

# Challenges of News in Easy Language

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Austria

Parallel Session: News and Easy Language



Friday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 11:30 – 12:40



## A Unique Project

- An experiment in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- Truly inclusive: Easy to read stories are produced by people with learning difficulties.
- Easy-to-read news on a daily basis
  - 5 days/week
  - Average 2 – 5 stories/ day
- Stories are provided on 3 platforms:
  - [es.kurier.at](http://es.kurier.at)
  - [news.rechtleicht.at](http://news.rechtleicht.at)
  - [facebook/Inklusive Lehrredaktion](https://facebook.com/Inklusive_Lehrredaktion)



## How we are organized



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Jugend am Werk takes care of pedagogical issues such as career orientation and searching for apprenticeships/jobs  
accompanying participants directly to the place of work,  
training on the rules of easy-to-read...



The daily newspaper KURIER provides journalistic support,  
interface between participants and editorial staff,  
publication of easy-to-read stories,...)

6 trainees

2 coaches for easy-to-read texts

2 journalists

The trainees get individual training in social skills, easy-to-read rules, basic journalistic skills, career orientation and others.



## Some of our (journalistic) challenges

- What kind of news can we provide in a society with too much information?
- How easy can stories be without being trivial?
- Which journalistic skills are necessary (investigation, on-the-scene-reporting, writing, editing, ...)
- What level of language shall/can we use, in order to meet the needs of our target groups
  - people with intellectual disabilities (learning difficulties)
  - people who have difficulties to read or write
  - people who do not speak German so well
  - young readers who are interested in news
- How to deal with the other departments and desks in the newspaper?



## Our approach

- The team works as independently as possible
- Changing focus by changing desk-responsibility
- Trainees chose the stories they want to work on
- Focus on constructive news reporting
- Reporting on social or political issues:  
We focus on results
- Violence, terror or catastrophes as little as possible
- We do give priority to topics concerning people with disabilities



## Our results

- More than 1100 Stories in the past year
- There is a visible interest in political developments: Reporting on elections last year raised number of readers significantly (+90%),
- Right now we have between 3000 to 4000 readers per month.  
(There was a significant slump in the number of readers in February/March 2017, which we still cannot explain. In the year before we had around 25.000 up to 45.000 readers per month.)



## Conclusions

- Two master thesis to evaluate the project are on their way
- Intensive marketing is necessary to reach a larger audience
- Working in the journalistic environment helps trainees to improve their knowledge and to gain self confidence
- Journalistic tasks such as on-scene-reporting, research or editing are often too difficult
- Inclusion into the editorial team of the newspaper is also difficult, but communication beyond the different desks is a general problem