



UNIT 3C. EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND (E2U) AND AUDIOVISUAL JOURNALISM (AVJ)

ELEMENT 1. PROCESSES

THE PROCESS OF CREATION, ADAPTATION AND VALIDATION OF E2U AUDIOVISUAL JOURNALISTIC CONTENT

Video Lecture Transcript

Slide 1

This is unit 3C, E2U and Audiovisual Journalism; Element 1. Processes, The Process Of Creation, Adaptation And Validation Of E2U Audiovisual Journalistic Content. I am Andrej Tomažin, from RTV Slovenija, and in this video lecture I will focus on the processes surrounding the creation, adaptation and validation of E2U AVJ content.

Slide 2

Firstly, we must distinguish between two core principles. The first is the original creation of E2U content and the second one is the adaptation of standard material into E2U content.



Slide 3

In creating E2U AVJ content one has to preliminary focus on the theme and narration, which is carried out by the editors and journalists. This process is followed by the organization of shooting and recording the raw material. The organization of TV recording consists of orchestrating the camera crew and logistics, preparing the questions, and in the case of E2U content, for example, informing the interviewees to answer slowly or providing other features on which we will focus upon later in this lecture.

Slide 4

Adaptation takes a different approach by having the theme and the material already at hand. The largest part of adaptation happens with the editing process, which is in greater detail described in another video lecture from Unit 3C, conveniently titled EDITING AND VOICING E2U AUDIOVISUAL JOURNALISTIC CONTENT.

Slide 5

The core principle in adaptation that precedes editing and voicing is the choice of news content to be adapted and prepared in E2U fashion, and the selection of material which is produced beforehand and to adopt a different approach regarding the narration and presentation.

Slide 6

As Christiane Maaß and Sergio Hernandez (2020) point out in their article "Easy and Plain Language in Audiovisual Translation", following the ideas proposed by Pablo Romero-Fresco in his book Accessible Filmmaking, planning the integration of accessibility services during the production



phase, including easy-to-understand language, leads to a more perceptible and accessible product.

Slide 7

One of the crucial things with recording for audiovisual media is to make sure there is enough material prepared for the later stage of editing.

Slide 8

Even though a journalist has a clear idea of what will be included in the news item, the technical circumstances can lead to certain shots not being usable or relevant. Other kinds of errors can be different intrusions into the scenery. For example: if there is a random person traversing a landscape the narrator talks about, and that random person has no role in the narration or even distorts the image, this material will most probably not be useful.

Slide 9

The cameraman needs to make sure there are different shots of the same scene, so they can be later combined in the correct manner and used in the proper context. That is why the cameraman usually makes much more material than is later used.

Slide 10

As a journalist, producing news for any kind of media, you first need to have a reliable source of information. In case of foreign news, the information is provided by international news feeds or foreign correspondents.



Slide 11

Whereas for domestic news the list is longer: it can be yourself, local news agencies, social media, news conferences, media releases, newspapers or other radio or TV stations.

Slide 12

The exclusive way of accessing information is by contacting different people who might give you accurate information on the topic. Based on the given information you can then, for example, arrange an interview.

Slide 13

The interview allows you to present exclusive information regarding a certain topic. The figure of the interviewee gives the news item an integral sense of assurance with respect to its authenticity.

Slide 14

With E2U AVJ content, the journalist should make sure that the uttered answers from the interviewee comply with E2U guidelines.

Slide 15

With regards to this issue, we need to understand that it is not always possible to implement Easy Language in spoken scenarios, because it is not natural to speak in that fashion.

Slide 16

It could be viewed as patronizing to use Easy Language for comprehensibility purposes.



Slide 17

Plain Language is more suitable for spoken scenarios. This means that the interviewee must understand these guidelines and use them with care, for example not to use them in a patronizing tone.

Slide 18

The task of the journalist, before the interview takes place is to explain the purpose of the interview as short and as concise as possible. The core principles are for interviewees to talk slower and in short sentences, but staying true to the topic they are referring to, not describing it as they would describe it for children, which seems to be the most common misunderstanding with E2U content.

Slide 19

With E2U AVJ content the interviews must be introduced with an adequate degree of context. If we, for example, interview a healthcare professional on the risks of the spread of some novel disease, the journalist has to make sure that the information from the interviewee is not placed at the beginning, no matter how important the words that are spoken, but is contextualized with the help of narration.

Slide 20

The context, the narrative introduction of a certain topic plays a crucial role with the E2U AVJ.

Slide 21

When using graphics as a tool for explaining the narration, the graphics should be clear and not too fast and not overabundant with information.



