

Guidelines for community radio trainers

to promote participation of special
target groups in broadcasting



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This handbook is guidelines for community radio trainers working with special target groups. It is based on multi-professional cooperation between community radio Helsingin lähiradio and Mioletöntä valoa “Epic light” -program.

Epic Light aims to strengthen the media skills and the voice of young adults that face challenges in their lives due to disabilities, mental health problems, social exclusion and/or unemployment. <https://mioletontavaloa.fi/english/>

The handbook is intended for use in workshops organized for the target group, which are led as a joint tandem team by the community radio trainer and the target group trainer. The latter refers to trainers and peer supporter persons working with the target group.

The handbook consists of six modules, whose content is arisen from the experiences and remarks gained in the joint testing workshops of Lähiradio and Epic Light and as a response to a question what the group’s central learning needs for radio work might be.

Interview plays a central role in a community radio due to its importance of increasing multivocality and pluralism. It turned out that the trainees are often quite skilled to do a radio interview. The trainees know e.g., what are the wh-questions and the difference between open and closed questions. But the radio itself as a medium, as a specific tool, was not always properly understood or it was given less attention, that caused problems in making a radio program.

Indeed, in community radio, we often start the training almost directly by learning different types of radio programs and how to do them, with consequence that trainees don’t get so well

familiar with the basics of radio, with the radio alphabet. This handbook doesn’t try to give any precise instructions for making a radio program, but it goes back to the roots and deals more with the tool itself, with “radio language” and the ways of expression specific to radio.

The modules can be carried out as a one workshop or one module at a time. The text sections of the handbook are intended as an introduction to the topic, and it is recommended to approach them in small groups, in pairs or as a general discussion, so that they can be deepened and concretized when needed with everybody’s joint input.

Doing exercises is pivotal to learn the radio alphabet, and it is wise to give it the most of the workshop’s duration.

So, at the end this will be a common learning process for the community radio trainer, the target group trainer and the trainees all together and also reflects in itself community radio’s non-hierarchical and equal spirit. And first of all, the aim is to encourage everybody to learn listen again and to have fun with sound and sound pictures.

The handbook is in the format of an interactive pdf file and it’s on hand without an Internet connection. There are sound clips embedded in the handbook, to listen to which you’ll need the free Adobe Acrobat Reader program.

And also, download the handbook to your computer in the following way.

First, right-click on the email attachment or webpage link. Then select the function “save link as”. Now open the interactive pdf file you have just saved, and the sound clips are to be heard.

CONTENT OF THE RADIO WORKSHOP

- MODULE 1** Training in a tandem
- MODULE 2** Introduction to community radio
- MODULE 3** Characteristics of radio as a medium
- MODULE 4** A radio interview is pre-planned and pre-practised for the listener
- MODULE 5** Building a radio package
- MODULE 6** From sound pictures to sound narration

Training in a tandem

The aim of tandem working is to lower the threshold for target group's participation in radio training by increasing the community radio trainer's knowledge of the target group and of its needs. The interest of community radio is to involve so many different target groups as possible in radio activities, to let people grab the microphone and speak out for themselves. This requires adapting the training to meet the needs of different target groups. The task would be impossible for a community radio trainer alone to complete.

It is recommended that the community radio trainer and target group trainer discuss the needs and interests of the trainees in advance. However, it is good to prepare for individual challenges of the trainees to be such that a workshops activity must be adjusted "on the fly".

Trainees coming especially from vulnerable groups, such as neuro-divergent people and mental health rehabilitators, have different ways

of interacting and learning. Getting to know the trainees takes some time, and it's good to familiarise yourself with it by working together. Working together is an essential way to better understand cognitive challenges and find the ways of supporting and the solutions.

The presence of target group trainers in radio training is also important because this creates a safe learning environment for trainees and brings with it the ability to solve possible problem situations. Also, never forget to give trainees space and the opportunity to make their own views to be heard during the training or later when they have more courage to do so.

Trainees coming from vulnerable groups have often received unpleasant feedback at school or in hobbies about their participation. That's why the feedback and interaction should be empathetic and positive for supporting the development of trainees' positive activity and focus on successes.



Community radio is more than only a radio

Community radio is not very well known among the general public. When asked, it is usually confused with social media.

It is important that the trainees get understanding about community media as a third media sector along national public service media and private commercial media. The former is aimed at large audiences and target groups, the program contents and formats of the latter serve the needs of advertisers, big is beautiful and money talks.

Getting to know community radio also includes understanding community radio as part of the



international community radio movement. Around the world community radio provides representation to social groups that are under-served, marginalised, neglected, or misrepresented by mainstream media

To understand what community radio really is about, the traditional image of the radio must be turned upside down, bottom up. Community radio makes audiences radio producers.

However, community radio is more than only means of communication. It works for the development of its surrounding communities, shares peoples' concerns, and always offer social benefit. "Community radio is 90 percent about community and 10 percent about radio", said

the pioneer of the community radio movement, in 2014 deceased Zane Ibrahim from Bush Radio.

Exercises

Studio practise

Getting to know community radio starts in the radio station's studio, where every trainee can try out the sound desk, the mixer.

Material

<http://radiomattoli.com/index.php/Home/homeMain>

<https://www.umwamamafm.co.ug/>

<https://bushradio.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.bcbradio.co.uk/about/>

<https://www.antxetamedia.eu/>

<https://radiocorax.de/about-corax/projekte/>

<https://kronika.civilradio.hu/>

<https://nearfm.ie/>

<https://www.contrabanda.org/>

Trainer shows websites of community radios all over the world. Trainees will be asked: which country, who has taken a microphone?

General discussion

How do you see media in your country- who speaks in media? Who are journalists? Who are people being interviewed?

Characteristics of radio as a medium

Each media has its own special means of expression. The aim is to get trainees to be familiar with the radio language and to understand the dual nature of radio as a mass medium and as a means of expression.

