



Exploring the Concept of Expressivity as Hallmark of Modernistic Newscasting in Nigerian Broadcast Stations

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Abstract

Innovativeness manifests nowadays in various art forms including music, dance, writing as well as public speaking. Just as broadcast programme presentation cannot be left in the lurch, news presentation calls for deployment of emerging strategies that connect with the inclinations of the percipient news audience to sustain its relevance to society. The objective of this work is to highlight the need for the news presenter to be in tune with trends that make his delivery worthwhile to a more enlightened information-society audience. It advocates a shift from the erstwhile deadpan objective stance of the news presenter to a relatively evocative style to be resultful, according to changing audience characteristics. The work relied on findings from a survey of secondary sources to spotlight the means of attaining expressivity which it recommends as the new reality in newscasting.

Key words: Expressivity, Newscasting, Prosody, Broadcasting, Voice.

The view that news is the centerpiece of all journalism efforts is a given. News production and dissemination underpins the essence of journalism to society; hence it is pivotal to journalism as an axle is to the workings of the automobile engine. To a large extent every other outcome of journalism is adjunctive or secondary to the news production endeavours of a journalist. Put succinctly, news is the report journalists make of recent happenings deemed significant to sections of society. It is always expected because in information societies, people can only orient themselves with the dynamics of life based on the news content made available to them. News is identified with mass communication media which traditionally transmits it. The essence of news to society in turn explains the centrality of the mass communication media in our daily lives and to this end, they are consentingly called the news media.

The gamut of mass communication media are decoupled into the print and electronic categories in consonance with the technology by means of which the news is served and the technology involved equally determines the mode of presentation. The electronic/broadcast media rely on electronic equipment for the transmission of radio and television signals to a mass audience and the broadcast news is the end-product of painstaking

effort of a number of studio hands scripted for presentation to the audience. The scripting takes into account the limitations of the medium (Radio or television) and audience expectations to be effective. Consequently the ability to accurately marshal all relevant facts to an issue for presentation within the briefest possible time while making for credibility is a fundamental consideration. The technicalities involved to get it right are numerous because news is determined by a set of values which have to be reflected in the script given that if the listener or viewers' curiosity is not salved, he can tune out or continue with difficulty for want of something to do. Such a situation tells adversely on the rating of the station.

In the print media the editor often enjoins the reporter to "write" it, not to tell him about the issue. Conversely, the broadcast news editor asks his reporter/news writer to "tell" him the story and not write it. While the print media editor expects his reporter to make his write up formal, the broadcast news editor expects his reporter to whittle down the formalities and make it conversational to his audience. This antithetical positions make it obvious that there is no fit-for-all writing style for media practice. While the print media adopt a relatively formal language with adherence to pertinent grammatical patterns and adequate

punctuation, the broadcast news script is conversational with sound bites and actualities interspersing the narrative, making up for the gesticulations that add meaning to the word-of-mouth in a conversation.

The two major factors that determine the acceptability of the broadcast news are scripting and presentation or delivery. The news reader must master his form of art by deploying deft communication skills to convey his message and that is the reason news presentation in the strictly formal and objective style is hardly emphasized today. The news for both television and radio is artfully scripted for the news reader's presentation in a verbal language but there are necessary non-verbal cues to be observed to make whole, the message received by the audience. This manifests in the way the presenter speaks and his body language that enhance credibility of the news in audience estimation given that the right language, right presentation in the right medium, makes for credibility of news.

The overarching role of the news reader cannot be overemphasized in that his ability or inability to deploy requisite presentational forms and strategies in news reading has capacity to reinforce or undermine the news, not minding the expertise deployed by the script writer. Therefore, it is appropriate to hold that the news reader is largely responsible for the aptness of the news to the masses for orientation with the dynamics of the information-society.

Objectivity is a pristine principle in news gathering and presentation. In other words, keeping our emotions in check when dealing with what eventually becomes news is necessary. The process of news production is expected to be conventionally correct and virtually strait jacket. The news presenter is also expected to follow through this stance in the way he reads the news while in more entertaining programmes a warmer, sociable and more relaxed procedure is adopted altogether. However, despite convention, the two approaches have become fused to the extent that news is infused with shades of the newsman's professional input and the news reader or presenter has become less

ceremonial and more laid-back. This development came on the wake of new technology in the newsroom that attracted conformable lifestyles or vice versa. Accordingly, the newsreader has become expressive and relies on a range of non-verbal resources to adequately drive home the message in the news (Montgomery, 2007).

