

**COVENANT UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA**

*TUTORIAL KIT
OMEGA SEMESTER*

**PROGRAMME: MASS
COMMUNICATION**

COURSE: MAC 343

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MAC343: BROADCAST COMMENTARY & CRITICAL WRITING

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- a. Write a script and produce a 3mins broadcast commentary with critical analysis, choosing any of the following topics:
 - b. 2015 General Elections: Matters Arising (Politics & Governance)
 - c. Rising tide of unemployment in Nigeria and the NIS [Nigerian Immigration Service] saga (Economy)
 - d. 2014 World Cup finals in Brasil: How prepared is the Nigerian team? (Sports)
 - e. Celebrities and social lifestyle: Are they positive role models for Nigerian youths? (Entertainment)
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1. As a broadcaster, when writing a broadcast commentary you will have to get opinion from some sources that will be relevant to your work. Discuss the four types of opinion that you can use.
 2. Discuss the principles of persuasion that are relevant to broadcast commentary and critical writing.
 3. Highlight the four basic rules that a critic will take into consideration when writing broadcast criticisms.
 4. State and explain two theories that contextualise persuasion as an important art of broadcast commentary and critical writing.

Marking Guide (MAC343)

1. Write a script and produce a 3mins broadcast commentary with critical analysis, choosing any of the following topics:
 - a. 2015 General Elections: Matters Arising (Politics & Governance)
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 - d. Celebrities and social lifestyle: Are they positive role models for Nigerian youths? (Entertainment)

The candidates will choose one of the four listed topics and produce a broadcast commentary. They will also be expected to do a critical analysis of the topic giving all sides to their presentation. For any of the topics selected, the following will be graded:

- i. *The script- 10mks (Format of presentation- 5mks, and Grammar- 5mks)*
- ii. *The production- 20mks (The content- 15mks, and style of presentation- 5mks)*

2. As a broadcaster, when writing a broadcast commentary you will have to get opinion from some sources that will be relevant to your work. Discuss the four types of opinion that you can use.

The four types of opinion are:

1. **Expert opinion:** In this context, the person giving the opinion is a professional and he is speaking from a professional point of view. Most times, the person's opinion cannot be disputed, because it comes years of professional practice in field of endeavour or empirical studies. These experts cut across various disciplines, especially from institutions of higher learning.
2. **Selected opinion:** In this case the journalist selects from his/her perspective, fairly educated people or citizens who are not necessarily experts, but are articulate enough to express their opinions concerning an issue of public interest. Their voices are heard most of the times because they are always available and accessible.
3. **Popular opinion:** These can be simply put as the voices of the majority (masses). This group of people is reckoned with in terms of catering for the interest of all. Their opinions are usually sort when government want to know how its policies are accepted by the people. Atimes their opinions are based on emotions not expertise or professionalism.
4. **Broadcast opinion:** The society and even government many atimes reckon with broadcast opinion because the media are regarded as the 'fourth estate of the realm'. Therefore, they play a significant role in even shaping the opinions of the other three groups we discussed earlier. The opinion of the broadcast media is usually sort on specialised issues, and public and private interests.

3. Discuss the principles of persuasion that are relevant to broadcast commentary and critical writing. **(20mks)**

The principles of persuasion are discussed as follows and each point carries 4marks:

1. Know your facts: The key to being a credible commentator is for you to master your facts. Be able to document any claims you make, because you have researched the evidence, others should know what it says. **(4mks)**
2. Know your audience: How many audience members are there? What kinds of people are they? What is their current opinion on the issue? What is the basis for their opinion? Where do they get their information? What are their own needs and interests? What arguments are most likely to persuade them? **(4mks)**
3. Express the similarities between you and your audience: Bring out your common values, beliefs, and experiences, because similarity between communicator and audience increases persuasiveness. For instance, we all want good leadership and governance; a country free from terrorists, etc. **(4mks)**
4. Utilise opinion leaders, it will give your commentary the desired credibility: Even if you have mastered your facts and expressed your similarities, you may not be as credible a communicator as others who have more visibility or stature in your community. These opinion leaders may be ministers, politicians, business executives, newspaper columnists, school principals, agency directors, club presidents, neighborhood activists, coaches, or others without specific titles. **(4mks)**
5. In addition to opinion leaders, use models: Models, in this sense, are people who have taken the desired action, have benefited from it, and are willing to say so publicly. An effective model need not be an opinion leader; he/she can be a family member, a co-worker, a neighbour down the street, or anyone else the audience know, like, and respect. Models are peers working with you to influence your target audience. If that model publicly performs the desired action, or says that he/she has gained from it, that is likely to have positive persuasive impact. **(4mks)**

4. Highlight the four basic rules that a critic will take into consideration when writing broadcast criticisms. **(20mks)**

The four basic rules attract 5marks each, and they are:

1. Critical comments should be supported: Many aspiring critics make criticisms against an author without substantiating them. It is not enough to say a book is good or bad, the reviewer must say why and give substansive examples. **(5mks)**
2. An opinion piece should be a reading experience: A reviewer or a critic should learn not to use 'critical words' throughtout his review, but should employ graphic and expressive words to evaluate the work he or she is reviewing. **(5mks)**
3. The word criticism does not mean casting aspersions alone: A reviewer should learn to balance criticism with praise. Only few works are entirely good or bad. One aspect will usually

overweight the other, but only in rare instances, will there be no opportunity for the critic to be both positive and negative. **(5mks)**

4. A critical review article must be a properly coordinated piece: The sentences and paragraphs must be linked that the reader or listener will have a distinct experience of following a connected line from the first sentence to the last. **(5mks)**

5. State and explain two theories that contextualise persuasion as an important art of broadcast commentary and critical writing. **(20mks)**

In class, four theories were discussed but the candidates are required to provide only two. Each point attracts 10mks:

- i. **The Psychodynamic Model:** This model is based on the Individual Differences perspective, and it states that for a persuasive message to be considered effective, it must first succeed in altering the psychological functioning of the audience in such a way that they will respond accordingly with models of behaviour as suggested or desired by the communicator.

- ii. **The Socio-cultural Model:** The model seeks to explain the ways in which variables such as organisational membership, work roles, reference groups, cultural norms and primary group norms exercise control, and help shape and channel people's overt actions in ways that depart from their own internal psychological dispositions. Messages are presented in such a way as to make recipients believe that these are the socially acceptable models of behaviour with reference to the given situation.

- iii. **Value Change Theory:** This theory employs the technique of 'Comparative Feedback' to induce attitudinal and behavioural change. In this case rather than simply inform people about the harmful or beneficial effects of certain kinds of behaviour, methods based on this theory challenge people to test their own values against those of others, which are presumed to be socially more acceptable.

- iv. **Cognitive Dissonance Theory:** This theory is concerned with the processes that a person goes through in justifying or rationalising his or her behaviour after a decision or commitment has been made.