents' investigations showed that police divisions in Abuja were almost free of seized vehicles.

Except in a few and isolated cases vehicles involved in accidents were removed to the police station, others seen in most of the divisions were stolen but recovered, with the owners yet to be identified.

Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Do the second reading of the three copies above

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Every modern sub must be computer-versatile to cope with the challenges of computer-aided subbing. This is particularly so at the second stage of the reading process where the sub is expected, not only to read through, but also to determine the length of copy and then juggle them, chopping paragraphs and changing words in a bid to make the copy fit into the space allocated on the layout sheet. It would, indeed, be awkward to see a sub struggling to get all these done manually in the present era.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

While at the first reading emphasis was on getting a feel of copy and making basic corrections, the second reading challenges the sub's



thinking faculty. Among other things, he now has the duty of making a long copy fit into a smaller space as provided in the layout sheet. It is just like making a big human leg fit into a small-sized shoe, just that in the case of subbing, the sub can chop off portions of copy, a privilege which the person forcing a big leg into a small shoe does not have.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

What exactly is the sub expected to do at the second reading?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Berner, R.T. (1982). *Editing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Isiaka Adams “Seafarers Canvass Better Funding for JOMALIC” *The Punch* Friday, June 24, 2005, p22.

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## **UNIT 4 THIRD READING**

### **CONTENT**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Third Reading
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Having undergone first and second reading, it is now time for copy to undergo third reading. This unit focuses on the principles and practices that facilitate successful third reading.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the principles and guidelines applicable at the third reading
- carry out the third reading successfully.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Third Reading

The third read-through is to make the story flow. Remember the Golden Rule ... **try resist the urge to rewrite**. However, if the copy is poorly written, here are some tips for bringing order out of chaos.

The cynical Sir Arthur Quill-Couch said: 'Read over your composition and when you meet a passage which you think is particularly fine .... Strike it out'.

He meant it as a warning against overly colourful writing. Not as if colourful writing, in itself, is bad, but too much of it and tongues begin to wag. This applies particularly to newspaper reporting, even if it is the sub who must do the striking out.

- Look closely at style, bad English, and cliches.
- The best journalistic style is black-and-white( not coloured)
- Use active tenses where possible.

Be positive. 'The council will not give permission' ... becomes 'Council turned down ...'.

Do not use a long word if a shorter one will do (ear, nose and throat surgeon is better than otorhinolaryngologist)

Always try to include a brief background to a story that has one.

Insert a full-stop wherever possible.

Journalism uses no semi-colons.

During the third read-through the sequence and structure of the story is assessed and perhaps altered. Assume you are on the third reading of a story that starts like this:

Nigerian Civil Servants would have to change their lifestyles to come to terms with rising fuel, prices, the President Obasanjo said yesterday.

And to lead the way the president said all Government departments had been instructed to buy four Peugeot cars.

A study had shown that most Government vehicles were brands that are not fuel-economical.

The sub, having corrected any literals and cut away any excesses, may decide that the story – in this case hard news – starts slowly. Indeed that a platitude precedes a hard news point. The sub would be justified in changing the sequence thus:

All state Government Departments have been told to buy only Peugeot cars henceforth.

The President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo said this yesterday

He said a study had shown that most government vehicles were not fuel-economical.

Nigerian Civil Servants would have to change their lifestyles at the story below. What would you do with it?

A worse sequence problem- Look carefully at the story below. What would you do with it?

Police have not identified a woman whose dismembered body was found dumped in a cardboard box and canvas bag on Thursday afternoon.

"It's a ritual killing and we still don't know who she is," the deputy chief of the homicide squad, Detective Inspector John Ajao, said yesterday.

He said the woman, aged between 30 and 40, and possibly of Igbo origin, was stabbed a number of times before her legs were cut off.

The legs were crammed into a waxed cardboard apple box stamped Somerset apples. The torso was in a large canvas bag lying against the box.

A piece of gold-coloured carpet, about two metres long and 1.3 metres wide, covered the box and bag.

The remains lay on a grass verge, four metres from the Ogere toll gate, 300 metres from the Redemption Camp on the Lagos – Ibadan Expressway.

They were discovered by a farmer, Mr. Taiwo Odunsi at 3 p.m. “I got a bit of a shock when I .....

If you were the sub on the third reading of the above copy, how would the story look like after the reading? (Try your hands on it)

Also read through our earlier examples. They have now passed through third reading, and this is their present form.

### **Copies for second Reading**

#### *Copy One*

Seafarers

I A

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The Intelligence Department of the Nigerian Military and Police are, however, believed to be working on various leads to ascertain what caused the sudden shut down of eight countries' missions.

### ***Copy Three***

#### **Motorists ASD**

Excessive fines for traffic offences may have forced many motorists to abandon their vehicles at parking lots belonging to traffic control agencies in Lagos and Port Harcourt, investigations have revealed. In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumped at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island.

In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents.

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Azeez acknowledged, however, that charges levied by officials for the various offences could range from N1, 000 to N50, 000.

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The case is not so different with the task force and the police, especially traffic policemen who have been directed by the state police command to stop routine check of vehicle particulars. Investigations showed that some traffic policemen demand as high as N5,000 from drivers for an offence as minor as jumping the traffic light.

The Federal Highways Act, Chapter 135, Section 20, states the condition under which a vehicle could be impounded as when it was driven in a way that it damaged any part of the highway.

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- (b) the necessary particulars in relation to that vehicle issued prior to the impounding of the vehicle;

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discovered, with the owners yet to be identified.

Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

#

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Take a good look at the copy above that talks about Nigerian workers (take the version of it that has not undergone third reading) Assume that you are the sub and do the third reading of it.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Although the sub is encouraged to resist the urge to rewrite at this stage, he can still bring order out of chaos at this stage if the need arises. Since overly use of colourful expressions can tarnish the objectivity of the story, they should be reduced as much as possible from copy, even at this stage. This also may have a bearing on the integrity of the publication and must not be toyed with.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has focused on the third reading, providing the principles and guidelines that facilitate successful third reading. It is emphasized that the purpose of this reading is to make the story flow. Although the urge to re-write should be resisted, the sub, even at this stage can bring order out of a chaotic copy.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List the eight-point checklist for the third reading provided in this unit.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Isiaka Adams “Seafarers Canvass Better Funding for JOMALIC” *The Punch* Friday, June 24, 2005, p22.

Martins Oloja, Alex Olise and Iyabo Lawal “U.S Reopens Lagos Consulate, Govt Tackles Alleged Insecurity” *The Guardian*, Monday June 20, 2005, p1.

Kunle Adeyemi, Tobi Soniyi and Soni Daniel “Illegal Fines: Motorists Abandon Vehicles” *The Punch*, Friday, June 24, 2005,p1.

## **UNIT 5      FOURTH READING**

### **CONTENT**

#### **1.0      Introduction**

- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Fourth Reading
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The fourth reading is the most important because it is the last opportunity the sub has to see the copy before it leaves the sub desk. Errors not detected and corrected at this stage may get into the print shop and from there on to the streets, offices and homes of readers. This unit focuses on how this important task of fourth and final reading can be best carried out. It also contains a list of finishing touches that may be required at this stage.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- edit the third reading
- use the checklist required for putting the final touches as and when necessary.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Fourth Reading

This is the most important read-through of all when there is time for nit-picking and polishing. Here is a list of finishing touches to make a story shine.

At the beginning of sentences and paragraphs try to avoid: **But**, **However**, **As a result** **Meanwhile**, etc....

Cut out all **unnecessary** indefinite and definite articles.

Watch out for tautology. You can only ‘build a **NEW** bridge’ – you could not build an **OLD** one. ‘Completely full’ is as silly as ‘slightly pregnant’.

Follow a uniform style based on the Style Book if there is one, or common sense if there is none. All figures up to, but not including ten are written out... ‘The State Governor’ takes capital letters ‘a state governor’ does not.

