



BAND 26

ACCESIBILIDAD DESDE UN ENFOQUE TRADUCTOLÓGICO

**GOEDELE DE STERCK, FÁTIMA GÓMEZ-CÁNEBA
Y SILVIA ROISS (EDS.)**



PETER LANG

9783039320951 Complimentary Copy - Not for resale. © Peter Lang Verlag

La obra aborda temas como la audiodescripción, la simplificación y el subtulado para personas sordas, así como la lengua de signos, el lenguaje claro o la lectura fácil. La tecnología desempeña un papel crucial en los servicios de accesibilidad, por lo que este volumen también cubre los últimos avances tecnológicos, como la IA, aplicados a este ámbito. Con la inclusión de casos concretos y ejemplos, el libro ilustra las aplicaciones prácticas de los conceptos teóricos, proporcionando a los lectores una comprensión más clara de cómo se aplican las teorías en escenarios reales. Este enfoque interdisciplinar une, por lo tanto, estudios de traducción, lingüística, comunicación audiovisual y discapacidad, entre otros. El fin último es que sirva de puente entre estas áreas y que promueva una comprensión más holística de la accesibilidad en y para la traducción y, además, fomente una mayor sensibilización y respeto hacia todos los actores implicados.

Goedele De Sterck es Licenciada en Filología Francesa (KU Leuven), Doctora en Filología Española (USAL), Profesora de Traducción (USAL) y traductora literaria en activo.

Fátima Gómez-Cáneba es Graduada en Traducción e Interpretación (USAL), Doctora en Ciencias Sociales (USAL) y traductora e intérprete en activo.

Silvia Roiss es Licenciada en Filología Inglesa e Hispánicas (U. de Salzburgo), Doctora en Traducción e Interpretación (USAL) y profesora titular de universidad en la misma institución.

ISBN 978-3-631-93298-8



9 783631 932988

Complimentary Copy - Not for resale. © Peter Lang Verlag

www.peterlang.com

Accesibilidad desde un enfoque traductológico

FORUM TRANSLATIONSWISSENSCHAFT

Herausgegeben von / Edited by
Lew N. Zybatow, Alena Petrova, Astrid Schmidhofer und / and
Michael Ustaszewski

BAND / VOL. 26

Goedele De Sterck, Fátima Gómez-Cáneba y Silvia Roiss (eds.)

Accesibilidad desde un enfoque traductológico



PETER LANG

Berlin · Bruxelles · Chennai · Lausanne · New York · Oxford

Información bibliográfica publicada por la Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

La Deutsche Nationalbibliothek recoge esta publicación en la Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; los datos bibliográficos detallados están disponibles en Internet en <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sterck, Goedele de editor | Gómez-Cáneba, Fátima editor | Roiss, Silvia editor

Title: Accesibilidad desde un enfoque traductológico / Goedele De Sterck, Fátima Gómez-Cáneba, Silvia Roiss (eds.).

Description: Berlin ; New York : Peter Lang, 2025. | Series: Forum Translationswissenschaft, 1610-286X ; Bd. = vol. 26 | Includes bibliographical references. | 12 contributions in Spanish, 5 in English.

Identifiers: LCCN 2025040307 (print) | LCCN 2025040308 (ebook) | ISBN 9783631932988 hardback | ISBN 9783631932995 pdf | ISBN 9783631933008 epub

Subjects: LCSH: Translating and interpreting | People with disabilities--Services for | Audiodescription | LCGFT: Essays

Classification: LCC P306 .A35 2025 (print) | LCC P306 (ebook)

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2025040307>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2025040308>

Esta monografía se ha beneficiado de una ayuda a la publicación del Vicerrectorado de Investigación y Transferencia de la Universidad de Salamanca en el marco del programa *Difusión de resultados de investigación*. Además, es parte del proyecto de I+D+i *PRELemma: Parámetros para recursos léxicos más accesibles*-PID2022-137210OB-I00, financiado por MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033/.

ISSN 1610-286X

ISBN 978-3-631-93298-8 (Print)

ISBN 978-3-631-93299-5 (ePDF)

ISBN 978-3-631-93300-8 (ePUB)

DOI 10.3726/b23328

© 2026 Peter Lang Group AG, Lausanne, Suiza

Publicado por Peter Lang GmbH, Berlin, Alemania

info@peterlang.com

Todos los derechos reservados.

Esta publicación no puede ser reproducida, ni en todo ni en parte, ni registrada o transmitida por un sistema de recuperación de información, en ninguna forma ni por ningún medio, sea mecánico, fotoquímico, electrónico, magnético, electroóptico, por fotocopia, o cualquier otro, sin el permiso previo por escrito de la editorial.

www.peterlang.com

Contacto sobre el Reglamento general de seguridad de los productos (GPSR):

gpsr@peterlang.com

Índice

Introducción	1
<i>Goedele De Sterck, Fátima Gómez-Cáneba y Silvia Roiss</i>	
La coexistencia de la subjetividad y la objetividad en audiodescripción. Una propuesta multimodal de operacionalización ...	11
<i>Alejandro Romero-Muñoz</i>	
Variation and Typological Differences in Audio Description. A Comparative Analysis of Motion Verbs	33
<i>Gesa Schole y Mirjam Sigmund</i>	
Accessibility on Netflix: How Many Films Could You <i>Actually</i> Enjoy in 2023?	57
<i>Fátima Gómez-Cáneba</i>	
La audiodescripción como recurso didáctico en los estudios de Traducción e Interpretación.....	79
<i>Laura Martínez Urtiaga</i>	
Alfabetización del lenguaje visual para la traducción accesible	103
<i>Catalina Jiménez Hurtado, Laura Carlucci y Ana Medina Reguera</i>	

ÍNDICE

Nuevos enfoques en la traducción accesible
mediante la audiodescripción museística sostenible 137
Carlos Navas-Vallejo

From Visual Literacy to Audio Description:
A Case Study of Accessible Translation in Contemporary Art 163
Cláudia Martins

Lenguaje simplificado para la comunicación accesible desde
la diversidad intelectual. Un estudio de investigación acción
participativa en traducción 193
Emilia Iglesias Fernández y Catalina Jiménez Hurtado

Intralingual Subtitling of Verbal Characterization:
A Case Study of Multiglossia in Egyptian Audiovisual Media 219
Heba Alattar

Subtitular “a más de una voz”.
Polifonía en subtítulado para sordos en plataformas digitales 245
Vicente Bru García y Cristina Álvarez De Morales Mercado

Jugar sin barreras:
evolución y estado actual de la accesibilidad a los videojuegos 269
Carme Mangiron

Examining Recommendations for Cognitive Accessibility
in Video Games 293
Miguel Ángel Oliva-Zamora

El japonés fácil desde un enfoque traductológico.
Estrategia y técnicas de traducción en la *Guía para la vida
diaria y laboral* de la Agencia de Servicios Migratorios 329
Martín Azcárate Muez

El diccionario LECTPAT: herramienta de acceso al conocimiento especializado a través de la Lectura Fácil	355
<i>Silvia Toribio Camuñas y Nuria Cabezas Gay</i>	
Accesibilidad a la discapacidad en la gran pantalla	375
<i>Verónica Arnáiz-Uzquiza y Paula Igareda</i>	
Accesibilidad táctil “compartida” en los museos de arte: ¿proporcionar imágenes o vivir experiencias?	403
<i>María José García Vizcaíno</i>	
Inteligencia artificial y traducción institucional: ¿cuáles son sus implicaciones en términos de accesibilidad e inclusión?	431
<i>Sara García Fernández</i>	

From Visual Literacy to Audio Description: A Case Study of Accessible Translation in Contemporary Art