Voice

Voice is the sound generated by the vocal chords in the larynx or voice box situated in the throat. To qualify as voice, such sounds released from the mouth must be organized and meaningful to aid human communication. In the context of this study, voice represents the gamut of sounds humans voluntarily release from their mouths as they talk, sing, exclaim, etc. to communicate with others. In other words involuntarily produced sounds devoid of meaning are not considered. Voice is the main communication resource of humans both at the interpersonal level and communication directed at the mass of people using mass media. It is to the broadcaster as the human hands are to the pianist (Utterback, 2000). Voice is the foundation of broadcasting which almost entirely appeal to the human auditory faculty. It is the totality of radio broadcasting and the mainstay of television broadcasting.

In radio, voice transmits not just the explicit text but also the meaning and affective dimensions of communication. It attracts attention to the message and enhances assimilation such that audience understanding of news depends on correct and expressive use of voice (Rodero, 2013). Just as changes in voice remarkably influences perception in human communication, the perception of the message in the news is presented alongside changes in the news reader's voice though the individual news consumer may not be aware of the subtleties involved (Romero & Romero, 2006).

Controlling the voice for effectiveness in broadcasting is achieved through the use of prosodic features. They are regarded as the main tool for transmission of explicit content of a text, provide referential framework and convey the sense of the text as well as its affective dimension. Voice affects

the impression forming process of the listener (Rodero, 2013). This position plays up its significance to broadcasting or news presentation which could be realized through appropriate application of pertinent prosodic features to catch audience attention, sustain interest and aid comprehensive. It also helps to convey the emotions pertinent to various news items in the bulletin and transmit credibility of the message/news to the audience.

Prosody

Prosody connects with the techniques and conventions identified with poetry. It represents the artful use of elements such as rhyme, meter, stress and other associated characteristics of poetry to make sense. It is, by and large, the study of poetic structure but in ordinary writing or prose, prosody relates to the elements of speech that are not individual phonetic segments such as vowels and consonants but properties of syllables and larger units of speech; hence, features of prosody are elements of language not encoded by grammar or choice of vocabulary (Scannel, 2000). It is the rhythmic and intonational aspects of language in oral communication (Schuaneflugel, Khun & Strahl, 2004). It has to do with the expressive function of language in the sense of conveying thoughts and feelings. Thus prosody is regarded as a fancy word for expressivity in speech. It is the way of speaking composed of intonation, accent, and speech rate (Rodero, 2014) which provides context, gives meaning to words and keeps listeners engaged. Prosody also manifests, among other things, in the laying of pertinent emphasis on words, using voice pitch and modulations and taking appropriate pauses (Schwaneflugel et al., 2004).

Perception and proper comprehension of radio news draws largely from the expressiveness of the news presenter (Rodero, 2014) thus emphasizing the relevance of application of prosodic elements by the news presenter to make his presentation tick. This accentuates the fact that knowing what to say is as important as how it is said in a given context. Therefore, prosodic news reading among other factors pays attention to distinctive sound patterns

much like in a conversation or speech giving consideration to appropriate phrasing, phrase structure, stress, and pause that make for fluency and expressiveness. The prosodic features are numerous but a few will suffice.

Prosodic Elements in Newscasting (vocal elements)

Pitch

It refers to the height or elevation of the voice while speaking, singing, etc. It is determined by the number of times per second the human vocal cords vibrate. More vibrations of these cords in the larynx realize a high pitch and vice versa. In music, it is the level of sound in musical scale, according to its frequency. Intrinsically, pitch refers to the rise and fall of the human voice while speaking. It is realized through manipulation of volume of the voice and is otherwise called inflection and closely related to the term intonation.

Pitch or inflection describes the rise and fall or variations in the height of a speaker's voice. However, inflection could also mean the process of modifying a word to express different grammatical categories such as tense, person, gender, etc. in speech. Pitch as noted earlier could either be high or low in the use of voice. Note that a sound is not high or low on its own. It has a lower or higher frequency which the ear translates into pitch. Its essence to news presentation is in its communicative value given that the low pitch is identified with naturalness, safety, competence, warmth, credibility, comprehensibility and is valued as more powerful. The high pitch, on the other hand, suggests nervousness, lacking in authority, devoid of credibility, incompetence, and sometimes suggests haste (Rodero, 2001). In programme presentation, both high and low pitches find their places depending on the underlying message but the low pitch is recommended for the reading of unaffected news content.

