



TOURiBOOST

REORIENTING TOURISM EDUCATION WITH DIGITAL, SOCIAL AND
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES TO SUPPORT LOCAL
STAKEHOLDERS TACKLE STRATEGIC INNOVATION IN HERITAGE
TOURISM

KA2 - COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD
PRACTICES KA203 - STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

M02: ATTRACTON PLANNING **PART 05: INTERPRETIVE STORY**

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2018-1-TR01-KA203-058344

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1

THE INTERPRETIVE STORY

The **Local Interpretive Story** refers to the inherently interesting and valuable tales that most heritage assets can narrate about the history, culture and environment of the surrounding landscape and communities; it should be tied to the Local Attraction Plan's (LAP) 6 intrinsic quality(s). Telling the story is a creative process that includes many types of synergies within the LAP

and its Stakeholder Map—from the young to the old, and newcomers to residents. The story is an aspect of Local Interpretive Project planning that people often find highly interesting, fun and compelling, and this encourages participation. Through the story, citizens can express what is unusual and special about their communities.

1.1.1 What is an Interpretive Story

- A Local Interpretive Story is the intentional, coordinated message that the Local Interpretive Project conveys to the audience about the heritage assets and qualities that it promotes. This message may be interpreted through different media: written materials, signs, information kiosks, guides, videos and other media.
- The Local Interpretive Story shall be conveyed through the direct experiences that cultural consumers or visitors at heritage places encounter along the heritage trip, might that be a food experience with a unique recipe, or a unique experience in a medieval castle, an ancient temple, a festival or event, to name but a few examples.
- The Local Interpretive Story refers to the inherently interesting and valuable tales that most heritage assets can tell about the history, culture and environment of the surrounding landscape and the communal legacy. Every Local Interpretive Project also has hidden stories. Consulting with communities the Local Project Teams can unearth these unique and authentic stories and reveal how they are woven into the Local Interpretive Story.
- The additional emphasis of quality and continuity of the visitor's experience distinguishes the Local Pilot Projects from other tourism products and management issues like landscape protection or land management efforts. The Project planning Manual encourages the Local project Teams to seek out, document and communicate all of the special qualities of a place: archaeological, natural, cultural, historic, recreational and scenic. This makes the onsite experience an integrative experience: visual, educational, physical and emotional.

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As the LAP aim at increasing cultural consumption, the story becomes an important economic development tool. While most cultural and tourism-oriented services include exceptional scenic or recreational heritage assets to attract consumer flows, the Local Attraction Plan (LAP) will draw experiences, broadened and deepened by the Story and its interpretation. The Heritage Experience

Seekers crave for authentic experiences at heritage places. Highlighting cultural experiences along the Local Project Area creates a win-win scenario for the host community and its cultural consumers: Interpretive Stories provide a mechanism for encouraging the audience to lengthen stay so that their economic impacts are felt throughout the Project Area, helping to achieve the most important cultural and tourism objectives set by the community or the region.

1.1.2 How to tell the Story

Storytelling is as old as prehistoric times, because it's a powerful tool for conveying and sharing ideas, beliefs, values and traditions. Because stories are so effective at explaining the meaning of things, they're at the heart of interpretation. No matter how simple a heritage asset might seem, it has a variety of stories to tell. It doesn't

have to be the oldest or most impressive asset in a Pilot Project Plan – it can still tell a story. Not all stories have the same emotional impact, and not all stories convey the significance of the asset with the same power and relevance.

The secret to successful interpretation is to capture the essence of the asset.

asset with the audience, how to link them together in a way that's memorable for them, is the quintessence of a quality cultural heritage service. To focus on a concise story and avoid causing the audience suffer mental overload, it's useful to organize contents into storylines. These are the main messages the audience shall to carry away at the end. Asset messages and meanings are easily communicated across a multicultural and multigenerational audience by telling stories that help them appreciate what's special about your resource. Storylines are crucial to interpretation, because they give different audiences clear threads to follow, rather than a series of disconnected facts. No matter what kind of an asset is being interpreted, an interesting story will always capture the audience's' attention:

