



UNIT 1

Element 3 – Learning Outcome 3

**TRANSCRIPT: REAL-TIME SUBTITLES
IN EDUCATION.
AN INTERVIEW
WITH MOHAMMED SHAKRAH – PART 1**



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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1 Slide 1

LiveTextAccess. Training for real-time intralingual subtitlers.

2 Slide 2

This is Unit 1. Understanding accessibility. Element 3. Embedding accessibility in working environments.

3 Slide 3

In this video lecture, we show the first part of an interview with Mohammed Shakrah, a real-time intralingual subtitler from Sweden. He will talk about the role of real-time subtitles in the educational setting.

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.

4 Slide 4

On completion of the training sequence, you will be able to advise customers about how to best set up an accessible real-time working environment for persons with hearing loss in the trained working contexts and settings. To achieve that, we will show testimonials and interviews of professionals.

5 Slide 5

The agenda is very short. First, I am going to introduce our invited speaker, Mohammed Shakrah. Then, I will illustrate the topics of the interview. Finally, we will end the video lecture with a summary.

Please note, that this is the first part of the interview.

6 Slide 6

First of all, let me introduce you Mohammed Shakrah.

7 Slide 7

Mohammed Shakrah is from Sweden. He has medium long, brown hair and a beard. He has been working as a real-time subtitler for 15 years. He is the founder of Svensk Skrivfolkning, a company which provides real-time subtitles services across Sweden since 2013.

8 Slide 8

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

9 Slide 9

In the first part of the interview, Mohammed talks about the importance of real-time subtitles as an access service to provide accessibility in educational settings, primarily for schools and higher education.

Then, Mohammed highlights the importance of planning when working in this particular setting.

Finally, he talks about the equipment needed.

10 Slide 10

Ok, let's watch the video now!

[INTERVIEW VIDEO STARTS]

-[Piero] Hi, Mohammed.

-[Mohammed] Hi.

[Piero] This interview will be about providing accessibility with real time-intralingual subtitles in the education field. You have been working in this field for many years. Can you introduce yourself a little bit?

[Mohammed] Sure! So, my name is Mohammed Shakrah, I've been working as a speech-to-text interpreter for about 15 years now. And, basically, I started the company Skrivfolkning.se 8 years ago now. Our aim has basically been to develop the field, as well as provide services within the field. From the beginning until now, it has grown, it has spread to Deaf users and a lot more people are using it, also within higher education, which has taught us about how to work with... different parties in being able to provide good live captions.

[Piero] OK, so... As a professional who works in this field, in the educational field, what do you need to provide a good service and provide accessibility to your end users?

[Mohammed] Before I start answering this question, I'd just like to say that, usually, I talk about primary users and secondary users, where the primary users are the ones making use of the subtitles, and the secondary user is the one conveying information in any way. I say this, because, usually, when we work as interpreters, we try to keep a neutral stance between the primary user and the secondary user, for them to feel that the interpreter is unbiased or, is not... changing or altering the message in any way. Whereas in the educational context, we view the interpreter as closer to the secondary user. So, for example, the teacher or the team or teachers in a course or a class around the students, we need to actually establish a professional and well-working cooperation or partnership with them, because our goals, in a way, intersect. The teacher holds classes, where they try to convey knowledge or information and, as interpreters, we're actually the "can do it" for that aim of knowledge acquisition, or knowledge transference to the students. As I said, I think this is quite... quite a different way to view one's own role in an interpreting context or environment. The main goal, I think, is to... try to build an understanding with the teachers or the staff of the possibilities and the limits of speech-to-text interpreting. I'm going to give a couple of examples. For example, we say "maths" and you have a math teacher, usually, the teacher writes equations on the board. Depending on the level of maths, obviously, the equations aren't gonna be a straight line with pluses and minuses. They're going to be crossed lines, you know, and they're going to start writing or painting arrows from one place to another, and dots, and everything. And that's very difficult to get in any software. Plus, the higher up you get into maths, you're actually running a higher risk of... misrepresenting whatever the teacher is saying. So, in this case, it becomes really important for the interpreter to know when to rant and when to point at what it's being written on the board. And establishing a procedure, which is very clear. Both with the teacher, so that the teacher knows when do we point, and when do you represent or... translate or type whatever is being said. But also for the student, so [to] understand where should put his or her attention at any given time, so that they can actually-- they have the time... to acquire the message or the information from the teacher. If we take physical education as an example, in high school or up in secondary school or whatever, it's... important to make the teacher understand, for example, that-- [to] give the instructions maybe before the lesson starts, or, at least, don't give instructions at the same time as in [the] ongoing activity. Let's say you're playing dodgeball. Maybe give the instructions to dodgeball before dodgeball starts, and then, if you have-- like players swap, or something, during the game, maybe also talk to the teacher about, you know, if you want a signal or stuff like that, have visual signals or something, because... I won't be able to interpret whatever you're saying during the activity. So, this relationship, or partnership with the teacher actually helps to plan for accessibility, for the students. It's key in this type of situations. But other than that, I'd say, obviously, understanding the curriculum and the learning objectives. [It] might not seem very important for you as an interpreter, but actually [it] is, so that you know how does this

