# MULTIPLIER EVENT 5 | REPORT

21st March 2019
Residència d'Investigadors: Calle Hospital, 64, 08001 Barcelona, Spain

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# AD TRAINING MATERIALS IN OPEN ACCESS

## PROJECT DETAILS

**TITLE |** Audio Description: A Laboratory for the Development of a new Professional Profile
**ACRONYM |** ADLAB PRO
**EC PROJECT NUMBER |** 2016-1-IT02-KA203-024311
**NATIONAL PROJECT ID |** GU10213041978
**FUNDING SCHEME |** Erasmus+
**SUB-PROGRAMME |** Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
**ACTION |** Strategic Partnerships for higher education
**DURATION |** 36 months
**COORDINATOR |** Università degli Studi di Trieste
**BENEFICIARIES**
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (ES)
Universiteit Antwerpen (BE)
Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (PL)
Utopian Voices Ltd. (UK)
Soundfocus B.V. (NL)
Radiotelevizija Slovenija Javni Zavod Ljubljana (SI)
Royal National Institute of the Blind (UK)

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## OBJECTIVES

ADLAB-PRO puts a strong emphasis on open access to the materials developed within the project in order to guarantee a bigger impact on society and policy-makers, and the project's future sustainability. This is why the materials are not seen as closed and rigidly structured modules but rather as open and flexible modular items. To disseminate the project as a whole, and more specifically the output of IO4, the modular contents developed as training materials were presented on a workshop organised in Barcelona in 2019, and collocated with the 8th ARSAD conference, the Advanced Research Seminar on Audio Description. This guaranteed a higher impact across Europe as ARSAD has established itself as a reference conference for audio description.

The aim of this workshop was to involve other trainers who have not participated in the project but may want to use the training materials developed as part of their courses, in various environments and learning situations. Different possible learning paths and suggestions for integrating the modular materials were presented, but most importantly an open discussion will be at the core of the workshop, to see how the diverging needs can be catered for and how materials can be improved in the future. Indeed, the workshop was the perfect testing ground for a selection of the materials, and feedback from prospective users or trainers was gathered. During the workshop the sessions were also recorded, and their re-use as course contents will be explored.

## ORGANIZATION

**Chair and moderator:** Anna Matamala / Carme Mangiron (UAB)
**Organiser:** UAB
**Presenters (in order of speaking):** Elisa Perego (UNITS), Anna Matamala (UAB), Joel Snyder (ADA), Bernd Benecke (BR), Zoe Partington, Kari Seeley (U. Adelaide), Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres (UAB/UA), Anna Jankowska (UAB), Carme Mangiron (UAB)
**Minute taker:** Blanca Arias-Badia (UAB)
**Photographer:** Jara Duro (UAB) and Laura Simonin (UNITS)

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## WELCOME AND ADLAB PRO PROJECT PRESENTATION
## Elisa Perego (UNITS)

Elisa Perego, ADLAB PRO main researcher, gave a welcoming words to participants and provided a short presentation of the ADLAB PRO project, funded by the Erasmus + programme. She highlighted that the project is at an advanced stage, many materials have been created, and they will all soon be available. Perego presented the consortium: UNITS has been the project's coordinator, 8 partners from different European countries have taken part: 4 academic (University of Trieste, Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Antwerp, University of Poznan), and 4 non-academic, service provider partners (Utopian Voices Ltd., Soundfocus, RTV Slovenia, Royal National Institute of the Blind). Perego described the six intellectual outputs (IOs), putting the emphasis mainly on the first three, as IO4 was presented by the next speaker and was actually the focus of the entire event.

## ADLAB PRO INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 4 PRESENTATION
## Anna Matamala (UAB)

Anna Matamala explained the development of the course content: the aims of IO4 included the creation of self-contained units, which were flexible and adaptable. Materials were distributed in modules and units based on IO3 results. More specifically, there are 6 modules (valued as either 6 ECTS/ECVETS or 3 ECTS/ECVETS each). The materials include core videos, reading lists, suggested tasks, additional videos, trainer's guides, and introductory videos.



Matamala went through each type of material: presentations are available in different formats such as video files, powerpoint files, transcripts, together with subtitles in multiple languages. As regards reading lists, each module includes 5 basic references plus 5 additional references. Anna Matamala showed the reading list for Module 1 to illustrate this type of training materials. She also referred to the 115 additional videos that have been created, but did not elaborate further on this, as this type of content was the focus of another presentation. In the presentation, a sample trainer's guide was also presented.