If there are three or four really interesting aspects connecting the

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TOURiBOOST tells the asset stories through the iBook. Written materials, signs, QR Codes, guided visits, videos, and other media within the iBook or/and in the territory of the Attraction Cluster direct experiences that the visitor encounters along each Pilot Project. For example, a historic Pilot Project might provide information on important and interesting historic events that occurred along the Local

Project Area, but it is visiting the ancient temples, the historic houses, the battlefields, or the landscapes in which these events took place that provide the indelible memories of the audience. To simply inventory heritage assets and then market a series of elements in the heritage area is not sufficient. All the intrinsic qualities an asset possesses must be pulled together into a cohesive and engaging story that serves as a unifying experiential tool.

1.1.3 The Red Thread

Common threads between the asset and the rest of the world are needed to facilitate understanding and appreciation of the asset. If museum visitors, or restaurant guests, or your flea market customers understand how the collection and the dish offered relates to the bigger picture, and why the asset is important and the resulting services offered acquire a special added value. To help any user group make sense of a given asset, one needs to link the asset to larger trends and events. Names and

dates are a part of interpretation, but they're meaningless without the wider socio-historical context, which offers many bridges to associate the asset with the user's every day horizon. One way to develop a context for your resource is to ask a series of "w-questions" that help you link a simple fact to a much larger chain of events. By making that link, you're helping to explain why the asset is significant – why people should care about it.

1.1.4 Heritage Assessment

The purpose of Significance Assessment is to take a close look at the intrinsic qualities of heritage places and assets and to develop a holistic experience for the Heritage Experience Seeker. It is important to identify and clearly describe the features that contribute to or otherwise affect the Local Attraction Plan's (LAP) significant intrinsic qualities. By thoroughly documenting the important heritage assets, a completed record of the area's significant assets and their individual aspects is created. The Heritage Assessment is more about the condition or importance of what the assets in question. The Heritage Record precedes the Assessment. The Assessment testifies exactly why places

and heritage entities are important, is central to developing conservation and management plans, a local heritage strategy, interpretive products and services; it contributes to the development of educational materials, justifies the allocation of resources. If heritage assessment is not undertaken, damage could be irreversible: destruction of evidence of significance, inappropriate management practices, exceeding Carrying Capacity level of assets, loss of a place altogether. There are four levels of significance for heritage resources: they can be of local, regional, national and global importance.

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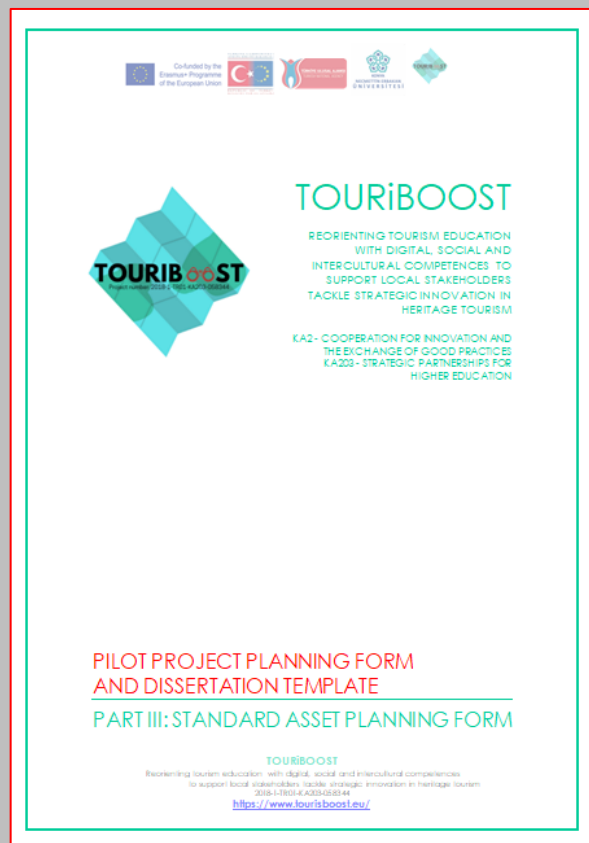
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1.1.5 The Standard Asset Planning Form