Banish non-sequitors. ‘He is married and hates non-sequitors’.

Check that figures add up. If the story says that 26 out of every 105 Nigerian children die before they are six, don't let a quote go by which says 'Forty per cent of ....'

Avoid clichés.

A good rule is: One fact, one sentence.

Another is: One thought, one paragraph.

Hyphens should be used only when phrase becomes adjectival. 'In the long term, but the long-term policy ....'

Watch out for the singular of collective nouns. 'Everyone is ... Abba is on tour ... none was ... 'Exceptions abound. 'The Beatles are...'

Do not overuse the word 'Nigerian doctors claim' suggests they are not as good as elsewhere. Use 'Doctors claim .....

Reporting should be accurate .... But not **too** accurate, such as 'about 2.07 p.m.

Does not use headline language in copy? You will be finding out why 'probe' 'quiz' 'Ex' 'bid' etc. are used in headlines in **Module 6**. That is where they belong – occasionally.

Give ages if possible, but not tribe.

Give prices e.g. If you say it cost ₦7 million, you do not have to waste space by being lyrical in your description of a pop-star's news pad.

If a title is more important to the reader than the individual's name, put it first. 'Minister for Education Professor Fabian Osuji, but Audu Ogbe, National Chairman of the People's Democratic Party "PDP"'.  
 When using quotes always make it clear who is speaking. But don't start every paragraph 'He said ...

Avoid weak qualifications. 'Some' 'several' 'a few' 'often' are forbidden in intros, and should be avoided generally.

The word "nice" is banned except when it means: precise, or discriminating e.g. a nice point in an argument.

Use 'made-up' words sparingly and only when they are not essential to the meaning of the story. Not "consoligbadun" is here to stay, but 'Adewale Ayuba, king of 'consoligbadn' might be acceptable.

Watch out for police reports .... They are often back to front in importance. 'Police believe his 222 rifle discharged a shell into his chest'. This particular quote from The Sun is also inaccurate. Rifles cannot discharge shells.

Be sure of your word. A car cannot 'collide' with a telephone pole. 'Forego' means to go before .... 'forgo' means to waive, 'refute' means to disprove, not disagree. Disinterested does not mean uninterested. Discomfited may not mean what you think it means. Use the dictionary.

Avoid 'worth' with cash figures. Not '₦100, 000 worth of damage .... But ₦1000, 000 damage'. Even better, 'Damage estimated at ₦100, 000.

Do not list academic degrees after a name. If they give point to a story add them in as a separate fact. Watch out for phoney doctors. Different from' not different 'to' or 'than'.

Avoid 'ever'. "The biggest meeting ever". If you must ... it is 'the biggest meeting ever held, known or remembered'.

Use 'fewer' with quantity, and 'less' for quality. 'Fewer good stories, and less good copy ....'.

Euphemisms are for politicians. Tell it like it is. Avoid 'indigenous' (native), 'passes on' (died) .... 'in the family way' (pregnant), etc.

People are not 'rushed' to hospital .... Neither are they 'hospitalised' or 'under hospitalisation'.

Don't use 'literally' either figuratively or metaphorically. 'The applause literally lifted the roof' is nonsense.

'Loan' is noun.' Lend' is the verb.

Cut out 'meaningful', 'situation' ... or 'this point in time'.

If an abbreviation ends with the same letter as the full word there is no full stop. So. Mr. Dr., Rd., Ms. and St (for both Street and Saint) do not have the full point ... Prof., Drv., Ald., and Const. Do.

Try avoiding full stops in initials. Initials for first names need a full stop, but NSW, UNESCO etc.

Avoid such phoney words as 'attire', 'garments' etc. 'Clothes' will do. It is better to use the same word repeated than to resort to a phoney alternative just for a change.

Avoid 'last' as in 'last few years'.

Avoid 'recent' or 'recently'. Be specific.

'Since' and 'as' not synonymous with 'because'.

Never try to mirror a foreign accent in quotes.

It is 'try to ...' not 'try and ...'

Unique. There are no degree of uniqueness ... not 'rather unique ... or very unique'.

'Who', is nominative case, 'whom' the objective. 'He robbed the man who was blind ....' He robbed the man whom he knew to be blind.

In intros, certain words should be avoided because in large type, set in narrow widths, they tend to be split in unfortunate places.

'Therapist, father, arsenic, album, sparse and mis-hit.

Avoid 'got'.

Check all spellings of names and address unless ticked by the reporter.

Never apportion blame unless reporting a court's decision or other privilege information.

Translate scientific jargons into clear English.

Always use metric measurements, without imperial equivalents.

Certain colloquialism should therefore be avoided 'A handsome six-footer ... Don't give him an inch'.

If you are to acquire the sub's mentality develop your own subbing 'process' or formula and go over stories you read in a newspaper. Ask yourself: Would you have used it that way? If you have to pause in reading the story and perhaps backtrack, then read and re-read the story until you find what stopped you. When you find the trouble, sit down and write the story again. You may need to do this many times before you develop the technique that suits you best.

Look, too, for loose ends in stories. What questions would you ask the reporter to get the story right? For instance, if a story says a man, his wife, and two children are killed in a car smash, the story should tell you if there were any surviving children **not** in the crash. It is a crucial point; if it is not there the story has a loose end.

It may interest you at this point to know what has become of the three copies we started with. See their new looks below|:

### *Copy One*

Seafarers

IA

The Federal Government has been urged to ensure adequate and prompt release of funds to the Joint Maritime Labour Industrial Council (JOMALIC) to enable the council execute its mandate of capacity building in the maritime labour sector.

Similarly, all the necessary support required by JOMALIC to embark on capacity building towards making Nigeria a seafarer-exporting nation to world merchant ships should be made available to the council.

According to a group of concerned seafarers under the aegis of the Nigerian Merchant Navy Officers (NMNO), the Water Senior Staff Association (WTSSA) and the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), the idea of making the country a seafarer-exporting nation had almost gone into oblivion.

"There is the idea of making Nigeria have enough seafarers for the Nigerian cabotage and for revenue generation as it is in the Philippines. What is the Federal Government doing about it or has it gone

permanently into oblivion. We the maritime unions are saying no. It should not”, the group stated.

The seafarers observed that five years ago, the NMNO, the WTSSA, the Nigerian Shipping Federal Manager, Prince Sokari George, and the MWUN jointly formed a directorate used as the enforcement organ to improve the welfare of the seafarers.

-mf-

- Add 1-

The statement reads, “The directorate that floated a monitoring unit then could not do much until the advent of the JOMALIC Act 2003. With the advent, the seafarers breathed an air of relief that their messiah had finally emerged”.

According to the group, the demise of the Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL), the Nigerian National Fishing Company (NNFS), and the Nigerian National Shrimps Company (NNSC), heralded the untold sufferings of the seafaring profession as the capacity building programmes of these parastatals died with them.

It noted that although the maritime industry still continued, the training and development programmes were completely lost leading to the dearth of trained seafarers.

“Therefore, there are practically few trained seafarers to man vessels that exist within the nations maritime, owned by foreign businessmen or foreign partners, who make tremendous profits through slavish conditions of service and introduction of modern day slavery”. The group noted.

It observed that a series of meetings and conferences had been held and references made to the seafarers and the profession, which culminated in the first African seafarers’ conference recently in Abuja, where many issues as they affected the seafarers were discussed and resolutions passed.

The group expressed the fear that as was the case with the previous meetings and resolutions, the necessary implementation might not come and the whole idea might be “imprisoned in the conference halls without any effect on the people and the nation”.

It advised that rather than confine the funding of JOMALIC to the Nigerian Maritime Authority and the Nigerian Ports Authority, a special



purse should be created for capacity building and training programmes of the council in order for the good intentions of the government to have the desired effects.

The seafarers noted that only well-funded capacity building programmes could guarantee that the Nigerian seafarers would comply with the International Maritime Organisation's Standard Training Certificate for Watch Keeping, 1995, which had stopped in the country long ago.

