

FRED FILM RADIO PRESENTS “ACCESSIBLE CINEMA”, A programme ABOUT MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY SPONSORED BY SUB-TI ACCESS, SUBTITLING AND AUDIO DESCRIPTION FOR CINEMA, TELEVISION, THEATRE PERFORMANCES AND OTHER EVENTS. ACCESSIBLE CINEMA.

Francesca Raffi (FR): Welcome to Fred Accessible Cinema, Fred's programme on media accessibility and inclusion to inform you about the state of accessibility in the media industry. This is our third episode. In the last one we discussed the importance of working together in order to provide high-quality media accessibility. Once again, we received many enthusiastic comments and feedbacks from our listeners based in Europe and beyond. So, a big thank you to all of you. But for the few of you who missed our last episode, you can find it on Fred website. We also shared information regarding practices and events related to media accessibility that you set up, and we will be giving voice to all of you, so please keep contacting us through Fred website. You might have also discovered the programme thanks to the media accessibility platform MAP, the first collaborative online platform gathering information on the history and the state of the art on research, policy, training and practices in the field of media accessibility. So, do visit MAP website (mapaccess.org) to listen to Fred Accessible Cinema, but also to find more about past and current projects dealing with media accessibility. And this third episode of accessible cinema is precisely dedicated to a project co-funded by the Erasmus Plus programme of the European Union, and addressing media accessibility and inclusion: The European project Live Text Access (LTA), a strategic partnership focusing on real-time subtitles. As you know, Fred has always been committed to accessibility and social inclusion. The need for real-time subtitles has risen since the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the European Accessibility Act and the Audiovisual Media Service Directive. Both are asking providers to ensure access to people with visual or hearing disabilities, and many subtitlers still lack specialised trainings, or their professional status is somehow not clear or recognised. So, the LTA project approaches this mismatch between trained and needed skills in the labour market through a collaboration between education and non-educational partners. In this episode we will be bringing interviews with the partners of the LTA project, which are SDI University of Applied Languages of Munich in Germany, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in Spain, Scuola Superiore per Mediatori Linguistici of Pisa in Italy, European Certification and Qualification Association in Austria, Velotype in the Netherlands, Sub-Ti Access in Italy, ZDF Digital in Germany and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People in the Netherlands. This complementary mix of educational and non-educational partners is definitely one of the main strengths of the LTA project. We will start with Rocío Bernabé Caro, who leads the LTA project, and Pilar Orero, who will give us an overview of the project and will tell us more about its main objectives. One of the aims of LTA is to harmonise the professional profile of real-time subtitlers across Europe, but who are real-time subtitlers and who are respeakers? Well, Carlo Eugeni, our third guest will clarify some terminology issues for us. Speaking of professional profiles, we will then hear from Miriam Hagmann, who will tell us how live subtitles are made and how real-time intralingual respeakers work at ZDF

Digital, a public broadcaster based in Germany. But there is further way to provide live subtitles. Not only by respeaking, but also by velotype. We will know more about velotypists, the needed skills to work as a velotypist and to produce high-quality live subtitles with Wim Gerbecks. Speaking of high-quality subtitles, with Estella Oncis, our next guest from Universitata Autònoma de Barcelona, who has take over the role of quality manager in the project, we will talk about quality in media accessibility, and the importance of adopting a users-centered approach. With our next guest we are going to look at the LTA project precisely from a user's point of view. Marcel Bobeldijk will tell us more about the current situation regardin real-time subtitling in Europe. Finally, to know more about the final stage, but also the future of the LTA project, we will listen to Gabriele Sauberer from the European Certification and Qualification Association. So, there is a lot to take in. Stay with us to know more about the LTA project.

AD: Fred Film Radio. Accessible Cinema.

FR: Let's start with our first guests. We are going to listen to an excerpt from an interview with the LTA project coordinator Rocío Bernabé Caro (RB), Deputy Head of the Professional College of Translation and Interpreting of the SDI in Munich in Germany. And with Pilar Orero (PO), one of the partners of teh project, full professor of audiovisual translation at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Just let me remind you that this, but also our next interviews are all available on Fred's website.

