

NEWSREEL 2

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NEW TEACHING FIELDS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF JOURNALISTS

TEACHING GUIDE

JOURNALISM FOR VOICE ACTIVATED ASSISTANTS AND DEVICES



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About the Newsreel Project

An indispensable ability that journalists need to acquire is the creative and responsible use of digital tools. Journalists should be reliable and trustworthy sources of news amidst the digital din as they need to provide a counterpoint to the wealth of unverified information that affects the raw emotions and tempers of audiences around the world. The target audience of the EU-funded NEWSREEL2 - New Teaching Fields for the Next Generation of Journalists project is the millennial and post-millennial generations of journalists whose lifestyles are inherently linked to digital devices and social media. The primary aim of NEWSREEL2 is to improve their digital skills in a creative and responsible way to enhance the societal benefits of the digital era. To achieve these objectives, the NEWSREEL2 project team developed innovative teaching methods and materials for media and journalism students.

The project is the extension of NEWSREEL - New Skills for the Next Generation of Journalists, widening the scope of the original four journalistic fields covered (data journalism, collaborative journalism, new business models and ethical challenges) with nine new ones: (1) 'Storytelling in social media' enables students to learn how to present journalistic contents on social media networks. (2) 'Graphic journalism' helps students to get to know the basic tools and subgenres of comics journalism. (3) Improving students' 'democratic sensibility' enables them to be aware of their social role and responsibility in the democratic society of the digital age. (4) 'Covering migration' helps to improve their research and reporting skills and understanding migration in a global context. (5) 'Foreign coverage' enables students to contribute to a more balanced coverage of international topics. (6) 'Journalism for voice-activated assistants and devices' teaches students how to use them and see their potential in newsrooms. (7) 'AI and journalism, robot journalism and algorithms' teach their usage, and enables students to clearly see the potential benefits and risks. (8) 'Verifying and analyzing fake news' teaches students to be able to identify information and opinion going viral and to verify information with the help of suitable tools and software. (9) 'Debunking disinformation' helps students to get solid knowledge about the mechanisms used for debunking fake news and disinformation. The project aims to facilitate efficient international cooperation between university-based journalistic ecosystems. All educational materials produced by the project partners are open free and accessible through open licenses via the NEWSREEL2 website (<https://newsreel.pt.e.hu/>).

The project partners are the University of Pécs, in Hungary; the Erich Brost Institute, from the Dortmund Technical University, in Germany; the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL), in Portugal; the University of Bucharest, in Romania; the

Masaryk University, from Brno, in the Czech Republic; and Hostwriter, from Berlin, in Germany.

The Teaching Guides

There is a teaching guide for each field of the NEWSREEL2 project. The main goal of these teaching guides is to give some hints that can help teachers and trainers to implement the developed courses. The guides help understand how the courses are structured and showcase the complete courses and the e-learning or other teaching materials available for each course on the online platform. Through the guides you can have access to main goals of the course, for whom it was thought, bibliographical references and other contents that can help you get the most out of the contents the NEWSREEL2 team has prepared.

The structure

Besides the detailed syllabus, this course provides teaching materials developed to support the teaching process. You can find these materials in the syllabus and in this teaching guide.

The teaching guides structure is the following:

- The professional field
- Target audience
- General objectives
- Specific objectives
- Professional competences to be enhanced
- Course
 - o Complete course
 - Contents according to the Syllabus
 - Advised teaching methods
 - Evaluation suggestion
 - Bibliography suggestions
 - o E- Learning or other teaching materials
- Notes to teachers
- General observations
- The team

Journalism for voice activated assistants and devices



Image: freepik

The professional field

This is a course for Journalism and Communication and Media Studies programmes, at Bachelor and Master's level.

Target audience

This course was created for journalism, mass communication, and social studies undergraduate and/or graduate students that have specific interest in new fields of journalism and want to understand this overrated, but with potential field.

General objective of the course

This course is aimed at students who have interest in understanding the field of voice-activated and assistants, the production of journalistic content for these devices and the recent evolution of this area in the media, in general, and journalism, in particular. And it prepares students to have contact with innovative and new approaches in journalism.

