



Online research seminar “Thinking-for-speaking and Audio Description”

Friday, October 18th 2024, 03:00 pm, online

[Registration link](#)

Programme	
03:00-03:15 pm	Opening Teresa Molés-Cases
03:15-03:45 pm	“Thinking-for-audio-describing”. A German-Spanish corpus-based study and the state of audio description in streaming services Teresa Molés-Cases & Rosa Alonso
03:45-04:15 pm	“Thinking-for-audio-describing”. An English-Spanish corpus-based study and some didactic applications Paula Cifuentes-Férez & Michele I. Feist
04:15-04:45 pm	From audio description to easy audios in cultural leisure visits Anna Matamala & Estel·la Oncins Noguer
04:45 -05:15 pm	The Reception of Creative Audio Description: The case of <i>Where Memory Ends</i> Pablo Romero-Fresco
05:15-05:45 pm	The cognitive side of visual arts and cultural heritage AD: visual language and perception theories for a structured multimodal translation process Catalina Jiménez Hurtado & Antonio Javier Chica Núñez
05:45-06:15 pm	Thinking about relevant information for audio description: The importance of the planning code in AD training Irene de Higes Andino
06:15-06:30 pm	Closing Teresa Molés-Cases

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Abstracts

“Thinking-for-audio-describing”. A German-Spanish corpus-based study and the state of audio description in streaming services

Teresa Molés-Cases & Rosa Alonso

(Universitat Politècnica de València & Universidade de Vigo)

Audio description for the blind and visually impaired is a mode of audiovisual translation which has received little critical analysis within the Thinking-for-speaking and the Thinking-for-translating hypotheses (Slobin 1987, 1996, 2000), two cognitive-based theories that essentially study how the structuring of thought in our mother tongue causes us to express and translate in particular ways. These hypotheses have been tested and developed mainly in narrative texts through the study of the lexicalization of motion events, a phenomenon which is key in the description of action and which is central in terms of embodied experience. The study of motion events in AD is an interesting research area to explore for several reasons: although some cases of interlinguistic transference can be found (Fryer 2016, Matamala 2019), AD is generally a type of intersemiotic transfer (Jakobson 1959, Gottlieb 2005) which includes a high degree of action and motion (Romero-Muñoz 2023). As languages differ in their typical means for describing motion events (i.e. Thinking-for-speaking, Slobin 1987, 1996), the audio-described experience available to speakers of different languages may likewise differ, a phenomenon we have named “Thinking-for-audio-describing” (Molés-Cases, in press).

The aim of the presentation is to detail part of the results of an ongoing research project on the “Thinking-for-audio-describing” phenomenon. More specifically, the contribution examines the information included about motion events in a German-Spanish corpus of audio-described films aimed at children and young adults. German typically encodes information about manner, thus providing a good contrast to Spanish (cf. Molés-Cases, 2016). The results of the study indicate the impact of both the describer’s mother tongue and the AD’s restrictions. For example, a higher degree of description of manner in German ADs is observed compared to Spanish and in some cases time restrictions result in the exclusion of manner in Spanish. Sound effects may also be used to compensate for undescribed information of manner in Spanish. Additionally, since this project aims to give greater visibility to AD, the contribution includes a report on the availability of AD in Spanish in a series of streaming services in Spain (i.e., Disney+, Filmin and HBO/Max).

Fryer, L. (2016). *An Introduction to Audio Description. A Practical Guide*. London: Routledge.

Gottlieb, H. (2005). “Multidimensional translation: semantics turned semiotics”, in Gerzymisch-Arbogast, H. & S. Nauert (eds.): *Proceedings of Challenges of Multidimensional Translation*. MuTra.

Jakobson, R. (1959). “On linguistic aspects of translation”, in Brower, R. A. (ed.): *On Translation*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Matamala, A. (2019). *Accessibilitat i traducció audiovisual*. Eumo.