Cláudia Martins

Instituto Politécnico de Bragança – CITEd

In 1982, UNESCO issued the *Declaration on Media Education*, following widespread concern about the “mediation of modern culture” (Thompson 1990). This apprehension around the role of the media and what started to be called “the digital divide” has since then deepened. Authors as Barthes (1977) delved into visual theory, particularly “the role and function of images in representation and communication” (Newfield 2011), and thus arose the concept of visual literacy, also named “media literacy” (Chauvin 2016) or “multimodal literacy” (Holsanova 2020). Visual literacy is relevant nowadays to protect people from misinformation, fake news and populism, and is developed by using a deeper analysis of all the details in an image, especially in teaching contexts. Transferring this concept to traditional visual contexts, such as museums, introduces additional layers of information that need to be addressed: historical background, artistic movements, styles and techniques, among others. In these cultural venues, mastering this skill is essential, especially when describing exhibits for visually impaired audiences. Thus, audio description intends to translate images into words that are objective, succinct, vivid and imaginative (Snyder 2008) to guarantee that these audiences may create a mental idea of the cultural venue they are visiting, their ambiance, space layout, lighting and collections (Fryer 2016). Therefore, our aim is to examine the concept of visual literacy and its interconnection to audio description (AD), an endeavour that few scholars have directly explored. Moreover, we intend to reflect on the skills audio describers must hold to cater for people’s needs in museums and reflect how these may improve through training, through the presentation of a set of pedagogical activities. Finally, we will draw on practical examples from audio described visits developed for the Contemporary Art Centre Graça Morais (Bragança, Portugal) in order to analyse museum ADs created in two different moments by master’s students.

Keywords: visual literacy, accessible translation, audio description, people with visual disability, translation in museums

1. Introduction

The *Grünwald Declaration on Media Education* put forth by UNESCO in 1982 is based on the concept of media culture and the idea that “we live in a world where media are omnipresent”, since “an increasing number of people spend a great deal of time watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, playing records and listening to the radio” (p. 1). Instead of condemning

the reality in the 1980s, the declaration endorsed its importance as a critical element of modern life. Consequently, they state that media should be approached at schools so they can be aligned with the real world. As such, the declaration presents four initiatives to encourage media education, primarily to support media education programmes, develop training courses for the people involved in education, encourage research on the topic and strengthen the actions put forward by UNESCO.

The situation described in this declaration was enhanced with the birth of the internet, a concept that only became widely available from the 1990s onwards and differently around the world, despite being a project that stemmed from ARPANET in the 1960s. The role of electronic communication technologies associated with the social implications of globalisation led Castells (2004) to speak of the network society, “a society whose social structure is made up of networks powered by micro-electronics-based information and communications technologies” (p. 3).

UNESCO put forth a preparatory document for the World Summit on the Information Society in 2004, where it emphasises that “access is at the centre of one of the most disruptive effects of the information society” (Greco 2018, p. 208), since information and communication technologies are not only “mere tools but rather social forces that are increasingly affecting our self-conception (who we are); our mutual interactions (how we socialise); our conception of reality (our metaphysics); and our interactions with reality (our agency)” (Floridi 2015, p. 2).

Due to this being another factor for social inequity, social agents began expressing concerns about the role of the media in society and social relationships in what was to be called “the digital divide” (a term coined by Lloyd Morrisett, according to the National Communication Association 2014), which has since been considerably deepened, particularly after the advent of the internet. It then widened a more profound gap between developed richer countries and underdeveloped and developing poorer countries. For instance, Greco (2018, p. 208) speaks of multiple divides besides the digital one, such as the one between languages that are “information rich” and those which are “information poor”. For this author (2022, p. 22) “the question of access [becomes] the most cogent ground for theoretical, political and social debate”.

Also related to the power of the media is the growing influence of the image and the often-repeated slogan “an image is worth a thousand words”, highly representative of our sight-dependent society or ocularcentrism. Authors such as Barthes (1977) delved into visual theory, into aspects such as “the role and function of images in representation and communication” (Newfield 2011, p. 82). Thus, the concept of visual literacy (VL) was born and has inspired many counter definitions, in what the International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA) calls the “problem the six blind men faced when describing an elephant” (Burbank / Pett, 1983). In other words, these men’s descriptions depended on the part of the elephant they were touching, and on the understanding one has of VL that will change according to one’s perspective. If “our world has clearly become visually-oriented” (Avgerinou 2003, p. 2), promoting and teaching VL is crucial, which echoes the Grünwald Declaration and the importance of media education.

Furthermore, developing VL is also relevant nowadays to protect people from misinformation, fake news, and populism. It can be developed through a deeper analysis of all the details that make up any image, not to mention its underlying intentions and aims. If one were to transfer this concept into traditionally visual contexts, such as the case of the cinema or museums, one would be confronted with new layers of information that need to be addressed, that is, historical background, artistic movements, styles and techniques, among others. In the case of audio description (AD) provided in cultural contexts, a possible definition put forward by Snyder (2008) is that this mode intends to translate images into objective, succinct, vivid and imaginative words, so as to enable the creation of a mental idea of the place visited, its ambiance, space layout, lighting and collections (Fryer 2016).

Although some scholars (e.g. Snyder 2007, 2008) and AD standards (such as the American Council of the Blind’s AD project, 2010) uphold the need for enhanced observation skills, the fact remains that little research has been conducted on the relation between visual literacy and AD. It is in this context that we seek to focus attention: on examining the concept of VL and its interconnection to audio description, for we believe that audio describers must hold this skill, along with that of verbal literacy, so that they may cater for the needs of people with visual disability. However, two texts must be mentioned: Snyder’s (*s.d.*) paper named “Literacy and Audio Description”,

in which he defends that AD is similar to poetry and “the use of descriptive language can build more sophisticated literacy for all” (p. 8), by observation, clarity, and efficiency of description, as well as his PhD thesis (2013); and Holsanova’s (2020) study that will be thoroughly discussed in this text.

Considering the relationship between the concept of VL and the skills required for AD, it is important to strengthen its interdependence and the pedagogical need to develop these professionals’ VL through training. For this purpose, we will analyse four examples taken from audio-described visits that were developed for the Contemporary Art Centre Graça Morais (CACGM), in Bragança, Portugal. Through the analysis of these examples developed in two different moments, we will attempt to describe how our experience in creating audio-described visits evolved throughout the years by furthering training and reflecting on the practices.

This paper has been organised in four parts: visual communication shall be the focus of section 2, followed by section 3, where a discussion of what VL consists of, its importance and alternative designations shall be presented; section 4 approaches audio description, with a focus on its required skills; and, finally, section 5 analyses 4 AD examples from two exhibitions at CACGM. This chapter concludes with reflections on the fundamental connection between VL and AD.

2. Visual communication

It is common to remark that communication through images is as old as humankind, and one needs only to think of cave paintings or the earliest writing systems, to name just two. Throughout the centuries, the use of sight has expanded in such a manner that we can say that Western countries consolidated an ocularcentric tradition, “based as it is on a vision-generated, vision-centred interpretation of knowledge, truth, and reality” (Kavanagh 2004, pp. 5–6, in line with the theses put forth by Plato, Descartes, and the philosophers of the Enlightenment). This ocularcentrism was enhanced even further since the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century. However, this over-importance of sight and visual information has turned out to be detrimental to the appreciation and development of the other senses (especially touch, taste and smell) in modern society. In this regard, the reference to ekphrasis (e.g. Webb 1999; Pujol / Orero, 2007, p. 49) is common

as it highlights not only an important precursor to AD, but also because it was a stylistic resource that offered a graphic and often dramatic description of a work of art by providing a vivid description.

On the other hand, it has become highly beneficial for those disciplines that explore visual language, because images speak directly to us, emotionally and holistically (Barry 1998, cit. Avgerinou / Petterson 2020, p. 441). In a text from 2011, Avgerinou and Petterson subscribe to the idea that “memory for pictures is superior to memory for words” (p. 27). However, combining both would achieve an even more substantial effect, already proposed by numerous scholars, such as Branch / Bloom (1995) or Paivio (1983).

Therefore, visual communication is an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and multidimensional area of knowledge (Avgerinou / Pettersson 2020, p. 439) that ranges from mass media to film and cinema studies. We would also add Audiovisual Translation (AVT).