A large part of community radio's radio programs are informative and transfer already existing material, such as published music, but don't bring anything new into that material, or radio programs that could have been produced and brought to the public also by means other than by radio.

Radio can also be used to create new material by using special means of radio. These radiophonic possibilities of radio are hardly utilized in community radios. Documentaries and radio plays are seldom broadcasted, and they are not included in the basic community radio training.

However, sound expression and sound narration are good way to convey such feelings and thoughts that are difficult to express in other ways, and thus they may offer new opportunities for self-expression to trainees with demanding life situations.

See with your ears - radio makes pictures

Radio is a blind medium but one which stimulates the imagination so that as soon as a sound comes out of a radio, you'll try to see and build with the mind's eye what you just have heard: where are you, who is speaking, what is happening? Radio gives free wings to your imagination; in radio you can even dance ballet or fly to the moon.

Compared to radio, visual medium is limited by the screen that crops the finished frames for listeners' imagination.

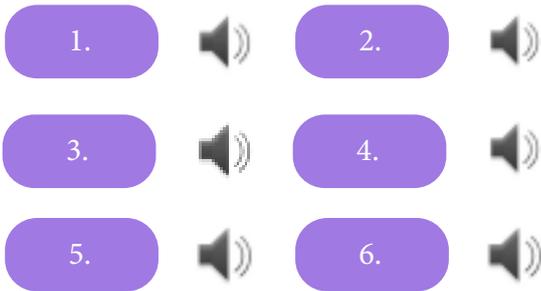
You don't always have to express yourself in words. By using sound and sound pictures you can evoke such emotional states, memories and associations in the listener's mind that might make it easier to understand the life and destinies of others and thus promote sympathy between people and working together for social benefit.

Maybe you haven't been in Ukraine, but surely you too have been worried and felt pain for your loved ones. By awakening those already existing feelings and experiences in the listener's mind you can tell much more about the senselessness of the war than cold reporting of current affairs program is able.

Exercises

Material

Sound clips



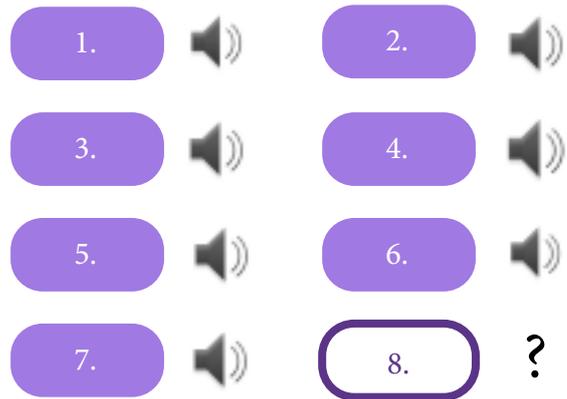
To stop and replay sound clip move to next page

Trainees listen to sound clips and tell what they see.

Trainees take a short sound walk on the neighbourhood of the radio station with a reporter recorder / a mobile, and other trainees tell what they see based on the recordings.

Material

Sound clips



Trainees build from sound clips a sound story of one person's 40-second morning activities. What sound is missing from the story?



Problem listening to the sound clip?

Do this:

- download the Adobe Acrobat Reader program to your computer
- start from the beginning and get again the handbook from your email or website
- right-click on the email attachment or webpage link
- select the function "save link as"
- open the file you just saved and listen to the sound clip

Radio sounds real but it's unreal talk situation between a program maker and a listener

Radio talk sounds like spoken language. It's near to normal two-sided, face-to-face, conversation. Nevertheless, radio is talking to a faceless listener, and as such an unreal speech situation. The radio talker can't know if the message is understood and make possible corrections because there is no direct reaction or feedback from the listener, like: "I didn't understand", "This is interesting, tell me more about this", "That's nonsense"... no applause, no laughing, no whistles.

If possible, at least during the training phase, it would be worthwhile for the program maker to give the radio program to a friend or colleague for listening in advance, remembering that the criticism should not be taken as a personal review, but it is solely related to the radio program.

Exercise

Material

Sound clips cut from station's radio programs

Trainees listen to sound clips and use cards (e.g., with emoji icons) to express their feedback to what they have just heard.



Radio is a one-way medium to a listener

Radio programs come as a single thread to the listener, who, unlike when reading a newspaper or a description of the content of a podcast, cannot return backwards of the program to check something unclear or forgotten.

Also, in radio there are no headlines like in written media, but the listener must decide what is important in the program stream.

It is the task of the radio maker to lead the listener forward, to tell where we started and where we are going, to repeat and repeat things one more time, so that the listener stays on the right track.

Instead of saying “What do you think about climate change”, say “What do you ___ (say the interviewee’s full name) think about climate change, what should we do about it?”, even if you have spoken to the interviewee a few minutes ago.

This is not our normal way of speaking and may sometimes be an unnecessary effort in the opinion of the program maker. However, this is not the case for the listener, who depends solely on hearing and cannot precisely remember the radio program far back.

Exercise

Material

Sound clips cut from station’s radio programs.

Trainees are channel surfers and listen to sound clips randomly cut from radio programs and recount their listening experiences: who is speaking, what is radio program about, how did program maker supported us to stay on the right track?

A radio interview is pre-planned and pre-practised for the listener

Even small is beautiful

In community radio, the interview is a very popular program format, either as an independent radio program or as a part of another radio program. However, there are often stumbling blocks in the initial stages of making a radio interview, most of which stem from the fact that for many people the mainstream radio has become a model image of radio broadcasting in general.

In contrast to the mainstream media, in community radio, program makers are encouraged to bring people who rarely have their voices heard publicly on the airwaves, to let them tell their opinions and express their feelings. Interviewees do not have to be kings or other very important persons. Program makers are free to ask their critical questions without fear of advertisers leaving or politicians getting angry. Topics of interest to very small target groups are not only allowed but also desired in a community radio.

