

EAST4610- Voices from East Asia: Guidelines

Ideas and recommendations regarding communication to a general audience (part 2 of the portfolio)

One of this course's practical tasks offers you with the opportunity to practice how to communicate acquired information to a general audience. Aiming to enrich common knowledge and public debates on East Asia, you are encouraged to concretely apply your expertise in a way that is different than in academic papers. By working with media that are oriented towards a general audience, you practice relevant editing and communication skills that constitute some of the basic abilities to be expected from graduates in various future professional situations.

General recommendations

When designing your "Voices from East Asia" project you should always keep in mind that the presentation form and technique has to be feasible, i.e. the project has to be completed within the given time frame and with the resources available.

Try to keep the scope of the topic as clear-cut as possible. That also implies that you should pick a clearly defined topic instead of trying to map the overall question or the whole field that you study. You need to use at least one source in an East Asian language for your presentations. This could be a text, a film, one or several interviews you have done, one or several images/cartoons that you wish to analyze, a piece of art accompanied by a small text, etc. The possibilities are (almost) endless.

The dimension of your project text (i.e. script length) needs to fit the intended presentation purpose and forum, usually the IKOS ["Voices from East Asia"](#) blog page, or – if possible – a professional media platform. A good example of directives for a web text format can be found at the ["NRK Ytring"](#) blog page (in Norwegian only).

"Voices from East Asia" are meant to be communicated to an audience beyond your area of specialization, that is, to the interested public. Language and content of your presentations should therefore be adapted to this purpose. Avoid phrasal references and argumentations that are based on too many prerequisites to make your findings accessible for a non-specialist reader. You might think of reportages in internationally acknowledged newspapers that speak to their audience in an engaging, precise and, yet, accessible fashion.

Presentations must strictly adhere to copyright issues and intellectual property regulations. You should, for example, see to it that you use only your own photographs, drawings, or design templates. When external material or data is used, this has to be legalized by either providing

clear references to the original source and – if needed – clearing copyright issues with the originator (individual or institution).

If there is uncertainty about any of these aspects, always consult your supervisor.

Types of presentation formats and minimum requirements

(Order purely alphabetical)

In order to provide as much flexibility and room for creativity to the “Voices from East Asia” projects as possible, these guidelines only state minimum requirements for different possible presentation formats. In case it is needed, you are yourself responsible for finding and documenting further professional instructions regarding the presentation form and technique of your choice. There are plenty of these kinds of tutorials out there; some suggestions for general reading on presentation media can be found below. For each presentation type a few examples are given, which are only supposed to serve as illustrations and source of inspiration.

General blog post / web special

Generally speaking this presentation format is aiming at making excellent use of the possibilities available online to link your text to as much external reference material as possible, including links to original sources or copies of them, pictures, figures, etc. It is meant to communicate expert insights on a certain topic to a broader audience. This is supported by the fact that it can combine different layouts and include much more visualisation than usually possible in an academic publication on paper.

You are free to decide on the textual and other visual elements you would like to use. However, please keep in mind that – basically – you yourself have to be able to handle and ‘produce’ them.

Examples: [blog post I](#), [blog post II](#)

Commentary

When you work with a recently discovered historical source for your master thesis or find exciting new or regionally diverging interpretations or translations of known historical sources, you could consider to present this in the form of a concise but accessible commentary. The above stated advantages of a web special apply here as well.

Example: [commented translation](#) (much smaller in scale for students’ projects of course)

Film clip / audio feature

A film clip could include dynamic graphs and figures, an animated cartoon, a recorded oral presentation by the student, an interview (see also below), a commented/translated collection of media clips from the studied region on the topic under research, or the like.

Much of the same would be possible in an audio format, e.g. in the form of a short radio feature capturing sound bites, original voices (translated and commented, of course) on or graphic descriptions of the studied topic.

Example: [video I](#), [video II](#)

Interactive figure / illustration; small collection/ database

A complex figure or illustration could help visualize complex relationships or communicate a topic that is based on much statistical data. A small and simple database could make terms, a specific body of texts, or other things that you work with and find relevant for a broader audience searchable and accessible.

When you choose a figure, illustration, a small collection or database to be the core of your project, please also supply a framing text for it.

Example: [illustration I](#), [illustration II](#), ["dictionary"/"encyclopaedia" entry of special term and its etymology](#) , [commented data collections](#)

News digest / public discussion analysis

A news digests could summarize media coverage of an event, or the discussion about a certain question (comparative as well as retrospective, historical) in your country/language of specialization. Beyond media coverage, it could also present (in the form of a blog post or database, see above) how certain terms, narratives or concepts are used in the broader public sphere in the region/language/era you study. You could also, for example, chose to contrast some mainstream views in Norwegian public debate (about questions concerning East Asia or on other themes that are discussed globally) and compare them with East Asian stances on this topic.

Examples: [news digest](#) , [news digest](#)

Q&A digest / factual interview

A Q&A digest format can be used to structure the presentation of phenomena you yourself have analysed. It allows you to facilitate readability and clarity (e.g. in explaining the many layers of the presented East Asian perspective on a certain topic) by dividing the most important argument(s) into sections headed by a pointed question.

Another option would be to present a real interview with another person, such as a contemporary witness, an expert in a field relevant for your master thesis, an identifiable driver of public discourse, the author of one of the most important references you use for your master thesis, or any other East Asian "voice" involved in the theme that you present. You could, if applicable, also compile selected statements from different interviews/an own survey sample group to present a certain argument.

Example: [Q&A digest](#) , [author](#) or [expert interview](#) , [oral history interview](#)

Review article

A review article would ideally present how a certain question is discussed in academic works (e.g., in the 2-3 most popular books on this topic) in the country/region and language of your specialization, or compare potentially diverging international and 'domestic' assessments of a certain topic.

Example: [commented collective review I](#) , [commented collective review II](#)

Other

The list presented here is, of course, not complete. You are free to discuss other ideas for presentation of your "Voices from East Asia" topic with your supervisor.

Recommended additional reading

Creame, Phyllis Lea, Mary R. (2008): *Writing at University: A Guide for Students*, Buckingham: McGraw-Hill Education. [See especially Chapter 12]. Available through UiO Bib online: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/oslo/docDetail.action?docID=10229830>

Dunleavy, Patrick (n.d.): *Shorter, Better, Faster, Free. Blogging changes the nature of academic research, not just how it is communicated*. Available online: <https://medium.com/advice-and-help-in-authoring-a-phd-or-non-fiction/shorter-better-faster-free-fb74bddaec03>

The Guardian: *How to Create a Successful Science Blog*. Available online: <http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/apr/17/science-blog-welcome-trust-writing-prize>

Meadows, A.J. (1998): *Communicating Research*, San Diego: Academic Press. Available at the UiO Realfags library: FA 2347.

Munger, Dave (n.d.): *How to Write a Good Research Blog Post*. Available online: <http://scienceofblogging.com/how-to-write-a-good-research-blog-post/>

SAGE Research Methods: *Writing and Presenting Research*. Available through UiO Bib online: <http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/writing-and-presenting-research/SAGE.xml>