Slide 22

Not seldom can one see in contemporary news bulletins the graphical explanations and statistical information being presented in a way which is incomprehensible because the speed of the delivered information is too fast.

Slide 23

In this sense the graphics should firstly correspond to the narration and secondly be explained within the narration, with special attention accorded to the details.

Details should be as minimized as possible and the graphics or statistical representations should only show the information, pertinent to the topic and the narration.

Slide 24

With short broadcast deadlines in mind, it is, as Barbara Alysen suggests in *The Electronic Reporter*, "harder to write a clear, tight story than to convey the same information in a longer one."

Slide 25

Even without the deadlines in mind, both radio and TV news items need to be shorter than their textual counterparts, but as concise and tight in delivering information. It is here where the characteristics of journalism must be juxtaposed with the E2U guidelines.

Slide 26

We can understand the difficulty when faced with the task of narrating, for example, a news item on a difficult political situation in E2U format.



There are certain topics riddled with difficult vocabulary. For example, the topics of corruption and elections. These topics must be addressed in a precise manner. Especially when dealing with delicate topics, where the main figures do not talk clearly, use difficult words or are vague in their statements.

Slide 27

It is in this sense, where the journalistic need of accuracy and E2U need for understandability collide. We can understand producing E2U news items as a task, which demands from the journalist to assess every situation in detail and decide which processes will be used to achieve the degree of understandability in E2U format.

Slide 28

Since E2U language incorporates both Easy Language and also Plain Language, the normativity of Easy Language makes it harder for the journalist to adapt or create AVJ content in Easy Language.

Slide 29

The principles of simplifying the content in Easy Language and the principles of verification and accuracy collide with greater force.

Slide 30

This problem must be always solved on an individual level, sometimes raising the language difficulty at the expense towards the easiness of the news item, but on the other hand simplifying the complex concepts to the detriment of detailed description.

Slide 31



One of the relevant aspects here is the marking of the target group: to whom the news items are intended has a significant weight in deciding as to whether the language is more complex or not.

Slide 32

At the same time, it is clear that E2U AVJ is a novel endeavour, and as such lacks theoretical research. Or as Maaß and Hernandez propose: "In audiovisual contexts, Easy Language has not yet been addressed theoretically, even though there is a mounting number of practical examples."

Slide 33

Many of the problems that arise in the first phases of E2U AVJ content production are quickly resolved with the help of validation.

Slide 34

Validation as such is mentioned in the two out of three existing Easy Language guidelines, but can, even without those guidelines serve as a great help for producers of E2U AVJ content, for those, for example, producing AVJ content in Plain Language.

Slide 35

The validation process is in most cases done by external collaborators, who test the understandability of the finished product and assess what could be done differently.

Slide 36

Different target groups must be taken into consideration, e.g. people with cognitive or reading disabilities, second language learners, elderly.



Slide 37

On the other hand, involving users from the beginning is vital since they know the problems or difficulties they are confronting, and probably also what will make the content easier to understand.

If we decide to validate the AVJ content, then the validation needs to be assessed in a consistent way, and with the understanding that the users of E2U AVJ content form a rather heterogeneous group.

Slide 38

Validation is necessary to know the wishes and approaches suitable for the target groups and to replicate them in other content.

Slide 39 & 40

Within the larger context of TV or radio broadcasts, which tend to be produced for a broader audience, journalists might need to find a proper way to address the question, posed by Bredel and Maaß in the book "Leichte Sprache", where they say that quality control of the finished texts, and news items in our case, is faced with a problem, where "due to the considerable heterogeneity of the primary addressees, the examining item has to be undertaken by a large number of different readers or users, and the question of whether texts checked by individual readers from different groups guarantee the general comprehensibility of a text would not be answered because of the random selection of the examiners."

Slide 41

The use of E2U AVJ materials for a broader variety of context in this sense presents a problem as to how to actually enforce adequate quality control at a proper level. Broadening the scope of analysis and validation is



certainly a first step, but we must at the same time acknowledge that this complexity should not lead us to avoid the involvement of the end-users in the process of validating E2U AVJ content.

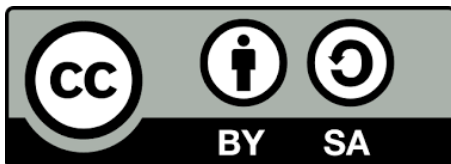
Slide 42

This video lecture was prepared by Andrej Tomažin, from RTV Slovenija. You can reach me at andrej.tomazin@rtvslo.si.



Copyright and disclaimer: The project EASIT has received funding from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education programme, grant agreement 2018-1-ES01-KA203-05275.

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Partners:



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI TRIESTE

Universida de Vigo