



The changing face of screen translation

Text-to-speech audio description for visually impaired children

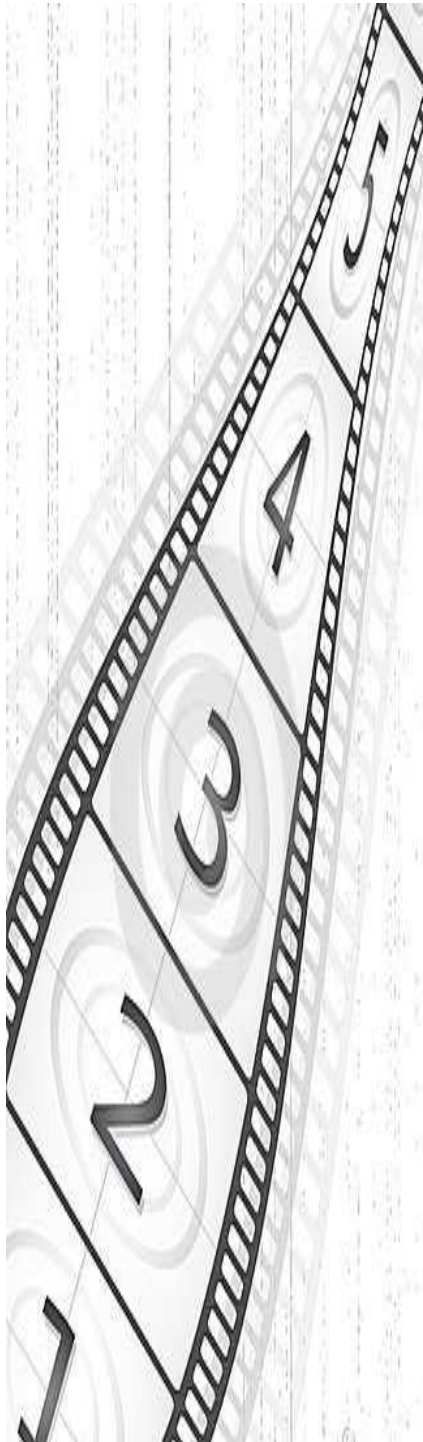
Forlì, 20-23 October 2010



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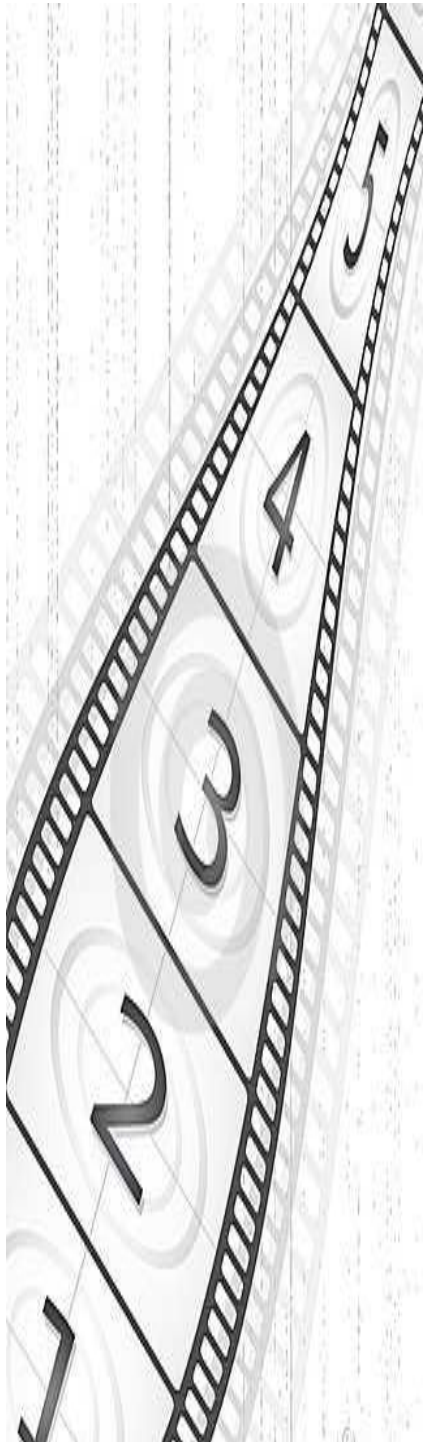
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Presentation outline

- About the project
- About the audiovisual material used
- The study
- The results of the study
- Questions/comments

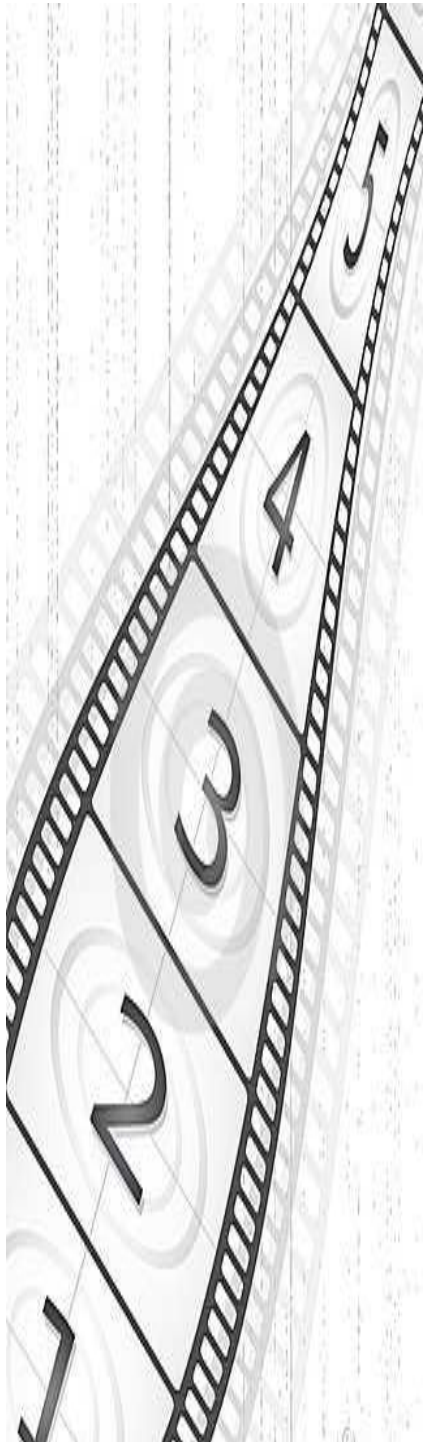


About the project

- aim: examine the acceptability and reception of an educational programme with text-to-speech audio description (TTS AD) by young visually impaired viewers

