

## **Transcript**

### **Video: Introduction**

### **Series: Support products and Information and Communication Technologies**

**Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED).**

#### **NARRATOR**

Javier Romanach, Human rights activist in Spain.  
Guillermo Fesser, Journalist - Gomaespuma.

#### **GUILLERMO**

You've heard of the Cyborg, something about this legendary character?

#### **JAVIER**

Yes, Neil Harbisson, he's no legend, he's a guy who appears on the Internet and everywhere and he is vindicating that he is the first Cyborg in history

#### **GUILLERMO**

But, what is a Cyborg exactly? Is it a compendium of ...?

#### **JAVIER**

Cyborg is like a mix between a human and a machine, and what the guy has done is, since he could not distinguish colours, he has a camera with a chip that sings a sound for each colour

#### **GUILLERMO**

Hell, he had an excuse to skip the red traffic lights... For example you come mechanised, are you a Cyborg?

#### **JAVIER**

Sure, I discovered it when I heard him, I say, if it's about carrying cybernetics, that's my chair, that has a lot of very sophisticated hardware, and human part, that's me, I am the man who is in the chair, I say, I've been a Cyborg for 20 years.

#### **GUILLERMO**

So many Cyborgs ranging down the street, what happens is that as this guy has been in the news he seems to be superman and then there are people like you, for example, or a neighbor or such, or a man who has other devices, a cane and maybe...

#### **JAVIER**

Yes, of course, it's different being Cyborg to needing a wheelchair, I don't know if I can explain.

#### **GUILLERMO**

Yes, yes, it means the same but it is understood differently, right?

#### **JAVIER**

Yes, if I say I'm a Cyborg, and I'm vindicating the rights of the Cyborgs to be able to enter some buildings, there would be a stream of technologists protecting my rights, but as I am a poor fellow who is in a wheelchair and in a chair, you get fucked. Then, when you start to describe yourself

otherwise, the description of, for example, there is a world between a disabled and a Cyborg, you need technology. Well somehow functional diversity affects disability, that is people who function in a different way, and need Cyborgs or gadgets to function, or are not able to do things. If you are saying to people they can not do, can not do ... that vision is: you can not do. And when you are not able to do, everything granted to you is like a favor, right?

For example, blind people, because to see the screen and to be blind is not compatible ...

**GUILLERMO**

Not suitable, of course.

**JAVIER**

What there is is a system that lets you listen to the screen, like the Cyborg's one who listens to what he sees through the camera, allowing you to listen to the screen.

What happens? That that is considered a support product, rather than a Cyborg.

**GUILLERMO**

So what happens is that part of society has had a disastrous marketing.

**JAVIER**

(LAUGHS) I'd never seen it like that, yes indeed, yes.

**GUILLERMO**

Too bad, because everything has gone on the charity side, poor things, and such, instead of human rights, listen, sorry, I want to get on the bus also, right?

**JAVIER**

Indeed, (LAUGHS). You buy the iPad the iplof, whatever, then you've bought a gadget, but if you need a screen reader, that is no longer a Gadget, it is a support product.

**GUILLERMO**

Marketing, very bad marketing, marketing, for honest and decent people, and for the poor things.

**JAVIER**

Come on, I think the people from UNED are working to try to explain to people about support products, especially to students who generate new Gadgets.

**GUILLERMO**

To explain to people that a man who is in a wheelchair can climb a mountain. That a man who is blind, maybe also likes listening to music, not just sell coupons, or likes being a state attorney... Various inventions, see, we are talking here about Gadgets.

**JAVIER**

It is very clear. What happens is that we are talking about the difference between support products and Gadgets, right? A support product becomes Gadget and is cool when it reaches to the whole society. That is, while you've invented it for a deaf, or blind person... then it is a support product

of, which is a residual thing, right? But the truth is that the vast majority of these support products end up by being inventions used by the whole society, then they become cool, turn into Gadgets and become great. The most paradigmatic example is Graham Bell who invented the telephone because his mother was deaf and he lived with a deaf community and wanted the deaf to hear, and therefore tried to make an amplification system and a remote sound transmission. And same as this, there are plenty of inventions, I do not know if you know that the typewriter was invented for a blind person, for the countess, I do not remember the name of the Italian countess ...

