



UNIT 5

Element 5 – Factors for high performance

**DISCIPLINE FOR PRACTICING DAILY
TO IMPROVE SKILLS**



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1 Slide 1

Live Text Access. Training for real-time intralingual subtitles.

2 Slide 2

Unit 5. Respeaking. Element 5. Factors for high performance.

3 Slide 3

This video lecture explains the discipline for practicing daily to improve your dictation skills and has been created by SSML and Velotype.

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On completion of this training sequence, you will be able to discipline yourself to practice and improve skills like setting up a schedule, measuring progress and analyzing results.

5 Slide 5

This is the agenda of this video lecture. I will first look at setting a schedule. Then, I will talk about measuring progress. Finally, I will discuss how to analyze results.

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Section 1 – Setting up a schedule.

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The first step to make a schedule is to determine for yourself how much time you can and want to spend on practising per week. I recommend you to practise every day for a short time, let's say 30 to 60 minutes, instead of once a week for a longer time. This will allow you to less stressfully keep practising and automating your dictation skills. It is also advisable if you can plan your training in a time that is most optimal for you. So maybe if you are more energetic in the morning, or perhaps less moody in the afternoon or more relaxed in the evening, go for that and be consistent. When you plan your practice, don't get distracted and consider it as an important task, not a hobby. Make sure others know you have this time reserved to practice and should not be disturbed. Finally, I recommend to find a quiet environment, so that you can fully concentrate on your work.

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Use a timer to keep track of time. If you go for an hour, I recommend you pause during this hour for 5 minutes, so as to stay always focused. You can also split your practice into smaller parts. For example, during the first part you can train your reading and dictation skills; during the second part you can train the listening and dictation skills. Always be very critical of your work and keep track of the exact time you practiced and the errors you made. Finally, keep track of the time it takes to transcribe a page and the amount of time you can dictate in a row. Besides training your dictation skills, take your time to improve your language skills. Use a good book for your language to train grammar and lexis.

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Section 2 – Measuring progress.

10 Slide 10

As we have said, it is important to measure your progress daily. In particular, you should measure speed and accuracy. Measuring your speed can be done in a few ways. When copying a written text, you can dictate for a fixed time, for example 10 or 15 minutes. After that time, you calculate the number of characters dictated. If you are not using specific software for this, you could for example paste the text in Microsoft Word and count the number of characters there. After dictating the text, you should also go through it and measure accuracy by counting the number of errors you made. Be fair and critical to yourself about it. After counting the number of mistakes, you can calculate the percentage of mistakes per characters dictated. You should always try to dictate as less errors as possible, and not exceed 2%. If your error percentage is higher, then it is better to dictate a bit more slowly next time, in order to reduce the number of your errors.

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Alternatively, the TAKI software and the MARS software provided by Intersteno for free can be used for practice. Another alternative is the Velotype Contest software, which is also freely available for practice. Use them for practicing by reading a written text or by listening to a spoken text. You can find out more in the exercises provided. Keep a diary of all the progress you made. When measuring accuracy and speed, it is important to understand what type of text you were able to respeak. Remember to keep track of your performance after every training session by writing down when and how long you practiced, what you practiced, the difficulty of the text, the amount of text you produced, the average speed, the number of errors and the percentage of errors. That way you can clearly see your progress evolving over time and know concretely what you still have to improve.

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Section 3 – Analysing results.

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When you make a mistake in the dictation, of course you will get an incorrect result. You will need to analyse if it is just a one-time error, or if you make this mistake more often. Be very critical to yourself about this and write it down what you do wrong. The most common mistake is that a word, the same word, is never correctly recognized. You pronounce it in different manners and it still does not appear correctly. Other words appear instead. Alternatively, it may happen that the same word appears instead of the one you want. Most of times it is a homophone or a near-homophone, that is a word whose pronunciation only slightly differs from the one you want to be recognized. Two other recurrent recognition errors are words that are recognized as 2 words or words that are not recognized at all. In the next slide, we will see how to deal with these cases.

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Reasons for the mistakes that we have seen are many. Among the most common reasons, we have a pronunciation error that may be due to you not exactly knowing how to pronounce that specific word or that word being associated to a different sound in the software vocabulary. Normally, the software adjusts to your way of speaking by the time. If it does not, always check the pronunciation of that word as a vowel sound may be the cause and add the spoken form of the same word. Also, consider that you may have made a pause while dictating that word in an attempt to be as clear as possible to the computer. Remember that the computer is not a person. If you split a word into syllables while dictating, it will appear as two or more words. Another cause may be that you are not enunciating correctly as a result of you speaking too quickly or mumbling or using a downward tone of voice in that part of the sentence or again a low volume of voice. Another case is related to that word in the vocabulary. On top of adding the written form of a word, remember that you can also add a word to the vocabulary, change the way that word is written in the vocabulary, train that word or update the training of that word to increase the priority of that word in the software vocabulary or even create a macro for that specific word. Alternatively, you can also consider using an easy synonym for that word. All in all, you may also consider that some mistakes are so small that correcting them takes a lot of useless time as the audience can easily understand what that word means. Consequently, some mistakes are more important than others. Prioritizing them and considering not correcting all mistakes may help you produce good quality subtitles.

15 Slide 15

Summary.

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In this video lecture, we have seen how to set up a schedule to train the most effective way possible. Then, we have seen how to measure progress. Finally, we have provided some tips on how to analyse results and how to correct some of the most recurrent mistakes.

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Exercises.

18 Slide 18

The exercises for this video lecture are in the Trainer's Guide for this Unit 5 and in the PowerPoint presentation. All materials are available on our website www.ltaproject.eu.

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