FR: Rocío, what is Live Text Access first of all, and what are the main objectives of this project?

RB: Our project is all about real-time intralingual subtitling. About the provision of the service. I mean, the main aim of the project is to create training materials for training real-time intralingual subtitlers. The thing is, at the moment the situation in Europe is that you have the legislation, you have the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, you have the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Accessibility Act, you have all this legislation triggering actually to provide services. You see the market and you have the providers providing the services, the subtitling. You have the educational sector, which is actually creating training and training professionals, but you have the users as well and the users are saying that the quality of the service that is being provided at the moment is not regular enough or good enough.

FR: It's not good enough.

RB: That's where why we get into action. We said, “We can get together, put the industry together, the service providers, the education as well in the project and create teaching materials for training good real-time intralingual subtitlers.” That's actually how everything started. I must say that wasn't my idea. Pilar has to take credit for this one. She was the one who started, initiated actually... Yes, it was you.

PO: OK, it was me, but you need a seed and you planted the seed. I mean, I would have never come up with the idea of easy-to-read subtitles, or easy-to-listen audio descriptions. It happened because Rocío made a dissertation on easy-to-read. That's true.

FR: How can we define easy-to-read?

RB: Easy-to read is just a way of writing that is simplified for people who don't really have access to information, because it is written in a very complicated way. It may be because you're using specialised terminology, or the sentences are far too complicated, far too long. At the very second when you say, "This is too complicated, we want to make it easier", is when you start creating easy-to-understand content.

FR: Contents...

RB: It can be plain language, or easy-to-read actually. Easy-to-read is a set of guidelines that tells you how to implement information. How to write it in order to make it easier to understand.

FR: So, the project will basically harmonise the professional profile of real-time subtitlers across Europe and create open source training materials, is it correct?

RB: Yes, we are an Erasmus project and all the materials and documents that are created have to be open source and accessible for everybody. That's one of the goals, of course.

FR: I understand from what you have just said that the LTA project sees accessibility like a kind of fundamental human right. Pilar?

PO: It is. We live in a society where access to the Internet and access to media and audiovisual content is basic. If you want to do any... I don't know where you live, but if you want to do any paperwork, or have any democratic participation in society these days, it is done through the Internet. If you don't have an Internet connection and you don't have access to the Internet... At university we teach with audiovisual material. We no longer teach with just paper and a pen. So I think that if people can't have access to this content, they are basically out of society. So, they are excluded from society.

FR: Excluded.

PO: That's not only my point of view. That the UN point of view.

FR: Yeah, that's true. That's true.

PO: Basically we have to integrate everybody. Most people can be integrated very easily, but some people can't, because they have one problem or another. You may not

have a finger to press the button to switch on your Internet. Or you may have no Internet connection. Or you may be blind and don't have access to the audiovisual. So, there are many issues. Maybe you speak a different language that's spoken where you are. If you put me in Japan, I can't read and I can't hear, because I don't understand it. So, in Japan I need a lot of accessibility. So... We need to make sure everybody can communicate, because communication to me is what differentiates us, verbal communication, from animals.

FR: From animals, yeah.

PO: We have to be able to communicate. Otherwise is solitude and that's horrible.

FR: We have listened to an excerpt from an interview with Rocío Bernabé Caro and Pilar Orero, who described the LTA project, its main steps and objectives. As Rocío and Pilar said, at present subtitlers lack specific training and the profession has not clear or recognised status, so the LTA project aims to design an effective and certified curriculum for real-time intralingual respeakers and velotypists. But who are the respeakers and who are the velotypists? To know more about these two professional profiles, stay with us. We'll be back soon with our next guest.

FRED AD: (PEOPLE SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES) Fred, the festival experience in 23 languages.

