



Narrative report

Editing training- 2nd session- Bethlehem Palestine

NON LINEAR EDITING

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With TAM- Women Media & Development

Funded by the French Consulate in Jerusalem

November 22nd 2006

تنميتها وإعلام المرأة
WOMEN MEDIA & DEVELOPMENT

The second session of training for Palestinian local TV stations professional staffs was carried out from 28/10/2006 to 08/11/2006 in TAM association (Women, Media & Development) premises in Bethlehem.

9 participants attended the session.



Nahed Awwad was the Arabic translator and co-trainer for technical support on editing stations.

The first session devoted to editing took place in July 2006 and allowed us to give a technical basis to the editors trainees: the editor job, the general work methodology, film building, the film-grammar and finally the basic functions of nonlinear editing tools : Avid, Premiere and Final Cut Pro.

The first session in July was implemented as an traveling itinerant training, 2 days in each city.

The special context of the country in July brought difficulties at the end of the session, which oblige us to gather the last participants together in one group in Bethlehem, in TAM office.

That's the reason why for this current session we choose for a more suitable solution consisting in gathering from the start all the participants in TAM office during all the training period, to avoid any surprise on the logistic or security level.

4 editing stations were available (2 PC, 2 Mac), enabling the trainees to work with Avid Xpress (Mac +PC), Adobe Premiere (PC), and Apple Final Cut Pro (Mac); 2 trainees per editing station.

It's not worth to remind that this training phase is included in a larger project of enhancing professionalism for local TV staffs, started more than one year ago.

This current second session on editing give us also the opportunity to capture and take stock of participants progress. It is also the first time that we will reach a concrete project with them, now that the technical basis (shooting, light, editing) was approved: Oral Women History. On this project we will based the forthcoming following sessions in order to make visible the hard work done for more than one year through the different training.

The training objectives were as followed:

- To offer a first level of general knowledge on image and editing by the study of documentaries and TV stories.
- To give a work methodology : paper phase, computer phase.
- To train on an editing reference tool: Avid.
- To offer an intensive space of work during 10 days to be able to understand and take advantage of the software functions meanwhile applying a supervised methodology of editing
- To give routine mechanism for them to use whatever the software, the cible, the context of work.
- To enhance professionalism of staffs

- To enlighten the differences between a local production and an international production (i.e. no over use of special effects and too much music)
- To initiate the work on women portrayals, which will allow us to make effective the training planning and cycle.

The rough cuts presented to the participants were the same for all the groups, it will enable us to make a comparison between the films and enable the trainees to understand the editing options and to measure their involvement in the project; the 'international language' will be likewise understandable as the group will be able on its own to criticize their choices made during the screening sessions in group, and to valid the sense of the story, equipped from the start with the same arms.

4 films built on the same rushes with 4 different approaches will be obtained.

Training Planning

Day 1:

We introduced the session to the trainees by insisting on the practical aspect of it; same for the need to build a story, apart from the use of video software for editing, what can at first be seen as conceptual for Palestinian editors who often shorten the editor's work to the knowledge of the functions of the editing software. The 2 following training days will be carried out without any computer.



The first day was devoted to review the method of building a story (news, documentary, drama) and the requirements to a good comprehension of the topic (structure, technique, and approach)

Finally, the trainees built on paper a standard story for evening TV news: the opening of a Sea-Food restaurant on Gaza beach. They were asked to draw a story-board and to make the cuts.



The 9 cuts were studied in group to stress the trainees' building mistakes as well as the positive points. About 25% of the story-boards were approved.

Day 2

The second day was for the screening of about 10 several videos. News topics from Aljazeera, French and US documentaries, video clips, and local Palestinian advertisements.



Discussion around the building, the cuts, the story telling, the editing methods, the special effects. Explanation around the special effects which usually are used to hide the poverty of the story building and the content. Cuts, style and technique.

Day 3

4 groups of 2 trainees were formed; 2 hours of rushes were selected and given to them dealing with forced marriage.

Each group has to, after three days, produce a 6 minutes short documentary with the same rushes, with a personal and particular point of view.

Before to start with non-linear editing of the images, they have to go through two steps, submitted to our approval:

- Precise study of the rushes with paper sheets distributed. Derush (watching the rushes) Building of their film on little Post-it papers, in order to rearrange and shuffle their video puzzle at ease.

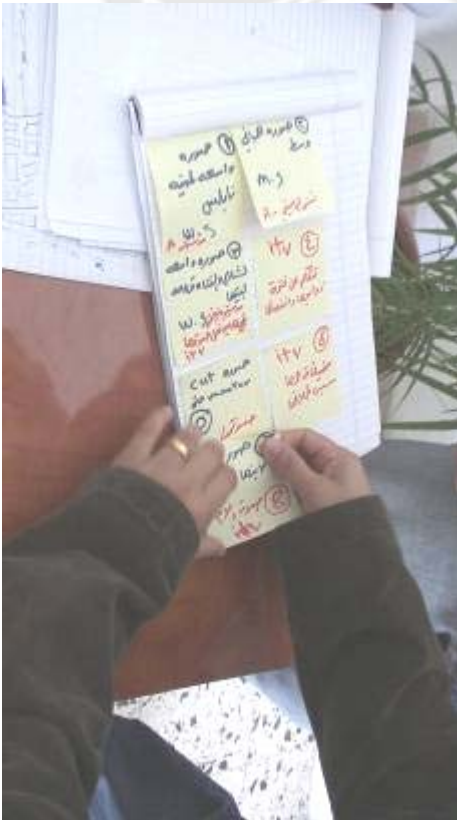


The working groups in process.