The interviewer is a radio director

A well-done interview sounds like a spontaneous conversation, but it is the result of advance planning, pre-practising and well-done work. Making a radio interview does not require special talent in speaking skills. Everyone learns how to do a radio interview.

Like a film director, the interviewer is the director who selects and decides the topic and the perspective. Very different radio interviews can be made on the same topic, each of which is a work, the interviewer's own personal creation.

The interviewer decides what material will be included in the final program and in what order the different parts of the interview will be arranged. You can place the interviewee's last sentence to start the whole program, if it is, for example, apt for stopping us listeners and makes us stay listening to the radio. You are also free to cut the interview material so much as you like but remembering not to change the interviewee's words and thoughts.

The interviewer is a radio director in three ways:

1. by taking care that the interviewee feels safe and comfortable - show your interest!
2. by taking care that the purpose and the content of the interview is clear - follow the "red thread" !
3. by taking care of the invisible listener – ask questions on behalf of the listener!

But first, decide whether you want to do an expert interview, an opinion interview or a person interview.

And remember source criticism. Don't say "I read somewhere", but openly state your source, the listener wants to know it.



Demonstration

The community radio trainer and the target group trainer demonstrate together how to plan and carry out an interview. This includes a pre-interview and different interviewing methods that are verbal, i.e., questioning technique and non-verbal, i.e., gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice. The final interview will be recorded and listened.

Trainees are free to make their comments and ask questions during and after the demonstration. If possible, some of the trainees can follow the demonstration from different standpoints, of an interviewer, an interviewee or a listener, and comment like e.g., “no, not like that because...”, “that will do, but...”, “yes, just like that”, etc

It is also important to ask trainees about their former experiences as an interviewer or as an interviewed.

Demonstration

The trainer shows the correct way of handling a microphone.

Exercise

Trainees interview each other on agreed topics and practice using the microphone. The practice interviews (maximum duration two minutes) will be recorded and listened together.

Accessibility for the neurodivergent community in radio

Written by Makte Muuri as feedback for a test workshop of the Nordplus project and as instructions for community radio trainers

Before the start of radio production

It is ensured that the place can be accessed by a person who moves with the help of an aid, the toilet spaces are large enough to pass and other obstacles to movement have been removed or can be circumvented. In addition, it must also be possible to move from the event to a quiet space to rest. The information about the facility's accessibility should be public. It's a good idea to tell visitors about it in advance.

Training

Assignments can be sent to participants in advance. Some people find it difficult to participate when they don't know what to expect and what kind of participation is required. It is good to warn about group work and its content at the beginning of the meeting at the latest. Participants must be allowed to skip a part of the task. It is good to create an atmosphere where nothing is forced.

In teaching, terms must be explained, even if they are "self-evident". A good technique is to leave pauses in your speech, giving the participants time to think and gather the courage to express their confusion.

Neurodiversity and body language in an interview

For many neurodivergent people (e.g., autism, ADHD, Tourette's syndrome and learning disorders), body language can be different from neurotypical people, i.e., those who are not neurodivergent. For neurotypicals, eye contact, turning the body towards the other person and precise control of the tone of voice are important parts of forming a good relationship, but for some neurodiverse people these are often difficult and even pointless things.

Expressions and gestures are important, but for many neurodiverse people, facial control is exhausting or even impossible. For an autistic person, turning their back to the interviewer can be a polite gesture. It shows that they feel the interview is so important that they are ready to continue talking even when the situation feels overwhelming. They try to make the space easier to navigate and less irritating by avoiding eye contact or turning their back to the interviewee and focusing on the content of the interview.

How would it be ensured that the interviewee does not interpret the normal body language of an autistic interviewer as impolite?

To make eye contact is to be polite to many but disturbing to others. Here, you should pay attention to the individual and try to detect their personal feelings about eye contact.

Word choices

The most important thing is to focus on everyone's own strengths and give examples of what is polite and expected in a radio production. Word choices matter a lot here. If it is said that "eye contact is polite", it also implies that to look away is impolite.

Why not say something like this: "You should pay attention to eye contact. Others consider eye contact a good feature in an interview, while others prefer to avoid eye contact in an interview".

Instead of talking about "good non-verbal communication" we can say "examples of good non-verbal communication".

One's own strengths and weaknesses

What ways can be used to express interest in the subject and how to highlight the methods that the person is capable of? If a person does not have similar body language to neurotypicals, one can try to focus on the tone of voice. If it is difficult to look into the eyes, let's focus on body language, for example.

Let's support everyone's individual development.

With a larger training group, examples can be given. Everyone should be encouraged to think about their own strengths and weaknesses. You can also practice identifying the needs of others. How do you tell if the interviewee is interested in making eye contact or not? How do you know what they respond well to? Do they think tone of voice is important to pay attention to?

Building a radio package

Basic elements of radio

The basic elements of a radio program are talk, ambient sounds, music, but also silence and, for example, the traditional sound of gong, which can indicate the transition to the following part in a radio program. Talk can be speech of a program maker, interview or panel discussion of studio guests.

The trainer presents Bald heads cards and explains their meaning. The Bald heads sound clips are listened.

Exercises

Material

Bald heads -cards of different program elements

-> see annexes: [A group picture of Baldheads](#)

Bald heads sound-clips

Bald heads sound mix about how police car-chase and dogs ruin an interview making

Bald heads sound story



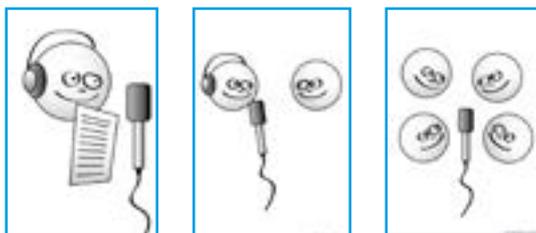
Trainees listen to Bald heads sound mix and will be asked: what different ambient sounds do you hear in the clip?

