



SignMedia

510388-LLP-1-2010-1-UK-LEONARDO-LMP

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=8860>

Project Information

Title: SignMedia
Project Number: 510388-LLP-1-2010-1-UK-LEONARDO-LMP
Year: 2010
Project Type: Development of Innovation
Status: completed
Country: EU-Centralised Projects
Marketing Text: SignMedia

Media production offers a rich source of employment opportunities for deaf graduates and professionals. However, the constant communication through written English can prove a barrier for sign language users.

With the support the European Unions' Lifelong Learning Programme, SignMedia has developed an innovative online learning resource, for deaf media professionals.

SignMedia teaches elements of written English through sign language in an engaging learning environment using video, animation and game-play. By centring round media documentation scenarios SignMedia enables users to develop language skills relevant to the work place.

The learning tool is accessible to users of British, Austrian and Italian sign language and is designed primarily for deaf media professionals, but also has benefits for deaf media students and sign language users who wish to develop their written English at an intermediate level.

Visit: www.signmedia.tv

Summary: European deaf people like their hearing counterparts should have equal access to the medium of written English. In each EU country there is a clear deaf community, (Pellet Boodle & Ochre, 2008) with members using the specific Sign Language of that community as their first language. Sign Language in each country is linguistically distinct from the spoken and written language (Woll et al), but written English can be seen by deaf people as a common means of communication with deaf and hearing people across Europe. Research and practice has identified that Deaf Europeans wish to learn written English in order to work and travel (Fleming in Kellet-Bidoll & Ochse, 2008) thus enhancing their lifelong chances. However, for decades educators have not been successful in making written English accessible as they have used methods created for those of us who hear. Fleming (1999 & 2008) re-examined the pedagogy and began to teach written English via Sign Language. Research has also shown that deaf people strongly identify with the media, especially digital media in film and broadcasting (Cybels, 2003). Recently the University of Wolverhampton UOWLW discovered that 70% of deaf graduates are working in arts and media-related industries (Fleming & Hay 2005). Therefore the project specifically targets people working in this sector. The online learning tool provides self-access exercises on written English, taught through the Sign Language of each partner country, thus providing 3 versions of the course, all with the same end product. The final product will enhance the inclusion of deaf media specialists in the current European media industry and improve their career and mobility prospects by providing access and skills in the most used language. The consortium of partners from Austria, Italy and the UK, (University of Klagenfurt, University of Turin, University of Wolverhampton, Mutt&Jeff Productions UK), sees this innovative pedagogy as a model for other deaf learning packages.

Description: SignMedia – Learning Resource

The aims:

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The world of media production offers an increasingly rich source of employment opportunities for deaf graduates and professionals. However, the constant communication through written English can prove a barrier for sign language users.

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union, the SignMedia project aims to break down these barriers with an innovative and accessible online learning resource, promoting career development and a new level of confidence for deaf media professionals.

The innovation:

SignMedia delivers an interactive learning experience that teaches elements of written English through sign language. Users will encounter a flexible and engaging learning environment, combining elements of video, animation and game-play.

All learning activities are designed around authentic media documentation taken from the production process, such as Location Risk Assessments, Crew and Actors Call Sheets and Scripts, enabling deaf users to develop language skills that are directly transferrable to their work environment.

Who is it for?

The online learning tool is accessible for users of British, Austrian and Italian sign languages. It is designed primarily for deaf media professionals, but has clear benefits for deaf media students and other sign language users who wish to develop their written English at an intermediate level.

Hearing people with a professional or personal interest in sign languages can also make use of this excellent resource.

The team:

A European collaboration, the experienced team of deaf and hearing professionals offers expertise in e-learning, media, deaf education, sign language and linguistics. SignMedia project partners are the University of Wolverhampton (UK), Klagenfurt University (Austria), University of Turin, (Italy) and Mutt & Jeff Pictures Ltd (UK).

The SignMedia online learning resource is available at www.signmedia.tv

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- Themes:
- *** Intercultural learning
 - *** Lifelong learning
 - *** Open and distance learning
 - *** Vocational guidance
 - *** Access for disadvantaged
 - *** Equal opportunities
 - *** Language training
 - ** Labor market
 - ** ICT
 - ** Enterprise, SME
- Sectors:
- *** Education
 - *** Arts, Entertainment and Recreation

Product Types: website
teaching material

Product information: SignMedia is a learning resource set within the fictitious world of a production company called SunriseMedia Productions. The user is asked to complete a number of tasks to help the production to run smoothly and to win television awards!

