



"MISSION EUROPE" A bilingual radio fiction & a quest

"Mission Europe" aims to help young Europeans become familiar with other European languages and cultures. The project is based on an original concept drafted by RFI which enables listeners to follow a bilingual radio-drama with little to no effort. The listeners follow the story of a heroine who speaks in their native tongue, and must learn to get by in a foreign culture with another language.

Radio France Internationale, Deutsche Welle and Polskie Radio have joined forces in order to produce three series of 26 episodes. **"Mission Berlin"**, **"Misja Kraków"** and **"Mission Paris"** are three quests, each set in a video game. The player must guide his avatar on dangerous missions in Germany, France and Poland respectively, finding clues and winning points. The player and his avatar must not only face extraordinary challenges, but also cope with everyday problems as they navigate the cities. In order to do this successfully they must ask for help and unveil their enemies' identities by learning communication skills appropriate to the country's language and culture. The listeners follow the video game adventures from the point of view of the player and his avatar who – just like the computer – speak the listeners' mothertongue.

The three series will be broadcast in Europe by the three radio stations involved as well as any other radiostations that are interested. It is possible to produce versions of the series combining any two languages.

The co-producers will ensure the promotion of this original concept, by targeting organisations such as radio stations, language learning centres, cultural exchange networks and tourist boards.

The series will also be available online via a website dedicated to the project, which will offer additional services such as audio on demand and a practical "guide" to the project. The original concept of the series provides the basis for a wide range of possible subsequent productions in any combination of target language and source language as desired by European radio stations joining the project.

The stories

"Mission Berlin"

Anna is woken up by a phone call from her hotel's reception: A woman has been murdered and superintendent Ogur wants to question Anna.

But where is Anna? A clue is on her bathroom mirror, written in German: "In der Teilung liegt die Lösung, folge der Musik ...". Anna is in Berlin and must uncover the secret in real time, before anyone else can get to the clue. On her mission, she has to cross time and travel back and forth. She meets many people, but are they friends or foes?

Throughout her quest, Anna becomes familiar with the German language and culture: Guided by the music, will she learn enough to find the solution and save modern Germany?



“Misja Kraków”

Suzanna regains consciousness in the cabin of a ship on the river Vistula. With the help of the player, she soon finds a mysterious message referring to a castle, a deck of playing cards and their suits- clubs, spades, diamonds and hearts These clues lead her to a violin player and a mysterious turning room in the Wawel Castle of Kraków. In order to save Poland from disaster Suzanna must go through three mysterious doors leading her to a circus in Warsaw, a lake in the Mazury district, the harbour of Gdansk and the Tatra mountains. On her quest, Suzanna encounters a number of people, some of them enemies, some friends, and finds out more about Polish language and culture.

“Mission Paris”

Eva finds herself in the midst of a huge explosion in the “Gare de l’Est” in Paris. A wounded man gives her the first clue- a series of numbers. Eva then finds an old paper saying: “La statue domine le mort mais la fertilité est retrouvée.”. Eva embarks on an adventure to solve the riddle. As the player guides her through Paris, Eva can call a magic taxi to her aid and Adrien, a bold fireman, also does his best to help her as she’s pursued by the mysterious “blackhats”. In Paris, Eva comes across old booksellers, painters at Montmartre and finally ends up at Père Lachaise cemetery as she searches to unlock the secret of the mysterious phrase But will she be able to complete her mission in time and save the French republic?

Global approach

The series “Mission Europe” aims to give young Europeans a “taste” of other European languages and cultures through the medium of radio.

The series works on the basis of the similarity between a quest and the struggles of someone trying to understand the language and culture of a foreign country.

Radio is a media which can reach a large audience and is easily accessible. Radio can also represent language and culture in an authentic way.

Radio formats make “sound snapshots” possible. That is, short scenes can convey images of the typical sounds and spoken language in any given city or country, which is for some listeners their first experience with a foreign language. Together with realistic settings and reports, these sounds and expressions form an authentic picture of a foreign country.

