



UNIT 1. MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

ELEMENT 4. WHAT IS MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY?

MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

Video Lecture Transcript

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This is unit 1, Media accessibility; element 4, What is media accessibility?; video lecture Media accessibility standards. I am Anna Matamala, from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

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And in this short lecture I will be talking about some of the main media accessibility standards.

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A standard is a document approved by a recognised standardization body which is established by consensus. Standards define requirements for products and services so that they are safe, reliable and of good quality. Standards should not be confused with legislation or with

recommendations and guidelines. Standards are pre-requisites for laws, but they are not laws.

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Standards need to be approved by standardization bodies, so a series of guidelines proposed by another organization are not standards.

At international level, standardization bodies include ISO (International Standardisation Organisation), IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) and the UN agency ITU (International Telecommunication Union). At European level, the European Standards Organisations are CEN (European Committee for Standardisation), CENELEC (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation) and ETSI (European Telecommunication Standards Institute). At national level, each country has its standardization agency, so please check which one you have in your country.

I would like here to refer to a few relevant standards for media accessibility.

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I will start with **EN301 549 v2.1.2 (2018-08)**, which is a harmonised European standard that establishes accessibility requirements for ICT products and services. It was prepared pursuant to a Commission's standardization request to provide one voluntary means of conforming to the essential requirements of the Web Accessibility Directive. It was produced by ETSI technical committee Human Factors and the e-accessibility joint coworking group of CEN-CENELEC-ETSI. In its 2019

updated version adopts W3C WCAG 2.1. guidelines for web content, electronic document and non-web software such as mobile applications.

The document considers that ability impairments may be permanent, temporary or situational, and any person, regardless of physical, cognitive or sensory abilities, needs to be able to locate, identify and operate ICT functions and to access the information provided. This is why it considers that usage should be possible in the following conditions:

- Without vision
- With limited vision
- Without perception of colour
- Without hearing
- With limited hearing
- Without vocal capability
- With limited manipulation or strength
- With limited reach
- With limited cognition
- And minimising photosensitive seizure triggers, maintaining the user's privacy at all times.

The document sets a list of specific requirements that I invite you to read. It is worth highlighting that the document refers to captioning (or subtitling) and audio description as necessary alternatives to time-based media. Time-based media refers to film, video, audios or digital works that unfold over a period of time.



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Another relevant standard is **EN 17161 (2019)** "Design for All Accessibility following a Design for All approach in products, goods and services – Extending the range of users". It was developed by the CEN-CENELEC joint technical committee 12 in response to the European Commission Standardisation Request through Mandate/473. This standard includes requirements that can allow an organisation to design, develop and provide products, goods and services that can be accessed, understood and used by the widest range of users including persons with disabilities.

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ISO has also developed a series of standards on accessibility as part of ISO/IEC JTC1/Subcommittee 35:

ISO/IEC TS 200071-21:2015 Information technology – User interface component accessibility – Part 21: Guidance on audio description. It is a 24-page long technical specification that describes how the different types of audio description should be created. It deals with aspects such as the styles of narration, the levels of importance and how to describe relevant sounds and text on screen. Guidance is offered on how to describe specific specific elements (objects, characters, spatio-temporal settings, etc.).

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ISO/IEC TS 20071-25:2017 Information technology – User interface component accessibility. Part 25: Guidance on the audio presentation of text in videos, including captions, subtitles and other on-screen text. It is

a 12-page technical specification published in 2017 that provides guidance on how on-screen text (including subtitles) can be transmitted auditorily. Put briefly, it is a standard for audio subtitles and audio text.

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ISO/IEC DIS 20071-23:2018 Information technology – User interface component accessibility – Part 23: Guidance on the visual presentation of audio information (including captions and subtitles). It is a standard on subtitles, but does not deal with the translation process. It addresses the visual design of subtitles and how speech and non-speech information (for instance, sound effects, paralinguistic elements, music, emotions, silence, etc.) is transferred into the subtitles. It also provides advice on how to identify speakers and how to evaluate the quality of the subtitles.

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It is very important to highlight that ISO has joined forces with the ITU group specializing in media accessibility, which is named Intersector Rapporteur Group on Audiovisual Media, IRG-AVA for short.

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I would also like to draw your attention to a report authored by ITU and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs that was published in 2011 on “Making Television Accessible”. Although things have evolved since then, it offers a wide overview of how audiovisual content can be made more accessible.



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To conclude, I would like to mention that standards on easy and plain language are being currently developed, sometimes relating them to audiovisual media, but this will be the topic of another video. For now, I would suggest that you do some research and try to find if there are any standards related to media accessibility that have been developed by your national standardization agency.

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This video lecture has been prepared by Anna Matamala, from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. You can reach me at anna.matamala@uab.cat.

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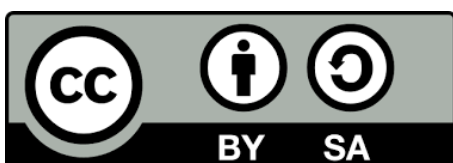
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