



UNIT 6

Element 1. Learning Outcome 3

TRANSCRIPT: ACTIVATE EXIT STRATEGIES IF THE SPEAKER IS CHALLENGING



Table of contents

1	Slide 1	4
2	Slide 2	4
3	Slide 3	4
4	Slide 4	4
5	Slide 5	4
6	Slide 6	4
7	Slide 7	4
8	Slide 8	5
9	Slide 9	5
10	Slide 10	5
11	Slide 11	5
12	Slide 12	6
13	Slide 13	6
14	Slide 14	7
15	Slide 15	7
16	Slide 16	7
17	Slide 17	8
18	Slide 18	8
19	Slide 19	8
20	Slide 20	8
21	Slide 21	9
22	Slide 22	9
23	Slide 23	9
24	Slide 24	9
25	Slide 25	10
26	Slide 26	10
27	Slide 27	11

28	Slide 28	11
29	Slide 29	12
30	Slide 30	12
31	Slide 31	12
32	Slide 32	12
33	Slide 33	13
34	Slide 34	13
35	Slide 35	13
36	Slide 36	13
37	Slide 37	14
38	Slide 38	14
39	Voiceover	14
40	Disclaimer, acknowledgement and copyright information	15
41	Additional metadata	15

1 Slide 1

LiveTextAccess. Training for real-time intralingual subtitles.

2 Slide 2

Unit 6. Velotype. Element 1. Psycho-cognitive skills.

3 Slide 3

Activate exit strategies when the speaker is challenging. Created by SSML and Velotype.

4 Slide 4

The introduction to this Unit has already explained what velotyping is, and the introduction to this element has already explained what are the Psycho-cognitive skills a velotypist must possess. This video lecture is aimed at letting you know about the strategies a velotypist applies when he or she realizes the speaker is challenging. To do so I will define the challenging speaker to then move to the strategies that a velotypist tries to apply when having to deal with specific challenges like a fast speech, incomprehensible speech, a low volume speech, an impromptu speech and plays on words.

5 Slide 5

This is the agenda of this presentation.

6 Slide 6

Section 1 – the challenging speaker.

7 Slide 7

As you have seen a velotypist has to do many things at the same time.

8 Slide 8

In this Element we will deal with the Psychocognitive skill of activating exit strategies while velotyping if you realise the speaker is challenging. In particular, for a velotypist to be able and become a professional in the field, he or she has also to apply solutions to problems he or she may encounter when subtitling due to the fact that he or she is no longer capable of providing the service as required. While you can only develop these competences by the time and thanks to ad hoc exercises, you may be interested in understanding the rationale behind it all. To do this, we will see what a challenging speaker is. For every challenge I will try to provide concrete solutions.

9 Slide 9

So, what does it mean a speaker is challenging? There are many situations where I found myself trying to subtitle a speech I found it hard to subtitle. Here we will see 5 situations which may cause you troubles when subtitling a speech in real time. For sure a speaker is challenging when he or she speak above your MARS, or your capacity to produce text as rapidly and accurately as needed. However, a fast speaker can be less challenging than a speaker whose utterances are incomprehensible for some reason or pronounced far from the mike or at a low volume. These are to me the worst. Some colleagues also find it difficult to subtitle speakers who have not planned their speech beforehand, and speakers who keep using plays on words. Here are some examples of challenging speakers.

10 Slide 10

Section 2 – Fast Speech.

11 Slide 11

When trying to subtitle people speaking very fast there are three types of problems. One is that you are not capable of producing accurate text at the same speed. A second problem is that you cannot memorise or even understand what quick speakers say. Last but not least, even if you were capable of keeping the same pace as the speaker, your audience would have problems reading your subtitles at the same speed, especially if subtitles are visible as two-liner subtitles.

12 Slide 12

So what shall we do when a speaker speaks too fast? Let's consider this example, taken from the opening of the famous Address Delivered by Martin Luther King in 1963 at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Let's read it. I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice.

