

**Díaz Cintas, Jorge, Orero, Pilar, Remael, Aline (eds) (2007). *Media for All. Approaches to Translation Studies*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 255 + 4 ill. pp. € 51 / US\$ 77. ISBN 978-90-420-2304-8**

In connection with technological developments in the audiovisual media market, media access for people with special needs has gained new momentum and has received growing attention in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) over the past decade. Technological developments have generally facilitated media access (e.g. digital TV), but they have also helped a plethora of new media to emerge (Web 2.0, mobile applications etc.). Viable media access solutions are therefore required more urgently than ever. The book makes a very timely contribution to this. It is based on papers given at the *Media for All* conference in Barcelona in 2005, the first of a series of conferences entirely devoted to AVT in the context of media accessibility. The editors' aim is to give an overview of current developments, mainly in Europe, in the relevant areas of AVT.

The book is divided into two parts: Subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) and Audio Description for the blind and partially sighted (AD). Each part is opened by an overview chapter, sampling major developments in SDH and AD in selected European countries respectively and including data obtained through questionnaire surveys among professionals in the field.

In the well-structured overview of SDH, Remael portrays countries "at different developmental stages with regard to SDH" (23-24) and includes both 'dubbing countries' and 'subtitling countries' to account for different traditions and settings. The overview provides a wealth of information e.g. on the historical development of SDH in the chosen countries, different practices, legislation and training. Somewhat surprisingly, Remael's overview is followed by two articles on access symbols used in different media and countries (Miller) and on sign-language interpreting (Stone) before the contribution by Neves turns again to SDH.

Neves looks into recent technological changes and their implications and opportunities for SDH, e.g. the provision of different SDH versions catering for different audiences. She stresses, however, that "technological changes [...] alone cannot account for what is of vital importance for the attainment of true accessibility" (93) and makes it clear that greater awareness for audience needs and quality is required. Neves offers a set of basic formula for adequate SDH and discusses the difficult balance between necessary reduction and explicitation in SDH. The SDH part of the book is concluded by an overview of SDH developments in Brazil (Santiago Araújo), following an approach similar to Remael's European overview.

The larger part of the book is devoted to Audio Description. In the opening chapter, Orero – also following broadly the same structure as Remael in the SDH overview and providing an equally rich amount of information – looks at five European countries and shows how their different AD histories have led to differences, for example, in coverage (TV, cinema, DVD), legislation, technological solutions and training. Compared to SDH, the spread of AD is still low, but Orero's contribution shows that AD is a dynamic and expanding field. Interestingly, this is also reflected by the fact that some of the information, while up-to-date at the time of writing the article, has been overtaken by the most recent developments. Thus it could be added today that two of the countries analysed, the UK and Germany, in addition to offering AD on TV and for cinema, also provide a solid range of DVDs with AD now. Training efforts have also grown rapidly. The University of Surrey, for example, has developed its original MA module on AD into a full-blown in MA in Monolingual Subtitling and Audiodescription.

The overview chapter is followed by a contribution by Greening and Rolph focussing on developments in the UK as one of the leading providers of AD. The authors raise awareness for the technological, logistical and other challenges for the actual provision and reception of AD. One such challenge is that "major DVD distributors in the UK are controlled by the Hollywood Studios and it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find the person who can authorize the AD track for the UK film release [in cinema] to go onto the UK DVD release" (137). This means a loss of much valuable work and/or avoidable double work.

The latter is also the theme of Vercauteren's contribution on European guidelines for AD. Following a comparison of existing national guidelines, initial suggestions for European guidelines are presented. As they stand, they are a good example of the benefits that research into AD could offer to the practice of AD and to any project aiming to develop further guidelines. Notions such as 'objectivity' and answers to the question of what it means for descriptions to match the style and the audience of the material described (144) require further reflection and appropriate theoretical frameworks for exploration.

Two approaches that have much to offer in this respect are presented in the two subsequent contributions. Both are situated within a linguistic research tradition and investigate the language of AD as a special text type, but they illustrate how different methodological approaches within this tradition can generate interesting and complementary results. Salway reports on a corpus-based investigation of AD scripts of some 90 films and focuses on lexical and semantic issues, starting from a frequency analysis, whilst Bourne & Jiménez Hurtado present a contrastive text-based analysis of the English and Spanish AD versions of one film, including lexical, syntactic and pragmatic analyses. The authors of the two papers also raise interesting questions for future research. Salway, for example,

points to the value of interdisciplinary research on AD including e.g. narratology, while Bourne and Jiménez Hurtado call for research into the translatability of AD scripts on the basis of further contrastive studies.

The contributions that follow are not only testimony to the ever-widening scope of AD, they also add further value to the book by covering two areas of AD that have so far received even less attention than the AD of film. De Coster and Mühleis look into the AD of 'static' art such as paintings and sculptures before Matamala and Orero, and York respectively return to the AD of 'dynamic' events and present two alternative approaches to audiodescribing opera.

An overview of AD activities in mainland China, Hongkong and Taiwan by Yeung concludes the volume. In the first part, this contribution follows the sampling approach taken by Remael and Orero on SDH and AD in Europe. Despite obvious differences, most prominently the virtual absence of AD in mainland China, Yeung's contribution also reveals similarities in developments, especially that more often than not "introduction and advocacy [of AD] are down to individual efforts" (237). In the second part, Yeung highlights ongoing training efforts in Hongkong, a technological solution for the reception of audiodescribed theatre performances in Taiwan, combining AD and a Braille reader, and last but certainly not least a very interesting cognitive study on AD conducted in Taiwan by Chao Ya-Li. The findings of this study are currently available in Chinese only and should perhaps be translated into English.

The articles in this book cover an interesting range of media access topics. The arrangement of the contributions in the volume is on the whole thoughtful and logical. It might, however, have been better to find a broader title for the first part of the book, which focuses on the needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing. A broader title would have emphasised the importance of both SDH and sign language interpreting and would have drawn more attention to their representation in this book. Miller's contribution on access symbols seems rather misplaced in the SDH section, as it covers many more types of access symbols.

The book combines a wide range of practice-led contributions with a smaller range of research-based contributions, which in itself is a good reflection of the present state of the art in Audiovisual Translation for people with special needs. The overview nature of some of the more practice-led chapters bears, of course, a certain risk that the information will need updating very soon, and the editors are well aware that any volume which aims to include such contributions can be no more than a "snapshot of a changing situation at a particular moment in time" (15). However, given that there is a great need for information about what is currently happening, as a first step towards pooling efforts, this book definitely fills a striking gap and will be of great interest to students, trainers, practising professionals and scholars alike. A keyword index as

well as the numerous cross-references between the individual chapters further strengthen the informative value of the book.

The slight imbalance of the number of contributions in the two parts of the book is symptomatic of another characteristic of current media access efforts. Most of the activities, let alone research, in this field are still individual efforts driven by the personal enthusiasm of professionals and scholars. What is needed is a much broader basis for systematic study and research. The volume is a highly interesting step towards this wider goal.

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