About the audiovisual material used

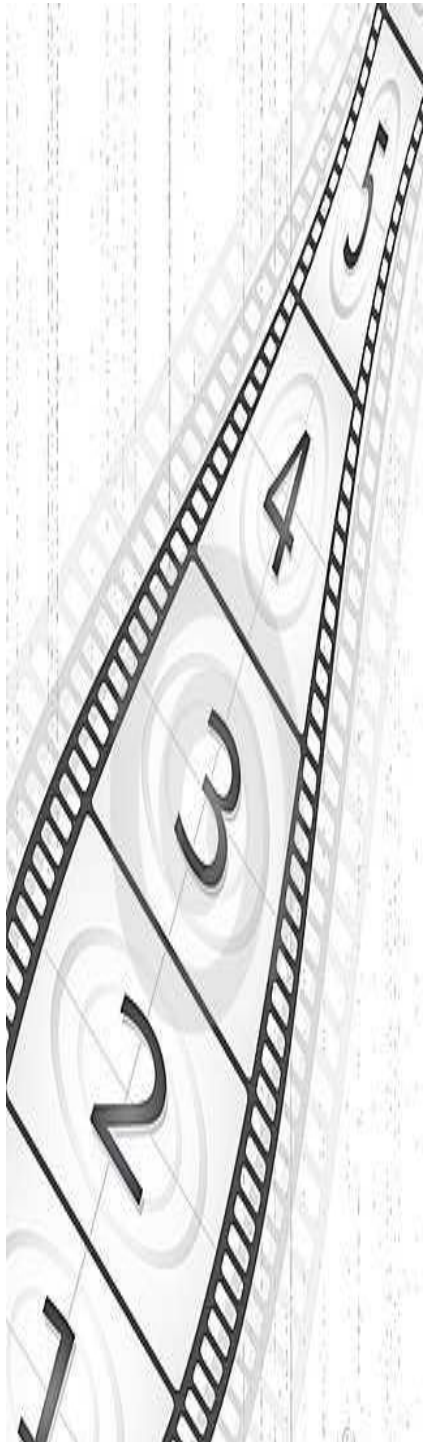
- not a feature film
- educational animation series
Once Upon a Time... Life
(*Il était une fois... la vie*)
- episode titled *Blood*





Challenges to be faced

- use of terminology (e.g. granulocytes, lymphocytes, macrophages)
- structure of AD
- phonetic, pronunciation and grammar issues
- question of intonation and punctuation
- selection of appropriate voice to read the AD script



Why TTS AD?

- cost-effectiveness
- more easily available alternative to the traditional pre-recorded AD
- making use of the software that many visually impaired people already have
- selection of voices
- increasing the total number of audio described films
- films available for everyone (people from big cities as well as small towns)



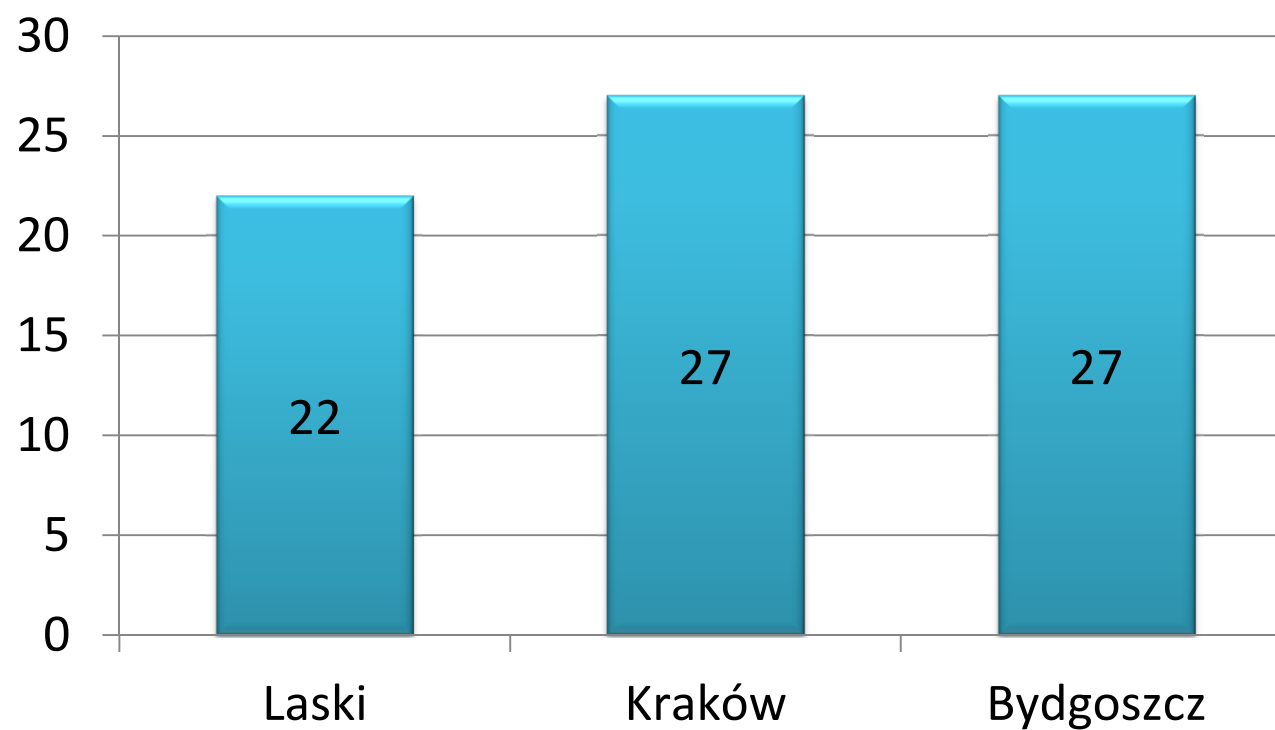
Software used in the study

- freeware programme BESTplayer (version 2.0)
- text-to-speech application Ivona Reader
- female Polish synthetic voice named Ewa (manufactured by Ivo Software)