Material

Bald heads -cards, sound clips cut from station's radio programs

Trainees listen to sound clips of radio programs and place the Bald heads cards on the table in a straight line according to listening of program elements.

Cut your card deck -> see annexes: [The Baldheads cards](#)



Links glue the story together

A radio program is built from many different parts. Written links glue the different parts of a radio program together.

A link has three functions for the listener: it must be interesting, act as a signpost and be informative.

The program maker is the listener's travel guide introducing the different sections of a radio program, also letting channel surfers to know what this is about, who is speaking and what is going to happen next, that is to stop and to inspire the listener to continue listening.

Writing for radio

Radio language is living spoken language. That's why a script for a link must be spoken, not read aloud if possible.

Write things clearly and in such an order that it is easy for the listener to understand. Think, what does the joke sound like if you tell it in the wrong order?

Write short sentences and phrases. Say it simply. Less is more.

Exercises

Material

Sound clips cut from station's radio programs and links cut from the very same programs.

Trainees listen to clips and links and try to find the ones that belong together.

Trainees write and present own links to be added into the parts of sound clips cut from radio programs.

From sound pictures to sound narration

The workshop concludes with dealing with radio's sound narration and radio's ability to express emotions but also to affect them. The aim is to support trainees' first steps towards community documentary. In the beginning this can be a little difficult area for trainees who are more familiar with the sound stage of "one talking head in the in a soundproof studio", that is characteristic to commercial format radio. That's why the approach here is more learning by listening, i.e., exercise oriented.

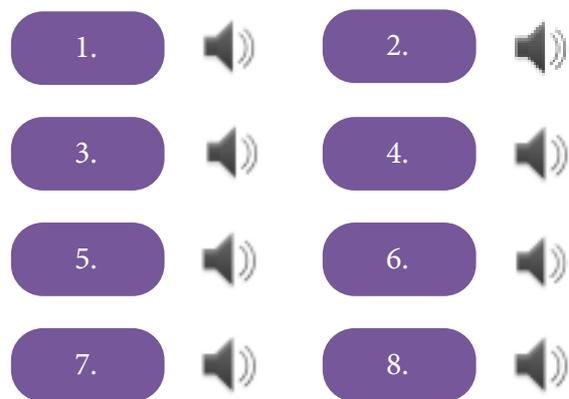
Sounds can tell a story just like words. Often sounds can tell even more, stories about things that have been silenced or that are too painful to express or impossible to receive through words.

By using and combining realistic sounds you can bring into a radio program something that doesn't only repeat or stage what already has been said but that has its own special importance alongside speech.

Exercises

Material

Sound clips



Trainees will be asked which sound clips they would use to express these things under? How are their sound levels, are they loud, quiet, etc?

Fear Anxiety Loneliness

Sadness Annoying Dispute

Joy Peaceful

Material

Podcast Sarajevon sala-ampuja, Finnish version of Stephen Schwartz's program "Sniper"

<https://areena.yle.fi/podcastit/1-2759432>

Introduction to the podcast

Sniper is the program of American-Danish documentarian Stephen Schwartz, who died in 2013. The main characters of the program are a musician who escaped from Sarajevo, the Sarajevo snipers and their victims. The Finnish version of the documentary Sniper, Sarajevon Sala-ampuja, is accomplished by Hannu Karisto and Rami Lindholm.

The sound world of Sniper has been characterized as a struggle of opposing forces, which are heard in the documentary as realistic sounds, and which say in their own way what the documentary maker wants to tell. These opposing forces include birdsong and gunshots, past and present, humanity and cruelty, tolerance and intolerance, peace and war.

(Hannu Karisto, Airi Leppänen)

Trainees are divided into small groups, which all are given their own task connected to the listening the podcast.

Trainees will be asked: who is speaking, what is she or he saying, which realistic sounds do you find in the sample, which of them are opposed to each other?

REFERENCE

Hannu Karisto, Airi Leppänen: Todellisia tarinoita – Riodokumentin tekeminen, tekijät ja Oy Edita Ab 1997