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Anna Matamala explained the audience that all materials will be available on an open access repository at UAB and on the project website by June. Efforts have been made to make all materials accessible, but feedback is sought to make improvements. Therefore, Anna Matamala asked the audience to fill in a questionnaire to get feedback about the presented materials.

At the end of the presentation, Anna Matamala played the main introductory video to close the session. This video explains the course structure in terms of modules and units, and the types of material available.

## THE FUNDAMENTALS OF AUDIO DESCRIPTION: WHAT EVERY DESCRIBER MUST (STRIVE TO) MASTER – OR- PUTTING THE "FUN" IN AUDIODESCRIPTION FUNDAMENTALS
### Joel Snyder (SDA)

Joel Snyder started working on audio description in 1981. In this presentation, he wanted to draw attention to the need for training materials to include *fun* exercises. He also expressed the need to know the target audience, as many audio describers have never met a blind person. In this regard, Joel Snyder showed a video about what not to do or say when you meet someone who is blind and quoted philosophers, humourists, and actresses to introduce the fundamentals of audio description: observation, editing, language, vocal skills. He showed FedEx logo to illustrate the difference between labelling and describing, as well as other pictures and clips to engage the audience in raising awareness on observation. He showed an advertisement portraying Tiger Woods to convey the idea that sometimes "to accomplish more you need to see less", and explored the idea WYSIWYS: What you see is what you say, by commenting further clips. According to him, you need to keep a degree of objectivity when it comes to audio description. Overall, the session allowed the audience to see how an expert trainer with a long trajectory in audio description in the USA approaches training and how materials could be integrated in his training proposals.

## TURNING A PRO INTO A MEGA-PRO: IDEAS TO TRAIN EXPERIENCED DESCRIBERS
### Bernd Benecke (BR)



Bernd Benecke introduced himself and explained that in the course where he teaches (BR), lecturers adopt an essentially practical approach, inviting students to work in teams. Students start from specific homework, which is later discussed. The course borrows short exercises from Aline Remael, e.g. on the description of rooms, landscapes, or characters. Benecke showed a picture and explained how he invites students to imagine it as the start of a film. The course is based on learning-by-doing-sessions, in which students work on action, science fiction, erotic or sex scenes, etc.

As regards teaching methodology, Bernd Benecke says working teams in the course are usually composed of three members, one of which pretends to be blind. The aim is to make an experienced impression. They build graphics that match scenes of the film with key aspects. As a "bonus", they try looking "for the impossible audio description". Example clips can be found in the speaker's slides. His presentation allowed gathering input from a lecturer who works mainly with professionals in Europe.

*Coffee Break*

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## AUDIODESCRIPTION CHALLENGES SOCIETIES NORMATIVE APPROACH
### Zoe Partington

As a partially-sighted artist, Zoe Partington appreciates the quality of audio description training materials and likes to know the rules that underpin it. Her talk reflected on the importance of welcoming disabled people in all areas of culture and society taking responsibility. She focused on Tu Fewn workshops, a project she is working on: 200 volunteers worked on a festival, they felt they had a value, and they learnt new skills. She used audio description to train volunteers to increase their confidence on communication skills: audio description is not only for blind people. She highlighted the relevance of observation for good design and architecture, as well as of engaging non-visual learners in art. Her presentation provided the perspective of the end user but also allowed to see how ADLAB PRO training materials could be actually used beyond training audio description professionals, as in the examples provided by Zoe Partington in the field of design and architecture.

## CROSS-CULTURAL AUDIODESCRIPTION TRAINING IN AUDIODESCRIPTION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS: A SINGAPORE CASE STUDY
### Kari Seeley (U. of Adelaide)

Kari Seeley's presentation started by contextualising the case study. She summarised the main features of Singapore as well its approach to disability, in care is largely family-based and still very much based on a medical model. Kari Seeley stressed that it is still very early-days in the social model, but thinks it will catch up soon.

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Kari Seeley's case study focused on the Singapore Repertory Theatre. She reported on the following: (a) social expectations: access and capacity (taxi drivers and hotel doormen) and retail workers; (b) devices: state-of-the-art technology (Sennheiser in-theatre smartphone app) was employed. Singapore is willing to put money into this kind of technology, which now does not allow for much personalisation in terms of sound mixing; (c) physical barriers; (d) end-user involvement; (e) cultural conundrums: challenges of co-presenting training with both sighted and blind/vision-impaired trainers and trainees; changes in the law that must be observed by producers, directors and funders.

