



Module 3

Unit 3: What to describe for live events

Core video transcript

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Transcript

Slide 1

Hello. I'm Louise Fryer, from Utopian Voices. In this ADLAB PRO video I will give an overview of what to describe for live events. This is Unit 3 - content selection in Module 3.

Slide 2

For all types of AD describers have to select from the many things they can see. This includes settings, actions and characters.

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In screen AD what the audience sees is largely dictated by the director. Directors control our attention by camera shots and editing.

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In live events, the sighted audience has more choice over where to direct their gaze. This gives the describer more choice too.

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As well as what's happening on stage you might need to describe the actions and reactions of the audience. Is there full on audience participation?

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You need to describe not only where a scene is set, but HOW that setting is

created. It might be a cherry orchard, with stepladder trees. Or trees painted on a cardboard flat or a photographic projection of trees.

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And what about the props and characters? A horse may be a real horse or a puppet - perhaps a horse-shaped framework brought to “life” by puppeteers.

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Some of this detail can be given in the audio introduction, but you will need a reminder in your script, of how the illusion is created.

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Simon who’s partially sighted remembers a stage version of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* – about a fabulous flying car. He says “it is important to know if it’s a real car or just a car cut-out, a bloke standing in a cardboard car.

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You might also need to describe where a character appears on stage (Peter comes in from the left). So users with residual vision know where to focus any remaining sight. Describe from the audience point of view so from the left, right, close to us, towards the back of the stage. You don’t need to use actors’ terminology such as upstage or DSR.

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Include details of stagecraft. Is the curtain lowered between scenes, are the lights dimmed or do we watch the stagehands? Perhaps the cast moves the set themselves?

Slide 12

The aim is to help your audience feel they're attending a live event. Not listening to a radio play. Here are some thoughts from an AD user and a director "As a user I want an immersive experience. I don't just want it to be the functional stuff." "The AD was telling me what was happening on stage but...wasn't creating the same quality of experience "

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Here's an example of some AD from the start of the children's play *Peter Pan*. "The lights in the auditorium dim. A young woman in a blue dressing gown - Wendy - picks up a teddy & props it on the pillow. She sits on the end of the bed & looks at us."

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Notice how the AD moves from describing stagecraft to the onstage action.

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Also the tense used is the first person plural (us). The aim is to help users feel they are part of the audience, and that the describer is part of the audience too. It is thought to increase a sense of social presence,

Slide 19

What do you think? If the description said "She sits on the end of the bed & looks at the audience" instead of "She sits on the end of the bed & looks at us." Would you feel different? Would you feel more or less involved?

Slide 20

Psychologists showed that social presence enhances both enjoyment and “transportation” – taking you further into the imaginary environment.

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I’ve been discussing content selection in the AD of live events. Unit 3 of Module 3.



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