

Multi-Faceted Aspects of Print Media Journalism
- *The Daily Star*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

News covers every important aspect of life that people would want to know about. I think newspapers and magazines are the most important media among all the other media in terms of covering news. It is also true that there are some other popular medium of news coverage such as the broadcast media which includes radio, television and the online media which includes internet. But still most people keep at least a copy of a newspaper or a magazine at their homes and offices. The reason is very simple. You can actually read it when you are free or at ease and at the same time you can actually feel and comprehend the depth of the news by reading closely. Then again you can go through a particular news story over and over again in order to understand the gist clearly, and by contrast you cannot do it when you hear the news on radio or television.

Now, when it comes to the definition of news, it is very difficult to set one standard or ideal definition because there are many views about news. But a general definition of news could be that news is something unusual, significant, unpublished and commonly appealing to the readers. In other words, if it fulfils one or more of the most important factors of newsworthiness (prominence, proximity, oddity, timeliness and consequences), it would then be considered news.

The profession of journalism has always lured me since my school life because I found people tend to consider it as a respectable, challenging and at the same time an influential

job. Thus I wanted to be a journalist when I was very young. As I wanted to be a journalist since my school life, I chose media and cultural studies as the major area of my study as a student of the English Department. Luckily I was placed in one of the leading newspapers, *The Daily Star* as an intern and I got an initial experience about how a newspaper office generally works. Here I got an opportunity to gain practical knowledge about print media journalism that I have learned theoretically in some of my courses like *Translation Studies, Editing, and English for Print Media* etc.

It is true that I got on the job experience while interning at *The Daily Star* but it was limited to three months. So I could work in the three supplements along with the cultural page only. The three supplements are the *Star Campus*, the weekend magazine, which comes out on Sundays, *The Star*, which comes out on Fridays and *Lifestyle*, which comes out on Tuesdays. Besides, I also worked for the cultural page, *Art & Entertainment*, which comes out everyday usually in the middle folder of the main newspaper. This report is focused on my experience with the multi-faceted aspects of media journalism such as translating, editing, article/report writing etc at *The Daily Star*.

1.1. A Brief Background of *The Daily Star*:

The Daily Star is situated at 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka. *The Daily Star* stabilised its place on January 14, 1991. The main goal of the daily is to publish fair news without being biased. Therefore, it started its journey with a sense of challenge and a feeling of humbleness to serve this nation as a truly independent newspaper. The most unique characteristic of *The Daily Star* is its non-biased position. It is free from any influence of political parties and vested groups. Its strength lies in being impartial about clashes between good and evil, justice and injustice, right and wrong, regardless of positions held by any group and alliance. (www.thedailystar.net)

In our country, most of the people like to read Bengali newspaper since they are not that comfortable with understanding high quality English language which is used in the English dailies. As a result, only well educated upper-class and upper middle-class people and corporate offices including some other offices and universities keep English dailies. But in spite of that, *The Daily Star* covers a significant amount of the readership in Bangladesh

The Daily Star believes that one of the major reasons of attracting almost half of the English readership is publishing some interesting supplements along with its sixteen-page regular publication. Those supplements are following –

1. *The Star*, a weekly [magazine](#) size supplement that comes out every Friday.
2. *Lifestyle*, a weekly fashion and lifestyle [tabloid](#) published every Tuesday.

3. ***Rising stars***, a weekly tabloid size supplement for teenagers published every Thursday.
4. ***Law and our rights***, a weekly supplement on legal issues published every Saturday.
5. ***Star Campus***, a university based supplement of the newspaper.
6. ***Forum***, a second monthly magazine, edited by Zafar Sobhan (assistant editor) and brought out by the newspaper.

Among these supplements, I worked for ***The Star, Lifestyle*** and ***Star Campus*** during my internship. I also worked for the cultural page that comes out with the main newspaper everyday. This report is mainly focused on the techniques of feature writing, translating, editing and some other aspects of print media journalism.

Chapter 2: Feature Writing

In this chapter, the variety of features with some examples, some basic rules of interviewing, conducting background research before writing a story, and covering an event are discussed in the light of my gathered experience while working for the different supplements as an intern at *The Daily Star*.

2.1. Feature:

Features are generally written for the supplements of a newspaper. The length of a feature is normally bigger than the news stories. If we want to define feature, it would be hard for us because there is no specific and ideal definition for features. But when it comes to defining a feature, it can be said that a definition that is quite appropriate is: features are not news. Usually, news stories can be categorised as hard news and soft news. Hard news deals with events or conflicts, is strictly factual and has immediacy. The hard news items include meetings, political events and facts, crimes, fires, accidents, strikes etc. By contrast, soft news is basically infotainment (information + entertainment) that focuses on sports news, cultural programmes, art exhibition, recitals, celebrities etc. But unlike news stories, features generally focus on the story behind the news. Features can be written about a variety of topics. The topic can include an agony column, a profile, a product roundup and even an obituary.

2.2. Feature Writing Strategy:

Writing an attractive, colourful, interesting and provocative intro is the most important strategy for writing a good feature since the intro creates the first impression on the readers about the feature. Whether a reader would or would not read the feature depends on how powerful and interesting the intro is. The following categories are the useful guidelines, and in practice, many brilliant intros combine two or more of these elements.

- Strong/provocative/intriguing statement
- Narrative/anecdote
- Description/scene-setting
- Question
- Quote etc.

Starting with a quotation is the most common way to start writing a feature. Quotation makes it easy to add colour, surprise etc. for impact. For example:

“It is not easy to forget an encounter with Zhang Jjianhua’s sculptures of Chinese coal miners; that is, if one is lucky enough to see that.”

International Herald Tribune

2.3. Fundamental Guidelines

Though there are some fundamental guidelines, there are no fixed rules to depend on while writing a feature. The guidelines are:

- Think.
- Focus.
- Have something to say.
- Take the readers with you from A to Z.
- Choose your words carefully and make them flow smoothly.

In ascending order of difficulty, features can

- Inform
- Help
- Entertain
- Persuade
- Amuse etc.