### *Copy Two*

**U.S.  
OOL**

All frayed nerves over the closure, last week, of major foreign missions in Lagos will cool down today as the United States (U.S.) Consulate reopens. Full consular services will begin tomorrow.

The American Embassy in Abuja, which confirmed the development to *The Guardian* yesterday, expressed regrets for the discomfort the closure had caused.

Dr. Rudolph Steward, the Information Officer at the U.S. Embassy had on Saturday said the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. John Campbell, would address the press tomorrow.

A statement by Steward yesterday read: "The United States Consulate in Lagos will reopen on June 20 with full consular services beginning on Tuesday, June 21.

"We regret any inconvenience to the public caused by the closure. We would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding assistance and co-operation provided by the relevant Nigerian authorities".

It was not clear at press time whether the reopening of the American Consulate in Lagos would result in a similar action by the other missions which cited the U.S. action for closing shop.

Barely 24 hours after the U.S. shut its missions, the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Russia, Italy and Lebanon made similar announcements.

The Federal Government had on Saturday threatened to launch a diplomatic offensive against the U.S. and some European countries that unilaterally closed down their missions in Lagos last week. A senior Foreign Affairs official had said that it was unconventional for the

missions to have effected the closure without notifying the appropriate authorities in the host country (Nigeria).

It was learnt at the weekend that some disagreements between two security agencies of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), had been resolved in favour of the FBI's position.

It was said that the FBI had raised a security concern that an alleged threat by a militant group, the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC), in the Lagos area, was serious enough.

But the CIA was said to have argued that it was not serious. The CIA's position tallied with the Nigerian government's position.

*The Guardian* learnt that the State Department had, however, argued that it was better to err on the side of caution, hence the closure.

The closure was earlier attributed to an *al-Qaeda* threat.

The Intelligence Department of the Nigerian Military and Police are, however, believed to be working on various leads to ascertain what caused the sudden shut down of eight countries' missions.

### ***Copy Three***

Motorists  
ASD

Excessive fines for traffic offences may have forced many motorists to abandon their vehicles at parking lots belonging to traffic control agencies in Lagos and Port Harcourt, investigations have revealed. In Lagos, no fewer than 250 vehicles are dumped at the premises of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) in Oshodi, Ikeja, and Lagos Island.

In Port Harcourt more than 500 impounded vehicles have been abandoned in 10 police divisions visited by our correspondents. Many of the impounded vehicles in LASTMA's parking lots are commercial buses.

Investigations showed that in some of the parks, officials demanded up to N5,000 from motorists before their impounded vehicles could be released. If a vehicle remained in the park over night, the fine could shoot up to N10, 000.

The traffic Act, however, provides that for each day that a vehicle impounded for a traffic offence remained in the park, the owner should pay a fine of N500 before he could reclaim it.

LASTMA's spokesman, Mr. Sikiru Olusesi Azeez, who spoke with our correspondents, did not deny the allegation of inflated fines for offences. But he noted that the agency had always warned motorists to promptly lodge complaints at the authority's headquarters in Oshodi any time they felt they were being extorted.

He noted that the statutory fine for any vehicle that stayed for more than 24 hours in the park was N500.

Azeez acknowledged, however, that charges levied by officials for the various offences could range from N1, 000 to N50, 000.

"For instance, a vehicle that is impounded for moving against the traffic will be released after the payment of N25,000; drivers whose vehicles are impounded for 'willful obstruction' will pay a fine of N5,000; bullion vans pay N50,000 each," he said.

The case is not so different with the task force and the police, especially traffic policemen who have been directed by the state police command to stop routine check of vehicle particulars. Investigations showed that some traffic policemen demand as high as N5,000 from drivers for an offence as minor as jumping the traffic light.

The Federal Highways Act, Chapter 135, Section 20, states the condition under which a vehicle could be impounded as when it was driven in a way that it damaged any part of the highway.

But the Lagos State Traffic Act is more specific on this. Section 18 of the Act reads, "Where any motor vehicle is found plying or being driven or used on any highway within Lagos State without the necessary particulars, any police officer may impound the vehicle and cause the vehicle to be removed to a vehicle park."

On the recovery of such impounded vehicle, Section 19 states, "Any person entitled to the custody of a removed vehicle who, within 24 hours after the vehicle was impounded, tenders to the official in charge of the removed vehicle park where the vehicle is, following:

- a) such evidence, as that officer may reasonably require, of his entitlement to the custody of the removed vehicle which is in the park ;

- b) the necessary particulars in relation to that vehicle issued prior to the impounding of the vehicle;

shall be entitled on demand at the park and without payment of any fees, to have the vehicle delivered up to him at the park”.

Sub-section 2 of Section 19 allows the vehicle owner to pay a fine only when the vehicle has been in custody for more than 24 hours. Immediately the fine is paid, the vehicle should be handed over to the owner.

-Mf-

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- Add 1-

Section 20 of the Act reads, “Where any removed vehicle is not claimed in accordance with section 19 within the period of two weeks specified under that section, the removed vehicle shall vest in the Lagos State Government”.

The Act stipulates another condition that can warrants impounding of a vehicle to be, “where a motor vehicle is stationary or abandoned on the highway or near private premises”.

Sub-section 5 states: “Where the vehicle was found not to have been abandoned, but left on the highway for an unreasonably long time with a view to eventual removal by its owner, the owner shall bear the cost of towing the vehicle to a removed vehicle park”.

Offences that may warrant impounding a vehicle include driving with a forged license, driving without a driver’s license, driving of any vehicle by a person under 18, driving an unlicensed vehicle, driving with forged vehicle particulars, and driving with fake number plates.

Others, such as driving an unregistered staff bus, causing obstruction on the highway, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol, disobeying traffic personnel or traffic lights attract a fine of N2, 000.

The vehicles impounded in Port Harcourt included assorted cars, buses, tankers, trucks, and motorcycles.

Our correspondents learnt that some of these vehicles were impounded over 10 years ago.

Impounding vehicles seems to be an oddity in the Federal Capital Territory, as our correspondents' investigations showed that police divisions in Abuja were almost free of seized vehicles.

Except in a few and isolated cases where vehicles involved in accidents were removed to the police station, others seen in most of the divisions were stolen but recovered, with the owners yet to be identified.

Our correspondents learnt that the Abuja police command had issued an instruction to all divisions to avoid impounding vehicles for minor traffic offences.

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## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Summarise in a single page all that is required to be done during the fourth reading.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The fourth reading is very important, and to get it done successfully, it is important for the sub to be familiar with the checklist provided in this unit.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has focused on the ingredients required for a successful fourth reading, especially the checklist. Familiarity with the checklist goes a long way in ensuring that the required final touches are put on copy before it leaves the sub desk.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the contents of the checklist for the fourth reading.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Isiaka Adams "Seafarers Canvass Better Funding for JOMALIC" *The Punch* Friday, June 24, 2005, p22.

Martins Oloja, Alex Olise and Iyabo Lawal “U.S Reopens Lagos Consulate, Govt Tackles Alleged Insecurity” *The Guardian*, Monday June 20, 2005, p1.

Kunle Adeyemi, Tobi Soniyi and Soni Daniel “Illegal Fines: Motorists Abandon Vehicles” *The Punch*, Friday, June 24, 2005,p1.

## **MODULE 6**

### **TYPOGRAPHY, CASTING OFF, HEADLINES AND LAYOUT**

Unit 1	Typography
Unit 2	Casting off and Headlines 1
Unit 3	Casting off and Headlines 2
Unit 4	Layout 1
Unit 5	Layout 2

## **UNIT 1    TYPOGRAPHY**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	What Typography is All About?
3.2	Studying and Practising Typography
3.3	Typography
3.4	Comprehension of Type
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	Reference/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION\_**

Those who fail to learn even the basic principles of typography waste much talent, time and money. Raw copy in which people have invested talent, time and trouble can be incomprehensible in print.