FR: This is Accessible Cinema, we are getting to know the Live Text Access project together with the partners of the project. As Rocío Bernabé Caro and Pilar Orero said, respeakers and velotypists trained by LTA will have suitable skills to provide high-quality subtitles in many different contexts. But, what is respeaking? And what does velotype mean? To know more about this, let's listen to an excerpt from an interview with Carlo Eugeni (CE), lecturer in conference interpreting at the Advanced School for Interpreters and Translators in Pisa, Italy, and trainer of respeakers.

FR: I understand also from your personal experience that bridging somehow research and practice is key to improving the profession, right? And this is basically what the Live Text Access project, what LTA wants to do by designing a curriculum for real-time live subtitlers. First of all, are respeaker and real-time live subtitler synonyms, or are they different somehow?

CE: Well, there is a lot of terminology flaws in the field, because the field is very new. In 10 years, let's say, many people have investigated on it, and talked on it. Sometimes, people have invented terminology.

FR: New terms.

CE: Respeaking per se is the name of a technique by which the respeaker listens to the speaker and repeats what he says, or reformulates what he says, or even translates what he says. The respeaker talks into a microphone, which sends the input to a

speech-to-text recognition software, which basically translates what it hears by the respeaker and translates the voice input into written words. It is quite complex, but it is similar to the job of a simultaneous interpreter. The simultaneous interpreter listens and repeats. Here the software transcribes what the respeaker says into written words. This means that you can produce through respeaking texts for many contexts. You can produce live subtitles for TV programmes; you can produce live reports for parliamentary assemblies; you can produce transcriptions of meetings at which you have deaf people attending, so deaf people are able to follow the speech, such as in conferences or job meetings. Live subtitling is something else. It is a context where respeaking can be used.

FR: OK.

CE: Respeaking is only a technique. We also have velotype. Velotype is a typing technique. Basically the job of the velotypist is to produce texts live by listening to a speaker and typing.

FR: So, different professional profiles, let's say.

CE: Yes.

FR: We have just listened to an excerpt from an interview with Carlo Eugeni from the Advanced School for Interpreters and Translators in Pisa, which will lead the Intellectual Output number 2 of the LTA project. That is the curriculum and course design in intralingual real-time respeaking and velotyping. As Carlo said, both respeaking and velotyping are fast writing techniques, which are used to produce real-time subtitles for many different contexts. With our next guest we will know more about real-time subtitles of live TV programmes. So don't move, we'll be back soon.

SUB-TI ACCESS AD: It is estimated that one in six people has some sort of sensory impairment or disability, which means that one in six people can't fully understand your film without subtitles for deaf or hard-of-hearing, as well as audio description for the blind or visually impaired. Sub-Ti Access generates accessible versions of films and makes media content accessible to a sensory impaired audience. Sub-Ti Access, access services for the media. Sub-Ti Access, your vision for all (subti.com).

FR: Accessible cinema. We are getting more and more familiar with the Live Text Access Project, which tackles the mismatch between trained and needed skills in the labour market by a collaboration between educational and non-educational partners. Among the non-educational partners there is ZDF Digital, an affiliate of the public broadcaster ZDF based in Germany, which among other things creates live subtitles and other accessible services for many different contexts. So let's listen to an excerpt from an interview with Miriam Hagmann (MH), international project coordinator for ZDF Digital to know more about real-time subtitles of live TV programmes.

FR: As I said, ZDF Digital is one of the partners of the project. Among other things, the company provides live subtitles. Is that correct, Miriam?

MH: That is correct. We provide live subtitles for parts of the ZDF programme. They have a live-subtitling department, but they cannot do it all, because live subtitling is very time-consuming.

FR: Can you tell us more about this accessible service?

MH: This is how live subtitling works. Most people are not aware that live subtitling really implies a live situation — the programme that is broadcasted with live subtitles is broadcasted on the internet but also on TV, so as the audience you can add live subtitles via teletext. Mostly, you need a team of three live subtitlers to work on it. They need to work together because it's a very demanding task where you have to be concentrated all the time. And it works in the following way. The live subtitler works with re-speaking — so you might want to know what re-speaking is.

FR: Yes, possibly, thank you.

