Audio description: Overview on an emerging topic

Elisa Perego
University of Trieste
eperego@units.it

18/05/2012, Department of English, Zagreb University

1970
George Frazier
San Francisco State University

Emerging»

Jorge DÍAZ CINTAS,
Pilar ORERO,
Aline REMAEL
(Eds.), 2007.
Media for All:
Subtitling
for the Deaf,
Audio Description
and Sign Language.
Amsterdam/New York:
Rodopi

Emerging»

Jan-Louise KRUGER,
Pilar ORERO
(Eds.), 2010.
Audio description,
audio narration – A
new era in AVT.
Special issue,
Perspectives, 18, 3.

Emerging»

Adriana SERBAN,
Anna MATAMALA,
Jean-Marc LAVAUR
(Eds.), 2011.
Audiovisual
translation in close-
up. Practical and
theoretical
approaches.
Bern/Berlin: Peter
Lang

Emerging»

Elisa PEREGO
2012, (Ed.)
Emerging topics in
translation: Audio
description.
Trieste: EUT

Free access online
«Emerging»


What is it?

«provides a verbal version of the visual for the benefit of people who are blind or have low vision» (Snyder 2007)

What is it?

«a growing arts and media access service for visually impaired people» (Braun 2008)

What is it?

«the addition of a descriptive narrative to accompany the key visual elements of theatre, television, cinema and other visual media [...] delivered in the natural pauses in the programme’s dialogue with minimal interference to the original audio» (Vercauteren 2007)

What is it like?

«Emerging»
What is it?

«a practice rooted in intermodal mediation, i.e. 'translating' visual images into verbal descriptions» (Braun 2008)

Cf. Jackobson (1959:429) > "intersemiotic translation" or "transmutation": interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems

Audiovisual text

- Dialogues
- Background voices
- Lyrics
- Music
- Natural sounds
- Sound effects
- Silence
- Dialogues (Superimposed titles)
- Written signs on the screen (displays, captions)
- Pictures
- Composition
- Flow
**Audiovisual text**

**Acoustic channel**
- Dialogues
- Background voices
- Lyrics
- Music
- Natural sounds
- Sound effects
- Silence

**Non-verbal =>**
- Dialogue (Superimposed titles)
- Written signs on the screen
- Music
- Natural sounds
- Sound effects
- Silence

**Visual channel**
- Dialogues (Superimposed titles)
- Written signs on the screen
- Pictures
- Composition
- Flow

---

**Audio description**

What should be described?
When should it be described?
How should it be described?
How much should be described?

---

**The audio describer**

1 Observation
2 Editing
3 Language
(4 Vocal skills)

“verbal camera lens”

-Snyder 2007-

---

**The audio describer**

1 Observation
2 Editing
3 Language
(4 Vocal skills)

“verbal camera lens”

-Snyder 2007-
The audio describer

1 Observation
2 Editing
3 Language
   (4 Vocal skills)
   “verbal camera lens”

Language succinct
   vivid
   imaginative
   precise
   simple
   objective

(Snyder 2007)

The hours (S. Daldry, 2002)

He gazes at her tenderly. As realization flashes through her eyes, he turns his head and lets himself fall out of the window.

Laura, in a simple grey evening-dress, sits rigidly in her chair, smiling at Dan. The family sit around the dining table, bathed in a pool of warm light. Dan helps himself to a cigarette.

Dead poets society
(P. Weir, 1989)

Cameron, the ginger haired banner carrier, pops his head in.
“a cross between poetry and live broadcast”

Thank you

Eliza Perego
eperego@units.it