

MULTIMEDIA TRAINING KIT

Trainers' notes: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

Introduction	This unit will show participants basic techniques for preparing and assembling a radio program. Emphasis will be on preparing elements, editing them and preparing a cue sheet.
Timing/duration	½ day session to ¾ day, depending on exercises.
Content outline and main topics covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Definition of editing (15 minutes)o Editing a program (1 hour)o Preparing a cue sheet (30 minutes)o Using other sounds (15 minutes)o Editing voice (15 minutes)o Translation voice-overs (15 minutes)o Exercises (2.5 to 4 hours)
Target audience	New and experienced community radio practitioners. Journalists practising without formal training.
Prerequisite skills/knowledge	Trainees should have completed the radio scripting unit or be familiar with radio scripting techniques.
Unit objectives/expected outcomes	At the end of this unit, workshop participants should <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Understanding a basic method for preparing a program from sound materials.o Be able to prepare a cue sheet for a complex program.
Pre-workshop activities	Ask workshop participants to complete the pre-workshop skills assessment questionnaire – if possible send it out with the invitation.
Notes on using exercises	Depending on the time and equipment available, the production exercise can be either done as cue sheet preparation exercises with listening equipment or full production exercises. Before the workshop, prepare a CD containing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Sound file of the phrase “The Current Affairs Show” in a tone suitable to a jingle.o Sound file of the phrase “Your weekly information show about current local, national and international news”, in a different voice from the previous.o Sound file of an introduction to the interview (reporter 1).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sound file of a full 7-8 question interview (reporter 2). o Sound file of background sound effects for interview. o A selection of music for jingles. <p>If you plan to have the students prepare real productions, you should insert glitches in the voice files to make sure they correct them when preparing the exercises.</p>
Resources included with unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Trainers' notes. o Handout. o Exercises. o Workshop evaluation form. o Materials evaluation form. o Glossary. o Sample jingle. o List of additional resources. o Pre-workshop skills evaluation. o Post-workshop skills evaluation. o Copyright statement.
Additional trainer resources	-
Equipment needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o At minimum, listening equipment (digital or analogue) with prepared material. o At best, complete production material (preferably digital).
Comments	-

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Handout: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

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About this document

These materials are part of the Multimedia Training Kit (MMTK). The MMTK provides an integrated set of multimedia training materials and resources to support community media, community multimedia centres, telecentres, and other initiatives using information and communications technologies (ICTs) to empower communities and support development work.

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What is editing?

Editing is defined as "preparing for publication or public presentation". It can also mean to assemble by cutting or re-arranging.

Editing for radio is to prepare a program or piece by starting with raw sound elements and obtaining a finished product which is ready for broadcast. It is to take raw elements, treat them and end up with an "ear-pleasing" product. It can be thought of as cutting and sewing different pieces of sound together.

It is not a discipline that is heavily ridden with theory or instructions. It is a simple method for taking raw elements, preparing them, writing down the plan for the production in an orderly fashion and, finally, assembling the different parts into a finished product.

Editing your program

Step 1 - Listen to voice elements

This first step requires selecting the voice elements you will be using in your final production. You need to identify what you will use and start cleaning it.

Note which parts you will use, including start and end time.

With digital editing, you can already start trimming parts of the voice, useless silences etc..

Step 2 - Listen to all other elements

In this step, you select background sounds, sound effects and music. It is important that you perform this step after preparing voice as you will be in a position to decide what you need, for instance, background sounds used as pauses.

Decide and listen to which music or sound effects you will be using.

Note them, including start time and end time.

If you are working with digital equipment, you can cut out parts already and save them in appropriately named files. Do not over cut at this stage, you may change your mind later on.

Step 3 - Listen again, edit and start your cue sheet

This is the final preparatory stage before the final mix.

Cut and clean voice to its final state.

Listen to all elements again.

Note voice and all other elements on a cue-sheet.

You are now ready to perform the final mix.

Note:

Before you edit voice in a destructive manner, make sure you have a copy of the material in its original form. You may change your mind later and decide to use it or need it in another production.

Step 4 - Final mix

Once all your elements are ready, you can start the final assembly of your production.

You should adjust your cue sheet as you go along, you may need it if you wish to change your production later on.

Note:

Once your final mix is done, make sure you keep not only the single sound file resulting from your mix but also the different parts you used to assemble it. If you are using multi track software, make sure you also keep the mix file so you can retouch the mix later without needing to redo the whole mix.

Cue sheet

Whether you edit a piece with the help of a technician or not, it will always help to prepare a cue sheet. It will be your guide as to exactly what should be used when while editing your story or program.

The usefulness of a cue sheet increases with program length. Shorter programs, with less elements can get away with a quick cue sheet. For larger programs with many elements, a clean cue sheet becomes imperative.

