

# TRANSFER EXAM

Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literature, NTHU, July 22, 2014

**Read the two passages below and answer the following essay questions. Do not borrow phrases from the original passages but try to compose the answers in your own words.**

## PASSAGE 1

**Read the passage and answer the following questions.**

Television has certainly made the world a smaller place. With the plethora of international news channels now available, it's often easier to find out what's happening on the other side of the world than it is to know what's happening on the other side of your town or village. But some local communities are bucking that trend. They're using new, cheap television techniques to produce local programmes aimed at bringing their neighborhood closer together

Just outside the city of Linz in Northern Austria, the community of Engerwitzdorf nestles in rolling hills and lush countryside. It is a community of thirty or so tiny villages, a place with clean air and quiet surroundings. Like a lot of rural communities throughout Austria, the people of Engerwitzdorf like to grow a lot of their own stuff—home-grown honey, homemade bread, homemade Schnapps—and now also home-grown Internet television.

*Buntes Fernsehen*, literally "colorful television", is a local TV service available on broadband and on the local cable service provided by Telecom Austria. Launched in the summer of 2004, the content is a selection of short films based around local events and local life. It's a video-on-demand service where each viewer can choose to watch any film at any time. Some features are factual, and some are more creative, but all are filmed, edited, and scheduled by local amateur enthusiasts.

"The reason why we started *Buntes Fernsehen* in a small community is that small communities usually do have a closer-knit network of social activities. They do have associations, clubs, things that happen on a local basis, things that produce content on a local basis and are of interest to a small community in particular."

Of course, like much of local life, planning a film is a social event that takes place in the team's spare time. The topic under discussion today, a feature on the traditional maypole celebrations which happen each year. Dozens of these enormous poles are erected around the community and become the focus of a variety of celebrations. The team have invited a group of local children to take part in this scene, and after explaining what's required, the director and the team begin filming. The team all own their own cameras, which range from professional DV-cam machines to lower-end home camcorders. They all use mini-DV or DV-cam tapes, which are becoming a popular choice for both amateur and professional broadcasters. Initially the crew were given basic training but then left to experiment and learn as they went along. The results are films that do vary in quality, more professional than a home movie but obviously not matching the production standards of high-budget broadcasters. But then again, production quality isn't the point of the service.

"When you look at what *Buntes Fernsehen* is delivering to the community, it's comparable to the local newspaper compared to the national newspaper. It produces content that is of interest to the very local community at its heart, things that are relevant around the corner, not in the whole world. So it's not meant to rival national television, it's meant to complement it."

One important role of local media is to raise awareness of local issues. The mayor of Engerwitzdorf is already seeing how *Buntes Fernsehen* has been able to improve some aspects of Engerwitzdorf life. "I think that *Buntes Fernsehen* can get things moving for the community and in the community. It's not only about entertainment and a show, it also reports on what's going on in the community. For instance, the film about the recurrent accidents at the crossroads really contributed to putting security measures in place. *Buntes Fernsehen* provides more opportunity for the population to have an impact on community decision-making."

"*Buntes Fernsehen* can bring light into the living rooms of the people of Engerwitzdorf, for example, for people who can't leave the house because they're sick or old. Through *Buntes Fernsehen* they can join in and participate in what's going on in the community."

Once edited, uploading the finished feature to the video-on-demand service is as simple as dragging and dropping a file. As cameras and editing software get cheaper, users like those of Engerwitzdorf are able to enter the world previously ruled by big-budget regional and national broadcasters, and that, according to the telecoms company that installed the hardware, will be very important.

"We think that user-generated content will play a very important role, not only in television but also in radio. We all heard about podcasting as a new catch phrase, in the Internet we heard about blogging as a new hype in the web. So user-generated content definitely is going to be a driver of the future of media."

But unlike blogging and other user-generated content, this kind of micro local broadcast model needs money to work. With each community producing its own content, every single area will need its own equipment, which will be expensive for any company willing to fund it. For the same reason, the service will most likely rely on volunteer staff. So whether the future of TV will involve such home-grown delights as motorized bread-making, for example, remains to be seen.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Using your own words, write a summary (about 150-200 words) of the article above. (20%)
2. Do you think the idea of *Buntes Fernsehen* is a good idea? Why or why not? Write an essay of at least 200 words supporting your answer. (20%)
3. This article reports on a situation from 2004, ten years ago. Technology has advanced since that time. Rewrite the article (in a shorter form of at least 200 words) incorporating the current technological developments. (30%)

## PASSAGE 2

Read the poem and answer the following question.

*Silentium*

Fedor Tyutchev

Be silent, hide yourself,  
Conceal your feelings and your dreams.  
Let them rise and set  
In the depths of your soul,  
Silently, like stars in the night;  
Contemplate them with admiration—and be silent.

How will the heart express itself?  
How will another understand you?  
Will he understand what it is that you live by?  
A thought once spoken is a lie.  
By stirring up the springs you will cloud them:  
Drink of them—and be silent.

Know how to live within yourself;  
There is in your soul a whole world  
Of mysterious and enchanted thoughts;  
They will be drowned by the noise without;  
Daylight will drive them away;  
Listen to their singing—and be silent.

**QUESTION:** Write an essay of at least 200 words either agreeing or disagreeing with the ideas expressed in the above poem and provide supporting evidence and/or examples from your own experience or that of others. Try to express your ideas in your own words. You will be graded according to grammar, content, paragraph structure, and vocabulary. (30%)