As mentioned, in 1990, Thompson spoke of the “mediation of modern culture”, which for Peck (1997) is “central to the historical process of modernization” (p. 237). Consequently, mediatisation changed how “symbolic goods are produced, transmitted, and received” (ibid.) and how we interact as receivers of these goods and with others at a distance and through media (particularly nowadays with social media). Such ideas echo Floridi’s (2015) introduction to “The OnLife Manifesto” summarised in section 1.

Fast forward 30 years, and the world has witnessed an outburst of media platforms, products, services, and the like, so much so that the significance of images is deeply entrenched in modern life. Despite the potential in these old and new media, the truth remains that the image is always present. In fact, Ma / Semali (2003, p. 87) sustain that the digital world has come to represent the vision of a virtual library.

In line with this, Newfield (2011) points out that “visual images of all kinds [are] increasingly used to represent meaning, ideas and feelings, often in complex combinations and orchestrations with words, sounds and movement” (p. 82). For this reason, images cannot be regarded as naïve, deprived of meaning or purpose. There are meanings to be found in images, as Unsworth (1997) upholds. Based on Halliday’s categories, Unsworth (1997) refers to 1) ideational / representational meaning, where images can be narrative or conceptual; 2) interactive / interpersonal, if images express modality (e.g. are images naturalistic, realistic or scientific?); and 3) textual / compositional,

which deals with the salience or prominence of images. These must be considered when working with images in any context. Therefore, to understand images, one must develop visual perception, which Avgerinou / Pettersson (2020) identify as involving “the sensing of information, the use of past experience, and the processing of information along dual pathways” (p. 455).

It is in this increasingly visually mediated world that scholars endorse the need for visual education (e.g. Messaris 1994), because working with images enhances the visual perception and comprehension of a myriad of visual forms and cognitive abilities, develops awareness of visual manipulation, distortion, and misinformation and encourages aesthetic appreciation in all forms of visual communication.

3. Visual literacy

Hobbs (1997) defines literacy as “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms” (p. 119), and the concept has been widely applied to various areas, such as one becomes computer literate, science literate and our current focus that is the visual literate.

According to the 1982 UNESCO Declaration, VL places emphasis on mass media, including television, newspapers, magazines, and movies (Chauvin 2003, p. 122), which are all naturally visual, although it may also include “works of art, architecture, body movements, and many other direct signs observed in the natural environment” (ibid.). The original definition of VL was put forward by Fransecky and Debes (1972), according to whom VL is a mix of skills “developed by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences” (Chauvin, 2003, p. 122). With this skill, people can discriminate and interpret visual information and communicate through images.

However, Avgerinou (2003) states that John Debes was the first to coin the term “visual literacy” in 1962. For this latter author, sight-based skills involve using all sensory experiences to enable people to use visual information critically. This idea brings forward the concept of multimodality, which shall be explored further below.

Apart from VL, Chauvin (2003, p. 120) also discusses the concept of media literacy. He claims that this term was created in 1993 by the Media Awareness Network (now MediaSmarts) in Canada to promote media education in

Canadian schools. This organisation collected various working definitions of media literacy: on the one hand, some stress the dimension of understanding, enjoying and producing media products, whereas others wish to focus on the empowering role of this skill to change “citizens’ passive relationship to media into an active, critical engagement capable of challenging the traditions and structure of a privatized, commercial media culture, and thereby find new avenues of citizen speech and discourse” (Bowen 1996). Another author – Shepherd (1993) – also emphasises the informed and critical understanding that one should have of mass media. Thus, how media literacy is defined by Bowen (1996) or Shepherd (1993) resembles the concept of critical visual literacy (CVL), as developed further ahead.

From Hobbs’ (2002, cit. Chauvin 2003) perspective, VL is preferred by “specialists in art theory and history, psychology, and production; media literacy (...) by people with specializations in sociology and communication. Information literacy (...) preferred by librarians” (p. 124). Regardless of the term chosen by scholars, Chauvin (2003) highlights the multisensory, multisemiotic nature of VL, because, for him, it includes any combination of following modes, including “body language, motion, and dance; two or three dimensional works of art; photographs and clipart; films and videos, including music videos; museum exhibits and dioramas; advertisements; illustrated written and verbal discourse; architecture; hypermedia and virtual reality experiences” (p. 125).

Based on Debes’s (1962) definition of VL, as well as IVLA’s (1989), Pettersson (1993) summarises the basic factors concerning this skill. Therefore, VL encompasses: seeing and integrating other senses; interpreting visual symbols to create visual messages; translating visual images into verbal language; and searching and evaluating visual information in media.

Furthermore, the critical factors for VL are visual language, visual thinking, and visual learning that match Braden and Hortin’s (1982) manner of expressing, thinking and learning in terms of images. These images can be seen, imagined and drawn, actions that occur unconsciously but reach their fullest when they interact (McKim 1980). Avgerinou and Pettersson (2011, p. 7) further develop these factors and add two others, where visual perception is at the core of all other dimensions of VL.

Moreover, according to Avgerinou (2003), there are ten points of convergence for VL, summarised as follows: a) visual language exists and parallels

verbal language; b) it is a cognitive but also affective skill; c) it implies both reading/ decoding/ interpreting and writing/ encoding/ creating; d) it is learnable, teachable and can be developed and improved; e) it is not isolated from other senses; f) it is interlinked with visual communication, visual thinking, and visual learning; and g) VL is focused on intentional communication. The multisensory dimension in VL matches the multimodality proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) or Kress (2010), in which multimodality is the normal state of communication. As Serafini (2010) states, “this shift from a linguistic focus to a multimodal one requires readers to navigate, design, interpret and analyse texts in new and more interactive ways” (p. 86).

Interestingly, Avgerinou and Pettersson (2020, p. 434) identify three waves in VL research, where wave three refers to a new generation of scholars that show interest in VL, such as Kress and van Leeuwen already mentioned. The first wave refers to VL in art education and into media studies, while the second to the VL movement in itself.

Similarly, Avgerinou (2003) also defines Critical Visual Literacy (CVL) which is the awareness of “the ideologies that permeate communication within a particular cultural context” (p. 2), where critical can be understood as “reasoned analysis” (Newfield 2011, p. 92) versus “mere” analytical analysis. Therefore, one “seeking to uncover the social and political interests in the images’ production and reception concerning the social effects of power and domination” (Newfield 2011, p. 92) emerges as a critically visually literate person.

In short, Avgerinou and Pettersson (2020) claim that VL is “an umbrella term covering a broad spectrum” (p. 433). Apart from (C)VL, other authors suggest alternative terms for this type of literacy, such as Media Literacy (Chauvin 2003) or Multimodal Literacy, which consists of something that is necessary for reading, viewing, responding to, and producing multimodal and digital texts (Walsh 2010, p. 111). Finally, Holsanova (2020) considers it essential to study “the dynamic interpretative processes of meaning making” (p. 133) which, in this case, is done through visual language.

Regardless of the name given to this type of literacy, this skill encompasses not only the five dimensions presented above by Avgerinou and Pettersson (2020) but also the reception and the production sides by Holsanova (2020), as we shall explain in the following section.

4. Audio description

Among the areas that work with images, AVT is one of them, an area within Translation Studies that, since the twenty-first century, has come of age and, for this reason, “deserved a separate room (...) in the translation studies (TS) building” (Romero 2018, p. 188). Traditionally, AVT mainly dealt with the cinema and thus developed various translation modes, such as subtitling or dubbing. However, it has crossed the cinema borders to encompass performing arts events – theatre plays, dance, musicals, concerts – and other cultural venues, such as museums and art galleries, archaeological, religious, and historical sites, and the like.

