Lend your eyes to a friend:

audiodescribing video clips in the language class

New perspectives on Language Teaching & Learning: Cross-Sector Annual Conference 2017

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Overview

• What is Audio Description (AD)?
• Previous studies on AD
• Fluency, pronunciation & intonation
• Methodological framework
• The experiment
  • Procedure
  • Tasks
  • Instruments for data collection
• Conclusion
What is audio description (AD)?
DISTRICT BOUNDARY

NO ACCESS BEYOND THIS POINT
What is Audio Description (AD)?

Audio description (AD) is a modality of audiovisual translation (AVT) used for making video content accessible to blind and visually impaired viewers. In this AVT mode, an additional narration is inserted into the audiovisual product, in between the original soundtrack, and describes the information transmitted visually. This typically includes actions, facial expressions and scenery.

Example “The Hunger Games” with AD

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8BD9txkGL4
What’s AD in a language class?
Sample AD: *The Full Monty* (a scene, EN>SP)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAdl_HqhCDM&t=8s
Previous studies on AD applied to Foreign Language Learning (FLL)

A study on the learning potential of passive AD for vocabulary acquisition (Martínez Martínez, 2012)

Studies on the learning potential of active AD point out an improvement in:

- **Writing skills** (Clouet, 2005)
- General improvement in language learning (Gajek & Szwarkowska, 2013)
- **Lexical competence** (Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2013)
- The **four traditional skills** (Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2014a)
- **Fluency in oral production** (Ibáñez y Vermeulen, 2014b)
- **Oral production** (Talaván y Lertola, 2016)
What is fluency?

Intuitive comments about fluency

- **Ease of communication** or speech that lacks unnatural pauses
- Does the speech sound **native**? (assuming that native speakers are all fluent)
- **Spontaneous** language in **real time**: automaticity
- **Fluency** vs. controlled **accuracy**?

Fillmore (1979) distinguished four types of **oral** fluency:

1. Filling time with talk **easily** and **with few pauses** (to maintain the **flow**)
2. The ability to talk **coherently** while producing semantically and syntactically dense tenses
3. The ability to say just the right thing (**socially** and **contextually**) for the occasion at hand
4. The ability to use the language **imaginatively**, creating metaphors, easily finding the most skilful way to say what one has in mind

Segalowitz (2010)

1. **Cognitive**: Processes that affect utterance production (ability for an efficient speech)
2. **Utterance**: Features affected by cognitive fluency
3. **Perceived**: Listener’s preceptions
Fluency vs. dysfluency (as quantifiable phenomena): features

• Hesitations (unfilled pauses, false starts >> filler words)
• Speech rate: Flow or smoothness
• Length of utterances
• Repair phenomena (repetitions, insertions, reformulations, re-phrasing...)
• Connectedness: cohesion & coherence
• Pragmatic ability
• Non verbal: spontaneous facial and hand gestures: conversational fluency
• Ability to appropriately claim or surrender turns
What is pronunciation?

- Native/non native status on the basis of pronunciation: Is there a standard?
- Language learners: to pronounce in a fully comprehensible and efficient manner? can they achieve a native like standard?
- Pronunciation (sound of speech): features
  - Individual sounds
  - Pitch
  - Volume
  - Speed
  - Pausing
  - Stress and rhythm
  - Intonation
What’s intonation?

• The rise and fall of the voice in speaking
• Language learning: a speech that sounds natural (a series of utterances)
• Levis’ principles (1999) for teaching intonation:
  • In context
  • Generalising possible meanings that it might denote
  • It should be subordinated to a larger communicative purpose
  • Authentic language should be used
Methodological Framework
Action-research

- Research: “a systematic process of inquiry in which the researcher poses a question or questions, collects relevant data, analyzes and interprets it, and makes the results accessible to others. It looks at the simplistic but persistent distinction between qualitative and quantitative methodologies” (Nunan, 1997: 13)

- Action-research: features
  - Research questions
  - Relevant data collection
  - Analysis and interpretation of data
  - Publishing
  - Class-centered
  - Teacher prime mover in the process
  - The purpose: to carry our a change in the learning practice
Investigación cuasi-experimental

• Cohen et al. (2007, 282)
  
  *often in educational research, it is simply not possible for investigators to undertake true experiments, e.g. in random assignation of participants to control or experimental groups.*

• Robson (2002); Cohen et al. (2007)
  
  • A series of methods should be used to attain methodological triangulation
Research questions

1. Do oral skills (fluency, pronunciation & intonation) improve with active AD tasks?

2. Are students’ perceptions on completion of active AD tasks positive?
Action-research: Procedure

1. Initial pre-test: Assess student skills
2. Active AD tasks
3. Evaluation Forms
4. Post-test & questionnaire
5. Analyse the results
Experiment background