It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

Now let's pretend we are subtitling Dr. King's speech in real time and that we were not given the text of the speech beforehand. If we had the script of the speech we could feed the software with this or train ourselves with it. But we cannot. Let's also pretend he is very stressed and starts speaking very quickly. What can we do?

13 Slide 13

In this case, one solution may be the Gordian Knot Strategy or cut and knit. It means that you can subtitle only half of the sentences pronounced by the speaker, while trying to keep coherence. In this example, you can avoid typing every other sentence and still provide understandable subtitles with little or no cohesion effort. Let's read the text as a result of this strategy and we will see it keeps saying more or less the same thing. I am happy to join with you today.

Five score years ago, a great American signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves.

It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

14 Slide 14

Of course this is not always easy and sometimes doing this may cause even more troubles. Let's consider the same example and apply the Gordian Knot strategy in a different manner. Let's read the text as a result of a badly applied Gordian Know strategy. I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves, who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free.

We can see that this creates some inconsistencies. Given that the sentence with the reference to Abraham Lincoln having signed the Emancipation Proclamation is left out, this creates a huge cohesion problem because the following sentences all refer to it. Are we still capable of guessing what he means by «Negro slaves»? Are the subtitles referring to the same people the speaker is referring to? And what does the «hundred years later» phrase refer to?

15 Slide 15

When you are not confident going for the Gordian Knot, prefer the Garwood Strategy: when in doubt, leave it out. You leave out an entire chunk, and start from the first sentence that you think it makes sense to re-start from. In this case, it is the last sentence without the reference to that «something» you were not able to subtitle, which happened 100 years before. The final result is the following: I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. The Negro still is not free. This is an extreme solution and the audience realises that subtitles do not read what is said by the speaker. This is not a problem if this is rarely adopted and you are capable of explaining the reason.

16 Slide 16

Section 2 – Incomprehensible speech.

17 Slide 17

Do you remember Charles Chaplin in the Great Dictator? There, dictator Hynkel speaks fake German to the people of Tomainia, who applauds him. When we type it may happen that we, as real time subtitlers, find ourselves in situations where we don't understand a sentence or more sentences that the speaker pronounces while it seems that his or her audience does, as in this famous scene.

18 Slide 18

In such cases, you can adopt the Generalisation Strategy. If you know the topic and the context and you more or less know what he or she is saying you can either relate the last concept you have understood, by either reformulating it or saying something that does not commit yourselves too much, like something general or logical. Let's consider some examples.

19 Slide 19

Let's consider the same example as above. Here you stop understanding the speaker when he says This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves, who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. What can you do? You can try to keep providing the subtitling service by reformulating the last concept you have understood, meaning Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

20 Slide 20

Here is the result. The sentence is replaced by the reformulation of the last subtitled sentence, meaning The Emancipation proclamation signed 100 years ago by such a great American is the symbol of us all today. It may sound a bit redundant, but this is an inspirational speech with an important use of rhetoric. This strategy is not to be confused with cheating. Here you don't lie. On the contrary, you keep providing correct information and, consequently, the audience keeps relying on the subtitles because they keep seeing them under the speaker's mouth.

21 Slide 21

If you understand the overall message the speaker wants to deliver thanks to context, body language or from slides he or she uses, you can replace the missing bits with logical consequences or general statements without jeopardising understanding of the source text or cheating with fake information. The final result is: This was a fundamental step in our history that made this gathering possible. You have replaced the incomprehensible sentence with a general statement which is also a logical continuation of the previous sentence.

22 Slide 22

When you are not confident going for the Generalisation Strategy, again prefer the Garwood Strategy: when in doubt, leave it out. Remember this is an extreme solution and the audience realises that subtitles do not read what is said by the speaker.

23 Slide 23

Section 4 – Low Volume.