The linguistic, social and cultural communication contained in the series is based on the “Discovery” and “Survival” levels, that is, Level A1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning*.

The series’ bilingual concept, fixed formats, and regular broadcasts allow the listeners to follow the heroes’ adventures and to discover and learn to master the basic principles of the target language, step by step.



Key elements

A "Spiral-like" progression in line with radio listening conditions:

The linguistic forms and structures, communication situations, practical as well as social notions are integrated in the story and follow the model of a "spiral" progression.

Listening to radio is in itself a "naturally incomplete" experience: Listeners hear first without understanding and when messages or words are repeated they listen and pick up their meanings. Once listeners have acquired an understanding of what they have heard they are able to apply the structures in their own speak.

This process is similar to the situation of foreigners who have immersed themselves in and are trying to come to grips with a foreign language environment.

Radio techniques make repetition possible: Stressing the same structures in different contexts and situations helps to "build" the progression "within" the programme.

The scenarios of the series include the key stages of language learning: acquiring and decoding structures and words as well as their application.

The heroes of the series are "assisted" in their quest by **tools**, such as a computerised language and practical guide to country and culture, or a native speaker taking on the part of a coach

The content of these "taster" series is limited to very simple language structures, **social strategies** to help make yourself understood as well as **survival-level know-how** of a foreign language.

Goal

Representing the target languages with characteristic sounddesign and dialogues

The playlets: Moments of investigation and communication with native speakers progressively teach the heroes to make themselves understood in the target language.

The scenario is written from the point of view of a foreigner communicating with native speakers.

The starting point of the quests in every episode are a "sound impression" of a situation within the target culture (such as messages, eavesdropping, listening to mysterious recordings). By decoding what they have just heard the heroes are taken to the scene of the investigation.

There, in communication with native speakers, the heroes of the adventures progressively use the basic expressions and simple sentences of the target language. At that point they still do not fully understand native speakers but pick up some words. By asking for explanations or repetition they make progress in their attempt to learn the language because they hear the same expressions in different situations.

Tools

Mothertongue used for communication between the player and his avatar: decoding, directing and finding clues together.

These moments stress the clues of their quest and it is in these moments that player and avatar try to find solutions for the language and communication problems they are encountering. The tools which the player can generate on his computer, such as



dictionaries, websites or tourist guides containing practical and linguistic information in their mothertongue, assist them in this endeavour.
 Each episode leads to a conclusion: The heroes find a new clue, face a new problem or discover another puzzling fact.

Structure

Three stories equal three series, each consisting of 26 episodes of 5 minutes each (5 acts of 5 episodes and a final episode). "Mission Europe" is based on a concept that follows a parallel progression in both storyline and in language/communication skills.

The link between the three series is that they all have the same structure and context. In each of the series, the player and his avatar are in a videogame and have been assigned a mission to complete. Each series is set in a different country. Their eagerness to move on in the game and to survive motivates them in their attempt to learn the foreign language.

Each story is constructed as a "collage": Each act represents a "level" of mastery of the situations (language and communication). In each episode a new clue is given which helps the investigation and the progress of the story. Every fifth episode summarises the clues and problems of the four previous episodes. The fifth episode recaps the language contents and leads to a change of perspective in the quest as well as to the next "level" in the mastery of communication skills.

Rough outline of the content

"MISSION BERLIN"; "MISJA KRAKÓW"; "MISSION PARIS"				
3 x 26 episodes = 5 acts of 5 episodes = daily 5 minute episode : 1 week = 1 act				
Act 1	Act 2	Act 3	Act 4	Act 5
"First contact"	Discovery		Survival	
Multilingual strategies, formulas ready to use	Situate yourself and the others	Identifying and describing	Interacting & participating	Expressing one's feelings, intentions, hopes, thoughts with simple phrases
1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 26



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