As such, AVT used to comprehend mostly interlingual subtitling, dubbing, voice-over and later began including subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, film audio description, live subtitling, museum audio description and sign language interpreting, as well as other emerging AVT modes. Closely related to these latter modes, another “room [was] devoted to media accessibility” (Romero 2018, p. 188), initially regarded as a sub-area of AVT. Notwithstanding, in line with work conducted by Greco (2018) and Romero (2018, 2019), Media Accessibility (MA) has come forward as “a driving force for social change” (Romero 2018, p. 189) and has somewhat become an autonomous area of study. In its development, MA experienced three shifts. First, it abandoned its particularist approach, whereby “[i]t was still framed as specific for persons with sensory disabilities” (Greco 2018, p. 211), to embrace a more universalist approach, according to which, in addition to sensory barriers, linguistic concerns also became included, that is, “access to media products, services, and environments for all persons who cannot, or cannot completely, access them in their original form” (Greco 2018, p. 211).

Added to this shift, another occurs, connected with “the increasing attention towards users as bearers of valuable knowledge for the investigation of accessibility processes and phenomena as well as their involvement in the design of accessibility solutions and artefacts” (Greco 2018, p. 212). This shift leads to an emphasis on access to creation and not only to content, embodied in Romero’s accessible filmmaking, where the AVT/MA specialist should be consulted and present from the outset of the whole process. Therefore, these changes enhance a user-centred but proactive perspective for achieving human rights since, as Greco (2018) puts it, “there is no accessibility without participation” (p. 213) of end users, be it with or without disabilities.

These shifts are fundamental if we reconsider the power of the media and the multiple divides it brings on for “accessibility becomes the ground on which power negotiations and social struggles take place” (Greco 2018, p. 208).

In this increasingly prominent area of studies, our focus will be on AD as “a mode of audio-visual transfer which involves making audio-visual content and live performances accessible to people with sight loss” (Mazur / Chmiel 2021, p. 51), and more specifically in museums where it “is a verbal description that seeks to make the visual elements of the diverse contents of museums and galleries accessible to blind and partially sighted people” (Hutchinson / Eardley 2019, p. 42). Even so, more than AD is needed for mediation to be accomplished; other senses must participate, especially touch and smell, even though taste is less common¹. The merging of an array of resources will enable a fuller and more meaningful experience, called a multisensory, multidimensional experience (e.g. Martins 2015, p. 213).

Bearing in mind these considerations about AVT/MA and the above sections, it is of the utmost importance that audio describers possess an enhanced VL and are aware of the need to acquire and constantly develop their observation skills, since they are working with visual communication, with a visual language and conveying different layers of information to people who have visual disability or, at one specific moment, cannot access the full product, among others that might be interested in accessing AD.

According to Holsanova (2020), the literacy of audio describers is twofold: as the receiving end and as a producer of information. As the author claims, on the reception side “the audio describer is a recipient of the text who must read the text thoroughly; make sense of the language, images, and graphics and interpret their interplay; find semantic relationships among various resources; and identify the main message” (p. 136), whereas, on the production side, “the audio describer is a producer who selects relevant pictorial information in the context of the message, verbalizes it, integrates it with the content of the written text, and transforms all this into speech” (p. 136).

¹ However, Tate Sensorium is worth mentioning since the 2015 experiment presented four art pieces inside a black room where visitors would be able to listen to music, taste foodstuffs available, touch through an ultrahaptics device and experience scents and fragrances, while having their physiological responses recorded and reviewed. Cf.: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/ik-prize-2015-tate-sensorium>.

Although Holsanova (2020) mentions “written text”, the underlying idea is that these “texts” are multimodal in their nature.

It is based on this double perspective of audio describers’ work that we reiterate the notion of intersemiotic translation (originally put forward by Jakobson in 1959), which consists of the need for the “interplay between various resources, their contribution to the content of the message, and their orchestration in order to achieve a certain effect” (Holsanova 2020, p. 134). This author also refers to the importance of intermodal integration, where audio describers should make sense of verbal and visual information and which enables them to “achieve a comparable understanding and experience for the audience” (Holsanova 2020, p. 143).

5. Training future audio describers for (C)VL

In the context of AVT/MA, it is essential to ascertain how students can be taught to develop their (C)VL to become competent audio describers. Although little research has been conducted about audio describers’ VL, except for Snyder (2013) and Holsanova (2020), multiple parallels with VL approaches can be established.

From the perspective of Kleege / Wallin (2015), close reading and deep analysis of visual material should be developed, along with intermodal integration, that is, making sense of visual and verbal information and supplementing what is lacking (Holsanova 2020). Besides a heightened VL, audio describers must develop a critical skill – a higher-order skill that includes selection, judging, and reordering. Challenges will occur at different stages, from drafting an AD script to evaluating and editing it.

In 2014, Bittner presented a comparison of nine sets of guidelines from the UK, the USA, Ireland, Australia, Germany and France, which followed Vercauteren (2007) and RNIB’s (2010) comparative analysis. In Bittner’s (2014, p. 1) view, audio describers should be aware of the ultimate efforts of AD, which must focus on what to cover, how to do it and the recording part. He identified these categories by quoting the International Television Commission, Snyder (2008) and the American Council of the Blind (2010)

As far as “what” is concerned, Bittner (2014, p. 1) identified six aspects: form, motion, colour, sound, camera perspective (in the case of film AD), and supportive information. Considering these aspects, the author compares.

For Bittner (2014), the “what” and “how” are notably more important than recording in AD training, since audio describers are not necessarily responsible for recording their own audio descriptions. In terms of “how” to audio describe, Bittner (2014) refers to the fact that most guidelines defend that “the style of AD should be factual, not interpretative” (p. 5) – description focuses on what is seen (i.e. Snyder’s (2007) mnemonic WYSIWYD or what you see is what you describe) without conveying moods or attitudes. Thus, a subjective description is deemed unnecessary and unwanted in most guidelines (Bittner 2014, p. 9). This dichotomy has been widely debated in AD (e.g. Schaeffer *e.a.* 2023 included in JAT’s special issue on beyond objectivity in AD).

Within the specific context of AD training, Jankowska (2019) recognises that, despite its offer at various levels, “yet a consistent definition of a describer’s competencies is still lacking” (p. 197). However, it is worth mentioning Díaz (2006), which encompasses a set of four competences for subtitlers and audio describers – linguistic, content-wise, technological, and personal – and Snyder’s (2007) 4 skills for audio describers – observation, editing, language, and voice.

Jankowska (2019) also refers that training materials in AD were less widespread than other areas in translator training, and highlights the Erasmus+ ADLAB PRO project (2016–2019), which produced free materials available online for this purpose. Corroborating Jankowska’s idea, Mazur / Chmiel (2021) state that “AD is a fairly young discipline, both as a professional practice and an area of academic interest. This also means that AD training is not yet fully fledged, and AD training methodologies and pedagogical approaches are still underdeveloped” (p. 52).

Nonetheless, there is a handful of papers on the didactics of AD, namely ADLAB PRO (2018), Chmiel *e.a.* (2019), Mazur / Chmiel (2021) who focus on the survey conducted within ADLAB PRO, Jankowska (2017, 2019), or Luque / Soler (2019).

According to the European project framework (ADLAB PRO 2018), there are thirteen competencies for audio describers to bear in mind, some of which are subdivided. These are as follows: 1) insight into the history, developments and trends of AD practice and research; 2) general knowledge of the concept of AD; 3) practice-oriented understanding of the functioning of audio-visual texts, in general and for different/selected types of AD; 4) technical knowledge and skills regarding software solutions for both the

production and reception/distribution of AD for different/selected types of AD; 5) knowledge of the workflow and identification of the different people involved in the AD production process for different/selected types of AD; 6) skills for the production of an AD script for different/selected types of AD; 7) skills for the delivery of different/selected types of AD; 8) knowledge of the parameters for a qualitative AD end product and skills for assessing/editing the AD; 9) knowledge of the use of Audio Introductions and what to include in them; skills for writing and recording AI's; 10) knowledge of the use of AST's, dubbing and voice-over and the different applicable scenarios; skills for adapting, if applicable, and recording AST's/dubbing/voice-over; 11) knowledge of new developments and the capacity/willingness to stay abreast: the translation of AD's, use of MT, use of artificial voices; 12) knowledge of new developments in terms of new areas of applicability and new audiences; and 13) knowledge of the needs of blind and partially sighted audiences in live interactions when leading tours and guiding. These are subsequently connected to subcompetencies and modules that specifically draw on the above-mentioned skills.

