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Language of Mass Media - A Study Based on Malayalam Radio Broadcasts

A Doctoral Dissertation in Linguistics

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LANGUAGE OF MASS MEDIA –
A STUDY BASED ON MALAYALAM RADIO BROADCASTS.

Thesis submitted to the University of Kerala through the Department
of Linguistics for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

K PARAMESWARAN.

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Dr N Rajendran,
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Certificate.

This is to certify that the thesis entitled 'Language of Mass Media – A study based on Malayalam Radio Broadcasts' is an authentic record of the research work carried out by K PARAMESWARAN in the Department of Linguistics, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram under my supervision and guidance. It is also certified that the subject matter of the thesis has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, associateship or similar title of any university or institution.

Dr N Rajendran,
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare the work presented in this thesis for the award of PhD degree of the University of Kerala embodies the result of original work done by me in the Department of Linguistics, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram under the supervision and guidance of Dr N Rajendran, Professor and Head of the Department of Linguistics, University of Kerala.

Thiruvananthapuram.

K Parameswaran

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Last, but not the least, I would like to record the immense debt that I owe to my father Late Dr G K Warriar who sowed in me, even without my knowing consciously, the seeds of a life long enchantment with language and literature.

K Parameswaran.

Transliteration.

Vowels.

Short: a l u r e o

Long: a: i: u: e: ai o: au

Consonants.

k kh g gh n

c ch j jh n

T Th D Dh N

t th d dh n

p ph b bh m

y r l v

s s s

h R l l

Chapter one.

Introduction.

The language of mass media is a protean phenomenon, with an amazing variety of character. From the four - sheet evening dailies to major players like Mathrubhumi or Malayala Manorama to umpteen numbers of TV channels, each media caters to particular audiences and so each media develops its own language and idiom. (Mathrubhumi is a premier Malayalam newspaper published from Kozhikode, the principal seat of administration and commerce in the Malabar region of Kerala. They have editions from various other centers of the state as well as in other centers like Chennai. Malayala Manorama has its headquarters in Kottayam in central Travancore region of South Kerala. Malayala Manorama also has multi editions being produced at various centers inside and outside the state of Kerala. Both the newspapers also have a set of specialized publications aimed at niche audiences like children, women, job seekers etc.)

But mass media in itself is formulated out of and is governed by certain particular characteristics. These characteristics form the justification for positing a 'language of mass media'.

This thesis tries to identify these characteristics and describe one particular type of mass media – the radio – with reference to these characteristics. The introductory chapter defines the concept of mass media and describes the various genres available therein. In the second chapter, the evolution of the radio as a potent mass

media is described, with emphasis on the history and development of All India Radio.

The third chapter posits the existence of a variety called ‘the language of radio’ and defines its central characteristics. The fourth chapter validates this with examples from Malayalam radio news broadcasts.

It has to be noted here that the concept of ‘language of mass media’ and the ‘language of radio’ are approached in this thesis from the point of view that they are ‘discourses’. The thesis posits that a particular discourse exists in the mass media and that the radio uses a discourse that is a variety of the discourse of mass media.

Mass Media

Mass Media has been defined as “means of communication designed to reach and influence very large numbers of people”. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1980). Defleur and Ball – Rokeach (1996) defines mass communication as a technology which helps a message to be transmitted among a large number of people at the same time. Thus, it includes newspapers, magazines, television, radio, cinema and the now ubiquitous internet.

Defleur et al (1996) have also placed the value of mass media at a high premium by arguing that the history of human existence itself can be explained solely in terms of distinctive stages in the development of mass communication technologies. They content that these communication systems represent critical points of change in human history.

According to them, the various stages of the development of communication systems are as follows – age of signs and signals,

speech and language, writing, printing, mass communication and finally computers and the internet. It has also to be noted specially that the nature of any society's communication process is necessarily linked to virtually every aspect of the society's daily life.

Various theories have been floated about the study of mass communications. Defleur et al (1996) says that the study of mass communications should be able to throw significant light on a, the impact of the society on a medium, b, the various processes involved in the working of mass communication systems, and c, the influence of medium on society. Many studies done hitherto concentrate on 'c', because a significant portion of criticism against mass communication media has concentrated on the way in which they have influenced the society or significant sections of society.

The present study shifts the focus of study to 'a' and 'b' and tries to understand the dynamics of media – society relationship from the view point of the society. However, in order to understand the nature of the dynamics of the media – society relationship i.e., 'a' or 'c', it becomes necessary to have a clear understanding of 'b', i.e., the nature of the functioning of the media or mass communication systems.

The society has to function in the context of social reality and one of the significant tools that the society has at its command to achieve this is language. From another point of view, language is the medium used by the society to exchange or explain the understandings and standpoints of one section of the society to its other sections. Hence, it can be concluded that language plays an

important role in realizing 'a' and 'c' and that language is an important ingredient of 'b'

Language and Mass Media.

It is in this context that this thesis attempts to analyze mass media against the background of language. Most attempts to analyze the language of mass media have concentrated on finding out formal mistakes committed with a critical view. Chovva dosham, a weekly column appearing in Mathrubhumi is a case in point. It is an attempt to find out mistakes committed in various editions of the paper in the previous week and either justify them or correct them. Books like Panmana Ramachandran Nair's Nalla Malayalam (2001) etc have also made such prescriptive approach to the language of media.) These criticisms view broadcast language or the language of mass media as a formal system – a grammar.

But language can also be seen as a functional system – a system in use, i.e., a discourse system. One of the features of such a system will be a continuous evolution which will make criticism solely from the point of view of grammar irrelevant. Mistakes will form part and parcel of such systems; and at many points, the evolution of the system will change what was once termed a mistake into an acceptable usage.

Analysing media language.

The next question that naturally arises in this context is the relevance or necessity of analyzing the language of media as discourse. Fairclough (1985) discusses why the analysis of media language from the point of view of discourse differs from the analysis of media language from the point of view of linguistics. In pages 16

and 17 he says that “analysis of media language as discourse can help in reaching a detailed understanding of the nature of media output. While linguistic analysis focuses on texts, discourse analysis is concerned with both texts as well as practices – discourse practices as well as socio cultural texts. It is an attempt to correlate texts, discourse practices and socio cultural practices.”

Adam Jarowski and Nikolas Coupland have explicitly referred to the necessity of considering language from the point of view of discourse in their introductory essay in Jarowski et al 2004. In their own words, “Rapid growth in communications media, such as satellite and digital television and radio, desktop publishing, telecommunications (mobile phone networks, video conferencing), email, internet mediated sales and services, information provision and entertainment, has created new media for language use. It is not surprising that language is becoming more and more closely scrutinized..... while simultaneously being shaped and honed (for example by advertisers, journalists and broadcasters) in a drive to generate ever – more attention and persuasive impact. Under these circumstances, language itself becomes marketable and a sort of commodity, and its purveyors can market themselves through their skills of linguistic and textual manipulation.....Discourse ceases to be ‘merely a function of work; it becomes work, just as it defines various forms of leisure and, for that matter, academic study. The analysis of discourse becomes correspondingly more important – in the first instance for those with direct involvement in the language economies, and second, for those who need to deconstruct these new trends, to understand their force and even to oppose them”.

William Lamb (1998) has a strong case to argue for analyzing the language used by the mass media and attempting at precise descriptions. He says that “people in Western countries probably hear more language from the media than they do directly from the lips of their fellow humans in conversation... they are the dominating presenters of language in our society at large. In light of the effect of repetition of learning, it seems reasonable that the speech that people hear, even passively, can have an affect on their own. Furthermore, as the news generally assumes a central place in radio broadcasting, with regular reports on the hour, it is the greatest source of repetitive speech. From the standpoint of convention and repetition it would seem to have the greatest potential for affecting parlance”.

The case of understanding and analyzing media language outside the traditional framework of grammatical or linguistic structures has also been pointed out by Paddy Scannell (1991). “To think of (radio or television) programmes as texts and audiences as readers is to mistake the communicative character of much of the output of radio and television. In particular it fails to recognize the live ness of radio and television, their embedded ness in the here and now (their particularity) and the cardinal importance of context and audiences. All programmes have an audience oriented communicative intentionality which is embodied in the organization of their setting (context) down to the smallest detail: there is nothing in the discourses of radio and television that is not motivated, that is not intended to generate inferences about what is being said by virtue of how it is being said. Most importantly, all broadcast output is,

knowingly, wittingly, public. That is, it is a self conscious, self reflexive performance produced for audiences who are situated elsewhere.”

Here, the author actually pinpoints the limitations of approaching the language of the media from both the prescriptive as well as descriptive models of analysis. The principal purpose of language, especially in the context of mass media, is the instant communication of information. In order to describe language use and prescribe norms for it, it has to be accepted that it is the communicative nature of language that has to come out of the description and prescription exercises. Actually, prescription and description form a part of the larger communicative purpose, because communication presupposes some ‘common’ factors and prescription as well as description are ways to engender and ensure such factors in common.

Discourse here refers to at least three concepts. Deborah Cameron in (Cameron, 2001) explains that discourse can refer to language above sentence level – its structure; it can refer to language in use – its function; it can also refer to language in language – the discursive construction of reality.

A later work by Deborah Cannon (Cannon, 2003), brings out more clearly the differing senses of the term discourse. In page 16, it is clarified that “for linguists, ‘discourse’ is ‘language in use’ – the way meaning is produced when a language is used in particular contexts for particular purposes. For critical theorists, ‘discourses’ are a set of propositions in circulation about a particular phenomenon. These propositions constitute what people take to be the reality of that phenomenon.”

In Candlin L N (1997), it is said that “discourse is also language beyond language in use. (It) is an important concept for understanding society and human responses to it, as well as for understanding language itself.”

Reflecting these viewpoints Fairclough (ibid) also demarcates two usages of the term discourse. He says the two senses of discourse refer to social actions and interactions and to the social construction of reality (page 19). In the first sense, discourse is related to the interpersonal function of language and in the second sense it refers to the ideational role of language. He further concludes that against this background discourse can be analyzed in two ways. He says the focuses of these analyses are essentially complementary. One focus is on language as communicative events and the second one is on language as ordered discourse. The former refers to specific events and the latter to the general structure of discourse (page 56).

Sandhya Nayak (2004) adds this explanation about the methodology of discourse analysis. She says that “Discourse analysis is defined as (1) concerned with language use beyond the boundaries of a sentence, utterance, (2) concerned with the inter-relationships between language and society, and (3) as concerned with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication”.

Hasnain Imtiaz (2005) has also explained the concept of discourse in a functional manner. He says that “discourse is not simply a unit of language larger than a sentence. What is required of

us is to look at discourse by going beyond such common-sense definitions. We need to look at language as a social practice and treat discourse as ruled by the conditions of its production and reception and as constituting a distinctive socio-cultural practice that is institutionalized to a greater or lesser degree.

Grossberg et al (1998) approaches the problem of media language from a different angle. They present Stuart Hall's (1980) opinion that communication has to be seen as two distinct processes – encoding and decoding – which do not have any necessary relationship to each other. According to him, readers or audiences interpret any communication by transplanting them into their own framework or codes. Thus, the interpretation of a text becomes a complicated and varied task. The interpretation takes place with regard to the text itself, the questions posed by the text and the technique of communication used in the text. Thus the text can be analyzed from the point of view of content analysis; text can be taken as a narrative and the principles of narratology can be used for analysis; it is also possible to visualize any media text in terms of symbols and codes and apply the principles of semiotics to analyze the text.

(Lamb, 1998), in the context of describing the register of radio language in Gaelic comments that “There are several reasons for studying language on radio,..... For one, many Gaelic speakers must go through a day hearing substantially more Gaelic on the radio than they do in their physical vicinity (cf. Bell, 1991: “People in Western countries probably hear more language from the media

than they do directly from the lips of their fellow humans in conversation... they are the dominating presenters of language in our society at large”, p. 1). In light of the effect of repetition of learning, it seems reasonable that the speech that people hear, even passively, can have an affect on their own. Furthermore, as the news generally assumes a central place in radio broadcasting, with regular reports on the hour, it is the greatest source of repetitive speech. From the standpoint of convention and repetition it would seem to have the greatest potential for affecting parlance”.

News against the context of mass media.

As mentioned above, the organization of mass media – especially radio and television – pays particularly close attention to context. As a result various genres of mass media can be isolated. Fairclough (1985) has differentiated discourses from genres and says that the former are references to the way in which knowledge is formed (for example, liberal, socialist or Marxist discourses) while the latter refers to the use of language in a particular social context (for example, radio broadcasts or political speeches).

One of the major genres of broadcast media is news. The Webster’s New World Dictionary has defined news in three ways. News can information that was previously unknown; it can be recent happenings, especially those broadcast or printed in the mass media; it can also refer to reports about such events in a general way. Journalism textbooks have defined news in various ways, especially by characterizing news as a departure from the normal, “a break from the normal flow of event” (Mencher, 1984). This text also adds that news can be information that helps people to take decisions.

Another classic journalism text (Abraham, 1992) defines news as “the description of an event. The event is described by those who have seen it or those who have heard of it for people who have not seen it or heard about it”. Here, there is a significant distinction between a news item and news - worthy event. The event in itself is not news; it is the description of the event that becomes news.

Mencher (1984) has also listed seven factors that will make any event news worthy. These factors characterize, to a large extent, any event acquiring the status of news. In other words, an event will have to fulfill some or all of these characteristics to attain the status of news. The seven characteristics are impact, timeliness, prominence, proximity, unusualness, conflict and currency. Some of these characteristics may seem to be contradictory to one another. However, it has to be remembered that any news worthy event may necessarily not fulfill all the seven characteristics; hence, such contradictions do not translate into reality.

(Danuta Reah, 1998) explains in her introduction itself that even if we accept the definition that news is basically ‘new information about recent events’, it is essential and practical to narrow down this because the terms ‘new’ and ‘recent’ are essentially subjective. According to her, a more useful definition would be ‘information about recent events that are of interest to a sufficiently large group, or that may affect the lives of a sufficiently large group’. She pinpoints that the problem with such definitions is that ‘everything that happens anywhere in the world is a recent event, so someone somewhere has to decide which, of all events that have happened over the last 24

hours are to be included in a specific newspaper, and which are to be excluded’.

Sociologists have tried another way to find out and analyze the nature of news. Their analysis concentrated on how journalists worked and how, in the course of their working, journalists develop the concept of news and relate to it. For example, Gay Tuchman (Tuchman, 1978) says that journalists actually work in terms, not of news worthiness directly, but of ‘hard’ stories and ‘soft’ stories. Hard stories refer to things happening at the time of going for publication; soft stories refer to feature stories that are not subject to timeliness in a strict manner.

Tuchman says that this method of classifying stories and news is also the journalist’s way of ‘routinising the unexpected’. By their method of classification, journalists are able to routinize and predict the happenings of news worthy events. Much of what appears in the media is expected; the journalist has a routine method of covering them. Thus, he becomes prepared for the unexpected, which also he will be able to routinize into the news paper schedule. This is done with the help of several structures and processes like the beat system of reporters or the inverted pyramid style of news reporting.

In an article by Bell (Bell and Garret, 1998), it is said that ‘news is a major register of language. Understanding how it works is important to understanding how language works in society.....News content is not independent of its expression and we can only hope to have a clear understanding of the nature of news content by close analysis of the news text’.

Nature of Broadcast.

Radio is one of the most prominent discourses of modern mass media and broadcast news is an important genre of this discourse, with its own sets of characteristics and procedures. The special features of the processes and structures of broadcast itself form the basis for positing the concept of broadcast news.

The term broadcast originally meant ‘cast widely’. By extension, broadcast has now acquired the meaning of casting or spreading words and information in a wide area. This wide area of receptivity itself forms the basis of the development of a special genre called broadcast language and news.

Rosemary Horseton (1988) has identified some elements of this genre and says that the most prominent among this is the fact that radio is a ‘permeable medium’. She has graphically pictured that the distance between the broadcaster and his audience can never be more than the distance between the microphone and the broadcaster or the radio set and the listener.

As Paddy Scannell (1991) observed, “radio and television mediate the public into the private and the private into the public in the manner and style of their performances in a wide range of settings and for correspondingly diverse purposes”. To a large extent this is achieved through on – air talk, says Scannell, which constitute the “institutional spaces of radio and television” and which is “daily seen and heard in the private, domestic and work spaces of listening and viewing”.

This means that the listeners of radio may be people who are engaged in a very wide and varied range of circumstances and

contexts. They may be engaged in almost every type of imaginable activity. It was from this point of view that Hilda Matheson, the first head of Talks in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), based the principle of broadcast which has since been accepted widely. Her principle was that it was “useless to address a microphone as if it were a public meeting, or even to read to it essays or leading articles. The person sitting at the other end expected the speaker to address him personally, simply, almost familiarly, as man to man” (Matheson, 1933).

Nagavalli R S Kurup, one of Kerala’s pre eminent broadcasters, has very clearly stated that one of the main characteristics of broadcast language is its spoken nature. “Radio language flows from the lips to the ears, and from there to the mind”, he says in the AIR 40th Anniversary volume (AIR, 1990).

Yet another feature of broadcast news concerns the way in which it is heard and understood by the listeners. They hear, in a continuous pattern, a flow of words that succeed one another. If one word in the pattern becomes unclear or unintelligible, the listener has no means at his command to stop the broadcast and listen to the unclear part once more. He has to listen, understand and imbibe the broadcast material in the very same linear mode in which he receives it.

As Paddy Scannell observes (Scannell 1991), “the pivotal fact is that the broadcasters, while they control the discourse, do not control the communicative context. The places from which broadcasting speaks and in which it is heard are completely separate from each other. Or, in other words, the settings in which listening

and viewing take place are always beyond the control of broadcasting institutions”.

This brings into light yet another nature of broadcasting – i.e., the fact that broadcast must orient itself to the audience. In all other kinds of public discourse, say, a public meeting, a church sermon or a staged play, the audiences come to hear the discourse. In the case of radio and television the discourse has to create and approach an audience. Hence, broadcast is always under the responsibility of orienting towards the likes and dislikes of audiences and affiliating themselves with the audiences.

Again, in its article on broadcasting, the Encyclopedia Britannica (1980) has this relevant comment to make. “The disposition of a radio or television audience, which is composed of individuals in the privacy of their homes, differs considerably from that of an audience in a theater or a lecture hall. There is none of the crowd atmosphere that prevails in a public assembly, and each listener is no more than casually aware that he is actually part of a large audience. This engenders a sense of intimacy that causes the listener to feel a close personal association with the speaker or performer”.

Hilda Matheson (Matheson 1933) has also observed that “broadcasting could not talk to its audience as a crowd. It had to learn to speak to them as individuals. In this essential respect radio and television marked the end, not the extension, of mass communication where that is understood as a form of communication that constitutes its audience and speaks to it as a mass.”

Because of the linear nature of broadcast programmes, even silence has a significant role to play. If, by chance, knowingly or unknowingly, a break occurs in the course of a programme while it is being broadcast, the listener will take it to be part of the broadcast discourse and assign some sort of a meaning to it. Usually such breaks are supposed to herald the announcement of an important nature – the importance being either that of general nature – for example the death of a prominent public personality – or that takes cue from the stand point of the programme being broadcast – for example a pause may precede an important disclosure by the police in a detective play being broadcast.

In this context, Nagavally's remarks are relevant. He says, "the main quality that broadcast programmes should necessarily have is that of simplicity. The language and style of the programme should be such that it impinges on the heart the moment one hears it. No broadcast material should contain words or ideas that need repeated rethinking for the common listener to decode. Language that can reach any illiterate, ideas that can be understood by any dullard – such programmes fit into the scheme of broadcast" (AIR 1990).

As concluded by K Parameswaran (Vijnana Kairali, 2004) "radio is a medium which can be heard and understood only with a sense of intimacy. The listener is bound to hear and imbibe the programmes in the very same order in which they are broadcast. Because of these same reasons, clarity of thought and familiar intimacy with the audience become the keystone of broadcast language."

Radio programmes.

As far as the radio is concerned, talks, plays and news are the three major groups of programmes that have language as their prime raw material. An analysis will show that any popular radio programme is a mix of one or two of these groups combined with music.

Interview is another technique commonly used in broadcast to bring variety in programming. Basically, an interview can be likened to a talk wherein the script has been bifurcated for two people. It may even be separated for so that more than two people may take part in the discussion. The points to be highlighted in the interview or the discussion are agreed upon beforehand and these points become the breakaway points between questions and answers so that the very same points stand out in the programme. The technique of enlivening a talk by introducing a second or third voice will also relieve the monotony of the same voice reading through a whole script for 10 or 15 minutes.

Another major programme involving words and language as the prime content is radio plays. T N Gopinathan Nair, a prominent dramatist says in his recollections that appeared in AIR 1990 that “radio drama or play is a play to be seen using the ears.... The imagination of the listener constitutes the wide expanse of creativity that is available to the radio dramatist. The dramatist who pens a play for stage performance is tied down by the cardinal unities of time and place, a limitation that the radio playwright never has to bother about”.

Gopinathan Nair also reminds that the radio dramatist has to battle with a different set of conditions. A major difficulty is that the

radio playwright is constrained to indicate even the movements and functions that occur on the stage through words and words alone. The exit of one character from the scene, the entrance of another, the change of scene from home to an office – all have to be indicated solely by the conversations between the characters on the stage. Another thing to be noted here is that even the hand movements, facial expressions etc of the characters and the reactions of one character to the words or action of another have to be indicated in the course of connected and convincing conversations of the characters. As Gopinathan Nair puts it in his characteristic way, “a radio drama character will not be able to say ‘your sari and my shirt are of the same color. He will have to explain clearly that my shirt is blue just like your sari”.

However, it is with reference to radio plays and news, that the problem of language acquires great importance in the broadcasting milieu. As the Encyclopedia Britannica observed in 1980, “many people will not accept in their own homes many of the candid forms of expressions that they readily condone or support on stage or in literature. Because it owes its license to operate to the state, if indeed it is not state operated, and because of its intimate relationship to its audience, broadcasting exists in a quasi public domain, open in all its phases to public scrutiny. It is therefore held to be invested with a moral as well as legal responsibility to serve public interest and must remain more sensitive to public sentiment and political opinion than most other forms of public expression”.

This situation exerts pressure on the broadcasters to play it safe, as is evidenced by the article by Peter.M.Lewis. (Scannell

1991). He says that the mid 1980s were a period in which financial and political pressure were stepped up on the BBC. In such times, editorial pressures to play safe are intensified. "Direct intervention by politicians and censorship by government is mostly confined to the bitterly contested area of news and current affairs. Fiction, except where it deals with political issues or matters of public reputation or controversy is at one remove away from these battles Questions of morality and tastes are left by politicians to public opinion as a court of appeal, and BBC treatment of the issue tends to reflect its current relationship with the government on the one hand and, on the other, the state of public taste in the wider society of which broadcasting is a part and which it must represent."

Manjulakshi L (2003) has this to say about the nature of language in general used in radio in the Indian context. She points out that "the type of language used in government-controlled radio stations, unfortunately, seems to be artificial in its idiom in the broadcasts done in all Indian languages. The broadcasts for farmers and workers try to use a style that is supposedly understood by less literate groups. We are yet to find a balance in the broadcasts that suit the audience for which these are intended. But the broadcasts are not as appropriate as these should be for the simple reason that these broadcasts are still largely government-controlled. Radio has a major role to play in language. The language used in radio impacted the previous generation very much. News broadcasts introduced chaste language, closely modelled after the written variety. The newsreaders introduced standard pronunciation values to the phonemes, words, phrases, and sentences. The impact of radio

language was heavy upon the written style, rather than on the spoken idiom. This is somewhat strange, considering the fact that radio is mainly an audio form. It appears that Indian radio is more closely associated with news and music than with dialogue”.

Radio news.

Radio news has been widely recognized as a special use of broadcast language. The Encyclopedia Britannica, 1980 had commented that “news continues to be the most important element in spoken word radio....The trend has been towards frequently repeated short bulletins’.

In White 1996, the special nature of radio news and its preparation are very clearly explained. He explains that radio is a temporal medium and it is the onus of the broadcaster to ensure the best use of the time available. Since the listener too can avail of only the same limited time allowed by the broadcaster, it stands to reason that radio news (any radio programme for that matter) has to be simple and it has to be ensured that the listener gets to understand what is being said at the first go.

To ensure this, says White, “Use conversational style in writing broadcast copy. (Copy is the technical term used by broadcasters to refer to news items edited to be read on air). (The broadcast news writer) should learn to write as you speak. Most of us use brief sentences, with few subordinate clauses, and choose easy to understand words in everyday conversations. Communicating information to a radio or television audience is best done in everyday language, simply and with sincerity”.

Reading aloud the copy prepared would be a good guide to evaluate your style of writing. It is the ear that guides the choice of words, decides the length of sentences and chooses when to start a new sentence or when to go on to a new paragraph.

This topic is discussed at length in the core chapter of the thesis. However, the following points have emerged from the discussion so far which posit the existence of a special discourse for broadcast. Radio news forms a special subset of this discourse that merits exhaustive treatment of its own.

1. The protean existence of the mass media has affected the way society behaves and the way in which individuals perceive society.
2. Language is the principal ingredient with which the mass media interacts with the society and the individuals partake of the mass media.
3. Hence, the use of language in various forms of mass media has acquired a range of specific characteristics.
4. These characteristics are Janus faced and have two orientations. One set of characteristics are generated from the peculiar nature of the media form itself. The other set of characteristics owe their existence to the varied nature and endless creativity of man's linguistic ability.
5. Radio is no exception. Neither is radio news.
6. However, language has been traditionally viewed from either a prescriptive grammatical point of view or from a descriptive linguistic point of view.

7. Both these methodologies fall short of describing and evaluating broadcast language because they bypass the real objective of language use or discourse in mass media that is communication.
8. Hence, it becomes necessary to approach media language as a form of discourse.
9. The discourserial characteristics of media language are the result of at least two sets of parameters.
10. One is the nature of mass communication and the other are the characteristics of the medium used. The former sets the larger discourse of which the latter becomes a particular genre.
11. Thus, radio news is a particular genre of the broadcast.

Against this background, this thesis tries to examine the principal characteristics of the broadcast discourse and examine how they function in the broadcast genre. The characteristics of the process of mass communication, the special features of radio as a broadcast medium and the particular nature of one of the commodities conveyed by the medium, i.e. news, all form act and interact each other in the formation of a media language and a broadcast news genre. But as a prelude to such an exercise, the background and development of mass communications and radio broadcasting are examined comprehensively in the next two chapters.

Chapter Two.

The Radio as a Mass Medium.