One has to write in a way so that the readers would read the feature with great interest. It should not be dull. In order to make the feature crispy, a feature writer has to start it with a grabbing intro. Its body part has to be topical, colourful, and trustworthy so that a reader would read the entire feature.

In short, a feature has to –

- be readable
- be credible
- have a grabbing intro

- involve the reader
- be accurate
- be crafted
- have substance
- contain a added element of surprise
- be topical
- be colourful
- contain good quotes
- be vigorous
- be helpful.

2.4. Types of Feature:

There are mainly four types of features:

1. Profiles: There are basically two categories of profile feature.

i) Profile features can be written about an individual usually based on interviews that can be written in first person, reported and also edited from a tape.

But then again, if the subject is dead, it becomes an obit or obituary. An obituary is mostly written by the acquaintances, relatives and admirers etc of the subject.

ii) Features about companies, pop groups and sports teams would also be considered as profile features. These features can be written with the help of interviews or clippings.

2. Product Stories: The features about a product or roundup of many products are called product stories. In product stories, a particular product or a set of products are described, compared and tested.

3. Background Feature: This kind of feature usually puts news in context. A news feature is a hybrid since it lies somewhere in between a straightforward news and a feature.

4. Opinion pieces:

- Leader/editorials
- Think pieces
- Columns
- Diaries etc.

2.4.1. Profile Feature:

Profile features are the most common item in any newspaper or magazine. The order of writing features may vary from person to person. But, it should touch most of the following facts.

1. The person's background emphasizing birth, upbringing, education and occupation.
2. Anecdotes and incidents involving the subject should be included in it.
3. Comments by the individual about her/himself, and about the subject that makes him/her newsworthy.
4. The reporter's observations are also very important.
5. Comments of those who know the interviewee (friend or foe, ideally both) are necessary.
6. The fact that indicates why the subject is significant is very important.

After reading your profile, the readers should not be asking themselves why they have read that story. If this is the case, you haven't done your job! So, you need to satisfy the readers from top to bottom. An example of a profile feature is given bellow.

A New Comer

SHOSHEE!

Cultural Correspondent

Sharmin Zoha Shoshee from Rangpur is one of the new faces in the media that conquered many of her audiences' heart by showing her talent as an actor. She is studying law. She has a brother and she is the younger in her family. Her parents were also involved



in acting. So her family atmosphere has a great impact on her acting talent.

Her first step towards the media is being the winner of Lux Anondodhara Miss Bangladesh photogenic 2003. After that she played a leading role in Shuchanda's film 'Hajar Bochor Dhore'; the play 'Hoimonti' directed by Kaonain Shourav and 'Ek Jon Porshi Ebong Otopor' directed by Tonmoy Tan Sen etc.

Recently she is playing the role of Samia in the daily soap 'Gulshan Avenue' directed by Nima Rahman that gave her an immense popularity that makes her feel great. When she has been asked to share her feelings about it, she said "I feel very happy when people recognize me wherever I go because they love the character I play in 'Gulshan Avenue'. Most of my fans do not know my actual name but they identify me as Samia, the role I play in 'Gulshan Avenue'. I feel like my dream came true." She also shared one of her good memories with us. She said "the other day I went to a place and a little kid became overwhelmed by seeing me. She kept on calling me by Samia Anty! This feeling charmed me a lot because I realized that the character also conquered the innocent soul of this little kid." She also added that she loves to work with the team of 'Gulshan Avenue' because she considers the team as a family of hers. She also wants to be alive in the soul of her respected audiences of 'Gulshan Avenue'.

Besides 'Gulshan Avenue' she is working for some more mega serials such as "Naksha" directed by Mamunur Rashid on ATN Bangla; a comedy serial "Mess Member Aboshshok" by Tonmoy Tan Sen; "Chiria Khana" directed by Sayed Shakil; "No Problem.com" etc. A new drama serial "Nona Bali Teer" on BTV is coming up on June 15 where Shoshee is going to play a leading role. She told that she is also interested in one-hour plays but it is very difficult to get time for one-hour plays while she is involved in several drama serials at a time.

Samia used to be a passionate dancer till she was in class ten. But these days she misses dancing as she is involved in acting. She loves reading story books especially Rabindro Nath Tagore and Humayun Ahmed. She revealed that she also wants to get involved in modelling. If she gets an offer to be a model for some good TV commercials, she would definitely go for it. Recently is wondering about writing script for plays. She wants to be a very good actor in the future and she is desperately willing to give some good works to her fans.

2.4.2. Product Feature:

The purpose of a product story is to persuade the customers to take the next step, which is purchasing or getting fascinated by your product. Generally, people know about the daily necessary products like stationeries, machineries, furniture, and other goods that we use in our everyday life. As a product story can be written about any of these products, it is not necessary to highlight the facts that everyone knows. Therefore, a product story should be written in such a manner that it makes the readers get influenced to buy or

become spellbound about the product. A product story must make the readers realize that they never thought of the product differently and interestingly.

In short, the key to **creating a powerful product story** is highlighting the unique factors of the product that capture the product's essence so that the shoppers will be compelled to buy.

The following feature is a good example of a product story that I wrote for **Lifestyle**.



Reload your pencil case

By **Imrana Yasmin**

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

As you trod through a stationary store, your fingers reflexively linger around intricately designed erasers, sharpeners or the others of the kind. You have probably caught yourself stuck in a scenario as such. Have you ever given the latter a thought as to why it occurs?

Tethered inside you is a child that attempts to free himself and thus the birth of the sudden attraction towards functioning toys, labeled stationary. As a child, one is bribed with these fancy objects into hours loaded with studies. It is an age-old trick applied by adults worldwide to fixate children's concentration onto books. With the aging of the stationery, fades away the aroused interest.

