



# **UNIT 3A. EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND (E2U) AND SUBTITLING**

## **ELEMENT 1. PROCESSES**

### **SAMPLE 1: CREATION OF E2U SUBTITLES FOLLOWING SDH RECOMMENDATIONS: ENGLISH SUBTITLES**

#### **Video Lecture Transcript**

#### **Slide 1**

This is Unit 3A. Easy to Understand and subtitling. Element 1, processes. Video lecture: Sample 1: creation of easy-to-understand subtitles in English following recommendations of subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, in short SDH.

My name is Rocío Bernabé Caro from the Internationale Hochschule SDI München, in Germany. I have created this video lecture in collaboration with Piero Cavallo.

Please do not stop the video at the end, because the video sample with the subtitles will be shown after the end of this video lecture.

## Slide 2

This video presents a case study that concerns the creation of easy-to-understand interlingual subtitles for an informative video. You can find a published paper about this topic on the reading list.

To simplify the subtitles, I followed both the Easy-to-Read guidelines, *Information for All*, published by Inclusion Europe and those for subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provided by the BBC.

The original video was created within the frame of the project Begriplig text, which means "understandable text" in Swedish. The project aimed to provide recommendations about how to convey easy to read and easy to understand information.

You can watch the original video with English, less simplified subtitles in Vimeo. The video is called "Textmakthavare Mike möter Olle NY". I do not speak Swedish. So please excuse my pronunciation.

We would like to thank our partner Ester Hedberg from Dyslexiförbundet and Mike Malmer, for providing us with the necessary rights.

If you are using this video to practise your creation skills, I recommend you watching first our video lectures about visual, editorial, and contextual parameters in Easy-to-Understand subtitling.

## Slide 3

Allow me to draw your attention to some characteristics of the subtitles, which we have created for this sample before watching the video.

Regarding the visual presentation, the subtitles appear in the lower bottom part of the screen and are embedded in a solid-black background

U3A.E1. Sample 1. Creation of E2U subtitles following SDH principles: English subtitles



to ensure good contrast. The contrast ratios throughout the whole video meet the Triple-A requirements established on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, in short WCAG, for regular and large text, which is 7:1. In our sample, the ratio for cyan is 12.9:1, for yellow 16.3:1, and for white is 19.7:1.

The subtitle events have a maximum of 2 lines of 37 characters each, which is the reference value for SDH. Nonetheless, we tried to reduce the number of characters as much as possible to reach the 32 characters per line recommended in the WCAG guidelines.

## **Slide 4**

To define the styles, we used the programme Aegisub. We used the colour codes and boxes as recommended by the BBC guidelines. The font-type is Verdana, which is a sans-serif type, and the size is 18. And the interline spacing we chose was 1.2. The text alignment in 2-line events is centred and not left-aligned because it is not possible to set this automatically in the software. However, we still recommend left alignment. Lastly, the subtitles are burnt in only for this video lecture, to serve as a sample. Again, we recommend using closed captions that can be turned on and off by viewers at any time.

## **Slide 5**

The mean on-screen time of all subtitles meet the SDH recommendation of 15 characters per second, in short cps. In our sample the mean on-screen time is 10.28 characters per second, or 123.32 words per minute, in short wpm. To do so, it was necessary to find solutions that would take into account speed, explicitation, and speaker's style. For instance, we

would have preferred a more explicit translation for subtitle 13. This was: "If you cannot read, then people call you stupid." However, we had to dismiss this option because it was too long. Instead, we chose the translation: "If not, they call you stupid.". Conversely, in subtitle 15, it could have been possible to eliminate the pronoun "me" at the end of the sentence. However, we prioritised explicitation. In both cases, the sentences are long, and we were only able to meet the 15 cps by increasing the original on-screen times by a hundredth of a second, while keeping synchrony.

## **Slide 6**

Regarding the editorial aspects, we followed the recommendations that we discussed in our video lecture on this topic.

We have used simple sentences where possible, the active voice, and have avoided special characters as much as possible. For instance, we have eliminated the suspension points used in the original. We also eliminated the dashes in the dialogues because we have used colours instead.

All contracted forms have been written out. And sentences follow the Subject-Verb-Object order as closely as possible. Less frequent words such as "input" were replaced by other, more common ones. In this case "input" was replaced by "tips". Lastly, the percentage in the subtitle number 6 was replaced by a word that expresses the underlying idea, in this case, this word was "many".

Overall the text is linguistically correct and has been proofread by the English native speaker and professional translator, Stephen Wood.



## Slide 7

Mechanics has enabled us to create lines that comprise one sentence and one idea. Of course, this was not possible in all cases, as you will see in a minute. In such cases, sentences were split into two lines. We segmented the lines where we would pause when reading the text out loud and considering that some groups of words should remain together.