As a prelude to analyzing the discourse of radio, it is necessary to understand the working of the medium. In this chapter the focus is on the development of radio as a mass medium and a description of some of the salient techniques of broadcasting.

The historical perspective will help understand how the medium makes use of language as a potent medium to communicate as well as how the communicative nature of the medium was shaped, to a considerably large extent, by the language used for communication. The technological perspective will help in understanding why radio programmes develop certain characteristics and how the specialized discourse of the radio helps in facilitating these programmes.

Development of radio technology.

The radio was actually the result of a long and arduous human dream of establishing instantaneous communication over long distances. The term radio was used first in the USA, deriving itself from radiation - the principle that governs radio waves. The development of telegraph technology was the step that led to the final fulfillment of this dream. The development of telegraph, on the other hand, was the result of an increasing understanding about the nature and working of electricity.

In other words it can also be said that radio technology was a by product of mankind's enquiry into the workings of electrical energy in general. The basis of radio transmission and reception is the

electron, the negatively charged particles which is present in all matter. This electron also plays a significant role in nature because it is the balancing force in matter whose other components are the positive protons and the neutrally charged neutrons. Protons and neutrons form part of the nucleus of any matter, while electrons revolve around the nucleus.

There are some elements like copper, which allow electrons to be added on or subtracted off. When an atom acquires an additional electron, it passes it on to the nearest neighbor, which repeats the process with its neighbor and so on infinitely. This is the process that is generally understood as electricity. Electric current is actually this process of taking on and subtracting off of electrons.

The next step towards the development of radio transmission technology was the discovery of the phenomenon known as electro magnet. In 1864 J.C.Maxwell discovered the principles of electromagnetics which form the very basis of broadcasting Later still, Samuel Morse is credited with perfecting a system of telegraphing and the well known Morse code which is the basic language used for telegraphing.

By 1866, Alexander Graham Bell had succeeded in transmitting human voice over a system of wires. The conjoining of the telegraph and the telephone, the next logical development in the specific area of communication technology, gradually got more and more refined, till at last the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy was perfected in the 1890s. During the First World War, wireless telegraphy had come in to use widely; however, the ability to transmit

human voice was yet to be made use of for communication purposes of the common man.

Defleur (1975) says that it was on the Christmas Eve of 1906 that operators on some ships sailing in the Atlantic Ocean heard the sound of human voice through their telegraphic ear phones for the first time ever. The voice they heard was part of an experimental broadcast made by a person called Reginald Fessenden from Massachusetts in the United States.

However, it was the development of the vacuum tube technology – the diode and the triode - that eventually led to the quick and in many ways phenomenal development of radio as a mass medium.

The later landmarks in the development of radio technology can be summarized as follows:

- ❖ 1904: Fleming develops the diode.
- ❖ 1907: Lee Forrester develops the triode.
- ❖ 1912: Radio proves its effectiveness in disaster mitigation programmes during the accident involving the sailing ship Republic.
- ❖ 1914: This is repeated in the incident of the Titanic.
- ❖ 1918: The development of the heterodyne circuit.
- ❖ 1922: BBC is formed.
- ❖ 1926: India enters the broadcasting scene.
- ❖ 1929: FM broadcasting comes of age.
- ❖ 1925 - 1950: The Golden age of Broadcasting.
- ❖ 1947: The Bell laboratories develop the transistor.
- ❖ 1952: The pocket radio assumes popularity.

- ❖ 1960: The TV proves a contender for the radio.
- ❖ 1960s: This provokes the development of the stereophonic broadcasts.
- ❖ 1990s: Digital Audio Broadcasting begins.

The Technology of Broadcasting.

Technically, broadcasting refers to the process of enabling sound waves to reach very great distances using another set of waves called carrier waves. Thus, the radio wave usually consists of an audio wave and a carrier wave. The former consists of our speech patterns and their electronic versions. The latter consists of an electronic signal that carries the audio wave over greater distances.

Two types of radio transmissions exist in India which differs in the manner in which these waves are combined. The technique of combining these waves is called modulation. In general terms, modulation refers to the process of "changing the shape of anything".

Another feature of broadcasting is referred to by the technical terms frequency and amplitude. The frequency of the wave is simply the number of times per second the cork goes up and down as the peaks and troughs of the wave pass it. Electromagnetic waves cycle a lot faster than this, and are measured in Hertz, where 1Hz is one cycle per second.

The amplitude is measured in terms of wavelength, which is the distance between each consecutive peak and trough. So when the wavelength is multiplied by the frequency, the speed of the wave can be calculated. Thus, a hundred Hz wave with a wavelength of one metre can be said to travel at a speed of hundred metres per second.

Radio transmissions can be amplitude modulated or frequency modulated - i.e., AM or FM. In the former, any change that is made in the shape of the audio wave gets reflected in the carrier wave. This results in a change in the amplitude of the carrier wave, which can be experienced by the listener as disturbances in the programme. In the latter, these changes are not reflected; rather, the strength of the signal is augmented by increasing the frequency of the waves - i.e., the number of waves produced per second is increased.

AM transmissions are usually medium or short wave. Medium wave travels only comparatively short distances, while short waves that are reflected from the ionosphere can be carried over greater distances. The former are usually of strengths between 525 and 1605 kilohertz, while the latter have strengths between 1.5 and 30 megahertz. However both these kinds of waves suffer from static disturbances; this means that any noise in the audio wave portion of the transmission is invariably reflected in the carrier portion.

FM transmissions travel through the ionosphere into the outer space. At the same time, the ground wave portion of these waves travels over limited portions. That is, they travel as far as the line of sight from the horizon. So these waves are to be sent from one repeater station to another and at each of these points, the signals will have to be strengthened again.

FM has several advantages over the conventional MW transmitters such as uniformity in the extent of coverage both during day and night and interference free quality of reception. (Sengupta 1996). Hence, the over all quality of FM transmission is quite superior to that of AM transmissions.

AIR uses satellite radio networking or RN channels for distributing programmes to stations spread over the entire country. All stations are capable of receiving the RN signals, through receiver terminals in the S band. In addition, C band down linking is also available at certain important stations and at the High Power Transmitters (HPT) carrying external services. Programmes thus received are re broadcast by various terrestrial transmitters of the All India Radio. CXS band uplinks are operated from New Delhi and from almost all capital stations for the purpose of regional up linking. One additional channel for use by the Vividh Bharathi is uplinked from TRACT, the mobile up linking facility of All India Radio. TRACTs are also being used for covering important events like world cup cricket matches and festivals like the Tyagaraja Aradhana music festival at Tiruvaiyyaru, Thanjavoor in Tamil Nadu. (Sengupta,1996)

What happens when a person switches on his radio or transistor set? These sets receive the radio waves, which actually consist of a set of audio and carrier waves and separate the audio waves from the carrier waves and make them audible to the listener.

Development of Radio in India.

In India, the age of the radio was inaugurated in 1927, with Lord Irvin, the then Viceroy inaugurating the Bombay transmitting centre on July 23rd. The British government had given two licenses and two broadcasting stations were thus started. The second started transmission on August 27th, the same year, from Calcutta.

M K Sivasankaran in his article on radio, included in (Sivasankaran et al 2000), divides the history of Indian broadcasting into four stages. The first twenty years from 1927 to 1947 were the

British India days. The fact that radio had good listener ship, right from the days of its inception, is attested by the phenomenal increase in the number of radio sets – from hardly 1000 sets in 1927, the number leapt to 16200 in 1934 and to the considerably huge number of 74000 by 1937.

The only source of income for the company was the fees imposed on radio sets. The then Indian Broadcasting company approached the British government for financial aid. This was denied and the company had to wind up operations.

However, manufacturers of radio equipments as well as radio enthusiasts prevailed upon the government to restart broadcasting. Their main argument was that a broadcasting facility was essential for the government – a viewpoint that was acceptable to the government also. As a result, the government took over both the Bombay and Calcutta stations, made a budgetary allocation of rupees two lakhs and handed over the administration of these stations to the industries department. Eventually transmission recommenced on April First, 1930.

Later, a new department called the Indian State Broadcasting Service was created and the radio stations were turned over to the care of this service. In 1936, the broadcasting setup was renamed All India Radio. Its acronym AIR had the special quality of indicating the medium in which the service functions. It was Lionel Fielden, who took over as the new Controller of Broadcasting on August 30, 1935, who was instrumental in naming the new broadcasting set up as All India Radio. U L Baruah (Baruah, 1983) mentions how by 1936 Fielden "... was able to persuade Viceroy Linlithgow to adopt the

name All India Radio, despite opposition from the Secretariat. The new name was adopted from June 8, 1936". The Hindi equivalent for AIR, Akashvani was borrowed from the literature of Rabindranath Tagore. Here also, akash stands for the medium of transmission while vani refers to language.

However, (Akashvani 1990) has a different story to say about the name 'Akashvani'. According to the compilers of that commemorative volume, a certain M V Gopaldaswami of the Mysore University had started experimental transmission from his home in 1935. These transmissions were named 'Akashvani' by Gopaldaswami.

Baruah 1983 also corroborates this. He says that "In September, 1935, broadcasting began in the princely state of Mysore, with the name Akashvani, meaning the 'voice from the sky'. Dr Gopaldaswami, Professor of Psychology, at the Mysore University had set up a 30 watt transmitter at his house. A 250 watt transmitter was later imported".

By the time India attained Independence, AIR had developed a network of six stations and a complement of 18 transmitters. The coverage was 2.5 percent of the geographical area and 11 percent of the population.

The second stage consists of the fifteen years up to 1962. During this period, the structure, composition and policies of broadcasting underwent several crucial changes. "It can be said that the second stage was heralded by Pandit Nehru's famous tryst with destiny speech". (Sivasankaran et al 2000). Several policy initiatives like the setting up of a series of small one kilowatt transmitters,

programmes like Vadya vrinda, a group music programme in 1952, a national programme of talks in 1953, Radio Sangeeth Sammelan, a prestigious all India festival of classical music presented on stage at various cities and towns and later broadcast over a period of one month from all the stations of AIR in 1954 etc were the fruits of this period.

The main entertainment channel of AIR, the Vividh bharati also came into existence during this phase. The service was started in 1957. The prime purpose of the new service was to cater to the increasing demand for more light and film music programmes as against classical music and developmental programmes of a more serious mode. (It is aired for more than 14 hours daily now, from 36 stations. Almost sixty percentage of the broadcast time is earmarked for Indian film music and the rest is divided between light music, devotional songs, short plays, interviews etc).

The third stage from 1962 right up to 1982 was one of expansion. By the time this period came to a close the number of radio stations increased to 83 and that of transmitters rose to 137. The advent of Frequency modulated (FM) transmission also took place during this period. By 1982, the number of radio set licenses rose to 1.22 crores and the coverage of broadcasting reached 90 percent of the population.

“The fourth period, starting in 1982, is especially significant because of the effects that scientific progress India made in the arena of mass communication technology. The first Indian national Sattelite – INSAT 1A – was launched in April, 1982. The sixth and seventh plans also gave much impetus to the growth of broadcasting facilities.

The decision that every part of the country must have the services of at least two radio channels was one of the plan proposals that was to have far reaching effects. The decision to further strengthen FM stations too came at this juncture, with the result that a 1000 kilo watt transmitter was set up at Nagpur on May 18, 1988". (Sivasankaran et al, 2000).

According to the report presented by the Audience Research Report of the All India Radio, Thiruvananthapuram in September, 2005 (the latest report on AIR at present available), the number of radio stations in the country comes to 191. In addition to these, 14 relay centres and 3 Vividh Bharati relay centres also function as stations in effect. There are also five community radio stations working under AIR. Thus, the total number of stations works out to 213.

To ensure that the stations cover 91.37 percent of area and 99.13 percent of population, AIR has a total of 335 functioning transmitters. Of these, 143 function in the Medium wave mode, 54 in the Short wave mode and 138 in the Frequency modulated mode.

The number of Vividh Bharati stations is 40 and they broadcast for 15 hours daily. FM transmission is available in 70 local radio stations as well as 25 Vividh Bharathi stations. There are metro FM channels functioning in 10 cities in the country and there are 29 relay centres and other transmitters which also function in the FM mode.

A case study conducted by the Nirma Institute of Management Studies in 2003 points out that "owing to its immense popularity, extensive reach, easy accessibility and cost effectiveness, AIR became the primary source of information, entertainment and

education during the 1980s, attracting listeners as well as advertisers. There are by now over a 100 million radio sets in India. The reach and penetration of AIR is still considered to be the best available among various media. Radio has also reached even the most remote of Indian villages and was considered the best medium for information and entertainment". It has to be especially noted here that the Nirma study was made from the point of view of effective marketing alternatives. The results and conclusions of the study thus have a pan disciplinary implication in the study of media efficacy.

As Sevanti Ninan has observed in The Hindu dated 25.8.2002, "The latest available figure is based on 1998-99 information, and it puts the number of average actual listeners of AIR on any day in radio homes all over India at 28.4 crores, and the radio sets in that year at 11.4 crores. For radio sets a 2002 figure is also available: 12.5 crores, so assuming the same three listeners per household, listenership today might be in the range of 30 crore to 36 crore listeners a day, if it has remained steady.

TV on the other hand assumes five viewers per household and that puts the TV audience in India on par with what the listening is for radio, given 7.5 crores or more TV homes. For a poor, developing country, that makes rather poor sense: the potential for radio listening should surely be much greater? By way of comparison, BBC World Service this year put its latest listeners figures for how many listen to its service in any given week at 150 million or 15 crores worldwide, and declared that it had lost some 12 million listeners (1.2 crores) in

India over the last year. It put down the decline in India to the fact that radio listening in India has fallen dramatically in recent years.

Only one in four Indians now listens to radio regularly — half the number of a decade ago, it said. But the fact that BBC is on shortwave could also have something to do with it, because the audience is increasingly turning to FM, with some 55 per cent of all radio sets (7.1 crores) in India now having the FM facility.

One indication of the lack of excitement over radio is the slow growth in the number of radio sets available. In 10 years from 1992 to 2002, satellite TV households have grown from nothing to 40 million. In comparison from 1991 to 2002, radio sets have grown in number by no more than 30 million. The growth of FM is changing that — with the hype created by half a dozen private radio stations in Mumbai, cheap transistors now sell at street corners in that city.”

Prasar Bharathi Corporation.

Basically, All India Radio was conceptualized as a public broadcaster from the days of its inception. This followed an early recognition and acceptance of the socially relevant and purposeful role played by this new and potent medium in a developing country.

As (Britannica, 1980) observes, “ because it owes its license to operate to the state, if indeed it is not state – operated, and because of its intimate relationship to its audience, broadcasting exists in a quasi public domain, open in all its phases to public scrutiny. It is therefore held to be invested with a moral as well as a legal responsibility to serve the public interest and must remain more

sensitive to public sentiment and political opinion than most other forms of public expression”.

Against the background of these two observations - namely, 1; radio is a powerful medium and 2; it must remain more sensitive to public opinion and interests than other forms of public opinion - the government had appointed three committees to go into the question of autonomy of broadcasting institutions. The Chanda Enquiry committee was set up in 1966, The Verghese Working group was constituted in 1978 and the Joshi Working group was appointed in 1983.

The Chanda Committee's main recommendation was that Broadcasting Corporation should be setup under an act passed by the Parliament. The committee emphasized that the scope of the government's authority should be unambiguously laid down. Another important recommendation of the committee was that the government should have the right to require the Corporation to broadcast some programmes as also to veto some kind of programmes. The committee was also of the opinion that creativity can be fostered only by decentralizing authority down to the regional and even local levels. (Details of the recommendations of all the three committees are taken from P K Raveendranath, 2004).

The Verghese committee, on the other hand, visualized a Trust to oversee the operations of broadcasting. The trust, also to be known as the National Broadcast Trust or Akash Bharati, would operate on a highly decentralized structure. The committee was firm that the said trust should be “an independent, impartial and autonomous organization”. The Verghese committee also stipulated

that the autonomy of the trust and its independence from government control should be enshrined in the Constitution itself.

The committee recommended that “all the national broadcasting services should be vested exclusively in an independent, impartial and autonomous organization established by Parliament to act as a trustee for the national interest”. (Quoted in Sengupta 1996).

The Joshi working group was of the considered opinion that functional freedom did not exist in Doordarshan or All India Radio. It also noted that the “crucial issue was not autonomy versus government control, but reforms in structure and management styles so that they will act as a support to the flowering of artistic creativity”. Therefore the working group suggested the setting up of an institutional arrangement that provided for coordination and interaction among political, administrative and communication spheres. The most significant aspect of the Joshi working group’s recommendations is that it did not favor the freeing of broadcasting from the control of the Information and Broadcasting ministry of the Union Government.

The Prasar Bharati Bill (1989) is based largely on the Verghese Committee report and the Akash Bharati bill of 1978. However, whereas the Akash Bharati bill, which was introduced by the Janatha Government, favored the creation of a Broadcasting corporation through a Parliament act, the Verghese committee wanted broadcasting autonomy of broadcasting to be apart of the Indian constitution.

Since the Akash Bharathi act of 1978 lapsed, it was presented as the Prasar Bharathi bill in 1989. Presenting the bill in the Parliament, the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting P Upendra said that the bill is “a charter of freedom to give voice to the people of India..... There is no proposal to privatize the electronic media, because big monopolies and industries will capture them. We are against that kind of thing happening”. (Akashvani, 1990).

The bill makes explicit provision that the corporation will give prominence to strengthen the unity, integrity, democratic traditions and social values as envisaged by the Constitution. A long list of subjects to be given prominence like education, science and technology, women and children’s programmes, programmes that raise their voices against superstitions and wrong doings etc etc. (Article by N Kesavan Nair in Akashvani,1990).

“With the spread of television and cinema, commercialization and entertainment values have assumed importances as far as most forms of mass media are concerned. The tastes developed by people by exposure to one form of media will influence their attitudes towards all other forms of media. Thus radio is also devoting more and more time for entertainment, advertisements etc. When the Prasar Bharathi comes into existence, it may have to run helter skelter behind big ticket corporations and companies to sponsor entertainment oriented programmes..... However, in the Indian context, the accent should always be on carrying forward the process of creating awareness among the common people and ensuring their financial and economic well being. The main question confronting the grant of autonomy to the electronic media is whether it will help in

attaining this goal". (Article by Thottam Rajashekharan in Akashvani, 1990).

Another working group, under the chairmanship of Dr N K Sengupta, was notified by the Union Government on 28th December, 1995. Its mandate was to review the provisions of the Prasar Bharathi act and to make recommendations regarding its restructuring.

In the introduction to their report (Sengupta, 1996), the group observes that: "Dramatic changes have taken place at a dizzy pace on the media front since the passing of the Prasar Bharathi Act in 1990. The advent of satellite channels and their rapid proliferation have substantially transformed the environment that prevailed till 1990 when Prasar Bharathi, the autonomous broadcasting corporation was envisaged. A complete rethinking of the role, organization and functions of Prasar Bharathi became necessary in a multi channel scenario, mostly driven by market forces. Prasar Bharathi needs the requisite degree of flexibility and financial powers to hold its own. There has been a constant debate concerning the quality and purpose of Indian Broadcasting for quite some time now. Some basic questions will have to be addressed to be able to evolve a vibrant and versatile model of a national broadcasting system, including a reinvigorated Prasar Bharathi, in a vastly changed and fast changing scenario. It was in this context and in order to undertake a comprehensive review that the Government of India has constituted an expert group".

The summary and recommendations of the expert group have very clearly described the state of affairs of Indian broadcasting in the 1990s and some relevant portions of the report merits full quotation.

“Unparalleled changes have taken place in broadcasting throughout the world. The boundaries between broadcasting, telecommunications and information technologies are becoming blurred. We have also witnessed rapid and fundamental changes in India’s media scenario in recent years, driven by technological developments, economic reforms and liberalization and the demands of increasingly discerning audiences..... The new technologies have demolished the monopoly of State run electronic media and rigid regulations of yester years in the realm of broadcasting have become ineffective and impractical.

Both Akashvani and Doordarshan have attempted with mixed successes to adjust themselves with the fast changing scenario. They have had a remarkable record in public service broadcasting. They are the major cultural patrons of music, drama and the visual arts. They have no peers as purveyors of messages intended to support and stimulate socio economic development. But what tended to undermine the image of these so called official media was the impression that had gained over the years that they could be influenced by those who wished to manipulate them for their own needs, whether it is the government of the day or other interested groups. The vociferous demand for granting autonomy to the electronic media and thus insulating them against external pressures ultimately led to the promulgation of the Prasar Bharathi act of the 1990. The postulates that guided the Act have been overtaken by several events of the nineties especially the emergence of transnational broadcasting and the two separate but concurring landmark judgments on airwaves by the Supreme Court in February,

1995, holding inter alia that air waves were a public property and that broadcasting media should be under the control of the public as distinct from the Government.”

The judgment referred to here refers to the case of Secretary, I and B versus Cricket Association of Bengal and others. The judgment categorically asks the Central Government to take immediate steps “to establish an independent autonomous authority representative of all sections and interests in the society to control and regulate the use of airwaves”. The judgment was delivered by Justice P B Savant and Justice S Mohan on 9th February, 1995. Justice B P Jeevan Reddy delivered a separate but concurring judgment”.

As a sequel to this judgment, the working group observed, it has become necessary to establish a regulatory framework for regulating the various channels. This becomes necessary to ensure that “there is no unfair or unjust treatment and unwarranted infringement of privacy or violation of accepted standards of public taste and decency.... We propose setting up a Radio and Television Authority of India, an independent body which is not part of Prasar Bharathi”. (Sengupta 1996).

In another important recommendation, the group clearly declared that financial support from the government for public broadcasting is inevitable. The group says that it does “not subscribe to the view that this might lead to an abridgement of the autonomy of Prasar Bharathi..... Such public funding will place on Prasar Bharathi an obligation to be accountable to its clientele”. (Sengupta, 1996).

Meanwhile, the Press Trust of India, in a news item dated 17th November, 2005, has reported that a variety of options are being considered to make public broadcaster Prasar Bharati a financially viable venture. They include transferring immovable assets like land to the autonomous corporation. Against an expenditure of around Rs 2,000 crores, Prasar Bharati just manages revenues of around Rs 800 crores, and depends on government grants and aid for the rest. A committee headed by Information and Broadcasting Secretary is studying the matter and has held various meetings to find a solution to the financial crunch of Prasar Bharati and make it a self-sustainable entity.

The report says that a senior official told press reporters in New Delhi that they had gone through a variety of proposals and a final decision was expected in around one month. The official said Prasar Bharati was currently occupying lucrative government real estate across the country, on which it has its offices and other equipments. One of the proposals being considered, according to the official, was either to transfer the land to Prasar Bharati for free or work out other arrangements.

Autonomy for radio and television.

All India Radio as well as Doordarshan has always been seen by the general public as an extension of the government in power. As far as the common man is concerned, what is said in the radio is the point of view of the government. Similarly, this government centric impression about the medium has led to certain attitudes, in the

minds of those who work in the medium as well as the general public that certain types of material cannot and will not be used on the radio. This has affected the style of presentation and the nature of input of All India Radio.

As (Sengupta 1996) observes, “In the listeners’ mind, AIR and Doordarshan are inevitably identified with the Government. Disenchantment with any aspect of Government’s policy or activity has a bearing on one’s reaction to the programmes. There is a predisposition on the part of the public that whatever comes from an official source should be treated as merely one side of the picture. Even in the innocuous area of development communication, when the recommended inputs are not available at the field level, it is the credibility of the official media that is unfortunately eroded.”

The group also says elsewhere in their report that “there is a duality in the character and functioning of the so called official media. On the one hand, their position as an organ of the Government places on it the responsibility to project the policies and objectives of the Government. As an extended arm of publicity for the Government, it presents and emphasizes viewpoints which the government is anxious to place before the people.” (Thus, it inevitably happens that in) “A climate of conformity controversial issues (usually) get elbowed out or glossed over.”

FM Radio movement.

Sevanti Ninan, in an article in The Hindu, dated August 28, 2002, is perhaps one of the best ways to conclude this discussion on the history and evolution of All India Radio. She says, “AIR remains India's foremost rural medium, and that alone makes it firmly relevant

in a country whose population is primarily rural. Not just for every votary of public service broadcasting, but also for audiences, and most importantly these days, for the market. For fast moving consumer goods targeting the rural sector, it remains the medium of choice. This year AIR grossed its highest revenues in a decade at Rs. 97 crores, up from Rs. 73 crores the previous year.

She also points out that the radio is fast evolving as a “morning medium, listened to in the car, at home and by the farmer in his field. The country's rising car population presents a growing audience for radio but private FM's seductive crooners are there, waiting to seduce listeners away from stodgy AIR”.The present move by the Central Information and Broadcasting Ministry to encourage FM radio stations in the private sector must be seen against this background of the formation of the Prasar Bharathi Corporation and the common perception regarding the autonomy and credibility of official media.

In a detailed analysis of the FM scenario, the financial daily Business Line (July 3, 2005) says that “The plan to take private FM to a total of 90 cities with 330 fresh licenses is just the tip of the iceberg. ...India with its vast cultural and geographical diversity can easily accommodate 3,000 FM stations. U.S., which is a far more homogeneous market, has over 14,000 radio stations! Anyone who has a doubt about the potential of FM radio should look at the history of mobile telephony in the country. After migrating from the fixed licence fee regime to a revenue-sharing model, the industry has just taken off, and is today the showpiece of India's decade-and-a-half liberalisation policy. The telecom companies have done so well under

the new regime that the Government has made more money out of revenue share than it would have with fixed licence fees. The Centre can also benefit from the taxes it gets on corporate profits as well.

Finally, there is tremendous benefit for the consumers. The reforms in telecom led to the emergence of the mobile players, who through their constant price war, brought the cost of owning a mobile down. Now we have a situation where Nokia, the world's largest handset maker is set to begin manufacturing in the country. Various other players like Elcoteq, LG, Alcatel, etc. have also followed suit. This would make it even cheaper for anyone to go mobile. Of course, the cost involved in tuning into FM radio is nowhere close to what it is in owning a mobile phone. A person can buy a simple FM radio for under Rs100 today. Still, the benefits in terms of the infotainment value are enormous. The gains from the higher FM radio penetration could be far more if only the Government relents on the on the issue of allowing FM operators to air news and current affairs programmes. If private television channels can be allowed to beam news and current affairs, why not FM radio channels? The reach of radio is many times more than television.”

The former Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Minister, Mr Jaipal Reddy's announcement of the second phase of the FM regime has to be seen against this background. The phase-II expansion of private FM radio kicked off in September, 2005, with the information and broadcasting ministry notifying the two-stage process.