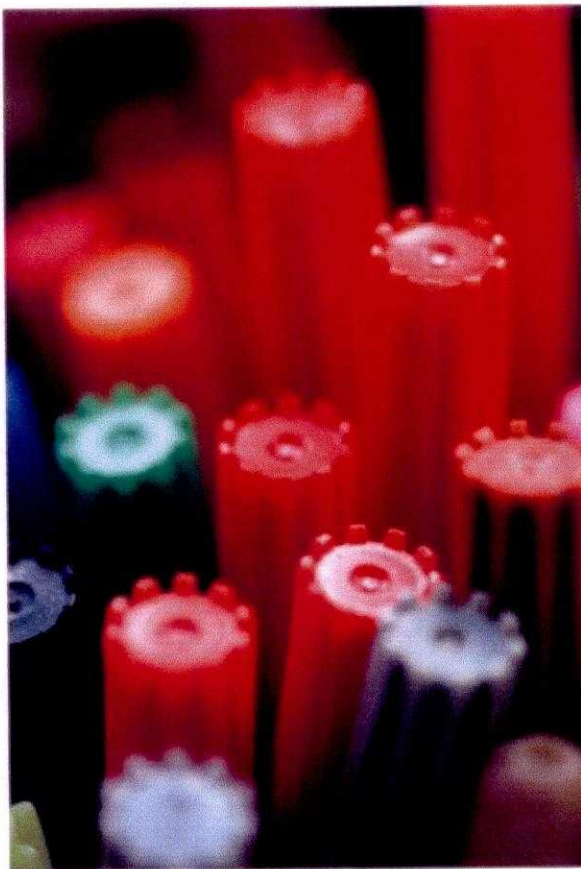
Marketing strategies to hypnotise children include but do not limit to, perfumed or geometrically cutout erasers and character-oriented pens. Once I met a kindergarten girl who flaunted her assortment of differently shaped erasers. She was excited as to which one she would lay her hands on and spent quite a while contemplating.

These days the market displays a varying range of glitter-pens, gel-pens, markers, penholders, paperweights, paper clips, penholders and the list goes on. A wide range of stationery awaits you at New Market. Besides New Market, you can choose from other well-equipped stores such as Etc., Bishwa Bichitra, Shabuj Library and Islamia Library. Although the prices at Etc. are comparatively a bit higher, the items available are exclusive.

If you walk along the series of stationery shops in New Market, you can buy erasers ranging from Tk 2.50 to 5, geometry boxes from Tk 55 to 210, colour pencils from Tk 50 to 250, pastel colours from Tk 55 to 400, penholders from Tk 40 to 140, bright pencil cases from Tk 25 to 200, pencil sharpeners from Tk 5 to 500, punch point files from Tk 12 to 35 and ring binders from Tk 55 to 90.

The stationery you use is a mirror reflection of your personality. The range of stationery extends to copyrighted Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck to Japanese fictional characters such as Hello Kitty. It is utterly vital that you pay close attention when shopping for your stationery, as your choice determines your portrait.

Moving on from the exteriors of stationery to their utility, we come across their advanced functions transforming architectural blue prints into infrastructures. If you are an architect or one in the making, and haven't paid your visit to the shop called Modern situated at New Market, it is high time you make a move! This shop attends to your needs with reasonable costs.



You can purchase model paper ranging from Tk 25 to 50, baseboard from Tk 60 to 100, holders from Tk 290 to 380, paper cutter from Tk 40 to 60 at this recognised supply store. Its collection further stretches to Uhu glue stick at Tk 50, transparency sheets at Tk 97, sheet alum paper at Tk 20, cork sheet at Tk 35 per piece, pool model at Tk 15 per piece, brown board at Tk 12, and switch board at Tk 25.

Now, all you need to do is, choose the right type of stationery for your customised personality from the designated places at compatible prices. If you are attached to exclusive stationery then high prices are sacrifices you should be willing to pay. So what are you waiting for, unleash that child within and grab your stationery now!

I have written the following feature for Environment Day special issue of the **Star**

Campus that tells the readers how polluted environment is harming us at an alarming rate.

Can You Hear the Environment's Voice!

- Imrana Yasmin



In Dhaka city, vehicular emission is the main cause of air pollution. Some environment related organisations have identified that the vehicles that run by two-stroke engines are the main source that generates comparatively a large amount of smokes and gas. Sadly, in our country, most of the vehicles like tempos, mini-trucks, and motorcycles have two-stroke engines. Moreover, huge number of old and poorly maintained buses emit smokes in the urban areas everyday. The automobiles that use diesel as fuel generate black smoke that unburned fine carbon particles. This polluted air is making the city life unbearable for the people. The roads of Dhaka

especially Manik Mia Avenue, Tejgaon, Farmgate, Motijheel, Mohakhali Gulshan and Banani have become more commercial than ever before. As a result, you cannot imagine these areas without traffic jam. Just imagine that you are sitting in a bus or a car in the traffic jam on your way home or workplace and you are inhaling the smell of petrol! There are some people who like the smell of petrol. But do you know what the smell contains and how it is threatening for your life? It contains lots of harmful particles that have short-term and long-term harmful effect on human life. Short-term effects include irritation to the eyes, nose and throat, and upper respiratory infections such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Other symptoms are headaches, nausea, and allergic reactions. Some of the long-term effects we can include chronic respiratory disease, lung cancer, heart disease, and even damage to the brain, nerves, liver, or kidneys. Continual exposure to air pollution affects the lungs of growing children and may aggravate or complicate medical conditions among the elderly.

Another major air pollution creator would be the industries that emit harmful chemicals, gas and toxics regularly. The industrial sources include brick kilns, fertiliser factories, sugar, paper, jute and textile mills, spinning mills, tanneries, garments, bread and biscuit factories, chemical and pharmaceutical industries,

cement production and processing factories, metal workshops, wooden dust from saw mills and dusts from ploughed land, and salt particles from ocean waves near the coastal lands. These industries pollute air and water as well. The harmful chemicals and industrial wastes are drained in the near by river and the pond of the industries. The farmers use this polluted water to plough their farmland to grow crops. It makes the harvested crops poisonous. Thus it is obvious that the poisonous crops are declining our health slowly and gradually.

A major duty for us today is to prevent environmental pollution. The theme of the World Environment Day is concentrating on tree plantation that can reduce air pollution. So it is the best way to celebrate World Environment Day by planting trees and encouraging people to plant trees as many as possible.