Intonation

Intonation refers to the use of pitch to influence meaning at the sentence level. It is the distinctive sound quality of voice that conveys the right attitude

or emotion. Intonation represents the rise and fall of pitch contrived to perfect the collective meaning of words in a sentence (Delvin, 2020). That is why when the intonation fails to rise while asking a question, the speaker could be easily misunderstood because the falling intonation is considered appropriate for sentences or statements that are neither commands, exclamation nor a question. Artful use of intonation realizes a tuneful presentation that sustains interest.

Tone

This is one voice property that is not often emphasized. It is in most cases subsumed in the concept of intonation. That is the reason people identify statements with cheerful, serious, morbid, etc. tones. The subtle difference between tone and intonation is that tone uses pitch at every single word (Delvin, 2020) and refers to the emotions and attitude a speaker puts behind each word (Lynch, 2004). Tone can also have a pervading presence in an entire composition just as every news item in the bulletin is expected to be presented with a befitting tone. Thus tone manifests in a news newsreader's voice according to the peculiarities of the situation reported. Again, a particular event, an unusual event or a breaking news story has to be read with the requisite tone that would rouse the appropriate emotions in the listener.

Stress

This is the emphasis we place on some syllables in a word or words in a sentence. It is the adjustment we make in length, loudness and pitch of a syllable in a word or words in a sentence (Roach, 2022). In word stress, the syllable stressed is louder because it is accorded pitch prominence to make it more noticeable to the auditory faculty. Relatedly, the way a news reader highlights certain words in a sentence makes for what is called sentence stress. It is a way of spotlighting the operative words in the sentence that bear its essence. In an everyday sentence, stress is laid on the content words (main verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs) in order that the meaning or message conveyed is not lost to the listener. Stress by

and large is the act of attracting distinct pitch levels to a syllable or word to make it stand out from its context for the realization of desired meaning (Nordquest, 2013). Stress comes in two levels, the stressed and unstressed or weakly stressed words. While content words deserve to be stressed, function words such as auxiliary verbs, pronouns and prepositions are unstressed or weakly stressed.

Stress does not always mean speaking words loudly at the stressed point. It sometimes relates to the emphasis accorded some elements of the news. For instance, to stress a quotation in the news, a pause could be observed before and after it, to give it the needed emphasis and make it stand out in the news (O'reilly, nd.). The pause at both ends of the quote enables the listener to identify that portion of the sentence that is stressed, emphasized or quoted.

Accent

Accent is the way of speaking typical of a particular group of people and especially of natives or residents of a region (*Miriam Webster Dictionary*). Accent refers to significant tone or sound or identifiable style of pronunciation or speaking often varying regionally, nationally or according to different locales (Nordquest, 2018).

News reports are delivered in standard British English that could be easily understood by the listener. This however pertains to major news bulletins of radio or television. The news reader delivers with the RP British accent (Received Pronunciation). Other types of news such as “news for Kontry people” do not follow the formal rules of British accent. They are often read using the accent prevalent in the target audience to make for understandability. Accent connects with how different words are pronounced among different peoples to make sense in their interaction not minding the formal pronunciation of words and intonation received from the original users of the language. Notwithstanding his aptitude to pander to different accents according to type of programme, the news reporter is obligated to use the British accent during the main news bulletin.

Pronunciation

This refers to the way words are sounded by a newsreader in accordance with the rules of phonology in the language in which the script is written. Pronunciation focuses on individual words in speech. It deals with how a group of letters in the word or a syllable should sound and which syllable in the word should bear the stress. Inattention to the intricacies in British word pronunciation patterns can mar a news presentation because a mispronounced word or a word that is not accorded the standard of correctness in pronunciation is distracting to meaning construction by the listener. Lucid pronunciation spells easy interpretation and understanding of message.