In stage-I, 'pre-qualification bids' will have to be submitted by interested parties for 338 frequencies in 91 cities. The eligibility conditions of interested companies on financial terms and other related matters will be verified in stage-I. In stage-II, financial bids will be evaluated for specific frequencies. The last date for submission of applications is November 7

The entire process of bidding and awarding the frequencies is expected to be over by mid-December, ministry officials said. The FM phase-II expansion was announced by the ministry in early July in which the government had accepted the recommendations of both Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and Dr Amit Mitra's radio broadcast committee on shifting from licence fee regime to 4% revenue-sharing model.

To discourage non-serious participants, financial eligibility of applicants will be evaluated in the stage-I, pre-qualification notification. The applicants bidding for frequencies in all regions will be required to furnish proof of company's net worth to be over Rs 10 crore. .

The final selection for grant of permission to establish and operate an FM radio channel in any city shall be made in stage II (financial bids) out of the applicants in the pre-qualification bids (stage I) found eligible after following the criteria and the procedure as detailed in the tender document, the notification said. However, sensing commercial opportunity in allowing news of a non-political nature on community radio, the Cabinet decided to refer the phase-II

of community radio expansion to a group of ministers to be headed by agriculture minister Sharad Pawar.

The latest position, as far as All India radio is concerned can be described as follows: "AIR today has a network of 215 broadcasting centres with 144 medium frequency(MW), 54 high frequency (SW) and 139 FM transmitters. The coverage is 91.42% of the area , serving 99.13% of the people in the largest democracy of the world. AIR covers 24 Languages and 146 dialects in home services. In External services, it covers 27 languages; 17 national and 10 foreign languages". (Website of All India Radio).

This web site has also compiled a list of main accomplishments which runs as follows: On August 15,1947, when India attained Independence the number of radio stations was six - at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Tiruchirapalli and Lucknow. On July 20, 1952 First National Programme of Music was broadcast from AIR The National Programme of Talks (English) commenced from AIR on July 29, 1953.The first Radio Sangeet Sammelan was held in 1954. On October 3, 1957 Vividh Bharati Services started.

On July 21, 1969 Yuvavani services were started at Delhi. On August 15, 1969 a 1000 KW Superpower Medium Wave Transmitter was commissioned at Calcutta (Mogra). The 1000 KW Superpower Medium Wave Transmitter was commissioned at Rajkot on January 8, 1971. The Akashvani Annual Awards instituted in 1974. The First ever FM service was started from Madras on July 23, 1977. On September 14, 1984 two High Power 250 KW shortwave transmitters

were inaugurated at Aligarh. The first Local Radio Station was started at Nagarcoil on October 30, 1984. By 1985 all radio stations were provided with 5 channel satellite receiver terminals. May 18, 1988 saw the introduction of National Channel and on April 8, 1989 the Integrated North East Service was commissioned. On March 2, 1990 the 100th station of AIR commissioned at Warangal (Andhra Pradesh), while on March 10, 1990 two 500 KW Superpower shortwave transmitters were commissioned at Bangalore. October 2, 1992 saw the commissioning of FM Channel at Jalandhar.

The practice of introducing time slots on FM channel to private parties was started at Mumbai on August 15, 1993. On September 28, 1994 four 500 KW Superpower Shortwave transmitters at Bangalore were inaugurated. With this Bangalore has become one of the biggest transmitting centres in the world.

May 2, 1996 saw the launching of AIR on-line Information Services on Internet. On January 13, 1997 Audio on demand on Internet Service was started. Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) was introduced at Delhi on an experimental basis on April 1, 1997. On January 26, 1998 'Radio on Demand' service on 2nd FM Channel Transmission was commenced. AIR 'News on Telephone' and AIR 'live on Internet'. Started started broadcasting on February 25, 1998 .

On Sept 1, 2001 AIR launched an Infotainment channel known as FM-II at four metros, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi, in addition to the Metro Channel FM-I. On Feb 27, 2002 AIR launched its first ever digital satellite home service which will cater to Indian sub-

continent and South-East Asia. In July, 2002 All India Radio celebrated 75 years of Broadcasting and in April, 2003 the Marketing Division of Prasar Bharati was inaugurated. On Jan 26, 2004 Bhasha Bharati Channel of AIR launched at Delhi and Classical Music Channel launched at Bangalore. Apr 01, 2004 Launch of Kisan Vani Programme from 12 Stations of AIR. Dec 16, 2004 DTH Service of Prasar Bharati.

Chapter 3.

AIR in Kerala and the growth of News Services.

In this chapter, the growth of All India Radio in Kerala and the development of the News Services division are documented. The Audience Research Report, 2005, presents an over view of the growth of radio in Kerala in these words: "The growth of broadcasting in Kerala during the years has been tremendous. Compared to a single 5 KW transmitter in 1943, Kerala has now 20 KW and 50 KW transmitters in Thiruvananthapuram, 2 X 100 KW transmitters at Allapuzha, 100 KW transmitters at Thrissur and Kozhikode, 2 X 3 KW FM transmitters at Devikulam, Kochi and Kannur, 2X 5 KW at Thiruvananthapuram and 100 KW transmitter at Kozhikode for CBS.

From a few hundred sets owned by affluent individuals, in small pockets of erstwhile Travancore state, radio now reaches every nook and corner of Kerala and abroad. Radio programmes covering a broad spectrum of interests in arts, culture, science, education, economic development etc are broadcast for a total duration of 97 hours."

Beginning Years.

The first radio broadcast in Malayalam was from Madras in 1939. It consisted of an Onam message from the Raja of Kollenkode, Vasudeva Raja. But, even before that, the Travancore royal family, based in Thiruvananthapuram, had initiated steps to set up a regular radio station. A team of officers had gone to Bombay, where a

broadcasting service was already in existence. A five Kilo Watt transmitter was set up, under the guidance of Goisar, the then Chief engineer of All India Radio.

The transmitter was established at Pangappara near Kulathur in Thiruvananthapuram, while the studios functioned at the band stand in Palayam, near the present MLA hostel. Although the work started in 1939, actual transmission commenced only on March 12, 1943. The transmission was inaugurated by the then Maharaja of Travancore Chithira Tirunal Balarama Varma, who switched on the 5 KW transmitter. (ARU report, 2005).

During the initial days the transmission time was three hours. K Saradamani, who had served as announcer in those halcyon days remembers: "After the opening announcement, a Swathi Tirunal song was sung. It was sung sometimes by the announcer, and sometimes by tempura artists. The programmes used to end with the rendering of Vancheesa mangalam, a song in praise of the Travancore King. Music, features, akshara slokam, poetry reading, small dramas, talks etc were some of the programmes aired during the initial days." (Akashvani, 1990).

The renowned violin artist, the late Chalakkudi Narayana Swami, who used to be a well known figure in the Kerala cultural landscape, remembers thus about the early days of broadcasting in Kerala: "I joined the Travancore broadcasting station in 1946. At that time Professor R Sreenivasan was its Director. The time of broadcast was four times a week, from 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm. Transmission used to open with a Swathi kriti and conclude with the Vanchi mangalam.

Music concerts, features, music lessons, dramas etc were the staple of broadcast during those days. (Akashvani,1990).

“G Madhavan pillai and A P Nair were in charge of technical matters in the early days of Malayalam broadcasting. In those days, radio was considered part of the telephone department and Madhavan pillai came from this department.” (Akashvani,1990).

In 1950, the Thiruvananthapuram station was taken over by All India Radio. GPS Nair took charge as the first director of the station. The broadcasting time was extended from three hours a day to seven and a half hours. The relay of two Malayalam news bulletins from New Delhi was started as also the relay of important English news bulletins. This necessitated the urgent augmentation of studio facilities. GPS Nair remembers that “the station engineers of the time wrote to Delhi a number of times and as a result the Director General Laksmanan and Chief Engineer Ram Chandani came to Thiruvananthapuram to review the position. Convinced of the need for a more spacious accommodation, they suggested a location some where near the heart of the city. The Maharaja of Travancore came up with the idea of utilizing Bhakti Vilasam for the purpose. He also suggested Kanakakunnu palace as an alternative. Accordingly, the Director General and Chief Engineer met the then Chief Minister T K Narayana Pillai. Though the Chief Minister was not personally in favor of the idea, the matter was placed before the Cabinet, which took a decision in favor of All India Radio.” (Akashvani, 1990).

The Kozhikode station of was started in 1950. Later a station was established in Thrissur in 1956. Later still, with the intention of increasing the power and extent of transmission, a 100 KW station

was established at Alappuzha. At present the position and strength of AIR stations in Kerala is as follows:

- Thiruvananthapuram: 5 Kilo Watt (KW) Medium wave (MW) from 1.4.1950, 10 KW MW from 15.2.1973. These were upgraded to 20 KW MW on 1.1.2002 and 50 KW Short wave (SW) on 6.11.1994, respectively.
- Kozhikode: 10 KW MW on 14.5.1950 and upgraded to 100 KW MW on 30.12. 1995.
- Thrissur: 20 KW MW on 14.1.1957 and upgraded to 100 KW MW on 15.9.1994.
- Alappuzha: 100 KW MW on 17.7.1971 and its strength was doubled by establishing one more transmitter of the same power on 15.4.1999.
- Kochi: 2 X 3 KW FM on 1.10.1989 and 2 more of the same strength on 15.2.1996.
- Kannur: 2 X 3 KW FM on 14.5.1991.
- Devikulam: do on 23.2.1994.
- Kavaratthi: 1 KW MW on 1.1.1994.

Vividh Bharathi.

- Thiruvananthapuram: 1 KW MW on 6.3.1966 which was supplemented by one more of the same strength on 1.5.1975. Later this was upgraded to 2 X 5 KW FM from 15.8.1999.
- Kozhikode: 1 KW MW from 2.11.1975, which was upgraded to 2 X 5 KW FM from 1.4.2003.

(Figures and dated from ARU Report, 2005).

News in All India Radio.

The major part of the history of broadcast news in India concerns the evolution and growth of the News Services Division (NSD). Commencing in a small way in 1936, the NSD now produces 284 news bulletins every day. In addition, it provides latest services like the phone in for news service as well as an internet site. The history of AIR News is dealt with in detail in the book “Here is the News: The Story of News Services Division” edited by Bimla Bhalla and later updated by D C Bhaumick in 1996. The book catchingly points out that “a day has twenty four hours only. For AIR news, the day extends to 38 hours and 35 minutes, with bulletins on the local, regional, national and external services”.

The website of All India Radio says that “The history of news broadcasting in India is far older than that of All India Radio. The first news bulletin was aired on 23 July 1927, from the privately owned radio station at Mumbai. It was only in August, 1937, that the news unit of AIR came into being, when the first news bulletin was broadcast from Delhi. By 1939 - 40, AIR was broadcasting 27 bulletins and the unit was known as Central News Organisation which was later called News Services Division (NSD). In 1943, an External Broadcast Unit was established under the Director of News. NSD is one of the premier broadcasting organizations in the world reaching more than 97% of the country's population.

An organized effort to streamline the use and style of language used in All India radio news broadcasts was started in 1967 when G D Mirchandani was the Director of News Services. Later in 1992, a detailed set of guidelines was published under the leadership

of Bimla Bhalla, who was the Director General of News in 1992. This set of guidelines was, in effect, the very first style book prepared for broadcasting in India. A second edition of the style book came out in 1996, under the editorship of Dwipesh Chandra Bhowmick, who also had been Director General of News Services in All India Radio.

As far as official media are concerned, the Government of India has prepared an official policy document that deals with news in the official context. This policy document was prepared by the Official News Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of G Parthasarathy in 1982. The Central Government had also constituted another Parliamentary Committee under the Chairpersonship of Geetha Mukherji which prepared detailed guidelines on the dos and don'ts concerning reporting of parliamentary proceedings by the official media including All India Radio and Doordarshan. This committee submitted its report in 1993. The second edition of the All India Radio stylebook takes note of all these sets of guidelines. (Narayanan,2000).

In the beginning, when broadcasting was being done under the aegis of the Indian Broadcasting company, the concept of editing and preparing news especially for radio was not known. The practice then was to take news items put out by the international news agencies like the Reuters and read them out aloud. The news items of the news agencies used to reach the offices of the broadcaster by tele printers. Since the practice was to tear off news items from these tele printers and read, the system came to be known as 'rip and read'. Even now, when unedited items are read over air, the practice is criticized as 'rip and read' journalism.

Up till 1935, only two news bulletins were being broadcast – one each in English and Hindi. News broadcast really came of age in the All India Radio in 1936, with the Delhi station of AIR starting a regular bulletin to coincide with the start of their transmission. A current affairs programme, dealing with issues of contemporary relevance was also started from AIR, Delhi.

Around this time, a separate organization was deemed necessary to oversee the efficient preparation of news bulletins and to ensure the impartiality and objectivity of news broadcast over All India Radio. Thus, the Central News Organization came into being on August 1, 1937. Sir Charles Burns assumed charge as News Editor in the new organization in September that year.

The Second World War proved to be the testing ground for the fledgling news organization. It was also an impetus for developing the news gathering and transmitting apparatus rapidly. This period saw the introduction of news bulletins in Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Gujarati being broadcast from Delhi.

By the end of the Second World War, the Central News Organization had overcome many of its teething troubles and was fast evolving into a completely professional news organization. By 1939, the number of news bulletins had already increased to 27, and the duration of news broadcast totaled to three and a half hours.

After Independence, news broadcasting over All India Radio underwent rapid transformation as far as quantity and quality were concerned. In 1947, M L Chawla took charge as the first Indian Director of News Services. The number of news broadcasts had risen to 74 and they had acquired the specific objectives of reflecting what

the nation stood for, her role in external affairs and the start of economic reconstruction.

At present, AIR broadcasts 364 news bulletins in 81 languages and dialects. These bulletins fall into three classes – national, regional and external. This differentiation is made on the basis of the intended listener ship of the bulletin. The subject matter of the bulletins also differs from this point of view.

Thus, national bulletins are usually broadcast from New Delhi and are intended for listeners all over the country. News items of national relevance are invariably selected for these bulletins. There are 112 national bulletins being broadcast daily in 17 languages. The total duration of these bulletins comes to 14 hours and 29 minutes. (Figures regarding number, duration etc of news bulletins taken from the website of All India Radio).

Regional bulletins are broadcast from AIR stations situated all over the country. These bulletins are mainly intended for listeners in the specific regions. News items of regional importance that do not find place in national bulletins are broadcast in the regional bulletins. For example, a festival of regional relevance, like that of a major temple in Kerala, may find mention in the regional bulletins broadcast from Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode, but not in the Malayalam national bulletin broadcast from New Delhi. However, the start of the pilgrim season at Sabarimala may find mention in the National Malayalam bulletin also because of the national importance of the shrine.

It is also to be noted here that the language of the national bulletin also is a factor when it comes to the decision on what to

include and what to leave out. The Sabarimala pilgrimage may be included in the Malayalam bulletin from New Delhi, but it need not necessarily find place in the English or Hindi bulletins. However, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada bulletins may include this news item because these are states neighboring Kerala and number of Sabarimala pilgrims from these states is ever on the increase.

The number of regional bulletins broadcast every day in All India Radio is 187. The total duration of these broadcasts comes to 20 hours and 35 minutes.

External bulletins are broadcast by All India Radio, with the prime purpose of reaching Indians living abroad. These bulletins also reflect the Indian viewpoint concerning various international political, social and financial developments. The external services are aimed at four broad categories of listeners. They are listeners in neighboring countries, listeners of Indian origin, English speaking population in general, and other foreign listeners. All India Radio is unable to reach countries on the other side of the world like USA, Canada, Latin American countries and the Caribbean. This is because India does not have, at present, a relay base which would enable it to originate transmissions from sites close to the intended targets. However, canned programmes are sent every week to ethnic broadcasting stations through Indian missions abroad. (Sengupta 1996).

The external bulletins are in English and in some other Indian languages like Hindi and Tamil. At present there are 65 external bulletins, being broadcast in 25 languages. The total duration of these bulletins comes to 8 hours and 57 minutes.

All India Radio broke new grounds on May 2nd, 1996 by introducing an on line information service on the Internet. Thus, All India Radio got connected on the information superhighway, by mounting an experimental on - line information service on the Internet. AIR daily news update, commentary on topics from current affairs and the significant highlights from the country's newspapers are fed regularly once a day in text mode. The system and home page design for this pilot service has been executed by the Research Department of AIR. This AIR service on the Net has received global appreciation and in the first ten days itself, over 7.5 lakh hits were reported. Most of the users are non - resident Indians and diplomats / officials all over the world. The experience and insightful feedback gathered from this experimental programme will be useful for setting up a regular information service of AIR on the Net. "This service on Internet has received world wide acclaim, especially from non resident Indians in different parts of the world" (Sengupta 1996).

The multiplicity of languages that All India Radio deals with makes for a unique feature of the news broadcast of the network. The pioneers of radio news in India recognized the need for providing people with news in their languages and thus was established the system of national and regional bulletins in English, Hindi and various regional languages. The significance of the pool system developed in All India Radio lies in the fact that it ensures unity in treatment of news items. It also makes for ease in deciding the policy of treatment of various news items.

Under this system, which was introduced right in the pioneering days of radio news in New Delhi, a basic news script is prepared in

English. This script will be different for national, regional and external bulletins. The editors of various language bulletins can choose the items they feel are relevant to their listeners from this pool. In the post Independence era, the preparation of the basic script was also being done in Hindi, the National language.

Masani Mehra (1985) discusses the problems specific to All India Radio, against this background. She refers to the system of 'pool copy' that is prevalent in AIR and explains it thus. The pool system was introduced in 1949 because of the large number of bulletins to be prepared and because of the lack of staff to prepare them separately for each of the various regional languages that have considerable listener ship in various parts of the country. She points out categorically that various Indian language bulletins are solely prepared by translators from the pool copy. These translations are often in a 'routine and stilted fashion' that 'there are so many and such frequent complaints about the selection of news, the language employed and the presentation'. In addition, since 'several language bulletins are served by a common text, the needs of the different areas to be served cannot possibly be met satisfactorily. It is not surprising that bulletins are standardized to a degree that makes them uninteresting'.

She works out a strong case for decentralization of news broadcasts and comes with the suggestion that various 'stations should be allowed to prepare their own bulletins so that regional and national news can be combined in one bulletin according to the needs of the listeners of a particular region. It would also get over the difficulty of translating news from English into the regional languages

as is done with the present centralized system. But it was argued that expert newsrooms at every station, with the required complement of editorial staff, monitors, teleprinters, correspondents and reporters would be more expensive than the present arrangement. This was undoubtedly so when the Central News Organisation was established, but now, with regional news units at every station, maned by editors, reporters and correspondents, and served by teleprinters, it is likely that a decentralized system would be not only better from the listeners' point of view but also less expensive. News is among the most widely heard of AIR's programmes and it is worthwhile to examine the question on the basis of professional standards and cost ratios without an undue concern for continuing a pattern simply because it exists.'

Regional news bulletins are also being broadcast from various stations in different states. At present, the number of such regional units is 41. The first regional bulletin from the states was broadcast from Lucknow and Nagpur in 1953. In South India, the first regional news unit came up in Chenai on May First, 1954. Bangalore followed sit ion November First, 1956. Telugu regional news from Hyderabad commenced on February 7th, 1957 and the Malayalam regional news from Thiruvananthapuram began broadcast on August 15th, 1957. Second regional news units were started in Vijayawada, Dharwad and Trichy in 1980 and 1981. However, a second regional news unit in Kerala was functional at Kozhikode right from April 14th, 1966.

Malayalam news broadcast from Thiruvananthapuram station was started on Independence Day, 1957. But news brodcasting in Kerala had a much earlier history. Results of the elections wherein

the first Communist government was voted into power in Kerala had received world wide attention and All India radio had made elaborate arrangements to broadcast the results. According to K N Damodaran nair, who had served in All India Radio during those days, the broadcasting of these results was the first news broadcasts from Kerala. (Akashvani 1990 and unpublished manuscripts). During the days of Travancore Broadcasting Station, that is before the station was taken over by All India Radio, English news also used to be broadcast.

P Santhanam and news readers Santhakmaran and G Vivekanandan were in charge of election result broadcasts, while Santhanam, K N Damodaran Nair, P Chandrashekharan and V Balaraman were the members of the first regional news unit at Thiruvananthapuram.

Another news bulletin was started in Kerala from Kozhikode on April 14th 1966. A news bulletin in Mahal language of Lakshadweep is also being broadcast from Kozhikode station.

Some shortfalls of AIR news.

Masani Mehra (1985) includes a detailed critique of the functioning of news programs in All India Radio. She prefaces her criticism with the comment that as with other outputs of AIR, 'the common man's criticism of the news broadcast is uninformed and often unjustified. For the greater part the complaints stem from the provincial, parochial and communal outlook of some of the listeners. Influential persons complain if the news concerning them is not broadcast or not given enough importance. Quite a few complaints are concerned with relatively minor matters such as mispronunciation

of names of people and places. But certainly there are major problems involved in the broadcast of news which require serious consideration by the public without in anyway minimizing the magnitude of the news operation and its commendable regularity and punctuality.'

She points out that over centralization is one reason for AIR's news broadcasts becoming unsatisfactory. In her opinion the major flaws can be attributed directly or indirectly to its functioning as a government department. One of the direct consequences of such a state of affairs is what she calls 'an ultra cautious approach to news'. 'Important items of news have, at times, been omitted from the bulletins, because as the voice of the Government, AIR cannot risk broadcasting any news which is not confirmed by the proper authority. The much publicized delay in announcing the news of Pandit Nehru's death was caused by the need to wait for the Cabinet Secretariat's instructions before the news could be broadcast. Topicality involves urgent decisions that must be taken by the editor on duty. A system of hierarchical checks and controls reduces the editor to a mere draughtsman.'

A second short coming that Masani notes, regarding AIR news, is 'the infiltration into the bulletins of comparatively unimportant items pertaining to the government and to the ruling party.' Here she adds a very significant comment that puts the inter related problems of autonomy, credibility and objectivity of All India Radio news and its acceptability among the public in a comprehensive manner. She says that 'even from the government's point of view the lack of credibility in AIR's pronouncements seriously reduces its utility as a medium for

reaching the public. Besides laying AIR open to the charge of biased reporting of news, the present practice of overloading the bulletins with ministerial and official pronouncements, even when they contain no policy announcements, makes the newscast dull. If such matter could be pruned

A news reel programme called Vartha Tarangini is also being broadcast twice a week from both the stations in Kerala. It consists of excerpts and actualities from major news and current affairs events that come within the coverage area of these stations. K N Damodaran Nair remembers that the first news reel programme was aired during the 1950s. In his unpublished memoirs he recollects as follows: "It was of five minutes duration and was about the Arat procession of the Padmanabha Swami temple in Thiruvananthapuram. Here the main deity is taken out in procession on the last day of the temple festival to the Shankhumukham beach for a ritual bath. The programme was produced by Vivekanandan and myself. Santhanam's name was given as that of the editor. After consultation among all of us the new programme was named Vartha tarangini". (Unpublished manuscript, K N Damodaran Nair).

In the fifties, All India Radio started the practice of broadcasting a short duration bulletin consisting of solely strange news that has the quality of oddity. The programme called 'odds and ends' gained much popularity and soon it was replicated in all languages. In Malayalam it was called Kouthuka Varthakal and used to be broadcast every Sunday. Ramachandran, a veteran news reader developed a unique style of presenting these news broadcasts in a hearer friendly manner.

In 2001, the programme was suspended. Following this, the Kozhikode station instituted a weekly news analysis programme called Deepthi which exhaustively treats of a current affairs subject, exploring the various aspects of the subject.

The Malayalam news broadcast in the External Services is one of the latest Malayalam news programmes to be introduced. It is of ten minutes duration and is aired at 11.00 pm from the New Delhi station.

The News Over Phone programme was successfully tried out by the Malayalam News Unit at Thiruvananthapuram during the Local Self Government elections in 2005. A large number of calls were received and frequent updates of results were posted.

Chapter 4. The Discourse of Radio News.

The discourse of radio news is generated out of a script prepared by a set of reporters and editors. They follow a set of conventions. They may also follow a style book which lays down rules of punctuation, spelling, prosody etc.

This means radio news presentation involves two processes with differing requirements at the same time. It is a script that is **written** for **reading**. That means, it is **written in** for comprehension and **read out** for communication.

Here a significant differentiation arises. A news script is something more than what is written down for others to read. It is a script written down to be read out **aloud**. So, the differences between the processes of writing, reading and listening all come to the fore and problematise the process of radio news presentation.

It is also to be noted here that the broadcast of a news bulletin involves at least three stages, which have their own differing criterion. In the first stage, a script is generated, based either on a report filed by a correspondent or on the basis of what is called 'wire copy'. (Wire copy refers to matter originally provided by the news agencies like Press Trust of India – PTI and the United News of India – UNI. They are usually in English and are oriented more for the requirements of the print media.) Translation to the regional language and adjustments for broadcast language usually takes place at this stage, although the tenets of written language are mainly followed here.

In the second stage the editor and the news reader goes through the copy and stylistic corrections are made to the script. Here, the conventions of reading and reading out aloud attain prominence.

Finally at the third stage of actual broadcast, the efficacy of the script has to be evaluated. Here, the conventions of listening become paramount.

Language – Written, Spoken and Read

Written language emerged to satisfy new communicative needs – in particular the need for permanent records that could be referred to again and again. Thus, the contexts of using written language are far removed from those of using the spoken language.

In the main, written language is addressed to someone far removed in space - and may be in time – from the person who is writing. So, written language necessarily developed a style of self contained - ness – a quality that is decisive in ensuring intelligibility of the text.

From this, it naturally follows that written texts tend to be more complex from a linguistics point of view. Written texts have more chances of involving longer sentences, more complex clauses, greater information load and higher lexical density. They tend to have more subordinate clauses, more long sequences of prepositional phrases, more attributive adjectives and more passive constructions than spoken language. It also means that in written discourse, words themselves are the prime movers of meaning. What could possibly be conveyed through non – verbal behavior in spoken discourse also

has to be communicated through the choice of words and their diction, in written discourse.

On the other hand, spoken discourse faces another set of constraints. One of the main constraints is that spoken discourse is uni - directional. The listener is constrained to understand the message in the order in which it is conveyed as far as spoken discourse is concerned.

However, basically, the differences between these two forms of discourses stem from the fact that each has its own level of signification. By tone, stress and pauses, the speaker can pass on an enormous amount of information to the listener. At the same time, written discourse has developed an array of techniques that seek to imitate the immediacy and reactivity of spoken discourse.