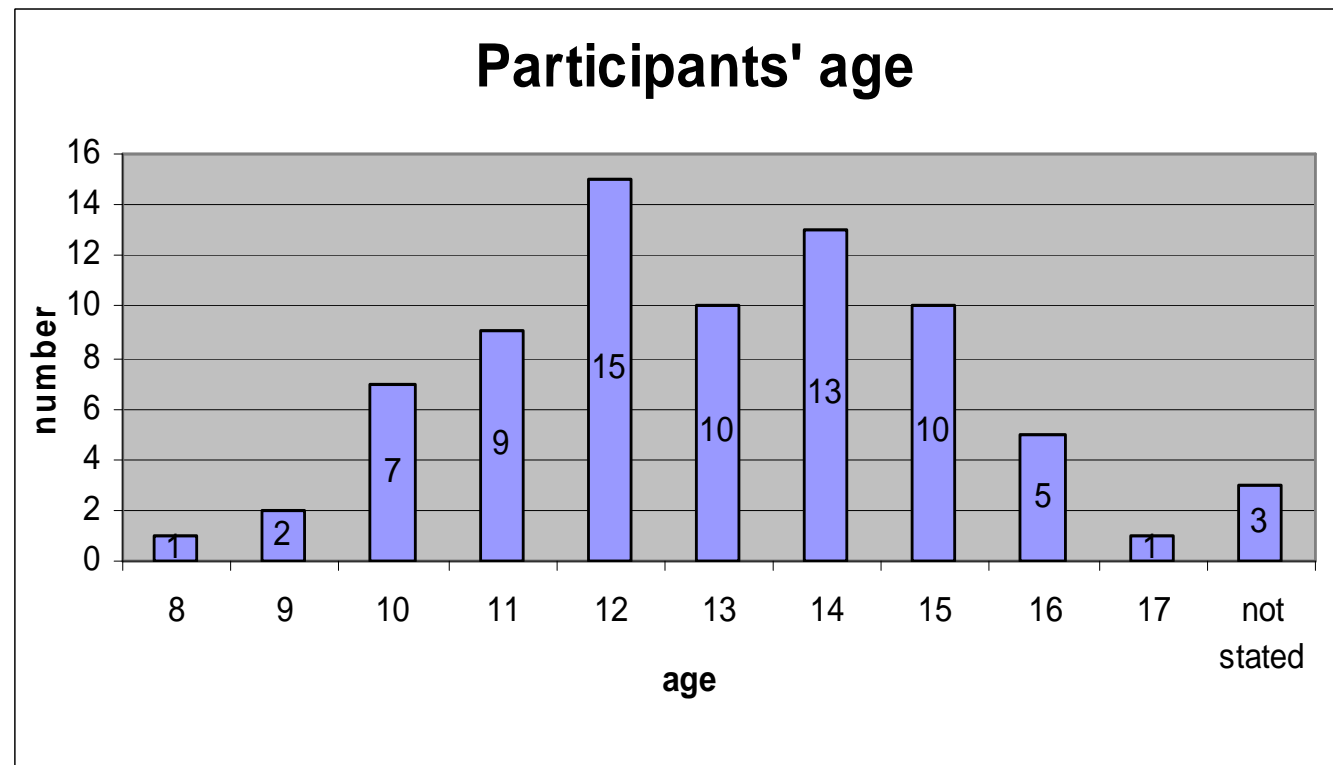
Study participants

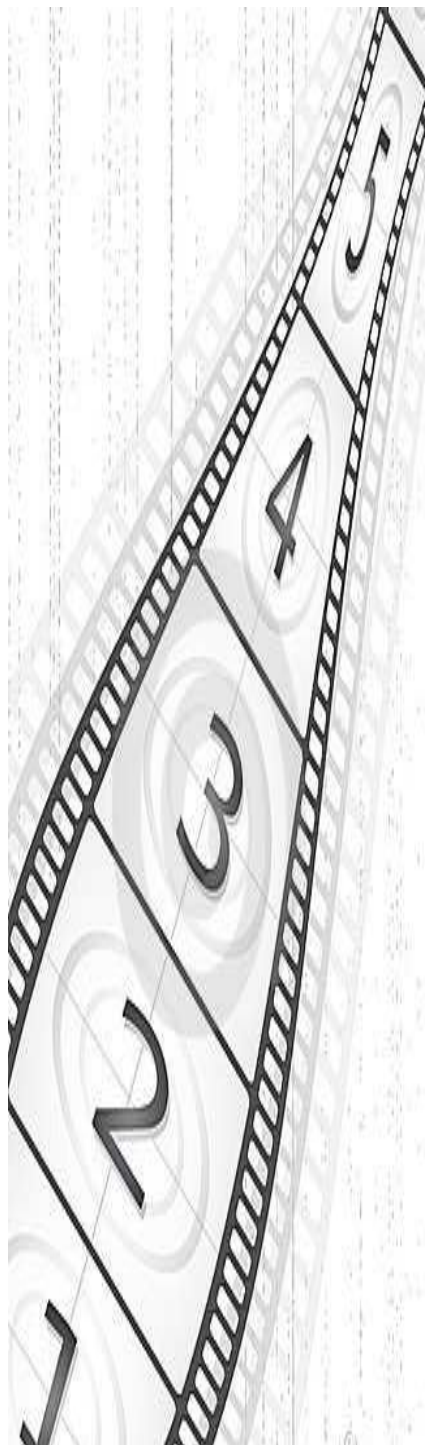
- 76 children (35 girls and 41 boys)



Study participants

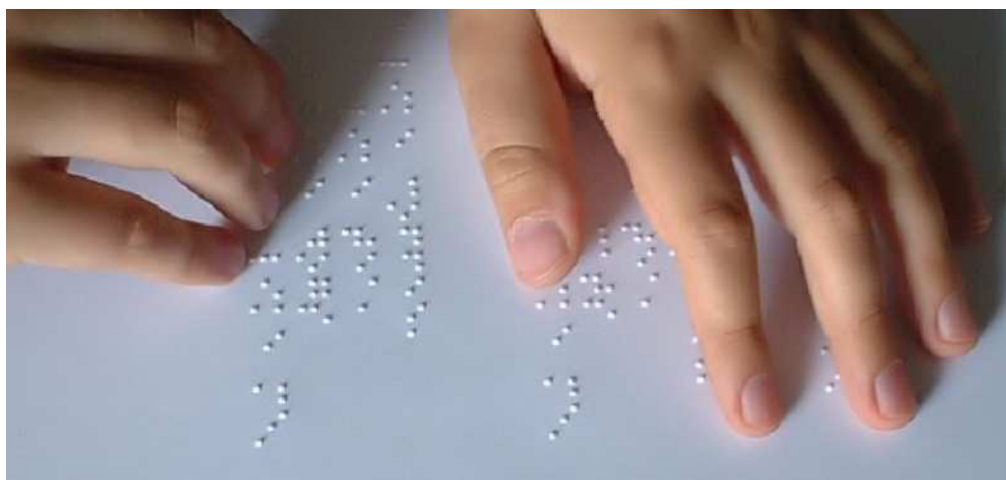
- aged between 8 and 17 years of age





Procedure

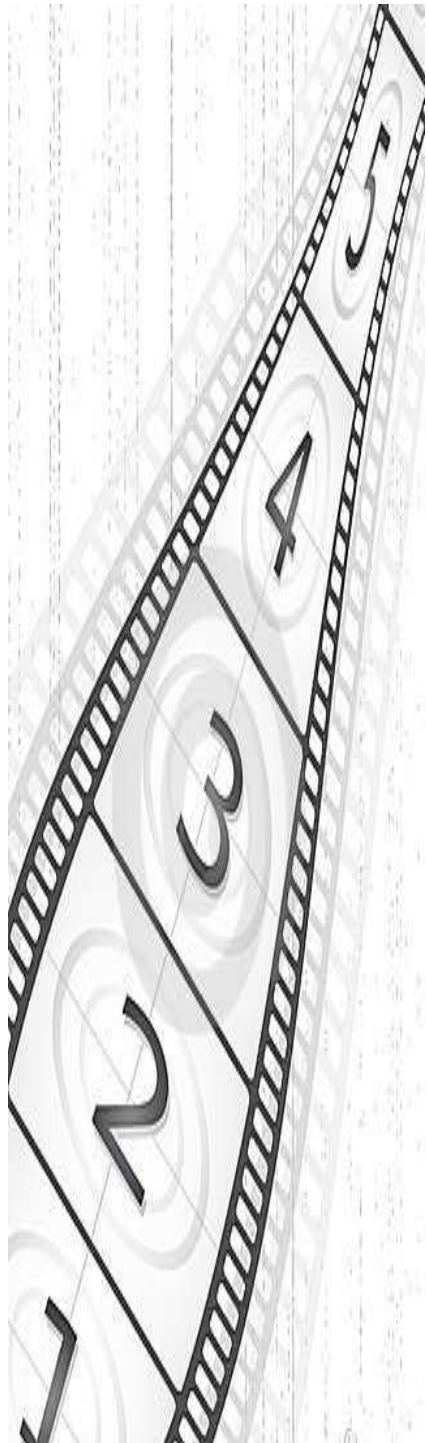
- two questionnaires (children+teachers)
- responses collected in three ways