The Form is a survey of the intrinsic qualities and heritage assets within the Local Interpretive Project Area. It is a list of “goods on hand.” At the completion of the DISSERTATION TEMPLATE (Asset Planning Form), a series of photographs and descriptions of the heritage assets attributed to the Local Interpretive Project’s intrinsic qualities and maps that illustrate the location of these sites and views are to be collected. The Standard Asset Planning Form focuses on the intrinsic qualities that exist in the Local Project Area. The Asset Planning Forms shall focus on recording and describing the heritage asset and features that relate to those qualities and **support the Local Interpretive Story.**

The Heritage Assessment assesses its strengths and weaknesses of the Local Pilot Project, appreciates its significance and uniqueness, sets aside the sense of local pride and takes a realistic look at really exists. The Standard Asset Planning Form evaluates the list of selected heritage assets to determine the importance or value of those intrinsic qualities as essential parts of the Local Interpretive Project. Local Project Teams shall prioritize and choose which are the most significant and representative intrinsic qualities and heritage assets to include in the Local Interpretive Project to capture the “Local Interpretive Story.”

Fig. 35: TOURiBOOST: The Asset Standard Planning Form



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1.1.6 Structuring information in leisure settings

Human cognitive architecture offers an unlimited Long Term Memory able to hold mental representations of varied automaticity degrees, but a limited capacity working memory with independent subcomponents to deal with auditory and visual material. The constraints inherent in the working memory should be the determinants for the design of effective interpretive presentations.

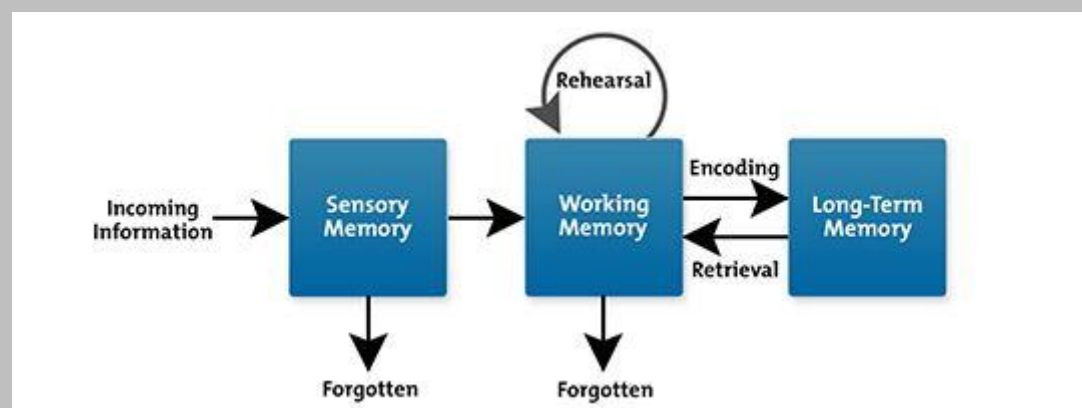
Working memory, the mind's blackboard, is used to process all conscious information, but is very limited with respect to the number of elements it can handle. Its capacity may be enhanced if information is processed using both the visual and auditory channel. Everything that is learned as a consequence of information processed in working memory is stored in an effectively limitless Long Term Memory in the form of schemas that can vary in their degree of automaticity. Both schema construction and automation have the dual function of storing information in Long Term Memory and reducing Working Memory loads.

The prime goal of information presentation in leisure settings should

be the ease with which information is processed in working memory. The use of procedures able reduce cognitive loads should not be thought at the expense of understanding. Construction and automation of schemas, useful of solving problems of interest, may very well be utilized to reduce cognitive loads, and capture audience attention in the long term. Schemas are stored and organized in Long Term Memory but information that constructs them is processed in the working memory.

Familiarity allows the human brain to expend less effort to concentrate on personal and meaningful content, and therefore use of known schemata facilitates perception of novel items in recreational settings. Learning mechanisms specifically designed for non-captive audiences must embed interacting elements in familiar schemas. These can be treated then as a single element in Working Memory, can effectively reducing loads provoked by novel items.