• Student number: 83

• Context: undergraduate (Hispanic studies)
  • 3 hours per week of language lessons: translation (En<>Sp), oral skills & grammar
  • Level: B1 (CEFR)

• Translation (En<>Sp): 10 hours per term
Data gathering: instruments

• Pre & post questionnaires
• Initial & final test (spontaneous speech)
• 7 active AD tasks + 1 free choice video
• Evaluation forms
• Evaluation rubric
• Observation notes
• Observers
Assessment Rubric (adapted from Lertola & Talaván, 2013)

1. Initial pre-test: Assess student initial skills via a podcast

**Pronunciation & Intonation**

- Pronunciation & intonation are correct:
  1. Rarely
  2. Sometimes
  3. Often
  4. Almost always
  5. Always

**Fluency**

1. Usage of simple sentences (speech full of unnatural pauses)
2. Speech is connected but often disrupted by student’s hesitations
3. Speech is connected but occasionally disrupted by student’s hesitations
4. Usage of fluent connected speech
5. Uses native-like flow of speech (ease of communication)

**Vocabulary**

1. Usage of basic vocabulary
2. Usage of voc. to express simple ideas within familiar contexts
3. Usage of basic vocabulary to communicate in social and technical contexts
4. Usage of voc. for a more varied type of language
5. Sophisticated and accurate voc. in a variety of contexts

**Grammar**

- Appropriate tenses, pronouns, prepositions, gender and number agreement, word order etc.
  1. Rarely
  2. Sometimes
  3. Often
  4. Almost always
  5. Always
Pre-questionnaire
Student language profile

¿Eres bilingüe? (63 responses)

¿Cuántas lenguas hablas además de tu lengua nativa (in addition to your native language)? (63 responses)

¿Has vivido alguna vez en un país donde se hable el español?

Si tu respuesta es afirmativa... (14 responses)
Audio visual resources in language lessons

¿Has utilizado materiales audiovisuales en tus clases de lenguas?

Si tu respuesta es afirmativa, ¿con cuánta frecuencia sueles utilizar los materiales audiovisuales? 1- nunca 6-siempre

¿Qué materiales audiovisuales has usado en clase? (63 responses)

¿Has grabado alguna vez tu voz sincronizada con un vídeo?

¿Crees que es una buena idea grabar tu voz en la lengua que aprendes?
¿Qué piensas del uso de la Audio Descripción (AD) en la clase de español?
Creo que me va a ayudar a mejorar mi...
(63 responses)

- comprensión... 8 (12.7%)
- producción e... 10 (15.9%)
- comprensión... 22 (34.9%)
- producción oral 42 (66.7%)
- vocabulario 39 (61.9%)
- gramática 19 (30.2%)
- pronunciación 52 (82.5%)
- entonación 50 (79.4%)
- cultura de los... 6 (9.5%)
- habilidad para... 40 (63.5%)
- habilidad técnica... 33 (52.4%)
2. AD tasks

In class & Moodle (VLE)
- Instructions

Homework
- Writing, recording and submission

Feedback
- Class discussion: fluency, pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, grammar & synchrony
- Individual feedback
### Evaluation form

#### Equipo 1: Evalúa los siguientes criterios:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronunciación</th>
<th>Muy mal (1)</th>
<th>Mal (2)</th>
<th>Regular (3.5)</th>
<th>Bien (7.5)</th>
<th>Muy bien (8.5)</th>
<th>Excelente (9.5)</th>
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#### Equipo 1: Puntuación global (muy mal: 1 punto; mal: 3 puntos; regular: 5.5; bien: 7.5 puntos; muy bien: 8.5 puntos y excelente: 9.5). Por ejemplo, si al video le das un "muy bien" en cada sección, sacaría un "68". *

**Your answer:**

#### Equipo 1: comentarios adicionales:

**Your answer:**
Tareas: AD

1. *The Hunger Games* (a scene)
2. *The Full Monty* (a scene)
3. *Tortilla de patatas: recipe*
4. *The curse*
5. *Minions: Competition*
7. *A Short Love Story in Stop Motion*
8. Free video creation
Sample AD: *Minions (The Competition)*
Sample AD: A Short Love Story
Video creation
Conclusions
Conclusions

• Student perception is positive and encouraging

• Technology has to be gradually introduced

• It’s essential that students receive teacher feedback, but it’s also necessary to facilitate student evaluation

• Students have been motivated to carry out optional tasks (they have submitted a high number of tasks)

• Research on oral skills via active AD task is a innovative and useful subject area

• This is a coherent study that is collecting a high degree of data


Thank you😊

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