For instance, in second 00:09.350, the sentence: "I work at a museum in Stockholm, in Sweden." was segmented after the word "museum" in order to maintain the prepositions and nouns together. Similarly, the sentence in minute 01:31.120: "Short texts with information are better." was segmented after "the word information" in order to keep the idea "Short texts with information" together.

Lastly, the original has some difficult words, for instance, ADHS and dyslexia. As you will see, we have simplified them by explaining them. To do so, ADHS has been replaced by: "I find it hard to concentrate." and dyslexia, by: "And I can confuse letters."

## Slide 8

Lastly; contextual information. We have used colours to identify the speakers, Olle and Mike. For instance, we have used the white colour for Olle and yellow for Mike, the second main character. For other interventions, we have used cyan.

The use of colours has enabled us to avoid the use of italics in the minute 1:38. Here Olle is speaking, but he does not appear on the screen.



## Slide 9

Altogether, we can say that creating Easy-to-Understand subtitles by leaning on SDH recommendations provided us with a good initial point. Especially because some parameters such as on-screen times and number of characters per line, or colours have not been developed yet for Easy-to-Understand subtitles.

The main issue remains the reading speed. Though we were able to create subtitles that reach a mean value of 10.28 cps, or 123.32 wpm, we still need data from end-users to validate their effectiveness. In the next months, we will validate these subtitles with end-users within the new Erasmus+ project called Train2Validate. We will share with you our findings as soon as possible.

### **Video sample**

Ok, let's watch the video now.



E2U subtitles

1

00:00:00,400 --> 00:00:04,160

How can we make simpler texts?

2

00:00:07,080 --> 00:00:08,800

I am Olle Burman.

3

00:00:09,350 --> 00:00:13,080

I work at a museum

in Stockholm, in Sweden.

4

00:00:13,680 --> 00:00:17,800

There are many texts in the museum.

5

00:00:17,960 --> 00:00:21,600

This text is an example.

6

00:00:21,760 --> 00:00:26,880

Many people in Sweden find  
reading difficult.



7

00:00:27,720 --> 00:00:31,600

Hi, I am Mike.

Olle. How do you find this text?

8

00:00:32,040 --> 00:00:36,320

I find it difficult.

Many words are difficult.

9

00:00:36,480 --> 00:00:39,750

This word is difficult.

And this one, too.

10

00:00:40,200 --> 00:00:42,120

Can I change it a bit?

11

00:00:42,240 --> 00:00:43,760

Of course.

Okay.

12

00:00:47,320 --> 00:00:49,790

People think that you can read.

13

00:00:50,470 --> 00:00:52,280

If not, they call you stupid.

14

00:00:53,040 --> 00:00:57,150

I find it hard to concentrate.

And I can confuse letters.

15

00:00:57,520 --> 00:01:01,200

I used to get upset.

Because people did not understand me.

16

00:01:01,760 --> 00:01:06,070

Now I correct their texts.

And people understand me better.

17

00:01:06,640 --> 00:01:09,680

I made some changes.

18

00:01:10,040 --> 00:01:13,120

"Bourgeois" is now "middle-class".

19

00:01:13,280 --> 00:01:17,080

The parts are shorter.



20

00:01:17,240 --> 00:01:21,320

And I separated the parts.

Then you have time to think.

21

00:01:21,480 --> 00:01:23,480

Very clear.

22

00:01:24,640 --> 00:01:28,200

I want to say to people:

23

00:01:28,400 --> 00:01:31,040

Complicated texts are difficult.

24

00:01:31,120 --> 00:01:35,160

Short texts with information  
are better.

25

00:01:35,560 --> 00:01:37,480

Many thanks!

Thank you.

26

00:01:38,040 --> 00:01:40,720

Mike gave me useful tips.



27

00:01:40,880 --> 00:01:44,480

I will use these tips at work.

28

00:01:49,200 --> 00:01:54,000

You can read more

about how to make simpler texts here:

## Slide 10

This video lecture has been prepared by Rocío Bernabé Caro and Piero Cavallo from the Internationale Hochschule SDI München, in Germany.

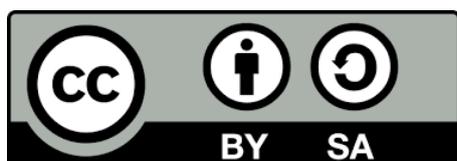
We have worked together with the Universidade de Vigo, in Spain.

## Slide 11

You can reach me at [rocio.bernabe@sdi-muenchen.de](mailto:rocio.bernabe@sdi-muenchen.de).

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