



UNIT 5

Element 2 – Learning outcome 3

**TRANSCRIPT: TYPE/DICTATE PUNCTUATION
WHILE KEEPING THE PACE OF THE SPEAKER**



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1 Slide 1

Live Text Access. Training for real time intralingual subtitles.

2 Slide 2

Unit 5. Respeaking. Element 2. Meta-linguistic skills. Turning non-verbal and visual verbal elements into written.

3 Slide 3

Typing/Dictating punctuation while keeping the pace of the speaker. Created by SSML and Velotype.

4 Slide 4

On completion of this training sequence, you will be able to produce coherent text while respeaking by extracting and combining the information conveyed with the speakers' material; identify which non-verbal elements need to be turned into verbal for each LTA trained working context by applying techniques like changing colors or font-size or inserting labels; type/dictate punctuation while keeping the pace of the speaker.

5 Slide 5

This is the agenda of this presentation. I will first recall the skills of the respeaker, to then concentrate on the meta-linguistic skills, with a focus on the dictation of punctuation, which is essential during a respeaking performance because it improves texts' functionality in terms of accuracy, readability and legibility of transcripts. I will finally focus on main punctuation characters that you will be requested to practice along the course to develop, reinforce, and maintain the skill at hand.

6 Slide 6

Section 1 – The challenging speaker.

7 Slide 7

As you have seen a respeaker has to do many things at the same time. In Element2 LO1 we have dealt with Meta-linguistic skills, meaning all those skills related to being able to improve textual, verbalization and dictation skills at the same time, which is another set of skills a respeaker has to possess. In particular, for a respeaker to be able and become a professional in the field, he or she has also to be able to process and guarantee a good functionality of the final product, thus to guarantee accuracy, readability and legibility of the text produced. This all involves firstly and foremost the ability of the respeaker to perform a good analysis, synthesis and reformulation of the speaker's discourse. While you can only develop these competences by the time and thanks to ad hoc exercises, you may be interested in knowing how this meta-linguistic skill works. Indeed, this is exactly what we are going to see in the next section.

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In this Element, Element 2, we will deal with the dictation of punctuation.

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Section 2 – Functionality of the text.

10 Slide 10

As we know, in any multitasking process which involves doing different things at the same time, in respeaking, two main types of skills are involved: understanding, aimed at comprehending the source text; and respeaking, aimed at making the most out of understanding under stressful conditions and with a reduced processing capacity than usual. Typing/Dictating punctuation while keeping the pace of the speaker is another important skill in order to render the functionality of the final respoken text. Important to such a good performance are the ability to understand the communicative intention of the source message, to understand the red thread of the discourse, the capacity to select and focalize the relevant information and to divide between main and secondary ideas and to deliver an accurate oral punctuation, the capacity to identify the discourse connectors, while deduce meaning through context and extra-linguistic elements. Last but not least, the ability to condense information and to segment information in sense units. This is the result of a good mix of accuracy, readability, and legibility of the text produced as a final text.

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In the case of respeaking, the most common method used to evaluate the quality of subtitles produced in real time consists of assessing their accuracy. Needless to say, where quality is concerned there are also a number of other features to be considered, such as delay, positioning, character identification and speed, as well as factors relating to their reception by readers (i.e. comprehension, perception).

12 Slide 12

Readability is about arranging words and groups of words in a way that allows the readers eye to access the content easily and in a way that makes sense.

13 Slide 13

It's important to understand what makes one typeface more legible than another. But basically, legibility is the quality deriving from a text which can be read and understood without much effort, also meaning that the message can fully and immediately reach the recipient. And the main rules to follow when dictating the text are dictating in an orderly manner while still keeping the pace of the speaker, and making sentences which are not too long. Punctuation plays a paramount role in this structuring of the text.

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Section 3 – Type/Dictate Punctuation.

15 Slide 15

We have already highlighted that using punctuation in respeaking improves the readability and usability of transcripts. As a fact, punctuation, used in the right place, significantly improves the readability of transcripts and reduces the time it takes to edit them. It is the use of special marks to enable readers to understand a piece of writing. Good punctuation follows the rhythms of speech, telling the reader to pause at the right points and to organize the information in the document that he or she is reading. It reduces misunderstandings and makes the writing clear. But how important is punctuation, really and which are the most commonly used punctuation characters in real-time subtitling? We're now going to dive into its importance in transcription, describing how we intend and how we use punctuation. First of all, it is important to highlight that punctuation marks fall under the domains of both verbal communication and non-verbal communication, which includes any communication act except speech. In particular, full-stop, comma, exclamation mark and question mark are the marks used within the real-time subtitled communication context, and other signs are those used for the non-verbal communication. Specifically for the non-verbal communication context, what I will explain will be a general overview, but it is important to bear in mind that the use of punctuation marks depends on the country of reference, meaning that in different countries we make a different use of the punctuation marks. While, on the other hand, the punctuation marks pertaining to the verbal communication are generally shared in their use.

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A full stop marks the end of a complete sentence that is not a question or an exclamation. It looks like other marks such as decimal points and abbreviation points in acronyms, but it does a different job. It ends a unit of sense and marks a similar, but longer, pause in the reading process than commas do. When respeaking, you can also use periods at the end of phrases that are not full sentences. For example: I like to break my writing up. You know. Obviously, in respeaking, subtitles and lines are to be broken at logical points. The ideal line-break will be at a piece of punctuation like a full stop (more than a comma). If the break has to be elsewhere in the sentence, the respeaker avoids splitting the following parts of speech: -article and noun (e.g. the + table; a + book); preposition and following phrase (e.g. on + the table; in + a way; about + his life); conjunction and following phrase/clause (e.g. and + those books; but + I went there); pronoun and verb (e.g. he + is; they + will come; it + comes); parts of a complex verb (e.g. have + eaten; will + have + been + doing).