The Narrative within the Learning Resource:

By setting the learning resource in the world of a production company, the users

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become involved in a narrative that is relevant to their professional life and increases their engagement with the product. The user enters the learning environment in a role that has status and responsibilities, instead of carrying the label of 'learner' or 'beginner'. The world also uses game-play systems and recognisable communication technologies that are widely accessed by Deaf media professionals. (smart phones, laptops, facetime, social networking)

The aim of the Learning Resource:

Our aim is to enable deaf media professionals to develop written English skills that will be relevant to specific areas of their working life. Central to the learning design are sector-specific scenario documents, (e.g. Risk Assessment, Call Sheet).

The Media Documents:

The final document for each task will replicate authentic documentation. Each document will include sentences, phrases and terminology taken from original documents.

Within each type of document, a key grammatical feature is identified as the focus for the learning and teaching, e.g. a Risk Assessment focuses on the use of the passive voice as that is a commonly occurring grammatical feature.

The role of the scenario document is to provide a context for the teaching of specific areas of grammar that the user would need if they were to reproduce the document in the workplace.

This is supported by access to translations of key terminology that are common to the documents and regularly used in a media environment. For example, the content of a Risk Assessment will vary greatly depending on the location it is assessing. However, key terminology remains the same across different Risk Assessments (Control measures, hazards, etc.), as does the use of the passive voice in the sentence structure.

Once Deaf users have completed a task, a completed example of the relevant document will be available to them. This will be stored in a 'folder' on the desk top.

The Learning exercises:

Once students have selected which document scenario to work on, they can then access a selection of learning exercises and a signed video clip that teaches them about the grammatical feature. This signed video is supported by animation of the English words and phrases. Students can move between the exercises and video clip as many times as they want until they achieve a score they are satisfied with.

They will be directed to signed hints and tips (taken from the main 'Producer' character's teaching script) that are relevant to the areas that they need to improve.

Learning packs:

Learning packs include a written version of the signed tutorial, written versions of the exercises and any other support information (e.g. lists of irregular verbs) for each document. Users of the resource are encouraged to print this out when they select the task as it provides a physical, real-world connection with the online learning. Depending on learner preference, they can attempt the exercises on paper before entering their answers on screen.

The Lexicon:

Users of the learning resource will also have access to 300 words/phrases. These have been translated into the three sign languages and included as a glossary. Users can access the glossary by following links from the words when they appear in the documents or by selecting a button on the tool bar.

Learner choice:

Our aim is to create a flexible learning environment that allows users to access the learning in an order that suits them. This increases learner motivation and engagement, and also means that users can use the tool to respond to specific requirements as they occur in their own workplace.

However, there are a few tasks that require prior knowledge in order for successful learning to take place. When this is the case, certain documents will remain 'locked' until the user has completed the pre-requisite task and exercises.

Summary:

After completing the learning resource, users will be able to

- i) Demonstrate knowledge of specific grammatical structures that are central to the written production of key media documentation
- ii) Comprehend items of English media terminology

Project Information

The SignMedia learning resource is an innovative product designed to create an engaging user experience.

Projecthomepage: www.signmedia.tv

Project Contractor

Name: University of Wolverhampton
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Partner

Partner 1

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Country/Region: Outer London
Country: UK-United Kingdom
Organization Type: SME - small and medium-sized enterprise (up to 250 employees)
Homepage:

Partner 2

Name: University of Klagenfurt
City: Klagenfurt
Country/Region: Lower Austria
Country: AT-Austria
Organization Type: university/Fachhochschule/academy
Homepage:

Partner 3

Name: University of Turin
City: Turin
Country/Region: Nord Ovest
Country: IT-Italy
Organization Type: university/Fachhochschule/academy
Homepage:

Project Files

2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prj/2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

SignMedia Final Report

2010_3663_PR_SIGNMED_pub1.pdf

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prj/2010_3663_PR_SIGNMED_pub1.pdf

SignMedia Progress Report

Products

- 1 SignMedia Learning Tool
- 2 Final Report

Product 'SignMedia Learning Tool'

Title: SignMedia Learning Tool

Product Type: material for open learning

Marketing Text: SignMedia recognised that the world of broadcast media offers an increasingly rich source of employment for deaf graduates and professionals across Europe; but that focus on communication through written English can prove to be a barrier for Sign Language users.