Todellisia tarinoita: Sarajevon sala-ampuja, podcast, Yle Areena 15.04.2015



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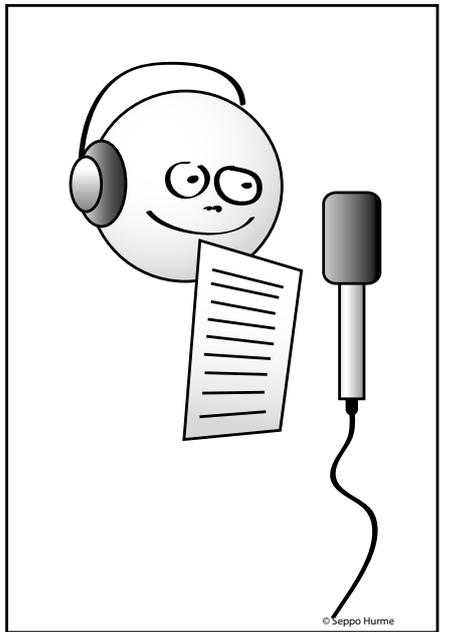
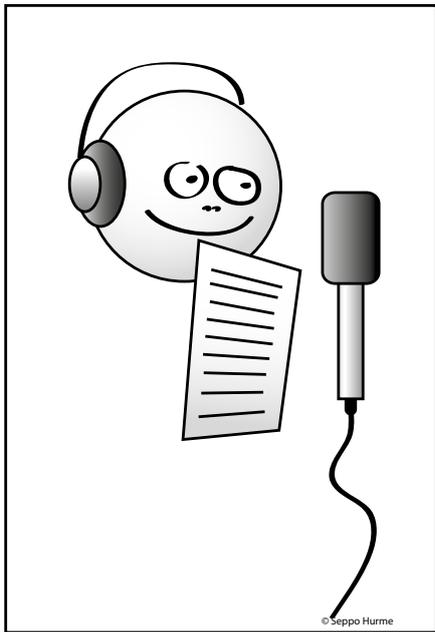
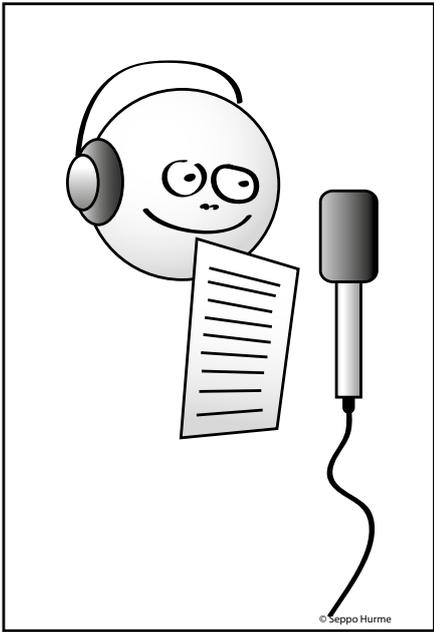
