



Module 5

Unit 2: Voice-over

Core video transcript

Module 5

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Transcript

Slide 1

Hello. I'm Anna Matamala, from UAB, and in this ADLAB PRO video I will explain what voice-over is. This is Unit 2 (Voice-over) in Module 5 (Additional services).

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When working as a describer, you may have to write ADs for original productions: for instance, an AD in English for an English film. However, you may also have to create ADs for content originally produced in another language and then translated using subtitles, voice-over or dubbing. Let's talk about voice-over.

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Voice-over is used to revoice fiction in some Eastern European countries (Poland, Bulgaria, Russia, etc.) and to revoice non-fictional content in many more. For example, in Spain fiction has traditionally been dubbed, but non-fiction is generally voiced-over. The map on screen shows the distribution of the so-called dubbing, subtitling and voice-over countries in Europe.

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The key feature of voice-over is that you hear a voice on top of the original voice. Don't get confused if someone uses the term "voice-over" to refer to

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an off-screen narrator: this is Film Studies terminology, different from Translation Studies terminology.

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In voice-over there are three types of synchronies: voice-over synchrony, action synchrony and kinetic synchrony.

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When creating a voice-over, the starting point is an original audiovisual content that needs to be translated for a certain audience. A professional produces a written translation, which is then read aloud, generally by a voice talent, and superimposed on the original soundtrack.

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Oral language is often rephrased in the process to fit in the space available and to make it more understandable to the audience. Hesitations, false starts or repetitions are often deleted.

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A voice-over is not a live interpreting, although the effect is quite similar: a voice on top of a voice. It is not a subtitling, although in certain language pairs there is some content reduction in the process. And it is not a dubbing because there is no lip synch.

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A voice-over is generally recorded by a voice with a neutral accent and a flat intonation, although this practice is in the process of changing. Just have a look at Spanish voiced-over reality shows.

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Sometimes there is only one voice for all the characters (for example, Polish TV voice-over). Sometimes there is a male and a female voice talent (for example, Lithuanian voice-over of TV films). And sometimes there is one voice talent per character, as in Spanish documentaries.

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Depending on whether the voice-over is created in a production or post-production process, the work involved will be different. For instance, in production, translators generally work without a script.

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As a describer, it is important that you are aware of the main features of voice-over and how they may affect your work, especially in terms of synchronisation.

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Well, this was just a short introduction. You may want to read the book “Voice-over translation: an overview” to learn a bit more.

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