

ELDP Training
Video Techniques – Simon Atkins
Monday 16th June 2008

09.30 – approx 10.15 - Video & Documentation – (DN, EG, CE, SA)

Approx 10.15 – 11.00 – Videography – (SA)

Why use video & where does it fit in?

- An extra type of information?
- Finding a point between “video data” and “story-telling” – can there be such a thing as a pure observer?
- A key element that distinguishes video material is its ability to capture relationships between people (including that between film-maker and subject) and emotional content - which is itself a valuable type of information or “data”. Video can be immensely “rich”.
- There’s a long tradition of visual anthropology to draw upon
- The fly in the soup approach

- Example sequence: Transmigration in Indonesia – 04.10 to 07.00 – Suyitno and Lily interview and life

Problems typically encountered in the use of video

- Weight and portability of the equipment
- Lack of visual & audio quality
- Lack of editing & selection
- Process & equipment is intimidating to subjects resulting in unnatural material
- Cost: money and energy of the work involved.
- Lack of skills

- Example: Peter Blake’s Amazon – 29.30 to 34.40 – journey up to gold mine site

Methodology & Rationale

- Crucial to have clear idea of what it is that you are doing when you press “record”
- Planning & Goals
- Different genres and what they each offer
- How do you film? Walking around – sitting down – interviews – events?
- Less can be more – real meaning can come out of selection & editing
- A professional result is achievable with relatively small, lightweight and affordable equipment. Consider what you are trying to achieve first then decide on kit and approach.
- Multiple roles: linguist, film-maker, friend, etc – be comfortable and fluent with your kit

- Relevance of editing/selection approach during shooting (not after)
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11.00 – 11.30 - BREAK

11.30 - 12.15 – Video: Camera and Sound options – (SA)

This focus of this session is to outline the options available to you and the issues involved rather than deliver specific technical training.

An example lightweight Filming Kit – sole operator?

- A simple workflow from camera to computer
- Example cameras and key equipment items
- Keeping things small, and lightweight - Better for you and better for your subjects.
- Importance of assembling your own kit and being happy and fluid in using it. The equipment is just a tool in the end.

Use of Sound with Video – discussion of what people typical use

- Mic on camera compared to in-built mic.
- Use of Boom poles
- Beechbox – XLR inputs
- Separate sound – (mike claps)
- Lapel/radio mics

Filming Techniques – General Considerations

- Spontaneous vs. set-up filming
- Handling the camera
- Pros and Cons of team working – having another set of eyes and ears – working with both visual and spoken languages.
- Handling the controls – what to leave on auto and what to control manually
- Dealing with Focus
- Dealing with Exposure – lighting options.

Filming Techniques - Interviews

- Interview set-ups – rationale
- Body language
- Use of a tripod
- Sound Options – lapel/radio mics and directional mics – use of two sound tracks
- Use of headphones (bring two sets) – (i) Are you getting sound? – (ii) What's the quality like?

Think about the selection/editing process before and during your shoot

- 5 minutes of DV format data or 1.25 minutes of HDV format data use 1GB of storage. Therefore a 60 minute DV tape will use 12 GB of storage (and HDV 48 GB). A 1 TB external hard drive (which can now be bought for about £140) therefore can hold approx 80 Hours.
- Shooting ratio?
- Reasons not to shoot too much

12.15 – 13.00 – Video Practical – (SA, CE)

- Organisation of groups and choice of group camera/sound equipment
- Review technical skills with those that need it
- Maximum group size of 3 or 4. Everyone to have a go with sound and camera use. Extra crew to assist with lighting, bag carrying, extra set of eyes, notes etc.
- Review during filming experience - Issues involved in the acquisition & production of video

First Task – The Interview (max 20 mins of tape per group)

- Interview. One person talking to camera.

Second Task – Capturing an event in real time (max 20 mins of tape per group)

- A discussion that is happening between 2 or 3 people
- One or two people who are doing something – a process

Options to Consider:

- Lighting and weather
- Tripod
- Location (e.g. – students relaxing/chatting outside during lunch break, canteen, bar)
- Timeframe & planning
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13.00 – 14.00 – Lunch (Video Practical continued)

- Use the lunch break for filming – it's one of the best times to find people

14.00 – 14.45 - Video Practical Cont. (CE & SA)

- Finish the tasks
- Use this time to carefully watch the material you have shot – Simon will be on hand to provide feedback

- Each group to decide on one interview and one event digitise these selected sections with Cathy.

14.45 – 15.30 – Video Editing & Evaluation (CE & SA)

- Review people's experiences – lessons learnt from shooting experience – Simon
- Don't break the timecode
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- Discussion of editing approach and examples - Cathy

15.30 – 16.00 - Break

16.00 – 17.30 – Video Editing & Evaluation (CE & SA)

Chose material from today's filming and edit. Participants to make some editing decisions themselves as we go along – e.g. select key material from a five minute interview.

- Sync pulls with jump cuts -
- Sequence editing
- Sound overlays and cutaways
- Exporting files

WRAP