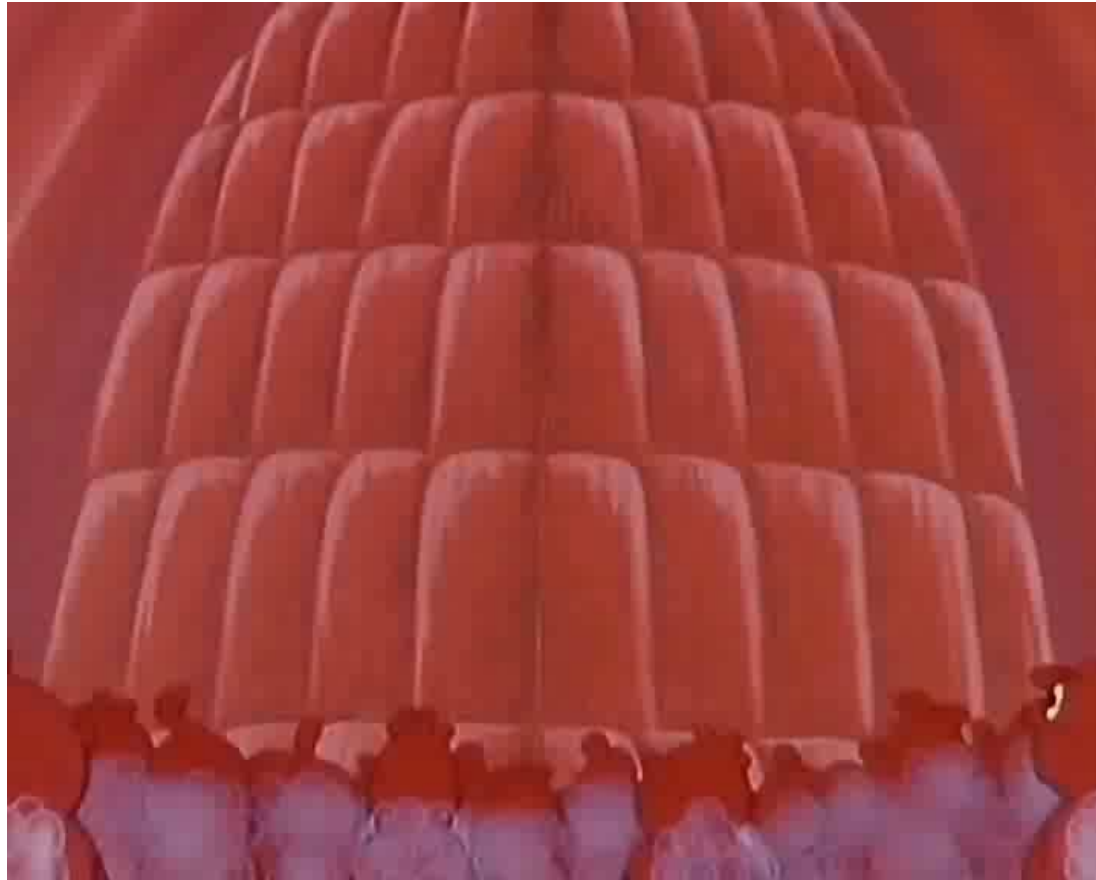


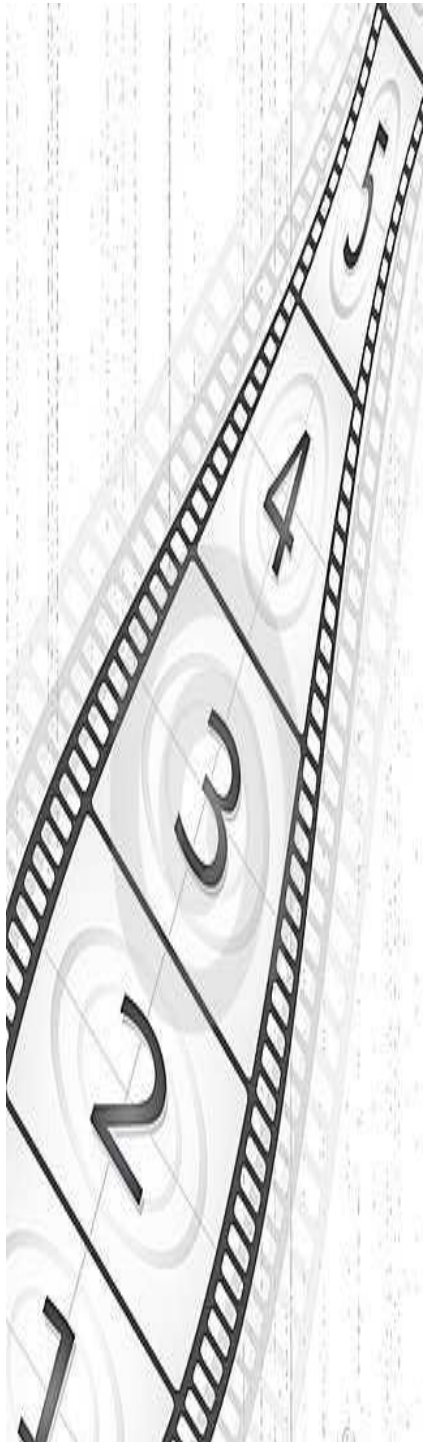
Questionnaire

- Children:
 - personal characteristics (gender, age, type and degree of sight loss)
 - previous experience with AD and speech synthesis software
 - film's content
 - opinions on TTS AD
 - opinions on the use of synthetic voice
 - eagerness to watch other episodes of the series with TTS AD
- Teachers:
 - opinions on TTS AD and its use in educational films aimed at visually impaired children
 - such programmes as additional didactic tools used on the biology/environment classes in the future?



