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[=]LTA
LiveTextAccess

http://www.ltaproject.eu/

Project Ref: 2018-1-DE01-KA203-004218

Project name: Live Text Access: LTA Quality Training in real-time subtitling across EU and EU languages

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Topic: Inclusion of persons with hearing loss in live contexts through real-time intralingual subtitles.

LiveTextAccess (www.Ltaproject.eu) is a strategic partnership between educational and non-educational institutions that aims to tackle the need for harmonised training in real-time intralingual subtitling. This type of subtitles, also called captions, are used to provide access to live content for persons with hearing loss. The project is led by Rocío Bernabé Caro from the International University SDI München, in Germany. The other partners are the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and the Scuola Superiore per Mediatori Linguistici di Pisa, two accessibility service providers (Sub-Ti Access and Velotype), one broadcasting company (ZDF Digital), one certification association (the European Certification and Qualification Association [ECQA]) and one end-user association (the EFHOH).

The project comprises five working packages called intellectual outputs (IOs). On its completion in August 2021, LTA will provide four main outputs: a skills card that maps the competence areas and abilities that are necessary for the profession of respeaking and velotyping, a modular curriculum, open-source training materials, and a certificate.

1. Why is the topic relevant?

Real-time intralingual subtitling has gained momentum as a profession since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and as legal frameworks have evolved across Europe and overseas. Training programmes have emerged in higher education and in-house contexts to meet an increasing demand for qualified professionals. However, training often focused on a single technique – either respeaking or keyboard-based production – or work setting, mainly TV broadcasting (Eugeni & Bernabé, 2019). As a result, trainees fail to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure an even provision in different work settings, such as broadcasting, parliamentary assemblies, education or the workplace (European Federation of Hard of Hearing People [EFHOH], 2015).

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LiveTextAccess (LTA) aims to approach harmonisation in training by providing vocational and higher education institutions with an all-encompassing modular curriculum and open-source learning materials for training.

2. Why did you choose a multidisciplinary and participatory approach in the project?

The uneven quality in the delivery of subtitles pointed out at a need for a common working framework and dissemination across Europe and beyond. Erasmus+ is an overarching programme that fosters high-quality projects that support European priorities, such as inclusion and digital education. Being part of this platform has enabled us to gather and transfer knowledge within Europe more efficiently, as well as to create new alliances. One example is the held events, which have proved to be an excellent platform for exchange and networking across Europe and sectors.

3. What tools will you use to ensure the usability of the project deliverables?

The project will deliver four main outputs: a skills card for respeakers and velotypists, a modular curriculum, open-source training materials, and a certificate. The first two ones are ready; the last two ones are on the making at the moment.

We have defined the following criteria to ensure the usability of the outputs:

Understandable. The mapped competence profile must be easy to understand. To this end, we have used skills cards. Skills cards are a versatile tool that illustrates sets of competence areas and skills that a professional should have. Trainers can use the skills cards to organise and evaluate training. Likewise, companies can use them to evaluate the skills of a job candidate.

Accessible. All documents and multimedia training materials should be accessible for all persons, with and without sensory disabilities. For example, all video lectures include subtitles and will be transcribed. Similarly, the accessibility of all monomodal documents (e.g. Word or PDF documents) will be tested according to current accessibility standards.

Transferable. The LTA skills cards and curriculum use learning outcomes, which is the European standard to represent what is formally assessed and accredited to the student. LTA has also quantified the workload in terms of credits following the European credit system (ECTS, ECVETS).

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Able to be validated. Skills can be acquired formally at training institutions or informally through experience. In order to recognise both paths, the project has designed a certification exam that can be taken both by professionals seeking formal recognition of their skills and by students that have undergone formal training.

4. What is the expected impact of the project?

Future real-time subtitling experts will benefit from the LTA's results. The LTA training will provide free-lancers and newcomers with training materials to develop the necessary skills to work in different settings, be them live events, in the classroom, in TV, parliamentary assemblies, or at meetings. At the same time, the trained working settings: face-to-face, online and relay, will open LTA students new job opportunities. The flexible nature of the training material will cater for the individual needs of different types of trainees and offer them a unique, open and high-quality learning opportunity. Europe-wide open access will allow knowledge transfer intersectorally.

Through the new certified profile and the exchange of best practices between academia and the industry, the project will raise awareness and promote media accessibility as a business opportunity. Non-HEI partners and real-time subtitling providers will broaden their knowledge about the competences required from real-time subtitlers they employ.

The open and innovative education and training offered by LTA will have a direct impact on all the professions related to real-time subtitling, also creating youth work opportunities in the audiovisual translation and real-time subtitling sectors. The status of the real-time subtitler will be recognised, and the widened professional profile will cater for more text-specific needs and creative solutions.

New audiences (e.g. elderly, migrants, people with learning disabilities) and settings (e.g. medical assistance) will arise. The quality of the subtitles will increase, and the service will expand to other languages and countries with less subtitling tradition. Reaching out to blind end-users and other parties will be driven by stakeholders, local (Bavarian Association of People with Hearing Disabilities, GIB), regional (e.g. Progetto il Seme), national (e.g. Sinosz) and international level (e.g. European Disability Forum), also outside the countries of the consortium.

Lastly, through dissemination activities, especially at the local level, we expect to raise awareness about media accessibility.

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5. Can you share with us some short statements/testimonials from trainers or event participants?

Yes, of course. For instace, participants of the online survey in IO1 said:

"Accessibility is very important that make a person become disable or not. Asia-Pacific Region does not have much accessible environment, specially to people who are hard of hearing and need captioning for communication and for development. LTA is a dream for us. Thank you."

One stakeholder said after having read IO1 report:

"The report covers a lot of the profession aspects. The open questions part adds an important layer of information. The number of participants is impressive."

Some feedback from the events:

"Thanks to the LTA team for a wonderful presentation and I would kindly ask to include us in your mailing lists for any future projects or seminars that are covering the field of subtitling, respeaking or sign language interpreting."

"Thank you and I hope we see each other again!"

"Great conference"

"The organisation was perfect. The content of the event was great."