Molés-Cases, T. (2016). *La traducción de los eventos de movimiento en un corpus paralelo alemán-español de literatura infantil y juvenil*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

- Molés-Cases, T. (in press): “Thinking-for-audio-describing: motion events in the film *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*”. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*.
- Romero-Muñoz, A. (2023). “Multimodal analysis as a way to operationalise objectivity in audio description: A corpus-based study of Spanish series on Netflix”, *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 6/2:8-32.
- Slobin, D. (1987). “Thinking for Speaking”. Proceedings of *Thirteenth Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, 335-345.
- Slobin, Dan (1996): “Two ways to travel: Verbs of motion in English and Spanish”, in M. Shibatani & S. Thompson (eds.), *Grammatical Constructions: their form and meaning*, (pp. 195-220). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Slobin, D. (2000). “Verbalized events: A dynamic approach to linguistic relativity and determinism”, in S. Niemeier & R. Dirven (eds.), *Evidence for linguistic relativity* (pp. 107–138). Clevedon: Mouton de Gruyter.

“Thinking-for-audio-describing”. An English-Spanish corpus-based study and some didactic applications

Paula Cifuentes-Férez & Michele I. Feist

(Universidad de Murcia & University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

The description of motion has long captured the attention of researchers examining cross-linguistic differences, owing to Talmy’s (1985; 2000) observation that languages vary in their use of verbs that encode aspects of a motion event along with the fact of motion. Most famously, English has been classified with languages that tend to encode manner in the main verb, while Spanish belongs to a family of languages that preferentially includes path in the verb. Further, Aske (1989) found that Spanish disallows the use of manner verbs in situations in which the Figure crosses a boundary, thus accounting for the lower frequency of manner verbs in Spanish motion descriptions. Moving beyond these observations, Slobin (2006) has argued that these languages differ not only in the distribution of verb types, but also in the salience of manner information, noting that Spanish tends not to augment descriptions using path verbs with additional information about manner. In this paper, we explore these proposals using a corpus of audio descriptions in English and Spanish, focusing on the distribution of verb types, the distribution of manner information, and the co-occurrence of manner information with indications that a boundary has been crossed. Following on from this, we ask how the information about these cross-linguistic differences in naturally-occurring language use may be exploited to improve the teaching of motion language in translation and the second language classroom.

Aske, J. (1989). “Path predicates in English and Spanish: A closer look” (pp. 1-14). *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*.

Slobin, D. I. (2006). “What makes manner of motion salient? Explorations in linguistic typology, discourse and cognition”, in M. Hickman & S. Robert (eds.), *Space in languages: Linguistic systems and cognitive categories* (pp. 59–81). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

From audio description to easy audios in cultural leisure visits

Anna Matamala & Estel·la Oncines Noguera

(Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Audio description has traditionally been addressed to users with sight loss, although some studies have acknowledged its potential as a language learning tool for any user. More recently, there has been an interest in identifying the usefulness of audio description for persons with cognitive disabilities.

This presentation starts from the concept of audio description and moves towards the concept of easy audios, in which audio description and Easy Language merge (Matamala 2023) to cater for the needs of persons with cognitive or learning disabilities. Although some previous experiences in “easy audios” exist, the characteristics of this access service as well as the commonalities and divergences of easy audios with audio descriptions are not well established.

To focus on a specific case study, I will be referring to cultural leisure visits. Cultural leisure visits were chosen after discussion with user association representatives, who highlighted that cultural leisure visits was a recurrent group activity with users with cognitive disabilities, and also with the elderly, but informative materials adapted to their needs were lacking. I will summarise the main findings of three focus groups different user profiles: a) persons with cognitive disabilities and user representatives; b) experts with experience in accessibility in cultural venues, and c) elderly and professionals working with the elderly.

This research is part of the WEL project, funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033/FEDER/UE.

The Reception of Creative Audio Description: The case of *Where Memory Ends*

Pablo Romero-Fresco

(Universidade de Vigo)

As standard, compliance-based media accessibility is consolidated through national and international legislation and guidelines, alternative forms of media access are emerging. The latter are often characterised by being integrated during the production process, involving collaboration with disabled users or experts and often resorting to creative approaches. This article presents the results of a transnational study on the reception of the audio description of the documentary *Where Memory Ends*. This subjective and creative audio description, integrated into the narration of the film and delivered by the director (who is also one of the authors of this article) was tested with over 100 hundred blind, visually-impaired and sighted users at Montclair State University (US), University College London (UK) and Cine Embajadores (Spain). The quantitative and qualitative results obtained show a very positive reception of this approach to audio description, which is however not allowed by official guidelines in countries such as Spain. The testimonies obtained through questionnaires and interviews during and after the events suggest that this type of audio description enables the filmmaker to involve the users into the journey of the film at an intimate level, thus using accessibility not as an obligation but as a transformative form of human connection.

