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Workshop Report

By

Elsie Bong
AMIC-DEUTSCHE WELLE
WORKSHOP ON DOCUMENTATION
AND ARCHIVAL TECHNIQUES FOR RADIO
SINGAPORE

November 27–December 8, 1989

WORKSHOP REPORT

By

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Programme Specialist

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Introduction

The International Workshop on Documentation and Archival Techniques for Radio was jointly organised by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, Singapore, and the Deutsche Welle of Germany.

The objectives of the workshop were:

1. to familiarize radio librarians with the wide range and scope of archival techniques
2. to provide a forum for participants to exchange views and experience on their respective systems

Participants

Fifteen participants from fourteen Asian countries participated in the workshop. The countries represented were from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The list of participants is in Appendix 1.

Resource Persons

Mr W Solbach was the Course Director. Mr K Lippe and Mr F Kresing-Wulf served as lecturers-cum-resource persons.

Programme

The ten-day workshop was opened by Mr Vijay Menon, Secretary-General of AMIC.
Mr Solbach started the workshop with a survey on the participants’ expectations.

Country reports from the fourteen participants were presented during the first one and a half days.

A lecture on the basics of a personal computer, the terminology, the hardware/software, and the operating systems, was given by Mr Lippe. This was followed by an exercise on how to handle a computer terminal and the use of the software LARS. The fifteen participants were divided into five groups, comprising three members to a group. Group exercise on the creation of a database “STATION” was carried out. Data definitions for this database were formulated, and data entry, based on information in the questionnaire submitted earlier by the participants, were keyed in.

A paper on AMIC’s experience was presented on the third day. The paper focused on AMIC’s objectives for computerization, the selection and installation of hardware/software, data entry, and networking. Demonstrations on the MINISIS software - the data definitions, the print format, data input and update - and how to access and use the mass communication database were carried out.

Topics covered for the remaining portion of the workshop concentrated on: Registration, Selection, Formal Description, Content Analysis, Storage, and Information Retrieval.

Mr Kresing-Wulf conducted lectures on the first four topics and the last two were handled by Mr Lippe.

Registration and Selection

The systems practised at Deutsche Welle were highlighted by Mr Kresing-Wulf. He gave a systematic account on the steps taken to register, select and process audio materials at the Deutsche Welle Sound Archive.

Formal Descriptions

Group exercise was carried out to create another database “RADIO”, followed by data entry into this database.

Content Analysis

Mr Kresing-Wulf lectured on the techniques of abstracting and indexing audio tapes. Examples of the three different types of abstracting, i.e. Indicative, Informative,
and Sequential methods were highlighted. An exercise on abstracting a sound recording of an interview with Ravi Shankar, an Indian musician, was given. The groups could use any of the three formats for the exercise.

Two more abstracting exercises were done based on the speeches of Indira Gandhi when she visited the United States, and also on the occasion when she presented the gift “Suria” - statue of the Sun God - to the United Nations.

The use of thesaurus was also demonstrated by Mr. Kresing-Wulf.

**Storage and Information Retrieval**

These two topics were conducted by Mr. Lippe. He dealt with the problems encountered in storage, such as the lack of space, print-through, humidity, etc. Using the LARS software, he demonstrated the different commands required for information retrieval, eg. the SEARCH, SEEK, FIND, and the use of AND, OR, and NOT. Using the ‘MUSIC’ database, ten questions were given, with each of the five groups answering two different questions. (Appendix 2).

An afternoon was spent on demonstrating how to use the “PROFILE” Host - an online information service, based in London, that offers a wide range of authoritative sources. Using the databases available in PROFILE, group members were given exercises to search for answers to the questions listed in Appendix 3.

As a follow-up to the use of online information retrieval, Mr. Solbach gave a briefing on the evolution of message transmission, which originated with runners running across country carrying messages, to the use of carrier pigeons, telegraphs, cable, telephone, radio, and satellite communication.

The workshop ended with a final exercise in which the fifteen participants were split into three groups comprising five members to a group, and headed by a resource person. Each group had to work on two of the six topics - Registration, Selection, Formal Description, Content Analysis, Storage and Information Retrieval - and present findings on the 1) current situation, 2) desired state of affairs, and 3) obstacles encountered.

**Recommendations**

Based on the above exercise, and the ten days of discussions and deliberations, the working groups comprising participants from 14 countries arrived at the following
findings concerning archival techniques in the area of tapes and records in radio:

1) The work of tape and record libraries is the backbone of programme production in radio broadcasting. Moreover, tape libraries in many radio stations in the Asia-Pacific region contain recording materials of utmost value for the preservation of the national heritage. This should be recognised by management, so that sufficient manpower, budget and working facilities are allocated to meet the needs of the archives.

2) Training opportunities and facilities for archival staff are essential to enhance the effectiveness of archivists.

3) On the methods and techniques used in radio archiving, namely Registration, Selection, Formal Description, Content Analysis, Storage, and Information Retrieval, the participants arrived at the following findings:

**Selection**

- In a number of archives, valuable historical recordings on national and international events are not available. An informal programme exchange between stations is therefore strongly recommended.
- The archivists should be integrated into the selection committee.
- A standardization of selection criteria is recommended for each country represented to minimise biased selection of subjective archival materials.
- Periodic re-selection of materials is necessary to weed out materials that are irrelevant or outdated.