For instance, research findings indicate that the information contained in body copy (not headlines) of newspapers is comprehended by 67% of readers when a serif type is used. But comprehension slumps to 12% when a sans serif type is used. In other words, using the wrong type (san serif) stops the information from getting through to five out of six readers. Since the aim of publishing is to ensure that the published information gets to the people and is understood, it is important to take a close look at the dynamics of typography.

This unit strives to correct the situation in which the use of certain types under certain situations prevents information from getting to the readers. This will be done by examining various issues relating to the use of types.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES\_**

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

explain what is meant by typography  
make correct decisions, in general, about the choice of  
typography in print journalism.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 What Typography is All About?

Simply put, typography refers to the use of types. In Unit 3 of module 2, a lot was said about types and type composition. The word ‘type’, as explained in that unit, refers to a letter, number, or any other character used in printing. Types are not used just anyhow, because as explained in the introductory part of this module, wrong use of type could impede communication.

Typography involves careful study, selection, composition and use of types in such a way as to enhance effective communication. Although the phrase ‘typographical error’ is now often misused, it originally meant an error in typography, most often the use of a wrong type at a point in time. Similarly, typographical pluralism refers to a good combination of types in such away that an excellent or a visually pleasant pattern is created.

#### 3.2 Studying and Practising Typography

There are principles that should be kept in mind when studying and practising typography.

Typography should help communication  
The best typography goes unnoticed

Or, as the doyen of American typography, Edmund Arnold, puts it in his seminal book *Modern Newspaper Design*:

*...a fundamental truth of typography (is) rarely do we find a non-functional element: almost invariably the non-functional is also the malfunctional. If an element fails to do a good job, it usually does something that is bad.*

There are a number of things we can deduce from the forgoing statement of Edmund Arnold. Let us look at just two of these:

- (a) Typography is not a random selection of typefaces, nor is it a haphazard work. Rather, it is a conscious effort to communicate



effectively through the careful and proper selection of typefaces that can best serve the purpose.

Typography, in that sense can be likened to sculpture. The sculptor is usually a careful and diligent person. He carefully carves out a piece of work with a pre-determined objective, and all the elements he selects are carefully chosen to contribute to the realization of that objective which he has in mind.

- (b) There is no redundancy in typography. Every element selected is functional. If any element does not contribute to the realization of the ultimate objective, it automatically detracts from it.

### 3.3 Comprehension of Type

As Baskette and Scissors (their books on typography have become classics – and their names bywords in all English – speaking newsrooms) say in *The Art of Editing* (1977):

*The foremost objective of good typography is to select legible typefaces. They (must be) easy to read and enable a person to read faster than he (she) could with less legible faces, (and) encourage the reader to read more of what has been printed simply because they present fewer obstacles to reading.* (p.242)

Simply put, Basket and Scissors are saying that typography must be reader-friendly. There are four elements that can be derived from their statement above. These are:

- (a) Typography must aim at, and achieve legibility.
- (b) There must be ease of reading
- (c) Typography should facilitate reading speed
- (d) Typography should encourage reading, in other words, it should not be a wet blanket

Another writer on the subject of typography, Colin Wheildon came with some facts and figures to serve as a guide. Under the guidance of Edmund Arnold, he carried out a five-year study in Sydney, Australia, from 1982 to 1986 to find out more on some of the key elements of typography.

A summary of Wheildon's findings is as follows:

#### Body

Serif type	GOOD	67% Good Comprehension
Sans serif type	BAD	12% Good Comprehension

* Justified type	GOOD	67% Good Comprehension
**Ragged right type	POOR	38% Good Comprehension
*** Ragged left type	BAD	10% Good Comprehension

### Line Lengths

More than 60 character	BAD	38% Find it hard to hard
Less than 20 characters	Bad	87% Find it hard to hard

- \* 'Justified type' means that the type has been set so that the lines of type are all exactly the same length so that all the left hand ends line up with each other, and the right hand ends also line up. Virtually all reports in newspapers are set 'justified'.
- \*\* 'Ragged right' means that the type has been set so that all the left hand ends of the lines line up, but not the right.
- \*\*\* 'Ragged left' is the opposite to 'ragged right'. That is to say, only the righthand ends of the lines line up.

## 3.4 Headline

Little difference in comprehension between Serif and Sans serif type

All Upper-Case type	POOR	55% Good Comprehension
Upper-and-Lower Case type	GOOD	90% Good Comprehension

### Use of Colour:

Generally, colour increases noticeability of headline by about 60%, but decreases comprehension.

Low chrome colour	POOR	52% Good Comprehension
High chrome colour	BAD	17% Good Comprehension

Based on this information, general typographical choices are clear if the first principle is to be applied, namely to help communication.

Body copy should be set justified (lined up both sides) and in a serif typeface. The computer is handy for the task of justifying copy.

The old adage that an ideal line length is one and a half alphabets, or about 40 characters, seems to be true.

Headline should only be set in upper-and-lower case. Capital headlines may help page design (part of communication) but not comprehension.

Coloured type inhibits comprehension, but helps page design. It should only be used sparingly, and then only in muted tones.

I wonder what the findings would be if Wheildon's kind of study is replicated in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria. Some of the findings would still be valid, and indeed, would serve to reinforce the principles deriving from the study. For example, readers in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria may be in more haste than readers in Wheildon's 1982-86 Sydney. This implies that errors in typography in Nigeria today may create more hindrance to comprehension than such errors did in Sydney at the time Wheildon carried out his study. This calls for more hard work and diligence on the part of the Nigerian who is involved in typography if appreciable comprehension is to be achieved. This becomes even more imperative, considering the low reading culture in the country today. Experts say that Nigerians are not reading enough. Newspapers are among the things that Nigerians are not reading enough, and there are several reasons. There are more audience –friendly sources of information and entertainment, including radio and television, and these are diverting people's attention from good old newspaper. Typography should not become another source of distraction. Rather, it should be so properly done that it becomes an attraction, leading readers back to the newspapers.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain what typography is, and why it is very important in layout and design.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Much time, energy and other resources can be saved if the basic principles of typography are well understood and put into practice. The way to understand is to study and the go on to practice what was studied. Since typography goes a long way in influencing comprehension, it is wise to invest in it. Interestingly, a number of published resources exist both locally and internationally to assist those who desire to improve upon their knowledge of typography. In this chapter, for example, we have referred to the works of Edmund Arnold, Baskette and Scissors, and others. Many other local works by Akinfeleye, Okoye, and others are available and could assist in better understanding of typography.

Typography, as explained, helps communication. That is the baseline, and that is why good typography should not shout. If typography shouts, it becomes noisy and both distract and detract.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has focused on typography as a very essential element in print journalism. Among other things, the unit has looked at comprehension of type, body (as opposed to headlines) line lengths, headlines (as opposed to body) and use of colour, all of which are essential elements in typography.

From the outset, the importance of studying and practicing typography was stressed, and it was explained that typography should aid communication. It was also stressed that the best typography goes unnoticed since it is not expected to shout or be noisy. The views of Edmund Arnold, doyen of American typography on this important aspect of print journalism, and the implications deriving therefrom, were also presented. Among other things, it was explained that typography is never done haphazardly but diligently, like sculpting. And no non-functional element is allowed in typography because that would become malfunctional.

Like Arnold's, the views of Baskette and Scissors on typography, and the four key objectives of typography as can be seen in their comment, were discussed. These include legibility, ease of reading, facilitation of reading speed and encouragement of reading.

Among the most significant things in this unit are the five-year study conducted by Colin Wheildon under the guidance of Edmund Arnold and the findings deriving therefrom. The findings, as they relate to body, line lengths, headline and use of colour were discussed in this unit.

Based on the significance of Wheildon's study, it was suggested that such a study (which was conducted in Australia of the 1980s) should be replicated in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria as a way of enhancing typography and adding value to our publications. This, it was explained, is particularly important as a way of helping to halt the reported decline in reading culture in our country.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain four things that can be deduced from Basket and Sissors' comment on comprehension of type in their book, *The Art of Editing*.

