

POPULARIZATION COMPONENT – COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION 5 – SECOND COMMUNICATION VIDEO

CONTEXT

GENERAL CONTEXT

The communication of scientific results and academic works is taking more and more importance in research projects. The recent pandemic crisis showed how important good scientific communication is, as the general audience is, in fact, willing to learn about how science works, and sometimes are happy to participate and contribute (see Deliverable 2 for more detailed points about citizen science). Good communication should be considered an important part of academic work.

Depending on the cultural and societal context, it is important to choose a way to communicate that is accessible, easy to use and understandable for civil society.

INSIDE THE PROJECT

Video is an interesting medium for communicating with the general public. Creating this first short video is also a way to attract people, make them interested in this subject and potentially be willing to know more about it (by visiting the website) or getting involved in the project (for future aspects, like surveys or events).

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

BACKGROUND

A first video was made for the communication around the project (see Document COM2) that was appreciated but did not meet the popularity expected. A previous short movie made for a popularization festival, already featuring crows in an urban environment from a scientific point of view (see the Links section), met a way more important success and its example was used to improve the second project communication video.

PURPOSE

The purpose is to create a narrative for the observations, more developed than the first one, in order to communicate more easily with the general public and create interest in the subject. A video is, in addition, a kind of content easy to watch, easy to share, and known to catch easily the attention and interest, even on uncommon subjects.

PRACTICAL ASPECT

METHODS AND TECHNICS

EDITING

Due to a lack of formation on recent editing tools, and the cost represented by the potential purchase of editing software and a computer able to run it, the choice was made to entrust editing to a service provider

(see Acknowledgements section), who had worked before for the university in similar productions. A quotation was produced before the beginning of work.

IMAGE

The video rushes chosen for this video were:

- For Paris in Spring: P_SP_230420_R13; P_SP_230420_R09; P_SP_230420_R14
- For Paris in Summer: P_SM_220715_R10; P_SM_220715_R14; P_SM_220715_R15
- For Paris in Autumn: P_A_221011_R12; P_A_221011_R13
- For Paris in Winter: P_W_220110_R09; P_W_220111_R03; P_W_220113_R04; P_W_220113_R11
- For Tartu in Spring: T_SP_220306_R02; T_SP_220329_R01
- For Tartu in Summer: T_SM_220601_R01; T_SM_220611_R08; T_SM_220611_R10;
T_SM_220810_R01
- For Tartu in Autumn: T_A_211013_R04; T_A_211013_R05; T_A_220929_R01; T_A_221106_R02;
T_A_221114_R01
- For Tartu in Winter: T_W_211208_R01; T_W_211208_R11; T_W_211208_R20; T_W_221227_R02;
T_W_230123_R04

Additional rushes were also filmed at the Tartu semiotic department, and in Raadi Cemetery for narrative purposes.

SOUND AND SUBTITLES

The voice is recorded in English. Transcripts in English and Estonian are provided. All additional music is royalty-free.

TEXT

In our collective imagination, the city is our house, to us humans, and to us only. But other species do not really care about what we imagine. Many of them are living next to us, never domesticated, not wholly wild, making the city theirs. People call them “rats”, “pigeons”, “crows”, and sometimes “pests”. But scientists call them: the liminal species.

In this project, led by the University of Tartu, we are studying some interesting liminals, that take up a lot of space in our lives. In Tartu, in Paris, and in many cities in the world, sometimes quietly, sometimes not so much. By studying them, and how they interact with people, it is possible to solve or prevent some issues they are causing.

Here come the suspects: *Corvus cornix*, and its western cousin *Corvus corone*; *Corvus frugilegus* often mistaken for a raven but in fact way smaller, trust us, you will know it the day you will meet a raven; and the very Tartusian *Coloeus monedula*. How do they live? What do they do? Why are they emptying again this plastic-only trashcan when there is plenty of fresh grass with seeds and insects nearby? Well, unfortunately, they won't answer you. Not directly.