24 Slide 24

There are some speakers, like Marlon Brando's don Corleone in the Godfather, who mumble or speak with a such a low volume that the problem is not that you don't understand them. With little effort you do. The problem is when you try to type, your concentration is on typing correctly. Moreover, the extra effort involved in understanding the speaker reduces your capacity to type. So, what can we do in such cases?

25 Slide 25

If the speaker speaks out of the mike or with a low volume, there is little we can do. You can ask the speaker to speak closer to the mike or louder, if you are physically close to him or her.

However, sometimes it happens that a speaker used to do this speaking with a low volume or not caring about the microphone, he or she will not manage to behave for long. In such cases, you can only adopt the Gordian Knot strategy, or cut and knit. As seen previously, the Gordian knot consists hearing a sentence and repeating it as fast as possible once it is over, by compressing it if you can. Then you skip the following sentence and concentrate on the third sentence of the row, which you are going to repeat it as quickly as possible once it is over, by paying attention to cohesion and coherence. As in the case of a fast speaker, this is something that you cannot do for long.

26 Slide 26

Section 5 – Impromptu Speech.

27 Slide 27

There is a huge debate among scholars and among professionals about whether one can subtitle all features of orality. Somebody says yes, because one must be faithful to what the speaker actually says. Somebody says no, because readability and understandability is more important. Especially when it comes to a politician, the question of reproducing one's bad grammar or mistakes is all the more important. It has to do with being fair with the opposition or diplomatic with the speaker. Though an answer is difficult to provide because both parties, to me, have their point, let me now concentrate on how to deal with features of orality. They jeopardise both your understanding as a real-time subtitler and that of the audience reading verbatim subtitles. So, what can we do? Though we always have to understand which strategy is better to use, verbatim or sensatim, an impromptu speech is an obstacle to the subtitling process, especially in the case velotyping is used as a subtitling tool, because it is sometimes a challenge to type non-existing words, like those speakers, especially foreigners, may produce as a result of calques from their native language or as a result of mispronunciations. So, how to cope with impromptu speech? If it is a challenge to the subtitling process you can go for correcting one's bad grammar and go straight to the point. If it is not relevant at all that the speaker makes mistakes, because he or she is a non native, speaking English as a communication tool, no matter if he or she doesn't pronounce words properly, selects wrong words, mumbles, hesitates, self-reformulates, produces extra sounds etc. What is important in a conference speech is the main message. If you manage to understand what he or she says, and recognise pronunciation, grammar, and lexical mistakes due to the speaker's native language, you can go and correct the his or her output. Preferably with short sentences. Given that foreigners tend to speak slowly compared to native speakers, the strategy is to wait for a complete sentence and then continue typing. The delay should be enough to let you produce correct sentences. Don't try to follow the pace of the speakers. Because you might have to go back and retype parts of what was said.

28 Slide 28

Concretely, let's consider this concrete example taken from the transcription of a speech made by an Italian politician famous for not being an excellent speaker of English.

Er, Professor, you know, my... my personal position is... is DAT. Italy's debt is too 'igh, too... too... too much big. We... in this moment the... the level of debt is 133%. For the first time, in 2015 we stop the growth, but the problem is the relation between GDP and the debt, because in the last 3 HEARS, with the RESECTION, the GDP was the... our first problem.

The speaker is challenging, especially if you don't guess what is the meaning the speaker wants to deliver. However, truncating what this speaker says into smaller chunks is quite easy, because grammar is simple.

29 Slide 29

Now let's consider the example we have just seen. Mr Renzi speaks is here a challenging speaker. However, truncating what he says into smaller chunks is quite easy because Mr Renzi, like many foreigners, uses a simple grammar. A possible result, trying to keep as much of the original as possible and producing short sentences, could be: Professor, my personal position is the following. Italy's debt is too high. Too much. In this moment, the level of debt is 133%. For the first time, in 2015 we stopped its growth. But the problem is the relation between GDP and debt. In the last three years, during the recession, the GDP was our first problem. OK.