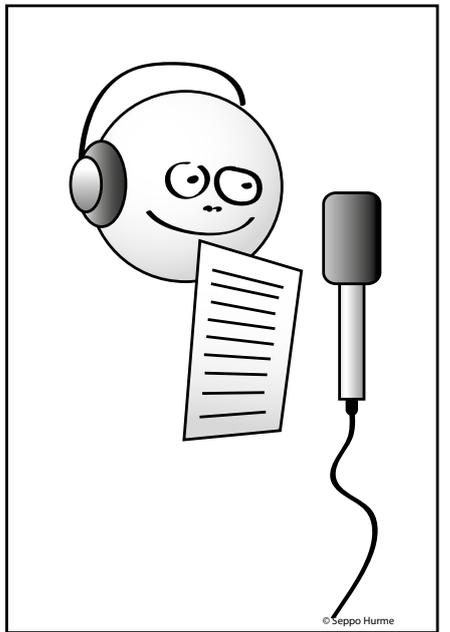
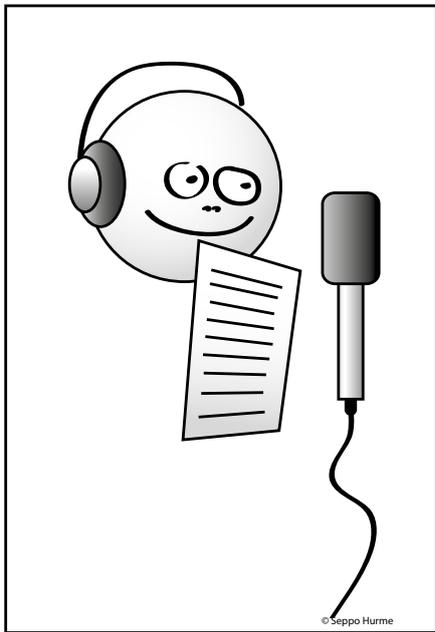
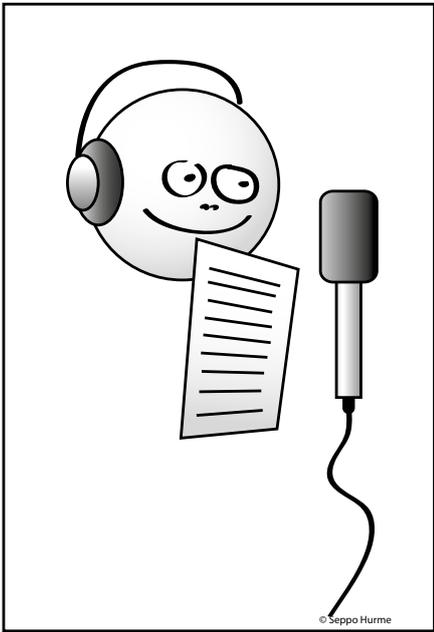
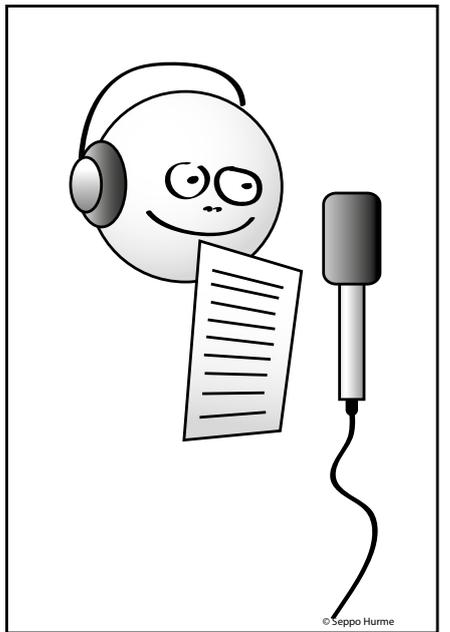
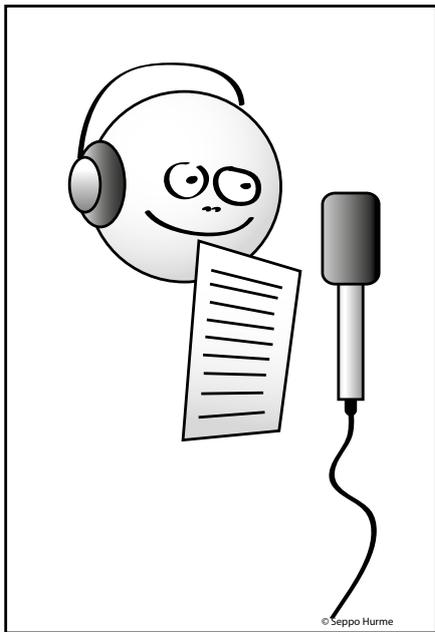
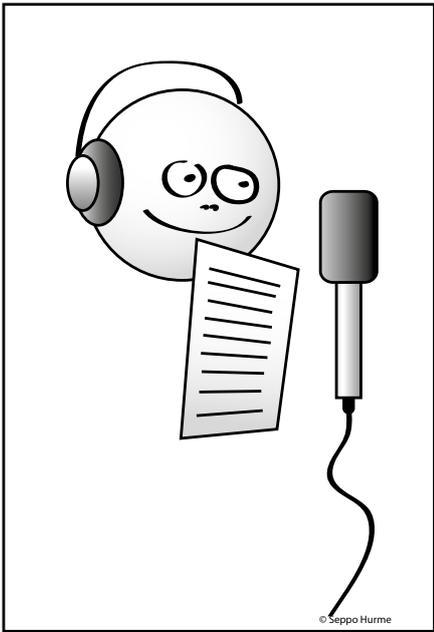
Nordplus

