

# Creativity in AD

Creative expression  
or subjective intervention?

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Evangelia Liakou, PhD candidate, Ionian University, Department of Foreign Languages, Translation and Interpreting

Part of the doctoral dissertation: “Audio Description Techniques for Greek cinema”

# Theoretic background

- Monaco's film reading theory (2009:174)
- Szarkowska's auteur description (2013)
- AD guidelines- American Council of the blind (2009)
- Holland on impartiality in audio description (2009)
- Udo and Fels (2009: 179)
- Joel Snyder on creative AD (2005)

# Methodology

- Description of a Greek drama (*Journey to Mytilene*, 2010, Lakis Papastathis)
  - Basic filmic feature: nostalgia
- Projection to BVI audience
- Question on their preference by offering examples from the film (language & tone) and possible alternatives
- Projection of the film to the director

## It was decided to...

- Incorporate the AD in the film as part of the end artistic product-not just a service
- Reflect the nostalgia and filmic atmosphere in the AD
  - Use more “free” language (vocabulary, syntax, metaphors, similes etc)
  - Broadcast the descriptions in tone relevant to the plot (faster, slower, sorrowful, dramatic etc)

# Examples (language and vocabulary)

- “He approaches the beggar who is gazing at the sea with her empty, tired eyes. Behind her, the pink and blue dawn”
- “The uncle looks through the car window feeling lost. Time has left a wrinkled mark on his face”
- “She slowly turns and stares at Kostas with her sunken, wrinkled eyes wide open”
- “From afar, he is seen to stand erect on the edge of the cliff, as the big blue surrounds him”
- “He approaches the beggar. She looks at the sea. Dawn”
- “The elderly uncle looks through the car window”
- “She stares at Kostas”
- “He stands at the edge of the cliff. Underneath the sea”.

# Examples (tone and narration)

- When the mother abandons the family because of her mental illness, the tone of the narration gets **very slow and dramatic**. The language is again more literary to fit the built up emotion of her fleeing: “*Marigoula (mother) smiles at her son for the very last time*”.
- When the father gets prepared to commit suicide, the description in the scenes that lead up to it is expressed in a serious, sorrowful, sometimes anxious tone.

# Feedback

- All participants (20) stated that they preferred the creative approach than the objective alternative
- They said that a distant tone would be boring and tiring
- This approach helped them stay focused (*engaged*) to the film, enjoy and understand it better.
- Director: enthusiastically agreed on the approach
  - He found the end product to be artistic and in keeping with his intentions

# Conclusions

## Food for Thought?

- Greek audience: in favor of a more free and creative approach
  - Reasons: geographical, socioeconomic, historical, cultural?
  - Previous experience of the audience: are they used to AD?
  - Could further comparative research be the key to understanding the difference in preference?



# References

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