If the environment is in danger, it is obvious that you are in danger too. You live in the natural environment and you are surrounded by it. It also can be said that you are an element of the environment. So it is natural that if the environment suffers, you would be the sufferer. The environment needs your help to be healthier again and that is why it is asking for your contribution. Can you hear the environment's voice which is full of expectations? The choice is yours!

2.5. Researching for Writing Stories:

I worked for the weekend magazine, *The Star* for two weeks during the internship and I was assigned to write a profile feature about an organization called Programme for Sustainable Development (PSD) - '*Shopno Moder Manush Hobo*'. I had conducted some interviews in order to research the background and the organization's current status to write a fair and well-rounded feature about the organization.

2.5.1. Some basic rules for conducting an interview:

The purpose of interviewing is to bring out as much relevant information as possible. So, an interviewer has to be a bit tricky while asking questions to the interviewee.

Sometimes, interviewees tend to mess up the interview session by saying things that are

irrelevant. In this case, it is the interviewer's duty to ask questions in such a manner so that there is no scope for the interviewee to say inappropriate things. Apart from that an interviewer should:

- ask open ended questions instead of close ended questions to get a good amount of information and quotes
- not interrupt the interviewee by saying yes or no when the interviewee talks
- ask easy questions first to put the interviewee at ease.
- know how to handle interviewees according to their personality type. For example, an interviewer has to have a different approach for the people of the following personality types: proud, shy, harsh, typical or open-minded.
- An interviewer has to look confident during an interview.

2.5.2 Rules of conducting research:

To write a fair feature one must conduct a fair research and a fair research requires-

- interviewing an expert,
- interviewing a good sample of all the other people who are directly related to the topic,
- interviewing some people who hold a different point of view or counterpoint including the interviewer's own idea or observation about the topic.

Researching of the facts thoroughly helps to build a good background. Hence, it increases the credibility of a feature.

The following feature can be a good example of a research based feature:

Programme for Sustainable Development (PSD)

'Shopno Moder Manush Hobo'

- Imrana Yasmin

As I entered the place, I saw so many tiny pairs of sandals were lying down in front of the main gate. Then I went into the building and noticed some eager voices were engaged with drilling with their teacher. They were actually reciting the rhymes "Twinkle twinkle..." It is not a scenario of any kindergarten school where little kids get their formal education, but it is such a school where the underprivileged slum children get non-formal primary education. Such kinds of schools usually survive depending on the donations of a very few volunteer wealthy people in the society. If we can incorporate more affluent people, the socio-economic status of our country would be enriched in the near future. Hence, it is our responsibility to turn these unprivileged potentials children into our asset to make our country wealthy.



There are some wealthy people in our society who want to help these needy people but most of the time they are confused about the scopes of donation. Programme for Sustainable Development (PSD), Maghbazar, Dhaka is one of such programmes through which you can do your bit to aid the slum children to get educated. PSD is a non-governmental organization aiming at developing of the hard core poor through enhancing their skills. It's a non-formal education for hard-up children, particularly living in Pearabag slum in Maghbazar and a recent distinctive educational programme of the organization. Shivanath Sarkar, Secretary General, PSD said, "This programme is unique in the sense, it is the right arena where you can stand beside the needy children directly and it removes the mental distance between underprivileged people and wealthy people as they can share their feelings in their regular meetings. Thus it improves a special attachment among them". He also stated that at present, hundred and thirty students are being privileged to have informal primary education along with the other vocational education under 'Shopno Moder Manush Hobo' (Dreams of building a better future) programme. They are being provided necessary books and stationeries from the organization along with Tiffin on daily basis. Besides, the students are also being taught acting, singing, drawing etc to make them familiar with our culture. There is another unique facility where the children are getting mental support by a team consisting of some students of psychology Dept. to examine the student's psychological status to detect the students' problems concerning their studies including their personal problems as well.

*Under 'Shopno Moder Mamush Hobo', PSD has started a new project in 2008 named APANJAN (Dear one) where anybody can be a member of the project by donating Tk500.00 per month or Tk6000.00 per year per student as the educational expense. The donators bearing the expenses of the students are called **educational parent** of the children. You may also help the school by bearing the expenses which incur as teachers' salaries, rent, student's nutrition expense etc. PSD told that they are also planning to provide health facilities, accommodation facilities, and job placement facilities etc in the near future but they need financial aid to establish these plans.*



Presently, CEOs' of some telecommunication company, bankers, and some other well-off people are donating their bit to PSD for the betterment of these underprivileged children. Galib Ahmed Ansari, an educational parent said, "There is no such organization or company who is supporting this organization financially and I found this organization is based on some personal donations of the wealthy people. Hence, I have motivated to do something for it as I realized it is our responsibility to sustain this compassionate initial for the betterment of our country". Another educational parent, Md. Rashedul Hasan said, "There are around 150 students and

only 42 of them are getting donations from their educational parents while rest of them are suffering from financial crisis due to lack of the educational parents. Besides, each of the students is getting Tk500 per month as their educational and other expenses. I don't know how they manage to give such privileges compare to our own children with this minimal cost in the existing economical recession." He also added, "We, particularly the well-off people of our society usually spend this minimal amount of money without worrying so much. So, people should contribute there bit donating money in such sectors." He also revealed that PSD is recently worrying about accommodation problem since they have to shift the organization to another place in December due to an unavoidable reason and financial crisis made the shifting very difficult.

The parents of these students are very optimistic about their children's future. One of the guardians wants to make her child a doctor in the future. The children are also very enthusiastic in their studies. One of the children expressed, "**Ami Doktor hoibar chai, herleiga amar poirte bhala lage**" (I am studying here to become a doctor). Most of their dreams are to become a doctor, teacher, engineer in future. Sadly enough, this organization provides only primary education. As a result, each year, it turns into a great problem for the students of class V. Rebeka Akhtar, a teacher said, "most of the students are very regular in class and very much eager to study since they want there dreams to become true". PSD is such platform for them, which aims to cherish and enhance the potentiality of these deprived students with the help of those wealthy personalities in the society who are willing to help them and want to contribute in social-welfare.