**GUILLERMO**

Olivetti probably, Mrs. Olivetti, yes, of course.

**JAVIER**

You own a GPS, I don't know if you have a GPS in your car ...

**GUILLERMO**

I, have two or three GPS, don't you see everytime I see a GPS I buy it ...

**JAVIER**

You'll see it tells you:in 200 meters turn right, that speech synthesis was first developed many years ago so that blind people could have access to information. And it is the same technology that's used in what is called a screen reader ...

**GUILLERMO**

But the blind, where do they carry that?

**JAVIER**

No man, it is a hardware device. Then it was used for elevators ...

**GUILLERMO**

You are arriving to the fifth floor.

**JAVIER**

Exactly, to access information ...

**GUILLERMO**

Careful, careful, Don Jose Luis ... you are going to hit the column ...

**JAVIER**

Uy, Uy Uy Uy (LAUGHS) 200 meters ahead, avoid the column. And then, that same technology that was speech synthesis, you get it out and it becomes what everyone uses. Because then we discover that humans have to do many things at once, and can't be looking at the same time. To drive you have to look at the road, if you look at the GPS you crash, right? Also, the predictive system in mobile phones, the one that completes words for you, this is another of those Gadgets created after a so called support product. Some people use only one button, since they are not able to handle more things, for example, they only use an arm or a foot, then what they do is go through a screen keyboard, ie A, well, then again A, B, C, D ...

**GUILLERMO**

You're taking too long.

**JAVIER**

Yes, you're taking too long, then to finish and to increase the speed there was an invention, many years ago, a technology called word prediction, so that you could speed up the process when using only one button.

**GUILLERMO**

For example, it's 8 in the morning and you put in C, and it says coffee, right?

**JAVIER**

(LAUGHS) Exactly.

**GUILLERMO**

If it's 8 at night, cook, right? (Laughter)

Now I'll tell you a story of the remote control. Well I'll tell you, in the interim, well, very quickly. The remote control is invented and José Manuel Peña's father buys the TV with remote control, he was a very classic, very conservative, simple, elegant gentleman, but very into his stuff, don't touch my things. Then he turned on the television with the remote control and always placed it on top of the television...

(Laughter)

and he sat on the couch, and every time he had to change channels he went to the television, he got the remote control and changed the channel. And then his son tells him: But Dad, it's a remote control, but you use it ... No, the remote control is here, and you are not to touch it. And, the remote control was on TV, so he was moving the same as the rest of the people, but was happy ...

**JAVIER**

All other people would not be like that, and in fact you wouldn't be able to watch TV without a remote control. You would not be able to have a GPS without voice synthesis, nor be able to operate a computer if it didn't have a keyboard . Every effort you devote to the extremes of the human diversity, extremes of diversity of human functioning, are in the end collected by everyone.

**GUILLERMO**

And I have this question, which responds to a personal concern: these devices, the support elements, the Gadgets to be a Cyborg when you grow up, what is this? Does one go with a prescription to the pharmacy, or are they sold in El Corte Ingles?

**JAVIER**

There are different types of Gadgets depending if they are a Gadget or a support product, some are already included, if you buy an iPod it already speaks to you, mobile phones already speak to you, many of them, right? And Gadgets that were only for blind people now are built in, We have now discovered that it is very useful if the tell us who's calling so we don't answer the phone.

**GUILLERMO**

Those they call accessibility elements, right? For people who want to use a ramp instead of the stairs, because if you do not see the screen, you get the voice ...

**JAVIER**

Indeed. When the product is sufficiently widespread, when it has already reached many people, then it is included. These Windows operating systems and all that stuff already have things that you can put in.