Also, producers using digital editing will feel less of a need for a very precise cue sheet as they can more easily correct timing on-the-fly.

A cue sheet template should be created once and copied for all to use.

A good cue sheet should include for each element:

- o Start time.
- o End time.
- o Name or identifier of sounds.
- o Duration.
- o Fade information (in or out).
- o Comments (anything that can help with the mixing).

The following is a simple cue sheet example:

Producer:				Date:	
Technician:					
Start	End	File or element	Secs	Fade	Comment
00:00	00:45	jingle	45	out	<i>cut short</i>
00:35	00:60	voice_introduction	25		
00:55	01:07	ambience_background_voices	12	out	
01:05	01:65	interviewee_one	60		
02:00	02:12	ambience_background_voices	12	in-out	
02:10	02:25	voice_middle	15		
02:25	02:58	interviewee_two	33	out	
02:54	03:06	ambience_background_voices	12	in-out	
03:02	03:42	voice_final	40		
03:43	03:48	interviewee_two_quote.	5		
03:45	04:45	show_theme, 60 sec	60	in	<i>end at punch</i>
04:45		end			

Using other sounds

Background sounds should serve as periods and commas to the voice. They should be used carefully to mark pauses or to let the listener think of what has just been said.

Whenever possible, sound effects should be recorded separately from the interview itself. It is much easier to lay over sound effects than to have to work with a voice recording that already contains background noise

Editing voice

The most time consuming part of radio editing is the editing of voice.

Editing voice is useful to:

- o Cut out parts that are not needed.
- o Shorten lengthy or unclear answers.
- o Re-organize the order of questions or segments.

Silence can be left when it is significant or actually adds to the meaning of a segment.

One must beware of over editing segments. The speaker's original meaning must always be left intact. This is a fundamental rule of ethics in journalism.

Translation voice-over

When recording translations, one must use a technique called voice-over.

In voice-overs, the original speaker's voice is usually at a very faint volume.

The voice over usually begins with a very short stretch of the original speaker's voice at normal volume.

It usually ends with a longer stretch of the original speaker's voice, to allow listeners get a feel of the original speaker's voice, tone and emotion.

If there are particularly intense moments in the element, one may pause the translator for a moment, and leave the original voice at a normal level. For instance, if the interviewee cries, screams, hesitates in a revealing way or is just overwhelmed with emotion. Finding appropriate moments for the original voice adds to the realism of the translation.

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Exercises: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

Exercise 1

Prepare a short jingle for a news program.

Output:

A precise and accurate cue sheet, or optionally, a full production.

Instructions:

A short jingle should be produced using:

- o Sound file "The Current Affairs Show".
- o Sound file "Your weekly information show..."
- o Chosen music.

The jingle should start with music. The music level should be lowered and the first sound file mixed in. The music goes back up for a few seconds. It is lowered again and the second file mixed in. The second file should end just before a short, appropriate musical ending.

All files should be cleaned up and trimmed to proper length before mixing.

Exercise 2

Production of a full interview.

Output:

A precise and accurate cue sheet, or optionally, a full production.

Instructions:

A full interview should be produced using:

- o Sound file of the introduction.
- o Sound file of interview questions.
- o Sound file of background sound.

The production should start with the introduction from reporter 1. Some sound effects should then be mixed in. The questions and answers should then follow. Background sound should be mixed in at least one point in the production and the interview should end on a short span of background sound.

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Sample jingle: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

The following is an example of a short jingle for a radio station.

Step 1 – Listen to all voice elements

You have one recording which contains:

“Radio for Development <pause> Working together for a common objective, a better community <long pause> Radio for Development <pause> All together for the betterment of our community <long pause> Radio for development <pause> Bettering our lives”

You would initially listen to the recording, as many times as necessary to decide which jingle you want to use. In this case, we pick the first one.

Once you have decided which one you want to use, could note the timing. Since this is a very small production, this is not necessary.

You can already cut out the other jingles that you won't need.

Of course, you will have kept a backup copy of your original file or recording in case you change your mind latter on.

Step 2 – Listen to all other elements

You should now select the music you want to use. Once it is selected, you can listen and note the precise timing of the part that you will use.

Theme: 00:00 – 00:27

Punch: 00:07

You can also note that the name of the radio should fit in the first 7 seconds because the re a punch you want to use for effect after those 7 seconds.

You can even cut the file to a shorter length, say 45 seconds to make it easier to manipulate.

Step 3 – Listen again, edit and start your cue sheet

Listen to the voice again. Separate the two voice parts into two different files.

Files: radio_development.wav, common_objective.wav

Cut out the extra blanks at the beginning and end of each file.