Kari Seeley acknowledged her colleague Jody Holdback's involvement in the case study, and provided with a different approach from Asia which complemented very well the approaches presented by other speakers in relation to the USA and Europe.

## TEACHING AUDIO DESCRIPTION FROM SCRATCH: ONLINE TRAINING AT UAB'S MUTAV (OFFICIAL MA DEGREE IN AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION)
### Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres (UAB/UA)

Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres described the course he teaches at the online version of MUTAV, UAB's official degree in audiovisual translation: the course is online-based (Moodle) and adopts a theoretical and practical approach. The course materials have been prepared by Pilar Orero, Nazaret Fresno, Anna Matamala, Pablo Romero-Fresco, Paula Igareda, and Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres. On forums, students analyse audio description based on the theoretical notions learnt. There is a weekly chat, as well as individual and group assignments.

Most students (90%) do not have a background in audiovisual translation. All of them are sighted and not active users of audio description, so they do not know what to expect from audio description, unlike in the case of courses on dubbing or subtitling. They are unaware of the needs of users, of audio description techniques and strategies, and have a feeling of insecurity. They see audio description as a challenging audiovisual translation activity.

Cabeza-Cáceres gave very specific details of his training activities and course development: during the first unit they work of the audio description of logos. They are provided guidelines for Catalan, Spanish and English. They review good and bad practices and assess the users' needs. Contributions are shared via forums. Examples were provided during his presentation.

The second unit focuses on film credits. They set up Subtitle Workshop for audio description because the students are already familiar with this freeware and it allows having an idea of narration speech. From a practical point of view, students prioritise strategies and analyse audio descriptions to start building their own criteria.

The third unit focuses on the audio description of characters and linear actions: how to introduce characters, how to maintain a narrative. Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres provides students with an audio description error matrix that considers omissions in content, errors related to language use, etc. Students perform a task to be graded.

The fourth unit focuses on non-linear and complex actions. Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres shows an example to illustrate how to deal with flashbacks. In this unit, he asks students to classify videos in accordance with strategy criteria.

In the fifth unit, they work on audio description for children at the theatre and opera. Students deliver a final task and they work together on a wiki to agree for a common strategy for the audio description of a specific film scene.

Cristóbal Cabeza-Cáceres closed the session by considering the main challenges of teaching audio description online, among which non-immediate communication or the fact that audio description is a completely new audiovisual translation modality for students could be highlighted.


## PRESENTATION AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING MATERIALS
### Anna Jankowska and Carme Mangiron (UAB)

Anna Jankowska and Carme Mangiron started by indicating that the aim of their session is to show content and get feedback, both through a survey that was distributed to the audience and through open comments.

First of all, they showed two core videos, and feed-back was obtained from the audience through the survey.

Then, the speakers explained the main characteristics of the document with suggested tasks: it includes first a multiple choice, followed by 1 to 6 tasks to be done at home or in class, individually, in pairs or in groups. All types of tasks were illustrated by means of extensive examples and the speakers asked the audience to complete a survey.

Carme Mangiron and Anna Jankowska also showed three examples of additional videos on the following topics: the target audience of audio descriptions, skills and audiosubtitling. They also asked the audience to complete a survey to give them feedback about this type of material.

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Finally, the speakers asked the audience to share their views as to whether they would use the materials. Some of the answers that were gathered are:

- *Yes, absolutely, training is a gap and this was necessary.*
- *Having something consistent that we can replicate will be very useful, at least for us in Australia.*
- *I'm an online trainer, and I think the videos work perfectly OK, but some of the previous tasks could be adapted for the online setting, for examples, having tests online without the key.*



## CLOSING REMARKS
### Anna Matamala (UAB)

To close the multiplier event, Anna Matamala shared the link to the repository where all files prepared to date can be found. She highlighted the fact that all these materials are open-access. Anyone can reuse any materials and adapt them to their needs.

Anna Matamala thanked sponsors and all attendees for their participation and asked for the audience's participation on a survey on the whole event.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This event was organised by UAB. We thank our colleagues from the ADLAB PRO Project who provided support and expertise that greatly assisted the organisation and delivery of the sessions, as well as a number of colleagues from UAB, who assisted with the logistics of the organisation, and the students who helped with the minute taking. We would also like to thank all the speakers and panel members for sharing their insights and best practices with us, the audience for their enthusiasm and very positive reactions.

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