Remember that this manipulation of the source text is only possible at the grammar level, not at the content level, otherwise this may cause differences between those who hear the speaker and those who read the subtitles. Also consider that somebody having heard what the speaker says may contradict him or her or correct him or her.

30 Slide 30

Section 6 – Plays on words.

31 Slide 31

Plays on Words are really terrible to type for many reasons, especially if you have to subtitle them live.

32 Slide 32

In the movie Pulp Fiction, Uma Thurman tells a joke to John Travolta, which says: Three tomatoes are walking down the street. Poppa tomato, Momma Tomato, and Baby Tomato. Baby Tomato starts lagging behind. Poppa Tomato gets really angry, goes back and squishes him and says: catch up! I don't want to know how much time it took to those who had to subtitle this into other languages or if they managed to do it. But even intralingually this is not an easy task because the joke is based on two homophones: the verb «catch up», a synonym to «speed up», and the noun «ketchup», the tomato-based sauce.

33 Slide 33

When it is a play involving a non-standard spelling, we normally type the word in uppercase letters, as a signal to the audience that that is the word or group of words where they have to focus their attention as that is the funny part of the joke. Some colleagues use inverted commas. Some others put an exclamation mark after the wordplay. Some others the caption [laughter]. What do we do, in this case where a homophone is used to provoke the laughter as in this case?

34 Slide 34

One solution can be that of spelling the non-standard homophone, the unexpected one. In this case we use ellipses as a suspense technique and then uppercase letters to say that they have to concentrate on the word Ketchup, which is the unexpected, laughter-provoking synonym to catch up, or speed up.

35 Slide 35

The summary.

36 Slide 36

In this video lecture we have seen some concrete examples of how to behave when a speaker is challenging. When a speaker is challenging we need to adopt what we call here Exit Strategies, meaning strategies to apply to exit a potentially dangerous situation for either the subtitled, the audience or both. In case of a fast speaker, the mostly used technique is the Gordian Knot, or cut and knit strategy, meaning trying to reduce the speech by omitting whole chunks and then managing to make the non omitted parts coherent among them. An extreme solution is the Garwood strategy, meaning leave everything out and explain why you did so. The Garwood strategy is also an extreme strategy for Incomprehensible speeches, though replacing incomprehensible bits with general or logical bits is to be preferred if possible. When a speaker speaks with a low volume, the Gordian Knot is again the best solution. When a speaker makes an Impromptu speech, with many mistakes and features of orality, the strategy is to skip them and try to produce short and correct sentences. Finally, when it comes to plays on words, the best solution is to type the laughter-provoking unexpected word in uppercase characters.

37 Slide 37

Exercises.

38 Slide 38

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

39 Voiceover

LTA - LiveTextAccess. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. SDI - Internationale Hochschule. Scuola Superiore per Mediatori Linguistici. ZDFDigital. 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.

40 Disclaimer, acknowledgement and copyright information

Authors: Wim Gerbecks, Carlo Eugeni, Sylvia Velardi.

Copyright: The document is proprietary of the LTA consortium members. No copying or distributing, in any form or by any means, is allowed without the prior written agreement of the owner of the property rights.

License: The document is made available to the public under the terms of the Creative by Attribution ([CC-BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)) license.

Disclaimer: This project has been co-funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

41 Additional metadata¹

Title or file name of resource	U6_E1_LO3_Activate-exit-strategies_TRANSCRIPT.docx
Version	Final
Description of resource	Audio transcripts for the video lecture about exit strategies
Keywords	access services; real-time intralingual subtitles; live captioning; Velotype; exit strategies
Author/Contributor	Velotype, SSML
File type	Text
Length (pages, actual length of audio or video)	15 pages
Copyright holder	Velotype, SSML
Other related pedagogical assets	PowerPoint presentation and other lectures in this Unit.
Related subject or skill area	Unit 6. Velotyping.
Publisher	LiveTextAccess
Format	PDF file
Issued	22 January 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