The news reader should be conversant with the phonetic spelling of words and relevant phonological patterns that aid the realization of the pertinent sound to convey appropriate meaning. Errors of pronunciation are incompatible with professional news reading. Pronunciation should bear naturalness and clarity without exaggerations that make the newsreader sound pompous and pedantic. When listeners find improprieties in pronunciation they see the presenter as a bad broadcaster (Rodero, 2001). Pronunciation of proper nouns must be accurate. A mispronounced name upsets the bearer and misleads the listener especially when the error in pronunciation matches an entirely different name. Geographical names, titles, acronyms, etc. have to be properly pronounced. Pronunciation is central to a rewarding career in newscasting.

Non-Vocal Elements in News Reading

Non-verbal features in news presentation are related to the transmission of message through facial features, body language, gestures, etc. that form part of semantic speech content. They belong to the realm of nonverbal communication that contributes to expressiveness. In radio news reading not so much of the nonverbal/non-vocal elements in communication apply because radio news is audio-based and many of these non-vocal cues appeal to the news consumer's vision only. However a few of these features apply to television news reading.

Eye Contact

This applies only to television newscasting. While presenting the news, the news reader is expected to make occasional glimpses at the viewer at home. He achieves this by taking the TV camera lens for his viewer with whom he is having a conversation. Audience members feel interested in a news presenter who exudes friendliness and eye contact is key to its actualization. It unites the news reader and audience members and enhances the conversableness required in broadcast news presentation given that the news consumer is afforded the impression of being addressed actually. It sustains interest and attention. Absence of eye contact suggests timidity, incompetence, unfriendliness, aloofness, etc.

Facial Expression

The human face communicates mood and emotions. Emotions well up in the face according to what you hear or see. The news presenter is human and whatever he reads impacts his mindset however objective he wants his stance to be. He has to, in his demeanour, emit the right emotion roused by a particular news content. He cannot be utterly expressionless. His face is watched and therefore his humanity is transmitted to his viewers in the way his facial expressions align with the import of a particular news item. The face of the presenter must support the text and transmit the news reader's commitment as well as validate the credibility of the message. However, such facial expressions must be spontaneous, not contrived though a smile could be contrived to sustain his appealing quality under normal circumstances.

Pause

A pause is a temporary stop in speech or an interval of silence in the course of a speech that has communicative effect. It is represented by the punctuation mark "comma" in prose and 'caesura' in poetry. The news reader must observe pause where a comma is inserted in the news script. It is a veritable aid to clear reading. Apart from pauses signaled by commas in a sentence to convey appropriate meaning, a pause in news presentation

indicates the end of a unit of information and prepares the listener for another news item. That is about the most important application of pause in news reading. Other uses of the pause include:

1. Dividing the script into sense groups.
2. Providing time for an important phrase to sink in the listener's mind.
3. Allowing the relevant change in intonation between one news item and the other that follows.
4. Indicating the commencement and close of a quotation.
5. Giving the news reader opportunity to catch his breath (Boyd, 2001). The pause is also used to emphasize the significance of an intriguing point in the news. Knowing when to pause and how long it should be is vital to news reading.

Articulation

Articulation refers to the processes involved in the production of sound in communication. It represents the interactions among the phonetic organs relevant to the production of different sound units in communication/news presentation. Good articulation begets accurate pronunciation of words given that vowels and consonants are delivered irreproachably in the news. In fact articulation and pronunciation are intertwined with the former being the footing for the latter.

Variation

In this study variation is related to changes in voice quality or pitch during news presentation. It is the quality of voice that keeps monotony or sameness in check. It is not so related to comprehension as to the attraction and sustenance of attention and interest. Nonetheless, the lack of variation that breeds monotony in intonation can cause loss of attention, and comprehension ultimately. Variation in news presentation strengthens voice quality and ensures greater attention (Bolinger, 1989). Turns and slides in pitch and intonation breath energy and aliveness to the news and aid impressiveness in enunciation. The lack of variation in news presentation makes the exercise monotonous, drab and boring.