Fig. 36: The Human Memory Processor
Source; Author



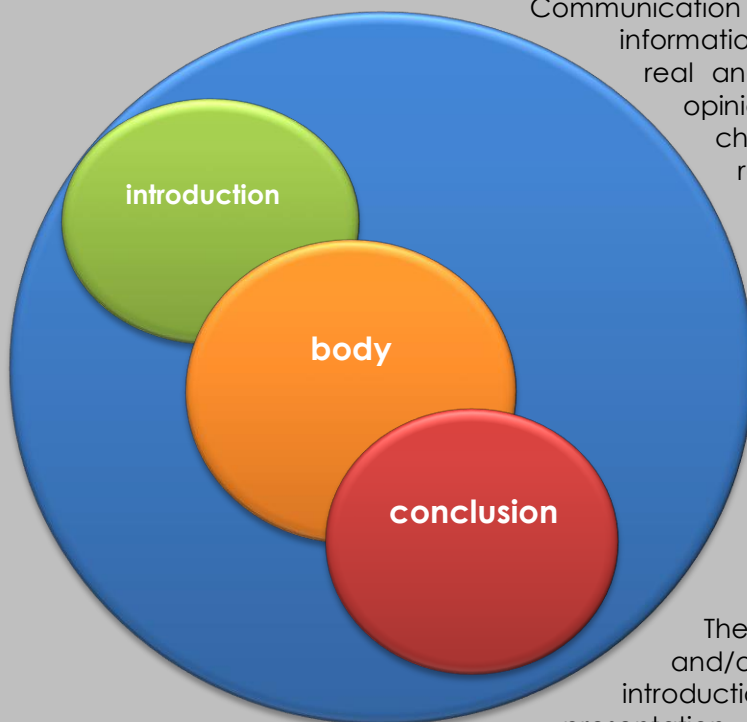
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1.1.7 The Interpretive Message

In interpretation, a communication between an interpreter and his audience is a basis for giving a message to audiences. Because it is complex, communication is difficult to define. The word communication is abstract and, like all words, possesses multiple meanings. The term communication can be used legitimately in number of ways.



Communication is not just a mere disseminating of information. It is a difficult process focused on real and sustainable change of audience's opinions, attitudes, and act. This kind of change is not possible immediately. It requests knowing of our audience, situation in communication, good strategy, its perfect realization and appropriate evaluation, eventually some corrections.

The **introduction** provides the opportunity to establish a common ground, gain the audience's attention, establish the thesis of presentation, and relate the importance of the topic.

The **body** presents the information and/or arguments indicated in the introduction. This is a largest part of the presentation.

The **conclusion** often gets the most attention since members know you are about to end. Conclusion reviews what was said in the presentation.



Relevant message (meaningful and personal): relating something to people's knowledge and experiences will make it more interesting for them. To achieve it, the interpreter should use examples, comparisons and universal concepts.



Organization: an introduction, body and conclusion can make it easier for your audience to follow and understand. The amount and type of information is not as important as the way in which we organize it. We can't demand too much effort from the public, they are in their free time and if they have too many difficulties to understand our message it won't have any impact on them. It is very important to maintain the level of attention.