that we're doing today tying to the long-term goal. So, while you're interpreting, you know what to put in that's not being said. Sometimes, that's needed in order for the message to come across clearer. And how to handle the actual lessons. But also to plan for things in the curriculum. I'd say also understanding the fundamental pedagogy of different types of subjects, so, how do I handle maths, for example, to how I am going to handle more practical subjects, like cooking or whatever, from a technical point of view. And overall setting: actually knowing what rooms you are going to be in, so you know if you can sit close to the-- If there's a front bench that you can actually sit on, or if you're outdoors. If you're going to a museum, are there going to be chairs there or should I bring my own chair? if you wanna sit down while typing. Or should I have one of these... I don't know if you've seen them, like a board that you hang on your stomach, so you can walk around typing. So: understanding the setting, understanding the context, understanding the environment, basically, to help you plan for what you need to bring and what you need to teach, in terms of, you know, from the primary and secondary user.

[Piero] So, planning is very important?

[Mohammed] Planning is everything when it comes to this type of interpreting, because it's based on, you know-- Your role is not just to convey information; your role is to be part of knowledge, the transfer of knowledge, which is-- You need to see yourself almost as a teacher in a way. I want to really point out the importance of this partnership in order to be able to plan. And in order for the teacher, the staff and the student to accept you as an authority. In getting your plans accommodated, or your ideas taken into account. And I say partnership because I wouldn't say "consultant", where you come in and tell the teacher what to do and what not to do, because you have to respect their authority and their knowledge. But if you build a working relationship they're going to provide you with information you don't need, even. Because they're going to ask you, because they respect you, "Do you need this? Do you think this is all alright?" "I'm thinking about this session, I was planning to do-- switch places in the middle of the lesson, do you think that would work?" Just being a part of the planning really helps you to be able to influence, but also get information that you... you need without asking along every step of the way.

[Piero] Does the teacher usually send you the information before the lesson? How does it work?

[Mohammed] I'd say there are two types of teachers, you know? One type of teacher, like, goes, "OK, so these are the books we're going to have this semester." And another type of teacher that actually, either asks you for, maybe, once a week, or once every two weeks to just go through what's going to happen the next week or two. And look at mainly the practical side of their lessons. Usually we have like a start up meeting at the beginning of the semester, where we kind of explain how we work, what we usually do, just to raise their awareness and have them come up with-- understand the situation, so they can come up with questions in relation to their subject, for example. And then, obviously, you don't want to be too pushy. We kind of have them decide the pace Do they send us information before each lecture? Or do they want a meeting once every week, two weeks, or a month to talk about... what's coming up ahead? I mean, the most hurdlesome kind of situation is where you send an email before each lecture, or date, or teacher, and you go, "Hey, I'm coming back tomorrow again. Could you send me some information?" What you want is for them to include you in their mind, but also... in practice. If there's, say, a guest lecturer, you can get the teacher to actually... speak for you or include you in their communication with others. [Then] you can focus on the important task at hand of... preparing for the lessons.

[Piero] What about the equipment you use? What kind of equipment do you need?