Specific objectives of the course

By the end of the semester, students in this class:

- Understand what voice-activated devices and assistants are and know their evolution throughout time
- Know how voice-activated devices and assistants are being used in the media, especially in journalism and discuss future uses for them in these areas
- Understand the specificity of journalistic contents for voice-activated devices and assistants
- Discuss the benefits and limitations of content production for voice-activated devices and assistants
- Understand the role of Natural Language Processing (NLP) in the field
- Understand the role of algorithms in the field
- Know when it's appropriate to deploy content production for voice-activated devices and assistants
- Knowing the importance of search in what regards these types of contents
- Understand how these types of contents are creating a new object for journalism and identify the main audiences: How to prepare contents to be read and to be found

- Produce samples of contents for voice-activated devices – looking at formats: the news brief.

Professional competences to be enhanced

This course is developed in order to help students:

- Collaboration skills
- Innovation skills in the field
- Problem solving skills
- Translate theoretical insights into journalistic practice and vice versa
- Skills to reflect and identify upon when is appropriate to deploy voice content production for voice-activated devices and assistants in a newsroom
- Being able to discuss appropriately the benefits and limitations of the journalistic content production for voice-activated devices and assistants.

COURSE

Contents

Class 1. Course

Course introduction. Syllabus. Class presentation. Brief history of voice-activate devices and assistants. State of the art of voice-activated devices and assistants

Class 2. Course

Voice-activated devices and assistants and their use in media and journalism. Discussion focused on present and future uses.

Class 3. Course

Understand the specificity of journalistic contents for voice- activated devices and assistants. Also understand how these types of contents are creating a new object for journalism and identify the main audiences

Week 4. Seminar

Write to be spoken and to be found: the specificities of journalistic contents for voice-activated assistants and devices.

Week 5. Course

Knowing the importance of search in what regards. contents for voice-activated assistants and devices. Understand the role of algorithms in the field for voice-activated devices.

Week 6. Seminar

Produce samples of contents for voice-activated devices – looking at formats: the news brief. A more technical and practical approach, giving the opportunity for students to produce news for VAD.

Week 8. Course

Discussing the benefits and limitations of content. production for voice-activated devices and assistants. Helping students understand when it's appropriate to deploy content production for voice- activated devices and assistants.

Week 9. Course

What is Natural Language Processing (NLP) and its role in the field. Knowing the languages and limitations in regards to producing and searching contents for voice-activated devices and assistants is of crucial importance. The case of the Portuguese language (this should be updated with other languages).

Week 10. Seminar

Create and present a sketch for a starting strategy for implementing the production of voice content for voice-activated devices and assistants.

Week 11. Seminar

Presentation of the sketch for a starting strategy for implementing the production of a voice content for voice-activated devices and assistants.

Week 12. Course

The growing importance of voice content: how to prepare a newsroom for this challenge.

Teaching methods

For the courses, the main teaching methods are lectures combined with discussion. The seminars are based on discussions and exercises. International, but also local examples of fake news should be presented, analyzed and discussed with the students.

Evaluation

The evaluation method is a combined one. For the course, 10% is represented by active class participation (the ability to answer questions during the lecture or/and discuss topics) and 60% is represented by a written academic essay (max. 10 pages) focused on one of the topics of the course. And 30% is for group assignments, during the seminars.

Short Bibliography

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Teaching materials

You can find the following classes on the project portal:
https://newsreel.pte.hu/voice_activated_assistants_and_devices

- Brief history of voice-activated devices and assistants
- Voice-activated devices and assistants and their use in media and journalism
- Languages and limitations to produce and search contents for voice-activated devices and assistants
- State of the art of voice-activate devices and assistants

Notes to the teachers

The course is divided into classes and seminars. The classes are aimed at more theoretical contents and seminars are more prone to practical and experiencing work. We advise that each teacher adapts the seminars to their students and their more specific needs and in this case the languages of the students is very important, because it can bring interesting discussions to the classroom. As this field is in permanent evolution, the contents of this course are a starting point that should be considered with further work on new tendencies.

General observations

This is a very specific field, the number of newsrooms working with it is very small, compared with other fields. It is greatly linked with Artificial Intelligence advances and to be up-to-date we advise to be updated with what happens in the AI field as well. Also, if you feel that a whole course on this is too specific, consider that some of our modules could be interesting for you to use in other courses you may have, as an example of different practices.

The team

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