Again, while spoken discourse is discursive and digressive in nature, written discourse scores in its logicity and well formed-ness. Spoken discourse reflects the regional and local environs of the language, while written discourse attempts to achieve homogeneity and acts as a standardization element as far as language as a whole is concerned.

The Element of Listening.

Radio news brings two more elements into this frame work of spoken – written paradigm. In a strict sense, radio news is not spoken language; rather, it is more apt to call radio news a **read** language. Since radio news derives its relevance from the fact that it is listened to by a large number of people, it can also be called a **listened** language.

Reading has been defined as the 'cognitive process of understanding a linguistic message'. The website of the Princeton University has defined reading as a public performance also.

News reading is an amalgamation of both these processes. It involves the understanding of the meaning of the written text on the part of the news reader. It also refers to the reading out aloud of a script in certain well defined environments, following a set of rules and conventions.

However, it has to be noted that the dynamics of listening to a news script read out on the radio is different from the way in which a person hears and understands what another person is saying. It is also different from the performance of a person who reads out a script in front of an audience.

In short, the discourse of radio news is a complex activity that involves the processes of writing, speaking, listening and hearing.

Characteristics of news discourse.

Thus, it follows that the discourse of radio news can be realized from the different sets of binaries discussed above. The binaries involved are the spoken – written paradigm and the read – listened relationship. In addition, the basic characteristics of the broadcast media also have a significant role in shaping up the form and content of the news script.

The factors are:

- 1, invisible audience,
- 2, non reactive audience,
- 3, live broadcast,
- 4, written script,

- 5, number of items,
- 6, complete sentence structures,
- 7, relatively short sentences,
- 8, selection of lexical items,
- 9, grammatical markers and sense markers.

The first two factors arise out of the fact that radio news arises out of a written script. When the third, fourth and fifth factors are also considered, they may together be considered to refer to the characteristics of the broadcast medium. The fifth factor, along with the remaining four, refers to the features of radio news a spoken, read and listened discourse.

The first two factors underline the fact that the discourse of news has to be self contained. All the information that is necessary for the audience to decipher the message has to be included in the script and its presentation. The news reader is not in a position to see and gauge the reactions of the audience and adjust his discourse accordingly. Similarly, the audience is not in a position to interrupt a news bulletin and call for explanations or additional information. Here, the characteristics of the radio as an audio medium connect with the rigors of the prepared script as a written medium.

On another axis, the script is an arrangement of words on a page aimed at expressing a set of meanings and ideas. It is shaped in a desired manner by the use of devices like spelling, divisions like sentences, paragraphs etc and punctuation. At the same time, this script has to be realized through the news readers' voices. The various dimensions and nuances of the script and the message it

encodes have to be realized through the pitch, rhythm, stress and intonation of the news reader. The success of the news discourse lies in the efficiency with which the written discourse of the script is translated into the read discourse of the news reader, so as to reflect the preferred reading.

The first five factors can also be said to arise out of the particularities of the broadcast medium. By convention, news broadcasts are always done live; that is, the presentation and transmission of the news broadcast are always simultaneous. This means the news reader has to be alert to minimize faults because there is never scope for editing, in the course of presentation. It also means that the amount of matter that goes into a bulletin has to be necessarily circumscribed by the length of the broadcast. There is a physical limit to the number of items that can be read within the allotted time limit. There is also no scope for a wide variety of sentence structures, new lexical items etc because the reader as well as the listener will not have the time to reflect on and understand the relevance of such nuances.

The final five characteristics define the language of radio discourse. They help in delivering the written script into an oral presentation. For example, radio news writers are rigorously trained in framing short sentences. They are often asked to keep to one theme per sentence, as a practical method of curbing sentence length. News readers and editors also become quite adept in presenting any major idea using self contained, short sentences. They judge the length of sentences in terms of breath length – the length of sentences that they can aspirate comfortably, without

pausing for breath. The main drawback of standardizing sentence length is that such breath lengths vary individually. So, the one theme per sentence technique has been accepted with quite efficient success in determining the sentence length of broadcast material.

In this context what Arokianathan (1988) observes assumes relevance. "The writing script of a language is usually devised to represent mainly the sounds of that particular language. However, this representation is always found to be inadequate, such that there exists a gap between the written representation and the reading pronunciation. There seems to be no faithful rendering of the writing system in its true sense, because they are usually (morpho) phonemic rather than phonetic".

The dichotomy of presenting a written script purely for hearing comes up most clearly in the case of markers. By markers are primarily meant pauses and punctuation marks. They may often mark grammatical distinctions also.

Here, the basic problem is the conveyance of the written punctuation or sense marker which has no overt phonetic value through an audio medium. That is, for example, a coma can only be intimated through a null set, a pause; it has no pronunciation. In face to face conversation and on the TV, the additional elements of kinesics and body language can make for clearer communication of such markers.

Lexical Items.

Another related aspect is the selection of lexical items for news stories. Since the reader never gets a chance to check up what he hears on the radio on an immediate basis, it stands to reason that all

lexical items included in the bulletin should be familiar to the listener. This causes problems when translating new terms into Malayalam and when coining new terms to express new information. An excellent example is available with the news archives of All India Radio. When the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation introduced a new type of 'low platform buses' in Trivandrum, almost all Malayalam dailies came out with their own Malayalam equivalents for the phrase. However, Pradesika varthakal, the Malayalam radio news bulletin preferred to use the English phrase taking into primary consideration the ease in comprehension that it provides.

Linguistic features of News Discourse.

It is axiomatic to say that language is at the root of news broadcasting. No other genre of radio discourse is as primarily dependent on language as is radio news. As observed in White 1996, "at the heart of radio and TV news broadcasting are reporting and writing.....If your reporting and writing aren't good, nothing is going to happen".

Very much in the same vein, K N Damodaran Nair (Damodaran Nair unpublished) speaks of the necessity of creating an audio or aural culture. He points out that the broadcaster must "understand and learn the idea of and meaning behind the script..... It is only when these exercises are repeated do the objectives of broadcasting get realized. Satyajit Ray had once called for the development of a cinema culture. In the same way, the development of a radio culture is also desirable. Just as the story line and plot of a cinema should have a well developed structure, so too should a well thought out radio programme too exhibit a structure."

Arokianathan (1988) observes that “any radio literature is intended for the aural medium and needs to be read aloud..... The difference in which one’s writing is carried over these two media requires a different objective and technique in the art of writing. The fact that the script is going to be “spoken influences” the author’s writing to make him “write in an easy and simple form ...; simple, in the sense, the sentences are not too long and complex with embeddings etc; easy, in the sense that lexical items are not pedantic and archaic, but are known to a wider population and are more easily understandable”.

White (1996) is a widely recognized textbook of broadcast journalism. One of the cardinal instructions given therein makes clear some of the linguistic features of broadcast language. White observes that “most of us use brief sentences, with few subordinate clauses, and choose easy to understand words in everyday conversations. Communicating information to a radio or a television audience is best done in every day language, simply and with sincerity”.

Similar observations have been made by V R Prabhodhachandran Nair in Prabhodhachandran nair (2001). In the article titled ‘madhyamangalile bhaasha” he points out that “it will be very irritating to hear the language of the print (here he refers to written language) from the radio.....We should remember, as that master of style Kuttakrishna Marar has time and again repeated, that the seriousness and vitality of language can be increased by decreasing the number of letters used and by the proper arrangement of words”.

Arokianathan (1988) has made a study of Tamil news in All India Radio and has listed some features of news in Tamil broadcast from Chennai as well as from New Delhi. Voicing of initial stops in non native words, allowance of clusters in initial, medial and final positions, use of non – epenthetic words and use of Standard Spoken Tamil forms which are rare in current use and are not easily comprehensible are the main linguistic features thus enumerated.

He has an interesting observation to make about the pronunciation of Tamil radio news readers. “Sometimes, radio news readers pronounce non native words in a unique way, in the sense that they are neither written in Tamil nor pronounced by anyone in such a way.....Further more, radio news uses the word bhaaratham to refer to India, while most other print media use indiyaa besides bhaaratham to refer to India”.

Another observation made by Arokianathan is also noteworthy, because it gives a clear clue to the process by which radio news is generated. “It is often noticed that peculiar syntactic patterns, similar to English syntax, are also found in news because the source of the program happens to be in English. Often sentences in news programs are complex and long. (Arokianathan attests to a sentence broadcast in the 6.30 pm news from Chennai on 29.12.1975 which had 35 words). Sentences in news were found to have an average of nine words per sentence, while radio dramas attested 4.2 words per sentence and conversations 5 words per sentence”.

In White (1996), there are also hosts of technical advice imparted to novice news men that provide valuable clues concerning the language technology employed by working broadcasters. For

example, White observes that “verbs play a vital role in broadcast writing. Present tense verbs should be used in broadcast copy as much as possible. People turn to the radio and Television to know what is happening now. (So, it is axiomatic) that when you write broadcast copy, try to make the news sound fresh without being dishonest or misleading”.

White continues with more specific advice. “Using the right verb is also crucial. Look for strong verbs that describes the action vividly, but make sure that they do not sent the wrong message”.

Grossberg et al (1998) approaches the question of language, meaning and their interpretation in media from another angle. They explain the working of the media from the points of view of two models – the transmission model and the cultural model. The former is ‘the process of moving messages from a sender through a medium to a receiver’. Here the cardinal questions involved in analyzing the language of the media are who said what to whom on which medium and to what effect.

The cultural model of communication sees the process as “the construction of a shared space or map of meaning within which people co exist”. Here, language of the media is not an isolated phenomenon; rather it is involved in the generation as well as the realization of meaning and its communication within a society. (pp 18, 19 and 20).

As far as the transmission model is concerned, the prime purpose of communication is to ensure that the receiver decodes the same meaning transmitted by the sender through a medium. The

more the correlation of meaning at the two ends of the transmission, the higher the communication equivalence of the process. As far as the cultural model of communication is concerned, the meaning of the communication is the result of the world view, knowledge and perceptions of both the sender and the receiver. Hence the possibility that the encoding of the message and its decoding may result in divergent sets of meanings cannot and need not be ruled out.

Against this background, the language of communication is to be understood as the result of the combination of at least three sets of postulates. They concern the nature of the text, the content of the text and the interpretation of the text. Connecting these three facets of communication is the concept of meaning which can be described as the prime function of communication.

Meaning has been conceived both as representational and as conceptual. In the former it is taken that language acquires meaning because of the one on one representation of things seen in the world and encountered by people inhabiting the world. The conceptual view concerning meaning says that meaning is the product of the inter relationship of the society with the world. Meaning is generated when members of a society encounter a phenomenon and want to convey it to others.

As Grossberg et al (1998) says, “a representational or realist theory of meaning assumes that for every word there is an object and for every object, there is a word. A conceptual or intentional theory of meaning assumes that for every word there is a mental image or thought and that every mental image or thought has its own appropriate word. These two commonsense views of meaning

assume that there is a necessary correspondence between a particular word or sign and its meaning”.

On a practical level, it can be seen that meaning is generated when people agree – the agreement may even be to disagree! In order to agree, people should find a ground of commonality. In order to find commonality, society shares a common code. A code can be defined as a system of signs where each sign is unique. Very broadly, any code acts as a system of meaning. Each code can generate its own system of meanings; thus each language develops their own systems of meanings and according to the cultural similarities and nature of contacts the meaning systems of different languages exhibit closeness or distance between themselves.

How do codes act as systems of meaning is the next question that arises naturally. Basically a code is a system of signs and each sign is a representation of distinctiveness. Black is black only because it is not any other color. Cat and cot are different words or signs in English because they are distinct. tala is different from mala in Malayalam because of their distinctiveness. For a non Malayali or for a person who does not know English these words may not be separate or distinctive because he or she will not be able to recognize the differences.

Over and above this, codes also divide the observable world into various categories. These categories are related to each other and also exhibit differences between each other and thus, through these functions, intertwine themselves into the world we know; that is, these functions make up the “shared space or map of meaning” referred to earlier.

Grossberg et al (1998) also talks about another feature of meaning systems, namely that they are wholly arbitrary. Codes and their constituent signs are, by virtue of their nature, arbitrary. Basically any code is a system made up of two systems of differences. The system of signifieds that they represent is defined by a set of differences; again, the system of signifiers which realize the signifieds as representations in the codes also owes its existence to differences amongst themselves. As Grossberg et al points out, “no natural law says that systems have to be linked (or) ...that systems have to be linked in just the way they were (or) that the world has to be divided the way it is”.

Concluding the discussion on meaning, Grossberg et al (1998) says that “people live in a world of meanings and interpretations, organized by codes of differences. They do not make those meanings: they do not interpret their world for themselves. Nor does the world come already interpreted apart from human activity. People live within the codes, the systems of differences, and the articulations by which those codes have been stitched together in various ways. They live within a culture, and the process by which that culture is produced, maintained, repaired and transformed is communication.Communication cannot be separated from the world that it communicates or from the codes that make it possible to communicate”.

For precisely this reason, it is important to understand the workings of the codes and signs of the mass media. This is all the more significant because media represents the most widely used and perceived sets of codes and signs. In this thesis, additionally, the

system of codes and signs are seen in the light of the communicative function that they full - fill, that is as a discourse. Here it is not the correctness or otherwise of the texts, codes and signs that assume significance. Rather, it is the discourse value appropriated by the text in a particular context that is considered significant. Thus, here media, text, discourse and codes appear as inter related phenomenon that act one on the other in the generation and perception of socially significant meanings and relevancies.

Narayanan (2000) is a work in Malayalam that provides practical tips on media language. The denotation of time and figures are two topics specifically referred to in the work. As far as electronic media like radio is concerned, referential time is of great significance. Taking the time of broadcast as a base, temporal reference can be made more evocative and clear. There is strictly no compulsion to follow the time mentioning systems followed in Western countries or in the print medium. Thus, standing on 27th November ,2005, the broadcaster can, with all clarity, refer to 2nd December, 2005 as the '2nd of next month'. Similarly, from the same standpoint, 20th November, 2005 can be referred to as 'last Sunday'. In general, broadcasters can, without loss of clarity and with economy of words and expression, refer to events using the year, time and day of broadcast in relation to other events.

Another point referred to by Narayanan is the depiction of figures. He points out that figures like million, billion etc are not germane in Indian contexts. Here the position values of figures increases gradually from units to crores, from right to left. Hence it is natural, easier on the ear and more in tune with the genius of the

discourse to read out figures using these place value terms. Thus the long figures like, for example 987654321 can be, with immediate comprehension, read out as, 98 crore, 76 lakhs, 54 thousand three hundred and twenty one.

As far as radio broadcasts are concerned, such accuracy is not necessary. The point here is the hugeness of the figure involved. An impression of this hugeness is better conveyed, with economy of expression, by the radio news reader, when he reads 'more than 98 crores' or 'almost 99 crores'.

Further elaborating on such related phenomenon, Narayanan points out that bulk of news material that comes out in media are from diverse sources that follow a plethora of styles and perhaps stylelessness. More often editing in this context turns out to be not mere correction and translation, but elaborate rewriting. It is in this context that problems like the depiction of time, figures etc assume significance. Again, it is the recognition and acknowledgement of such problems and the ceaseless attempts to resolve them that paves the way for a discourse that marks the communication through mass media.

Narayanan (2000) concludes his discussion on the language of electronic media by saying that, as far as the language of the media is concerned, "the first step is for media men to understand and internalize the genuine genius of the language concerned. Taming this genius for use in the particular medium is the next step. The language used for broadcast and telecast assumes specific characteristics. From the point of view of the sender, the language of the electronic medium is written to be read; from the point of view of

the listener, it is meant to be heard. Here, effective training in language use assumes paramount importance'. It can be seen that the discourse of the electronic medium develops dynamism, simplicity and an organic nature as a result of such conscious cultivation and training.

It is here that the conceptualization of the discourse of news again assumes relevance. Here, the language used is defined in terms of usage. The usage, at the same time, is characterized by the medium, the content and the language. The next chapter is the description of the discourse of news from these three points of view.

Chapter 5.

Analysis.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to describe the characteristics of the discourse of broadcast news against the parameters outlined in the previous chapters. The materials for analysis are the recordings of the 6.45 am Pradesika varthakal (Regional news), broadcast from the Kozhikode station of All India Radio and the manuscripts of the bulletins of Paradesika Varthakal broadcast from Thiruvananthapuram station at 12.30 pm and 6.20 pm. The texts (and in some cases, recordings) of bulletins, covering a period of one month (November,2004) have been used as the primary material for the study.

Methodology.

The methodology adopted for the study is as follows. The recordings and manuscripts are first classified in terms of their content into nine subjects. They are politics, development, religion, culture, legal, death, accidents, sports and miscellaneous. This classification provides one of the bases for formulating the discorsal nature of radio news broadcasts.

In other words, the wide variety of subjects that are dealt with within a single news bulletin that lasts ten minutes and on an average includes about 25 to 30 hand written pages is an indication that a particular technique is used for the preparation of the bulletin; it is this technique that is described in this thesis as the discourse of broadcast news.

Secondly, the recordings of bulletins collected are transcribed and classified similarly. Thus a corpus of about 120 bulletins that cover a period of one month has been used for the study.

As the third step, these bulletins are analyzed from the following points of view: vocabulary, constructions, cohesion and reference. They are also analyzed as to the elements of humor, sensitivity to gender issues and the nature of sources used.

Subject wise classification.

With regard to subjects covered in radio news bulletins, the restricted nature of the medium has to be taken into consideration. Newspapers devote special pages or sections to cover various areas like politics, industry and commerce, sports, legal etc and various subjects like education, religion, feminist issues etc. They also have special columns for the expression of opinion. The opinion of the paper is overtly expressed in the editorial, while it is covertly indicated even in the space and size allocated to any particular news item.

As far as the radio is concerned, all the variety has to be accommodated into ten minutes of time allocated for the bulletin. Special bulletins, intended for special groups of listeners like farm news, sports news etc are also being put out by All India Radio. But such programs are produced by the concerned production units and do not come under the purview of the News Services Division that deals with all aspects of news production, per se.

It was only quite recently, in the early 21st century, that a news commentary, quite akin to the opinion column in the papers, began to be produced in Malayalam. Titled 'Vartha Veekshanam' (meaning news and views), the programme being aired after the evening

regional bulletin on alternate days has attracted quite a lot of attention.

Inter active programs.

The listeners' opinions on the content and quality of radio programmes find expression in the readers' voice programmes like 'eluttu peTTi' or 'tapaal peTTi', generally meaning 'post box'. Here, the usual format is that of one voice reading letters from listeners and another voice commenting and providing answers and explanations as and when required.

Recently, All India Radio has increased its percentage of inter active programmes that allow the listener also to take part in a program. This trend was visible even in the sixties, when film music was provided in the Vividh Bharathi as requested by the listener. The names of the listener requesting any particular song was announced and then the song was played. Another variant of such programmes was that of inviting a famous personality like a popular film star or public figure and ask him or her to choose the songs for a particular session.

Now the scopes of such programmes have increased and listeners can talk to important personalities present in the studios and the resultant conversations are broadcast either in an edited version or as live programme. Programs in such interactive mode involve film music, health, agriculture etc.

News reels.

Yet another instance of participatory program on radio is the news reel program produced by the News Services Division. It is broadcast in English and Hindi, alternately from Monday to Thursday

from All India radio, New Delhi. Regional news reels are produced by the Regional News Units which function from various radio stations situated in different states.

In Malayalam, the radio news reel is called 'Vartha Tharangini', which means 'music of news'. It is broadcast on Mondays and Thursdays from All India Radio, Thiruvananthapuram and on Tuesdays and Fridays from All India Radio, Kozhikode.

The format of the program consists of recordings of actual news events that are connected to each other by relevant commentaries presented by a news reader. The news events are tape recorded and then edited to fit the actual duration of the program – that is fifteen minutes. Three or four events are usually included in one news reel.

The commentaries are framed so as to bring the news event reported into focus. The necessary background information necessary to understanding the significance of the event is necessarily included in the commentary.

Oftentimes, a special recording by an important personality in the news or by an expert is also included in the news reel. The purpose behind including such recording is to explain the significance of certain news developments to the radio listeners. The recording of the prominent personality in the news will provide an authenticity to the news reel while the inclusion of an expert opinion will help clarify the issue at hand to the listener at large.

Another important aspect concerning the production of a news reel is the necessity of ensuring the currency of the program. For this, a keen sense of news and an awareness of various developments in the political, cultural and developmental arena are most essential.

The items covered in the news reel should have current relevance and they must be ones about which the listener has an abiding interest.

The language used in news reels is also significant. As in news bulletins, brevity and clarity should be the hall marks of the language used in news reel commentaries. The presenter is loaded with the weighty responsibility of having to explain to the listener some very complicated circumstances that leads to a particular political, developmental or cultural crisis. To achieve this using short, simple and expressive language is a real challenge.

Here, the discourse of news takes on a new color, mainly because the language of the newsreel requires a bit of 'color'. The essence of a situation can often be expressed only by using a language that is sited to the occasion. This means, the usual method of eschewing adjectives that forms the back bone of news language in general and the broadcast news discourse in particular, becomes unsuitable as far as news reel commentaries are concerned. Here some bits of descriptions as well as use of colorful adjectives to bring out the essence of the events involved become necessary.

In this regard, it is important to note that two of the characteristics noted earlier as defining the discursal nature of news, namely invisible audience as well as non reactive audience, may appear to be at variance with the discourse of news reel and inter active programs. This is not so because the reactions of the audience form here a part of the discourse. Invisible and non reactive audiences were posited as discursal characteristics because they explained the uni - linear nature of broadcast news. These still hold

good as far as the discourse of radio news in itself is considered, while it transforms into part of the very same discourse when the discourse of news reels as well as news based inter active programs are examined.

Content classification.

Analysis of the various news bulletins collected as part of this study revealed that there are nine principal kinds of news stories that are included in bulletins. (News men use the term 'story' for all news items. They broadly classify news stories into 'hard' and 'soft' and employ differing techniques to report these different kinds of stories. [Tuchman 1978]. As far as broadcast news is concerned, the main stay of bulletins is usually hard stories while soft stories are taken up for detailed treatment as news reel items, documentaries etc. In newspapers also, the main news columns are usually taken up with hard stories. Soft stories usually are included in the magazine and feature sections. To accept a general definition, hard stories are breaking stories that have to be covered within a definite time frame, while soft stories are usually developing stories that are in the process of unfolding and can be best explained in terms of extended coverage.).

The nine kinds of news stories are as follows: politics, financial and commercial, religious, legal, accident, death, sports, cultural and miscellaneous. In any typical news bulletins, political stories and financial stories occupy the prime of place. This is often because developments in these spheres directly affect the people at large. Sports stories are also given great importance because of the wide interest that such stories generate.

Legal and religion based stories are also covered widely in bulletins. This is because of the popular appeal that such stories have. The rulings of High Courts are covered in great detail by the Pradesika Varthakal because of the far reaching consequences that such rulings have on the life of the common people. Newspapers have special correspondents with legal background for covering High Court proceedings. Often, two or more papers jointly utilize the services of a lawyer to get the latest details about ongoing cases in the High Court.

All India Radio has a permanent reporter based in Kochi, one of whose principal beat is the High Court. (Newspaper reporters divide their responsibilities on the basis of beats. A beat is a regular assignment carried out by a reporter or a team of reporters. Beats are divided either on the basis of institutions covered, like the courts, police stations, hospitals, educational institutions, fire force etc. Beats are also organized on the basis of subject matter covered by the reporter. Thus we can have reporters who cover education, legal affairs, political parties etc. [Various journalism texts.]. However, All India Radio does not have a permanent system of beats, mainly because of the nature of coverage required, which is never as lengthy or exhaustive as ordinary papers.).

Stories about temples, churches, mosques and their festivals form an inevitable part of news bulletins. This is more so in the case of regional bulletins because such festivals attract a lot of local attention and hence assume a high news value. (News value is a concept used by journalists to decide the importance of any news story. The story is 'played up' or 'toned down' according to the news

value it gets. Dalton Gage, one of the pioneering scholars in the field of mass communication research has pin pointed nine conditions that help in the establishment of news value. For example, the nearer an incident takes place to a major newspaper publishing centre, the higher will be its news value; thus, proximity is one of the conditions that help in accruing news value to any incident.).

During pilgrimage seasons such as the annual festival at Sabarimala (a major temple in the Idukki district of Kerala, where Lord Ayyappa is the chief deity. The temple is situated atop a hill and the nine mile trek to the temple is supposed to be holy and sacred. The 41 day annual pilgrimage to the temple takes place in the months of November, December and January) the temple attracts a huge number of people. All news papers and the electronic media make special arrangements to have people appointed in Sabarimala during this season. All India Radio also has special arrangements for providing commentary on the procession carrying the ornaments of the deity and the special ceremonies in connection with the Makaravilakku festival there. Similar is the case as far as the Ramzan period of fasting, Easter and Christmas celebrations etc are concerned.

The examination of the bulletins have revealed that of the 2500 items included in the 120 bulletins, 904 items (36.16%) concerned political developments, while 285 items (only 11.4%) could be attested for religious stories. Of these 285 items itself, a major part concerned announcements regarding temple festivals. References to temples and other religious institutions also occur in stories referring

to accidents and deaths also, when such incidents occur in religious institutions. Legal stories were 202 in number (8.08%).

Accident and death stories form a considerable amount of items included in the regional bulletins. Again, there is always a local angle in such stories. (Angle, slant, bias etc are some of the terms used by journalists to describe the way in which a story is treated in a paper. Of these, only the term angle refers to the process of treatment of a story in a positive light. Slant and bias are negative terms that ultimately question the very concept of the objectivity of a news story. In one way, the process of treating any story in any particular way is a negation of the principle of objectivity of news stories. However, in practical terms, stories are usually published with an angle favorable to the owners of the paper, its shareholders or the political ideology to which they subscribe. [Texts on journalism like Dubuque, Mencher.M. (1984) and White Ted (1996)]). This means, that the news value of a death story depends mainly on the proximity of the person to the centre of publication.

This is the reason why the death pages on newspapers vary according to the region in which they are circulated. The particular edition of the paper that is published from a particular centre will publish the news of deaths that occur in the particular area. So, the page in which such news is published varies from edition to edition.

Since the production and broadcast of radio news in India is largely centralized – even though there may be different centers in different regions – news bulletins tend to be more selective about the death news stories carried by them. Prominence of the person who died in the region of broadcast is one of the more general criterion

that radio uses to fix the news value of a death story. Here the concept of prominence applies not only to political arena but also to literature, business, service, professions etc. Since Pradesika varthakal covers most of the state of Kerala, a more generalized approach is taken regarding death news by the All India Radio than news papers which have the convenience of having a number of editions suiting regional and local interests.