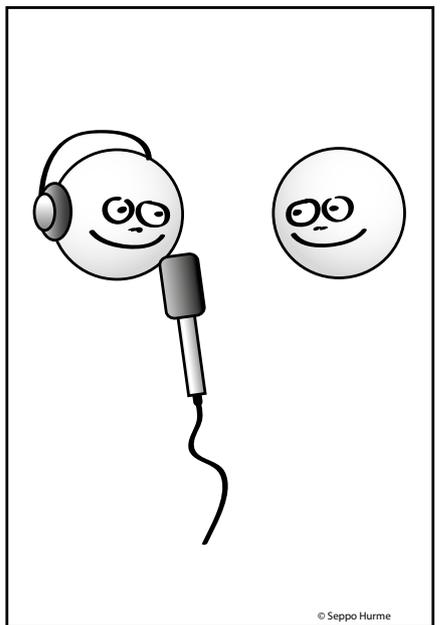
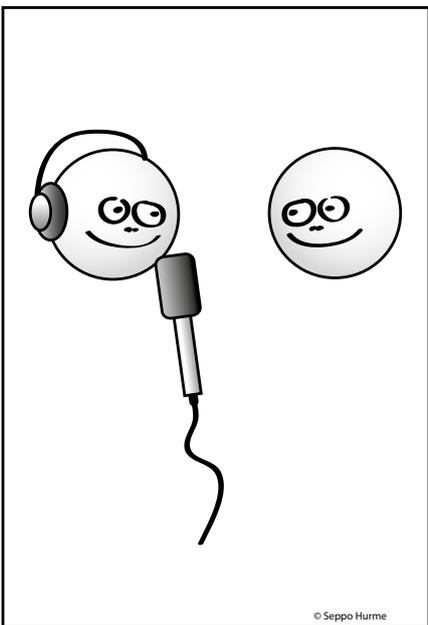
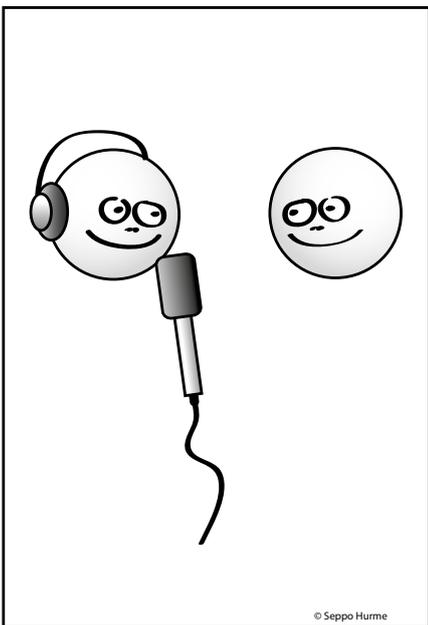
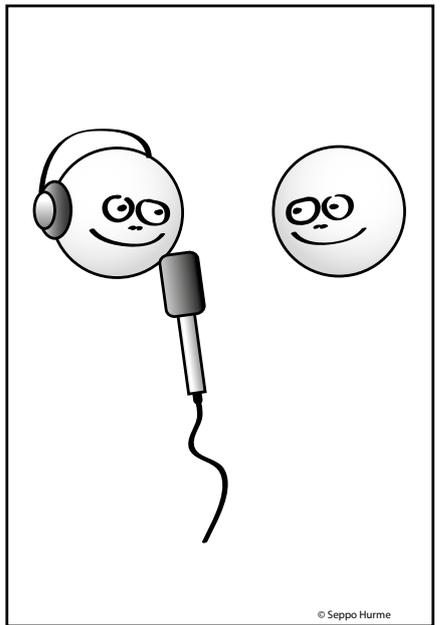
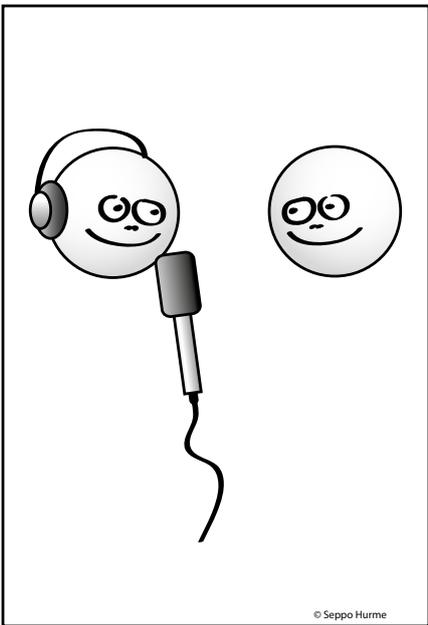
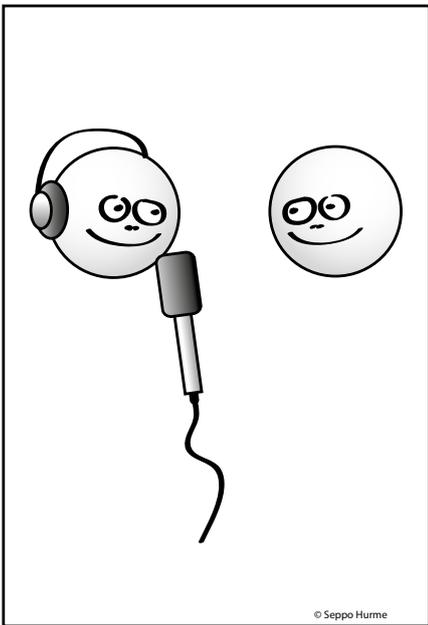
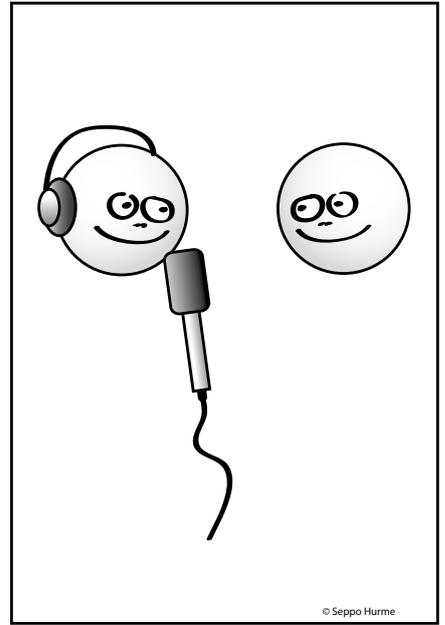
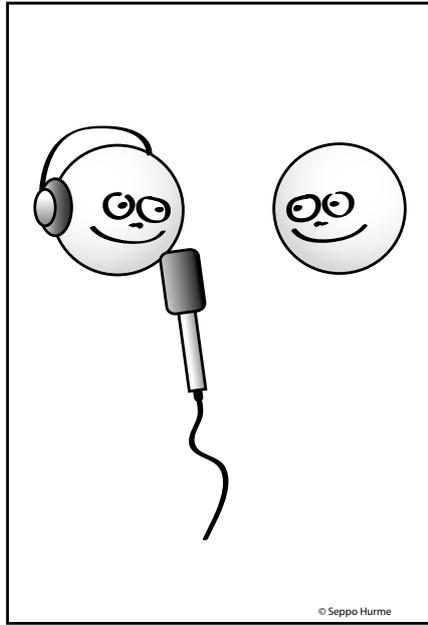
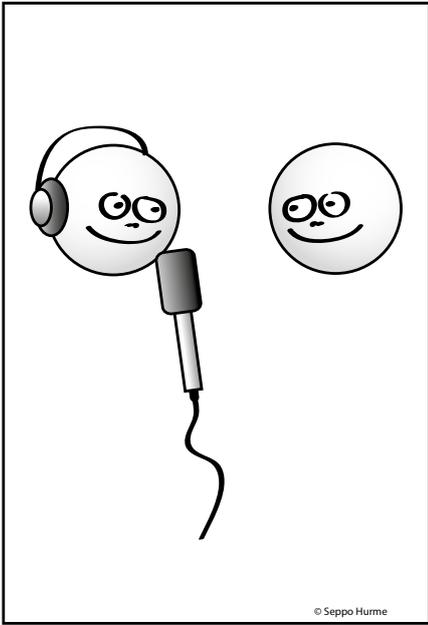


