

Title	Audio Description – using film and video as a way of broadening vocabulary
Language(s) & CEFR Level	From A2 to B2
Skill Area	Spoken Production / Written Production / Grammar / Vocabulary

Activity Description	In this activity, a teacher will choose a piece of audio-visual material to be audio-described for audiences who are blind or partially sighted. Here is example from Frozen in English. This can be anything from an extract of a documentary, a promotional video of a town, a short excerpt from a film. It should last around 1-2 minutes. The idea is that students provide a description in the L2 or heritage language of the visual image. The challenge is that students have to do this so that the description fits between each piece of dialogue. They can then record their descriptions on a smart phone along with the video. This activity is also excellent preparation of pronunciation as well.
Estimated Time	40 – 50 minutes
Resources required	Synonyms and Antonyms Dictionary, access to audio-visual material, etc., a smart phone or tablet.

Success Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will provide descriptions that fit within the pieces of dialogue • Students will use a variety of descriptive vocabulary (e.g. adverbs, adjectives) as well as action verbs. • Students will mediate visual images into spoken descriptions
Links to JC/SC Learning Outcomes	JC: Strand 2 1.1, 1.4, 2.4, 3.3. SC: Mediation

Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support less able students, the teacher could provide a written scaffolding using sentence starters for 4 chosen aspects to describe. Also, the teacher could use a video that has less dialogue and more images so that they are not limited by time. • To support more able students, choose a more difficult, challenging piece of audio-visual material where there is lots of dialogue or the images are more unfamiliar to them so that they will have to find this new vocabulary.
------------------------	---

Ideas for further development

- Using video editing software like iMovie or Windows Movie Maker, students can record their audio description pieces so that they can be viewed by others.
-

A specific example from for teaching Polish.

This is method of audiovisual translation is intended for blind or visually impaired people. In this scenario, an voiceover describes what can be seen on the screen and often occurs in between dialogue. Audio description is used to describe films but can also be used to describe everything, for example art (paintings, sculptures etc.). For this reason, it is not only useful for developing spoken production but also intercultural knowledge.

This method is very valuable for language teachers because it can be used to widen students' vocabulary, also syntactic structure of sentences. The use of a synonyms and antonyms dictionary would be also be useful.

Using this method during classes can be great fun. At the same time students are taught specialist vocabulary from different fields even on the lower levels of study. Agnieszka Tambor, the author of the book "(nie) codzienny język polski" and the tutorial about audio description urges us to try the method.

The main rule in audio description is to mediate the visual information into text so that a blind recipient is able to enjoy the film in a similar way to the non-visually impaired viewer. The student must begin by asking key questions about the visual images that are on show (e.g. Who? What? Where? How? When?). Description starts from general to specific information. Names, personal information should be used if possible but you must take into account what is said in dialogue. In films, event logic (i.e. the sequencing of events) is very important as well as subtitles and explanation that can be seen on the screen. All noises need to be explained, too. Audio description needs to stimulate imagination, so the most accurate words have to be chosen, for example is it a house or a building, a residence, a flat, an apartment, a house, a cottage? Comparisons, epithets, metaphors and other figurative language should be used where possible. For example, rather than saying 'the closed with a bang' an audio describer might say 'the door banged'

For more information go to:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcqsuuQ3JT0&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR05f_WgU3IFaCNqRTybb2kiYkom47Y8178IH_HD_mOmv50dMrKpR086dEU

Written by Mariola Wanczyk (May 2020)