For that, you will need to talk to another strange species: the zoosemiotician. They are a subspecies of biosemioticians, scientists studying how living beings create signs and make sense of the world that surround them. Here is their nest, a comfy place where their ideas can quietly grow and multiply. But most of the time, zoosemioticians are somewhere out, interacting with the species they crave to understand. Some say that it is a one-way fascination, but corvids are of these species that are able to recognize human faces. Maybe this subject fascinates them too...

By studying the various process of meaning-making in liminal species, scientists hope to improve the way both humans and animals are living, finding solutions to human issues without endangering the biodiversity or the peaceful life of intelligent and sentient species.

Wanna know more about that? Scientists are shy creatures, but you can find them, and ask all your questions in many events of popularization! Wanna join our journey? Contact your local university or natural history museum: there are tons of citizen science programs in which you can enrol, to help scientists understand better how we are coexisting with other species.

ETHICAL AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE

The webpage is hosted by the University of Tartu, and supported by the university servers. Consequently:

- All media are property either of the university or of the administrator (in this situation, that means me).
- No copyright can be applied to media that could prevent them from being shared with other scientists or research teams.
- The webpage is as protected against informatic attacks or hacking as is any content managed by the University IT department.

Still, a third party was used for hosting the video, and cookie management should be monitored due to that aspect. This choice was made for, first, a technical reason (WordPress could not properly upload the video and the entire website was unstable due to that), and second, for an accessibility reason (Youtube allows to easily implement subtitles for deaf people). The Youtube Channel hosting the video (in Unlisted) is The Dendrobate Doctor's channel (see in the Links section), my own channel of science popularization, in French.

Subtitles in English were made from an accessibility perspective. Subtitles in Estonian were automatically translated and will need correction by a native speaker.

FEEDBACK

As for the first video, the second video was first proposed to a small sample (5) outside of the project (from 21 to 65 years old, 2 males, 3 females, with various levels of English, from basic school level to bilingual, none with English as native language) before being uploaded on the webpage.

- Tests were made on computer (4), tablet (2) and mobile (2).
- Technical quality:
 - o Participants found the audio clear and were able to understand the text. Two participants stressed the fact that they were able to understand everything even if their English level is quite poor. Two participants stressed the fact that they were able to understand without subtitles. One participant describes the audio as “a bit difficult to follow”.
 - o Participants found the images good and professional-like. Two participants noted the use of different moments from the same sequences. One found that one or two sequences were a bit out of focus when watched on a big screen.
- Aesthetic and ambience: Participants could give three adjectives to describe their feelings about the video.
 - o The popularization aspect was well understood (“adapted for neophytes”, “triggering curiosity”)
 - o The aesthetic of the video clearly impacted participants (“luminous”, “smooth”).
 - o The video was described as relaxing by 3 participants, one stressing that it was maybe a bit too calm and/or classical. On the other one, one participant described the general ambience as “with peps”.

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- General interest:
 - o Participants said that the video made them want to learn more about the species. Two of them wondered if it would have the same impact on people not already a bit interested in science and/or animal life.
 - o Participants said that the video made them want to learn more about the project. Three of them wanted to be involved in citizen science programs. One of them did not notice at first the links at the end allowing participants to find such programs.

The video was then uploaded on the home page of the project webpage.

GENERAL PROJECT – CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

IMPORTANCE OF THE CURRENT STEP

This step is the last one from the communication component. It is the summary for the general audience of what kind of work is done in a project like this one.

PROPOSITIONS FOR OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT

ACADEMIC ASPECTS

This communication production will be introduced in conferences (see Document C2) as a sample of production targeted towards the general audience.

RESEARCH ASPECTS

This kind of work can increase the interest of the general audience for citizen science and could consequently improve the number and the quality of data recorded.

NEXT STEPS

This is the final step of the communication aspect of the project, and will be included in the final milestone report (M3).

ANNEXES

LINKS

Short movie from popularization festival: <https://leblob.fr/videos/des-corneilles-et-des-hommes>

Youtube channel hosting the video: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEx2bxvWCWpudAH-wpJuKOW>

Video address: <https://youtu.be/KAdVOOT-F9s>

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DOCUMENTS

Plan for video COM5 (docx version – 30/05/2023)