Reading Pace

Getting the right reading pace makes presentation comfortable to the news reader and clear to the listener. However, it must be in tandem with the house style of the station and that could be between 140 and 220 words per minute (wmp) or 180 wpm which is a natural and pleasing pace yet 150 wpm could be appropriate for TV which can run a little slower (Boyd, 2001). Reading rate slightly differs between radio and television. It could be slower in television than radio because the radio news presenter does not have visual accompaniment to his audio content. A pedestrian reading rate registers a tiresome impact on the listener. The news presenter must find the right reading rate that enables the listener keep pace with him. Besides, different reading rate, an emotion-laden news item has to be read with a pace reflective of the melancholic state of those in the news. An entertainment or sports news is usually vivacious and attracts a pace or rate that can convey the vivacity. Getting the reading rate aright is key to impactful presentation (Vlad, 2018).

The news reader should be mindful of the number of words per second, minutes per news item and the overall running time of the news bulletin to be able to get the news presented within available time. Practice and compliance with established house style could be helpful. The news presenter should note that if the pace is too slow, he will sound agonizingly dragging to the audience. Conversely, if he is too fast his articulation suffers and pronunciation becomes horrible in that vowels and consonants cannot be roundly pronounced.

Breathing

Skillful breath control or good breathing enhances the timbre of the voice and brings out its richness. Good breathing rate is largely a function of appropriate sitting position to allow the lungs and diaphragm to function optimally. An upright sitting position is recommended. The body could be arched forward a bit. Given that air is to the newsreader as oil is to the engine, anything that gets the newsreader out of breath interferes with the fluency of the presentation. Thus the news reader is expected to

take a deep breath at the start of the bulletin, top up at full stops and paragraphs and take shallow breaths at commas (Boyd, 2001). Get at least a two to three minutes rest before takeoff and breathe through the mouth instead of the nostrils because the former permits faster recovery than the latter.

News casting

News casting refers to the transmission of the news and other information through broadcast media. It is the centerpiece of broadcast journalism and the only means by which professional information purveyors directly address their audience members on the outcomes of their watchdogging efforts in society. The journalist that casts or presents the news is known as newscaster or new reader in the UK while he is seen as an announcer, news anchor or presenter in the US. These epithets generally represent all on-air personalities in a broadcast station and are interchangeably used to address them including the news reader because of some duties they equally perform in the station other than actual news reading.

Despite the hard work of reporters, producers, etc. in the news team and notwithstanding the talents of other programme presenters, a broadcast station's fortunes could stand or fall on the newscasters' daily handling of the news. Notably, presentation styles differ from programme to programme hence there is a lot of flexibility and informality in the presentation of entertainment, edutainment and infotainment programmes that do not follow the strictly formal processes of news presentation. However, if it is the lot of any programme presenter to present the news, he adopts a more formal tone and demeanor in keeping with the weightier materials of the news bulletin (Boyd, 2002).

The broadcast news is always scripted for the presenter yet a piece of unscripted and unrehearsed addition to the news could be taken by the presenter. This can be an interview, announcement, etc. The language is both verbal and non-verbal. It is fundamental to impactful news presenting and so is the way the presenter uses it both in radio and TV. The presenter's use of language affects news content

and message. Put differently, notwithstanding the vocal quality, the style of presentation of the newscaster affects the listener or viewers sometimes more than the language itself (O'reilly nd.). That explains why expressiveness in news casting is fast becoming an asset though it is at cross-purposes with the concept of objectivity or neutrality in news presentation (Pantiff, 2010).

Expressivity is part of the news presenter's role which manifests in non-verbal resources such as eyebrow flashes, smiles, head movement, prosody, etc. that always accompany verbal content to create a relationship between the news caster and the audience (Han & Zhu, 2018). Conventionally, expressiveness is antithetical to the concept of objectivity but existing realities in the realm of news reportage and the near impracticability of the objectivity principle have made the two stances close ranks to the extent that news is becoming more personal and the news reader more approachable (Boyd, 2001). This situation relates to the fact that bias cannot be completely ruled out of human interactions though has to be contained because at the professional level it is the duty of the newscaster and other hands to free themselves from bias or prejudice as is humanly possible in output.

