Universal Teaching and Learning

Topic(s):

Mainstream teaching and learning has been - for hundreds of years - mostly based on print, paper & ink, blackboard & chalk. Within the last decades, interactive digital tools made possible by widespread, cheap and fast developing Information- and Communication Technologies entered mainstream teaching and learning (but kept using the basic didactical strategies, paradigns and patterns).

All this left the education and support of learners and teachers with disabilities to highly specialised activities and institutions adapting the contents and modalities to accessible formats to be used with ICT and (expensive) appropriate Assistive Technologies or assistance.

Additionally, learners and teachers with a disability need to stick on highly visual strategies and targets and all support activities had to work around the most prominent barriers resulting from this visually centered mainstream approach (e.g. describing pictures and graphical content or resolving complex structures like nested tables for blind people).

New offers (e-, distance / blended learning and Online Courses / MOOCs) and emerging technologies like eBooks and the use of HTML5/XML and other native digital interaction schemes have the power to be accessible by itself from the very beginning and 24/7 - if not subject to measures making them inaccessible on their way to the "customer".

Actual developments, e.g. the lawsuit against Harvard University and the MIT for inappropriate subtitling and captions of (free) online courses (see: http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/12/us-usa-education-lawsuit-idUSKBN0LG20S20150212) underpin the necessity of using native accessibility features as well as easy, efficient, comfortable, cheap and reliable structures and approaches for implementing accessibility to all aspects of teaching and learning and the used materials.

This STS addresses practicioners, experts and institutions working in the field of preparing, adapting and providing educational teaching and training materials in accessible formats from study literature in .docx, .html, .pdf to Daisy and eBooks over mathematical / complex content as well as individuals / institutions providing multimedia enriched and interactive teaching and learning materials. This STS focuses but is not limited to blind and partially sighted people as a primary target group.

You want to contribute to this important field of research and work?

Send your extended abstract (2 pages) to andrea.petz@jku.at by March 15.

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Chairs (in alphabetical order):

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