**GUILLERMO**

That's already included because whoever needed to put pressure has done so.

**JAVIER**

Indeed, an American law forced them to do it because if not they would not buy their products. I, federal government, won't buy it, and as I am the best customer you have...

**GUILLERMO**

Well look, that's one thing ...

**JAVIER**

And yet, then there are other products that are not included, and those are expensive, a speech synthesis system which reads your entire computer screen with all Windows, with all the windows, all internet, with everything, everything, everything.

**GUILLERMO**

For example, if you are blind and you want to look for a flat.

**JAVIER**

While they are still called support products they are expensive. Then they start being cheaper when they realize. Ah, hell, this is not a support product it is a Gadget. Then it becomes Gadget, then the technology spreads. Then it ceases to be expensive gets built in. All you have to do is have an open mind but people still think of a version for the dis-abled providing them with a specific product to use and not thinking... what a valuable Gadget we can create for these needs, that will suit everyone.

**GUILLERMO**

Marketing pure, pure marketing. And what is needed, is a good advertising agency.

**JAVIER**

Indeed.

**GUILLERMO**

But good, good... one with those well prepared people in it.

**JAVIER**

But back to the subject, I already have all the gadgets, the blind man who is blind we have given him all the Gadgets, and he can now handle the computer. But then we try to buy a flight ticket and this guy from the company has made an inaccessible website, so that the Gadget gets very confused because it can't find things in the order in which they should appear, and Iberia Customer Service appears, and there is no way to access Buy, or there is no way to access the window where the flight appears. In the end we mucked it all up, man.

**GUILLERMO**

So, you have, let's see ... The support elements are the ramp to get to a place, but as the site has no door, that's bad...

**JAVIER**

Indeed.

**GUILLERMO**

And how is web accessibility doing? Do people design accessible websites, or is this very rare? You have your wonderful screenreader...

**JAVIER**

I spent ten years trying to get people to make accessible websites, and we had a great success, now there is a 0.01 per 1000 accessible websites ...

**GUILLERMO**

And are they good?, At least good? Or, not even ...

**JAVIER**

There is a bit of everything, the funniest thing about all this ...

**GUILLERMO**

Interviu (magazine with naked covers), is it? (Laughter)

**JAVIER**

Oh, I had not thought of it. The oddest thing about all this is that there was a law in 2002 which required that all pages were made accessible, and as they were not, in fact half of them are public. It enforced that by 2002 all public administration pages should be made accessible and as they were not...

**GUILLERMO**

It's because 2002 was a lousy year. They also chose a year that ...

**JAVIER**

Since it did not go well they passed it on to the year 2006, but failed so they passed it on to 2011. Then we have a law... we have a lot of laws, but, here, accessible web pages...

**GUILLERMO**

So all newbies that are currently thinking of designing a web page, should have to think that they need to make it accesible so that the gadgets can be useful, and especially so that we can benefit from...

**JAVIER**

But what I was telling you is that once you have the Gadgets that work, requiring that websites are designed in a certain way, not very difficult to do, what you get is a better website. You know what happens when we start talking so many Gadgets, so much gadgeteria, so much Superman and so much Cyborg, and so on? That in the end everyone thinks gadgets will fix everything.

**GUILLERMO**

Ya.

**JAVIER**

So, see, gadgets are very good and are necessary but not sufficient. I'll give a very clear example of what happens to me. In my house all the computers

and mice are adapted for me, voice recognition, I have reversed the contrast of the screen because it is better for my age... But of course, a small problem arises... I have to connect the pendrive, right? And then I can not grasp the pendrive because I don't have enough dexterity, I have not enough strength to insert it, or to remove it. Then comes a time when you say: Okay, as long as there isn't an automatic Gadget for connecting pens, what you'll always need is a support person, what we call a personal assistant.

**GUILLERMO**

In other words, even if you have eyebrows with a chip that programs the microwave oven the chicken needs to be put in...

**JAVIER**

Indeed, as simple as that