Again it is evident that effective communications takes place between communicators only when the modes applied are pertinent to the receiver's disposition. Just as people prefer different channels of communication for any resultful interaction, the broadcast news audience prefer to receive information in different ways and the wooden news presenter that is not able to adopt these modes can only get his audience disoriented rather than informed. The newscaster should therefore be aware that some cannot appreciate the news unless the visuals are deployed. Some are content with just the audio signals while others cannot do without the non-verbal facial and physical clues. The best presenters use a combination of visual, verbal, musical and facial/physical clues (Rodero, 2001) to make his presentation functional. In so doing some of his efforts come short of the conditions for objectivity yet have of late become tolerable, especially when objectivity in journalism

is no longer seen in the light of its pristine purports. This explains why in society today the infotainment-oriented mostly privately owned broadcast stations are less formal and objective in programming and presentation than the publicly owned ones, though even the latter can only be as objective as they could possibly be.

Again, broadcast news presentation is conventionally conversational and conversableness entails display of discourse features such as emotions through some physical and physiognomic clues that reflect the import of the message uttered and relate adequately with message receivers (Johnson, 2009). Television can simulate face-to-face communication and spontaneity given that the news caster's address to the camera can be seen as a direct interaction with the viewers and he is heard at the moment of articulation (Allen, 1992). However, the radio news presenter has a lot more to do as he is expected to bond with his listener and convey the right emotion that communicates appropriate meaning with just his voice. His ability to use correct pitch, stress intonation/tone reading pace, etc. is of essence as they aid meaning deconstruction and adequate comprehension of message invariably.

It should be noted that conversableness does not connote casualness or outright informality that begets a chatty or cozy presentation which has a distractive effect in real news presentation. Expressiveness allows the presenter/newscaster to convey confidence and reassurance yet he is constrained from being overly personal so that accuracy and impartiality are accorded prominence in the presentation (Montgomery, 2007) which has to be devoid of elements of personal convictions about news content. Yet, the detachment should not be taken too far because being human, the newscaster's humanity should show through change of tone, pitch, demeanour, etc. in accordance with the emotion roused by the content of a particular news item.

This analysis is not an attempt to throw overboard the concept of objectivity but to emphasise Boyd's (2001) position that the newscaster is no longer as detached from his audience as of old but connects with it in more ways

than he had in the past.

The Newscaster

The news presenter is central to the news programme. He is responsible for the overall success of the news package in terms of audience interest arousal and sustainability as well as ensuring that language is neither misheard nor misunderstood. He also ensures that message or meaning transmitted equals meaning received. The news audience looks beyond the spoken word to pictures and the story and the style of presentation encompassing both vocal and non-vocal aspects of presentation that connects with the auditory as well as visual faculties of the news consumer. The news reader makes a narrational presentation with evidential complements gleaned from the field to authenticate the information. The narration is the word spoken by the news reader working on a script prepared by the news team. The news reader on air could be likened to a songstress who is expected to adequately interpret her song when she is on stage to present it. He must be versed in the vocal and non-vocal accompaniments of the narration to aid audience comprehension of the information. Evidential elements that add credence to his narration include sound bites actualities and graphics.

Sound bites call attention to the non-vocal aspects of the story and are used so the listener can hear or see the emotional reactions to the statement made which the ordinary broadcast language may fail to convey (O'Reilly, nd). Actualities replay the scene of an incident on screen and offers the viewer the opportunity to observe what happened while the graphics illustrate what is heard in the narration. They are affordances the newsreader can count on to make his presentation worthwhile. Sound bites are the equivalence of quotes in the newspapers the news writer uses to get his work properly attributed. Like the print news writer, the radio or television news credibility hangs or falls on the newsreader's narration. He is by and large responsible for the success or otherwise of the broadcast news operations. Among other needfuls, the newscaster's capacity to determine and emit perspective material

to respective news items is key to sustaining patronage of the cotemporary broadcast news audience, easily put off by affectless presentations.

Attributes of the Newscaster

The newscaster has to be talented and charismatic. He has to be flexible in his presentation, in other words allowing a bit of informality to lighten up the hitherto strictly formal process (Boyd, 2001). People look out for elements of behevability and thus trustworthiness in the news. These are factors that follow a presentation that exudes authority. Authority derives from the newsreader's personal conviction that he knows what he is telling his audience and could be transmitted through a flawless delivery in the right quality of voice which is a minimum condition for one whose accomplishments have direct bearing on the rating not only of the programme, but the medium he represents equally. Versatility in current affairs is an asset. He has to keep abreast of events and incidents making the rounds to boost his competence should he conduct a live interview in the course of the news bulletin. He should therefore be a news addict steeping himself in stories that matter to his audience.

