[=]LTA
LiveTextAccess

UNIT 1

Element 1 – Learning Outcome 2

TRANSCRIPT: UNIVERSAL DESIGN ACCESSIBILITY AND USABILITY. PART 2.

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LiveTextAccess. Training for real-time intralingual subtitlers.

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This is Unit 1. Understanding accessibility. Element 1. Basic concepts.

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This is part 2 of the video lecture about accessibility, usability, and Universal Design. In part 1, we talked about Universal design. Here, in part 2, we will define the terms of accessibility and usability.

My name is Rocío Bernabé Caro, from the Internationale Hochschule SDI München, in Germany. I have prepared this video lecture in collaboration with Piero Cavallo and the European Federation of Hard-of-Hearing, in short EFHOH.

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On completion of this training sequence, you will be able to explain the concepts and the differences between usability, accessibility and Universal Design.

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In this second part of the video lecture, we will discuss the concept of accessibility and usability, and how they interbreed and how they play a role in the philosophy of Universal Design.

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So, what is the difference between accessible, usable and universally designed?

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Accessibility and Usability are "abilities", or characteristics of a product. Accessibility is the ability of a product to be accessed, while Usability is the ability of a product to be used.

Products that have been designed following the principles of Universal Design should be accessible and usable for persons with the broadest range of abilities and capabilities.

However similar, these concepts of accessibility and usability are not interchangeable.

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Moreover, they are 2 sides of a coin. Accessibility is a prerequisite to usability. If we cannot access a product, or a building, or a text, we cannot use it. However, being accessible does not always imply that a product can be used for its intended purpose. For instance, if a video has subtitles, but the font is too small, almost illegible, or the text is full of mistakes, the video will be accessible but not usable. As we can see in this example, design plays a role in this equation.

Let's take a closer look at these concepts.

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"Well-designed things are more difficult to notice than things that are poorly designed". This is a statement by Don Norman, a university professor at the University of California.

According to Don Norman, we often do not notice good design because things are well designed and they fit our needs.

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Thus, we can say that the use of well-designed products becomes easier. It is effective because we can reach our goals without trouble, and even find it enjoyable.

Conversely, bad design hinders us. It makes things difficult or even impossible. It even upsets us.

The illustration shows a very badly-designed sign. Indeed, I still have not found out if I should go to the right or to the left to reach room number 104.

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Don Norman points out that being a good designer means being a good observer who finds ways to make a product "usable".

Don Norman illustrates with an image what "usable" means.

The cover of his book "The Design of Everyday Things", I can only recommend it, shows a beautiful red teapot. The steam from the warm water raises and the viewer's desire to have a cup of tea is more or less immediate. However, a closer look at the handle and at the spout makes us realise that we will never be able to pour that hot water into a cup because both handle and spout are placed on the same side of the pot.

Is the design of the teapot appealing? Yes, it is.

Is it useable? Well, that is another story.

This is what I mean by "intended purpose". If this teapot was designed to be looked at; then the designer did a great job. However, if the teapot was meant for making tea; the design failed.

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The International Organisation of Internationalisation, ISO in short, defines usability in the Standard 9241-11: 2018.

Allow me to read it aloud. Usability is: "The extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use." Interesting here are the 3 dimensions of usability actually, namely, effectiveness efficiency and satisfaction.

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We can say that usability describes how well a product is designed so that it is effective, efficient, or in other words, easy-to-use, and friendly to use, not difficult to use.

The extent to which a person considers a product usable is a personal estimation. This means that we cannot buy "usability". Usability emerges in the interaction of a person with a product, or a service, or communication, you know.

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The degree of usability of a product can be assessed by answering these questions. First; effectiveness. Can users achieve their goals? Efficiency. How much effort does it require from users? And, finally; satisfaction. How easy to learn and use is the product?

This interplay between accessibility, usability and design makes us realise that providing access through subtitles implies conveying a message that is usable by users. Real-time subtitlers can improve the usability of their texts by asking themselves just these questions before the job.

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First, who are the users and their needs? And what level of expertise do they have? Also, do I have, as a real-time subtitler, the level of expertise needed?

Another question would be: what are their goals, the goals of the users? What do they want to achieve? How can subtitles help them to achieve these goals?

Lastly; the context. What specificities have the context? What problems may the users of real-time subtitles face in these contexts? What type of subtitling is called for, verbatim or sensatim?

Video lectures from Element 2 and 3 of this Unit will enable you to know more about users and their needs and how to embed accessibility in working settings.

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To recap, we can say that Universal Design is a goal worthwhile pursuing.

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Designs that are for all not only take into account accessibility and usability, but put target users and their needs at the focus.

Some say that design is an art. In this spirit, we could also say that real-time subtitlers are artists of inclusive real-time communication. Do you see yourself as such?

As for now, I say good-bye.

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Exercises.

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The exercises for these video lecture are in the Trainer's Guide for Unit 1, and in the PowerPoint presentation.

20　　Voiceover

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