Another criterion usually applied is the nearness of the person to the government and various political organizations. This is not an official policy, but is more or less applied in an informal manner. Tricky questions concerning the news worthiness of some death stories are solved by the application of various un - official yardsticks. This has been revealed by the personal interviews that the researcher conducted with some professionals who used to be involved in the news production. Excerpts from such interviews have been included as an appendix to this thesis.

There is a curious system of announcement of deaths adopted in radio bulletins, usually when they are related to important personages in the political arena like ministers, Members of the Parliament, Legislatures etc. For example, if a close relative of such a prominent personality – the dead person may not be in any other way news worthy – dies, the yardstick of prominence itself will make clear that the story cannot be carried in the radio bulletin. As a way out of this, the editors usually announce that the public programs of the prominent personality concerned have been cancelled for a certain period because of the demise of his relative.

However, the examination of the 120 bulletins selected for our analysis reveals that only 32 death stories have been attested. This means that the percentage comes to only 1.28 %. But the number of accident stories comes to 127 or 5.08%. Here the number of dead people, the nearness of the accident site to the place and region of broadcasting and finally the prominence of the persons died all come into play in deciding the news worthiness of the story.

In any news bulletin, stories on finance, commerce and business are very essential. Their importance can be placed next to that of political stories. Newspapers often devote special pages for publishing stories about commerce and finance. They have entire pages detailing the movement of share prices, giving the price range of agricultural products etc. Financial reporting is considered a specialty within journalism and there even are papers like the Economic Times, Business Line and Business Standard that publish primarily news on economic and financial matters. In such papers the publication of political news is only small part.

In All India Radio, commercial news such as price movements of agricultural products, cash crops etc are basically dealt with the section concerning agriculture – the Farm and Home unit. They broadcast special programs and bulletins devoted exclusively to the price levels in various markets.

In Pradesika Vathakal, financial news is covered along with political news. In our corpus of 120 bulletins, 350 items on finance, commerce and the markets have been attested. There have been 50 instances where the finance story assumed such great importance that it was the lead story of the bulletins.

In addition to this, there have been about 100 instances where the finance story was placed as the lead story in the second bunch. (A lead story in journalistic parlance means the main story of the day. In news papers such stories occupy the first page and can be identified separately by the kind and size of type used. In radio bulletins, the lead story is the one that is placed at the beginning of the bulletin. In the list of main stories read out at the beginning of the bulletin, that is the headlines, the lead story is read out first. The bulletin is usually organized in two sections known as bunches. The announcement regarding the program – like ‘you are listening to Pradesika Varthakal from All India Radio’ – indicates the division between the two bunches. Nowadays certain advertisements are also broadcast during this break between the two bunches. There are two important points in the bulletin that ensures maximum attention of the listening public. They are the first story that is read after the reading of the headlines and the first story that is read after the break, in the second bunch. This arrangement is just like the arrangement of news in newspapers where there are special vantage points – like those that come just below the fold of the paper when it is delivered to the reader – that ensures the maximum attention for the particular news item.). There have also been about 35 instances wherein the political stories, especially those dealing with the announcement of cabinet decisions, have had commerce and finance as their principal subject. It is also worthy of note that of the 12 scripts used for the Vartha Veekshanam (News and Views) used during the period under review, four – that is one third – dealt with financial matters.

Another important ingredient of all news bulletins is items on sports and games. They attract the maximum attention as is attested by the letters from listeners received about news bulletins. Many letters are received when a factual error concerning sports items inadvertently happens to go on air in any news bulletin.

The guidelines from the Director General of News in All India Radio and the practice followed by such renowned broadcasting organizations like the BBC is that sports items invariably form a staple part of all bulletins. In addition to this, there are bulletins exclusively devoted to sports and games items also. In Malayalam, Pradesika Varthakal ensures that all prominent sports and games events taking place within the region – for practical purposes region that comes under the ambit of the various stations of All India Radio in Kerala covers the whole of the state of Kerala - and some of the more prominent ones like the Santhosh trophy football matches or the Ranji Trophy cricket tournaments that takes place outside the state and sometimes, as in the case of Champions Trophy cricket, even outside the country, are included in its various bulletins.

But it is to be noted that there are no special bulletins exclusively devoted to sports items in Malayalam. The Delhi station of All India Radio broadcasts bulletins in English and Hindi every night that includes only items on sports and games.

Of the 2500 items included in the analysis here, items concerning sports and games come to 360. This works out to 14.4%. This comes as the second highest percentage – the maximum number of items dealing with politics and government.

Finally there are items about cultural activities like art exhibitions, book releases, music and dance programs etc. It is noticeable in the case of such programs that the presence of prominent personalities in the audience often increases the chances of the program being included in the bulletin. Again press conferences by artists are given wider coverage on radio rather than the actual performance.

There may be two reasons for this. For one, the review, appreciation and evaluation of a piece of art or an artistic performance are more or less jobs that need specialized training and attitude. The routine of radio bulletins and the severe time constraints under which the bulletins are produced do not offer the time and scope for such elaborate treatment of art and artists.

The second and perhaps the more important and practical reason is that artistic performances are the mainstay of radio programs as such. The bulk of the programming of radio, other than news, is based mainly on music and allied arts. Hence, the thrust is put on the views of artists rather than the actual artistic performances as far as news bulletins are concerned.

The number of art and culture programs included in the bulletins analyzed comes to 70. This forms 2.8%, which is higher than only the percentage of items on deaths.

Finally, all other items dealing with a variety of subjects like environment, science, education, life style, astrology, wild life etc have been included in the sub heading of Miscellaneous. Here also the number of items is 70 which again works out to 2.8% of the total number of items analyzed, that is 2500.

Discourse characteristics

The next step of the analysis is to describe the vocabulary and constructions used in the news bulletins and to examine how they reflect discourse techniques like cohesion and reference. But before that, the effects of the subject wise variation that can be seen in all news bulletins have to be recognized and properly understood.

As explained in the previous section, news bulletins cover a variety of subject matter, not necessarily related to each other. This means that the registral peculiarities of these various subject matters necessarily have to be reflected in the bulletins. The aim of this thesis is not to identify and describe such characteristics, because they do not actually define the discourse of news. (A register is a variety of language that mainly reflects the professional and functional background of its users. A dialect is a variety of language that reflects the social or geographical particularities of a language. These are separate axes and they combine in a variety of ways that have social as well as linguistic relevancies in the make up of any single person's use of any language. [Trudgill, 1985]).

Rather, this thesis concentrates on outlining the discourse particularities of the language used in radio news bulletins and tries to justify the proposition that there is a discourse variety special to radio news bulletins. Vocabulary and construction are two elements that form the cornerstones of identifying a discourse.

Before starting out on the actual process of analyzing vocabulary, it is necessary to identify precisely what is actually meant by the terms discourse, vocabulary and construction. For the practical

purposes of description (as against the theoretical discussion undertaken in the chapter entitled ‘Discourse of News”), discourse can best be defined as a ‘description of rules and conventions underlying the use of language in extended texts. It is also a convenient general term for referring to language in action and the patterns which characterize such types of action’. (Ericson Hobbe, 2001). This is an extended description of what was earlier (in the chapter discussing Discourse) mentioned as discourse being the study of language in action or in use.

It is the contention of this thesis that in extended texts that form discourses, language tends to acquire a life of its own. It is this language, a dynamic entity, which the discourse analyst hopes to describe. Often, this personality of the language may be at odds to the picture of language presented by both traditional grammarians as well as descriptive linguists, because both treats of texts as isolated examples of the language phenomenon.

‘Malayala Sali’ (Kuttikrishna Marar, 2003), is one such text that has tried to approach the discourse of Malayalam newspapers from the point of view of actual usage. Similarly, the Mathrubhumi newspaper (Mathrubhumi is a major Malayalam newspaper with editions from different parts of Kerala as well as from other cities in the country) has a weekly column called ‘Chovva Dosam’ “The fault of Mars”, wherein the use of language in its columns are discussed and criticized.

Vocabulary and construction are the two most widely used indices to identify a discourse. Vocabulary refers to the words used in

the discourse, while construction, broadly, refers to the ways in which the words are connected together to be able to convey meaning.

Here, it is to be especially noted that the term 'vocabulary' is used in an extended sense. Traditionally vocabulary was used to refer to the words used in a language. As far as linguistic analysis was concerned, the question of correctly identifying what exactly is a word has complicated the general standpoint regarding the nature of vocabulary. The notions of lexeme, morpheme, sememe etc came up in this context, and have complicated the issue.

In the context of this study, the term vocabulary is not considered in isolation. Rather, here, vocabulary refers to all the individual items that comprise any discourse. Thus, in addition to what is traditionally considered as words, this study considers punctuations, interjections, pauses and repetitive elements of speech as vocabulary.

This enlarges the scope of the study. Also, since punctuations etc are standard elements of any language when put to use, their inclusion in the corpus will help in drawing a more factual and detailed picture of the discourse of news.

David Crystal (1995) describes punctuations as defining characteristics of language use. He says that punctuations are actually correlates of silences in actual speech. Silences in actual speech can be considered the vocal realizations of punctuations or punctuation marks can be considered as graphical representations of silences that occur in actual speech. He also posits four functions for punctuation. They are grammar, prosody, rhetoric and semantic nuances.

In broadcast news, punctuations have great relevance, because scripts prepared for news bulletins are primarily meant to be read out aloud. The process of reading out aloud is facilitated by punctuations, which are actually put into place by the editors and reporters who actually write the scripts or by news readers and presenters who later read them out on air. From this point of view, all the four functions that Crystal enumerates become applicable to news bulletins.

Crystal, in the same text, further elaborates that space also should be treated as a form of punctuation. In a real sense, all letters and all punctuation marks can be seen as manipulations of space in a written form and as manipulations of time in the spoken form. In a written text a letter is an indication as to how a word is to be formed, while punctuation is an indication of a null set in the text. In a spoken text, a letter indicates how a word should be pronounced; while the punctuation indicates how long a pause should be extended.

In addition to this, the shape of a text is also important as far as a news bulletin is concerned. (A bulletin has been included as an appendix to show how the shape of a text indicates its practicality and functions). As pointed by Crystal (ibid), "rules about space are part of the way we formulate traditions about textual shape. It is (also) clear that we – as readers have notions about the appropriate amount of space in and around texts".

White Ted (1996) elaborates on the importance of proper selection of words as far as broadcasting is concerned. He particularly points out to the typical nature of the vocabulary used in broadcasting texts. For example, he specifically mentions about the

power and strength of verbs in animating a primarily aural media presentation. He says that “verbs play a vital role in broadcast writing. Use present tense verbs in broadcast copy as much as possible. Texts should be made to sound fresh without being dishonest or misleading. Using the right object is also crucial. Look for strong verbs that describe the action vividly.”

White also makes another crucial observation regarding the nature of vocabulary in broadcast. This can simply be restated as prefer the familiar words to unfamiliar ones. Since the hearers of the radio bulletins have only an aural input and since the potential hearers may be engaged in other activities also while simultaneously listening to the broadcast program, it is of paramount importance that the broadcast material should make immediate sense to the hearer. For this it is always preferable to use familiar words rather than unfamiliar words. As White puts it tersely “you don’t always need to look for ways to replace says. It is a good verb”.

Damodaran Nair, in his unpublished manuscripts, also has a word to say about the selection of vocabulary. Elaborating on the need to develop a radio culture, on the lines of a ‘film culture’ as advocated by the eminent film maker and director Satyajit Ray, Damodaran Nair points out that the presenter himself should be aware of the nuances of the text he presents over the radio. It is his amount of awareness and understanding that is ultimately being broadcast in a final sense. Vocabulary is one of the prime indices that facilitate such understanding. Hence the selection of words, their arrangement, the way in which the words are pronounced, the pauses in between words and sentences all thus assume significance

in the course of a radio presentation. All these factors together result in what Damodaran Nair likes to call a 'radio culture'.

He further explains that "just as the screenplay of a cinema should be informed by a sense of structure, a radio program also should possess a degree of unity and well formedness. The purity of diction and the unclutteredness of pronunciation are invariable factors that borne out the culture of radio".

P K Ravindranath (2004) has also made a set of relevant observations about the development of a broadcast culture, language and presentation being the integral parts of such a culture. He points out that "what is written for (the broadcast media) is to be spoken, what is written for a newspaper is to be read. The vital difference has to be borne in mind by anyone aspiring to be a newsreader...."

He continues with his observations that newspaper language is often "stilted and staccato". The newspaper assembles the story in terms of its techniques like the intro, because the newspaper reader always has the opportunity to go back through the pages and get a clarification of what was not intelligible at the first reading, a liberty that the radio or television listener cannot command under usual, everyday circumstances.

This brings the broadcast journalist under persistent obligation to be absolutely unambiguous as far as the language he uses is concerned. He is also constantly under pressure to make the sentences as brief as possible. This is supposed to make sentences easy to read and easier still to understand.

Ravindranath also makes a relevant observation as to the nature of vocabulary commonly used in broadcast contexts. He points

out that, adjectives are classes of words that can be safely sacrificed in broadcast language. He says that using an excess of adjectives lead to two problems. One is that they challenge and question the very principle of objectivity that is often regarded as the cornerstone of news reporting. The other is that the use of adjectives is, more often than not, in effect the pronouncement of value judgments on the part of the editor. Such value judgments also color the way in which the news is presented and ultimately, the manner in which it is understood.

With regard to the selection of vocabulary specifically, Ravindranath has an interesting observation to make. According to him, the journalist has the primary duty to make sure about what he wants to present. It is only when the journalist is clear of what he or she is trying to communicate will the subject matter of what is being communicated become intelligible. He offers a practical guideline in the framing of sentences; “Be clear in your own mind about the meaning of what you are saying. To make sure that you make sense of what you say, repeat the sentence silently in your own mind”.

Krishna Warrior N V (1964) has, in an interesting article, pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of broadcast language, with reference to the preparation and presentation of radio talks. The points made by Krishna Warrior, with regard to the language of talks is relevant in all departments of broadcast.

He says that the basic characteristic of a radio talk is the ‘written script’. In a practical sense, a radio talk is only the reading out of a script. But again, an important differentiation is that a script is not

just an essay in the conventional sense. A good script may also be a good essay; but all essays are not acceptable scripts.

A script basically is a 'blue print' of a radio talk – or of any radio program. It is when the script is presented 'on air' that it becomes alive, that it becomes different from an essay or a written article. N V compares the reading of a script to traveling on a jetliner that can move only forward. The conventional essay, to use the same metaphor of air travel, can be compared to traveling in a helicopter. To use N V's own words, "reading an essay is like nature watching, sitting in a helicopter that can move forward, backward or towards any particular side. If necessary, it can also stand still for some time. ...At the same time, listening to a radio talk is akin to traveling on a jetliner that can move forward only. One cannot stop, reconsider or go back to hear what was said once again".

Concentrating on the practical aspects of script writing, N V says that the first sentence of every radio talk is very significant. He says that the listener is at the liberty to stop listening at any point of time, in course of the talk. So, it is important that the interests of the listener are always sustained. No where is this more important than at the start of the talk. The first sentence, the opening, should be 'ear catching'. The listener should be attracted into continued listening.

Although the point about a good start is not so relevant as far as news scripts are concerned, the central point he makes, that is the importance of sustaining listener interest at all points of the script is relevant in the case of radio news scripts also. At each and every point of the script, the listener should be engaged with the persistent anxiety about 'what comes next'. As far as news scripts are

concerned, news in itself is a commodity that deals with what comes next. So, the listener interest is maintained to some extent by the very nature of the content in radio news scripts.

It is at this point that what N V says about the presentation of scripts assumes added relevance. He says that the voice culture of the radio presenter is an important factor as far as its attractiveness for the listener is concerned. He repeatedly points out that the listener should at no point feel that the script is being read out. It should create an ambience of friendly, one to one conversation. This holds good for news presentation too. The radio has an inter - personal quality, that of a friendly acquaintance who has come to the listener's house. This should be made use of to the maximum. What better way than to infuse a script with a conversational tone.

However, the usual techniques used to set such a tone are not practical as far as radio news scripts are concerned. They include using questions that directly involve the listener as a passive factor in the program, usage of the inclusive pronoun like 'we' and 'us' to include the listener in the script, including anecdotal material that come within the everyday experiences of a majority of the listeners, actively introduce the elements of the presenter's personality on to the script by the use of special items of vocabulary, constructions etc.

N V very poetically pictures the effect that such radio scripts can produce in the minds of listeners. He says that the presenter should try to convey all the picturesque ness of your personality into the script. "Even a person who has a passing acquaintance should be able to feel the warmth of your presence from your sound and way of presentation".

N V concludes the article with the observation that a radio talk becomes effective when there is the proper amalgamation of the written with the spoken form of language. He says that it would be more proper to say that in a radio talk spoken and written forms of a language become one. Such a talk also becomes a form of art because it transmits the personality and the feelings of the presenter.

Analysis of vocabulary.

As mentioned earlier, vocabulary and constructions are the two primary indices that help in identifying a material as a piece of discourse. This is because the archetypal characteristics of discourse, reference and coherence are mainly realized through these devices.

Discourse here is mainly intended to refer to extended texts that are analyzed in terms of the functions they realize against the background of their contexts. Reference refers to the characteristic that such texts exhibit whereby one part of the text either anticipates or recalls another part. Such references become necessary because the text is being articulated in a specific context for specific purposes. Anticipation or recall are techniques that facilitate the communication of the discourse as a connected whole from the speaker to the receiver.

Various texts on philosophy and psychology (for example, Vernon, 2002) have pointed out that the attention span of the listener is always limited by different extra textual factors also. These factors are spread across both the time as well as space factors. Hence the technique of reference is a practical tool that ensures the reception of the discourse as a single, connected sample of communication.

Here reference can also be made to the most modern way in which communication is achieved – the internet. Because of the huge volume of material that is transmitted over the internet, the system of sending material in terms of packets, through various routes, is commonly made use of. This ensures that the material is passed through various points and reaches the ultimate destination within the shortest possible time limit.

However, this means that the material sent as separate packets should be correctly identified and properly reassembled at the point of reception to achieve effective communication. For this the same principle of reference becomes inevitable. Thus it can be argued that reference is a characteristic of any discourse that aims at the communication of any extended texts that is displaced through either time or space.

Again, another analogy can be drawn in this context, to the methodology adopted by wire news agencies like the Reuters, the Press Trust of India (PTI) etc. Here again the huge volume of material transmitted makes it inevitable that they are dispatched as small packets, technically called 'takes'. These takes are labeled and numbered for proper identification at the reception point. But, at the same time, in order to ensure that the text that is reassembled reads well and in a unitary fashion, the references in each take will have to be constantly readjusted.

The system of takes makes for ease and efficiency in the use of communication lines between the wire agency and its subscribers. It also ensures that a large volume of material, with rivaling importance and news value, are being moved over the communication lines

together, in a coordinated fashion. As the material is sent in terms of short paragraphs (takes) it is easier for editors at various news papers to edit them according to the varying editorial and proprietary requirements of each paper.

As far as news bulletins under analysis are concerned, the technique of reference occurs basically in two contexts – intra bulletin and extra bulletin. Reference is made within a single item in the bulletin, between the earlier part of the item and the latter part. This is referred to here as intra bulletin references. Intra bulletin references can also mean reference made in one item of the bulletin to the subject matter of another item in the same bulletin. There have also been occasions wherein such references have occurred between bulletins far removed in time. This can be a function of the time frame within which some news events unfold. Court cases, police investigations etc are some such events that are pertinent in this context. Here there can be a wide time gap between the actual event, the start of the investigation and the arrest and conviction of the real culprits. News items on the progress of such stories necessitate references within and without various bulletins.

Extra bulletin references also become relevant in such contexts. In such cases the references made in the bulletins will refer to people, places and events that completely lie outside the bulletin. Quotations are the most common examples of such references. They become necessary from point of view of authenticating the news item. The characteristic of radio news bulletins – i.e., that they appeal to the sense of immediacy of the hearer - also makes such references inevitable. The sense of immediacy regarding the event, in terms of

both time and space, can be realized only by such extra bulletin references.

It is in this context that the visual representation of a news bulletin and its audio presentation acquire particular relevance. In written form, a quotation is marked off by a pair of inverted commas that are pegged at the beginning and end of the quoted words. These, in common parlance, are called 'quotation marks'. In the course of silent reading for comprehension, these marks serve as an indication that the words under reference are quotations, spoken by someone else.

The question becomes problematical in the context of news reading and presentation. The news reader has to convey the presence of quotation marks in the text and transmit the fact that what is being read forms part of what some one else has said – i.e. what is being said is an extra bulletin reference. In silent reading and in non formal reading contexts the problem is tied over by making explicit the presence of quotation marks by physically mentioning them in the course of the presentation. Thus, usually, the reader or presenter acknowledges the presence of quotation marks by saying 'I quote' or by saying 'in inverted commas' etc.

However, since news reading on the radio is primarily a formal exercise (Rosemary Hurston, 1988), such interpolations that do not form actual part of the designated script are not usually allowed, by convention. So, the reader or presenter is forced to refer to the presence of such marks by a differing tone or by interpolating a pause at both ends of the quotation, thus marking a difference from the script as such.

Intra bulletin

Intra bulletin references occur mainly of three types. They can be in the form of words, phrases and clauses, or markers. Examples of the first kind are most numerous, with our data of 2500 bulletins yielding a total of 250 examples.

Of these itself, the use of pronouns are the most numerous and common. Any person, institution or other entity, once referred to in a bulletin, is later recalled in the form of pronouns. Of the pronouns itself /adde:ham/ 'that person honorary' seems to have been attested with the maximum frequency. /aya:l/, /adu/ and /avaR/ have also been attested to, in this context. The preponderance of /adde:ham/ can be attributed to the formal nature of the medium, as also the official nature of All India Radio, as a public institution.

The next most numerical instances of such references are the use of abbreviated name of the person, institution or entity. For example various corporations and government departments, which are initially mentioned in full like the /samsta:na vaidyuti bo:Rd/ 'Kerala Electricity Board' or the /samsta:na ro:d tra:nsपो:Rt co:rpore:san/ 'KSRTC/ etc are later referred to by commonly used abbreviations like the KSEB or the KSRTC.

However, another feature of both these kinds of references is that all such instances are invariably interspersed with the references made by including the name, position or institution in a repetitive manner. For example, in an item with reference to a court case against the Travancore Devaswam Board (the temple administration wing of the state government in South Kerala), in between subsequent references to the Board using pronouns, care is usually

taken to make the reference explicit by mentioning its full name /tiruvita:mku:R devaswam bo:Rd/ frequently. This is a seeming anomaly and a negation of the principle of the technique of referencing in discourses. However, here, the anomaly can be explained and justified by having recourse to the characteristics of the radio as an aural, audio, mass medium. Since this medium is received by a large number of people in astonishingly varying sets of conditions, it becomes necessary to tailor the content and presentation of the bulletins to as near as possible to the lowest common denominator. The elements in this denominator need not be politically aware or formally well educated enough to grasp the meaning and import of abbreviations or acronyms that lie within the domain of even a primary level of elementary formal education. Hence, the reference to names of prominent institutions, in full, at various points of the bulletin, becomes a technical necessity and a formal procedure.

Here, mass communication experts also make reference to the repetitive elements that form a set of necessary elements of the communication process. Such elements decrease the density of the communication process and lighten them for the people to understand all the more better. The process of repetition also makes for easier recall of key elements of the communication. The standard radio techniques of repeat headlines, frequent announcement of station identity and program identity etc are practical applications of the principle of dynamic repetition of key elements in the broadcast discourse.

Another element of significance here is the ever present chance that people may tune in to a program midway. References may go over the head for such listeners and there is always a chance that the reference may hold no relevance for such listeners. The community of radio listeners is so large that such listeners who come in midway cannot be ignored as a negligible minority. (Rosemary Hurston, 1988).

At the same time, if references to institutions etc are always made in full, these would intrude upon the strict timings that news bulletins have to adhere to. The process of repeating lengthy names in full a number of times may also lead to apathy among the listening public.

Taking all these facts into consideration, the via media usually adopted is to use pronouns or abbreviated forms interspersed with the reference in full. However, special care is always taken to ensure that any name is always introduced in full, at the first instance, in any bulletin. There after, the reference usually alternates between pronouns, abbreviations and full references.

Phrases and clauses.

Phrases are another element used for attesting reference. About 75 examples could be culled out from our data showing phrases fulfilling the responsibility of making references.

Phrases are used in the same way as words in attesting references. However, since they are longer, references using phrases are limited. The reason for the wide variation in the number of instances attested can be attributed to the nature of the broadcasting medium. Here time is always at a high premium. Longer phrases take more time to pronounce than the relatively shorter words. Hence, news editors as well as readers prefer words to phrases.

Another reason is that the nature of reference itself is such that it can be done more effectively by using words rather than phrases. A reference is something that stands for something else. It refers to what was said before and is intended to have all the attributes of what was said before, even though the element of repetition is completely absent. From this practical stand point also, words are more suited to convey the sense of reference. Again, the element of time comes to be in favor of words here also.

Some examples of word as well as phrasal references are as follows:

- 1 /cm – tangal carca/ 'discussion between Chief Minister and Tangal (supreme of the Muslim League, a constituent of the United Democratic Front in Kerala).
2. /vyakttamallennu pa:RTTi/ 'party says not clear'. This item refers to certain discussions taking place among the constituents of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in Kerala. Here, the term /pa:RTTi/ itself is a

word reference, indicating the CPI(M). Thus this reference is an example of a double headed reference that functions both at the levels of word as well as phrase.

3. /neraTTe:/ 'earlier'. This example forms part of a news item that yokes two parallel developments concerning a single news item. However, since it occurs within a bulletin, it is taken here as an instance of intra bulletin reference. The reference is to the then ongoing tussle between A K Antony and K Karunakaran, two prominent leaders and ex Chief Ministers of Kerala. Here, the reference is made, contrasting the stands made by these leaders then and some time before.

4. /pa:Naka:T tangalumaayi mukhyamantRi naTattiya caRca/ 'discussion held by the Chief Minister with Panakkad Tangal". This is also an example of a reference that functions at the levels of both word and phrase or clause. The words /pa:Naka:T tangal/ as well as /mukhyamantRi/ are word level references to two persons whose identities have been clarified in the bulletin earlier. The word /caRca/ is also a word level reference. The whole clause itself is a reference, at another level, referring to the main news revealed at the beginning of the item. It is specially note worthy here that the referential value of a clause is something more than the sum total of the referential values of the individual words contained therein. Hence, these two sets of references have to be considered original and independent of each other. They are neither in the nature of complementing each other, since the referent of the words as well as the clause are completely different.

