Midwinter Virtual Conference 2022

Questions from Session 9: Crash Course in Captioning: Tools for Making Your Videos More Accessible, by Christy Allen (Furman University)

Q1. YouTube subtitles - pluses and minuses of public vs. unlisted?

A public video can be viewed by anyone. An unlisted video can only be viewed if a user has the video's specific URL. An unlisted video will not appear in YouTube search results or in your channel. If you are uploading your video to YouTube for the sole reason of running auto-captioning, and then plan to remove it from YouTube, I recommend using the "unlisted" feature. If you plan to keep your video in YouTube and you want it discoverable, choose the "public" option.

Q2. Are you able to export the subtitles in YouTube to a Google doc?

Once you have the captioning as a .srt file, you can open it with a text editor (such as Notepad ++), or you can copy/paste the content to a Microsoft Word doc or a Google doc.

Q3. Does YouTube still allow for community-submitted captions (for other language support)?

Alas, no. YouTube removed the feature allowing for viewer-submitted captions in Sept. 2020.

Q4. Are there any copyright issues with these files that you have to address before putting them up on YouTube?

All of the videos we make available online are either copyrighted by Furman or the copyright holders have signed a written permission form allowing Furman to post the videos online.

Q5. Kind of tangential: is there a similar captioning option support for descriptive audio?

3PlayMedia offers a great guide to audio description here: https://www.3playmedia.com/learn/popular-topics/audio-description/
At Furman, we have not yet tackled audio description, but plan to dive into it soon.

Q6. Can You Tube do automatic translations for example an English video into Spanish and then you can edit the Spanish?

According to my research, no they do not. Users would have to download the .srt file from YouTube, manually translate the text of the .srt to the preferred foreign language (keeping the timings in place). Once the translation .srt file is saved, the user would go to the subtitles/caption menu in YouTube, select "create new" with the desired language and then upload the .srt file they manually translated.

Q7. Have you other software like Screencastomatic for close captioning?

No, we have not. I have personally used Camtasia for creating tutorials and have tried auto-generating captions through that software, and the results were awful. Honestly, YouTube auto-captioning is the most accurate option I've found.

Q8. (If this question is already asked, please ignore this.) Is it possible to download the finished file from YouTube and put it to a depository?

Yes, you can download the .srt caption file of any video on your channel in YouTube. Instructions to do so appear earlier in the presentation.

Q9. Any ideas on getting a podcast transcript? I've been told if you upload a wav file to YouTube you can do this. But you have to upload the file as a video

I have a work-around for audio-only files. I'll load the audio file into a video processing software like Camtasia, add a static graphic, and then save it as a .MP4 which I can then load into YouTube for auto-captioning. You can see an example here: https://vimeopro.com/user37012443/furman-oral-histories/video/236474095

Q10. Can you download the Zoom captions into a txt file?

Yes, you can save both manually created closed captioning and live transcription from Zoom. See more information here: https://sites.udel.edu/ats/conferencing/zoom/live-transcriptions/

Q11. How does your team handle quality control when using multiple people to caption videos? What is your workflow?

This is something we're still working out. Right now, I am the one doing all the quality control (either on outsourced transcription, or auto-generated captions). We're starting a pilot program this spring where we're training students to make PDF, Word, and video files more accessible. Part of that work will include captioning for videos. In addition to doing the work itself, this will also be a good pilot for establishing sustainable quality control workflows.