Programme for Sustainable Development (PSD) deals with the dreams of these poor children and their parents under the programme 'Shopno Moder Manush Hobo.' It is not only their dream, but also a collective dream of our whole nation. So, the wealthy people in our society including NGOs, corporate organizations and government can contribute collectively to make our nation's dreams come true.

2.6. Event Coverage

Events are supposed to be covered in a different pattern from that of the other features / articles. The steps of covering events are following:

1. Once the event is happening for sure, start thinking about getting ready to make your report happen.
2. While the event is happening, take pictures of all the main parts of the event. If a band is playing, get some good close-ups.
3. During and after the event, get reaction quotes from the people in the crowd. The best way to transfer impact is to get it directly from the people who felt the impact personally.
4. Before and after the event, talk to the people responsible for planning and speaking at the event. They have valuable things to contribute since they see things from a different angle than the crowd.
5. Make notes about the number of people attending, the location, the time, the theme, as well as anything else that stands out or makes the event distinct.
6. Get a close up picture of everyone you get a quote from.
7. 3 hours to 3 days after the event, sit down and compile all the information in one page.

8. Write a paragraph length summary of the event, highlighting the most exciting and meaningful elements so that anyone can get a general overview of the scope and schedule of the day.

I have covered an event for the cultural page of *The daily Star*. The event was an art competition for children artists held at Shishu Academy.

Children have a field day at Shishu Academy art competition

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

An art competition was held at the Shishu Academy on May 31. The function was held to observe the 33rd death anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin. The event has been organised annually since 1991.

Professor Md. Nazrul Islam was the chief guest and S.M. Aminur Rahman was the special guest. Artist Syed Lutful Haque, art editor of the daily Independent; Md. Nayeem Mashreki, chairperson of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Smriti Parishad and Pranab Chakrabarty, additional secretary, delivered speeches. Syed Lutful Haque, a former student of Zainul Abedin, nostalgically recalled his talented guru and talked about the immense power of a child's imagination that can be realised through art. Pranab Chakrabarty echoed a similar view.



About 800 children, up to the age of 15, participated at the two hour long competition. The children were divided into four groups that were thematic in nature. Said Syed Lutful Haque: "A distinct theme would obstruct a child's imaginative power. The participants revealed their rich imagination through a variety of paintings on themes such as villages, village markets, environmental pollution and wrestling. Meanwhile, the chief guest and judges viewed the children's delightful art works.

Sixty participants are to be selected as winners. The winners would get the privilege to visit an art exhibition on June 3 and the prize distribution is to be held on June 4.

2.11. ‘Star Campus – Coffee World – Literary Adda’

I have also covered ‘*Star Campus – Coffee World – Literary Adda*’, which is a monthly event of the Star Campus where a professor of English literature from the universities of our country discusses a literary work with some of university students of the country.

Each month a different professor is invited. I attended three ‘*Star Campus – Coffee World – Literary Addas*’ during the internship and I have written a feature on one of the *addas*.

I have written the following feature about the session of ‘*Star Campus – Coffee World – Literary Adda*’.

Monthly

Pizza Corner - Coffee World - Star Campus

Literary Adda



Star Campus Coffee World Literary Adda

Imrana Yasmin

Photos: Ishtiaque Bin Quashem

BY now, the regular readers of Star Campus have got a fairly good idea about the 'Star Campus Coffee World Literary Adda'. Our guest speaker at this session was Fakrul Alam, professor of English Department, University of Dhaka and he started the discussion introducing his occupational background. In the beginning of our literary *adda*, he gave a brief idea about the author Amitav Ghosh, who is an Indian writer, and about his second book 'The Shadow Line' to a bunch of students from different universities in the city. He stated that he had chosen the book since its partial setting is in Dhaka.

The remarkable piece of literature explored through introducing the protagonist Tridib's character. Prof Alam explained how the unnamed narrator of the story travels around

the world through his eyes of imagination, which is taught by his uncle Tridib. Sadly, Tridib dies in a riot that took place in Dhaka during the partition of India. Basically, the book is based on the setting of riots in Dhaka and post-partition Dhaka in the 60's, in London in the 60's and in London

during the Second World War. The narrator tends to explore the truth behind the impact of the imaginary 'line', caused by the partition of India on different characters through Tridib's life as he has an unusual fascination for Tridip. Thus the book's title is 'The Shadow Line'.



The title talks about an invisible line that has divided the people of India and put its impact on the minds of the people living in India. In the story, the partition makes the 'tha-ma' (the grandmother) stick to her home, Dhaka and her family shifts to Calcutta. Conversely, Ila, Tridib's cousin stays in London to have the freedom of her own life as she thinks there is no right to lead life in her own way being a woman. The story talks about the dilemma of *rootlessness*, which is caused by the imaginary line that creates a mental border. What we need to do is cut out the border to embrace common humanity that would remove the dilemmas in our mind. In the end, the narrator dramatically falls in love with the beloved of Tridip, May Price in London after Tridip's death.

The narrator's interpretation is not limited to time and place since he keeps going back to the past and suddenly returning in the present and from Calcutta to London or Dhaka. All the students agreed that the book is very confusing to read as the narrator moves back and forth. One needs to read the book for the second time and think about the flow



To get invited to the next Literary Adda, send an email to starcampus@gmail.com mentioning your name, institution and department.

of the story. At the end of the discussion, Dr Alam expressed the view that it is a wise story with great philosophy.

The *adda* ended with the feedback and comments of the students about the book. Almost every student liked the book and agreed with the guest speaker that it is a book full of wisdom. The characters of the story are very common people. But the writer came up with the unique points of view by looking at it differently. Lastly, Dr Alam commented that the story is aimed at 'Rooted cosmopolitanism'.



Chapter 3: Translation

Working as a journalist is not limited to only feature/article writing, reporting, editing and compiling news. Translating Bengali piece of writing into English is also an important and common task. As our mother tongue is Bengali, it is necessary for journalists to have Bengali to English translation skill because a substantial amount of news comes from press releases which are commonly written in Bengali. During my internship, I translated some Bengali press releases into English for the cultural page. Basically, the press releases of different television channels come to the cultural page desk and it is precisely translated by the cultural page correspondents into English. I got the chance to translate some TV picks that increased my translation capability.