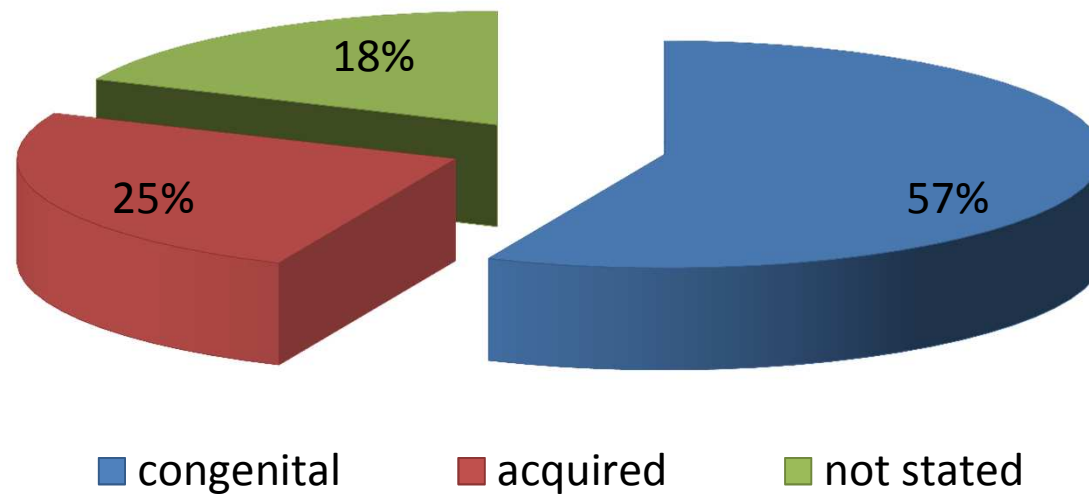
FILM

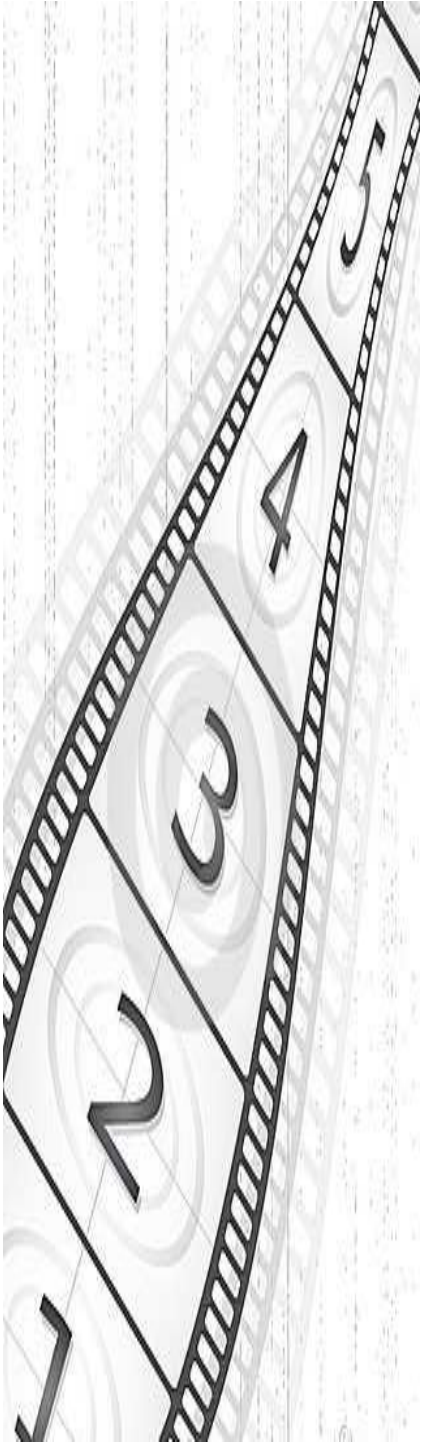




Results

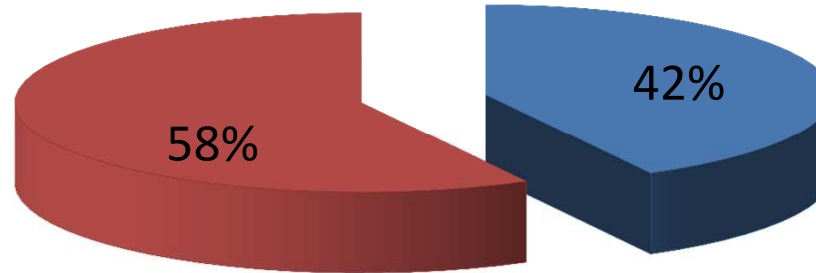
Type of sight loss



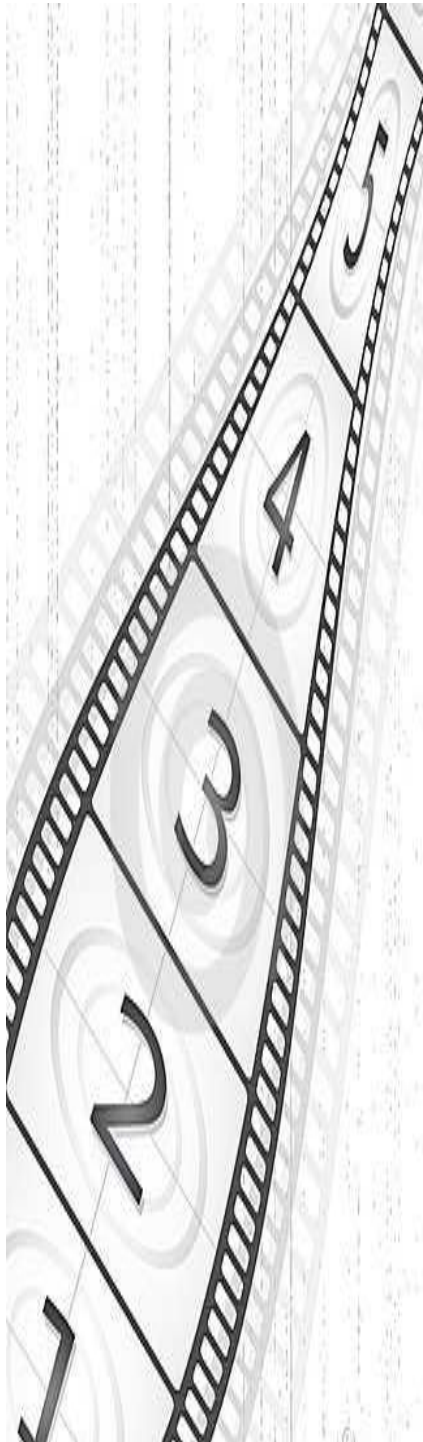


Results

Degree of sight loss



