



Module 2

Unit 4: Screen audio description: characters

Core video transcript

Module 2

Unit 4: Screen audio description: characters

Transcript

Slide 1

Hello. I'm Iwona Mazur from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. In this ADLAB PRO video I will talk about film characters in AD. This is Unit 4 (Screen AD: characters) in Module 2 (Screen AD).

Slide 2

Characters are an essential part of any film narrative as they drive the story forward.

Slide 3

They can be divided into focal, supporting and background characters. It is usually the focal characters that should be get the most attention in AD.

Slide 4

Determine through what means character traits manifest themselves most. It can be their physical appearance, their actions or reactions or what they say and how they say it.

Slide 5

This should give you an indication as to what to prioritise in your AD.

Slide 6

For instance, a character's meticulousness can be depicted through his actions, such as the way he neatly arranges writing materials on the table.

Slide 7

When describing the appearance of a character it is best to avoid appraisal.

Slide 8

So instead of saying that a woman is 'beautiful', it is better to mention what actually makes her appear so.

Slide 9

Start with the most prominent feature, such as "blonde hair" and add more characteristics later. You don't want to overwhelm the audience with too many details at once.

Slide 10

Sighted viewers look at people in a holistic manner, whereas persons with sight loss will have to conjure up the image of a character in a linear fashion.

Slide 11

So instead of saying "She is wearing a white skirt, floral top, wedges and a visor" it is better to offer a top-down description such as "She is wearing a visor, floral top, white skirt and wedges".

Slide 12

Characters can express emotions and attitudes through gestures and facial expressions.

Slide 13

In your AD, you can simply name the gesture: “She makes an ‘OK’ gesture”.

Slide 14

You can also describe it: “She raises her thumb”.

Slide 15

And you can both describe and name it: “She raises her thumb in an ‘OK’ gesture”.

Slide 16

When introducing new characters you basically have two options.

Slide 17

You can either name the character the first time they appear on the screen and possibly add a brief description, for example: “A older man with a beard, John”

Slide 18

Or you can wait for the name to appear in the film itself and until that time use a brief, generic description, such as “The man with a beard” or “Bearded man”.

Slide 19

The latter solution is usually more time consuming but is recommend if the character’s identity needs to be kept secret.

Slide 20

If you want to find out more about audio describing characters, I recommend that you read the ADLAB guidelines.

Slide 21

I hope you have learned some interesting things about characters and their AD from this video we've prepared with examples.



Creation of these training materials was supported by ADLAB PRO (Audio Description: A Laboratory for the Development of a New Professional Profile), financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2 – Strategic Partnerships, Project number: 2016-1-IT02-KA203-024311.

The information and views set out in these training materials are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