5. /dharippicatine tutaRnnaN idu sa:dhikkyaaate/ 'it was after this was informed that it could not be done'. Here, the clause is only a fragment. However, the reference here is made by the word /idu/ 'this'. It is a clear example of a word level reference using a pronoun.

6. /sRi: murali:ddaran pinni:T kollattu paRannu/ 'later Shri Muralidharan said in Quilon'. Here, the reference works both at the levels of word and phrase. At the word level, /pinni:T/ clearly makes an anaphoric reference to what Muralidharan said later. At the phrase level /pinniiDe kollattu/ makes a reference to the actual occasion. Since the occasion lies outside the bulletin this has to be rightly taken up as an extra bulletin reference.

7. /nikse:paTTinRe To:T kuRannu/ 'the rate of investments decreased'. This is also a word level reference. Here, the reference is made by the word /nikse:pam/'deposit'.

8. /ko:likko:TTu naTanna paNimuTakku mu:lam/ 'because of the strike that took place at Kozhikode'. Here, the reference is made by the term /panimuTakku/ 'strike'. Here, a common generic term is used to refer to a specific instance. This instance of reference is noteworthy because of its special nature. The crux of the reference here is carried by the word /panimuTakku/, but a greater clarity is achieved by conjoining the term /ko:likko:TTu naTanna/ 'took place in Kozhikode', with this word level reference. This is noteworthy because it is an instance of the reference at one level being reinforced at another level.

9. In a series of connected stories on a bus strike, carried in the same bulletin, intra references can be seen to be developed like a chain. Each story can be seen to be referring to the first story where the

genesis, cause and course of the strike is detailed in full; each story can also be seen as referring to each of the other stories in the chain, each story reinforcing the spread, variety and strength of the agitation. The chain is constructed by pegging on the name of the place at the start of the story. Thus each story that forms part of the chain starts with a place name like /kocciyil/ /kollatt/ etc. Each story details the course of the agitation in that particular place. This technique is used widely by news editors to ensure that all the links of any particular story are truly covered.

10. Stories in a series are connected by using phrases also. This technique is used when parallel developments in a story occur at different places and involves different sets of people. In such cases, the editor will have to make sure that all the different angles to the story have been included in the bulletin. For this purpose phrases like /ate: samayam/, 'at the same time', /atiniTe/ 'in the mean time', etc are used. Differing from the use of using actual place names to indicate how an event like an agitation spreads to different centres, the use of phrases like /ate: samayam/ makes explicit the inter connectedness of the parallel developments. This becomes necessary for the proper understanding of the story because parallel developments need not concern the same place or same set of people.

11. /ate: samamayam nikse:pattinte to:t kuRannu/ is an example of such a reference made in a story referring to financial and banking developments. Here the reference is to certain steps taken by financial circles to control inflation. Positive and negative results

followed this decision and such results are added to the story by making use of the phrase /aTee samayam/.

12. /ate: samayam niRdisTTa ko:TTayam ponkunnam reyil pa:ta konT ya:toru pRayo:janavum uNTa:killenn...../. Here, the same phrase is used to make a reference of a different nature. A parallel development, occurring at a different centre, which is opposing in character to the main development, is introduced with the phrase /ate: samayam/. The story deals with the development of railways in Kerala. Conflicting claims about laying rail lines connecting different parts of the state are being made by regional leaders and organizations. It is to one of the claims made by such organizations that this story makes reference to.

In cases such as these, the references also function as an indirect pointer to the popular perceptions about regional claims in developmental issues. Although news bulletins are traditionally thought of as objective exercises that concentrate only on presenting facts and figures, an indirect thread of subjectivism cannot be completely ruled out. In fact, while theorists like Defleur, Ball – Rockeach et al (1975), Dubuque, Mencher.M. (1984) etc have observed that traditionally objectivity of news is held sacrosanct, newer studies in communication and journalism, especially those from the point of view of sociology, have questioned the very supposition that news is objective; for example see Tuchman.G (1978). Against this background, the functioning of references has a special significance. They suggest that from the point of view of discourse analysis, which is basically the study of the dynamics of a language and its special property of generating meanings, references

are techniques basically used to position a news story in a certain milieu. The story is ultimately understood in a positive or negative sense on the basis of this milieu or setting. Thus, references can be said to belie the avowed objectivity of news stories and journalistic communication in general.

Extra bulletin references.

Extra bulletin references are very common in news bulletins because they are necessary to indicate the intersection between the bulletins and the real world they represent. Often, the intelligibility of a news item may hinge upon an extra bulletin reference that may be far removed in time and space. It is also common that references to people, places and events outside the bulletin are concomitant with the events unfolding within the bulletin.

Here are some examples of extra bulletin references collected from the data:

1. /kalinna ma:sam a:rambhicca pRatye:ka haj vima:nangal vali/
'using the special Haj air services that were started last month'
Here, the reference is to a development that took place considerably removed in time. However, the intelligibility of the story increases because of this reference. The reference is classified as extra bulletin, but it can also be intra bulletin. Here, the reference pertains to a development that took place outside the frame of the bulletin. However, the commencement of the Haj air services last month may have been noticed in the bulletins also. Thus, they may also be termed as intra bulletin. At the same time, it is convenient to term as intra bulletin references only those references that occur within a single

bulletin. Thus the present instance can clearly be classified as an extra bulletin reference – that is both from the point of view that it refers to an incident outside of the reference point of the bulletin and from the point of view that even if the incident was referred to earlier in the bulletin, it might have been in another bulletin.

2. /se:sikkyunna pRasnangal yu:di:ephinte aTutta yo:gam caRcca ceyyummen sRi:a:ntaNi aRiyiccu/ 'Shri Antony informed that the remaining problems will be sorted out in the next meeting of the UDF'. Here also the question of whether the 'problems' referred to have been mentioned in the bulletin, thus making this an intra bulletin reference becomes relevant. However, the anaphoric reference to the 'next meeting of the UDF' makes this reference categorically an extra bulletin reference. Again, the reference to the news conference by Antony is also an extra bulletin reference. This categorization brings to light the larger question of all references being basically extra bulletin. Viewed in a wider context, the observation that all references are basically extra bulletin would seem to hold water. However, closer examination will reveal that the functioning of references differ in certain ways warranting a differentiation between extra bulletin and intra bulletin references. Extra bulletin references allude to reference to materials that lie outside the bulletin per se. Thus, the reference to a coming UDF meeting is clearly extra bulletin. At the same time, the reference to Antony's press conference can be characterized as either extra bulletin or intra bulletin. Since its happening lies outside the immediate purview

of the bulletin the press conference can be termed extra bulletin; however, the first part of the sentence, wherein Antony's declaration about future course of action is referred to, can make the whole reference fall within the purview of intra bulletin reference also. In general, it can be concluded that references are always extra bulletin in a wide sense. At the same time, the dynamics of reference, wherein the referent can lie completely within, completely without or partially within and partially without the bulletin, makes the question of classifying a particular reference intra bulletin or extra bulletin. Thus it can be logically concluded that intra bulletin references are a sub class of extra bulletin references wherein the basic parameter will be whether the primary referent lies within the bulletin or outside.

Temporal, Spatial and Personal

Reference can also be classified on the basis of yet another axis – that of the place, duration and person of the referent. Thus reference can be either temporal or spatial. The earlier Haj story is an example of both temporal and spatial reference. Here, the sir services referred to are both removed from the bulletin proper along both the axes of time and space. The reference can also be removed on either of these axes alone also.

Here is another example; /pampayil innale reilve risaRve:san ke:ndram ulghaaTanam ceyyukayaayirunnu adde:ham/. 'That great man was inaugurating the railway reservation center at Pampa yesterday'. Here, there are three references. The first, /pampayil/ 'in Pampa' is a purely spatial reference that makes clear where the event took place and the fact that it is removed from where the

bulletin is originating. The second /innale/ 'yesterday' is a purely temporal reference that makes clear the timing of the event from the stand point of the bulletin and its time of broadcast. The third /adde:ham/ 'that great man' does not belong to either of these classes because reference does not pertain to a time or place; rather it is a personal reference to one of the key players in the news story.

/pa:Nakka:T siha:b tangaiuma:yi mukhyamantRi naTattiya caRccayil.../ 'during the course of the Chief Minister's discussions with Panakkad Shihab Thangal...' Here the term /naTattiya/ 'that was made' is a temporal as well as spatial reference. It makes clear that the reference made is to something that took place which is removed from both the time and place of the origin of the bulletin. /caRccayil/ 'in discussion' is a reference that falls into either spatial or temporal axes. It can also be deemed personal in that it makes clear what the references made earlier by /naTattiya/ by allocating a name.

/vaTakkan jillakalil paNimuTakku...../ 'in Northern districts the strike was....' Here, the term /vaTakkan jillakalil/ is both a spatial as well as a personal reference. Spatially the reference is to some districts removed from the place of origin of the bulletin. Personally, by particularly referring to the districts by a generic name, the earlier reference to the strike and its extant is made clear in the bulletin.

This is again a pointer to how the bulletin can in subtle ways become subjectivized. Even by elaborating only on the facts of the strike, a favorable or unfavorable picture of the same can be created in the minds of the audience. The positioning of the item, whether it was highlighted as a headline item or not, the items or stories that preceded and succeeded the particular story are all pointers that help

in creating a particular framework through which the news editor makes the audience see a particular news story in a particular manner. Even though such techniques may, on the face of it, be in line with maintaining the objective nature of news, the listener of the bulletin as well as the reader of the paper can see between the lines and make a reading and interpretation of the story in line with the particular ideology of the paper or broadcasting organization.

This forms part of the larger frame work of the discursal nature of radio news or even of news stories in general. Radio news begets the nature of a discourse from two sets of parameters, one pertaining to the language and the other pertaining to the medium. There are of course some points where both the sets of parameters coincide and the objectivity and subjectivisation of news is one such problem area. Here, the language used and the technology of mass communication act and react upon each other to produce a discourse that is unique to broadcasting. One of the characteristics of such a discourse is the super imposition of subtle subjectivity by overt and theoretical objectivity.

By this is meant the practice followed in radio newsrooms of holding facts as sacrosanct. The news story broadcast is never allowed to deviate from its fidelity to facts; at the same time, through subtle practices like arrangement of news items, the order in which news items are broadcast, their placement (meaning what follows a particular news story and what comes before it), whether the item under question has been given headline treatment or not etc determine the frame through which the organizers of the bulletin wants the hearers to perceive the bulletin.

Objectivity versus Subjectivity.

In this respect the comment made by Manjulakshi L. (2003) is relevant. While discussing the role played by the mass media in spreading awareness and thinking about language in general, Manjulakshi observes that “Radio has a major role to play in language. The language used in radio impacted the previous generation very much. News broadcasts introduced chaste language, closely modeled after the written variety. The newsreaders introduced standard pronunciation values to the phonemes, words, phrases, and sentences. The impact of radio language was heavy upon the written style, rather than on the spoken idiom. This is somewhat strange, considering the fact that radio is mainly an audio form”.

The analysis of radio news bulletins from the point of view of discourse analysis also reveals that the language of news bulletins is heavily modeled on the written variety of language, rather than on the spoken form. Since radio in itself is seen primarily as an audio media, the insistence on faithfulness to the written variety may seem paradoxical.

But the fact is that radio news is a formal exercise that relies heavily on the accumulation and articulation of facts. It is the dependence on facts and the faithful rendering of facts that render radio news bulletins their authority and respectability. To protect these, the practice of reading out news bulletins from a prepared script is usually adopted. Since the script is a written material, and since the presentation of a news bulletin is primarily a reading out of the script by a trained voice that has good broadcast qualities, the

exercise of news reading becomes an amalgamation of writing, reading and speaking. It is in this context that vocabulary and constructions evolve as key elements in determining the discourse of news bulletins.

In this context, it can be seen that radio bulletins can be nothing but scripts modeled on the written variety of language. As the written variety of any language is naturally more formal than its spoken variety, the script of news bulletins become more characterized by formality rather than by informality.

At the same time, the purpose of the news script is to be read out aloud so that a large audience can hear what is being read. Here the need to transcend narrow provincial considerations, like dialectal elements become paramount. The necessity of being intelligible to a large part of a linguistic unit – it maybe a state or it may be parts of different states – necessitates that the pronunciation, enunciation, construction and vocabulary choices all should be value neutral as far as radio bulletins are concerned.

The question of formality versus informality in the presentation of a news bulletin is a question that has never been satisfactorily solved. This is because of the inherent duality of the radio news discourse and the nature of radio as primarily a familiar medium to ordinary people. The radio news is perceived as an authoritative version of news among people. This has become all the more stressed with the mushrooming of private news channels beaming electronic visuals through out the day. An informal study conducted

by the Media Monitoring Group, Nagpur (2004) says that out of 50,000 samples, spread over metros, small towns and rural areas that came under its purview, 92% were of the opinion that news is basically subjective and that radio news (here only All India Radio comes into the picture, because only they put out radio news bulletins on a regular basis) is the least subjective.

On detailed questioning by personal interviews, close to 50% of the respondents were of the opinion that by objectivity they only expected the presentation of news items. They pointed out to various instances where news items were blocked out by rival Television channels because they were against the political ideology subscribed to by the parties owning the channels. The respondents in the study were generally of the opinion that radio news put out by All India Radio was generally free of such exclusions.

Here, it has to be specially noted that objectivity, in general parlance, is only a phenomenon characterized by inclusivity. It does not mean that objectivity in news is a one sided phenomenon. It also does not refer to any lack of ideology, as elaborated by Kuttikrishna marar in his famous work Bharatha paryadanam, where he equates the quality of objectivity with a lack of commitment and belief in a certain ideology. Rather, in journalistic parlance, objectivity is only the process of presenting both sides of an issue and leaving it to the reader or listener to make up his mind. (Various journalism textbooks).

But here also, it has been pointed out by scholars like Mathewsson (2001), Jim Reeves (1999) etc, that the very process of selecting a news item for broadcast or publication in itself is a subjective act. Thus we have come a full circle, starting with the supposition that in reality news cannot remain completely objective and finally concluding that the maintenance of complete objectivity as far as radio news is well nigh impossible.

Analysis of constructions.

Discourse is characterized by its own specific vocabulary and constructions. Vocabulary becomes a marker of discourse by underlining its referential aspect. This has been discussed in detail in the previous sections. Next, the aspect of constructions is taken up for discussion.

Construction refers to the different ways in which vocabulary are arranged, so that various shades of meanings can be expressed. As far as discourse is concerned, the principal function of language is the communication of meaning. Discourse Analysis is one of the techniques for identifying how meaning is generated in a language.

Nottingham (2003) makes the following observation regarding the role played by discourse in the generation of meaning. She regards the principle of 'cohesion' as an important technique used in discourse as a means to identify and generate meaning. Cohesion is the factor present in any body of text that indicates the connectedness of its content.

One of the principal points she makes is that the relatedness of a text is marked by means of cohesion. This is reinforced by reference.

As Halliday, M. A. K. and R. Hasan (1976) points out 'cohesion is what gives a text its texture'. They say that 'cohesion and register enable us to create a text. Register is concerned with what a text means. It is defined by Halliday and Hasan as the "set of semantic configuration that is typically associated with a particular class of context of situation, and defines the substance of the text."

Cohesion, as contrasted with register, is not concerned with what a text means. Rather, it refers to a set of meaning relations that exist within the text. These relations are not of the kinds that link the components of a sentence and they differ from sentential structure. The discovery of these meaning relations is crucial to their interpretation.

According to Halliday and Hasan, the function of cohesion is to relate one part of a text to another part of the same text. Consequently, it lends continuity to the text. By providing this kind of text continuity, cohesion enables the reader or listener to supply all the components of the picture to its interpretation. Halliday and Hasan hold that cohesion in its normal form is the presupposition of something that has gone before in the discourse, whether in the immediately preceding sentence or not. This form of presupposition is referred to as anaphoric. The presupposing item may point forward to something following it. This type of presupposition is called cataphoric. On the other hand, exophoric and endophoric

presuppositions refer to an item of information outside and inside the text, respectively.

Halliday and Hasan recognize five types of cohesive devices in English and in the lexicogrammatical system of the language. They are reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Reference, substitution, and ellipsis are grammatical; lexical cohesion is lexical; conjunction stands on the border line between the two categories. In other words, it is mainly grammatical but sometimes involves lexical selection.'

From a slightly different point of view, Cameron Deborah (2001) points out that cohesion and reference are actually specific indicators of discursal material. Reference can be viewed as a sub class of cohesion; in other words, reference is a special kind of cohesion. Together they mark the inter relatedness of longer pieces of texts.

Cohesion and reference are vital indicators of discourse from another angle also. They are clear signposts as to how a text is to be read. This is not against even the modern deconstructionist view of literature wherein a text can have as many readings and as many meanings as there are readers. Every text comes with an author generated 'preferred reading' and this reading is marked in the discourse by means of cohesion and reference.

Direct repetition, repetition of synonyms and near synonyms, superordination, coherence and foregrounding are some of the techniques commonly used to ensure cohesion in longer texts. Here,

coherence in specific refers to the implied and sometimes explicit relationship between references which are assured by means of movement from general references to specific references and vice versa.

Foregrounding refers to the practice of ensuring that the author as well as the reader reads the text in the same way, from the same point of view.

Another important reference that Notingham makes with regard to the question of coherence is the question of a special kind of reference and cohesion elements which she calls 'demonstratives' or 'dietics'. This group of coherence elements is very important as far as the audio medium, especially news and advertising, is concerned.

Dietics refers to words like this, these, those, that, here, there etc which can be defined conveniently as verbal pointers. Their principal function is to place the reader or hearer with reference to the text or speaker. This function acquires all the more importance in a medium where the only possible reference is the voice of the speaker – the radio. The hearer does not have the convenience of any kind of visual or tactical clue that can help him place the time or place or persons around which the discourse evolves. Here, the only possible elements he can call for help are these elements called dietics.

Advertisements, which are attempts at bringing a product and a set of possible users as close as possible, are another area where the use of dietics is wide spread. The frame of reference of an

advertisement – again this is specially significant as far as an oral and audio medium like radio is concerned – is enlarged outwardly to include a potentially large number of prospective clients and extended inwardly to include the presenter and producers of the program, the artists involved etc by use of dietics. This technique ensures that the distance between a radio program and its listeners is shortened to the maximum possible.

In the case of dietics also we come to a feature of the news discourse wherein the parameters of the medium as well as the particularities of the language are drawn together in the creation of a specific discourse of the radio news.

Elipses, substitutions and conjunctions are also techniques used to achieve cohesion in a discourse. These three elements help in pulling a text together, according to Nottingham. Ellipses, though they may occur in spoken discourse naturally, may have to be inducted into written discourse artificially. This technique is used by dramatists when writing radio dramas so that a sense and impression of naturalness is created as well as a sense of affinity with the audience is generated.

However, taking into concern the formal nature of radio news bulletins, the uses of ellipses, conjunctions, abbreviations etc in radio news bulletins is not possible. This is not necessary too because the news reader is not expected to be come into close affinity with his audience. The reader or presenter is a remote figure who presents news from a higher ground where he has a much larger vision than

his listeners. The authoritativeness of news programs is also derived to a certain extent from this aloofness of the presenter from his intended audience.

At the same time it has to be ensured that the news reader and his team do not stray far away from the parameter of instant intelligibility. Here, the important thing is to be able to strike a balance between an easy nearness to the listener and keep an articulate distance from him so that clarity, objectivity and authoritativeness are not compromised.

It is in this context that several writer's guides like the Indira Gandhi National Open University (1991) have emphasized the importance of making the script sound. Informal words, short and simple sentences, elimination of direct quotations, avoidance of all but necessary adjectives and adverbs etc are some ways devised by radio journalists to make a news script 'sound'.

The same set of set text books mentioned above has given a detailed explanation of the story structure of the news stories. 'Broadcast journalists do not use the inverted pyramid story structure. In its place they use something known as dramatic unity. The dramatic unity structure has three parts: climax, cause and effect.

The climax of the story gives the listener the facts of the story in about the same way the lead of a print news story does; it tells the listener what happened. The cause portion of the story tells the cause – why it happened, and the circumstances surrounding the event.

The last part of the story relates to the effect and gives the listener the context of the story and possibly some insight about what the story will mean for the future.

Broadcast journalists should think of their stories as completed circles rather than inverted pyramids. While the pyramid may be cut without losing the essential facts, the broadcast story, if written in the unified fashion, cannot be cut from the bottom or anywhere else. It stands as a whole unit.

Broadcast news stories must gain the attention of the listeners from the beginning. The first words in the story are extremely important. Getting the attention of the listener is sometimes more important than summarizing the story or giving the most important facts of the story.'

A story is analyzed in the book to show how a story meant for the printed news paper changes structure when adapted for a broadcast to be heard. The structure of a news paper story is given first: 'India is turning out inferior products that are priced too high for foreign customers and the problems go beyond a strong rupee, high wages and high taxes, a Commerce Ministry spokesman reports.' For broadcast the story is typically recast as follows: 'A Commerce Ministry spokesman said that Indian products are of inferior quality and are not worth the prices that are quoted.'

In the same text, the differences in the structure of print and broadcast news stories are succinctly summed up. 'Broadcast news

is written in a different form than the inverted pyramid structure. Broadcast copy is written for the ear rather than the eyes: that is writers must be aware that the consumers of broadcast news will be listening to what is written, rather than reading it. In writing broadcast copy, the writer is less concerned with making sure that a story is told as completely and clearly as possible in a short amount of time.'

Here is what the Style Book of the All India Radio News Services Division (1992) says about the technology of writing news bulletins. In summarizing the guidelines, the style book cryptically points out that 'the radio is a spoken word medium. The news items have to be brief. The style has to be conversational. The language should be simple; sentences short and words such as are easily understood by the average listener.'

With regard to reference, the style book makes special mention. In the chapter entitled 'Basic Guidelines for News writing for Radio', the compilers make clear that 'these arise from the need to make yourself understood, bring interesting and the latest information to the listener in the brief time at your disposal and, of course, the nature of the medium.'

For instance, the very question of the frame of reference of any news story poses problems in broadcast news. How does one identify the place and date of occurrence of any event in a printed news story? For this, journalist use the technique of incorporating a dateline at the top of the story which mentions both the date and place of occurrence of the event mentioned in the story. But radio news does

not have the time for mentioning the dateline separately. Here the dateline has to be transformed into the body of the story itself and thus be able to indicate the frame of reference of the story. The Style Book also points out that 'since there is no frame of reference (as such) the radio bulletins, by structure, cannot use referential terms such as 'above', 'below', 'former', 'latter' etc.'

Repetition is another tool of reference and cohesion that radio news has to avoid to a large extent. This becomes very vital when dealing with related stories. News papers have the liberty to publish such stories separately. But in radio, they have to be placed one after the other and every time the same person need not be mentioned fully. In such cases pronouns, titles, well known abbreviations, nicknames etc can be used. For example the President of India ,may be mentioned by name at the start of the story; thereafter every reference to him in the same story and related stories may use only the title and even pronouns.

But at the same time, the frequent use of pronouns as reference and cohesion markers may tend to take away from the intelligibility of the news story in general. As the Style Book explicitly says, 'the listener may miss the name of the individual or the place the first time it occurs. So, in the second or subsequent sentence of any story, the individual or place should be specified by name. In the print medium the reader can go back and forth and pick up what he missed, not so in the radio.'

For example, take a news story that refers to some political developments like the following; 'The Karnataka Chief Minister Mr Bangarappa denied today that any Tamils have been killed in Bangalore during the disturbances in the past two days. He was speaking to newsmen in Bangalore after a cabinet meeting in which the latest situation in the state was reviewed. He appealed to the people to maintain calm and asked the Police to enforce the law impartially. He said he was in touch with the Central Government.' Here, the continuous use of the pronoun 'he' in subsequent sentences after the lead sentence leads to a confusion of antecedents, since proper nouns like the police, the Central government etc are introduced in between.

Another major point that is to be considered when discussing the techniques of reference and cohesion in radio news is the frame of reference. The news paper uses the date of publication as its principal frame of reference and uses either the past tense or the historic present to report day to day events. The events that are to take place on the date of publication and the follow up developments of events reported the day before are all mentioned using the deictic 'today'.

The radio goes a step forward and uses the time of broadcast as the principal frame of reference. Thus the terms 'just now', 'a little while ago', 'in a short time from now' etc are used by news editors. /alppam munp/ 'a little while ago', /alppa samayattinakam/ 'in a short while from now' /ka:lattu pattu maNiyo:Te/ 'by morning ten o'clock' /mantRi sabha: yo:gattinu se:sam/ 'after the cabinet meeting' etc are

some examples of such frames of references that can be attested from our data.

The Style Book offers such examples of reference terms like 'In Mumbai today...', 'at the Lok Sabha a short while ago.....', 'speaking at the UN.....' etc.

Discourse Structure of a News Bulletin.

From the foregoing discussion of the discursual features of radio news, it is possible to understand the structure of the news bulletin. This again will help reinforce the central observation of this thesis that radio news is actually a form of discourse that has to be analyzed and understood from the point of view of function.

Broadcasting structure.

From a journalistic point of view a news bulletin can be divided into four parts. (News Services Division, All India Radio (1992). They are the headlines, the body of the bulletin, the break and the repeat headlines. The headlines are pointers to the listeners about the main items that will be included in the bulletin. Usually, the lead sentences of important stories themselves are used as headlines. Editors justify using the same sentence structure for headlines as well as for full stories by pointing out that the replication of structures results in quicker identification and comprehension of the relevant news item.

However, the style book for radio is clear about the fact that the headlines should be composed as full, complete sentences. All India

Radio also has specified the maximum number of headlines that a news bulletin can effectively include. The relevant chapter in the Style Book recommends that there can be at most four headlines for a ten minute bulletin and five headlines for a fifteen minute bulletin.

The Style Book is also quite specific about how the bulletin should be ordered. It says that bunching is an exercise that must be undertaken with due diligence. Bunching actually refers to the ordering of the items in a bulletin. This will be the order in which the stories will be actually read out on air. It is not necessary to follow a mechanical routine for bunching the bulletin. There is no rule that insists on stories to be classified on the basis of their place of origin, subject matter etc. All these are judgments to be taken by the concerned news editor on the basis of the material available. The basic principle is that the first bunch that occurs before the break should consist of the newsier of the stories available. By convention it should also include at least two of the headline stories.