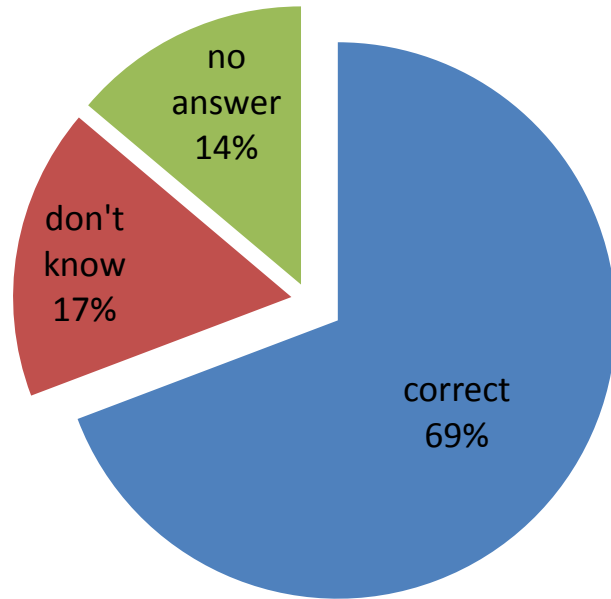
■ blind ■ partially sighted



Results

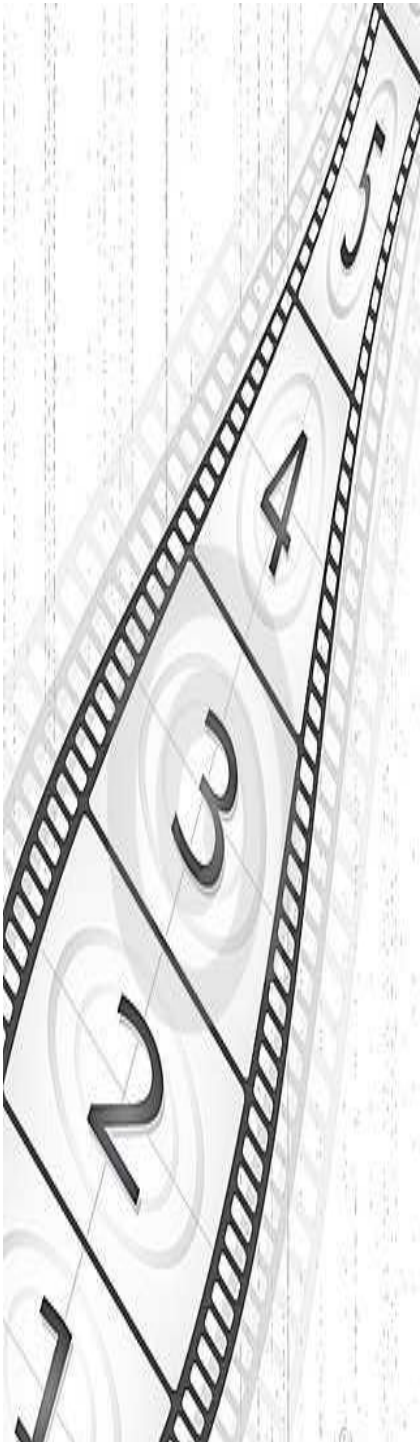
Content of the film

The role of red blood cells



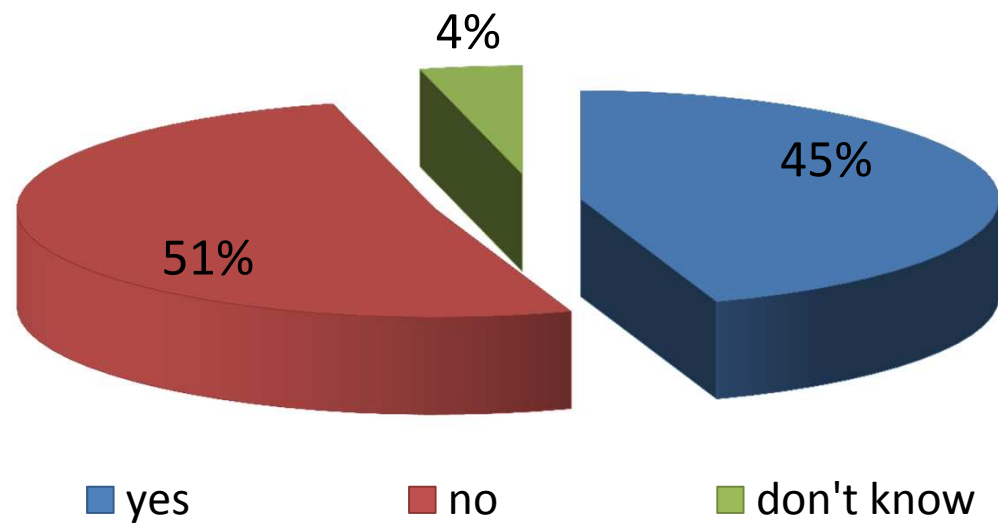
The role of white blood cells

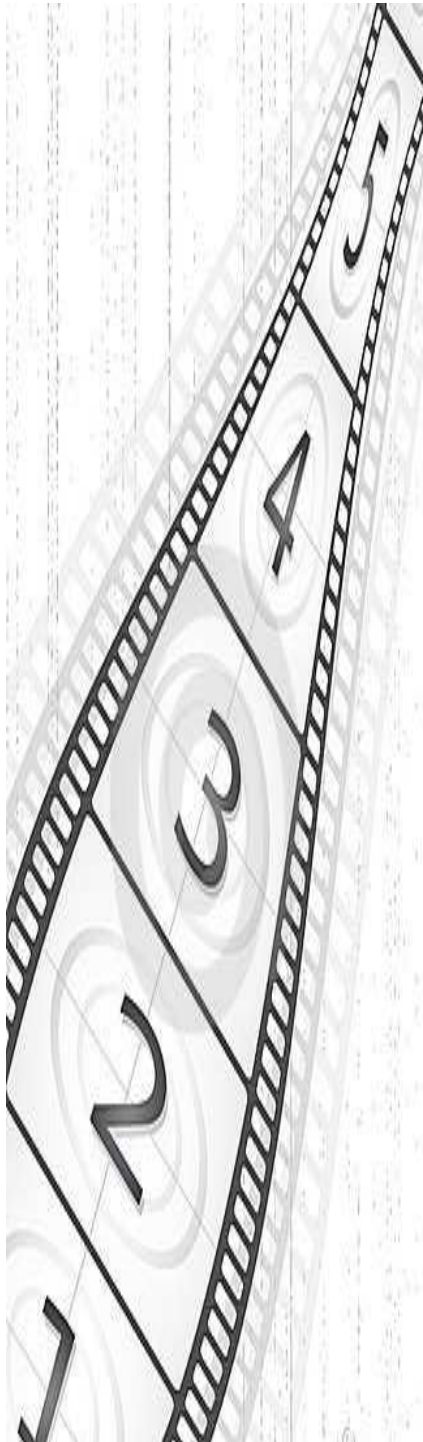