Jankowska (2019) presents a set of exercises that are aimed at enhancing audio describers' skills. The author's pedagogical approach is, in turn, based on Biel's integrative functional approach, which is inspired by "the professional realism of training, social constructivism and functionalism" (Jankowska 2019, p. 198), combining a "more traditional approach of offering knowledge through lectures and readings (...) [with] the principles of active and discovery learning (...) [and] a variety of exercises (...) that promote inductive rather than deductive learning" (Jankowska 2019, pp. 198–199). As Jankowska (2019) summarises, "it is through practice and searching for real solutions to real problems that future describers learn how to use the tools provided by the theory" (p. 199).

Jankowska's exercises are organised into different modules that are 1) first steps in AD scripting, 2) AD (interlingual) translation, 3) learning and questioning the guidelines, 4) from rules to strategies, and 5) collaborative AD scripting (Jankowska 2019, p. 200).

I selected two exercises from Jankowska's first module because these are more focused on the development of VL through verbal literacy. The first exercise is called "Can you draw it?", whereby students are read "two manipulated descriptions of the same schematic picture" (Jankowska, 2019, p. 201)

and asked to draw what the descriptions incited them to. One of the descriptions is structured but imprecise, and the other is detailed but chaotic. According to the author, this exercise “enable[s] trainees to experience AD from the perspective of a user and to use this experience to deduce possible AD drafting solutions” (p. 201) while the students are still a *tabula rasa*. After drawing, students discuss the description that was easier to follow. This exercise can also enable trainers to approach different AD styles, such as objective vs. subjective vs. poetic or longer, more detailed vs. shorter, and more succinct AD.

The second one is named “Can you see what I am seeing?”. Here, students sit around a table where some objects are placed. They must all describe what they see from their place. In the end, they contrast their descriptions and reflect on how they were affected by several factors, since “[t]he way we depict something depends on the distance for which we examine the scene, what we look at in particular, which objects we pay most attention to, where we view the scene from, and on our previous experiences or knowledge” (Jankowska 2019, p. 203). This echoes the elephant drawn by the eight blind men in the introduction.

The idea of past experiences and knowledge is not only an aspect approached by Langacker’s construal from cognitive linguistics, but also the above-mentioned authors that created and developed the concept of visual literacy: the fact that one’s past experiences is bound to influence and to a certain extent determine the details you select as important in a visual object, what you actually pay attention to and the aspects you ignore.

All in all, the constant interplay between these VL and verbal literacy is a necessary step in audio describers’ training. Training both literacies is essential, particularly so through ongoing group discussion with other audio describers-in-training, professional audio describers and end users. Consciously and intentionally developing them is highly productive for their consolidation as future professionals in AD.

6. Accessible translation at CACGM

The European Master in Translation (EMT) network encompasses the European Higher Education (HE) institutions which offer translation training and were accepted through an application. Within the EMT context, Valdez

et al. (2023) conducted a survey that focused on ascertaining the training these HE institutions offer, with a special focus on AVT and MA. According to the results, MA is not offered in the Portuguese HE institutions that make up the EMT, and the country has limited provision of AVT.

The Polytechnic Institute of Bragança (IPB) is a HE institution in the northeast of Portugal that is not part of the EMT (yet). However, it has been providing students with training in interlingual subtitling, subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing and AD since the academic year 2013/2014, and, since 2021/2022, training in plain and easy language.

As far as AD is concerned, the focus has always been on film AD and museum AD. In 2018, the IPB signed a protocol with the CACGM so as to develop a master's project in museum AD². At the time, the master's researcher and their supervisor carried out a pilot experiment (i.e. a small-scale study to evaluate the project's feasibility) for the exhibition "Metamorphosis of Humanity" by Graça Morais³ and, drawing on this first experiment, prepared the AD for a second exhibition called "Blue Eyes of the Sea" also by Graça Morais (Martins / Freitas 2019).

While working on the exhibition "Blue Eyes of the Sea", the research team devised a template for audio-described visits (partially based on Martins 2015), and the term was coined to mean a visit that is wholly based on AD, not only because it includes what Neves (2011, p. 26) calls "replacement AD" (i.e. a stand-alone AD that describes the piece through an audio without resorting to other senses or materials), but also what she calls "spatial orientation AD" which provides instructions and directions to guide people with visual disability through space.

Later, in 2020–21, the main researcher (the supervisor in the previous study) continued working solo on ensuing exhibitions, namely "Drawings and Paintings: Graça Morais' donations" and Túlía Saldanha's⁴ "onedayisaw" (intentionally without any spaces). Finally, between 2021 and 2023, the IPB developed

² The master project was developed between 2018 and 2019, and completed in 2020 by Ingrid Freitas (cf. References).

³ Graça Morais is a Portuguese contemporary artist. She was born in Vila Flor, a village in the northeast of Portugal, in 1948. The CACGM was named after her and her work is permanently on display there, though the exhibitions are regularly changed.

⁴ Túlía Saldanha (1930–1988) is a Portuguese contemporary artist born in Macedo, northeast Portugal, who died before her time. Her harsh personal life led her to get

the project “Culture for All Bragança” (NORTE-07-4230-FSE-000058) for the Municipality of Bragança and created another six audio-described visits for the CACGM: 4 exhibitions by Graça Morais and two by visiting artists.

This project allowed the research team to perfect and consolidate their expertise in museum AD, among other areas, and it was then that the template created for the audio-described visits in 2018 was revised and improved (see Table 1). The project also presented the opportunity to work both in previous audio-described works, namely from “Blue Eyes of the Sea”, and in installation-based exhibitions, such as “Assembly Lines” by Alex Dorici⁵, in line with the previous Tília Saldanha’s exhibition.

Table 1. Template for audio-described visit

Template for audio-described visit	Technical acknowledgements
	Instructions
	History of building
	Description of the exhibition space
	The exhibition (topic and artist)
	Spatial description in each room and from one room to another
	AD of a selection of works
	Farewell and feedback

“Blue Eyes of the Sea” was elected among the 6 CACGM visits produced within the “Culture for All Bragança” project for the purpose of the analysis presented in this chapter. On the one hand, the 2019 exhibition was displayed in seven rooms on the first floor of CACGM and its audio-described visit included fifteen works with replacement AD, along with spatial AD. It was a much larger exhibition with a total of fifty-eight pieces. On the other hand, in 2023, the exhibition was part of a display that included other pieces from

involved with Coimbra’s Circle of Plastic Arts despite not having prior experience or training. Regardless, she became a reference in Portuguese art installation.

⁵ Alex Dorici is an artist born in Switzerland in 1979 who has a Portuguese mother and Italian father. He studied arts in Switzerland and Italy and worked in Paris. Portuguese art is admittedly an influence on his artistic approach.

Graça Morais's different periods and themes and it only occupied the ground floor of CACGM, with a dozen works exhibited on the whole. Of the fifteen works audio described in 2019, only six were audio described in 2023.

The previously existing ADs were used to improve the 2023 ADs, so that the final texts would become linguistically simpler, in line with plain language requirements, less confusing and thus clearer for people with visual disability, and at times less detailed to avoid information overload. Furthermore, we also reflected on the underlying visual processing strategies used in 2019, the elements chosen then and their semiotic connotations.

It is worth mentioning that all the ADs were tested and validated by people with and without visual disability and the changes introduced in the 2023 AD also stemmed from comments made by these diverse audiences. The need and requirement to have end users participate in the creation process is aligned with what Greco (2018) upholds – the proactive principle, reflecting a common practice in various MA areas.

Two common pieces were chosen from the 2019 and 2023 exhibitions: “Blue eyes of the sea” and “Feast” (cf. Figures 1 and 2, respectively). It is worth explaining that these two works are part of a collection that was commissioned by the Municipality of Sines, a coastal city in the south of Portugal. For this commission, Graça Morais stayed in Sines for 6 months to get to know the community of fishermen and photograph their life. Thus, the exhibition mostly represents men, contrary to Graça Morais's usual objects of study which are women, nature, animals and the metamorphosis from humans to animals and the reverse. This is relevant information for audio describers and will determine the way the chosen works are analysed and evaluated (two stages for VL). These works are all part of a larger, common narrative which is to depict the fishermen's harsh life in the sea.