3.1. What is Translation?

Translation is a process through which an original text (source text) or verbal language changes into another text (target text) or verbal language keeping the meaning same. I have used '*interlingual translation*' in my assignments.¹

¹ Interlingual Translation: Translate one language into another language.

3.2. Types of translation:

There are two types of translations. Those are:

1. **Word-for-word translation:** A TT (target text) in which each word of the ST (source text) is replaced by its close correspondent in the TL (target language) is called word-for-word translation.
2. **Sense-for-sense translation:** A translation that modifies surface expression and keeps intact only the deeper meaning is called sense-for-sense translation.

3.3. Translation Strategies:

To translate a piece of discourse one needs to consider the following aspects of the source text.

- a) **Text type:** The pattern of the text such as poetry, prose, novel, short story etc.
- b) **Content:** The subject matter of the text and it can be comedy, romance, tragedy etc.
- c) **Context:** What culture the text is representing is considered as the context of the text.

3.4. Equivalence and resonance:

In interlingual translation, equivalence plays an important role. Sometimes it is not possible to find the exact word of one language (Bengali) in the language that it is being translated into (English). So, it is necessary to use the *equivalent* word that carries the closest meaning of the particular word. But it is always preferable to get the exact word that conveys the same meaning. Finding the *equivalence* should always be the second choice. For example, the Bengali word 'gaab' has no one word translation in English. So we have to go for the equivalence and the English translation would possibly be 'a somewhat sweet fruit'!

On the other hand, it is necessary to keep the *resonance* of the target text there. The translated piece of work has to be natural so that a native speaker of the target language finds it natural.

I have translated some TV picks for the cultural page of The Daily Star from Bengali to English where I followed the 'sense for sense method' rather than the 'word for word method' while translating it. For example:

The following TV pick is the Bengali version that usually comes from the press releases:

আজ বাংলা ভিশনে নাটক সমুদ্রজলঃ

আজ বাংলা ভিশনে প্রচারিত হবে ধারাবাহিক নাটক সমুদ্রজল। নাটকটি পরিচালনা করেছেন মোহন খান। নাটকটি প্রচারিত হবে রাত ৮টা ২৫ মিনিটে।

নাটকটিতে অভিনয় করেছে গাজী রাকায়েত, লুৎফর রহমান জর্জ, সাহেদ শরীফ খান, শাহরিয়ার নাজিম, সোহেল আরমান, বন্যা মির্জা, সজল, লিটু আনাম, চাদনী, তনিমা হামিদ, শারমিন শিলা, রিয়া সহ আরো অনেকে।

কাহিনী সূত্রঃ রুশো এবং অধোরার বিয়ে তাদের পরিবারে মেনে নেবে না বলে তারা বিয়ে করে কক্সবাজারে পালিয়ে যায়। সবকিছু ঠিকই চলছিল কিন্তু তারা বিপদে পড়লো, যখন তাদের হাতের সব টাকা পয়সা ফুরিয়ে যায়। রুশো টাকা যোগাড় করার জন্য ঢাকায় ফেরার কথা ভাবলো। সে টাকা নিয়ে আবার কক্সবাজারে অধোরার কাছে ফিরে আসবে বলে আশ্বাস দেয়। কিন্তু পথিমধ্যে রুশো একটি ভয়াবহ সড়ক দুর্ঘটনায় আহত হয়ে অ্যামনেশিয়ায় আক্রান্ত হয়। ফলে, সে তার কক্সবাজারে ফেলে আসা পত্নী সহ আরো অনেক কিছুই ভুলে যায়।

Here is the English version which is translated from the above press release –

Published On: 2009-06-04

Arts & Entertainment

Drama serial Shomudrojol on Banglavision tonight

Cultural Correspondent

Banglavision will air the drama serial "Shomudrojol" by Mohon Khan tonight at 8:25 pm.

The plot of the serial follows a newly married couple, Rusho and Adhora. Their families never accepted their relationship. The two elope and get married. The newly-weds go to Cox's Bazar for their honeymoon. Everything was going fine until they run out of cash. Rusho decides to go to Dhaka to get money. He leaves Adhora in Cox's Bazar, promising her that he would return soon. On his way to Dhaka, Rusho has a terrible accident, which causes amnesia. He forgets everything including his wife who is anxiously awaiting his return in Cox's Bazar.



A scene from the serial.

The cast includes Gazi Rakayet, Lutfar Rahman George, Shahed Sharif Khan, Shahriar Nazim Joy, Sohel Arman, Banya Mirza, Shojol, Litu Anam, Chandni, Tonima Hamid, Sharmin Shila, Riya and many others.

Chapter 4: Editing

My editing capability got an immense exposure while working for The **Star Campus** as an intern. The **Star Campus** basically focuses on the news concerning various university students' and teachers' activities. It deals with different types of stories that attract mainly the young generation and the teachers (sports, drug addiction, fashion, music, travels abroad education standards and politics to a limited extent etc). Basically, it tries to stick to its slogan, which is, "*Linking young minds together*".

There is a separate folder in the server of *The Daily Star* named *Final* where the features and materials are kept for the next issue. The articles are edited from this folder. The fact that the majority of the writers who write for the *Star Campus* are students who frequently make grammatical errors has given me the opportunity to get a lot of practice when it comes to correcting errors. And this has enhanced my editing skill. Editing a huge amount of material for the *Star Campus* enabled me to get a lot of practice in editing. Here, I got the opportunity to compare between good work and bad work. Thus, my sense of scanning news in terms of news value developed to a great expert.

In the case of the *Star Campus*, it welcomes the young writers' upcoming ideas and work. So, naturally those features would be full of mistakes because of low quality English learning in the so called English classes of the educational institutes. Hence, it is not easy for the editor to check a huge amount of mistakes before the supplement comes out. Thus, the sub-editors come to sort out the common mistakes.