MH: So, the live subtitler hears what is being said on TV over the headphones and basically repeats every word that is said on TV; sometimes they skip words that are not so important. They repeat and speak it into a speech recognition. Why is that? If you are simply trying to repeat everything that is being said on TV while using speech recognition, it's not going to be recognized, because you have to speak in a certain ductus, in a certain way, so speech recognition then recognizes what is said and puts it into writing. So, while the respeaker is re-speaking he is listening to what the person on TV continues to say, and while doing these two tasks, he is also looking at what has been transcribed by speech recognition and, if necessary, needs to correct what has been written, because sometimes speech recognition might just not correctly understand and transcribe what is said. For example, if a person says: "We want to explore the city," speech recognition might recognize: "We want to explode the city." This is something that needs to be corrected. It makes people laugh, because it's obviously a mistake, but it's better to correct things.

FR: As for live subtitling, just trying to sum it up, only the main outlines, the subjects and the participants of a given programme are known. The rest happens live, in real time and unpredictably.

MH: Yes, unpredictably. Sometimes they know who are going to be the guests that are invited on a TV show. For example, if you were invited, they would train the speech recognition beforehand by saying your name, "Francesca Raffi," several times, in order to make it recognize and transcribe your name correctly. Because otherwise it is probably going to be wrong.

FR: It can be challenging. And once the subtitles are corrected and, possibly, shortened, what happens?

MH: What happens after respeaking, transcribing, correcting, it is of course the most important part, is the sending of the subtitles, because if you don't send them, they are not going to appear on TV. So, during all those processes they have to send the subtitles, while also ensuring that they don't send them too quickly so that people are able to read them; then they also have to respect a certain time, so our goal is to have a delay of three seconds, so there is not a huge gap between what is said on TV and the subtitles. This is very important, so we try to have a delay of three seconds between the live situation and the subtitle. The delay is between three and six seconds, and there are certain techniques to catch up with what is said by shortening, but mostly, they are able to respect those three seconds.

FR: We have just listened to an excerpt from an interview with Miriam Hagmann, who told us how real-time subtitles are created for live TV programs. As Miriam said, the respeaker listens to the speakers and simultaneously repeats, reformulates or even translates what they say to a microphone connected to an automatic speech recognition software. This automatically recognises the respeaker's voice and turns it into written words. That is the real-time subtitles. However there is a further way to provide live subtitles, not by respeaking, but by velotype. If you want to know more about velotypists the Velotype keyboard, stay with us. We will be right back.

FRED AD: (PEOPLE SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES) Fred, the festival experience in 23 languages.

FR: Accessible Cinema. We are exploring the ways in which live subtitles can be produced and made available for different contexts. It is clear from we have learnt so far thanks to our guests, that live subtitlers need to be specially trained. This is the reason why the LTA project has been launched: to design an effective and certified curriculum for both real-time intralingual respeakers and velotypists. Velotype, the Dutch company which invented the velotype keyboard, is one of the partners of the project. So to know more about this, let's listen to an excerpt from an interview with Wim Gerbecks (WB), co-founder of Velotype, the only company in the world that produces and sells the velotype keyboard.

FR: How does this keyboard work, Wim? Because of course it has nothing to do with a computer keyboard, right? How does it work?

WG: Well, it is quite a different way of typing. When you type on a normal keyboard you press one key and you get one character each time. With the Velotype keyboard the idea is that you type a chord of keys. So you press several keys simultaneously. With every chord of keys you get a whole syllable or a whole word. It is a very different way of typing. But in the end much more efficient.

FR: Okay. So by pressing several keys simultaneously we can make let's say complete syllables and words. So instead of typing character by character. Is it correct?

WG: Yes, exactly.

FR: Okay, alright. So, being a quick way of typing, I imagine it is especially useful when we need to type at a higher speed. What are the main application contexts in which this keyboard is used, Wim?