Start building your cue sheet:

Producer:	Date:
Technician:	

Start	End	File or element	Secs	Fade	Comment
00:00	00:27	Music	22	in	<i>Fade 7 secs.</i>
00:02	00:07	radio_development.wav	5	-	-
00:11	-	fade Music to 50%	12	out-in	
00:15	00:20	common_objective.wav	5		
00:27		END			

Once your cue sheet is built, you can start mixing your production!

Sample Cue Sheet for Productions

Producer:	Date:
Technician:	

Start	End	File or element	Secs	Fade	Comment

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Pre-workshop skills assessment: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

1. Do you produce radio programs in your current job?

Yes
No
I participate in productions
I have only produced a few times

2. Do you have an organized method for preparing your productions and making sure everything is prepared editing?

Yes
No

3. Do you use forms to prepare your programs?

Yes
No
No – but I have a method for noting production order

4. Are you aware of certain rules when editing source voices?

Yes
No
Very little

5. Have you ever done voice-overs?

Yes
No

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Post-workshop skills assessment: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

1. Do you understand the basic steps in preparing a radio production?

Yes
No
I will need to check my notes
Not sure

2. Do you see the usefulness of preparing a cue sheet?

Yes
No
I will need to check my notes
Not sure

3. Do you understand all the elements that should go in a cue sheet and why they belong there?

Yes
No
I will need to check my notes
Not sure

4. Do you understand the basic rules for editing voice?

Yes
No
I will need to check my notes
Not sure

5. Do you understand the basic principle of editing voice-overs?

Yes
No
I will need to check my notes
Not sure

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Glossary: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

BACKGROUND SOUND	Field recording, usually made up of sounds picked up in the background, without voice. Used to give a feel of the atmosphere of the location or event where the main sound is recorded.
EDITING	<p>According to Merriam-Webster, preparing for publication or public presentation". Also to assemble by cutting or re-arranging.</p> <p>Editing for Radio is to prepare a program or piece by starting with raw sound elements and obtaining a finished product, ready for broadcast. It is to take raw elements, treat them and end up with a ear pleasing product. It can be thought of as cutting and sewing different pieces of sound together.</p>
CUE SHEET	Ordered list of all voice, background sounds, sound effects and music used in a production. Usually includes for at least each element, start time, end time, name or identifier, length, fade information and comments.
MIX	Mix refers to the assembly of all sounds into one single sound.
SOUND EFFECTS	Small sounds used to convey a particular event. For instance a door squeaking, thunder, children laughing etc.
VOICE-OVER	Radio editing technique where a sound is layered under voice. Often used for translation of foreign languages for radio. Voice over music can also be considered voice-over.

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Additional resources: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

Resources on editing for community radio are quite limited. A university library is a good starting point for finding resources on editing in general. Here are a few suggestions:

Online

How to write for radio

An informational comic about writing and editing for radio.

http://www.thislife.org/pages/trax/comic/writing/comic_writing_1.html

Radio Sound Effects: A Theoretical Outline

A rather theoretical page on using sound effects in radio.

http://www.greatnorthernaudio.com/audio_theater/Sound_Effects.html

Books

Rooney, Edmund & Witte, Oliver. 2000. *Copy editing for professionals*. Champaign: Stipes Publishing.

Wimer, Arthur & Brix, Dale. 1980. *Workbook for radio and TV news editing* (5th edition). Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishing.

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Workshop evaluation: Radio Editing

Presented by: Organization/trainer

Thank you for attending this workshop. Please fill in the evaluation form below – your feedback will help us improve our future training programmes.

1. Your name and e-mail address (optional) _____

2. Were the workshop aims made clear to you in advance (e.g. through the invitation)?

Not clear
Somewhat clear
Very clear

3. How useful did you find the workshop overall?

Not useful
Somewhat useful
Very useful

4. How satisfied were you with the trainer?

Not satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Very satisfied

5. How satisfied were you with the handouts?

Not satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Very satisfied

6. How did you find the pace of the workshop?

Too slow
About right
Too fast

7. How did you find the length of the workshop?

Too short
About right
Too long

8. How satisfied were you with the organization of the workshop?

Not satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Very satisfied

9. Please use this space for any other comments and suggestions for improvement

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Materials evaluation form: Radio Editing

Developed by: AMARC

We welcome feedback from trainers who have used these materials. By answering the following questions you can help us to improve and expand the MMTK set of resources. Please note that all questions are optional!

Please return your completed questionnaire by e-mail to AATohill@apc.org

1. Name _____

2. E-mail address _____

3. Organization: _____

4. How useful did you find the materials in this unit?

Very useful _____

Useful _____

Not useful _____

5. Did you use the materials "as is" with your students, or adapt them?

Used "as is" _____

Adapted _____

6. If you have any suggestions for how the MMTK team could improve this unit, please tell us about them.

7. Other comments

THANK YOU!

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Copyright statement: Radio Editing

Unit developed by: AMARC

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