## **7.0 REFERENCE/FURTHER READINGS**

Baskette, F. and Sissors, J.Z. (1977). *The Art of Editing*. New York: Macmillan.

## **UNIT 2 CASTING OFF AND HEADLINES 1**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Headlines
  - 3.2 Functions of the headline
  - 3.3 Headline variations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION\_

One of the reasons subeditors are in scarce supply is that they have to be numerate as well as literate. This unit introduces you to the first two areas where skill with numbers is essential.

The level of mathematical knowledge needed is very low. Simply addition, multiplication and division are all that is needed. However, these processes must be carried out very quickly, usually in one's head, and have sport-on accuracy.

When people join the subs desk, their first job is likely to involve being asked to process copy so that it conforms to page designs created by senior subs. So, as well as being able to sub copy, the junior subs will be expected to carry out **two** other functions.

They will have to be able to make the body copy fit the spaces allocated in the page design. They will do this by cutting or adding to the copy. However, before they can do this they must be able to work out how much copy is needed to fill the spaces, and how much space each item of raw copy will take up before it is added to or cut. This process is known as **Casting Off**. Fortunately, computers now do this job for us.

Subs will be expected to **write headlines** that follow the instructions of the page designers.

Good headline writing is an art that needs an extensive command of language, a large vocabulary, and indefinable creative flair. That is why all journalists and professional writers should practice this skill with a headline on every article they write.

However, headline writing is also something of a science. There are many rigid, and often irksome, rules that have to be followed.

The advice that the only way to learn to write is practice, practice, practice, is very true in headline writing. Headline writing is never easy, but practice makes it easier. Without practice it is impossible. There are no 'natural' headline writers.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

On completion of this module, you should be able to:

- perform character counts for headline writing
- cast-off body copy
- write headlines that fit the space allocated and achieve the objective of headlines
- avoid 'splits' and 'verbals' in headlines.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Headlines

Let us assume that as a journalist you have struggled through your story, struggling very hard to get it in on time. Now it is perfect (or apparently so); an investigative piece, let's say, linking a state governor to a worldwide drug distribution racket. Then, it appears under the headline:

#### **Governor Shuns Saccharine**

Would you bother reading on?

Let us examine another scenario. A journalist has traveled to ten states of the federation, following up on alleged cases of massive child abuse across the land. He has conducted a series of interviews, investing time, energy and other resources in the process. He returns to base and carefully writes up the story. He is persuaded it is a master piece, but when it is published, the title is

#### **Many Children are Suffering or Eze out of School**

Apparently, the headlines have trivialized the stories.

The main point here is that no matter how good a story is, a bad headline can relegate it to 'article unread' (NB. Poor typography can have the same effect). A headline has the capacity to make or break a story. Let us begin by looking at the functions which headlines are supposed to perform.

### 3.2 Functions of the Headline

The headline must make people **want to read** the story underneath. This is the fundamental role of a headline, and any of the rules mentioned later may be bent or broken to fulfill it. Just take a look at some of the headlines in newspapers during the week and see if they make you want to read or not.

The headline should **stimulate** some response in the readers which sparks their curiosity and makes them feel involved in the story. Either directly or by association of curiosity is very important because if people do not get curious, they may not bother to read the story. And readers are likely to get curious when there is something in the headline that makes them feel involved. For example, since there are many armed robbery stories in the newspaper, the one that has a headline that makes the reader feel involved somehow is likely to attract more readers. Ditto for stories from other countries. Since they most probably lack the element of proximity (which is one of the determinants of news worthiness) their headlines should make the reader feel involved somehow, otherwise they will not be read. Generally, this principle applies to the headlines of all stories.

The headline should catch the **attention** of the readers and draw them to the story. In other words, the headline should be able to flag down the readers' attention. If it cannot flag down their attention, it cannot get it any other way. And readers' attention is very important. It is when the attention is gotten that one can begin to talk about keeping that attention throughout the story.

The headline should tell the news by **summarising** the main ingredients of the story, but be careful not to cram in too much information. The headline should convey the essence of what comes below, and allow the readers to ascertain whether they to want continue.

Headlines serve as an **index** of a page's contents. They enable the readers to skim the page and pick out the stories they are interested in.

The headline conveys the **mood** of an article. It indicates whether a story is humorous, cynical, serious ....

Headlines set the tone of the newspaper. This is obvious in a comparison of two Nigerian newspapers. For example, a story about the murder of twenty-four journalism students by a homicidal, gun-trotting lecturer might come under the headline in *The Sun*:

**Shocker! Lecturer Massacres Dozens of Students**



Or could be headed in The Guardian:

### **Lecturer Kills 24 Students**

These reveal the tone of the two publications. From day one, *The Sun* promised to be sensational, and nothing is necessarily bad about that. It has remained committed to that vision, and many readers love it for that. Check its sales figures, and you will realize that it meets a certain need in the country.

On the other hand, *The Guardian* does not sensationalise but provides detailed slow-paced analysis. Many Nigerian newspaper readers, especially the elites, are in love with this approach and would do everything possible to get their daily supply of the publication.

Yet, the tone of The Punch, Vanguard, Daily Independent, Daily Trust and other Nigerian newspapers are different. And their readers love them. Variety, they say, is the spice of life, and the headlines of news stories often reflect the tone and variety of Nigerian newspapers. No wonder Nigeria has one of the most diverse and vibrant media systems in Africa.

Headlines provide a major **design** ingredient for page make-up.

**A page should never be boring to look at because of its headline.**

### **3.3 Headline Variations**

There are **four** ways of varying headlines, and thereby the look of the page. They are:

by **size** – headlines can be large or small. Remember, headline sizes should decrease down the page as we will see later in this module.

by **weight** – this refers to the thickness, or boldness of the letters.

by **style** – in one typeface, capitals, lower case or a mixture of both may be used. In the same sense, either the roman or the italic (but rarely) of a single typeface may be used.

by **contrast** – some typefaces may be used together successfully, others look awful.

The general rules here are:

never follow a light type with a heavier type  
always ensure the strapline (new term – will be defined later in this module) is lighter than the main head.  
Never use more than two different typefaces on one page.

**NB.** Remember, in just one typeface, you can choose from bold, medium or light, roman or italic, capitals or lower case and standard, condensed or extended.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss four ways in which headlines can be varied, and the general rules to be observed while doing so.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

The need for proper casting off and headlining cannot be over-emphasised. How well this is done goes a long way in influencing how the newspaper is perceived and received by the reading public, and since every newspaper wants to be well perceived and well-received by the public, there is emphasis on employing people who have the requisite skills. The sub who wants to be relevant and marketable must be diligent in understanding and practicing the skills.

#### **5.0 Summary**

This unit began by mentioning the need for aspiring subs to have numerate skills so that they can more effectively handle assignments that relate to casting off and writing of headlines. It was explained, in the process, that headline writing is both an art (since it requires creativity) and an art (since there are a number of rigid and often irksome rules that must be followed). Other skills required for effective headline writing as explained in the introductory part of this unit include extensive command of language, a large vocabulary and creative flair.

The need for constant practice was also emphasized, with an explanation that there are no ‘natural’ headline writers.

Examples were used to depict what ineffective headlines could do, before the functions of headlines were discussed. These functions include making people want to read the newspaper, stimulating curiosity, flagging down readers’ attention and summarizing the main ingredients of the story. But that is not all. A good headline, it was explained, serves as an index of a page’s contents, conveys the mood of an article, sets the tone of a newspaper and provides a major design ingredient for page make-up. Relevant examples were used to illustrate some of these points.

Headline variations was the next sub heading discussed in this unit. It was explained that there are four ways to vary headlines (and consequently, the look of the page). These are by size, by weight, by style and by contrast. General rules to observe while varying headlines were also presented.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List and discuss the functions of headlines.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Herbert, S. (1969). *Pioneers of Modern Typography*. London: Lund Humphries.