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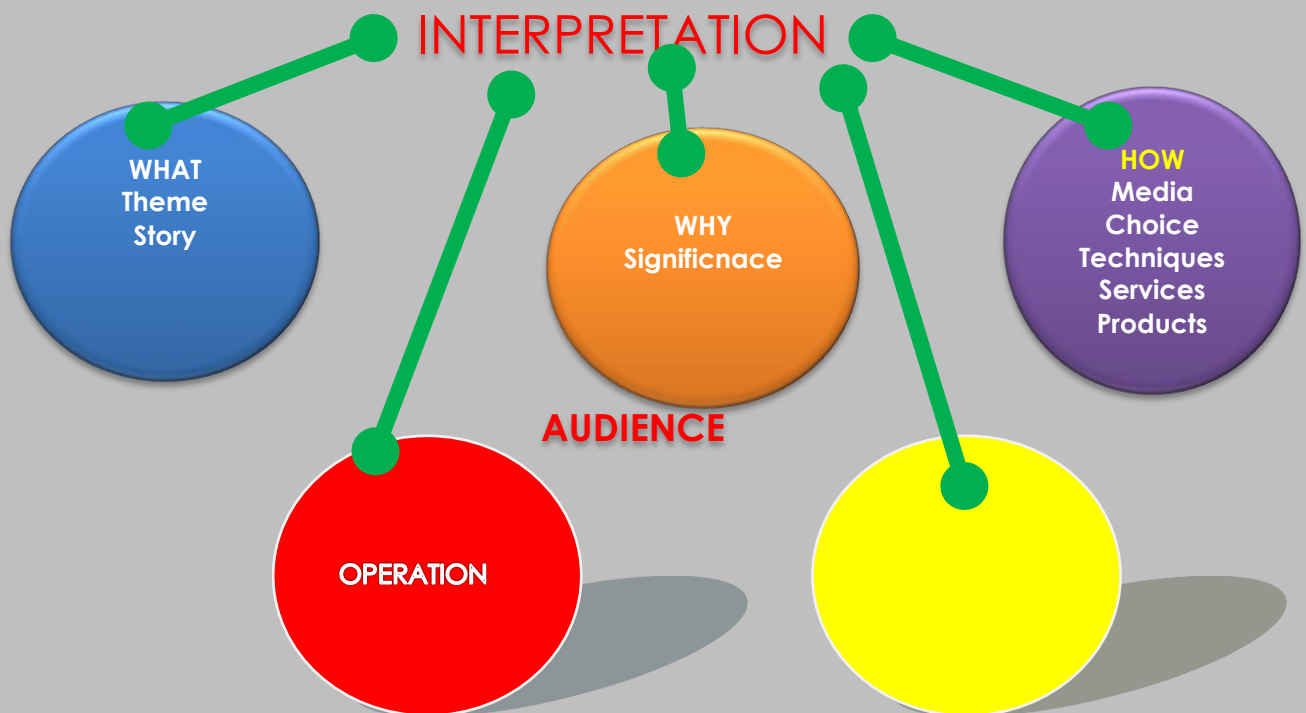
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Thematic interpretation consists on presenting the information related to a clear central idea or interpretive **theme**. This kind of presentation helps the audience and the interpreter and it can be used as the title. It should be something easy to remember, it must describe the topic of the presentation in general terms and it will be written in the form of complete sentences. Based on this clear idea, the interpretation is going to be easier to organize because we know what we want the audiences to understand and take away with them.

Fig. 37: Interpretation Components
Source: Author



- What – some message we want to tell (what we want to tell?)
 - We must have specific objectives that we want the message accomplish (interpretive techniques we can use to present the message, services in which to use the techniques – presentations, exhibits...)
- We are communicating our message to the audience, so we need to know as much as possible about them.
 - If we evaluate the program, we will see whether our objectives were accomplished.
 - If not, we need to go back to make some adjustments.
- Implementation and operations considerations – costs, staff needs, material needs...

A good, strong message has an influence on audiences' mind. Good message shouldn't contain too many details. Using a central message, it can have a strong (and positive) effect on audiences' understanding. If information comes at us from all sides without a central point, our reaction may be to ignore it.

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Fig. 39-40: Connecting the technology intense experience with onsite authenticity
Kalenbronn, Black Forest, Germany
Source: SEE/B/0016/4.3/X SAGITTARIUS Project Record







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1.1.8 Understanding the Interpretive Message

Interpretive Message

-  *short, simple, and complete sentences*
-  *Contains just one idea*
-  *Reveals the global purpose of a presentation*
-  *Is specific interesting and motivating*

The Interpretive Message shall:

-  *Provoke the attention or curiosity of the audience/audience. If you can't get their attention or interest, you can't communicate with them.*
-  *Relate to their everyday lives or experiences. We must communicate to them in terms and examples that they can understand.*
-  *Reveal the essence or key parts of the message last – we want an “oh my” response*
-  *Strive for Message Unity – use the right colors, design style, music, etc. (stage setting) to support your total message presentation.*
-  *Address the Whole – illustrate how this specific interpretation is part of a larger picture, such as how “this” historic home is an example of a larger community story.*