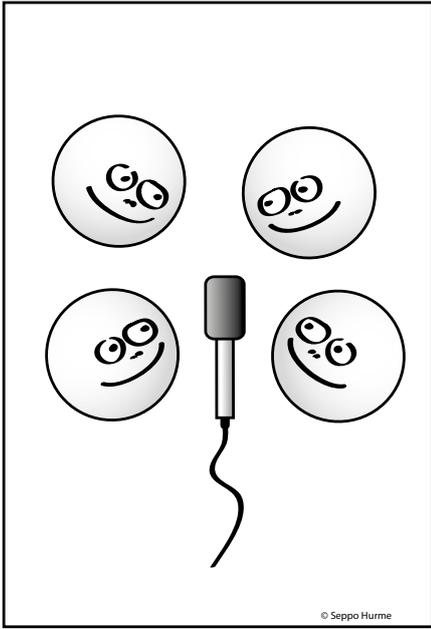
Kansan radioliitto - Folkets radioförbund ry

Annexes: A group picture of Baldheads, The Baldheads cards

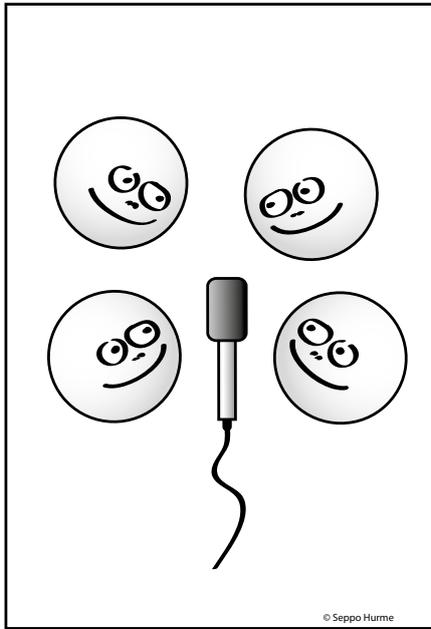




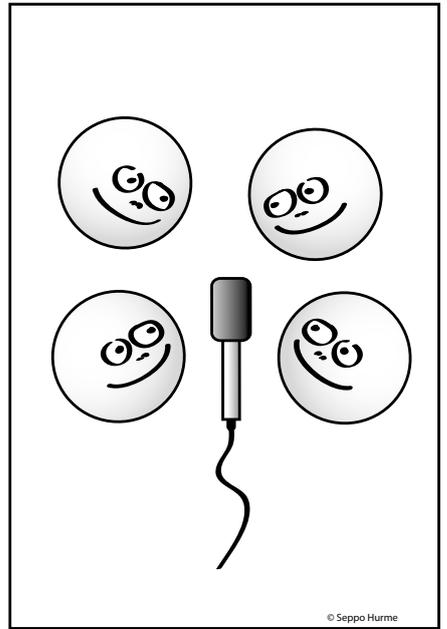




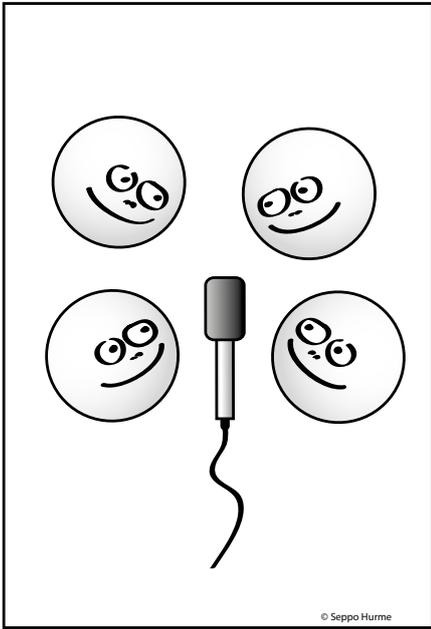
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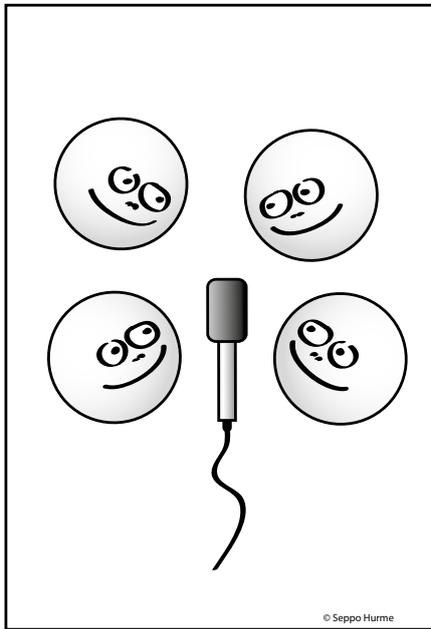
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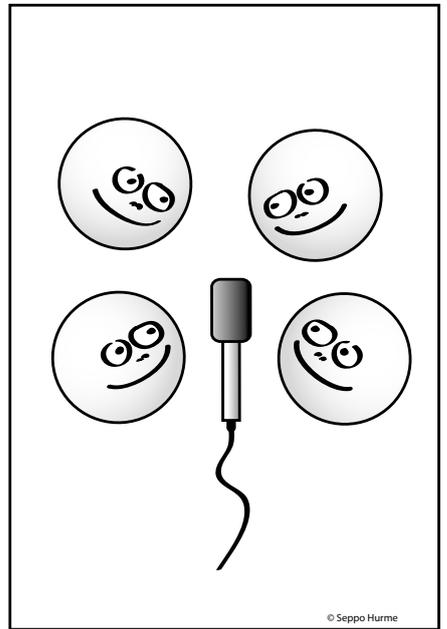
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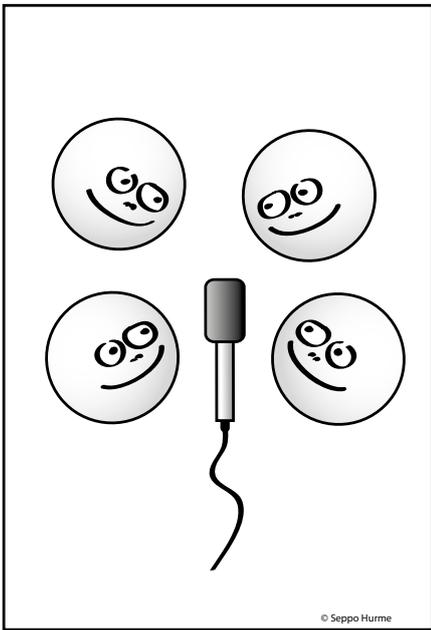
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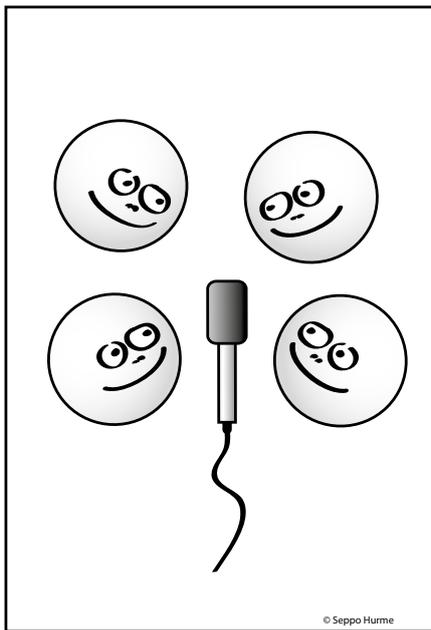
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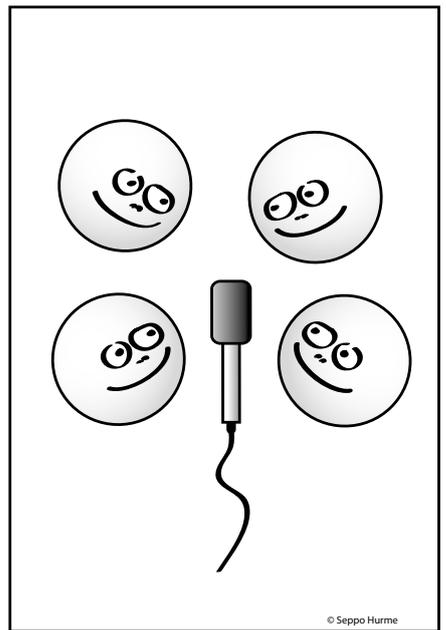
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