Hodgson, F.W. (1984). *Modern News Practice*. London: Heinemann.

Okoye, I.E. (2000). *Newspaper Editing & Production in the Computer Age*. Lagos: Mbeyi & Associates.

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## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Type Faces
  - 3.2 Rules for Headlines
  - 3.3 Types of Headline
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit two, we looked at headlines, highlighting their importance as well as their functions, using relevant examples. Among other things, it was explained in that unit that the headline must make people want to read; that it should stimulate some responses in the readers; that it should catch attention and that it should tell the news by summarizing the main ingredients of the story. It was mentioned, however that too much information should not be crammed into the headline. Headline variations were also examined in that unit.

Important as the foregoing points about headlines are, they are not the only things one needs to know about headlines. In this unit (Unit 3) we shall take a step further to look at typefaces as they relate to headline casting and examine in greater detail, the rules for casting headlines. We shall also, in this unit, look at types of headlines, using relevant examples. This unit, therefore, complements Unit 2.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the importance of the typeface in ensuring the impact of headlines
- discuss the rules for casting of headlines
- analyse the types of headlines.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### 3.1 Typefaces

The typeface is very important in ensuring the impact of a headline. A clear typeface will convey the message more quickly and more accurately. In newspaper, typefaces should be crisp and sharp rather than delicate or flowing. The examples which we shall see later on in this unit will make these points clearer.

Typefaces can also change character counts. Some will take up more space than others, and in some typefaces the italic form is more space-consuming than the Roman. These facts are usually put into consideration in selecting and using typefaces for the headline.

Usually, each newspaper office has books with examples of different type sizes and styles it uses.

### 3.2 Rules for Headlines

Use the **active voice**, and try to get the verb in early. Verbs convey action and immediacy.

For example, *'Nigeria hosts the world'* is more apt and more appropriate than *'The world is hosted by Nigeria'*

A **headline must never start with a verb**. In print journalism this is known as a 'verbal', and its use is strongly frowned at. For example, *'Giving and Receiving Bribes to be stopped'* is not as acceptable as *'Bribery to be Stopped'*

Use the **present tense**, again because it tells the reader. 'This is happening NOW'. Present tense should not be used when the article tells of a future event, or when choosing the head for a story which deals with death. For example, whereas *'Nigeria Endorses Protocol on Free Trade'* is acceptable *'Nigeria Endorsed Protocol on Free Trade'* is not acceptable. Also, *'Milton Obote of Uganda is Dead'* is more acceptable than *'Milton Obote of Uganda Dies'*

Always use the **subject** with its verb. Otherwise the headline will scream a question (something like 'What killed those cherubic journalism students?'), and it can be enough to make less stalwart readers scream themselves.

**24 Students Killed** is acceptable,  
but not **Kills 24 Students**

Always use the **positive** aspect of the story in the headline. This doesn't mean the optimistic angle; it means the statement with the most news value.

**Passengers escape injury in crash**

Is better than

**No one hurt as plane crashes**

**Never repeat words** in a headline or in headlines on the same page, unless you want a deliberate and catchy effect.

**'Split' headlines are bad news.** There's always a way round them. Headlines are 'split' when adjectives and nouns, or two parts of a proper name are on different lines, or any line ends with a preposition, such as:

**Mobile Police  
Invade Odi to  
Restore Peace**

Use the words that give the **precise** and accurate meaning of what you are trying to convey. Be careful of words that have more than one meaning.

Avoid using the **anonymous** 'he' or 'it' (unless it is unidentifiable and utterly indescribable – but even then you could use the person's job title). The anonymous headline is boring and vague. Age, sex, occupation, nationality, status (etc.) all give some identity. As a last resort, transfer the situation to the person or create a metaphor.

Only use **puns** if they are very good. 'Broken English' is never good. It is bound to give unnecessary offence to some.

**Personalise** headlines where possible. This gives the reader something to identify. Names are better than countries (e.g. Bush rather than US), but only where the name is generally known and easily identified.

**Place names** should only be used when they are well-known. Most people know where London is; Gilgandra is not quite as well-known. This rule may be broken in local newspapers.

**Abbreviations** should only be used where they are part of everyday language and generally understood. In Nigeria abbreviations like NEPA and NLC are commonly used in headlines. People would not respond as easily to a headline with

CONM as its key subject (Council of National Manufacturing Industries) because it is not a very popular organization. Overuse of abbreviations makes the page design ugly.

**Jargon**, particularly police, academic and public-service jargon, should be avoided because it is likely that only a few readers will know its meaning.

In quality newspapers, avoid **slang** in headlines. It lowers the tone of the newspaper and may not be understood by some readers. On the other hand, in popular newspaper, particularly on the sports pages, using slang such as ‘fort’, ‘turf’, ‘grouse’, biff, etc, is often a good idea.

When using **numerals**, be as precise as possible. If an estimated figure is given (e.g. between 70 and 80) use the conservative figure. This builds reader confidence and gives the newspaper more credibility.

**Punctuation** – a headline should not be cluttered with punctuation; in fact, it **should be unnecessary and avoided altogether. In this unit punctuation in headlines is banned.** However, there are some instances where publications use punctuations in headlines, usually because of sloppy thinking.

**Exclamation marks** make the ‘headline, and the story’, less credible. They are a confession of failure (Sellers 1968, p. 108).

### 3.3 Types of Headlines

Many headlines have to be written to exactly fit the space allocated by whoever designed the page. However, use of a variety of headline types, or formats, prevents a newspaper from looking boring and allows the subs to brag about just how creative they are. The following are few types of headlines that could be used to make a page look attractive:

**Fullout** – All the lines of the headline fit the space exactly. Most tabloids and ethnic newspapers make use of this.

**Flush left** – All the lines of the headline are aligned on the left-hand side, but are uneven on the right-hand side (this unevenness shouldn’t be too obvious). A flush left headline is usually the easiest to write, but over use can give the paper a ‘squared-off look’.

**Centred** – Each line of the headline is centred across the column space. There formations generally occur:

long-short-long  
 short-long-short (rare)  
 long-shorter-shortest – also known as the ‘inverted pyramid’.

**Reverse** – The colour in the headline is reversed so that the letters are white on a black background. They are often used in straplines or kickers (read on to discover what these are, plus other bits of exciting trivia). Permutations of the Reverse headline are the **Type on Screen** and **Ghost Reverse** headlines. The former is where black type is superimposed on a screen of dots; the latter is where white letters are superimposed on the screen of dots.

Reverse:

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

Type on Screen:

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

Ghost Reverse:

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

NB: (For these headlines the type must be bold face)

**Strapline** – A short line of type above the main headline. It is usually about half to two-thirds the length of the main line. Never use a strapline which is, or could be, linked to the main headline by the word ‘and’ or ‘then’. Strapline are often underscored.



**‘Just another day in Journalism Course’  
University toll reaches 24**

**Underscoring** – underlining a headline. The weight of the underscoring, or width of underlining rule, must be correct and close to the letters. The underline should break at the descenders (it is a design decision whether the underlining should continue or not in the space between the words).

**Lecturer reprimanded for lapse in self-control**

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Write a two-line upper-and-lower-case headline based on each of the following intros. The design of the page requires that **each headline is full out**, and **each of the two lines has a unit count of 15**.

- a) LAGOS A woman has been sentenced to 10 years’ jail for her part in a scheme to supply 160,000 tablets of the designer drug ecstasy, which were imported into Nigeria hidden? from Benin Republic.
- b) ABUJA Conservationists, nuclear disarmament supporters and other activists will meet in Abuja this weekend to organise a national ‘Green’ network in the lead up to the forthcoming federal election.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Headlines play a significant role in attracting the attention of readers to news stories so that such news stories can get read. However, various factors impact on the effectiveness or otherwise of the headlines. This unit has focused on the typeface as one of such factors. It has also focused on the rules for headlines as well as the types of headlines. It is hoped that you have been stimulated to develop the requisite skills for excellent headline casting.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have gone further from where we ended the discussion on headlines in Unit 2. In this unit, we have looked at typefaces as they are used in headlines, the rules for headlines as well as the types of headlines. It was explained, among other things, that the typeface is very important in ensuring the impact of the headline and that a clear typeface conveys a message more quickly and more accurately.

