



## **UNIT 1. MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY**

### **ELEMENT 1. HUMAN DIVERSITY**

#### **HUMAN DIVERSITY**

#### **Video Lecture Transcript**

#### **Slide 1**

This is unit 1, Media Accessibility; element 1, Human diversity; video lecture, Human diversity. I am Anna Matamala, from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

#### **Slide 2**

And in this short lecture I will be defining some concepts related to human diversity.

#### **Slide 3**

We are all unique. We all have individual differences. We can think of human diversity in terms of major differences between groups related to factors such as ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, first language, socio-economic status, age, physical and mental capabilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or national origin, among



many others. These categories are not always fixed, and definitions of diversity may adopt a narrower or a broader perspective.

## **Slide 4**

I would invite you to read a chapter entitled "Social and psychological perspectives on diversity", by Lilian Otaye-Ebede and Loliya Akobo. It was published in 2020 in the second edition of the book "Managing diversity and inclusion", edited by Jawad Syed and Mustafa Ozbilgin.

## **Slide 5**

The authors explain that what unites narrow and broad definitions of human diversity is the concept of difference. They say, and I quote, "diversity can be defined as a variety of visible and non-visible differences (e.g. gender, ethnic, social class, age, religion) inherent amongst individuals and groups. However, an evaluation of extant diversity research shows more emphasis given to social groups that have been historically subjected to discrimination such as by gender, age, ethnicity, race, disability, sexual orientation and hence have been protected by laws across the globe".

These same authors provide some interesting insights into four key concepts when working with different social groups. Let me summarise them.



## Slide 6

The first is stereotypes. Stereotypes are considered, and again I quote, “biased generalisations about a social group”. They are related to cognition. We learn them in different ways (for example, through communication with parents and peers, through the media) and they are difficult to change. The authors I mentioned posit an example that we may decide that “children who wear glasses are geeks, not good at sports” or that “blonde women are unintelligent”.

## Slide 7

The second is prejudice. In a classic definition, Allport defines it as “antipathy based on a faulty or inflexible generalization”. Prejudices are often based on stereotypes and impact on the way we communicate and behave with others, on the way we think. Given the way we think of a group, due to a stereotype, we develop a negative emotion towards a social group, we develop a prejudice. For instance, some people may dislike or hate someone with a certain sexual orientation.

## Slide 8

The third concept is unconscious bias. Without being aware of it, we may favour those who look like us or share similar values over others who don't.

## Slide 9

The last concept is discrimination. Discrimination is linked to behaviour. When people are treated less favourably, because they are linked to a



group (because of age, physical and mental capabilities, ethnicity, etc.), discrimination occurs. This discrimination can be direct or indirect, and can take multiple forms.

I will refer to two examples put by Lilian Otaye-Ebede and Loliya Akobo in their chapter. For example, when a man and a woman are equally qualified for a post, the job may be offered to the male because most of the staff are men and think the man will fit in better. This would be direct discrimination. Another example would be when a higher education institution does not allow dogs at all on the premises. This can be an indirect discrimination against persons with sight loss with a guide dog.

Discrimination against people with disabilities is known as ableism or disablism.

Michelle Nario-Redmon, in the book "Ableism: The Causes and Consequences of Disability Prejudice", published in 2020, considers that, despite the many definitions of "ableism", it could be simply defined as, and again I quote, "prejudice and discrimination towards individuals simply because they are classified as disabled – regardless of whether their impairments are physical or mental, visible or invisible".

From a theoretical point of view, the bibliography is extensive, and I am sure you will be able to find interesting readings to get a deeper learning of all these concepts. I would like to finish this video with reference to two key documents.

## **Slide 10**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in its Article 2:

"Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex,

language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.”

## **Slide 11**

And the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states in its article 5:

“States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds”.

I hope this lecture was food for thought.

## **Slide 12**

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

## **Slide 13**

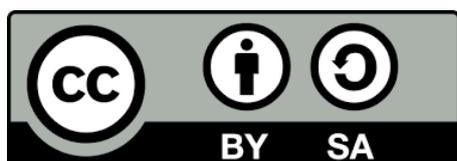
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**Copyright and disclaimer:** The project EASIT has received funding from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education programme, grant agreement 2018-1-ES01-KA203-05275.

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