4.1. Who are the subeditors?

Sub-editors or copyeditors are a group of people who take care of the appropriateness of a piece of work for publishing it in the main issue. Sub-editors correct all kind of mistakes in a feature/article. This includes grammatical mistakes, structural errors, problematic and vague content etc. They revise a piece of work over and over again to make sure that there are no mistakes in it. There are two categories of sub-editors. They are the planners and plungers. Planners are better editors in the sense that they go through the article first and then plan the structure of it. Finally, they edit the work keeping in mind the appropriate structure. On the other hand, plungers are sub-editors who just edit the grammatical mistakes but keep the original structure in which the writer wrote the article the same.

4.2. What is editing?

Editing is correcting the errors in a raw piece of writing while keeping in mind the common structure of news story writing, which is the *inverted pyramid* structure. It is very important to maintain Rudyard Kipling's six questions in the story, which are: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How (5 Ws and H) along with the *inverted pyramid* structure. Kipling's six questions is a helpful checklist that works as a safeguard against the holes of the stories.

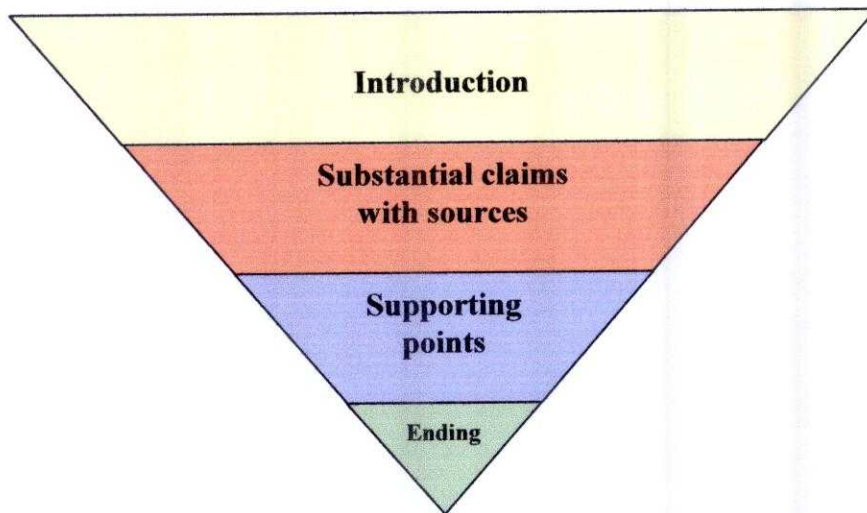


Figure: Inverted Pyramid

The introduction of a story should reflect the gist of the news story in a short and crispy way to attract the reader. Introduction works as the first impression of a news story. If it fails to catch the readers' attention, it will lose its appeal that would cause the reporter to have written the story vain. The second part of the story should focus on using substantial claims with sources. If this is ignored in the news story, it will no longer be a credible story. Next, a news story should have plenty of supporting details to convince the readers to believe in the report. Finally, it should be ended by rounding up the gist of the story for the readers' satisfaction. Basically, inverted pyramid indicates putting the most important fact in the beginning and the least important fact at the end of the story. This structure helps the editor to cut off some portion of a news story from the end if there is scarcity of space in the newspaper.

4.3. Do's and don'ts while writing news stories:

There are some facts that sub-editors should maintain while editing the copies. They are:

- The news stories should not be vague. One should use the precise information to avoid vagueness of a copy.
- Always negotiate with the writer while changing a major part of a story to keep the meaning same.
- Sub-editor has to be flexible toward the work of a writer.
- Sloppiness should be strictly avoided.
- Always double check the designation of a person and the spelling of the names.
- Has to very careful about the facts and figures.
- Give the same importance to both small and large copies.

4.4. Editing Headlines

Editing headlines is one of the major facets of editing a piece of work for newspapers since it works as the eye catcher for a specific story. So, a headline should be wittily chosen while writing or editing a headline for a story. To write a good headline the following tips can be applied.

- Use the short simple declarative sentences.
- Use familiar words.
- Write concisely.
- Use active verbs.
- Keep modifiers near the things they modify.

- Use specific rather than generalized language.
- Use concrete words rather than abstracts.
- Put statements in the positive form, not the negative.

4.5. Common Spelling and Grammar Mistakes

There are some grammatical mistakes that I encountered while working as an intern at the **Star Campus**. These mistakes have been commonly occurring for a long time.

Grammar and usage:

- Affect / Effect.
- Among / Between.
- Bad / Badly.
- Desert / Dessert.
- Lose / Loose.
- Who's / Whose.

Commonly misspelled words:

Correct - Incorrect

- Adviser - Advisor
- Judgment - Judgement
- Accommodate - Accomodate
- Ph.D. - PHD
- Usable - Useable

Basically, editing is a kind of finishing touch for an almost done feature or news story. So, it is the copyeditor's duty to put the raw features in a proper pattern and a proper structural shape that would be appropriate for the final printing in the newspaper.

Chapter 5: Others

5.1. Compiling News

One of the most important ways of obtaining foreign news is surfing the internet. Often, it becomes quite impossible to send reporters to every corner of the globe to accumulate current information. So it is the finest means of collecting information within a minute, ignoring wastage of time and money. Apparently, it sounds easy to compile a feature or an article using the internet since the information is already given there, but it is really not that easy. The following problems are more likely to occur while compiling news from the web.

1. Every so often it is very difficult to sort out specific information about specific topics since the internet is full of important and unimportant information. It seems very messy and disorganized.
2. It is also important to ensure that the spelling, grammar, punctuation and overall consistency are correct while compiling a feature from the internet.
3. Sometimes selecting news from the huge range of information in the internet becomes difficult. The news we get in the internet is much more related to the other countries or other cultures. It's necessary to extract such news that is attractive or related to the readers of our country.

I have compiled the following feature on Oscar winning music composer A. R. Rahman for the cultural page of *The Daily Star*.

AR Rahman's 'Special Album' for Michael Jackson

In a matter of few months, AR Rahman has lost two people he looked up to, sound engineer H Sridhar and Michael Jackson. Sound engineer H Sridhar passed away due to cardiac arrest and the cause of MJ's death is still a mystery.