Some of the rules of headlines discussed in this unit relate to the use of active voice rather than passive voice, avoiding 'verbals', using present tense, always using a subject with its verb and using the positive aspect of a story.

Types of headlines, such as fullout, flush left, centred, reverse, strapline and underscoring, were also explained.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

With relevant examples, explain at least, five of the rules for headlines casting as discussed in this unit.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Turnbull, A.T. and Baird, R.N. (1967). *The Graphics of Communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Warford, H.S. (1971). *Design for Print Production*. London: Focal Press.

Wesley, B.H. (1980). *News Editing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Wheildon, C. (1986). *Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes*. Sydney, Australia: Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia.

## **UNIT 4    LAYOUT 1**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Layout
  - 3.2 Picture Editing
  - 3.3 Page layout
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION\_**

The subbing that we have examined thus far in this course text can be roughly summarised as ‘making a story fit’. That is, making it fit to be published; fitted to the publication’s style, and cut to fit the space available.

In this unit, we shall focus our attention on layout. Layout is every bit as important as the other factors affecting print publications – pictures, writing styles and content. However, layout is particularly important because it determines how the printed product will look and this, in turn, would go a long way in determining whether it is read, how effectively it will hold the reader’s attention and ultimately, whether the publication will sell.

The layout, typography and design of newspaper advertising and the results achieved have been observed and measured for over 80 years. Principles that have evolved out of journalistic instinct have been confirmed by controlled observations. In this unit, we shall benefit from the knowledge and experience that have emerged over the years

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

On completion of this unit you should be able to:

- explain some of the principles and practices associated with layout
- produce attractive and easy to read pages.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Layout or Managing the Message**

Newspaper advertising involves reading, and this is usually done from top left of the page to bottom right. Usually, the reader's eye falls initially upon the top left. This area is technically described as the Primary Optical Area (POA). The reader's attention is believed to decrease progressively until the eyes leave the page at the bottom right, which is technically described as the Terminal Area (TA). This is usually described as the Gravity of Reading or reading gravity.

The element that deserves the greatest attention is usually placed as close as practicable to the POA. Advertisers are well aware of this and often make efforts to ensure that their advertisements get into that position. This is one of the reasons for the popularity of 'earpieces' in many publications. An earpiece is a relatively small piece of advertisement which is strategically placed at a top corner of a publication to attract greater or special attention. A look at your popular newspaper or magazine will confirm the popularity of earpieces. But while advertisers would like to take advantage of the POA, the Editor too is interested in ensuring that editorial matter is not relegated to the periphery. He also protects the interest of the reading public, so he strives to ensure some balance.

Advertisers would always insist on getting the best exposure for their advertisement, knowing fully well that advertisements which do not conform to the 'Gravity of Reading' pay a heavy penalty in greatly reduced attention and comprehension of the message. Newspapers have advertisement rates that take cognizance of the principles associated with the Gravity of Reading. Rates are fixed in such a way that adverts which are closer to the POA are charged higher than those that are farther away.

The Page Designer has a high degree of freedom as long as reading gravity is not compromised.

#### **3.2 Picture Editing**

Picture editing refers to the selection and treatment of pictures for publication. It requires careful study because of the vital importance of pictures in publications. Imagine a newspaper or a magazine without pictures! It would be very boring and unattractive.

Picture editing involves, above all, choosing. The first choosing involves taking a decision on whether a particular picture is suitable or not, in the

first place. If a picture is considered unsuitable, it is discarded right away. If it is suitable, other decisions as discussed below will then follow. Where two pictures are available for a single space, a choice has to be made on which of them will be more effective, and where the available pictures are many, a choice has to be made on which will be the most effective.

The second consideration is: which **part** of a picture?

Cropping (as the framing of part of a photograph is called) is the crucial refinement. A picture needs to be cropped so that the desired effect or effect can be produced. Perhaps, a picture of a personality was taken at a high table while he was seated with other guests, but you want the other guests out so that focus can be on the particular personality. Through cropping, this and other things can be done. The whole caption or a portion, the impact, and indeed the very content of a picture can be changed by cropping.

A decision must also be made on the extent to which a picture needs to be augmented by a caption or a headline. Few pictures are complete without some words of explanation, if only to record when and where they were taken.

### **3.3 Page Layout**

The great divide in newspaper layout is, of course, Tabloid versus Broadsheet. In Nigeria, though, not many newspapers come in the form of a broadsheet. As H. Evans in *The Function of Newspaper Design* (1976) writes, these are the fundamental bases for decisions on everything from the size of the sheet to the length of a paragraph. A format for a serious newspaper dealing in politics and social reporting will not suit a metropolitan evening newspaper offering lots of 'spice'. (Compare *The Guardian* with *PM News*) It is impossible for the same combination of type, text and layout to express the function of both. It is as absurd as putting a Rolls Royce body on a sports-car chassis. If the newspaper is a busy evening, paper published mainly for an audience of commuters on crowded trains, buses, *molues*, etc, and then it should first be designed to be read by a commuter.

To Evans, for reading in conditions inimical to reflections on the nature of the universe, the newspaper will offer short spot news, sport, stock prices, and entertainment feature, the ideal format will be a tabloid, for ease of handling, and the detailed typography will accommodate lots of short and short paragraphs within them. If the paper, for commercial or technical reasons, is broadsheet, it has to meet its handling problem by exploiting the larger page size: continuation stories will be avoided and

the first page will be designed to have the widest possible range of appeal. So should the back page, though it is usually neglected.

Evans explains further that a newspaper which is shared by a family at home will avoid publishing the women's feature on the same page as the sport or on the reverse side of the sports page. He uses a typographical illustration to explain that a design to project major national and international news as dramatically as possible in a competitive situation, will not be appropriate for a monopoly weekly newspaper circulating in a small town.

He also laid out a prescription for the requirements of newspaper design that can hardly be bettered: Design wrote Evans, must:

- (i) *Communicate clearly and economically, i.e. with maximum legibility consistent with effective use of limited space'.*
- (ii) *Communicate with a sense of proportion, guided journalistically, by the context of the news of the day and the period, and positioning of the television guide, stock prices, and so on.*
- (iii) *Communicate in a recognisable style and with such consistency as is helpful to the reader (for instance in the regular positioning of the television guide, stock prices, and so on).*
- (iv) *Use means that are economical in time in both the printing and editorial department'.*
- (v) *Use means that enable quick changes in response to changing news'.*

(Evans 1976, p. 6)

Evans notes further that irrespective of the category to which a newspaper belongs (that is, whether a paper it is tabloid or broadsheet) its page plan is either static or dynamic. A static page plan remains the same, no matter what stories or pictures are to be fitted into it. On the other hand, a dynamic page plan changes according to demand.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the following:

- (a) Picture Editing,
- (b) Primary Optic Area,
- (c) Terminal Area,
- (d) Static versus Dynamic Page Plan.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Unarguably, layout is one of the main determinants of the fortunes of a publication. Even from a distance, the layout can attract or repulse. This becomes even more real from a close look. Consequently, layout deserves serious and careful attention so that the attention of prospective readers can be attracted and kept, while the interest of current readers is sustained.

