UNIT 1. UNDERSTANDING ACCESSIBILITY

Element 2. Learning Outcome 1

TRANSCRIPT: PETER VANHOUTTE – PART 2

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LiveTextAccess. Training for real-time intralingual subtitlers.

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This is Unit 1. Understanding accessibility. Element 2. Target users and their needs.

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This video lecture shows the second part of the interview with Peter Vanhoutte, a member of the Deaf-Blind community from Belgium.

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

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On completion of the training sequence, you will be able to explain the needs and preferences of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, Late-Deafened, and Deaf-Blind community.

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The agenda is very short. First, I am going to introduce Peter Vanhoutte. Then, I will illustrate the topics of the interview. Please note, that the interview has two parts. This is the second part of the interview.

Finally, will end this video lecture with a summary.

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First of all, let me introduce you Peter Vanhoutte.

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Peter Vanhoutte is from Belgium. He refers to himself as deafblind. He has medium long, grey hair. He wears a shirt and a sweater. He is on the board of the Flemish association of deafblind people, called "Anna Timmerman association". He is also on the board of the European DeafBlind Union, in short EDBU.

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Let me give you some information before watching the second part of the video.

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In this video, Peter recorded himself with a webcam, while he answers some questions that we sent to him before.

Peter speaks in Flemish, which is one of the languages spoken in Belgium.

The video has English subtitles.

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In this second part of the interview, Peter talks about how deafblind people communicate. He explains how deafblind persons prepare themselves for a conversation and the role of light, acoustics and other environmental aspects. Peter also explains the types of interpreters (oral, text, and sign interpreters), and the tools used for communication, for instance Braille. Finally, he gives some suggestions to future real-time subtitlers.

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Ok, let's watch the second part of the video now!

[TRANSCRIPT OF THE INTERVIEW – PART 2]

How do deafblind people communicate? When you look at the form of communication, you will see two groups. Oral deafblind and deafblind making use of signs. The oral deafblind are the hard of hearing. With visual impairment or blindness. They can speak and understand the spoken word. Good acoustics is important. Limit environmental noise as much as possible. Articulating well. Sometimes they wear hearing aids or they have a cochlear implant. They use an oral interpreter who interprets in clearly spoken language. Or a text interpreter. Especially for group conversations. Who interprets by typing and the letters will appear very big on a screen. Or in Braille on a Braille reader. The users of sign language are mainly deaf with tunnel vision. They communicate using signs. The signs are made near the tunnel. So in a limited signing space and not too wide. [INAUDIBLE] Contrast, distance, lighting are important aspects. When it is too dark, and you are not able to see the signs, you can start to "feel" the signs. This is called "tactile sign language". I am somewhat oral and I am able to speak. But I can't understand the spoken word myself. I use the Lorm alphabet to communicate. That is a sort of typing on the hand. We will perform a demo. Yes, that is the alphabet. You can do that fairly quickly. Almost as quick as I can type. It is very useful. There can be a lot of noise. There can be a lot of sunlight. It can also be completely dark. And you can use it in all of those situations. You just sit next to me, besides each other at the table, on the chair, on the bicycle, in the car, or you are walking, or swimming. It is good for conversations with friends and family. For conversations at the table but also for conversations outside. Outside it is of course difficult to use a device. You are also able to use it in the swimming pool. Many people don't know Lorm. And choose to type on a keyboard. That is connected to a Braille writing device. Look, this is my Braille writing device. And you can connect a keyboard. There are Braille [INAUDIBLE]. Here are small pins. The pins pop up and create Braille letters. And I am able to read whatever is being typed. We also have a picture. You can't see for yourself what you are typing. Because it is a device without a screen. We are showing the picture now. Here you see a text interpreter at work. On the keyboard connected to a Braille writing device. You can also connect the Braille reading device to a computer. So that you have access to emails. You can also read reports. Also digital newspaper articles. It is possible to connect a small reading device using Bluetooth. And an input for text messaging, WhatsApp and Messenger.

