Captioning Methods
for
Educational Videos

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Objectives

- Review the purpose of captions
- Review technical aspects
- Demonstrate and summarize various alternatives
- Demonstrate my preferred method
- Demonstrate captions in Moodle and Canvas

- Not an expert, but have experience
- You are an instructor or administrator wanting captions

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Purpose of Captions

- Accessibility:
  - For those with hearing disabilities
- For the educational organization
  - Required by law

- Benefit all students
  - Improve understanding
  - Improve engagement and retention
  - Helps with technical terms
  - ELS students
- Benefit instructors
  - A record of what was said
  - Direct students to specific points
  - Serves as starting point for future improvements

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Technical Terms

- Closed captions
  - Sidecar file
- Open captions
  - Burned into the video

- Captions, subtitles and transcripts

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Some Characteristics

- Evaluation metrics:
  - Cost (service or your time)
  - Time (production)
  - Quality (accuracy, formatting, alignment)

- Educational videos:
  - Create original
  - Edit existing (change words and timing)
  - Revise (delete/insert, move)

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Some Alternatives

- Use the computer OS (Windows 11 and Ventura)
- Manually
- Internet (websites)
- Pay for (Rev.com)
- Software (MovieCaptioner, Camtasia)
- Video serving platforms (YouTube and Vimeo)
  - Auto-generated captions
- Adobe Premiere

- Scripted and unscripted videos
- Focus on "closed-caption" sidecar file

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Windows and Mac OSs

- Use tools built into Windows or Mac
  - Free
  - The computer creates the captions

- Issues
  - Quality is poor
  - Captions lag voice
  - Captions should contain more than just words (birds chirping, soft-music, loud bang)
  - Cannot create a standalone transcript file

- Perhaps in the future

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Manual Captioning

- Two major types of caption files:
  1. .srt (~ 90%)
  2. .vtt (~ 10%)
- ASCII "text" files
  - Edit with any text editing or word-processing software
- Contents:
  - Words
  - Timecodes

- Type, cut/paste words
  - Possible, but very time consuming
- Create timecodes
  - Impractical

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Web-based Solutions

- Search for "free captioning services"

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Rev.com – "Pay For" Solution

- Currently $1.50 USD per minute
- Reasonable price
- Quality meets education standards

- Great editor
  - Adjust words and timing, spell check, search, and more
- Rev.com uses a person, better than auto-generated captions
- A script can be uploaded for improved accuracy
- Translations to other languages
- Drawbacks
  - A revised video must be recaptioned, pay again
  - University-owned account didn't provide me the editor

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Captioning Software: MovieCaptioner

- Load movie
- While playing movie, manually type what is said
- Hit "Return" to capture the text and timecode

- Better than a "text" editor
- Somewhat slow, based upon your typing speed
- Supports many caption file formats

- Around $100
- More economical than Rev.com?
  - What does your typist cost?

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Camtasia (TechSmith)

- Available for PC and Mac Provides captioning track
- You manually type words on the caption track
- PC-version provides auto-generated captions
- Able to export captions as SRT file

- Auto-generated voice-to-text should be trained
- Editing takes time

- Camtasia Suite (about $ 100 USD per yr.)
  - Includes Camtasia (screen recordings) and SnagIt (screenshots)

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YouTube

- Free!
- Provides auto-generated captions

- Drawbacks
  1. Licensing issues
  2. Ads and irrelevant videos show
  3. Auto-generated captions may not meet educational quality standards

- Solutions
  - Find another video distribution platform
  - Embed YouTube videos
  - Edit the captions

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YouTube's Caption Editor

- Quite robust (like Rev.com)

- Spell check
- Search and replace
- Correct words
- Adjust timing

- You can export YouTube's captions as SRT, VTT, or SBV

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Vimeo

- Costs me around $250/yr.
- Reliable video-serving platform

- You retain ownership of your videos
- Good control of user interface

- Auto-generated captions
- Editor for word correction
- Good quality

- Download/upload SRT files
- Videos can be embedded in LMS

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Vimeo's Regular Player - Features

- Includes captions and transcripts
- Searchable transcripts
- Chapter markers

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Adobe Premiere

- My recommended choice for captioning
- Timeline contains video assets and captions
- Can auto-generate captions and transcripts
- Higher accuracy than YouTube and Vimeo
- I use Premiere to caption Internet download videos

- Editing tools superior
  - Able to adjust words and timing
  - Offers find and replace, keyboard shortcuts, spell check
  - Timeline editing: ripple, rolling, trimming, slip, and split

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My Premiere Method

- Replace Premiere transcription with script text

- Begin with auto-generated transcription
- Insert backtick ` character at breakpoints
- Run MS Word macro to reformat the script
- Replace Premiere transcription segments with script segments

- Very accurate
- Faster than editing auto-generated captions

- Create mp4 and SRT files, upload to Vimeo

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Premiere Summary

- Premiere can create open-captioned videos

- Creative Cloud Subscription, $30 USD per month
  - Includes Photoshop, After Effects, Acrobat, plus more

- No longer need Rev.com

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Captions in Moodle and Canvas

- Using YouTube or Vimeo, captions are provided by the platform

- Without a platform (i.e., a video and caption file)
  - Moodle: Insert Media tool
    - Point to video's URL
    - Upload a VTT file

  - Canvas: Insert, Media, upload video
    - Upload a SRT file

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Summary

- Rev.com: great pay-for solution
- YouTube: good free solution, except licensing
- Adobe Premiere: my preferred solution

- For additional resources, see

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