Connected items can be taken together, but here again it is insisted that each of the connecting stories should be clearly separated from each other. The stories can be linked together by means of techniques such as references or cohesion markers. But the Style Book insists that the important thing is that the transition from one story to the next, the demarcation of the important story from the unimportant one, should be smooth. It should not jar on the sensibilities of the listener.

The break normally occurs somewhere around the middle of the bulletin. However there is no hard and fast rule about this. According to the nature of the news fall (i.e. the nature of stories available) the first bunch may occasionally overstep this time limit.

The second bunch usually opens with the third headline. There are occasions when, because of the news value of stories, as many as three headline stories may have to be included in the first bunch of the bulletin itself. This often occurs in the case of bulletins originating from regional stations, where the number of headlines is also more.

Discourse Structure.

Bell Allan et al, 1998 observe that news stories normally consist of attribution, an abstract and the story proper. In radio news stories, the attribution need not be direct. That is, in news papers the dateline and the byline makes it clear, in a separate and clear manner, where the story has originated, who wrote it, who supplied it to the paper etc. In radio news stories, constraints of time prevent the process of such detailed attribution. Rather, the attribution of the story is done indirectly and often as part of the body of the story. Now a days, with All India Radio also going in for a lot of voice casts from reporters on the spot, attribution is often done by the reporter himself, in his own voice, at the end of his voice cast.

The abstract consists of the lead sentence or the 'intro' of the story. This will necessarily include the central event covered by the news story and possibly one or more secondary events. This also

means that some information about the setting of the event, the characters involved etc are also given as part of the lead or abstract. In news papers, the headline is also considered as part of the abstract. This is because each separate news story in a paper is invariably accompanied by a separate headline, which forms part of the story itself. In radio news bulletins, the headlines are given separately at the start of the bulletin. They are repeated at the end of the bulletin also. Even though, most often, the lead sentence of the story and its headline may be the same, they are invariably separated in the structure of bulletin across the axis of time and hence it is not possible to consider a story and its headline as a composite unit in the case of a radio news bulletin.

The body of the story may consist of one or more episodes, which in turn may involve one or more events. Here, events refer to description of actions and actors, while episodes refer to clusters of action that share a common location or actor. From this it also becomes clear that attribution is also, in practice, a part of the event.

These three form the basic frame work of any news story. However Bell etc have also described three other factors that make for the intelligibility of the news story. These attributes assume significance when we analyze news stories as exercises in communication; that is when we examine a news story as a discourse that exists as a function of actual use. The factors are background, commentary and follow-up. In short, these represent the past, the present and the future of the story.

Background refers to the description of the events that happened in the past, leading to the particular news story. Frequently these may be stories which appeared or were broadcast in earlier news bulletins as separate stories themselves. They provide essential knowledge without which the present story will have to remain largely unintelligible to the average listener.

Commentary refers to the description of the event proper. It is here that the question of the objectivity of news stories becomes prominently highlighted. News stories are primarily descriptions of what has happened and generally it is accepted that it is for the readers and listeners to reach any conclusion about the description they have read, heard or seen.

Follow – up refers to the story in future time. It narrates the possible fall outs of the developments described as commentary, on the basis of the knowledge that is available in the form of background.

Here, a particular point to be noted is that the background to a particular story could have been a story proper in an earlier time scheme. Similarly, the follow – up to any story can again be transformed into a story proper at any later time scheme. In short, the demarcation of a news story into various parts is only an artificial separation aimed at providing greater convenience to the process of description and analysis. In real terms, these terms and concepts are inter related and inter changeable to a large extent.

Examples.

Against the context of the journalistic and discursal view points, a few news stories are analyzed here.

1. Text.

1./daridraRkku mungeNana nalki atista:na saukaryangal
meccappeTuttaanulla padhatikalkkaN e:Di:bi: va:yppa koNTu
mukhyama:yum lakshyamiTTiTTullatenn mukhya mantRi
e:ke:a:ntaNi parannu/ 2./gavaNmentinte bharaNa navi:karaNa
padhatiye kuRiccu mutiRnna ma:dhyama pRavRttakaRkka:yi
naTattiya silppasa:la tiruvanantapuratt ulkha:Tanam
ceyyukaya:yirunnu adde:ham/ 3./sa:mpattika vikasanam
ka:ryakshamama:kkuka dhana viniyo:gam vaRdhippikkuka
sa:mpattika suraksha uRappa:kkuka tuTangiyavaya:n e:di:bi:
va:yppayuTe lakshyangalenn adde:ham cu:NTikka:TTi/
4./va:yppayuTe palisa nirakk pattara satama:nama:Nenkilum
mu:nilonn gra:nta:yi labhikkyunnatu konT edha:Rdha nirakk ancu
satama:nattil alpam ku:Tutal ma:tRame: aaku:venn mukhya mantri
o:Rmmippiccu/ /mantRi ememhassan adhyakshana:yirunnu/ /ci:f
sekRatteRi pablik Rileesans dayarekter tuTangiyavaR
pRasangiccu/

English Translation.

‘Chief Minister A K Antony says that the ADB loan will be used mainly to improve infra structural facilities, with an emphasis on poor people. He was inaugurating a workshop held at

Thiruvananthapuram for senior media representatives about the governments Administration Modernization program. He pointed out the aims of taking a loan from ADB included making economic development more efficient, increase the effective implementation of financial resources, ensure financial security etc. The Chief Minister also reminded that although the real interest rate for the loan was 10.5 percent, the actual rate would only be just a little more than five percent. This is because thirty percent of the loan is being provided as grant. Minister M M Hassan, Chief Secretary, Public Relations Director etc also attended the function.'

Here it is easy to see how the first sentence functions as the intro or lead. It relates to an important clarification by the Chief Minister about a controversial financial exercise being conducted by the Kerala State government at that time. (The story was the lead story of the 12.30 pm bulletin in Malayalam broadcast from Thiruvananthapuram on 5.1.2004.) The first two sentences together can also be seen as the abstract of the story also. The second line of the story also doubles as an attribution because it is only in the second sentence that the context of the Chief Minister's statement is being explained. This is not an unusual journalistic practice, because the mention of the Chief Minister and the ADB loan in the opening sentence itself will make the listener attracted to the item as it is a live issue that had generated a lot of discussion in the public domain.

Here, the discourse practices of the broadcast medium, as necessitated by both the nature of the medium and by the

characteristics of the language are brought into sharp focus. As a discourse, radio news scripts are characterized by essential devices such as attribution, abstract etc. however, driven by the necessities of the medium, these devices are used differently from that of the print medium. However, this underscores the fact of the existence of a discourse that is primarily intended for radio news.

The third sentence of the story is a clear example of how radio news uses the available time constraints to efficient use. Here, technically the sentence can be seen to be part of the body of the story and it can also be seen that the sentence is part of the main event described in the story – the inaugural speech of the Chief Minister.

However, it is also possible to analyze the same sentence from another point of view. From this point of view it can be seen that the sentence is part of the background of the story. It explains how the ADB loan is to be made use of by the state government. It is also a reply by the Chief Minister to certain criticisms leveled against his government by the opposition parties. Thus the sentence can also be seen as part of the follow – up part of the story.

This thesis seeks to under score the multi layered use of language and structure in the audio medium, especially on the transmission and communication of radio news. Because of the severe time and space constraints that the news editor inevitably works – these constraints are partly the result of the construct of

the medium, partly the result of the specialized discourse made necessary because of the former and also partly the result of the particularities of the contexts in which the bulletin is broadcast and in which it is received and heard. The third sentence of the news story just analyzed makes clear the multi layered construction that news stories usually have embedded within themselves.

The fourth sentence of the news story is also a multi layered construct in that it also looks forward as well as backward. It functions as a background for the proper comprehension of the story and at the same time looks forward indicating the possible fall out of the event described in the sentence. Again, at the same time, the sentence can be seen as functioning as a part of the main body of the story wherein the event described is fully a part and parcel of the action happening then and there – a part of the inaugural announcement made by the Chief Minister. Thus it can be summarized that such multi layering is a part of the discourse of radio discourse.

The fifth and last sentence of this story is a complete deviation from the analytical frame work suggested above. This sentence is rather a round up rather than a follow – up. It rounds up the event described in the body of the story. It also gives in a very short and brisk manner some additional features concerning the event which will make the listener's understanding of the same more clear and complete.

Amended discourse structure for radio news stories.

In short, the discourse structure of a radio news story is different from that of a conventional news story that is printed in a news paper. The reasons for such deviation are the nature of the medium as well as the functional characteristics of the language. Since the medium offers no scope for reiteration and recapitulation of facts beyond a certain minimal limit and since the language has to be restricted to severe length and diversity limitations, taking into account the time frame within which the bulletin has to be broadcast and listened to, the conventional division of a news story into attribution, abstract, body, commentary, background and follow up does not work in the case of a radio news story.

Here it is safer to assume that the discourse structure is wider and more variable. The various divisions proposed by Bell et al hold good only in a theoretical sense. In reality what happens is that as far as broadcast news stories are concerned, these divisions merge into one another making the discourse structure multi layered.

There is, for example, no attribution as such in broadcast story. The frame of reference of the story evolves from the structure of the body of the story itself. The date line and byline of the story is never mentioned separately. Rather, information regarding how the story evolved, where and who were the principal characters involved etc have to be revealed in the

course of the narration of the event itself. Here, the economy of time, words and unity achieved suits the nature of the medium in a very appropriate manner.

Another major difference between the discourse structure of printed news stories and the broadcast news stories lies with regard to the conclusion of the story. Printed news stories can be generally considered forward looking matter. The emphasis is often on any number of newer stories that can be generated from a single news event. Thus, printed news stories usually are wound up with the possibility of a follow up story being mentioned. Such follow up material invariably lies in the future, beyond the time and space limit of the news story that appears in print.

However, in the case of broadcast stories, the stories are usually wound up with a round up. The main features of the event are either recapitulated or additional information regarding the event which will make the comprehension of the story better will be added as a part of the round up.

Example 2.

/ka:yamkulam taapa vaidyuti nilayattinRe sta:pita se:si
randa:yiratti munnu:Ru mega:va:TTa:yi vaRdhippikkyunnatin
samsta:na gavaNment entipi:si:yuma:yi dha:raNa:pattRam
oppu vaykkyum/ dravi:kRita pRakRiti va:taka TeRminal
sta:pikkyunnat sambandiccullata:yirikkyum it/ mukhya mantRi

e:kke: a:ntaNi mantri sabha: yo:gattinu se:sam va:Rta:
le:khakare aRiyiccata:Nit/ ke:esaidi:si a:yirikkyum dharaNa:
pattRattil oppu vaykkyuka/ /mu:nu vaRsham kondu paddhadi
pu:Rti:karikkyukaya:Nu lakshyam/ /dRavi:kRita pRakRiti
va:takam indhanam a:kunnato:du ku:Ti ka:yamkulattu ninnulla
vaidyutiyuTe vila gaNNyama:yi kuRayumennu mukhya mantRi
cu:nDi ka:TTi/ /pa:lakka:d jillayile ati ru:ksama:ya varalca: stiti
gatal ne:riDunnatin upa samitiye niyo:gikky:num mantRi
sabha ti:ruma:niccu/ /jillayile gurutara:vasta pariganicc oru
varsha kka:latte:kkyu kaRshakaril ninnum vella karam
pirikkye:nTatillenum mantRi sabha t:ruma:niccata:yi mukhya
mantRi aRiyiccu/

Translation.

‘The state government will sign a memorandum of understanding with the NTPC to increase the installed capacity of the Kayamkulam thermal power plant to 2300 megawatt. The memorandum will deal with the setting up of a liquefied natural gas terminal at Kayamkulam. This was disclosed by Chief Minister A K Antony to news men after the cabinet meeting. The memorandum will be signed by the KSIDC and the work on the plant is expected to be completed within three years. The Chief Minister pointed out that with the introduction of Liquefied Natural Gas, the fuel prices from Kayamkulam will come down drastically. The Cabinet had also decided to appoint a sub committee to look into the serious drought condition in Palakkad district. The Chief Minister also said that the cabinet

had decided to exempt farmers of the district from paying water charges for a period of one year, in view of the severe drought conditions.'

Analysis.

Here, the first sentence of the story is in the form of a straight lead that gets into the core of the news story. It indicates the future expansion program of the state's prestigious thermal power plant situated in a place called Kayamkulam in Alleppy district of the Southern part of the state. Thus, it can be seen that the very first sentence of the story, the lead or intro is itself a follow up.

But here what is of special significance is that the lead sentence is only one event in an episode. The episode that the story concerns itself is the press conference convened by the Chief Minister and the decision about the future expansion of the thermal plant is only one event that forms part of the episode.

In other words, in this case the intro of the story itself is multi layered and carries the functions of an intro as well as a follow up. It is these kinds of deviations that make up the discourse of broadcast news and gives it a vitality that can be matched only by the un rehearsed ebb and flow of natural conversations. Here, the broadcast news story also comes

closer to the ideal of imitating ordinary spoken language, in structure at least.

The attribution in this story occurs only in the third sentence. The frame of reference of the story also becomes clear only in the third sentence.

The second sentence as well as the fourth sentence functions as background, making clear the sequence of developments that led to the main event depicted in the news story.

The fifth sentence functions as a follow up. But, since the sentence consists of an announcement by the Chief Minister, standing at the point of the event itself, the sentence can also be viewed as part of the body of the news text.

The sixth and seventh sentences of the story introduce a new event into the story. These sentences together can be visualized as forming another story that is 'interiorised' in the first story. (Ayyappa Panikkar,2006). Here also the discourse structure explained above remains valid, with the two sentences taking on multi layered structures and functioning at various levels.

(The theory of interiorization has been explained by Ayyappa panikker as follows. 'In a perceptive comment on the theory of "interiorization," Krishna Rayan says: "Running one word into another, one image into another, or one text into

another can be done in either of two ways. One can be fixed upon the other-this would be upari-sannivesha. Alternatively, one can be darkly concealed inside the other, consciously or unconsciously-this would be antassannivesha. Uparisannivesha (insertion upon) is related to the principle of rendering manifest; antassannivesha is related to the principle of rendering obscure."

In one sense, this process may be related to the way two words or images or texts are related to each other. The alternative for a word or image or a text may be seen as the other, which it tries to take within itself.

A sentence such as "The elephant is a huge animal," can be translated by using corresponding words in the target language for the lexical items in the original. "Aana oru valiya mrigam aanu" is a possible, acceptable translation in Malayalam, since the lexical terms have dictionary meanings, and one may find exact equivalents or corresponding expressions for them in Malayalam. But even here, if any meaning other than the literal one of "big" is interiorized in the word "huge," then another word may have to be used. (This is interiorization at the word level). The difficulty increases in proportion to the multiplicity of meanings for each word or lexical item; difficulties may increase if the syntax also is complicated. Tonal variations, which may be concealed from the written language, but which are important in the oral expression, may also add to the difficulty. This will necessitate

interiorization at the phonological level.’ (This forms part of a symposium on translation and examines the theory of interiorisation, in the context of translation published in Language in India, issue dated February, 2006.)

Elements of Humor.

Even though, it is not strictly speaking a part of the analysis of the discourse structure of broadcast news stories, certain elements like gender bias, humor, sources etc are also indicative of particular discursal qualities. Hence the news items were examined from these points of view also.

Further more, the study of discourse in its wider perspective – that of the creation and reflection of social life through language – naturally involves the questions of language – society interactions. Humor, gender etc are some of the major points of such interactions. Hence, the analysis of such interactions can be said to form part of the analysis of the broadcast news discourse, although strictly not part of the analysis of broadcast language.

It can also be noted in this context that another important point of view of discourse analysis is the examination of power relations as they are represented in language. Here gain questions of gender bias, formal language, ritualistic forms etc come to the fore. In this respect also the examination of

discourse from some non linguistic points of view will yield significant results.

Nothing can be farther away from news stories as humor, in a structured sense. This is because the general overtone of news, especially of radio news, is somber and serious. Hence the basic discourse structure of news does not provide for humor.

How ever, the stories themselves provide elements of humor that are read by the audience themselves. In this regard it can also be pointed out that the discourse structure of news stories often help in highlighting the humorous aspects of the stories.

The most important way in which this is done is through the process of reference and cohesion that runs through out a bulletin. This is actualized in terms of placement of items, the order of items, and provision of headline status.

In our basic analysis of 2500 items, instances of direct humor were so restricted as to be negligible. However, instances of structural humor could be attested in 100 stories. These include all the three kinds of referencing mentioned above.

The most common method used is that of the juxtaposition of material. For example, in some bulletins stories of opposing nature were juxtaposed so as to evoke a smile in

the faces of the hearers. Thus, in one bulletin of November 13, it was observed that differing statements about the same political development by ruling and opposition members were juxtaposed with humorous results. Again, in another bulletin (November 22) stories on a strike in one state were placed next to increase of industrial production in another state. Here again, even though unintentionally, an element of humor is being presented in news bulletins.

A related question that has to be answered in this context is that whether such expressions of humor contravene the objectivity of news stories. Humor, basically, is a subjective phenomenon. It is perception that always creates humor and perception cannot but be individual. In the various instances from radio news bulletins mentioned above, it can be read that the placement of items, juxtaposing items of opposing nature, was an editorial decision made on the basis of news value judgments. That humor was read into these juxtapositions is a subjective matter. Hence the presence of the subjective element of humor in news items need not be a negation of the basic objective nature of news bulletins.

Sensitivity to Gender Bias.

Another important aspect of discourse studies is the analysis of power relations in society that is reflected in the language. Here again the possibility of the relations themselves

being structured by the language used is also taken into consideration.

Gender studies are a new methodology of analyzing the structure of society, with the woman's view point as the focus. Discourse analysts like Cameron (2001) have pointed out that language is one of the elements used to create and sustain separate gender identities in many societies. In Malayalam, studies have been made with reference to the language used by antharjanams (Namdoodiri women) and the separate language used in Sanskrit dramas for women and inferior characters.

Basically, gender studies consider the problem of gender bias as seen from the point of view of male hierarchy. They see this as a function of the power struggle that goes on in the society between men and women. They see that language is one of the tools used by the society to perpetuate the bias against women. The recent PhD thesis by Dr S Prema (Unpublished thesis, 2005, University of Kerala) has quoted a number of examples wherein the same concepts and objects are referred to by different names by men and women. Here, the point is that the differentiation between men and women is being emphasized by the repeated use and reference in language. This repetitive reference slowly enters the collective unconsciousness of the society and in course of time this difference and the implied weakness of women becomes an

accepted fact. Later still, language starts reflecting this bias as an example of language reflecting society.

For example, Grossberg Lawrence, Ellen Wartella and D Charles Whitney. (1998) have explained the conceptual intricacies of the question of social identities in a succinct manner. They say that it is not physiology or anatomy alone that determine gender identity. People have to assume certain social roles and practice certain kinds of behaviors. It is these roles and behaviours that determine what is called gender identity.

The reality of physiology and anatomy remain and as far as language is concerned it is these realities that form the basis for setting up a chain of differences that form the basis for a set of signifieds, which again set up groups of semantic differentiations that lie at the heart of meaning representation which is the basic characteristic of language.

In short, discourse analysis defines identity as a cultural construct. It is the product of the set of physical distinctions seen in nature that is reproduced in language, reiterated and strengthened by repetitious use and finally again represented by language as a representation of nature and society as such. What is to be perceived here is that it is language that has first determined what is to be differentiated; it is the chain of differentiations, what Derrida calls the 'play of differences', that first determines the identity. Later, society accepts this

differentiation whereupon language takes the next step to perpetuate it through count less repetitive acts. This repetitions result in the identities being accepted as part of a social reality, which in turn is again reflected in the society. Thus, apparently what is seen in language as a representation of society is actually a re reflection or even a refraction of what was actually perpetuated by language itself in the first instance.

The question of gender bias in broadcast news assumes significance against the possibility of such refraction. For example, All India Radio has all along insisted on the meticulous use of honorifics. The major argument was that since radio is a spoken medium, the avoidance or rejection of honorifics would become tantamount to insulting the personality referred to. It has also been pointed out that since the possibility of any hearer at random switching on the radio set 'in situ' (ie, in the middle of a programme) is always very real, it makes sense to insist on the prudent use of honorifics. Thus, the terms Shri and Srimati were being used by All India Radio.

Times changed and the use of honorifics became limited to formal occasions. Here again, it was the media that was in the van guard of the chain. The plethora of news channels in the private sector, led by the printed medium, where space is money, slowly evolved a system where the use of honorifics was restricted to the minimum possible. This informality of the medium was reflected in the society at large and again, as a third step was refracted by the same media as a reflection of

society! Now, All India Radio is also in the process of slowly discarding the use of honorifics although a uniform pattern is yet to evolve. Though not part of the corpora collected for the study, in some of the bulletins in Malayalam from New Delhi station of All India Radio, monitored in March, 2006, it was found that the use of honorifics was being slowly discarded. In the set of seven bulletins monitored during the week, honorifics were used in 15 occasions and ignored in 12 occasions.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that the presence of humor as well as the existence of gender bias are two of the more important factors that characterize the discourse of broadcast. In the case of the first, the element of humor need not be consciously integrated into the bulletin. Humor, in news bulletins, evolve as a function of typical news room procedures like placing, bunching and head lining of news stories intended for broadcast. The dynamics of broadcast news discourse entails the juxtaposition of various kinds of stories – based on subject matter, place of origin, sources etc – which in turn may result in presenting a humorous world view which comes within the familiar mental map of the average consumer of radio news. And thus, it can be said, that humor in broadcast news is unintended, but is the result of the dynamics of news discourse.

Another distinguishing feature of broadcast news is the presence of gender bias. Here also, it is refraction of a social reality previously engendered by the media themselves.

In short, the analysis of radio news broadcast has brought to light the following points.

1. The discourse of radio news broadcasts is characterized by two sets of parameters that are derived from the media and the language.
2. On this phenomenon, the characteristics of the process of listening, whereby the broadcast news is received and comprehended by the public, also act.
3. The recordings and manuscripts are first classified in terms of their content into nine subjects. They are politics, development, religion, culture, legal, death, accidents, sports and miscellaneous. This classification provides one of the bases for formulating the discorsal nature of radio news broadcasts.

In other words, the wide variety of subjects that are dealt with within a single news bulletin that lasts ten minutes and on an average includes about 25 to 30 hand written pages is an indication that a particular technique is used for the preparation of the bulletin; it is this technique that is described in this thesis as the discourse of broadcast news.

4. Analysis of the various news bulletins collected as part of this study revealed that there are nine

principal kinds of news stories that are included in bulletins.

5. Vocabulary and constructions are the two primary indices that help in identifying a material as a piece of discourse. This is because the archetypal characteristics of discourse, reference and coherence are mainly realized through these devices.
6. The discussion of the discorsal features of radio news, it is possible to understand the structure of the news bulletin. This again will help reinforce the central observation of this thesis that radio news is actually a form of discourse that has to be analyzed and understood from the point of view of function.
7. The structure of a news bulletin from both the journalistic point of view and the discourse analysis point of view are discussed.
8. From these, it is possible to conclude that the discourse of radio news is a separate entity having its own characteristics.
9. Discourse is to be studied from the view points of non linguistic parameters also. Thus the presence or absence of humor as well as the reality behind gender bias are factors that determine the discorsal characteristics of broadcast news. From this stand point this thesis

concludes that humor does exist in broadcast news, but only as a function of the dynamics of the news discourse. Juxtaposition of related or unrelated items are the most common source of humor in news bulletins. Here juxtaposition can also be seen as a variety of the discourse techniques like reference and cohesion.

10. As far as the question of gender bias is concerned, the thesis argues that such bias is constructed in the collective unconsciousness of the society by the media – specially electronic media like radio and television – themselves. For this, the potent medium of language is used by the media. In a second stage, this bias is absorbed into the collective unconsciousness of the society as a whole. Later still, it is at the third stage, that the same set of biases originally rendered real by the media through the medium of language – specifically through culturally value laded sets of signifiers and signifieds – that the same set of biases are refracted by the media as a realistic portrayal of society. Actually, media ia actually representing what they originally created as a representation of reality!

Chapter Six.

Conclusion.

This thesis dealt with the analysis of Malayalam Radio news and the conclusion is that the language of radio news forms a special kind of discourse. It posits that a particular discourse exists in the mass media and that the radio uses a discourse that can be called a sub set of the discourse of mass media.

The theoretical back ground of the study is described in the first chapter. Radio is a potent mass medium that caters to a very wide and varied audience. Mass media itself is formulated out of and is governed by certain particular characteristics. These characteristics form the justification for positing the 'discourse of mass media'.

These characteristics are Janus faced and have two orientations. One set of characteristics are generated from the peculiar nature of the media itself. The other set of characteristics owe their existence to the varied nature and endless creativity of human languages.

Here, it is to be noted that language has been traditionally viewed from either a prescriptive grammatical point of view or from a descriptive linguistic point of view. Both these methodologies fall short of describing and evaluating broadcast language because they bypass the real objective of language use in mass media, which is communication. From this point of view, radio language was analyzed on the theoretical basis that language use is a form of discourse.

Against this background, this thesis has attempted to examine the principal characteristics of the broadcast discourse and describe

how they function in the broadcast context. The characteristics of the process of mass communication, the special features of radio as a broadcast medium and the particular nature of one of the commodities conveyed by the medium, i.e. news, all together act and interact with each other in the formation of a media language and a broadcast news genre.

In the second chapter, the evolution of the radio as a powerful mass medium is described, with emphasis on the history and development of All India Radio. This emphasis is given mainly because the present study takes place against Indian background, where the principal player in the broadcast scenario is All India Radio. As a prelude to analyzing the discourse of radio, it is necessary to understand the working of the medium. In this chapter the focus is on the development of radio as a mass medium and a description of some of the salient techniques of broadcasting.

The historical perspective will help understand how the medium makes use of language as an effective medium to communicate as well as how the communicative nature of the medium was shaped, to a considerably large extent, by the language used for communication. The technological perspective will help in understanding why radio programmes develop certain characteristics and how the specialized discourse of the radio helps in facilitating these programmes.

In the third chapter, the growth of All India Radio in Kerala and the development of the News Services division are documented. The various important developments up to 2005 are documented.

The fourth chapter theoretically posits the existence of 'the discourse of radio news' and defines its central characteristics. It is to be noted here that in this context, the conceptualization of 'the discourse of radio news' also assumes relevance. Here, the language used is defined in terms of usage. The usage, at the same time, is characterized by the medium, the content and the language. The fifth chapter validates this with examples from Malayalam radio news. The conclusions that are drawn from the study are summarized here.

Radio news forms a special subset of broadcast discourse and merits exhaustive treatment of its own. The protean existence of the mass media has affected the way society behaves and the way in which individuals perceive society.