Consequently, AR Rahman has decided to put up together a special album as a mark of respect to MJ. Of late, AR Rahman has been making several trips to the US because of his secret dream project is ready to take off. Artistes from all across the globe will contribute to this album. It is believed that the album will have a few recreated songs of MJ, along with Rahman's original compositions.

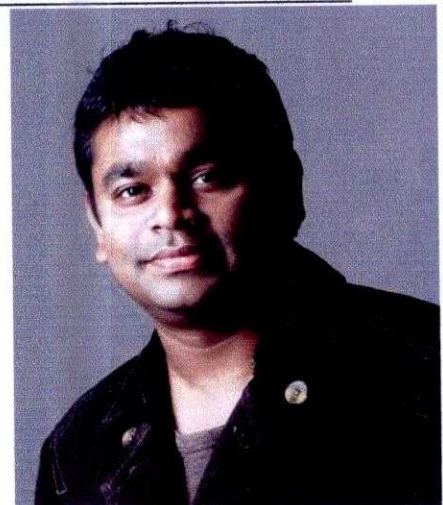
The king of pop's untimely and mysterious death unsettled Rahman. A source said, "The two deaths one after the another made Rahman realise the uncertainty of life. These tragedies have made him more spiritual."

Rahman had earlier said, "Artistes and their art lives for ever. My late sound engineer Sridhar had brought me a video of premiere of Michael's "Remember the time" when I was recording the track "Kadal rojav" for my first movie "Roja." That afternoon, that inspired all of us. Now, there is no Sridhar and no Jackson anymore."

Ar was looking forward to working with MJ whom he had met during the Oscar Award in Los Angeles earlier this year. Talking about his meeting with the pop star, AR Rahman had said, "MJ was concerned about contemporary developmental issues such as global warming, wars and their consequences. He asked me to compose a unity anthem on the lines of we are the World for him. I nodded in awe."

When asked about the album, Rahman, who is going LA this week, said cautiously, "It's too early to talk about it. Talking about it right now may jeopardise things."

Source: Internet



5.2. Job Ads

Job ads are a very important section for both readers and newspapers. Even in this era of electronic media, when there are different job sites in the internet (e.g.

www.bdjobs.com, www.jobsal.com etc),

most people look in the newspapers when they are seeking jobs. On the other hand, newspapers get a substantial amount of revenue by publishing these advertisements about job opportunities. Most of the time, it is easy to compose the job advertisement



and sometimes it is not necessary to compose these ads since the organizations who give the advertisement compose these ads on their own. But my experience is different. I worked for the *Star Campus*'s new section named JOBS. This page is generally complied with such job advertisements that are basically suitable for the fresh graduates since these jobs require less experience in the respective fields. To compile the page I had to gather information and advertisements of job opportunities from various newspapers and the job sites of our country like www.bdjobs.com and www.jobsal.com. It took me approximately three hours to gather all the information from the different sources and to compile it in the prescribed format of this section.

5.3. Compiling Comics

As supplementary magazines' target audience covers all sorts of people, it keeps a separate section for comic relief of the readers. The jokes published in the *Star Campus* are mainly taken from internet. To compile this page, I browsed the internet to search for the unique and funniest jokes. Then I compiled and edited those jokes. Searching for jokes in the internet is not that easy since you can get thousands of silly jokes in the internet and most of them will never make you laugh out loud! Moreover, most of the jokes consist of colloquial language with informal spelling that we generally use while chatting on different messengers like msn, yahoo etc. So it is a bit annoying to fix the colloquial language and spelling of those jokes found in the internet.

5.4. Cover Page Making

Generally, the cover page and cover stories of the *Star Campus* are decided on Tuesdays as the deadline is on Thursdays. It is done as group work by the team members. The team members negotiate a great deal to select the most appropriate title and cover story. Cover Stories are usually long in length and the cover photo is the most appealing photo selected from the stocked photos of the cover story.

5.5. Graphics/Layout

The graphics section is very interesting and creative among the other sections of the newspaper because one can make the layout using one's creative imagination. There is a

software named Carol Draw for designing the layout. Generally, the pages of all the supplements of the newspaper are prepared from the beginning since there is a specific layout for each supplement of the newspaper. Then, just before the publishing day or the deadline, the news materials are set in the layout. The finishing touch is usually done on the layout pages. I have also learnt how they readjust the photos and the articles in the limited space on the final page. In the body of the articles, *Utopian* font type is used and the size is 9.5. The font type *HelveticaWeueCondensec* is used in the headlines of the articles where the font size is between 30 and 35. The raw pictures and the texts are edited using 'Edit Text Box'.

5.6. Finishing Touch and Page Set Up of Weeklies:

At first, the documents are taken from the Microsoft Word to the Carol Draw software. Then the finishing touch is given in Carol Draw pages. There are separate folders for each of the supplements or sections of the newspaper where the necessary feature, article, news and pictures are kept according to the date. The graphic designer takes those materials and puts them on the pages of Carol draw software. The graphic designer edits the pictures using *Adobe Photoshop* software first and then sets those pictures on the final page. Afterward, a sample printout of the final copy is taken out for the last minute correction of typing mistakes (typos). Finally, one copy of it is sent to the top floor computer to prevent other pages from covering the same stories and another is sent to the people who design the online edition of *The Daily Star*. Lastly, the final pasting is completed in the final workshop of the newspaper.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This report is focused on feature writing, translating, editing and other aspects of media journalism. In these chapters of my report I have explained the practical experience of my internship in one of the leading English dailies of our country that was surely a great achievement of my undergraduate career. This internship made me very enthusiastic about print media journalism. The most interesting thing is that during the internship I met many people while attending the different seminars, the art competition and interviewing a celebrity and various people in order to write the articles and features. This exposure to various people triggered my interpersonal skill. It helped me to mingle with various people around me that made to relate my bookish knowledge to the real life context. Apart from that, it felt so great, to see my contribution in the newspaper. It's like, yes, I have done something for the whole nation, in the sense that the newspapers circulate across the country and my contribution reach the masses.

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