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Ai-Media Launches International Autism Pilot
Ai-Live in Schools for Students with ASD

9 April 2014

Speech-to-text innovator Ai-Media today launched an international schools pilot to test its new Ai-Live autism (ASD) application, with independent evaluation to be provided by the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education (GSE).

The service will be piloted in participating school clusters in the UK, Australia, Singapore and Dubai, with multiple teachers, for around 3 hours per week for 12 weeks. The new release of Ai-Live supports teachers by providing a teaching and learning diagnostic tool, tailored to the communication styles of students with special needs.

Autism impacts people's perception and understanding of language and communication. The pilot delivers accurate simplified text of what the teacher has said, directly to the student's iPad or tablet, within seconds. The transcript is also available after the lesson as a study aid for students, and as a reflection tool for teachers.

Ai-Media also announced the appointment of Eileen Hopkins as an expert consultant in the development of applications for its Ai-Live technology to support people impacted by ASD. Ms Hopkins is a former Executive Director of the UK's National Autistic Society, and autism adviser in policy and practice for UK autism research charity, Autistica.

Ms Hopkins said, "Based on results from preliminary pilots, I believe this technology will support students impacted by ASD by reducing anxiety and improving attention. By reading what it is the teacher is saying, in a simplified form, the students can focus on the content that matters, thus improving confidence and participation."

"It is not about running Ai-Live every single lesson", said Ai-Media Chief Executive Officer Tony Abrahams, "Teachers choose the most appropriate three hours each week to use the service."

"A key tenet of all the work we do is independent evaluation. We are delighted to extend our relationship with the University of Melbourne GSE, who now add autism to the independent evaluation being performed for the deafness and teacher improvement applications of Ai-Live. Teachers' use of the product during this pilot phase will inform product development ahead of planned commercial release."

University of Melbourne GSE Associate Professor, Janet Clinton, will lead the evaluation team, together with Professor John Hattie, Associate Director of the Science of Learning Research Centre. "We know from our 2011-13 work in Australian classrooms that real-time captioning provides benefits beyond deaf and hard of hearing students," said Professor Clinton.

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"In the UK we are now examining the impact of the service on teacher improvement. By now exploring how it supports students on the broad autism spectrum, we are beginning to understand this technology as an education support for each student."

Professor Hattie added, "Real-time captioning can bring alive many of the principles behind Visible Learning by facilitating deeper connections between teacher, learner and content. Autism is a key focus area for many educators, and we are delighted to focus on autism in this international pilot."

Autism Spectrum Australia estimates 1-in-100 Australian children are impacted by ASD.

Ai-Media is seeking expressions of interest for participation in the pilot, from schools in Australia, Dubai, Singapore and the UK.

April is World Autism Awareness Month

Expressions of interest:
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Ai-Media is an Australian and UK-based for profit social business that provides high quality speech-to-text solutions for broadcast, government and education clients. The Company's Ai-Live internet captioning service was supported by Commercialisation Australia. Using a microphone on the original speaker, the spoken words are sent live to a trained stenocaptioner or "re-speaker", who uses software that converts speech into text that is sent back over the internet to screens read by the client in the originating classroom or meeting room.

Learn more: www.ai-media.tv and www.ai-live.com

The University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education is home to a number of internationally recognised education experts, and was ranked world number 2 in education in the QS World Rankings by Subject 2014. Please see: www.education.unimelb.edu.au