The aim for this section was to analyse the differences between the ADs created for the two exhibitions. It will bear in mind Martins's (2015) microstructure for AD, which includes linguistic aspects – total number of words and of sentences –, strategies for lexical and syntactic simplification and details that may have been either omitted, added or nuanced. At the same time, comments will be made about the visual processing that underlay the ADs and how we communicated/ translated the visual elements and their connotations.



Figure 1. “Blue eyes of the sea”
(Graça Morais, 2005 – photo by Cláudia Martins)

Examples 1 and 2 are presented below and refer to the AD for the 2005 painting “Blue eyes of the sea” (cf. Figure 1) by Graça Morais.

Example 1 – painting “Blue eyes of the sea” (2019 exhibition)

The acrylic, charcoal and pastel painting on canvas is 3 metres high and 1.9 metres wide, and is in the vertical position. (0) It is attached by cables to the ceiling; it looks as if it is suspended on air and does not touch the ground. It is possible to walk around the piece, due to the space that separates the canvas from the wall. (1) Dated October 2005, a man’s bust is depicted on a blue background. (2) The hairless figure has striking black features for his face, such as protruding ears and nose. (3) He appears to be a man with a long life due to the age lines on his face and neck that hint the character’s lifetime. The irises in his eyes stand out as being a bright light blue as if they were marbles. His closed mouth is marked by black and orange lines. The character has an absent look. Where the rest of his head should be, you see scribbles that form the shape of a crab in orange tones. In the centre of the body of the crab, a huge ball appears that resembles the iris of the man’s eyes. (4) Dripping ink marks run all over the canvas.⁶

⁶ The AD is preceded by the following: Now, at 12 o’clock, we have the work “The blue eyes of the sea”, the work that gave its name and is the symbol of this exhibition.

Example 2 – painting “Blue eyes of the sea” (2023 exhibition)

On the right of the text, we have a painting in acrylic, charcoal and pastel on canvas, 3 metres high and 2 metres wide. (1) It is upright and dates from October 2005. It is the bust of a man painted on a blue background. (2) He has no hair and his face is drawn in bold black lines. It has protruding ears and a large nose. The irises or pupils of the eyes stand out for being a bright light blue as if they were marbles. Despite this, the man has an absent look. The mouth is closed and marked by black and orange lines. (3) He appears to be a man who has had a long life from the wrinkles on his face and neck.

Above the head, orange strokes create the drawing of a crab. In the centre of the crab's body is a huge ball that resembles the irises of the man's eyes. (4) The work is filled with ink marks that run along the entire canvas.⁷

The observation of this piece highlighted the materials used, its size and the possibility of interaction (i.e. going around it, which was no longer possible in 2023), the striking features on the man's face and their direct connotation to his age and difficult life, and the different shades and hues of blue that are connected to the sea. Blue is also the colour of the man's eyes that could be read as the sea being his life, a more interpretative element that was not included in the final AD. The shape of the crab in orange strokes and the dripping ink marks were also important elements selected for they connect again with the sea and the artist's way of creating art.

As far as length is concerned, the 2019 AD includes 201 words and twelve sentences, whereas the 2023 AD became slightly shorter, with 167 words, though the number of sentences remained 12.

The 2019 and 2023 texts provide spatial information, some details of which were omitted, as can be seen in (0). The painting's measures and date, techniques and materials (e.g. acrylic, charcoal, pastel, no frame) are covered in both ADs. (1)–(3) are instances of syntactic simplification that converted a longer subordinate sentence into two sentences and, for instance, replaces a derived adjective – hairless – for the sentence “he has no hair”, in line with plain language guidelines. (4) also consists of a simplification strategy: it turns a shorter, more poetic sentence into a longer one that is more direct and explanatory.

⁷ The AD is preceded by the following: Centre entrance – The exhibition starts at the entrance to the centre, where we have one of the wall texts. It's entitled “A Conversation with Dante” and was written by Graça Morais. Let's read it. [text].



Figure 2. “Feast” (Graça Morais, 2005 – photo by Cláudia Martins)

The ADs for “Feast” are shown in examples 3 and 4. This is a painting also from 2005 by Graça Morais.

Example 3 – painting “Festim” (2019 exhibition)

The charcoal and pastel drawing on paper is 1.2 m high and 1.6 m wide and on the horizontal. It has a light wood frame and is protected by glass. (1) In the centre of the picture, where it would be firm land, we have two figures that occupy a large part of the picture, facing each other. (2) They are in the process of metamorphosis between humans and seagulls.

The figure on the left is in profile and takes its right hand to the head. (3) It has its body leaning forwards and it seems to expel a flow in shades of white, black, and yellow from its mouth. Two wings of an angel come out from its back. (4) The birdman wears black shorts and his feet are flat on the floor.

The figure to the right of the work, slightly larger than the first, has legs and wings of a seagull. (5) The character brings its hands to its mouth, as if eating, making direct reference to the pictures of Graça Morais’s daughter. It has a well-defined nose and, instead of eyes, yellow and white blotches prevent you from realising if the eyes are open or closed. Between the legs of these two figures, a seagull appears drawn in a mixture of grey and white which is in profile.

On the right side of this seagull, a female figure is seated, with her head resting on her right hand and the elbow on her right knee and her other hand at her waist. According to available interpretations, this woman represents Vasco da Gama's mother, the Portuguese navigator and explorer who is said to have been the first to arrive in India by sea and to have lived in Sines. This woman is a direct reference to another work from the same series called "The seagull lament of Vasco da Gama's mother" that is not part of this exhibition. In this piece, the seagull complains to Vasco da Gama's mother about the destruction of Sines at the hands of industrialisation.

To the right of this second figure, we see a seagull leaning forward to catch a fish, surrounded by debris.

On a second plane, where the sea is represented, to the left of the work, a rowboat with two indistinct figures is outlined.

On the background, the port facilities of Sines are sketched in red, grey and black lines.

The sky is painted black as if it represented industrial pollution. In the centre is an orange tip that might be the sun. (6) Another interpretation for these shades of black and red is related to the painter's concern about the fires that occurred in Portugal.

Example 4 – painting "Festim" (2023 exhibition)

On the wall in front of us is the painting called "Feast", also from 2005.

The charcoal and pastel drawing on paper is 1.2 metres high and 1.6 metres wide. It has a light wood frame and is protected by glass. (1) In the centre of the work, we have two figures that occupy a large part of the frame. They are on dry land, by the sea, and are in (2) the process of transforming into something between humans and seagulls, as is usual in Graça Morais's creative process.

The figure on the left is in profile facing the right of the frame. It raises its right hand to its head. (3) Its body is leaning forward and seems to vomit an opaque liquid, painted in shades of white, black and yellow. Two wings come out of its back. (4) The birdman wears black shorts. He has both feet firmly on the ground. The figure on the right is slightly larger than the first and has seagull legs and wings. (5) It brings its hands to its mouth, as if it is eating something. Instead of eyes, it has yellow and white spots that prevents us from knowing whether its eyes are open or closed.

Between the legs of these two figures, there is a seagull drawn in grey and white tones. There is also a seated female figure, with her head resting on her right hand and her elbow resting on her right knee. The other hand is on her waist. According to Jorge da Costa, the curator of this exhibition in 2019, this woman represents Vasco da Gama's mother, the Portuguese navigator and explorer who is said to have been the first to reach India by sea and to have lived in Sines. The inclusion of this figure results from the request of the Sines's City Council, who commissioned the series. Around these figures, there's another seagull eating from the ground and a boat with two people.

