

This checklist could help you to identify narratives, discourses and frames journalists (usually) unconsciously use while doing a journalism job. Do not take it as a manual or exhausting list of to do and not to dos – it is more about food for thoughts when gathering, selecting, processing and reproducing whatever information we get into contact with.

Who is speaking to whom? Who is the author of the information, and what audience is assumed? From what perspective is information given? Does it include the view of ‘reported’ groups? How much space is given to those groups? And what are the expectations of the audience?

Who are the characters? Who are the people in the story? Does it present some as heroes or as villains?

Who are the messengers or respondents? They frame the information. E.g. when speaking about migrants, if we quote police officers, security analysts or government ministries, we will frame the situation differently than we would if we invited comments from sociologists, social workers, political scientists, development workers, human rights experts – or refugees themselves.

Does information avoid stereotypical formulations or prejudices? How are people depicted? Are they labelled in any collective way? And what about the ‘colouration’ or tone of language?

Does the information use any metaphors and comparisons? And how does it influence the meaning and impact of a story? And what about the synonyms selected?

Does the information use **more active voice** or is it built on passive one enabling to blur the core content of the story?

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What visual images are used? In video stories, the frame includes the images as well as the words. Written articles will often be accompanied by pictures. Charts, drawings and photographs can all significantly change the impact of a story, and cast things in a different light.

Does it give any sense of a wider context or causes? Is not the information episodic or thematic? Does it present a story in isolation? Or, in contrast, does it aim to include the wider context? Thematic coverage gives the audience a sense of the scale of the problem, and its wider causes.

If the story omits the wider context – what is it? What are the hidden variables of the information? What social, political, power, religious, economic or other factors lie behind the story? Who has the power in the story and who is powerless – on an individual, institutional, regional, and global level?

What's the meaning of the story? We can frame the whole narrative in a way that directs the audience to a certain way of thinking about the issue. For example, does the information talk about winners and losers? Does it talk about revealing injustice, or protecting national security? Does it talk about economic measures and impacts, or does it emphasise the value of human life?

What does the author not say? Which questions are omitted by the author of the information? Which important facts are not mentioned? Which characters should have been included in the story but are not?

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