**Formal Description**

- The system of registration of sound materials immediately after production should be introduced or improved.
- Guidelines for cataloguing should be worked out resulting in a cataloguing manual.
Content Analysis

To perform content analysis it is necessary to listen to the tapes which in turn requires:

- trained and sufficient manpower
- sufficient equipment (tape machine)
- the use off data-checking references

Storage

- In order to maintain the quality of archived materials, air-condition and clean premises are essential.
- Regular room cleaning and additional record covers may reduce the problems produced by dust.
- Regular re-winding of tapes (annually) can reduce the problems of print-through.
- The problem of space shortage could be partially reduced by combining short tapes onto longer tapes; upward extension of racks or selection and re-storage of rarely used materials.
- In order to retrieve loans, strict lending rules must be implemented.

Information Retrieval

With an increasing number of tapes and discs to be archived, it might be useful to install a computer-based archival and retrieval system for those archives whose collection is over 30000 items.
Evaluation

The participants unanimously rated the overall content and depth of the course as "very good". All agreed that the workshop had either met or exceeded their expectations. A summary of the participants' evaluations and suggestions for the workshop are as follows:

1) that in view of the usefulness of the workshop, the course should be repeated to allow other archivists to benefit from the training.

2) that the time frame for future workshop be extended.

3) that the experts from Deutsche Welle conduct a 2-3 day training course at the broadcasting station of the host country.

4) that there be a follow-up workshop for the same group.

5) that for future workshop the participants invited should be directly involved with radio archive.

At the concluding session, the participants were awarded certificates attesting to their participation.

Conclusion

The facility for hands-on experience with the on-line PROFILE database link to London proved to be an invaluable experience for all participants as it provided an insight into the applications of information technology to retrieve information transcending national boundaries.

Overall, all participants' expectations of the workshop were fulfilled. The consensus was that the conduct of the workshop was timely as it provided the platform to acquire various concepts and ideas for application or adaptation in their respective home countries.
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BANGLADESH
1. Mr Nurannabi Khan
   Director
   National Broadcasting Authority

BHUTAN
2. Mr Yonten Gyeltshen
   Research Officer
   Radio Bhutan

NEGARA BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
3. Ms Dayang Rauyah Bte Haji Ahmad
   Senior Tape & Record Librarian
   Radio Televisyen Brunei

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
4. Mr Huang Yenling
   Director of Office
   Radio Beijing

INDIA
5. Shri D P Jatav
   Asst Station Director
   All India Radio

INDONESIA
6. Mr Yoseph Hartopo
   Head of Sub-Division Programme
   Radio Republik Indonesia
MALAYSIA
7. Madam Che Wah Mahmud
   Acting Supervisor
   Radio Television Malaysia

NEPAL
8. Mr Dhanendra Bimal
   Radio Nepal

PAKISTAN
9. Mr Qurban Ali Shah
   Librarian
   Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation

PAPUA NEW GUINEA
10. Mr Don Haro
    National Broadcasting Commission

PHILIPPINES
11. Ms Leonar R Repotente
    Chief Librarian
    Philippine Information Agency

SINGAPORE
12. Mr Poh Joo Tuang
    Supervisor, Audiotape Library
    Singapore Broadcasting Corporation

THAILAND
13. Mr Wichai Chanthamari
    Chief of Enlightenment Sub-Division
    National Broadcasting Service of Thailand

VIETNAM
14. Ms Nguyen Thi Du
    Voice of Vietnam
DEUTSCHE WELLE

15. Mr Wilfried Solbach
   Radio Trainer Journalist

16. Mr Karl Lippe
   Engineering Trainer

17. Mr Felix Kresing-Wulf
   Head, Deutsche Welle Archive

AMIC

18. Ms Elsie Bong
    Programme Specialist
    (Documentation)

19. Mr George Tan
    Asst Programme Specialist

20. Dr Anura Goonasekera
    Senior Programme Specialist
    (Research)

21. Ms Lock Yut Kam
    Asst Programme Specialist
Appendix 2

EXERCISE (MUSIC DATABASE)

1. How many songs were written about the topic “love”?

2. What are the titles of the songs written and sung by Michael Jackson?

3. How many songs last between 2:30 mins and 3:00 mins?

4. What is the title of the newest song in the database?

5. Which company had the most number one hits in the USA?

6. How many songs were published on singles and how many on longplay records?

7. Are all of these hits sung in English?

8. Who was the most popular composer in the USA and who was the most popular performer?

9. Which production number begins with the digits 260? Who is the performer and what is the title of this song?

10. How many different types of rock music were played by the various performers?
Appendix 3

EXERCISE ON PROFILE

1. How many motorcars are sold in your country in 1987?

2. What was the precise result of the last elections in two of your neighbouring countries?

3. When did East Germany allow all citizens to visit West Germany?

4. What did the President of the USA declare to the proposal of Helmut Kohl for German reunification?