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Audio describing as a purposeful activity
(the language of children's AD
in relation to its planned purpose)

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Audio describing is a purposeful activity:

- Each AD has its own purpose (= to provide verbal descriptions necessary for comprehension of the visual content);
- By the means of its language it should also fulfill the planned functions of the original message (of the source text);
- The function of the source text needs to be detected by an audiodescriber and on the basis of that s/he is expected to choose the role of audio description;

In my PhD thesis I want to answer the following questions:

What is the language of AD prepared for the young audience?

Does it differ in relation to the planned functions of AD (e.g. education / entertainment), age of the presupposed viewers, their expectations and needs, etc.?

To answer them, I examined the language of 55 scripts accompanying cartoons, theatre plays and movies for children and teenagers.

What do I look for in those scripts?

Among others: various stylistic figures possible to find in AD texts like e.g. comparisons, onomatopoeias, exclamations, rhetorical questions, verbal games and puns, neologisms, alliterations; then: diminutives, augmentatives and participles, metaphors (both literary and conceptual ones), conceptual blending, phraseology, fossilized utterances, etc.

Additionally: a wide range of explanations providing young viewers with the knowledge about the world around them.

- While reading about the socio-linguistic development of the blind children we find the information that some delays in blind children's language development can be observed. But in these texts there is also information about the compensational role of the rich linguistic stimulation.
- In my researches concerning AD for children I wonder if the children may develop their linguistic competence by listening to the AD. My previous research showed that children repeat whole phrases from AD, but it was difficult to determine if they could acquire those phrases permanently.

- Numerous studies which I refer to in my thesis show that children acquire language skills most efficiently by interaction (by taking part or observing it). Children under 3 are supposed not to learn even a word if they just passively watch TV, and children after 3 can learn just a few words this way. All those children have been proved to learn new words when taking part or observing (in real life or recorded on video) some kind of verbal interaction.

- That is why I checked if in Polish AD scripts addressed to the young audience there exist certain utterances thanks to which children could be stimulated and drawn in linguistic interaction.

Examples of such utterances:

Original (Polish)	English back translation
AD track: Akrobaci w cyrku skaczą baaardzo wysoooko! Hop! Piesek <u>też</u> potrafi!	AD track: The acrobats in circus jump veery hiiigh! Hop! Little dog <u>also</u> can do that!
AD track: O, właśnie! Trzeba znaleźć bicz. Jest bicz, a gdzie są dziekie zwierzęta?	AD track: Oh, that's right! It is necessary to find a whip. There's a whip, and where are any wild animals?
Film track: Misiu, kamyki nie skaczą. AD track: Misiowi jest przykro, że nie skaczą.	Film track: Little teddy bear! The stones do not jump. AD track: Teddy Bear is sorry that they do not jump.
AD track: Obok Mikrusia leży kanapka... Ojej! Już nie leży! Film track: O, moja kanapka z serem odchodzi. AD track: I to szybko!	AD track: There is a sandwich lying next to Mikruś... Oh no! It's not lying there any more! Film track: Oh, my cheese sandwich is going away. AD track: And it's doing it very fast!



Total amount of words in the scripts

Amount of searched utterances

Amount of words in those utterances

Their percentage share in the scripts

Animated movies for children in pre- and earlyschool age (35)

20 590

152

518

2,52 %

Barbara Szymańska and her team (15)

11 097

0

0

0 %

Izabela Künstler and her team (20)

9 493

152

518

5,46 %

Theatre plays for children in pre- and earlyschool age (7)

13 819

79

583

4,22 %

Filmic adaptation of the obligatory school readings (13)

54 014

27

59

0,11 %

CONCLUSIONS

- Even if it's unconscious, this kind of utterances occurs rather in AD dedicated to the pre- and early school age children than in AD dedicated to older ones.
- Those utterances are very complex and fully informative in AD for theatre plays for children.
- As they may encourage the process of language learning in small children they should be applied more widely.
- What is important, they depend more on the audio describers' individual preferences and style, as well as aim than on the kind of the audiodescribed content and the age of the target audience.
- Absolutely additional conclusion is that these kinds of comments introduce some dynamism to the description and as a result they make AD (and an accompanied product) more attractive and amusing for young viewers and make them more engaged in watching.

Questions and/or
suggestions?