ClipFlair: Online Revoicing and Captioning of Video Clips for FLL

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Abstract

This session aims to present ClipFlair, a web platform which provides captioning and revoicing tools and activities specifically designed for foreign language learning.

Using audiovisual material in the language classroom is a common resource for teachers and course designers since it introduces variety, provides exposure to nonverbal elements and, most importantly, presents linguistic and cultural aspects of communication in their context. However, learners and teachers using videoclips face the difficulty of finding active tasks that will engage learners and discourage passive viewing.

ClipFlair proposes a productive and motivating way of working with AV material: by asking learners to flair a clip, i.e. to revoice or caption a short video. Revoicing involves recording one's own voice onto a clip, as allowing for foreign or same language dubbing, free commentary, audiodescription and karaoke singing. Captioning is adding written words onto the clip: e.g. standard subtitles, captions for accessibility, annotations and intertitles. Clips are short video or audio files, of any type, whole or parts of a longer video, fiction or non-fiction. This simulation of the subtitler's or dubber's professional environment has a tangible, shareable result: the captioned or revoiced clip, and the completion of a learning activity.

ClipFlair is based on a methodological framework for learning through the interaction of words (written and spoken), image (still or moving) and sound (verbal and non-verbal). This framework incorporates important recurrent factors involved in language learning and video awareness, providing educational specifications for the web platform, as well as clip selection criteria

The ClipFlair Studio (http://studio.clipflair.net) offers the captioning and revoicing tools needed by activity authors to create activities. This is also where learners can practice and learn their target language(s) by carrying out these activities. It is basically a zoomable area, the Container of the activity components, i.e. the clips, texts (e.g. instructions, clues or scripts), captions, voice-recordings, images and maps. Each component is editable for size, zoom and features to suit the pedagogical rationale of each activity, depending on the learner's level and needs.

Users can collaborate, interact, share materials, provide feedback, watch tutorials and study guidelines for activity creation and evaluation through groups and forums at the ClipFlair Social Network (http://social.clipflair.net)

Activities for 15 languages can be accessed through the Gallery (http://gallery.clipflair.net) which also includes reusable materials. Given the component-based nature of the ClipFlair Studio, the same material can be mixed differently for different activities in different languages. For example, the same clip may be exploited in different ways for different levels, or a given set of instructions can be used in various activities. Each item in the Gallery is accompanied by relevant metadata which facilitates searching and identifying materials.

Within the project's scope, activities will be developed for 15 languages but in the long term, the project intends to expand the community regardless of language or level.