

What (more) can we do with words: an interdisciplinary workshop on creating Museum Audio Descriptions with the use of Generative AI

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About this AD project

What: An ongoing Museum AD Project conducted by PhD and MA students in collaboration with the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.

Why: Lack of AD in the Greek Museums, while BPB visitors seldom attend museums. Lack of formal AD training of relevant courses in HE curricula (Luque, M. O. & Soler, S. 2020).

> We aim to provide a sustainable framework for training Audio Describers and/or Museum Personnel.

How: By tracing the training needs of prospective Audio Describers.

When: Project started on International Day of Museums and is still in progress. ICOM 2024 theme “Museums, Education, and Research”.

Where: The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki and it is expanding in other museums.

Who: Trainers, Trainees, BPB Audience



Image 1:
Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, Greece

Our AD Workshop participants

An inclusive and interdisciplinary synthesis of the group according to W-ICAD Model (Eardley et al., 2024)

Trainees:

12 undergraduate students of:

- Translation Studies & Linguistics,
- Theatre & Film Studies,
- Education & Disability Studies,
- Psychology.

Trainers:

1 PhD Candidate and 3 MA Students in the field of AD and Accessibility.

Audience:

10 Blind and Partially Blind visitors.



Image 2:

ICOM DAY 2024 - AD Training Workshop, Phase A, Pepo M. Frances Library.
Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki,

AD Creation Challenges

Challenges in AD creation according to challenges described in relevant literature:

- AD text length (Eardley et al. 2022)
- the heterogeneous nature and needs of end-users (Perego, 2018)
- the use of adjectives and nouns when describing shapes, textures, sizes (Mazur, 2022) as well as terminology and heavy sentimental language
- the level of formality or the level of simplicity (Arias Badia & Matamala, 2023)
- the tactile aids or relevant materials (Avni et al. 2024).



Image 3:

Pleniadores (Mourning Women), c. 1920, Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, Greece.



“[...] The woman on the left side of the grave appears to be the maid. She is wearing a white cover made from muslin cloth which is a thin and transparent fabric made of wool, cotton or silk, and was typically worn daily by unmarried women. In Jewish it is called: “moumi”. The maid is not wearing an antari, her shirt and sagio are exposed.

Image 4: close caption of Pleniadores – The Maid

Her attire -undergarment and apron- is simpler compared to the mourning woman and in her folded hands, she holds her employer’s fur-lined cape. The woman’s face is turned towards the viewer, but her gaze is turned to the side [...]”



“[...] The elder woman on the right side of the grave is in mourning. With her right hand, she is leaning on the grave and wiping her tears. That woman is in urban clothing. She is wearing a simple light coloured dress with dark stripes and a headscarf [...]”

Image 5: close caption of Pleniadores – The Mistress

Attitudes towards the use of AI by AD trainees

Percentage of your final text co-created with AI tools > **5 out of 11 AD trainees say that for their final text the use of AI was less than 25%**

Phase of AD creation where AI tools were used > **most AD trainees use AI tools for editing than for writing, while 36% did not use AI**

11. What percentage of your final text would you say that was co-created with AI tools?

11 responses

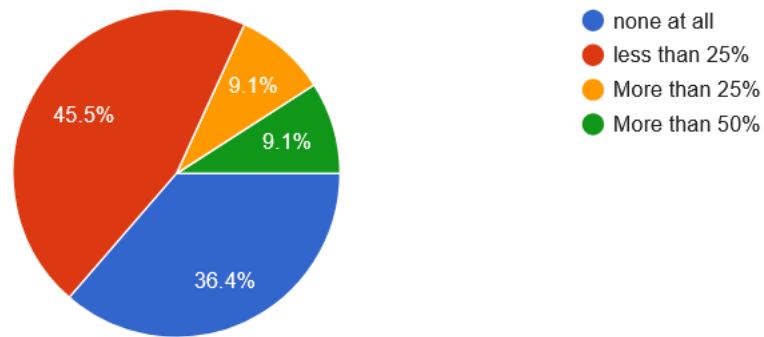


Image 6:

Pie chart of Question regarding the percentage of AD text that was created with the use of AI

12. In what phase of this process did you use AI tools?

11 responses

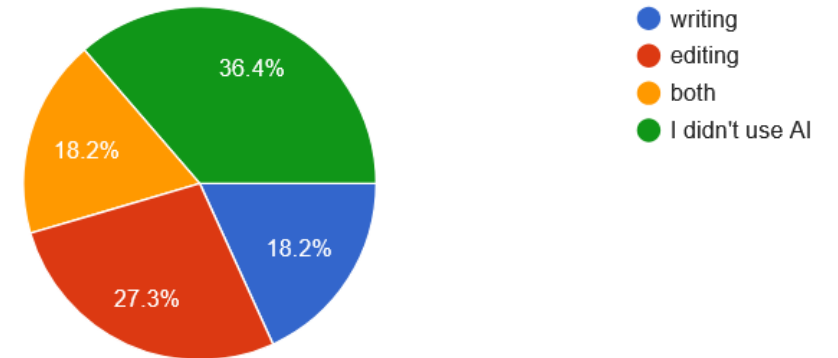


Image 7:

Pie chart of Question regarding the phase of AD writing where AI tools were used by the trainee Audio Describers

BPB Audience Input

- V.Z. Male Blind Participant, Doctor, Age 40+ said: ***“Whenever there was tactile aid, the AD text seemed more relatable”.***

Example of AD abstract: “[...] All the graves in the cemetery are made of brick and carved stone and they must be one meter tall, exceeding from the surface of the earth [...]”.

- G.Z. Female Blind Participant, Archaeologist, Age 50+ mentioned: ***“Subjectivity and sentimental language, even metaphors, are not necessary. Maybe younger people would like to hear such sentimental approaches”.***

Example of AD abstract: “[...] The image conveys a solemn, intimate moment—grief and duty captured in the quiet stillness of the cemetery. The stark contrast of light and shadow enhances the textures of the tombstones, clothing, and the women's expressions, making their emotions almost tangible”.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of 4 BPB participants.
(M = Mean,
SD = Standard Deviation,
AD = Audio Description,
NAD = Narrative Audio Description)

Descriptive statistics	Extrinsic	Intrinsic	AD enjoyment	AD helpfulness	NAD enjoyment	NAD Helpfulness
M	75	75	4.50	4.50	2.25	2.75
SD	31.9	28.9	.577	1.00	.957	1.26

Data analysed by MA student
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Image 8:
Blind and Partially Blind Workshop participants touching some of the tomb stones described in the AD.
Pleniadores, Jewish Museum if Thessaloniki,

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