

Recording scripts

Unit 8

Listening Part 3

Recording script CD2 Track 2

Interviewer: In today's *On Message* I'm joined by Harry Cameron, the veteran journalist who has witnessed many changes in his profession over the last nearly sixty years as a reporter. Harry, welcome.

Cameron: Thank you – it's a pleasure to be here.

Interviewer: Harry, I'd like to start if I may by asking you what being a journalist was like when you started your first job as a junior reporter on the *Daily Journal*.

Cameron: My main memory of those far-off days is the sense of pride I felt at writing for a respected national newspaper. It was a real honour. What you have to remember is that in those days people got most of their information about what was going on in the world from their daily newspapers. And almost everyone read a paper every day. Television was in its infancy – something only the rich could afford. The radio broadcast regular news bulletins, but newspapers gave people the pictures to go with the stories. Journalists like me travelled the world and filed reports which kept people up to date with everything important that was going on. I remember once in the early 1950s reporting from a war zone in East Asia. I wrote my report sitting on the bed in my hotel bedroom. I could hear gunfire and see plumes of smoke. I wrote my story, then phoned it through to my editor for publication a day or two later. I was telling people about something thousands of miles from home – and more importantly, something they didn't already know.

Interviewer: But people still read newspapers today, don't they?

Cameron: Yes, of course, but their function has changed. If you want to know what's going on in the world at any particular time, you don't read a newspaper, do you? You turn on the telly. And you'll probably have an extensive choice of news programmes to watch – some of them, like CNN or News 24, rolling news programmes which are broadcast 24 hours a day. And then, whatever channel you're watching, there'll be regular news updates. And, on top of all that, there's the Internet.

Interviewer: So, what can newspapers provide if not current news?

Cameron: Well, I suppose different newspapers provide different things, don't they? The more up-market ones give us background to the news stories and an in-depth analysis of the issues involved. I think they do this very well. At the more popular end of the market, papers these days focus more and more on stories involving celebrities from the world of sport, TV, cinema, etc. And sport itself, of course. There's sport everywhere, always accompanied by photographs – action shots. People lap all this up, and I suppose it is news of a kind, but to my mind it's a somewhat distorted definition of news.

Interviewer: And what about 'citizen journalism'? Is this a term you're familiar with?

Cameron: Yes, it is, and it's something I have some sympathy with, even though it may put some of my own colleagues out of work in the long run.

Interviewer: So how would you explain its sudden appearance as a source of information?

Cameron: It's quite simple – the fact is that the Internet has given everyone access to a wealth of information and to a worldwide audience. So a citizen journalist in a war zone, like me fifty years ago, doesn't have to write a story and send it to an editor who can decide whether or not to run the story in their newspaper – they can simply add information to a news website like NowPublic or write their own blog. Bloggers are the new journalists. And of course they can take photos with their mobile phones and send them straight to an internet site or blog.

Interviewer: And how reliable are bloggers and citizen journalists as sources of information?

Cameron: At least as reliable as the traditional news providers, whose stories are usually revised and cut by editors who may be under political pressure from a newspaper owner or even their government. And of course some news websites allow other members of the public to add to, update or correct stories that are already there. I'd say it's a very democratic editorial process.

Interviewer: So, this is not something you think should be controlled in any way?

Cameron: Absolutely not! Anyway, you couldn't control it even if you wanted to. The genie's out of the bottle.

Interviewer: And you have no regrets about the effect of this form of journalism on the profession you were so proud to be part of when you first became a reporter?

Cameron: I suppose I'm a little sad, but the important thing is that people have reliable sources of up-to-date information. Of course there will always be a role, in newspapers and elsewhere, for intelligent comment and analysis of the news, and if I were starting out again now, that's the kind of journalism I'd get into.

Interviewer: And you'd do it extremely well, I have no doubt. Harry Cameron, thanks for being my guest on today's *On Message*.

Cameron: It's been my pleasure.

Grammar

Reported speech

Recording script CD2 Track 4

- Ben:** Do you know anything about Wikipedia?
Tom: Yes, I often use it.
Ben: So how do you look for information?
Tom: It's like any search engine – you simply type in a keyword, press Return and the information you want appears.
Ben: What do you use it for?
Tom: All kinds of things. Yesterday, for example, I needed to find out about wildlife conservation in Namibia. It took me about a minute to find the information I wanted on Wikipedia.
Ben: Have you any idea how accurate that information is?
Tom: No, but that's no different from any other source of information. The article on Namibia had been revised the day before yesterday, so it was up to date.
Ben: So, would you recommend using Wikipedia?
Tom: Yes, definitely. It's free, as well as being quick and easy to use.

Speaking Part 3

Recording script CD2 Track 5

- Woman 1:** Well, I'd say that nearly everyone watches the news on TV – if they're above a certain age. I have to say when I was younger I never watched the news.
Woman 2: No, I used to hate the news. I used to get really bored when my parents put it on.
Woman 1: But now I'm quite interested to hear what's going on.
Woman 2: I don't actually watch the news – I prefer to listen to it on the radio, but I think that's fairly unusual.
Woman 1: Mmm. Yeah, I think I'd rather watch it on TV.
Woman 2: I think it gets pretty depressing if you watch it – there's so much bad news. I think they cover much more bad news than good news – and I don't want to watch about wars and famines and things like that.

Woman 1: OK – now we've got newspapers. I would say quite a few people read these, but I think people tend to read the newspapers that agree with their political opinions.

Woman 2: Or if they just want amusement, they read one of the tabloids.

Woman 1: Erm – advertising, erm, is in everything.

Woman 2: There's so much brand management now – it's all sort of half subconscious. People sponsoring things and ...

Woman 1: Too much money spent on advertising.

Woman 2: Yeah ... Radio, which we've already mentioned.

Woman 1: Yeah, with me it sort of goes through phases. I like listening to the radio when I get up because I like to know what's going on.

Woman 2: Apparently we seem to be in a visual age – I don't know, but over time I would imagine radio listening has probably gone down.

Woman 1: I think actually it's just changed – I mean people listen to the radio on their mobile phone now ...

Woman 2: Yeah, or the Internet – there are lots of radio stations and programmes you can listen to on the Internet ...

Woman 1: Yeah – live or often you can listen again.

Woman 2: Or on your iPod. There are about eight million people listen to the breakfast show, so ...

Woman 1: Hmm – that's quite a lot of people.

Woman 2: Yeah – very much a background thing, though, these days. I mean, every café you go into's going to have a radio programme on, aren't they?

Woman 1: OK – we're on to the Internet and the World Wide Web. I think this is massive – it's fantastic – in western countries the most influential of all of these things.

Woman 2: You can just find out anything.

Woman 1: Yeah, absolutely anything – Wikipedia, and all the social networking sites and stuff.

Woman 2: And at least with the Internet people have a huge choice.

Woman 1: But don't forget the banner ads.

Woman 2: You see, you can never get away from advertising of some kind.

Woman 1: I know – even Google mail, when you sign up – they advertise certain things that you like, they look for your keywords.

Woman 2: Big business is, I guess, a lot more influential than we realise – because their wealth gives them power.

Woman 1: Yeah – but it's less direct power, isn't it?

Woman 2: I wouldn't say it's less direct. It may be less obvious, but there's no doubt that large sections of the media are owned and controlled by the business interests of a few powerful individuals. This allows them to influence people's political views and control advertising. This in turn means that they have an influence on how we spend our money.

Woman 1: It's all a bit sinister, don't you think?

Woman 2: Yeah, a bit Big Brother-ish – being told what to think.