Video Descriptive Track Protocol (Draft)

These steps will create a video with an additional audio track that attempts to describe the visual component of the video. Note that the file created from this document will always have the additional track playing. We are currently examining the possibility of adding a toggle button.

Software Required

QuickTime Pro http://www.apple.com/quicktime/

Audacity (or other audio editing software) http://audacity.sourceforge.net/

Hardware Required

Microphone

Headphones

A quiet room

1. ANALYZE VIDEO

The first task is to watch the video, and determine proper times and information to include in the description. The description information must be interspersed with the audio already in the video so that a listener can follow the progression. This means areas of low sound should be located and the time noted. Adding description over background music is acceptable, but over important sounds and dialog is not. Once the areas where it is possible to add a description have been located, examine the video and determine what visual information is important. Time will always be limited, so avoid any unnecessary details. It may be helpful to say your description while watching the video to verify you are including the correct amount of information for the available time.

2. RECORD THE DESCRIPTION

For recording you want to be in a quiet environment so there is little background noise. This also means you need to turn the sound off for the video or use headphones to watch the video while recording. Attach your microphone and open Audacity. Create a new file. Check that the correct microphone is selected as the input device. Start recording in Audacity, then switch to the video. Note the current time on the recording and begin playing the video. Speak your descriptions at the times determined in the previous section. Speak clearly with a steady calm intonation. When the video finishes, stop recording in Audacity. Listen to the recording to confirm correct pronunciation, volume, etc. If it is satisfactory, save the file. Select the beginning of the waveform up to the time when you began playing the video, and press delete to trim it. Do the same at the end of the recording so that it is the same length as the video. Export the sound file to an appropriate format- AIFF for raw video or if audio compression will be done in QuickTime, or MP3 for web posting.

3. ADD DESCRIPTION TRACK TO VIDEO

Open the video and sound file just recorded in QuickTime Pro (if it is not already open). With the sound file focused, Select All and Copy. Switch to the video and place the play head at the beginning of the movie. Insert the audio track into the video by selecting Add to Movie from the Edit menu. Play the movie and check that the video description audio lines up properly with the video and audio already in it. If it does not, you will need to delete the track and insert again with the play head at a different position, or return to Audacity for editing. If the video description seems correct, save a copy of the movie appropriately.

Files when done

Description notes (optional)

Audacity recording

Exported video description

Original video

Copy of video with video description (final product)