[Mohammed] Obviously, background information and materials, like lectures, speakers notes, sort of lectures plans are always a part of preparations. And then, a computer and a keyboard of choice. I'd say, preferably, the most silent keyboard you can find. And a software. For us, a suitable software is a software that, in educational settings has two main properties: one property is that the text can be scrolled through during the lecture, because... we work with students that have visual impairments, for example, or with dyslexia, or with attention [deficits], on top of their hearing impairments. Actually being able to acquire the text at a pace that suits you at the same time as you're taking in the room and your surroundings, what's happening on the board, in the room, for example, I think it's very important. And you also want a solution, where the student gets a cordless device, so they can read the text on their tablets, a smartphone, or a computer. Because you want them to be able to move around, because sometimes the lesson requires that. But also from an integrity point of view: you don't want them connected to you via chord, because it's about freedom of movement, obviously, and personal integrity. And a mean of communication between you and the student via STEM software, where they can ask you questions, "Could you please make the text bigger on my screen?" Just so that you can talk to them. Even if you don't know sign language, which a lot of us that work with speech-to-text interpreting don't. Then you can still communicate with them. And obviously, if possible, a comfortable chair, if you're on-site, which is adjustable in height. It's very difficult to decide on what table am I going to sit at, because most usually we want to sit at the front of the room. Or, if we can't sit in the front of the room, we usually bring, like technical aids, that people that have a hearing impairment use. Either you go via the induction loop and you have like a hearing aid yourself so that you hear everything that goes into a microphone clearly. Or we have a version where you put a microphone close to the teacher or to the table and you're listening through a receiver. That's important: if you understand that we're going to sit in a big meeting hall. And we're sitting way up back, because-- We want to make sure that we can bring equipment to be able to hear what's being said easily. But most often we'd just sit at the front of the classroom. Yeah, I think that's it. Pen and paper. It's always good to have pen and paper when you go to class. Yeah, in terms of equipment that's definitely it. And obviously, if you're sitting remotely that's the main difference: you can have your own technical set-up the way you like it, the way you want it. With two screens, where you have reading material on one, and your software on the other, where you can Google stuff when your co-interpreter is interpreting, so you can support them with spelling, or corrections, or things like that. I'd say... for remote working, then the technical set up and the ergonomic set up is usually a lot better. Whereas the auditive situation or possibilities... are worse, because it's going to depend on, you know, how good a microphone that everyone has in the setting. How good are they at turning their microphone off when they're not talking.

[Piero] Is the school that provides you with the equipment when you're on-site?

[Mohammed] We have our own equipment. Basically, that's what we provide: is the technical equipment to be able to provide the service. Because, I mean, there are as many... kinds of keyboards as there are people. For example, we as a company, we have some interpreters that write on a Velotype. And that's asking quite a lot from, for example, a school. To also provide a keyboard that costs that much. Also when it comes to computers some might like a computer that's one way and others might want a computer that's another way. We as a company have all these kinds of equipment. And we choose the equipment based on the user preference, or the situation at hand. That's what we provide. The school supports us, obviously, with-- like, if they have classrooms that have induction loop, they might prioritize our students and us for those classrooms. Or they might provide us with a comfortable, adjustable chair, for example, so we don't have to bring our own. But, other than that, we bring the technical equipment that we need to work. That's what we get. We get paid to provide the service. Obviously, some schools, they're really, really accommodating with, like a really good chair. We have a place where they got us the best chair ever. And you're really happy about that. But it's nothing that we ask for or require.

11 Slide 11

The summary.

12 Slide 12

To briefly sum up, we can say that real-time subtitles in the educational setting work as a bridge, where the knowledge is transferred between students and teachers by the subtitlers. Because of that, it is important from one side to establish a good working cooperation with the teachers and, from the other side, also know the relevant information that needs to be transferred to students.

Then, we have seen that planning is essential when working in the educational setting. In order to prepare for the job, you will need as much as information you can get. And to get those information, you will need to build a trustworthy relationship with teachers.

Finally, we have seen that schools usually rent a real-time subtitling service from companies. Because of that, it is up to the subtitler or the company to choose the equipment that best adapts to the user's preferences or the situation. Every school or university is different and has different possibilities.

13 Slide 13

Exercises.

14 Slide 14

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

15 Voiceover

LTA - LiveTextAccess. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. SDI - Internationale Hochschule. Scuola Superiore per Mediatori Linguistici. 2DFDigital. The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People - EFHOH. VELOTYPE. SUB-TI ACCESS. European Certification and Qualification Association - ECQA. Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

Erasmus+ Project: 2018-1-DE01-KA203-004218. The information and views set on this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained here.

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17 Additional metadata¹

Title or file name of resource	U1_E3_LO3_Education-subtitles_Mohammed-Shakrah_part-1_TRANSCRIPT.docx
Version	FINAL
Description of resource	Audio transcript for the first part of the video lecture about real-time subtitles in education, including an interview with Mohammed Shakrah
Keywords	Respeaking, velotyping, real-time subtitling, education, technology, skills, linguistic competence, accessibility.
Author/Contributor	Piero Cavallo, Dr Rocío Bernabé Caro, Mohammed Shakrah, EFHOH.
File type	Text
Length (pages, actual length of audio or video)	12 pages
Copyright holder	Internationale Hochschule SDI München, EFHOH
Other related pedagogical assets	PowerPoint Presentation and part 2 of the video lecture.
Related subject or skill area	Unit 1. Understanding accessibility.
Publisher	LiveTextAccess
Format	PDF file
Issued	22 June 2021
Language	English
Licence	CC BY-SA 4.0
Accessibility	PDF checked with TingTun
Certified by	ECQA: http://ecqa.org/

¹ The scheme used is an adaptation of the format provided by the EU project 2014-1-DE01-KA203-000679