How does a deafblind person prepare himself for a conversation? What is included in this? First of all, the deafblind person needs to ask for an interpreter. Through an interpreters agency, you can find an interpreter. Then you also need to arrange for transportation. He needs to make sure he arrives at the meeting place. And on location, he will give his material [INAUDIBLE]. First of all you need to find a good place to sit. Without too much light, not too much sunlight on the screen. You need to set up the computer. You need to put the settings correctly. Settings for the font type and font size. And also you have to choose the colors. The colors of the letters and background so you will have good contrast. As for the sign language interpreters, the deafblind sign language interpreters yes, they also have to find a good place where there is good lighting. There should also not be any backlight. The correct distance is important. Not to close and not too far. Not too close, because the signs need to be visible in the tunnel. The closer, the smaller the tunnel. Then, someone using tactile sign language also needs a comfortable spot. In such a way that he can sit comfortably. In such a way he is not straining his back. A text interpreter can also be very useful for a deafblind person sometimes. Yes, especially for the oral deafblind people, especially for group conversations. And if you are still able to read quickly. Either texts in large font size on a big screen or text in Braille. Deafblind people who make signs prefer communication in signs. There are also deafblind people who don't know Braille. And who can't see enough to be able to read quickly. So for that last group a text interpreter is not very useful. It will go much too quickly. Personally, I use text interpreters at home. To communicate with people who don't know Lorm. Or in order to attend a lecture or workshop. During my volunteer work, I use a lot of text interpreters. For meetings, and study days, and congresses, and also for attending courses, like a course in German. For the lectures during my education, for that I also used a lot of text interpreters.

Then, a last issue. Those are some suggestions. Alright, every deafblind person is different. And also has different wishes. Important is to reserve time. You take your time, that is important. Also making good agreements. Agreements concerning several issues. About the materials. Who is taking care of that? Is an extra screen required? Then also agree on the location where to meet. So where will you meet each other? Some people need transportation to get there. So perhaps you meet at the house of the deafblind person to pick him up. And maybe also bring him home afterwards. Some deafblind people can get there by themselves. If they know the environment, they can get there themselves. Some deafblind people need accompaniment to go to the toilet, to get coffee, or something to eat. Then you will discuss the font size and preferences for color. Then you also have to realise, you are not only the ears for a deafblind person, but also the eyes. So you are not just interpreting the spoken word but also describing visually. You translate who is there, what the people are doing. Who is speaking and what they are saying. Also interesting things that happen in the environment. You will also need to describe those while typing. It's important you involve the deafblind person in the conversation. When the deafblind person wants to say something, make sure it is possible for him to speak. Never speak instead of him. The important is to respect his choice. His choice of interpreting, his choice of seating location, his choice of activities. Also you need to pay attention with water and other drinks. Close to the computer, that is dangerous. When the deafblind person spills it, then often the devices break down quickly. So make sure the deafblind person knows there is a drink nearby. And where it is exactly. Then a last point for after the assignment. Make sure the deafblind person takes all of his belongings back home. So that he doesn't forget anything. For example his telephone on the table, or his cap. Or his white cane is still underneath the table. But he doesn't think about it, but you see it. Make sure that he takes all his belongings home.

That's it. I wish you a lot of success with your education. Goodbye!

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The summary.

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To sum up, we can say that although deafblindness is an impactful impairment, there are several ways in which deafblind persons communicate, depending on the degree of visual and hearing impairment, and also to the person's preferences.

To communicate, you should always consider some other aspects beyond linguistic ones. For instance: contrast, distance, good lighting, etc.

Lastly, we are all unique. We all have our own preferences and so do persons with deafblindness. So don't be afraid to ask what are their needs and preferences. The important thing is to respect his or her choices.

Finally, don't forget that you are not only the ears, but also the eyes of a person with deafblindness: involve and provide him or her additional information.

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Exercises.

15   Slide 15

The exercises for this video lecture are in the Trainer's Guide and the PowerPoint file of part 2.

16   Voiceover

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