Language is the principal ingredient with which the mass media interacts with the society and the individuals partake of the mass media. Hence, the use of language in various forms of mass media has acquired a range of specific characteristics.

These characteristics are Janus faced and have two orientations. One set of characteristics are generated from the peculiar nature of the media form itself. The other set of characteristics owe their existence to the varied nature and endless creativity of man's linguistic ability. Radio is no exception. Neither is radio news.

However, language has been traditionally viewed from either a prescriptive grammatical point of view or from a descriptive linguistic point of view. Both these methodologies fall short of describing and evaluating broadcast language because they bypass the real objective of language use or discourse in mass media that is

communication. Hence, it becomes necessary to approach media language as a form of discourse.

the discourse of news has to be self contained. All the information that is necessary for the audience to decipher the message has to be included in the script and its presentation. The news reader is not in a position to see and gauge the reactions of the audience and adjust his discourse accordingly. Similarly, the audience is not in a position to interrupt a news bulletin and call for explanations or additional information. Here, the characteristics of the radio as an audio medium connect with The discourserial characteristics of media language are the result of at least two sets of parameters. One is the nature of mass communication and the other are the characteristics of the medium used. The former sets the larger discourse of which the latter becomes a particular genre. Thus, radio news becomes a particular genre of the broadcast.

Against this background, this thesis has examined the principal characteristics of the broadcast discourse and examined how they function in the broadcast genre. The characteristics of the process of mass communication, the special features of radio as a broadcast medium and the particular nature of one of the commodities conveyed by the medium, i.e. news, all form act and interact each other in the formation of a media language and a broadcast news genre.

The basic characteristics of the broadcast media have a significant role in shaping up the form and content of the news script.

The factors are:

- 1, invisible audience,

- 2, non reactive audience,
- 3, live broadcast,
- 4, written script,
- 5, number of items,
- 6, complete sentence structures,
- 7, relatively short sentences,
- 8, selection of lexical items,
- 9, grammatical markers and sense markers.

The first two factors arise out of the fact that radio news arises out of a written script. When the third, fourth and fifth factors are also considered, they may together be considered to refer to the characteristics of the broadcast medium. The fifth factor, along with the remaining four, refers to the features of radio news a spoken, read and listened discourse.

The first two factors underline the fact that the rigors of the prepared script as a written medium.

On another axis, the script is an arrangement of words on a page aimed at expressing a set of meanings and ideas. It is shaped in a desired manner by the use of devices like spelling, divisions like sentences, paragraphs etc and punctuation. At the same time, this script has to be realized through the news readers' voices. The various dimensions and nuances of the script and the message it encodes have to be realized through the pitch, rhythm, stress and intonation of the news reader. The success of the news discourse lies in the efficiency with which the written discourse of the script is

translated into the read discourse of the news reader, so as to reflect the preferred reading.

The first five factors can also be said to arise out of the particularities of the broadcast medium. By convention, news broadcasts are always done live; that is, the presentation and transmission of the news broadcast are always simultaneous. This means the news reader has to be alert to minimize faults because there is never scope for editing, in the course of presentation. It also means that the amount of matter that goes into a bulletin has to be necessarily circumscribed by the length of the broadcast. There is a physical limit to the number of items that can be read within the allotted time limit. There is also no scope for a wide variety of sentence structures, new lexical items etc because the reader as well as the listener will not have the time to reflect on and understand the relevance of such nuances.

The final five characteristics define the language of radio discourse. They help in delivering the written script into an oral presentation. For example, radio news writers are rigorously trained in framing short sentences. They are often asked to keep to one theme per sentence, as a practical method of curbing sentence length. News readers and editors also become quite adept in presenting any major idea using self contained, short sentences. They judge the length of sentences in terms of breath length – the length of sentences that they can aspirate comfortably, without pausing for breath. The main drawback of standardizing sentence length is that such breath lengths vary individually. So, the one theme

per sentence technique has been accepted with quite efficient success in determining the sentence length of broadcast material.

The discourse of radio news is generated out of a script prepared by a set of reporters and editors. They follow a set of conventions. They may also follow a style book which lays down rules of punctuation, spelling, prosody etc.

This means radio news presentation involves two processes with differing requirements at the same time. It is a script that is **written** for **reading**. That means, it is **written in** for comprehension and **read out** for communication.

Here a significant differentiation arises. A news script is something more than what is written down for others to read. It is a script written down to be read out **aloud**. So, the differences between the processes of writing, reading and listening all come to the fore and problematise the process of radio news presentation.

It is also to be noted here that the broadcast of a news bulletin involves at least three stages, which have their own differing criterion. In the first stage, a script is generated, based either on a report filed by a correspondent or on the basis of what is called 'wire copy'. (Wire copy refers to matter originally provided by the news agencies like Press Trust of India – PTI and the United News of India – UNI. They are usually in English and are oriented more for the requirements of the print media.) Translation to the regional language and adjustments for broadcast language usually takes place at this stage, although the tenets of written language are mainly followed here.

In the second stage the editor and the news reader goes through the copy and stylistic corrections are made to the script. Here, the conventions of reading and reading out aloud attain prominence.

Finally at the third stage of actual broadcast, the efficacy of the script has to be evaluated. Here, the conventions of listening become paramount.

The visual representation of a news bulletin and its audio presentation acquire particular relevance. In written form, a quotation is marked off by a pair of inverted commas that are pegged at the beginning and end of the quoted words. These, in common parlance, are called 'quotation marks'. In the course of silent reading for comprehension, these marks serve as an indication that the words under reference are quotations, spoken by someone else.

The question becomes problematical in the context of news reading and presentation. The news reader has to convey the presence of quotation marks in the text and transmit the fact that what is being read forms part of what some one else has said – i.e. what is being said is an extra bulletin reference. In silent reading and in non formal reading contexts the problem is tied over by making explicit the presence of quotation marks by physically mentioning them in the course of the presentation. Thus, usually, the reader or presenter acknowledges the presence of quotation marks by saying 'I quote' or by saying 'in inverted commas' etc.

However, since news reading on the radio is primarily a formal exercise (Rosemary Hurston, 1988), such interpolations that do not form actual part of the designated script are not usually allowed, by

convention. So, the reader or presenter is forced to refer to the presence of such marks by a differing tone or by interpolating a pause at both ends of the quotation, thus marking a difference from the script as such.

Although news bulletins are traditionally thought of as objective exercises that concentrate only on presenting facts and figures, an indirect thread of subjectivism cannot be completely ruled out. In fact theorists like Defleur, Ball – Roakeach et al (1975), Dubuque, Mencher.M. (1984) etc has observed that traditionally objectivity of news is held sacrosanct. However, newer studies in communication and journalism, especially those from the point of view of sociology, have questioned the very supposition that news is objective; for example see Tuchman.G (1978). Against this background, the functioning of references has a special significance. They suggest that from the point of view of discourse analysis, which is basically the study of the dynamics of a language and its special property of generating meanings, references are techniques basically used to position a news story in a certain milieu. The story is ultimately understood in a positive or negative sense on the basis of this milieu or setting. Thus, references can be said to belie the avowed objectivity of news stories and journalistic communication in general.

In general, it can be concluded that references are always extra bulletin in a wide sense. At the same time, the dynamics of reference, wherein the referent can lie completely within, completely without or partially within and partially without the bulletin, makes the question of classifying a particular reference intra bulletin or extra bulletin. Thus it can be logically concluded that intra bulletin references are a

sub class of extra bulletin references wherein the basic parameter will be whether the primary referent lies within the bulletin or outside.

Radio news begets the nature of a discourse from two sets of parameters, one pertaining to the language and the other pertaining to the medium. There are of course some points where both the sets of parameters coincide and the objectivity and subjectivisation of news is one such problem area. Here, the language used and the technology of mass communication act and react upon each other to produce a discourse that is unique to broadcasting. One of the characteristics of such a discourse is the super imposition of subtle subjectivity of overt and theoretical objectivity.

By this is meant the practice followed in radio newsrooms of holding facts as sacrosanct. The news story broadcast is never allowed to deviate from its fidelity to facts; at the same time, through subtle practices like arrangement of news items, the order in which news items are broadcast, their placement (meaning what follows a particular news story and what comes before it), whether the item under question has been given headline treatment or not etc determine the frame through which the organizers of the bulletin wants the hearers to perceive the bulletin.

Construction refers to the different ways in which vocabulary is arranged, so that various shades of meanings can be expressed. As far as discourse is concerned, the principal function of language is the communication of meaning. Discourse Analysis is one of the techniques for identifying how meaning is generated in a language.

Notingham (2003) makes the following observation regarding the role played by discourse in the generation of meaning. She

regards the principle of 'cohesion' as an important technique used in discourse as a means to identify and generate meaning. Cohesion is the factor present in any body of text that indicates the connectedness of its content.

As Halliday, M. A. K. and R. Hasan (1976) points out 'cohesion is what gives a text its texture'. They say that 'cohesion and register enable us to create a text. Register is concerned with what a text means. It is defined by Halliday and Hasan as the "set of semantic configuration that is typically associated with a particular class of context of situation, and defines the substance of the text."

According to Halliday and Hasan, the function of cohesion is to relate one part of a text to another part of the same text. Consequently, it lends continuity to the text. By providing this kind of text continuity, cohesion enables the reader or listener to supply all the components of the picture to its interpretation. Halliday and Hasan hold that cohesion in its normal form, is the presupposition of something that has gone before in the discourse, whether in the immediately preceding sentence or not. This form of presupposition is referred to as anaphoric. The presupposing item may point forward to something following it. This type of presupposition is called cataphoric. On the other hand, exophoric and endophoric presuppositions refer to an item of information outside and inside the text, respectively.

Cohesion and reference are vital indicators of discourse from another angle also. They are clear signposts as to how a text is to be

read. This is not against even the modern deconstructionist view of literature wherein a text can have as many readings and as many meanings as there are readers. Every text comes with an author generated 'preferred reading' and this reading is marked in the discourse by means of cohesion and reference.

Another important reference that Notingham makes with regard to the question of coherence is the question of a special kind of reference and cohesion elements which she calls 'demonstratives' or 'diotics'. This group of coherence elements is very important as far as the audio medium, especially news and advertising, is concerned.

Diotics refers to words like this, these, those, that here, there etc which can be defined conveniently as verbal pointers. Their principal function is to place the reader or hearer with reference to the text or speaker. This function acquires all the more importance in a medium where the only possible reference is the voice of the speaker – the radio. The hearer does not have the convenience of any kind of visual or tactical clue that can help him place the time or place or persons around which the discourse evolves. Here, the only possible elements he can call for help are these elements called diotics.

Advertisements, which are attempts at bringing a product and a set of possible users as close as possible, are another area where the use of diotics is wide spread. The frame of reference of an advertisement – again this is specially significant as far as an oral and audio medium like radio is concerned – is enlarged outwardly to include a potentially large number of prospective clients and

extended inwardly to include the presenter and producers of the program, the artists involved etc by use of dietics. This technique ensures that the distance between a radio program and its listeners is shortened to the maximum possible.

In the case of dietics also we come to a feature of the news discourse wherein the parameters of the medium as well as the particularities of the language are drawn together in the creation of a specific discourse of the radio news.

Elipses, substitutions and conjunctions are also techniques used to achieve cohesion in a discourse. These three elements help in pulling a text together, according to Notingham. Ellipses, though they may occur in spoken discourse naturally, may have to be inducted into written discourse artificially. This technique is used by dramatists when writing radio dramas so that a sense and impression of naturalness is created as well as a sense of affinity with the audience is generated.

However, taking into concern the formal nature of radio news bulletins, the uses of ellipses, conjunctions, abbreviations etc in radio news bulletins is not possible. This is not necessary too because the news reader is not expected to be come into close affinity with his audience. The reader or presenter is a remote figure who presents news from a higher ground where he has a much larger vision than his listeners. The authoritativeness of news programs is also derived to a certain extent from this aloofness of the presenter from his intended audience.

The discourse practices of the broadcast medium, as necessitated by both the nature of the medium and by the characteristics of the language are brought into sharp focus. As a discourse, radio news scripts are characterized by essential devices such as attribution, abstract etc. however, driven by the necessities of the medium, these devices are used differently from that of the print medium. However, this underscores the fact of the existence of a discourse that is primarily intended for radio news.

This thesis seeks to under score the multi layered use of language and structure in the audio medium, especially on the transmission and communication of radio news. Because of the severe time and space constraints that the news editor inevitably works – these constraints are partly the result of the construct of the medium, partly the result of the specialized discourse made necessary because of the former and also partly the result of the particularities of the contexts in which the bulletin is broadcast and in which it is received and heard.

The discourse structure of a radio news story is different from that of a conventional news story that is printed in a news paper. The reasons for such deviation are the nature of the medium as well as the functional characteristics of the language. Since the medium offers no scope for reiteration and recapitulation of facts beyond a certain minimal limit and since the language has to be restricted to severe length and diversity limitations, taking into account the time frame within which the bulletin has to be broadcast and listened to, the conventional division of a news story into attribution, abstract,

body, commentary, background and follow up does not work in the case of a radio news story.

Here it is safer to assume that the discourse structure is wider and more variable. The various divisions proposed by Bell et al hold good only in a theoretical sense. In reality what happens is that as far as broadcast news stories are concerned, these divisions merge into one another making the discourse structure multi layered.

There is, for example, no attribution as such in broadcast story. The frame of reference of the story evolves from the structure of the body of the story itself. The date line and byline of the story is never mentioned separately. Rather, information regarding how the story evolved, where and who were the principal characters involved etc have to be revealed in the course of the narration of the event itself. Here, the economy of time, words and unity achieved suits the nature of the medium in a very appropriate manner.

Another major difference between the discourse structure of printed news stories and the broadcast news stories lies with regard to the conclusion of the story. Printed news stories can be generally considered forward looking matter. The emphasis is often on any number of newer stories that can be generated from a single news event. Thus, printed news stories usually are wound up with the possibility of a follow up story being mentioned. Such follow up material invariably lies in the future, beyond the time and space limit of the news story that appears in print.

However, in the case of broadcast stories, the stories are usually wound up with a round up. The main features of the event are either recapitulated or additional information regarding the event which will make the comprehension of the story better will be added as a part of the round up.

The question of the role and function of language in communication have been examined by sociologists from another interesting point of view. Grossberg et al (1998) have explained this approach in great detail. . They explain the working of the media from the points of view of two models – the transmission model and the cultural model. The former is ‘the process of moving messages from a sender through a medium to a receiver’. Here the cardinal questions involved in analyzing the language of the media are who said what to whom on which medium and to what effect.

The cultural model of communication sees the process as “the construction of a shared space or map of meaning within which people co exist”. Here, language of the media is not an isolated phenomenon; rather it is involved in the generation as well as the realization of meaning and its communication within a society. (pp 18, 19 and 20).

As far as the transmission model is concerned, the prime purpose of communication is to ensure that the receiver decodes the same meaning transmitted by the sender through a medium. The more the correlation of meaning at the two ends of the transmission, the higher the communication equivalence of the process. As far as the cultural model of communication is concerned, the meaning of the

communication is the result of the world view, knowledge and perceptions of both the sender and the receiver. Hence the possibility that the encoding of the message and its decoding may result in divergent sets of meanings cannot and need not be ruled out.

Against this background, the language of communication is to be understood as the result of the combination of at least three sets of postulates. They concern the nature of the text, the content of the text and the interpretation of the text. Connecting these three facets of communication is the concept of meaning which can be described as the prime function of communication.

Meaning has been conceived both as representational and as conceptual. In the former it is taken that language acquires meaning because of the one on one representation of things seen in the world and encountered by people inhabiting the world. The conceptual view concerning meaning says that meaning is the product of the inter relationship of the society with the world. Meaning is generated when members of a society encounter a phenomenon and want to convey it to others.

Grossberg et al concludes saying that “people live in a world of meanings and interpretations, organized by codes of differences. They do not make those meanings: they do not interpret their world for themselves. Nor does the world come already interpreted apart from human activity. People live within the codes, the systems of differences, and the articulations by which those codes have been stitched together in various ways. They live within a culture, and the process by which that culture is produced, maintained, repaired and transformed is communication.Communication cannot be

separated from the world that it communicates or from the codes that make it possible to communicate”.

For precisely this reason, it is important to understand the workings of the codes and signs of the mass media. This is all the more significant because media represents the most widely used and perceived sets of codes and signs. In this thesis, additionally, the system of codes and signs are seen in the light of the communicative function that they full - fill, that is as a discourse. Here it is not the correctness or otherwise of the texts, codes and signs that assume significance. Rather, it is the discourse value appropriated by the text in a particular context that is considered significant. Thus, here media, text, discourse and codes appear as inter related phenomenon that act one on the other in the generation and perception of socially significant meanings and relevancies.

Finally, this thesis concludes with a discussion of how the discourse characteristics of the radio news bulletins result in the development of a discourse structure. To describe the discourse structure of the radio news bulletins, the thesis has first attempted to describe the news bulletins in terms of the journalistic structure consisting of leads, intros, body of the story, headlines and bunching. These terms are used in a technical sense in journalism and broadcasting.

These terms are then connected to the terms used in the analysis of broadcast discourse by Bell et al. They have used terms like attribution, background, commentary, follow up etc to indicate the various phases of a broadcast story.

This thesis analyzes some news stories broadcast by All India radio, Thiruvananthapuram and establishes that the discourse structure of radio news stories follows a common pattern. This pattern includes an intro, a body that includes attribution, reference, background and commentary and a conclusion that involves a round up. This round up, at times, also functions in the form of a follow up indicating the form the story is expected to acquire in later bulletins. This is especially true of stories that are developmental in nature – that is, stories that are in the process of evolving.

The discourse structure of broadcast news stories makes clear their primary communication function. The structure of the broadcast stories is aimed at facilitating immediate communication and comprehension of latest developments concerning any news story. Conversely, it is the particular structure of broadcast stories that make them capable of carrying along the latest developments in a news story.

Discourse is to be studied from the view points of non linguistic parameters also. Thus the presence or absence of humor as well as the reality behind gender bias are factors that determine the discursal characteristics of broadcast news. From this stand point this thesis concludes that humor does exist in broadcast news, but only as a function of the dynamics of the news discourse. Juxtaposition of related or un related items are the most common source of humor in news bulletins. Here juxtaposition can also be seen as a variety of the discourse techniques like reference and cohesion.

As far as the question of gender bias is concerned, the thesis argues that such bias is constructed in the collective unconsciousness of the society by the media – specially electronic media like radio and television – themselves. For this, the potent medium of language is used by the media. In a second stage, this bias is absorbed into the collective unconsciousness of the society as a whole. Later still, it is at the third stage, that the same set of biases originally rendered real by the media through the medium of language – specifically through culturally value laded sets of signifiers and signifieds – that the same set of biases are refracted by the media as a realistic portrayal of society. Actually, media in actually representing what they originally created as a representation of reality!

In short, the main conclusions of this thesis are as follows:

- Radio news forms a special kind of discourse.
- This discourse owes its genesis in the kind of language used and in the characteristics of the broadcast medium.
- The discourse characteristics of radio news lead to the formation of a discourse structure for news stories.
- This structure will help in analyzing and describing the communication properties of radio news bulletins.

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Appendix one.

Statistics.

Analysis of content classification.

- Total number of bulletins: 120.
 - Total number of items: 2500.
 - Total number of days covered: 30.
-
- 1. Politics: 904! 36.16%
 - 2. Financial: 350! 14%
 - 3. Legal: 302! 8.08%
 - 4. Sports 360! 14.4%
 - 5. Religion: 285! 11.4%
 - 6. Culture: 70! 2.8%
 - 7. Accidents: 127! 5.08%
 - 8. Death: 32! 1.28%
 - 9. Misc: 70! 2.8%

The materials for analysis are the recordings of the 6.45 am Pradesika Varthakal (Regional news), broadcast from the Kozhikode station of All India Radio and the manuscripts of the bulletins of Paradesika Varthakal broadcast from Thiruvananthapuram station at 12.30 pm and 6.20 pm. The texts (and in some cases, recordings) of bulletins, covering a period of one month (November, 2004) have been used as the primary material for the study.

A total of seven bulletins, spanning a period of one week was monitored in the month of March,2006, as a follow up to

the original analysis. The observations from the monitoring exercise have also been included in the thesis.

Appendix Two.

News Policy for Broadcast Media. (As published in the Style Book of News Services Division, All India Radio, 1992).

1. There has to be a clear understanding of the difference between news and views. The reporting of news has to be factual, accurate and objective and only such views as make news should find place in news broadcasts. There can be no editorializing in broadcast news.
2. Each news story should be judged strictly on its news value.
3. In the selection of news received from wide ranging sources and in news editing, AIR and Doordarshan should be guided by the highest possible professional standards. While news worthiness will determine the selection of news, its treatment and presentation should be directly related to the special characteristics and potential of each medium as well as the target audiences.
4. Apart from treating news factually and objectively, AIR and Doordarshan should provide, where necessary, a background to the events and happenings in order that listeners in any part of the country are able to place such events and happenings in proper perspective.
5. The broadcast news should satisfy the highest criterion of accuracy and responsibility. AIR and Doordarshan cannot indulge in speculative stories of the type that appear in

certain journals. They should develop their own sources for the verification of events.

6. In a developing country like ours, a special function of broadcasting should be the coverage of development, its significance, achievements and problems. Development news covers a wide range of activities – economic, technological, social and cultural. It should not be confined to mere statements and plans but should explain their significance also. For this purpose, news gathering operations of the AIR and Doordarshan should be expanded and properly dispersed. In other words, the news gathering apparatus should make a deliberate effort to explore new areas of development and nation building news. People's participation in such activities should be duly highlighted as also significant work being done by voluntary agencies. There by the broadcast media should not only supplement the work normally done by the news agencies but put out well prepared background stories on their own.
7. With the limitation of time, the vast audiences reached and the presentational demands, AIR and Doordarshan cannot be expected to follow the pattern of news coverage followed by news papers. The range and scope of news gathering and selection will have to be suited to the media.
8. The style and method of news reporting should reinforce the fundamental principles on which national policies are based. These fundamental principles include territorial integrity,

national integration, secularism, maintenance of public order and upholding of legislature and judiciary.

9. Ministerial statements on policy matters, particularly those by the Prime Minister, are important in as much as they enable the people to understand national policies. Similarly, implementation of government programmes should be given proper place in the news. Here, the focus should be on information rather than on individuals. It is also necessary that views critical of the official policies and the manner of their implementation should also find adequate broadcast time.
10. In reporting on political controversies, the broadcast media should be guided by objectivity and fair play. If a variety of view points could not be projected in a single bulletin, a balance should be achieved within a reasonable period of time.
11. In the choice of international events, the objective should be to keep people informed of world developments. A special effort should be made to give the proper background of the events. In the selection of news, greater attention should be given to events in developing countries, particularly our neighbours. Apart from strictly pruning and editing the copy from world agencies, it would be desirable for AIR to use copy from the Non aligned News Pool and other Third World agencies, subject to news merits. What is most essential is for AIR to increase the number of its foreign correspondents and carefully select their location and area of news

coverage. This will enable the organization to project a view of world developments as seen by India and other non aligned and developing countries.

12. AIR and Doordarshan should aim at creating an informed public opinion on international events and developments. In preparing programmes in news and current affairs, the national interest must be borne in mind. The national policy of peace and peaceful co existence, non alignment, friendship with all countries, support for people fighting for independence, the struggle against racism and the establishment of an international order based on equality and justice should be high lighted. This does not exclude the reporting of any significant criticism of the Government's foreign policy, either in its content or in its implementation.
13. The primary purpose of the current affairs programmes should be to enlighten people on various aspects of political, economic social and cultural developments. The treatment of the subject should be comprehensive projecting differing view points. It should aim at providing adequate background information for a proper understanding and interpretation of events and issues.
14. The current affairs programmes should be broad based in the selection of topics and participants. The interests of various sections of people should be taken into account. The formats should be innovative and suited to the medium. There is scope for experimentation in this respect.

15. Internal evaluation of news and current affairs programmes after their broadcast should be a regular exercise on a daily basis. A panel of outside experts for news and current affairs in a particular language should be considered.
16. The characteristics and potential reach of the broadcast media necessitate the drafting of news items in the spoken style. The language should be addressed to the ear unlike the printed word in a news paper or journal which is meant to be read.
17. The constraints of time that fall on all programmes that are broadcast also calls for precision and brevity in drafting. The difference in the levels of comprehension in various sections of listeners is another factor that has to be taken into consideration. Clarity and simplicity are essential. Reporters and those who give talks over radio should aim at easy communication with people and not at parading their literary skills.
18. There should be provision for evaluation, from time to time, of the language of the bulletins. There has to be much greater emphasis on specialization and training of news personnel within AIR and Doordarshan. A style book in each language should be prepared without delay.
19. The implementation of these policies and norms will depend upon the professional capacity of the people who run the news and current affairs programmes. The choice of personnel is most important. A professional must have had training in news work. He should be able to choose the

items well and rewrite stories to suit the medium. Professional training and appreciation of the role of the media in a democratic society will give him the confidence to take the right decisions.

Appendix Three.

AIR Code.

Broadcast on All India Radio by individuals will not permit:

1. Criticism of friendly countries;
2. Attack on religions or communities;
3. Anything obscene or defamatory;
4. Incitement to violence or anything against maintenance of law and order;
5. Anything amounting to contempt of court;
6. Aspersion against the integrity of the President, Governors and the Judiciary;
7. Attack on a political party by name;
8. Hostile criticism of any State or the Center;
9. Anything showing disrespect to the Constitution or advocating change in the constitution by violence; but advocating change in a constitutional way should not be debarred.
10. Appeals for funds except for the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund at a time of external emergency or if the country is faced with a natural calamity like floods, earthquake or cyclone.

11. Direct publicity for or on behalf of an individual or organization which is likely to benefit only that individual or organization;
12. Trade names in broadcasts which amount to advertising directly (Except in Commercial Services).

Footnote.

1. The Code applies to criticism in the nature of personal tirade either of a friendly Government or of a political party or of the Central Government or any State Government. But it does not bar reference to and dispassionate discussion of the policies pursued by any of them.
2. If a Station Director finds that the above Code has not been respected by an intending broadcaster, he will draw the latter's attention to the passage objected to. If the intending broadcaster refuses to agree with the Station Director's suggestions and modify the script accordingly, the Station Director will be justified in refusing his or her broadcast.
3. Cases of unresolved differences of opinion between a Minister of State government and the Station Director about the interpretation of the Code, with regard to a talk to be broadcast by the former, will be referred to the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India who will decide finally whether or not any change in the text of the talk is necessary in order to avoid violation of the Code.