Effective communication between the interpreter and the audience requests knowing and respecting of characters of his audience. Theme of the message and its form must be specially and carefully suggested. The message must capture attention of our audience to work towards our audiences' mind. Our interpretation is successful when our audiences receive the message, understand the message, remember it and use it in some way. Below are basic steps, how to make our audience to pay attention to our interpretation:

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1.1.9 Structuring the Interpretive Message

The aim of interpretation is to communicate selected messages to the audience comprehensible and effectively. If we want people to understand our message, it must be clear and simple, and it mustn't contain too much information. Too much information is sometimes worse than too little. By structuring the message, the interpreter should answer some questions:



What does s/he the audiences want to know?



What does the audience already know, and how much more does it need to know?



Why does the audience want to know it and how can it be useful for

it?

EXAMPLE:

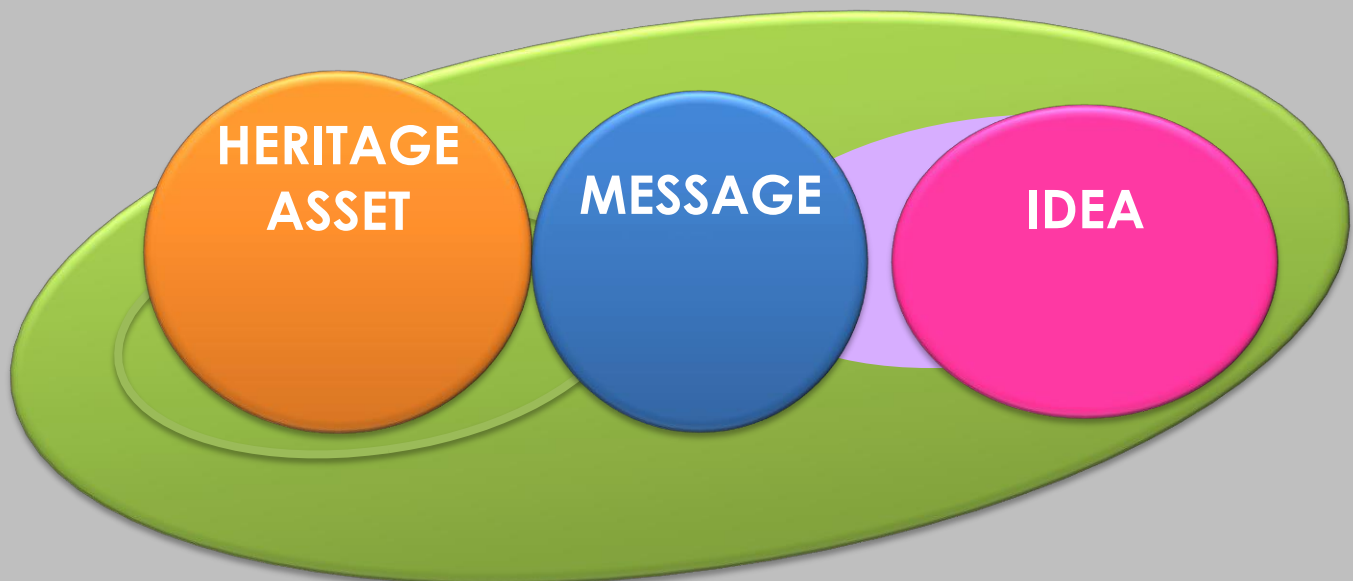
"Why do flowers grow on the ground?" asked my 6 year old son!

I must admit I did not know the answer!

As we walk against strong wind, which takes us our power, and compare it with flowers on the mountaintop, we **understand** that flowers face these conditions every day! Then we perceive why these flowers grow nearly ground.

With the help of **resource** (our walk against the wind) we can understand the **idea** (why do the flowers on the mountaintop grow nearly ground).