What we have done in this unit is largely a scratching of the surface. In the next unit (Unit 5) we shall see more about layout. It must be added however, that full appreciation and understanding of the dynamics of layout can only come from practical experience. You are therefore encouraged to develop interest in the practical aspect of layout and strive to learn more from how it is practically done in this fast-paced computer age.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has focused on layout, which is a main determinant of whether a newspaper will be read, how effectively it will hold the reader's attention and whether the publication will sell. At the beginning of the unit, it was explained that what had been done in subbing so far was making a story to fit. The influence of POA as well as TA in layout were discussed, explaining that just as advertisers are interested in placing their advertisements as close as possible to the POA, editors also would like editorial materials to be close to POA. On the basis of the fact that the interest of the public needs to be protected, it was advised that both interests should be put into consideration in doing the layout.

Picture editing was also treated in this unit. It was explained that it principally refers to the treatment of pictures for publication with an explanation that choosing is a major component of picture editing because the suitability of a picture for use in the publication, whether there are more effective pictures, etc, are decisions bordering on choice.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Summarise the views of H. Evans on page layout as explained in this unit.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Berner, R.T. (1982). *Editing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

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Herbert, S. (1969). *Pioneers of Modern Typography*. London: Lund Humphries.



## **UNIT 5    LAYOUT 2**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Modular versus Irregular Layout
  - 3.2 Horizontal versus Vertical
  - 3.3 Layout Blanks
  - 3.4 Order for Designers
  - 3.5 General Principles
  - 3.6 From the Present to the Future
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 4, we began a discussion of pertinent issues relating to layout. Specifically, we looked at layout in relation to advertisements and editorial content, and how layout is influenced by both the Primary Optical Area (POA) and Terminal Area (TA). Picture editing and the views of H. Evans on page layout were among the issues discussed in Unit 4. In the concluding part of Unit 4, it was explained that the issues discussed in that unit about layout were like scratching the surface and that more issues would be looked at in this unit ( Unit 5). It is now time to fulfill that promise by looking at more issues that have to do with layout. In essence, this unit is a continuation of Unit 4.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- explain more of the principles and practices associated with layout
- mark up a page so that the design can be acted on by others.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Modular versus Irregular Layout**

Layout may be modular or irregular. An irregular layout allows a column of text to turn into the next column without the two or three legs of the story being equal. Clip a story out of the page – it would be L

shaped. On the other hand, a modular layout means that each story can be clipped out as a neat oblong. Modular design is compatible with either a static or a dynamic layout. Evans quotes Peter Palazzo who was responsible for the redesign of the *New York Herald Tribune* in the 1960s in this style:

*The modular system is very useful because it acts as an automatic organiser for many news items on the page. This makes it easier for readers to identify and read stories without wandering off into other stories.*

It does organize, but the great limitation of modular make-up will be obvious. A story must be precisely the right length for the space allotted. If the length is radically different from the allotted space, the modular make-up may not be achievable.

### **3.2 Horizontal or Vertical Balance**

All the other considerations of design also apply to the appearance of a page, Symmetry or asymmetry; Horizontal or vertical balance - even diametrical.

As a general rule vertical make-ups are simpler and slightly easier to read than horizontal ones, but horizontals are more aesthetically appealing and (even more important) economical.

A horizontal page can carry more advertising than vertical make-ups, without ruining the aesthetics. Now that technology can make the horizontal make-up as easy to read, vertical is facing extinction.

However, journalists should not lose sight of it. The most difficult of all print media to design (the club, company or parish newsletter) is often much better off in vertical make-up. These publications usually have to include many small stories. In horizontal, they become a mass of unattractive and difficult-to-read headlines.

Whichever principles are applied, the most important thing is that nothing in the appearance of the finished layout should be allowed to distract from the main purpose to present stories and pictures with the emphasis due to each element, easily accessible to the reader and clearly understandable. It must be added that the first and main purpose of the layout is effective communication in the truest sense of the word. Any form of embellishment that causes a distraction from this purpose is dysfunctional and should be avoided.

### 3.3 Layout Blanks

Before any story appears in print, space has to be made for it in the publication. Layout has to take account of advertising space that has been booked. The layout blanks provide an opportunity to show the spaces allocated for advertisements and the spaces available for editorial contents.

Advertisement spaces are usually marked on the layout blanks or grids (or 'dummies') to which a sub or a designer first turns.

### 3.4 Order for Designers

An order for designers is usually prepared to guide them in doing the designs. Medium blue felt tip pens are best for quick, bold lines to plot out the following:

Place of pictures, whether best horizontal or vertical; picture head/captions. Size of head; number of decks (lines); whether set – left/centred, etc.

Final balance of the whole page – according to size and location of ads, best placement of picture, best size and type of headings.

Once the general view of the page has been roughed out, you might draw in more detail to complete the page design – such as strip lines to divide stories and blocks of copy; boxes to highlight particular stories (remember to indent copy, and allow for boxes to be drawn in) or reversed, black-on-grey, underlined headings.

**A Rule:** Pictures should always be identified in exactly the same words on the layout and the back of the print

### 3.5 General Principles

Too much large, boldface type is unattractive on any page in any type of paper.

Pages must never be exactly symmetrical. As well as looking awkward, it makes the reader work too hard. Two stories at the top which have been given the same design 'weight' means a decision by the reader on which is the more important. It is the journalist's job to indicate that.

Headline should not be of the same type size and weight on the same page, unless they are needed to balance the page.

Neither should sub-heads clash, that is, fall next to each other in adjoining columns.

No body copy should be turned up higher on the page than the intro.

All 'legs' of a story should be covered by a headline, except when covered by an illustration to the story.

Turning a story to another page should only be done from page one and then if there are more than four paragraphs to turn. If there are not, cut the story. If compelled to turn a story from an inside page, never turn to a preceding page.

Avoid putting pictures with larger heads (of people) below others with smaller.

Try to force the two-decks do not mix type families.

Small headlines make a page grey and uninteresting. A useful headline guide for single column stories for beginners could be:

- One para: 18pt; one line;
- Two para: One or two lines 18pt; or one line 24pt;
- Three para: One or two lines 24pt;
- Four para: Three lines 24pt; or two lines 30pt;
- Five para: Two or three lines 30pt; or two lines 36pt;
- Six para: Try for a double-column heading;
- Too-short flush left headlines are usually unattractive.

All blocklines should be set in the same typeface and size and follow the same style throughout the publication.

### **3.6 From the Present and the Future**

As a result of rapid advances in science and technology, the traditional roles of the layout subs and picture editors have almost completely merged into a unified graphic department. This, among other things, is even more economical than the traditional approach.

The relationships between the word and visual editors have almost changed; with the latter gaining in status.

Many subs who have been made graphics managers need more technical training. This is very important if excellence is not to be compromised.

To gain promotion in tomorrow's newsrooms, journalists need management training. Before now, this has not been the case, especially in Nigeria and other developing countries. But gradually, this is becoming imperative because of changes in the nature of the job and the need to be professionally and technically equipped to meet up with the emerging challenges.

As Gentry and Zang once said, 'The position of graphics managers is in a state of evolution'. The practices on the subs desks are changing, but nobody seems to know how, when or in which direction.

As often happens in journalism, 'a category of jobs has evolved before specific preparatory programs have been developed to match them'.

But the technical skills of comprehensively trained subs will be very much in demand throughout the foreseeable future.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain your understanding of evolutions or changes in subbing and related works, and how these are likely to be in future.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The study of a course is dynamic as publication layout and designing cannot end. It is so dynamic that unless one is constantly in touch with what is happening in real life, he or she may soon become outdated. It is important, therefore, for you to strive and be at par with the industry situation. Good as academic knowledge of this course is, it is not a substitute for practical, hands-on experience.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has looked at regular versus modular layout, horizontal versus vertical make up, layout blanks as well as order for designers. A rule as well as some general principles that guide layout was discussed, and finally, there has been a peep into the future, standing on the platform of the present. These are basically the things that subs need to be familiar with, but there is a lot more to learn hands on because although the sub's work is done on paper, the study of it cannot be exhausted on paper

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the following:

- (a) Modular versus irregular layout,
- (b) Horizontal versus vertical make up,
- (c) Layout blanks,
- (d) Order for Designers.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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