The cognitive side of visual arts and cultural heritage AD: visual language and perception theories for a structured multimodal translation process

Catalina Jiménez Hurtado & Antonio Javier Chica Núñez
(Universidad de Granada)

In this seminar, we will examine the importance of accessible translation (AT) of cultural heritage spaces through audio description (AD). We emphasize the universal right to cultural access, as stated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and highlight the necessity for cultural institutions to create inclusive programs. Our focus is on developing the interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological foundations required for representing and translating multimodal textual typologies, with a particular emphasis on visual language and perception theories.

Drawing on cognitive translatology and both theoretical and applied research, such as the work of Muñoz Martín & Olalla-Soler (2022) on intersemiotic translation and Soler Gallego (2016, 2018) and Chica Núñez (2016) on image-to-word processes, we will analyze how to convert images into words and vice versa as essential tools for communication. We will discuss the concept of mode and multimodality, develop a concept of visual language based on theories of Arnheim (1979) and Dondis (2017), and apply these theories to the analysis of visual source texts and their verbal representation in AD.

Our objectives are to establish a comprehensive framework for understanding visual grammar and to explore its application in creating effective AD for visual arts and performances. We have integrated theoretical insights with practical analysis, providing a clear methodology for translating visual content into accessible verbal descriptions. In conclusion, a structured understanding of visual grammar, including the perception of basic attributes and their syntactic and semantic interrelationships, is essential for creating accurate and meaningful AD. This ensures that individuals with diverse sensory and cognitive abilities can enjoy an inclusive cultural experience.

Arnheim, R. (1979.) *Arte y percepción visual. Psicología del ojo creador*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Chica Núñez, A. J. (2016). *La traducción de la imagen dinámica en contextos multimodales. Parámetros de análisis para su traducción*. Granada: Tragacanto.

Dondis, D. A. (2017). *La sintaxis de la imagen. Introducción al alfabeto visual*. Barcelona, Gustavo Gil.

Muñoz Martín, R. & Olalla-Soler, C. (2022), “Translating is not (only) problem solving”. *The journal of Specialised Translation*, vol. 38, 2022, pp. 3-31.

Soler-Gallego, S. (2016). “A corpus-based genre analysis of art museum audio descriptive guides”, in *Corpus-based studies on language varieties*. Alonso Almeida, F., Cruz García, L. & González Ruiz, V. (eds.), Frankfurt, Peter Lang, Linguistic Insights, pp. 145-166.

Soler-Gallego, S. (2018). “Audio descriptive guides in art museums: A corpus-based semantic analysis”, *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, vol. 13, n° 2, pp. 230-249.

Thinking about relevant information for audio description: The importance of the planning code in AD training

Irene de Higes Andino
(Universitat Jaume I)

Despite initiatives to integrate the needs of blind and partially sighted audiences from the very beginning of an audiovisual production, such as inclusive cinema (Font Bisier 2023) and accessible filmmaking (Romero Fresco 2019), audio description developers mainly work in post production - once the audiovisual content is finished. Standards have traditionally recommended to describe objectively (AENOR 2005 and ADC 2009). However, the frequent impossibility to contact the filmmaking team determines that creating an audio description (AD) has a subjective nature (ISO 2015). Audio describers must make a personal decision on which details to highlight. Therefore, the most difficult task in AD training is how to teach the levels of importance (ISO 2015: 14-16), i.e. the information necessary to understand the visual and auditory content, the information which provides a more complete understanding of the audiovisual product and the details which are irrelevant. My presentation focuses on the planning code (Chaume 2004) and its importance on meaning construction and content selection.

In Film Studies the planning code corresponds with the use of camera movements and angles, i.e. type of shots. In Audiovisual Translation, the impact of this signifying code on different translation modes is beyond doubt (cf. Chaume 2004 for dubbing and subtitling, and Tamayo 2017 for subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing). In his proposal of multimodal analysis for audio description, Romero Muñoz (2023: 21) describes how an AD script may include “information related to camera movements and angles, as well as the information they convey”. From an objective perspective, the script may describe shots denotatively. If shots are included subjectively, audio describers may interpret their meaning, use metaphors to describe them, add information about them or even include filmic terms.