The SignMedia learning resource aims to break down these barriers with an innovative and accessible online learning resource that teaches elements of industry-specific English through Sign Language video and interactive tasks. It has pushed boundaries further in elearning design, bringing video narrative, and an immersive, alternative reality to Deaf online education for the first time.

The SignMedia consortium believes that the SignMedia learning tool, which is suitable for users of British, Austrian and Italian Sign Languages will enhance the inclusion of deaf media specialists in the current European media industry, challenge stereotypes and raise aspirations.

Description: The SignMedia project recognises the immense potential of combining the shared visual modalities of e-learning, media and Sign Language. The result is a product that uses contemporary media developments to reflect the vibrancy, creativity and professional aspirations of the deaf community.

All learning activities are designed around authentic media documentation taken from the production process, such as location risk assessments, crew and actors call sheets and scripts, enabling deaf users to develop skills that are directly transferrable to a work environment.

Sign Media delivers an interactive learning experience that teaches elements of written English through sign language. Users will encounter a flexible and engaging learning environment, combining elements of video, animation and game-play.

The materials are designed for flexible, non-linear use that can either be approached as an online course or respond to users' needs at a particular moment in time. For example, as part of their job the user may need to complete a compliance form or risk assessment, or alternatively their motivation to select a document may be linked to a particular grammatical feature.

Each of the seven production document scenarios, including tasks, signed tuition, glossary and supplementary materials can take up to one hour to complete, depending on the skill level of the learner. Users are encouraged to revisit and complete the learning materials through the scoring and reward system, and the signed glossary and grammar tutorials are available as a continuing resource.

The learning resource also offers users the option to access the glossary in British, Austria or Italian Sign Language, creating further language experiences for deaf people and encouraging increased mobility between countries.

Target group: The online learning tool is accessible for users of British, Austrian and Italian sign languages. It is designed primarily for deaf media professionals, but has clear benefits for deaf media students and other sign language users who wish to develop their written English at an intermediate level.

Hearing people with a professional or personal interest in sign languages can also make use of this excellent resource.

Result: The primary result of the SignMedia project is the interactive online learning tool which can be accessed at <http://www.signmedia.tv/>. Registration is currently free and open to all.

Product 'SignMedia Learning Tool'

Area of application: The SignMedia project has the potential to have a significant impact on the European deaf community. Historically, this has been a community with limited mobility, limited aspirations and low levels of employment, but positive developments in legislation and educational provision mean that this is gradually changing. SignMedia is important because it represents successful, high-achieving deaf Europeans. It assumes that the users have, or are about to have exciting careers, travel, and collaborate professionally with other countries, and by reflecting their humour, ambition and creativity it reinforces their status as a linguistic, rather than a disabled minority.

Throughout the creative process, on-going evaluation was carried out by the teams of Austrian, British and Italian deaf industry professionals who were involved in the filming and production process.

Focus groups comprised of deaf media professionals and students also tested the learning tool and have described it as 'engaging', 'unique' and 'fun'.

Homepage: www.signmedia.tv

Product Languages: German
English
Italian

product files

SignMedia Final Report

2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prd/1/3/2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

SignMedia Learning Tool

114. SignMedia Learning Tool Screenshot Tour.pdf

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prd/1/4/114.%20SignMedia%20Learning%20Tool%20Screenshot%20Tour.pdf>

SignMedia Progress Report

2010_3663_PR_SIGNMED_pub1.pdf

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prd/1/2/2010_3663_PR_SIGNMED_pub1.pdf

Product 'Final Report'

Title: Final Report

Product Type: others

Marketing Text: A final report including an executive summary and a summary description of project objectives, a description of the main outcomes and results, partnerships, the potential impact and the contribution to EU policies.

Description:

Target group:

Result:

Area of application:

Homepage:

Product Languages: English

product files

Final report

2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/8860/prd/2/2/2010_3663_FR_SIGNMED_pub.pdf

Project Tags

The project belongs to the following group(s):

Best Projects (<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/thematicgroup/MMVII>)