17 Slide 17

Commas break sentences up into smaller parts that are easier to understand. They signify natural pauses, segregate pieces of information, and separate items in a list, whether nouns or adjectives. Pausing for Breath: You can use a comma to insert a natural break between two parts of a sentence, or to join two short sentences. For example: He ran down the street as fast as he could, and tripped over his shoelaces. Here, the comma (together with "and") joins the two sentences "He ran down the street as fast as he could" and "He tripped over his shoelaces." Commas of this kind reflect the fact that you sometimes need to pause your train of thought to make sense of the words. Inserting Additional Information: Commas are also useful when you want to insert groups of words that add new information to a sentence, but which don't change its basic meaning. For example: Michael, who was taller than James, was the eldest of the children. "Michael was the eldest of the children" makes sense on its own, but commas allow you to add the fact that "Michael was taller than James" without simply sticking it awkwardly on the end of the sentence. Separating Items in Lists: You can also use commas to separate items in lists. One fixed rule is that lists of three or more items need a comma between the first and second items. A comma is also needed between the second and third items if the list has four items, and so on.

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The exclamation point is a mark of punctuation in verbal communication. To be effective, the exclamation point should be used in moderation. At the end of a sentence, the exclamation point is a mark of terminal punctuation. As such, it should not be followed by a period or question mark. Some will use both a question mark and exclamation point for an exclamatory question, but only the exclamation point is truly necessary. For example: What in the world are you doing up there!

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The question mark is used at the end of a direct question. Indirect questions take a period. For example: What is she doing tonight? OR I wonder what she's doing tonight. When a direct question occurs within a larger sentence, it takes a question mark. Note in the example: Would they make it on time? she wondered.

20 Slide 20

The colon has grammatical uses but also non grammatical uses. Grammatically, it is used to introduce a list of items. For example: The bookstore specializes in three subjects: art, architecture, and graphic design. In real-time subtitling, and as for the non-grammatical uses - the colon is used in order to introduce a direct speech which cannot be turned into indirect speech. For example: She said: What's your name? Instead of she asked what her name was. Moreover, colon is used for quoting citations only in some countries among which is Italy. Other countries use quotation marks, instead.

21 Slide 21

As for the non verbal communication, again, it is important to remark that what I will explain will be a general overview. However, it is important to bear in mind that the use of punctuation marks depends on the country the real-time subtitler works for, meaning that in different countries s/he makes a different use of the punctuation marks. While, on the other hand, the punctuation marks pertaining to the verbal communication are generally shared in their use. The non verbal communication punctuation marks may include: parentheses (in Italy), or brackets (in UK and USA), quotation marks, ellipses (in Italy) or dashes (in UK), and other signs always according to the country in question (i.e. < >). We will now see these signs, the so-called paragraphematic signs for non verbal communication. The parentheses indicate additional information or concepts which are different from the spoken discourse. Important to say is that bracketed information should be an addition, not a substitution. For example: (Michael laughs), intends to pass the concept that besides the verbal speech, something is happening which cannot be respoken by the real-time subtitler. Also, if a quotation includes a foreign word or phrase that might not be understood, parentheses provide a translation to better understand the meaning of the whole sentence. For example: I seldom spoke in French class. When I did, I usually just said "je ne sais pas" (I don't know).

22 Slide 22

Quotation marks clarify written language for both readers and writers by marking quotations, titles, translations, and other words and phrases. In respeaking, quotation marks perform the following basic functions: enclose direct quotations: direct quotations are quotations that are repeated verbatim. For example, President Franklin Roosevelt said, “The United States of America have been suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan”. Titles of works: use quotation marks with titles works and parts of wholes. For example: The first chapter in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone is “The Boy Who Lived”. Highlight novel uses of words and phrases: use quotation marks around words and phrases to indicate a special sense of use. For example: The motherboard is sometimes considered the “brain” of a computer. Again, there is an important to note it make here: in Italy, quotation marks are not used to cite (rather respeakers use colon), in other countries they are used instead with these different uses.

23 Slide 23

An ellipsis is a set of three periods (. . .) indicating an omission. It is also used for omitted material within quoted sentence. For example: Jean argues that by simplifying one’s life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex. At the same time, dashes are used in the place of ellipses to mean that someone has been interrupted while speaking. Again, a specific difference for the Anglo-Saxon countries. After this overview, a real-time subtitler should bear in mind the concept that verbal communication and non verbal communication are featured by several and different punctuation marks. The fundamental in this distinction is that verbal marks of punctuation are almost shared in all countries, while they are country-specific in non verbal communication, and can change accordingly.

24 Slide 24

Summary.

25 Slide 25

In this LO we have introduced the main competence of the respeaker, the meta-linguistic skill in the form of dictation of punctuation as one important feature guarantying the functionality of a text in respeaking. In particular, we have dealt with two important aspects, a theoretical one that is the text functionality, whose characteristics are accuracy, readability and legibility, and a more

practical one, on the use of the most important punctuation characters used by the respeaker – both for verbal and non-verbal communication - in order to deliver an optimal target text to the reader. This, too, has to become a mechanic and automatized action when respeaking. To do so, dictating punctuation is the exercise to start with. In the homework session, we will see how to do this in practice.

26 Slide 26

Exercises.

27 Slide 27

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

28 Slide 28

Outro.

29 Disclaimer, acknowledgement and copyright information

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