Results

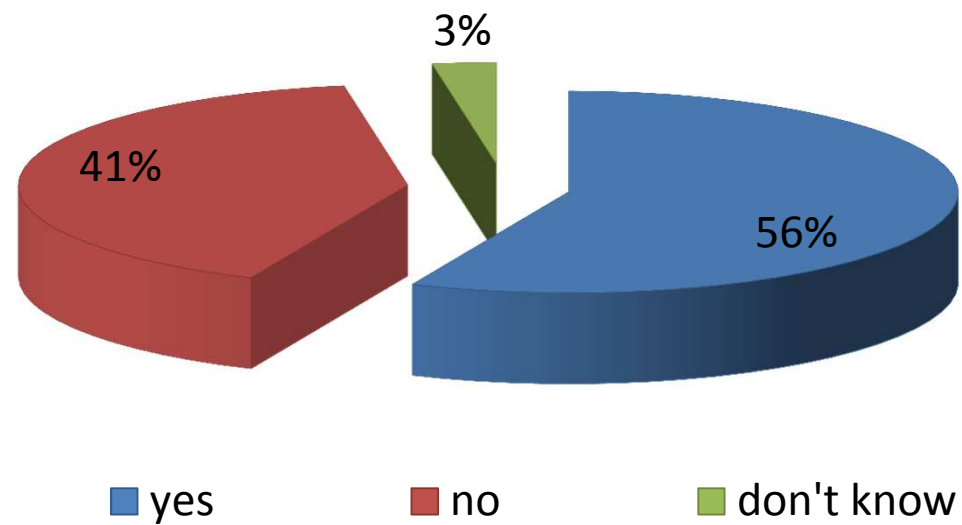
Have you watched any films with AD?

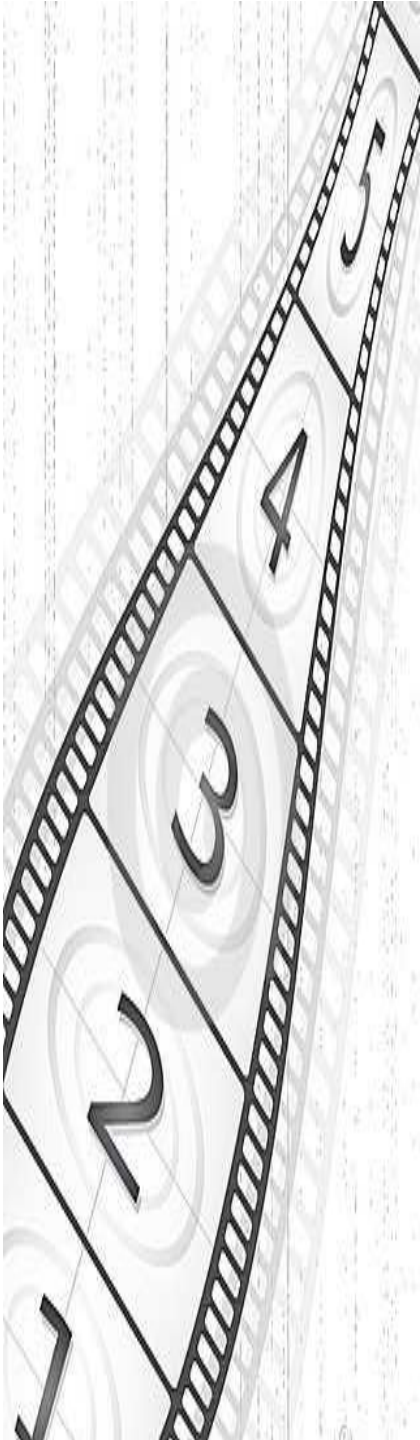




Results

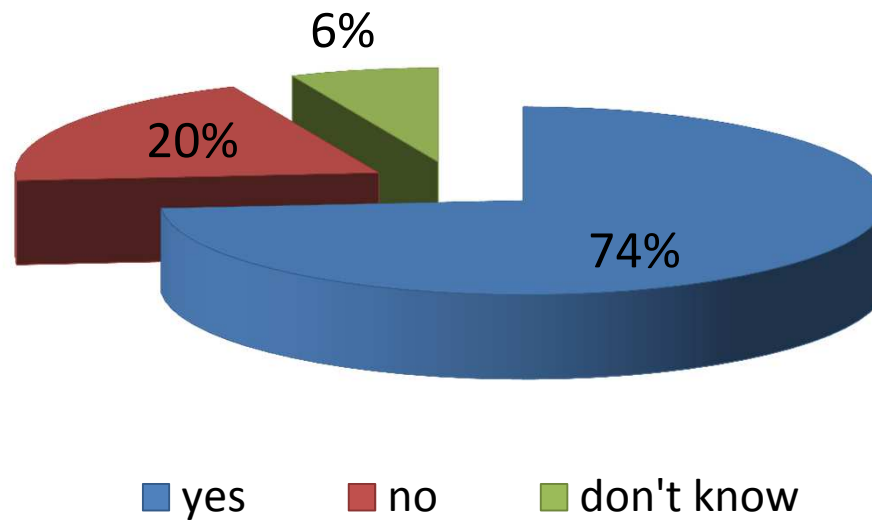
**Do you use speech synthesis software
at home or at school?**