The fact that Romero Muñoz (2023) did not find any examples of descriptions of the planning code is the starting point of the training presented here. In my classes at Universitat Jaume I (Castelló, Spain) I focus on the planning code. My experience with audio describers-to-be and the analysis of professional AD scripts confirm that shots are important for content selection, especially for the description of objects, facial expressions and character movement. My proposal adopts the classification of Borràs and Colomer (2010) and their description of the function and value of shots, not overlooking time constraints and taking into account the most recent proposals of collaboration between production and accessibility teams.

AENOR (2005). *153020 Audiodescripción para personas con discapacidad visual. Requisitos para la audiodescripción y la elaboración de audioguías*. AENOR.

ADC (2009). *Standards for Audio Description and Code of Professional Conduct for Describers*. Audio Description Coalition.

Borràs, J. & Colomer, A. (2010). *El llenguatge cinematogràfic. Tot el que s'ha de saber per realitzar un film de ficció*. UOC.

Chaume, F. (2004). “Film Studies and Translation Studies: Two Disciplines at Stake in Audiovisual Translation”. *Meta*, 49(1), 12–24.

Font Bisier, M.A. (2023). *Cine inclusivo: Contexto, metodología y praxis*. PhD dissertation. Universitat Jaume I.

- ISO. (2015). *Information technology — User interface component accessibility — Part 21: Guidance on audio descriptions* (ISO/IEC TS 20071-21:2015). ISO.
- Romero Fresco, P. (2019). *Accessible Filmmaking. Integrating translation and accessibility into the filmmaking process*. Routledge.
- Romero Muñoz, A. (2023). “Multimodal Analysis as a Way to Operationalise Objectivity in Audio Description: A Corpus-based Study of Spanish Series on Netflix”. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 6(2), 8-32.
- Tamayo, A. (2017). “Signifying codes of audiovisual products: Implications in subtitling for the D/deaf and the hard of hearing”. in *TRAlinea Special Issue: Building Bridges between Film Studies and Translation Studies*, edited by J.J. Martínez Sierra & B. Cerezo Merchán.

Bionotes

Teresa Molés-Cases is Associate Professor at the Department of Applied Linguistics at Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain). Her research interests include translation studies, corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics and language acquisition. She has published her book *La traducción de los eventos de movimiento en un corpus paralelo alemán-español de literatura infantil y juvenil* with Peter Lang and several papers in international journals (some examples include *Review of Cognitive Linguistics, Perspectives, Meta, Languages in Contrast, Lebende Sprachen, VIAL*). She belongs to the research groups COVALT (Corpus Valencià de Literatura Traduïda) and GALE (Grupo de Análisis de Lenguas de Especialidad). She has worked as a researcher and teaching assistant at Universitat Jaume I and at Universität Leipzig (Germany).

Rosa Alonso Alonso is Associate Professor at the Department of English, German and French at Universidade de Vigo (Spain). Her research interests include second language acquisition, informal learning and cognitive linguistics in the translation of motion events. She has published three books, a handbook, two single-edited volumes and a number on papers on these topics. She is currently the PI of the research group “Materials and methods for Second Language Acquisition and Teaching” and the editor of *VIAL Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*.

Paula Cifuentes-Férez is Associate Professor at the Department of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Murcia (Spain). Her main research interests are within the area of Cognitive Linguistics applied to translation and the impact of emotions and personality factors in translation. She has written a book and many articles in international academic journals on these issues. She is a member of the research group TRADICO (Translation, Didactics, and Cognition, Spanish acronym) and the Thematic Network Translation, Research, Empiricism, Cognition (TREC).

Michele I. Feist is Professor of Linguistics and LEQSF Regents Professor in Social Sciences at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where she directs the Language and Cognition Lab. Her research centers around literal and metaphorical uses of spatial language, examined from both a cross-linguistic and an experimental psycholinguistic perspective. She is coauthor of *Time, Metaphor, and Language: A Cognitive Science Perspective* (with Sarah Duffy, forthcoming); her research can also be found in numerous journals, including *Cognition, Cognitive Science*, and *Language & Cognition*.