WG: Well, the invention of the keyboard was basically just for anybody who wants to type at a quicker speed and more efficiently. But eventually the main applications for the keyboard are for the support of hard of hearing in all different situations. You can imagine you can use it at a big event where many people are watching your text. But even at the doctor, or even at a job interview when you sit next to somebody who is deaf or hard of hearing you type directly what the conversation is about and they can read along immediately. It is a very good support for deaf and hard of hearing people. And besides that it is also being used for live subtitling for television through Teletext for many years. So, the people watch television at home, they see the live subtitling, also by the use of Velotype.

FR: So the velotypists listen to the speaker and simultaneously type what they say, using the Velotype keyboard, right?

WB: Yes, exactly. You have to be trained for it. Of course, you have to know how to use the keyboard. Besides that you have to be trained to listen to speakers, to also understand all the different accents and then try to type it as quickly as possible. You can imagine the spelling, the knowledge of the spelling is very important when you do this work.

FR: We have just listened to an excerpt from an interview with Wim Gerbecks, the inventor of the modern version of the Velotype keyboard, a product which, as Wim said, revolutionise the way of typing especially within the context of live subtitling. As Wim explained, the velotypist listen to the speakers and simultenously type what they say using the Velotype keyboard. This covers over 30 languages and has shown to deliver superior results in noisy environments and when it comes to higggh-quality orthographic typing. Quality in media accessibility will be the focus of our next interview. So if you want to know more about this, stay with us. We will be back soon with our next guest.

SUB-TI AD: We translate for thos who can't understand. We write for thos who can't hear. We describe for thos who can't see. Sub-Ti, subtitles and accessibility for film, televison and theatre (subti.com).

FR: Accessible Cinema. We are talking about media accessibility, inclusion, the state of accessibility in the media industry, and the need to provide high-quality media accessibility. Quality training for subtitlers across Europe is the focus of the Live Text Access project. As our previous guests, all of them partenres of the LTA project, emphasised, the provision of access to people with disability across Europe is uneven and its quality uncontrolled or insufficient. To know more about quality in media accessibility, let's listen to an excerpt from an interview with Estella Oncis (EO),

post-doctoral researcher at Transmedia Catalonia, a research group from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

FR: Well, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona has taken over the role of quality manager in the project, so how important is quality, Estella? Because I think that the focus of accessibility providers, but also researches, but also users and professionals, has somehow gradually shifted from quantity to quality. What do you think Estella?

EO: Yes, it's true. A lot of studies and research on audiovisual translation have focused since the beginning on which other practices... also there has been a lot of research on corpus which is... we could say it's a quantity thing. But since the last few years the research in audiovisual translation field...

FR: Yes, media accessibility in general.

EO: Yes, audiovisual translation and accessibility, is focusing more and more on a user approach. It's thinking more and more about a user centric approach.

FR: Yes.

EO: So, when talking about accessibility, we have... as researchers and as practitioners, we have also to take into account which is the position of the user. How the user is going to receive our outputs.

FR: Accessibility services, yes.

EO: Our accessibility services.

FR: And how important is quality in accessibility? Estella, what do you think?

EO: It's very important because at the end quality will have a direct impact on a good or a bad reception.

FR: Yeah, that's true.

EO: It's gonna determine the aim of the service. Because if you provide accessibility, what you want is that the user receives the content properly.

FR: Yeah, that you meet the user's needs.

EO: Right.

FR: We have just listened to an excerpt from an interview with Estella Oncis from the Univeristat Autonoma de Barcelona, which has taken over the role of quality manager in the LTA project. As Estella said, they will be dealing with the fourth phase of the LTA project, intitled Intellectual Output number four conducting among other things user-centered evaluations with the prospective trainers and trainees. One of the partners of the LTA project is precisely and end user association. So if you want to know more about the LTA project froma user's point of view, stay with us. We will be back soon.

FRED AD: (PEOPLE SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES) Fred, the festival experience in 23 languages.

FR: Accessible Cinema. We are talking about quality and user-centered approach within the LTA project and within the broader framework of media accessibility. With our previous guests we looked at live subtitling from the point of view of international partners and service providers, but what about end users. Let's listen then to an excerpt from interview with Marcel Bobeldijk (MB), the president of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, one of the partners of the LTA project. He will give us an overview of the current situation ragarding real-time subtitling in Europe.