In the far background, we can guess the Sines port facilities in red, grey and black lines. The sky is painted black, as if representing the pollution from the industry in Sines. In the centre an orange line that could be the sun setting on the farthest horizon.⁸

In terms of visual processing, this piece is far more complex than the previous one, since it conveys various layers of information on the foreground, midground and background, roughly Sines and its industry, life in the sea and the beach that represents the community that stays behind. Although the colours might be regarded as milder, they are semiotically more loaded and the understanding of this piece was enhanced thanks to two guided visits to the 2019 exhibition, one with the artist herself and another with the director of the centre who curated the exhibition. Not only does the piece tell a story, thus favouring a more narrative approach, the figures drawn and painted here also depict metamorphosed animals-people and smaller people and animals with apparently different functions. In the AD, it becomes clear that the team turned the semiotic interpretations into part of the final text as a means to produce some sort of explanation for the figures, colours and the three layers of information.

The 2019 AD is 441-word long and includes twenty-one sentences, while the 2023 AD was shortened to 373 words but increased the number of sentences from 21 to 23.

Both texts include information about the location of the painting within the room, its measures and date, techniques and materials (e.g. charcoal, pastel, wood frame, glass) and an inkling on the style of the artist, i.e. metamorphosis. However, this is an instance of simplification (see (2) in examples 3 and 4), where the technical word “metamorphosis” was replaced for its explanation. Other examples of simplification are: (1), (3) and (4) where the sentences in the 2019 AD are divided into two to aid comprehensibility. In terms of omissions, there are two noteworthy cases: (5) omits the information about the artist’s daughter, which may not be particularly relevant for VL, in (6) the reference to the fires in Portugal is omitted altogether in example 4.

⁸ The AD is preceded by: Straight ahead, we pass by the glass doors that give access to the garden on our left and head towards the back of the room. On the right is the lift and a set of four framed drawings. On the wall in front of us is a painting called *Festim*, also from 2005.

The AD conducted in 2019 was mostly concerned with covering the visual details deemed important, often in complex syntax. Despite covering many of the criteria put forth by Martins (2015), there were aspects that the 2023 AD simplified, omitted or nuanced. Not only was the temporal distance essential for these changes, but the feedback received from people with and without visual disability also led the team to introduce the above-discussed changes. It is also worth noting that the 2023 AD benefitted from plain language guidelines which were widely used throughout the “Culture for All Bragança” project.

7. Final remarks

Despite our solid ocularcentric tradition, one is not necessarily a visual literate merely because one has sight. Based on several authors, visual literacy is regarded as a skill that must be learned, developed, and improved to allow us to interpret visual symbols, their meanings, and underlying intentions, and recode them if needed. For the case of audio describers, VL establishes a parallel with verbal literacy. These two sides are paramount for these multimodal, intersemiotic professionals who must develop their observation skills, as Snyder (2007) upholds, especially important in the identification, selection, and prioritisation of the most pertinent visual elements to be included in the AD script.

For Holsanova (2020):

[t]he audio describer – being first recipient and later producer – combined the contents of the available resources, made judgements about relevant information, determined ways of verbalizing visual information, used conceptual knowledge, filled in the gaps missing in the interplay of resources, reordered information for optimal flow, and facilitated understanding and cognitive processing. (p. 145)

This definition of audio-describers’ work leads to the concept of critical VL, since one must consciously and critically (i.e. through a reasoned analytical approach) look at/into images, deconstruct them and then encode them to produce a text that may produce a mental image in those who enjoy AD. Apart from this, one must not overlook the relevance of meshing a verbal description with other senses to give rise to a multimodal, multisensory experience.

Consequently, pedagogical activities aimed at training audio describers are crucial to developing and consolidating their skills. As such, a selection of activities proposed by Jankowska (2019) were presented that enable students to engage in different ways with the visual object, by questioning the rules and designing their own strategies, but also discussing and arguing in favour or against specific ADs. Drawing on this pedagogical approach, we examined four cases of ADs retrieved from the 2019 and 2023 exhibitions “Blue Eyes of the Sea” at CACGM. While the first AD was carried out within a master’s project, and to some extent pioneering in Bragança and CACGM, the second AD was developed within the “Culture for All Bragança” project and benefitted from the experience amassed through the 4 years that separated the experiences. Notwithstanding, both experiences were developed collaboratively and involved authentic, real-life exhibitions (and thus were not mere academic exercises). They embody what Jankowska (2019) purports: that is through practice and search for real solutions to real problems that skills are developed, and, we would add, VL for AD is enhanced.

As a result, we presented and briefly discussed the underlying strategies for visual processing, as well as some of the changes that occurred in the ADs, mainly highlighting instances of simplification and omission. The need to identify visual elements in an object is undeniably intertwined with audio-describers’ visual and verbal literacy, but often the number of details described must be balanced and either simplified, nuanced or omitted altogether. However, it is worth mentioning that the final AD was also assessed through reception studies that allowed audio describers to ascertain whether their work was producing the intended purpose by collaborating with people with visual disability.

In a nutshell, as Chauvin (2003, p. 126) purports, we are visual before we are linguistic beings, and, as such, visual literacy is indeed a prerequisite to human thinking (Sinatra 1986).

References

- ADLAB PRO (2018): Simplified course structure. <https://www.adlabpro.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Simplified-course-structure-IO3-1.pdf> (retrieved 20/09/2024).

- American Council of the Blind (2010): Audio Description Guidelines and Best Practices (version 3.1). <http://docenti.unimc.it/catia.giaconi/teaching/2017/17069/files/corso-sostegno/audiodescrizioni> (retrieved 20/09/2024).
- Avgerinou, Maria (2003): “A Mad-Tea Party No More: Revisiting the Visual Literacy Definition Problem”. Conference Paper. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313470038_A_Mad-Tea_Party_No_More_Revisiting_The_Visual_Literacy_Definition_Problem (retrieved 20/09/2024).
- Avgerinou, Maria / Pettersson, Rune (2011): “Toward a Cohesive Theory of Visual Literacy”. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 30(2), pp. 1–19.
- Avgerinou, Maria / Pettersson, Rune (2020): “Visual Literacy Theory: Moving Forward”. In: Josephson, Sheree / Kelly, James D. / Smith, Ken (eds.): *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*. New York: Routledge, pp. 433–464.
- Barry, Ann-Marie (1998): “The Joe Camel story: Tobacco industry manipulation and the necessity for visual intelligence”. Paper presented at Viscom 12, Winter Park, CO, June 26.
- Barthes, Roland (1977): *Image music text*. London: Fontana Press.
- Bittner, Hansjörg (2014): *Audio description guidelines – a comparison*. https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/_migrated/content_uploads/AD_Guidelines_Comparison_-_Read.pdf (retrieved 20/09/24).
- Bowen, Wally (1996): *Citizens for Media Literacy*. www.mediasmarts.ca.
- Braden, Roberts / Hortin, John (1982): “Identifying the theoretical foundations of visual literacy”. *Journal of Visual/Verbal Language* 2(2), pp. 37–51.
- Branch, Robert C. / Bloom, Joel R. (1995): “The Role of Graphic Elements in the Accurate Portrayal of Instructional Design”. In: Beauchamp, Donald G. / Braden, Robert A. / Griffin, Robert E. (eds.): *Imagery and Visual Literacy*. Loretto, PA: International Visual Literacy Association, pp. 162–174.
- Burbank, Lawrence / Pett, David W. (eds.) (1983): *Contributions to the study of visual literacy*. Bloomington, IN: International Visual Literacy Association.