Anna Matamala, BA in Translation and PhD in Applied Linguistics, is a Full Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Leader of Transmedia Catalonia research group, Anna has participated (DTV4ALL, ADLAB, HBB4ALL, ACT, ADLAB PRO, IMAC, Traction, Mediaverse) and led (AVT-LP, ALST, VIW, NEA, EASIT, RAD) funded projects on audiovisual translation and media accessibility. She is currently participating in the European project ATHENA, co-leading the Spanish project WEL and directing the knowledge transfer network AccessCat. She has taken an active role in the organisation of scientific events such as Media for All or ARSAD and has published extensively in international journals. She is co-author of a book on voice-over (Peter Lang, 2010), author of a book on audiovisual accessibility and translation (Eumo, 2019), and co-editor of various

volumes on audiovisual translation and media accessibility. Joan Coromines Prize in 2005, APOSTA Award to Young Researchers in 2011, Dr. Margaret R. Pfanstiehl Memorial Achievement Award in Audio Description Research and Development 2021. Her research interests are audiovisual translation and accessibility. She is involved in standardisation work.

Estel·la Oncins holds a PhD in Accessibility and Ambient Intelligence from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). She is also a member of the TransMedia Catalonia research group. She is currently the Coordinator of the MA in Audiovisual Translation. Her research interests are audiovisual translation, media and digital accessibility, also in immersive environments. She is involved in standardisation work. She has participated in conferences on these areas of study and has published extensively in prestigious international journals and with publishers such as Routledge and Peter Lang. She has a large experience in participating in European founded research and innovation projects and Erasmus+ related to media and digital accessibility. She has published extensively in indexed international journals.

Pablo Romero Fresco is an Associate Professor at Universidade de Vigo (Spain) and Honorary Professor at the University of Roehampton (UK). He is the author of the books *Subtitling through Speech Recognition* (Routledge) and *Accessible Filmmaking* (Routledge). He is the leader of the international research group GALMA and has worked as a consultant for institutions and companies such as the European Parliament, Ofcom, Netflix or the Spanish Film Academy, with which he has set up a training course to introduce accessible filmmaking and access coordination in the Spanish film industry. Pablo is also a filmmaker. His first short documentary, *Joining the Dots* (2012), was used by film schools, universities and film festivals all over the world to raise awareness about audio description. His first feature-length documentary, *Where Memory Ends* (2022), premiered at the London Spanish Film Festival and the Seminci Festival (Spain). In 2024 he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the international subtitlers' association SUBTLE for his lifelong impact on the areas of audiovisual translation and media accessibility around the world.

Catalina Jiménez Hurtado is full professor of Translation Studies at the University of Granada (Spain). Her main research area is that of Accessibility and Audio Visual Translation, but also includes Linguistics Applied to Translation, with a special focus on access to knowledge and knowledge representation. She has edited three books both at national and international level (Peter Lang, Tragicanto). She is the Head Researcher of the multimedia research group HUM 770, Translation and Accessibility -TRACCE- under the Andalusian research programme, and of different national research projects funded by the Ministry of Education and Research (Spain): PRA2 (FFI2010-16142), TALENTO (PID2020-118775RB-C21). All of them focus on innovation in multimodal research methods and evaluation of their quality.

Antonio Javier Chica Núñez is full-time lecturer at the Department Translation and Interpreting of the University of Granada and PhD in Translation by the University Pablo de Olavide of Seville, where he worked as research fellow and lecturer. His main research interest is the analysis of motion images as source texts and co-texts in Audio Visual Translation and Accessibility, with a special interest in the multimodal translation process involved in audio description for the blind. He is a member of the TRACCE research group (HUM 770 - Translation and

Accessibility) under the Andalusian research programme and as such has contributed to the development of several R&D projects: PRA2 (FFI2010-16142), OPERA (FFI2015-65934-R) or TALENTO (PID2020-118775RB-C21).

Irene de Higes Andino holds a bachelor's degree on Translation and Interpreting by the Universitat Jaume I (Castelló de la Plana, Spain) and PhD on Translation and Interpreting by this same university with a thesis on dubbing and subtitling multilingual films into Spanish. She has worked as a production assistant in a dubbing studio and as a freelance translator specialised in articles about cinema, dubbing and voiceover for TV, subtitling and audio description. She has also taught at the Valencian International University (VIU), the ISTRAD and the European University of Valencia. She is now a full-time lecturer and researcher at Universitat Jaume I and member of the research group TRAMA (Translation for Audiovisual Media and Accessibility). She mainly teaches audiovisual translation (voice-over, dubbing and subtitling) and audiovisual accessibility (audio description for the Blind and Visually-impaired and subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing). Her research interests focus on multilingualism, identity, audiovisual translation and accessibility.