Audio description: a transversal training tool for minoritized language education

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Audiovisual Translation and minoritized languages (1)

- AVT research and practices in the new millennium
    - Homogeneization vs diversity
        - Regarding conventions (streaming platforms guidelines vs. specific uses)
        - translation modes (subtitling, dubbing, audio description)
        - language combinations (major vs. minority languages).
        - AVT use (enjoyment vs. didactic use).

Audiovisual Translation and minoritized languages (2)

- Dynamic definition of minority language (Cronin, 1995)
  - Asymmetrical relations between major and minority languages "absolute" and "relative" minority languages (Branchadell, 2011: 97)
- Challenges of translating into and from minority languages
- Language planning: "specific, deliberate interventions designed to provide linguistic support to a particular speech community" (De Ridder & O'Connell 2018, 403).
- (Didactic) AVT as a useful minority language planning tool.

Didactic Audiovisual Translation and minoritized languages

- Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT): use of audiovisual translation for didactic purposes.
- Increase in DAT practices and research in the last 25 years.

Main focus

- dubbing, subtitling (and little AD)
- Foreign language learning
- University students
- Major language combinations (e.g. English-Spanish)

Our focus (Bardini & Espasa, 2021, 2023)

- dubbing, subtitling and AD
- Mother tongue/L1 learning
- (High) school learners
- Minoritized languages

Erasmus+ HOW TIMELY project (2025-2027, 2024-1-IT02-KA220-SCH-000251047)

- Grounded on theoretical and methodological foundations in translation and language learning: situated, collaborative and task-based approaches (Bardini & Espasa, 2021)
- promoting minority languages revitalization in secondary schools
- focusing on three minority languages (Catalan, Irish, Sardinian)
- Involving 3 modes (subtitling, re-voicing, and AD).
- Main output: open access HOW TIMELY teaching/training portal

Didactic AD (DAD) in How Timely Project

- HOW TIMELY teaching/training portal
  - To provide self-education resources for minority language teachers and activities to implement in class.
- Survey for minority language teachers in high school
- Guidelines for DAD
- Learning modules

Survey for minority language teachers in high school

- Preparation (January-February 2025)
- Translation into minority languages and distribution (March-April 2025)
- Asking teachers about
  - Knowledge on accessibility
  - Experience with minority language teaching
  - Familiarity with (didactic) audiovisual translation
  - Specific didactic needs and resources.

DAD on the HOW TIMELY Training Portal (1)

- Training for teachers who want to learn DAD:
  - General AD training
  - Guidelines based on pilot study (Bardini & Espasa 2021, 2023)
  - DAD guidelines and practices

- Self-assessment

DAD on the HOW TIMELY Training Portal (2)

- **Lesson plan:**
  - Introduction to AD
  - AD Guidelines
  - Practical example
  - DAD activity design

DAD on the HOW TIMELY Training Portal (3)

- **Self-assessment:**
  - Questionnaires on AD
  - Checklists to the different stages of AD creation
  - Checklists to the different stages of DAD activities creation
  - Reflection toolkit

Designing a DAD activity (1)

- **STEP 1: Define target audience**
  - Age
  - Linguistic level
  - Interests
- **STEP 2: Choose a clip to describe**
  - Type and topic
  - Length: defines the timespan of the activity
  - Linguistic aspects

Designing a DAD activity (2)

- **STEP 3: Plan the activity**
  - Introduction to AD
  - AD creation
  - What next?

Introducing AD to secondary school students

- Plan a 45 to 60 minutes session to:
  - **Put students in users' shoes:** hear a clip without AD and conjecture about it, about what they hear and what they miss.
  - **Explain how AD works**, how it is created, take examples from shows they know and watch.
  - **Open a discussion** on AD and on blindness.
  - **Work on a short example**. E.g. a character.

AD creation step-by-step (1)

- **Step 1: Analysing the film.**
  - Watch the video.
  - Fill the analysis form.
  - Reflect on what will need to be described and what not.
  - Reflect on possible difficulties.

  ➔**Minoritised language as instrumental language**
  ➔**Sensibilization and empathy to blind persons**

AD creation step-by-step (2)

- **Step 2: Drafting the script.**
  - Spot spaces where AD is needed.
  - Choose what to describe.
  - Write.
  - Shorten or add information where necessary.

  ➔**Writing skills development in minoritised language**

AD creation step-by-step (3)

- **Step 3: Voicing the AD.**
  - Record the AD.
  - Synchronize the AD with the video.
  - Review.

  ➔**Oral skills development in minoritised language**

What next?

- **Let people watch students' productions**
  - Get in touch with local blind persons' associations.
  - Share the student's audiodescribed video within the school.
  - Share the student's audiodescribed video online (caution with copyright).

Conclusion

- Synergies between minoritized languages and accessibility.
- DAD as a valuable language revitalization practice.
- Online portal to train MEL teachers to DAD available October 2025.
- Potential to make AD training available for other minority language speakers as well.

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Thank you for your attention!

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