FR: So, accessibility for hard of hearing people means a broad range of assistive technology and the LTA project deals in particular with real-time subtitles. I know that the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People regularly publishes surveys and comparative documents showing the rates of subtitling in member countries. So Marcel, what is the current situation regarding real-time subtitling and why are real-time subtitles so important?

MB: It is important for hard of hearing people to have the same access to information as everyone. It is in our opinion that a human right is also for people to have access to information on a television or a website, and also access to cultural life, movies in the cinemas, plays in theatres, etc. You see there is a big gap in Europe. For example in countries like the Netherlands and the UK, there are very well organised speech-to-text reporters, so the situation in the Netherlands and in the UK is a little bit different. But for example, in Sweden they have well-organised subtitling for the movies in the cinemas. That doesn't happen in the Netherlands. So, there is a difference between European countries. There's also no standardization. An example, when you look in the Netherlands for subtitling on television via teletext you use 888 while in Germany you use other numbers. So when you are in Germany it's difficult to find out the subtitles on television, because each channel is different. In France, they are working

hard to have more and more subtitling, also in Belgium, in Finland, in Sweden and also in the Czech Republic and in Spain, but the quality of the subtitling is not always very good.

FR: We have just listened to an excerpt from an interview with Marcel Bobeldijk, the president of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, which regularly publishes surveys and comparative documents showing the rates of subtitling in member countries. As Marcel said, there is a big gap in Europe with countries leading the way and other following, but, as Marcel underlined, it is important for hard of hearing people to have the same access to information as everyone everywhere. This is why the LTA project aims to design a high-quality professional profile who can be employed in different media, social and cultural contexts across Europe. LTA will achieve its aims by leaning on the certification process of the European Certification and Qualification Association, which is an LTA partner. So to know more about the certification process and the future of the LTA project, don't miss out next guest. We will be right back.

SUB-TI ACCESS AD: It is estimated that one in six people has some sort of sensory impairment or disability, which means that one in six people can't fully understand your film without subtitles for deaf or hard-of-hearing, as well as audio description for the blind or visually impaired. Sub-Ti Access generates accessible versions of films and makes media content accessible to a sensory impaired audience. Sub-Ti Access, access services for the media. Sub-Ti Access, your vision for all (subti.com).

FR: Accessible Cinema. We are talking about media accessibility, users' needs and the importance of creating certified qualification to provide high-quality live subtitles across Europe. Among the partners of the LTA project there is also a European certification partner: the European Certification and Qualification Association, a nonprofit association joining institutions and several thousands of professionals from all over Europe and abroad. So to know more about this association and its role within the LTA project, let's listen to an excerpt from an interview with Gabriele Sauberer (GS), vice-president of the European Certification and Qualification Association.

FR: You are now the Vice President of ECQA among many other things. The association provides a worldwide, unified certification scheme for numerous professions. Can you tell us more about the certification procedures?

GS: Yes. This again was a great opportunity for me. When I met ECQA... It was 10

or 15 years ago. My goal was to provide language professionals with European certificates. I was one of the first people in Austria who did the European computer driving licence. What ECQA does is exactly the same as what ECDL is, like a computer driving licence, but with professions. With all kinds of new and emerging job roles. We started with innovation manager, but when I joined ECQA 10 years ago, we developed an international European certificate for terminology managers, because this was a job role you couldn't actually graduate from. In university you have language studies, translation studies... Some parts of them tackle terminology, but only a few. This was the first time professional terminology workers could show and prove that they have the necessary skills and competencies to do terminology management at a professional level. We are doing the same thing for the LTA project, where intralingual real-time respeakers and subtitlers will get a certificate, or certification scheme basically. For the first time they will then be able to show that what they're doing in practice is complying with European standards. The exciting thing is that in that project we are creating the standard. It is not existing. There are real-time subtitling and respeaking, but there are no common standards on how this actually should be. And this is exiting.