ACCESSIBILITY TO MOOCS IN HBBTV

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1. DEFINITION

Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) are free courses delivered as a series of lessons to a web browser or mobile device. Theoretically they can be accessed anytime and anyplace, though the reality is different for persons with disabilities. The language can also be considered here if we aim at widening greatly the number of end users. With this in mind, and with the aim to teach the services available to make MOOCs accessible the EU co-funded project HBB4ALL design a course on media accessibility.

2. SERVICES

Accessibility services that should be used in a MOOC.

2.1. SUBTITLES FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING (CAPTIONS)

These are same language subtitles and are a transcription of the dialogue. If other sounds, music are available, these should be annotated.

SDH (English audio to English subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing)

2.2. SUBTITLES

The translation of the dialogues.

Interlingual subtitles (English into Spanish)

2.3. AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Audio description (AD) is a service for the blind and visually impaired that renders Visual Arts and Media accessible to this target group. It offers a verbal description of the relevant (visual) components of a work of art or media product, so that blind and visually impaired patrons can fully grasp its form and content.

EXAMPLE AUDIO DESCRIPTION

2.4. AUDIO SUBTITLES

Read aloud subtitles, subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH), or other texts on the screen.

> EXAMPLE AUDIO SUBTITLES

2.5. SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign languages (SL) are the primary means for communication used by the Deaf Communities. There are about 70 M sign language users around the world.

Sign language users include deaf, deafblind, hearing-impaired and even hearing individuals. Sign language users identify themselved as a minority linguistic

group and culturally belong to the Deaf Community. Moreover, as many minority languages, SLs have a low social and linguistic status.

Sign languages are natural languages just like any spoken language, but they differ in the language modality they use. Sign languages are visual-gestural

languages. They use several articulators such as the hands and arms, face and most of the upper body parts to convey all linguistic structures. Facial expressions,

like eyebrow position, mouthing, head tilts, and shoulder and torso positions are used to convey meaning and grammar in all the linguistic levels.

Sign language.

3. STAGES

Accessibility services that should be used in a MOOC.

3.1. PRE-PRODUCTION STAGE

- the provision of metadata for translators, including not only the script (in fiction) or the transcripts (in documentaries) but also any other information available, such as research material, the treatment, the storyboard and the shooting script, which may be very useful for the audio describer;
- attention to clothing colour if subtitles are to be used;
- collaboration between the subtitler and the creative team in pre-production if subtitles are to be used as part of the original film (part-subtitling).
- or the provision of dialogue transcription to be automatically translated, and then edited by a professional.

3.2. PRODUCTION STAGE

- attention to framing if subtitles are to be used. This is particularly important in the case of close ups with dialogue or narration.
- attention at leaving some spaces with no dialogue for audio description to be inserted, if the scene or example has visual clues.

3.3. POST-PRODUCTION STAGE

- collaboration between the translator and the post-production team;
- attention to on-screen titles (particularly in documentaries) and on-screen text when dialogue or narration is used over them. Unless the shot is extended, the viewers of the translated film may end up losing either the dialogue/narration or the translation of the text;
- access to the sound editors, or to the sound editing process, may prove very useful for SDH subtitlers. The experience could help them engage with and understand useful terms they need to describe the music, the special effects and the atmosphere for the deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers.
- access to the sound editors to provide a good audio description mix

4. TECHNOLOGY

The personalisation of the MOOCs accessibility features is realized with an online platform called AccessGUIDE. It allows the personalisation of accessible online video services on PCs and mobile platforms. The Software as a Service (SaaS) platform that can be used by application developers to include personalized accessibility feature into their applications. It comes along with an online multi-language text to speech function that can be used for screen reader and spoken subtitle functionality. It supports the personalisation of the applications user interface, the subtitles in video on demand applications as well as the text to speech service.
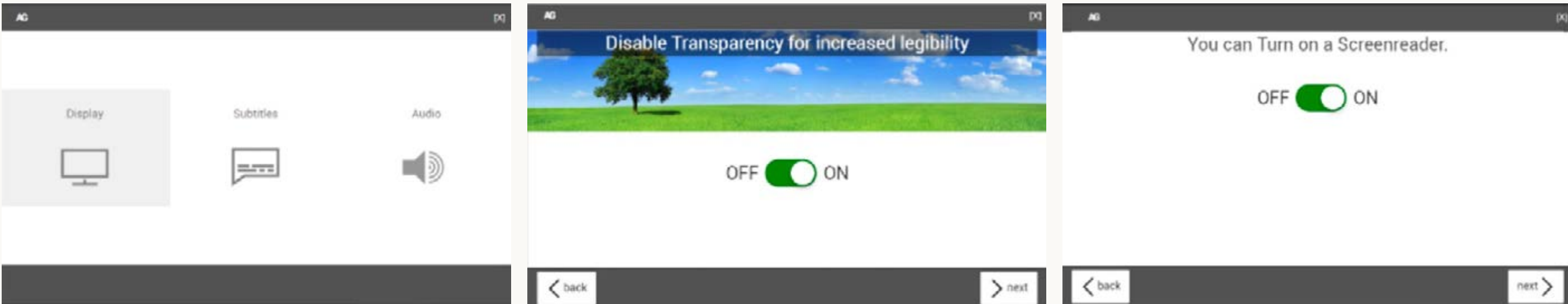
Vsonix has integrated the AccessGUIDE service into its interactive online video platform "vPlayer" that supports accessibility features such as a screen reader functionality, customizable multi-language subtitles (language, size and position), spoken subtitles in different languages as well as the possibility to switch between signed and unsigned video content.