Fig. 41: Interpretive Message Correlation
Source: Author



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MESSAGE

- Why would audiences want to know what I'm going to communicate them?
 - *Answer to this question helps the interpreter to find a way to relate his message to audience's everyday life. It also gives people reason to pay attention and learn more.*
- How can I make a good message when I don't know what do the people want?
- And finally, why have I made this message when it won't be useful for the people?
- How can my audiences use the information I am interpreting to them?
- Is my message comprehensible and clear enough for my audience to remember it?

AUDIENCE

- Who are the audiences coming to the program?
 - What is their age level?
 - Are there some children among them?
 - What are they interested in?
 - What they already know?
 - How much time do they have?
 - What is their health condition?

- Is there a special group among them (people with health problems)? What is their education level?

This question and all the related questions are specifically focused on audiences. Answers to these questions should help the interpreter know his audience better, and according to that he should adapt his interpretation and communicate his message. According to their age and their health condition, the interpreter chooses appropriate difficulty and length of his presentation.

- How much are the audiences able to learn? How much are they able to remember interpretation presented to them?
- Have my audiences ever been to any other sites (historical places, museums)? Have they ever seen an animal (artefact, statue) like this? Where/what was it?
 - *If the interpreter knows an answer to this question (and if the answer is positive), he could use their knowledge in his interpretation and compare it with interpreted site.*
- What about audiences' imagination? When I describe an artefact, what does the audience imagine in his mind?

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1.2 Interpretive Outcomes

Outcomes (not outputs) describe the desired impacts of what visitors and cultural consumers will do, think, or feel as the result their encounter with the LAP. Outcomes describe *what visitors might do, think, or feel as a result of their onsite experience*. These might be *short-term* outcomes (within a few weeks of the experience) or *long-term* (months or even years after the experience). Because educators typically don't have as much control over post-site experiences, they often don't distinguish them by category. In order to measure outcomes, it is necessary to develop specific and measurable outcome statements that eventually guide a formative or summative evaluation strategy.

- **Physical engagements**

describe how visitors engage physically with the asset content – actively and passively

- Visitors get acquainted with the assets onsite and read the related explanation deploying the QR Codes
- Visitors will stand and read contents for approximately 20-40 seconds.

- **Social engagements**

describe how visitors engage with each other and when and how they interact with others in their social group. Examples might include:

- Visitors will discuss how experienced heritage assets relate to their own lives.
- Visitors will call others in their group over to try the suggested activity that is described in the Mobile Web

- **Intellectual engagements**

describe how visitors engage intellectually with the asset contents, how they reflect on topics, and how they make connections between ideas. Examples include:

- Visitors will compare and contrast the different types built heritage
- Visitors will consider similarities and differences in the hospital care of today and back in the Middle Ages (Chios, Greece)

- **Emotional/ Spiritual engagements**

describe how visitors engage with or connect emotionally to the asset contents (i.e., excitement, passion, awe, inspiration). Examples include:

- Visitors will feel overwhelmed by the size of the tourist flows visiting the Mevlana Museum in Konya
- Visitors will be awed at the extraordinary philosophy of Mevlana


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CHECKLIST

-  Does the LAP identify the experiences that are unique to the Pilot Project Assets?
-  Does the LAP offers iconic or globally competitive assets, e.g. experiences?
-  Does the LAP reflect the cultural positioning of each Pilot Project?
-  Does the LAP consider these experiences in light of global competition?
-  Does the LAP allow for visitor immersion in the local culture, environment and lifestyle?
-  Do the iconic experiences deliver on the preferences of the Experience Seeker - for example, meeting locals, participating in living heritage, local events and using travel styles conducive to a more engaging experience with other indoor and outdoor activities?
-  Does the LAP highlight opportunities for increasing contributions to conservation within the National Asset environment?

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-  Does the LAP identify opportunities on how stakeholders will contribute to the protection and enhancement of Pilot Project Assets?
-  Does the LAP give direction for building on your existing strengths - improving existing experiences?
-  Does the LAP consider what entirely new experience offers could be developed based on your heritage place positioning?
-  Does the LAP attributes and individual positioning?
-  Does the LAP ensure a Visitor Experience Diversity against other assets?

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