As noted earlier, voice is key to broadcasting and the newscaster must possess a good voice that could be modulated to add meaning, highlight mood, and enhance attractiveness. The newscaster's voice must be sonorous, devoid of stutters and lispy impediments. Nasality and sibilance can cause indistinctiveness as much as a reedy and young-sounding voice (Boyd, Stewart, & Alexander, 2008). However with effort, such reedy voices could be reduced in intensity to give a better impression. Voice should possess the cadence that can afford dignity to the newscaster. Avoid monotony of tone so listener interest could be sustained from one news item to the other in the bulletin. This relates to inflection or turns and variations in pitch that would be pleasant to the ears, convey energy, aid transition and enhance comprehension.

The newscaster should have sound enunciation and maintain a reasonably steady poise throughout the bulletin no matter his disposition to different news content (O'reilly, nd). Capacity of sight-

reading is of the essence. This entails reading without rehearsal and it speaks to his confidence quotient and ability to work under pressure while communicating with fluency.

The newscaster must be abreast of journalistic standards including interviewing skills, knowledge of media laws, time consciousness especially the running time of his bulletin to enable a hitch free delivery and guide himself against avoidable slips and infringements on the law.

In delivery, the newscaster must exude professionalism with a warm personality that transmits authority and personality. He should read in a pace comfortable to him, distinct in the listener's ears and corresponds with the station's house style. He should avoid a staccato stumbling from word to word that can alter the flow of the presentation and occasion loss of concentration of the listener. Delivery must reflect the newscaster's confidence in the truth and importance of the information he is letting out. A newscaster that stumbles, makes corrections, apologizes on the way or just doesn't know how to communicate fluently irritates and annoys his listener and puts credibility to question (O'reilly, nd).

He must remain impartial or neutral as much as possible on contentious issues. In essence he should keep his passions in check by being detached, yet the caveat is that the detachment should not be taken too far as to make him lose his humanity which should show throughout pertinent instances to communicate with the listener.

The newscaster should master his plosives, bilabials, fricatives and sibilant notes. The popping of the microphone caused by lack of control of the bilabials has an awkward effect in the ears and that is the case with the unnecessarily intensified sibilants. Weak "Rs" that sound similar to "Ys" cheapen enunciation and affect elocutions. The rusting of papers, if not carefully done, interferes with sound quality and blurs hearing once picked up by the microphone. Keep standard distance from microphone and avoid unnecessary head movement that can occasion fluctuating voice levels.

Specific to the television newscaster is a good dress sense. He must look engaging or appealing in

appearance to the viewers. Knowing what not to wear is of the essence because a flashy and distractive appearance diverts attention from the message to the messenger. Unobtrusive dressing is commendable.

He must have good teleprompter skills. Rehearse pacing with teleprompters, set font size according to comfort so he does not peer or frown to be able to read. He should not be caught staring. The main purpose of using a teleprompter is to enhance conversableness which is encouraged by eye contact. With the teleprompter, the news script is reflected on a transparent monitor which is placed directly in front of the camera lens to simulate a face to face interaction between newscaster and audience members. The newscaster should know how to comport as a discussant in a conversation.

The newscaster should be an adept multitasker. This is necessary as a radio news reader and more involving as a television newsreader. The newsreader has guests in the studio for interview to deal with, the reporters from the field that must make their input from the scene, the viewers' inclinations he has to be always conscious of, the working of his equipment, the teleprompter and input from the production control room all of which compete for his attention.

The newscaster should be capable of sight-reading which involves confidence, competence and ability to pick up lines quickly. A good sight-reader is able to communicate with fluency and clarity without rehearsal (O'reilly nd). Sight-reading capability is key to news reading as he deploys his improvisation skills to handle a script given to him in the course of the bulletin. It tests how well the newsreader can work under pressure. A breaking news script is one piece that sight reading capabilities can see the newsreader through.

Conclusion

This work is an attempt to draw attention to the need for innovativeness in broadcast news presentation in line with the perceptive nature of the broadcast news audience that can no longer stand the standoffish news presentation style of old. It has emphasized the adoption of prosodic features in

newscasting as a way out, analyzed a lot of these features and enjoins newscasters in broadcast stations both privately and publicly owned to make adjustments and embrace the new normal in news presentation.

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