- Castells, Manuel (2004): *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (volume II). Cambridge, MA/ Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Chauvin, B. A. (2016): “Visual or Media Literacy?”. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 23(2), pp. 119–128.
- Chmiel, Agnieszka / Mazur, Iwona / Vercauteren, Gert (2019): “Emerging Competences for the Emerging Profession: A Course Design Procedure for Training Audio Describers”. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 13(3), pp. 326–341. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2019.1656408>
- Díaz Cintas, Jorge (2006): *Competencias profesionales del subtitulador y el audiodescriptor*. Technical Report for Centro Español del Subtitulado y la Audiodescripción.
- Floridi, Luciano (2015). “Introduction”. In: Floridi, Luciano (ed.): *The onlife manifesto. Being human in a hyperconnected era*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 1–3.
- Fransecky, Roger B. / Debes, John L. (1972): *Visual Literacy: A Way to Learn—A Way to Teach*. Washington, DC: Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT).
- Freitas, Ingrid (2020): *Bragança+: uma iniciativa para promover a acessibilidade sensorial no Centro de Arte Contemporânea Graça Morais* [Bragança+: an initiative to promote sensory accessibility at the Contemporary Art Centre Graça Morais]. Unpublished master’s report. Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Portugal.
- Fryer, Louise (2016): *An Introduction to Audio Description: A Practical Guide*. London / New York: Routledge.
- Greco, Gian Maria (2018): “The nature of accessibility studies”. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 1(1), pp. 205–232.
- Hobbs, Renee (1997): “Literacy for the information age”. In: Flood, James/ Lapp, Diane/Heath, Shirley Brice (eds.): *The Handbook of Research on Teaching Literacy through the Communicative and Visual Arts*. Old Tappan, NJ: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, pp. 7–14.
- Holsanova, Jana (2020): “Uncovering scientific and multimodal literacy through audio description”. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 39(3–4), pp. 132–148.

- Hutchinson, Rachel / Eardley, Alison (2019): Museum audio description: the problem of textual fidelity. *Perspectives* 27(1), pp. 42–57. DOI: 10.1080/0907676X.2018.1473451.
- Jankowska, Anna (2019): “Training future describers – a practice report from an audio description classroom”. *Linguistics Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies* 18, pp. 197–215.
- Kavanagh, Donnacha (2004): “Ocularcentrism and its Others: A Framework for Metatheoretical Analysis”. *Organization Studies* 25(3), pp. 445–464. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840604040672>.
- Kleege, Georgina / Wallin, Scott (2015): “Audio description as a pedagogical tool”. *Disability Studies Quarterly* 35(2). <https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/4622/3945> (retrieved 20/9/24).
- Kress, Gunther (2010): *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, Gunther / van Leeuwen, Theo (1996): *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. New York: Routledge.
- Ma, Yan / Semali, Ladislaus (2003): “Understanding Digitization and the Visual Experience in the Age of the Internet: Principles, Practices and Challenges”. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 23(2), pp. 84–102. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23796529.2003.11674594>.
- Martins, Cláudia (2015): “Longe da vista, perto da imaginação: análise de audioguias em museus portugueses [Far from sight, close to the imagination: analysis of audioguides in Portuguese museums]” (unpublished PhD thesis). University of Aveiro, Portugal.
- Martins, Cláudia / Freitas, Ingrid (2019): “Imagination wide open: accessibility project in Bragança’s Contemporary Art Museum”. Poster in International Conference The Museum for all people: Art, Accessibility and Inclusion. Madrid.
- Mazur, Iwona / Chmiel, Agnieszka (2021): “Audio description training: A snapshot of the current practices”. *The Interpreter and the Translator Trainer* 15(1), pp. 51–65.
- McKim, Robert H (1980): *Thinking visually: A strategy manual for problem solving*. Belmont, CA: Lifetime Learning Publications.
- Messaris, Paul (1994): *Visual literacy: Image, mind, and reality*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Moriarty, Sandra / Kenney, Keith (1995): “Visual Communication: A Taxonomy and Bibliography”. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 15(2), pp. 7–50. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23796529.1995.11674502>.
- National Communication Association (2014): The digital divide. https://www.natcom.org/sites/default/files/2014_Public_Statements_Digital_Divide_Press_Kit_October.pdf (retrieved 20/09/24).
- Neves, Josélia (2011): *Imagens que se ouvem. Guia de Audiodescrição*. Instituto Nacional de Reabilitação / Instituto Politécnico de Leiria.
- Newfield, Denise (2011): “From visual literacy to critical visual literacy: An analysis of education materials”. *English Teaching Practice* 10(1), pp. 81–94.
- Paivio, Allan (1983): “The Empirical Case for Dual Coding”. In: John C. (ed.): *Imagery, Memory, and Cognition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 307–332.
- Peck, Janice (1997): “Psychologized Religion in a Mediated World”. In: Hoover, Steward / Lundby, Knut (eds.): *Rethinking Media, Religion, and Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 227–245.
- Pettersson, Rune (1993): *Visual information*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.
- Pujol, Joaquim / Orero, Pilar (2007): “Audio Description Precursors: Ekphrasis and Narrators”. *Translation Watch Quarterly* 3(2), pp. 49–60.
- Romero Fresco, Pablo (2018): “In support of a wide notion of media accessibility: Access to content and access to creation”. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 1(1), pp. 187–204.
- Romero Fresco, Pablo (2019): *Accessible Filmmaking: Integrating translation and accessibility into the filmmaking process*. London / New York: Routledge.
- Royal National Institute of Blind People (2010): *A Comparative Study of Audio Description Guidelines Prevalent in Different Countries*. London: RNIB.
- Schaeffer Lacroix, Eva / Reviers, Nina / Di Giovanni, Elena (2023): “Beyond Objectivity in Audio Description: New Practices and Perspectives”. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 6(2), pp. 1–7. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47476/jat.v6i2.2023.309>.

- Serafini, Frank (2010): "Reading multimodal texts: Perceptual, structural and ideological perspectives". *Children's Literature in Education* 41, pp. 85–104. DOI: doi:10.1007/s10583-010-9100-5.
- Sinatra, Richard (1986): *Visual literacy connections to thinking, reading and writing*. Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas.
- Shepherd, Rick (1993): "Why Teach Media Literacy". *Teach Magazine*, Quadrant Educational Media Services.
- Snyder, Joel (2007): "Audio Description. The Visual Made Verbal". *The International Journal of the Arts in Society* 2(2), pp. 99–104.
- Snyder, Joel (s.d.): "Literacy and Audio Description". https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/libraries-for-print-disabilities/conferences-seminars/ad-ifla_2016-literacy_and_audio_description.pdf (retrieved 20/09/24).
- Snyder, Joel (2008): "Audio description: The visual made verbal". In: Díaz Cintas, Jorge (ed.): *The Didactics of Audiovisual Translation*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 191–198.
- Snyder, Joel (2013): "Audio Description: Seeing with the mind's eye. A comprehensive training manual and guide to the history and applications of Audio Description" (unpublished PhD thesis). Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.
- Soler Gallego, Silvia / Luque Colmenero, María Olalla (2019): "Multisensorialidad en la Alhambra: Visitas para personas ciegas y con baja visión a la exposición temporal de arte Bab Al-Saria". En: Pazos López, Ángel/Alonso Tak, Alejandra (eds.): *Museo. Imagen. Sentidos. Monográfico temático, Eikón Imago 14: 413–442*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid.
- Thompson, John B. (1990): *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*. Cambridge: Polity Press / Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- UNESCO (1982): *Grunwald Declaration on Media Education*. <https://milobs.pt/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Gr%C3%BCnwald-Declaration-on-Media-Education.pdf> (retrieved 20/09/24).
- Unsworth, Len (1997): "Scaffolding reading of science explanations: Accessing the grammatical and visual forms of specialized knowledge". *Literacy* 31(3), pp. 30–42.

- Valdez, Susana / Secara, Alina / Perez, Emília / Bywood, Lindsay (2023): "Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility Training in the EMT Network". *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 6(1), pp. 19–44.
- Vercauteren, Gert (2007): "Towards a European Guideline for Audio Description". In: Orero, Pilar / Remael, Aline / Díaz Cintas, Jorge (eds.): *Media for All: Subtitling for the Deaf, Audio Description, and Sign Language*. Amsterdam / New York: Rodopi, pp. 139–149.
- Walsh, Maureen (2010): "Multimodal literacy: What does it mean for classroom practice?". *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy* 33(3), pp. 211–239.
- Webb, Ruth (1999): "Ekphrasis Ancient and Modern: The Invention of a Genre". *Word & Image* 15(1), pp. 7–18.