



Module 2

Unit 9: Screen audio description: audio introductions

Core video transcript

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Transcript

Slide 1

Hello. I'm Iwona Mazur from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. In this ADLAB PRO video I will talk about audio introductions. This is Unit 9 (Screen AD: audio introductions) in Module 2 (Screen AD).

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An audio introduction (or an AI for short) is a piece of running text that includes factual and visual information about an audiovisual product. In this video we will focus on AIs for films.

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An audio introduction may be used in combination with an AD or as a stand-alone piece of text.

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If an AI is to be used in combination with an AD, it has to be consistent with it, for example in terms of naming characters or places.

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There are several functions that an AI serves. The functions will largely determine the elements that should be included in an audio introduction.

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First, there is the informative function. The information provided in an AI may include the director, awards and critical acclaim, genre, synopsis, running time of the film, etc.

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Next, there is the foreshadowing function, which entails, for example, providing more detailed information about characters and locations or explaining the relevant intertextual references.

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Then there is the expressive-aesthetic function. Here details about the visual style of the film are provided, such as film color or unusual editing techniques.

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This function is highly important especially for visually thrilling films, as ADs do not allow for elaborate descriptions of camera work.

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Finally, there is the instructive function. It informs the users of any technical and practical issues, such as how characters or locations will be named in the AD.

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In the case of a cinema screening, it can also give such practical details as increasing volume on the headset in scenes with loud music.

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When drafting the AI start with the more factual information and then move onto the more descriptive details.

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Remember that AIs are dense with information and as such can be difficult to process by the audience. Try to use simple sentences, clear conjunctions and specific vocabulary. Make sure the AI is vivid and engaging.

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Finalize your AI after the AD is finalized. Otherwise you risk repeating or omitting some information or being inconsistent.

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If the AI is to be recorded, rather than read out live in the cinema, record it yourself or have a voice talent do it. It is best done in a professional recording studio.

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To prepare this video I used the chapter on audio introductions in the ADLAB guidelines. Read it, if you want to find out more.

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I also recommend that you read Fryer's and Romero Fresco's article on AIs as well as have a look at other materials in this unit, which include an actual example of an audio introduction.

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This was a wide overview of what audio introductions are. I hope you have learned a bit more about this topic.



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.

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