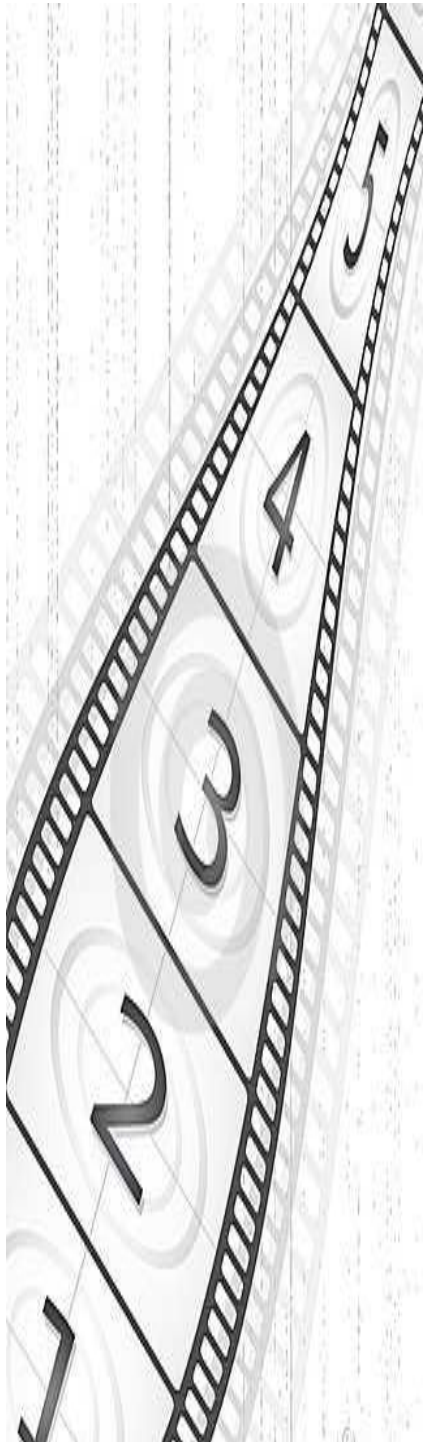




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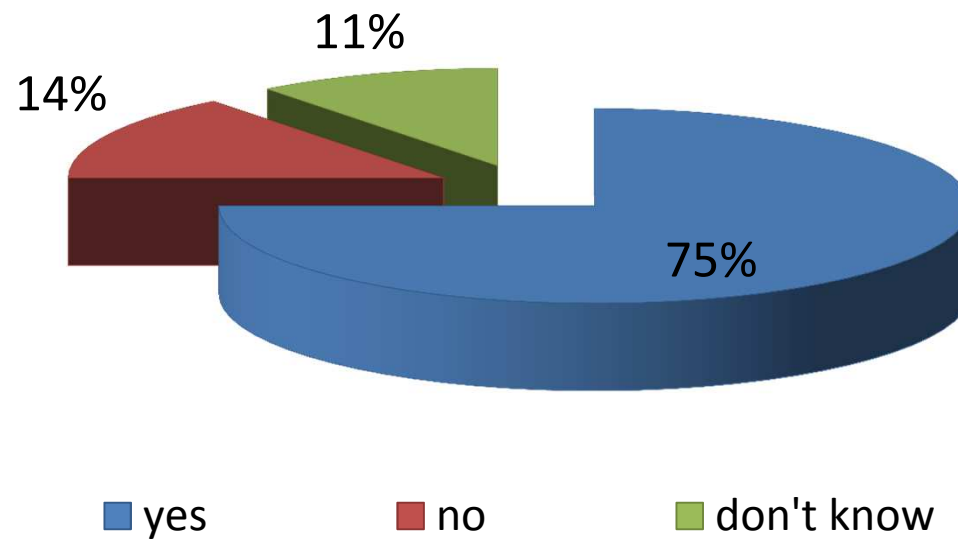
Did you like the voice of the synthesiser?





Results

**Would you like to watch
the next episodes of the series?**





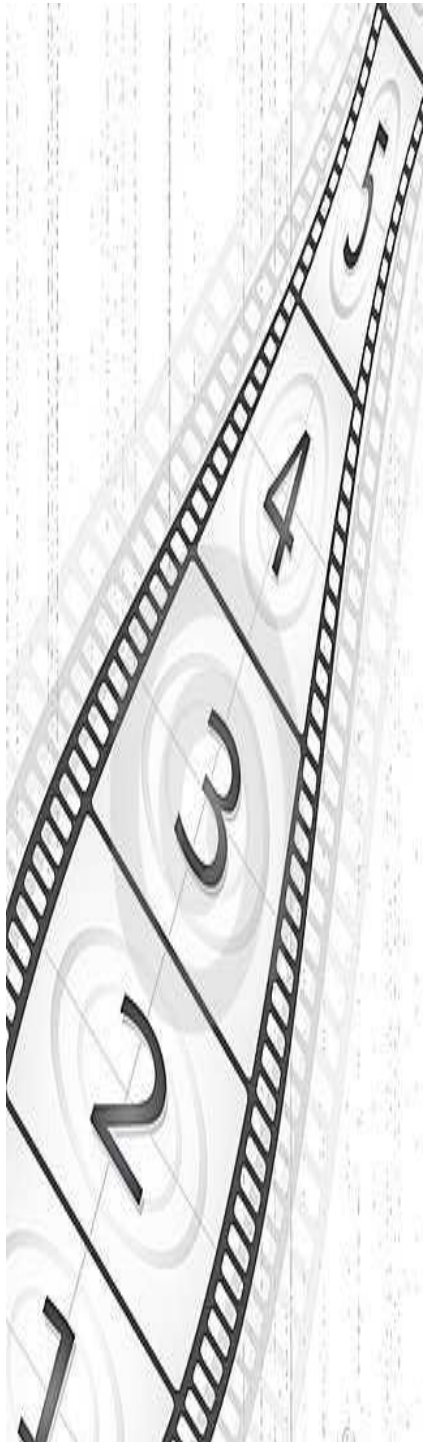
Participants' feedback

“I'd really like to watch more episodes. Up till now I have watched films without AD. My parents described me the action of the film. But I prefer films with AD.” [Boy, 13 years old]

“I liked the voice and the series is really interesting. If there were more episodes, I would definitely like to watch them.”
[Girl, 14 years old]

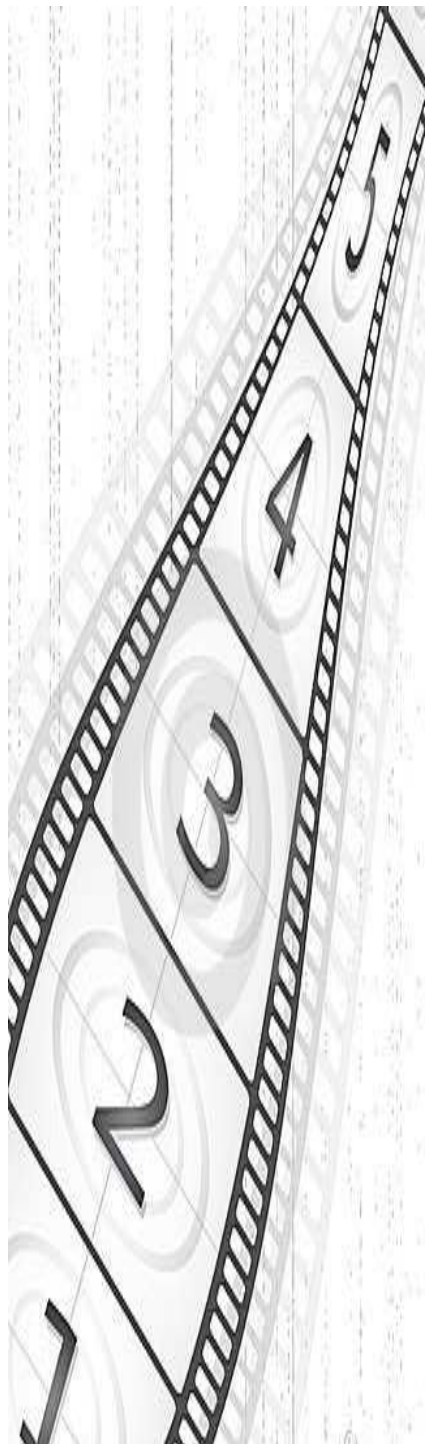
“I want to watch the next episodes, because thanks to them I can better understand what is going on in my body and that is very interesting to me.” [Girl, 15 years old]

“I'm very happy that there are films with AD. I think this one was faultless. If I didn't know this was a synthesiser, I would think a real person was reading the text. In general, good and clear AD.”
[Girl, 13 years old]



Teachers' opinions

- positive about films with TTS AD
- helpful and comprehensible AD script
- films with AD as an interesting and clear way of providing essential information to visually impaired children
- motivating function of the film
- not used films with AD on the lessons, but would like to include them into biology/environment courses if available



Conclusions

- challenging task
- demanding group of receivers
- sensitivity and creativity of the audio describer
- other disabilities of children
- promising results
- experience with speech synthesis software
- immense potential of TTS AD but the need for further studies still remains

Questions and comments?

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More information on the subject available at:

www.avt.ils.uw.edu.pl



AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION RESEARCH LAB