Day 4

Continuation and final step of films derush, on paper.

We checked each group one by one to approve or not their building structure.



For this workshop in specific, AVID software was a mandatory tool for each group.

For the computer phase, 2 steps were compulsory approved once the work is achieved:

- Creation of sub-clips in the respective Bins: interviews, cut aways...
- Making of the uncut first cut (draft).



After getting our approval of the first cut (draft) of each group, the trainees can go to the next step after being trained on AVID advanced tools: overlap, fade in/out, heading, cross dissolve, voice over import and the music...

Day 5

Continuation and final step of editing.

Conclusion of the first workshop, and screening of the 4 movies.

Feedback and comment of the trainees on the other groups' movies.

The day was proficient for understanding the weakness & mistakes and the 'local ways'.



Day 6

2nd workshop with 11 DV tapes for a 12 min. subject on Polygamy.

Following the methodology: logging the rushes on paper / construction on Post- it papers and approval on paper.



Day 7

Continuation and final step of films derush. Approval by Nahed and myself.

Day 8

Selection of the editing software as wished: Except one group who preferred to work on Final Cut Pro, the other 3 groups chose to go on with Avid Xpress pro.



Day 9

Following Editing:
Production of sub-clips, first cut (draft), final editing.
Approval of the first cut (draft) and correction of construction mistakes.

Day 10

Continuation and final step of the 12 min. editing.
Screening of the movies.



Day 11

2 trainees asked to be trained on one day session on camera techniques. Pied, micro HF and Sony PD170 were used for this session.

Description of the cameraman work methodology, zebra white balance.
Discussion around producing an image and building a plan.
Description of the camera, the stand, how to adjust the HF mike configuration.



A first workshop is taking place inside TAM office to produce a short interview.



A second workshop is taking place outside in the streets of Bethlehem dealing with Lebanon, news format.

Coming back of the trainees and feedback of the images.

Day 12

A DVD has been produced, integrating the different trainees' works.

Conclusion

Deep involvement of the trainees, especially during the writing phase and building the story; it was mainly for most of them, the first time they prepared the editing before to start the computer production.

During the 2 productions, 50% of the films were professional enough to be screen as it was; 50% needed additional work or to be modified.

Simplicity and moderation is a non-concrete concept for 25% of the trainees (music, special effects, voice off, introductive heading...).

They were able to realize based on the discussion exchange after the movies screening how much the language ought to be universal and understandable for all: proficiency, simplicity ...

The great majority of the trainees understood that building the story is more important than having the skills of the software tool in itself; I was very surprised to see how far they get deeply involved in the writing process and the game of building the puzzle story on Post-it papers.

The logical of non-linear editing was well gained, enable them to be free in their choice for editing software, and in the same time to be confident to edit with AVID.

These 10 days were intensive but short; once back to their daily life of production, they will have to meet their news skills with the local needs; but we can come to several statements:

- Through our several interventions, the improvements were visible, particularly regarding the frame operator and the images broadcast on Palestinian local television stations.
- The trainings pointed particular higher noticeable skills of some trainees out: it is the case particularly for three of them, **Smail** (Tulkarem), **Mahed** (Ramallah) and **Ala** (Bethlehem). The trainings gave them the potential missing so far to work with any international TV channel.
- The whole work done coherently initiated in 2005 now allocates us to propose additionally to the Palestinian channels professionalism enhancement, one or several documentaries dealing with Palestinian women and History.
- We have to notice the very important impact of their work on the other teams and others channels ' work, sometimes we can see a multiplier effect when the want to copy the new style of these technicians.
- Finally, the different cycles of training allow us to enhance the value of talents, to built local teams and to generate cooperation which will show the way to local projects development; **Suheir Farraj** and **Nahed Awad** for example -only to mention few names- for their serious and professionalism.



Regarding the future, it will be interesting to let them time to work on the women history project, and to come to supervise the following steps before the portraits to be finalized.
A parallel additional work should be the writing of the cases, work which was not the focus because of important technical needs at the beginning of the training.

A material was given to them including the training themes: building a story, technical basis and computer basis, AVID, final cult and Premiere tool, mostly translated by Naed into Arabic.

Note : We already have a support material in Arabic; the suggestion for the coming year to gather them all with additional complementary documents to make an homogeneous whole out of them, in order to finally produce a reference book "shooting/ editing" in arabic, was approved.

This written material will be our focal point and main interest in order to sustain our training effort when no training session is carried out in the field. The local training centers will be able to take great benefits in medium and long term.

