CHAPTER 6

Audio Describing Text on Screen

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1. Text on screen in *Inglourious Basterds*: An introduction

The first two images the audience sees from *Inglourious Basterds* are two logos. Then music begins and opening credits appear: a black screen on which words, with changing typefaces, are superimposed. A total of five different types of fonts are used to display the opening credits while music is heard and no action takes place. More logos, copyright information and, again, the title of the movie close the cast list and end the film which is divided into five chapters, each introduced by intertitles indicating the chapter number and its title. Text on screen is used to start, end and split up

the film in different chapters, but it is also used to set the time by superimposing the year in which the action takes place. Words also appear on various objects and places: rifles, newspapers clippings, cinema lettering, passports, and maps, just to name a few. Additionally, arrows pointing at some of the characters introduce their names by means of captions on screen, and there is even a card game played at a tavern in which names of famous people are written on a card which is stuck on the forehead of the players. Written words are especially relevant for understanding the plot in one particular scene, also at the tavern: the actress Bridget von Hammersmark kisses a napkin for a drunk German soldier and signs it with her name. This autographed napkin is later found by Colonel Hans Landa next to the actress's lost shoe and allows him to understand that von Hammersmark is an agent.

The film is also a good example of multilingualism, with English, German, French and Italian being spoken. The original English version includes subtitles in English when characters speak other languages: Colonel Hans Landa speaking French to the LaPadite family at the beginning, Fredrick Zoller talking also in French to Shosanna at the cinema, or Bridget von Hammersmark and German soldiers talking in German at the tavern, to name just three examples. In other subtitled versions, and even dubbed

versions, it may well be that some of these dialogues are also subtitled.

All these written texts on screen cannot be accesed by the blind and visually impaired audience and, therefore, when creating an accessible version, the describer must ponder if these elements are relevant enough to be prioritised. If so, their integration in the audio description (AD) has to be carefully considered.

Text on screen is an important issue in AD and has been tackled in the scientific literature as will be shown in section 2. The aim of this chapter is therefore to describe what the main guidelines and research papers say about audio describing text on screen, and to analyse the specific strategies that could be implemented when audio describing *Inglourious Basterds*, taking into account the constraints posed by each scene and proposing and commenting on some instances of an English AD created for the purposes of this study.

2. Text on screen in audio description: Guidelines and research

Text on screen has been considered in some guidelines and analysed in various articles, as indicated next. A short summary of the main proposals found in the guidelines will be presented first, and then the

main research carried out to date on the topic will be briefly summarised.

In 2000, the *Guidance on Standards for Audio Description* (Independent Television Commission 2000) was published: one subsection is devoted to logos and opening titles and one to cast lists and credits. These standards state that it is often difficult to give a helpful description of some credits. Although in some cases there may be a contractual obligation to describe the logo, credits can be used to "provide the viewer with some useful information about the program" (ibid., 22) or, alternatively, description can be omitted so that music can be enjoyed. In the following subsection the standards state that "reading the credits at the beginning and end of films and television programs is an important function of audio description as it is an area in which visually impaired people feel they particularly miss out" (ibid., 23). However, knowing that most people are not interested in the names of production teams and technical crew, they propose to include this information in a bulletin or in electronic program guides**.** Practical advice is also given on how to gather the credit list if reading out all the credits is required. A remark on opening credits appearing over action is made, indicating the need to summarise them and read them in advance. In another section it is stated that on-screen subtitles can be "particularly frustrating for visually impaired people" (ibid., 26). When referring to subtitled

productions, artificial voices are considered not suitable for entire dramas or films, and an additional comment on the unsuitability of audio describing fully subtitled films is made.

The *Guidelines for Audio Description* by Audio Description Inetrnational (2003, online) advise to "[r]ead credits where time allows, and subtitles and captions, making clear by either a preface or just with the voice that these are not part of the description of the action". On the other hand, the German guidelines (Benecke and Dosch 2004) do not give specific instructions on this topic, although they mention that opening credits are an adequate place to insert additional information about the film. However, they acknowledge that in recent films this is sometimes not possible because action and opening credits often coincide.

The Spanish norm *UNE 153020* (AENOR 2005) clearly indicates that the AD should include information given by occasional subtitles, signs, notices and credits, summarising those that are too long for the silent gap available. The French *Charte de l'audiodescription* (Gonant and Morisset 2008) also includes subtitles, signs, written messages, significant symbols and front and end credits as elements to be described without giving further detail. As for the *Audio Description Guidelines for Greek – A Working Document* (Georgakopoulou 2008), it has a specific section on "Graphics" which recommends including all written graphics in the

AD by simply using quotes, without further indication. On the contrary, if subtitles can be confusing, the Greek guidelines advise to include the word "subtitle" before the subtitled texts and then the text in quotes. Regarding credits, the recommendation by the Greek guidelines is to list the most important ones (production company, title, main actors and characters played, executive producers, director) and to include the company providing the AD at the end. Georgakopoulou also indicates that credits can be described before if they overlap with an important scene. In fact, a year before the publication of these guidelines, Vercauteren (2007, 143) had already raised this issue in an article in which he advocated common European guidelines for AD and asked himself whether information could "be given before the programme starts or after it is finished, for example, for reading credits (over a blank screen)".

In 2009 the American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project published a work in progress document with *Audio Description Standards*. They suggest dealing with logos as with any other images, and reading the company name. They also highlight the importance of reading disclaimers, front and end credits, and subtitles. On first appearance, their advice is to introduce subtitles with a phrase ("Subtitles appear") and change the tone of voice. The need to sometimes summarise the material and simply add "Other credits follow" is also highlighted, as well as the

difficulty of describing credits overlapping screen action. In these instances, as previously mentioned, reading the credits before or after their actual appearance is proposed. An additional remark on credits is made referring to pre-show notes (or audiointroductions) in live productions.

The *Guidelines on the Provision of Television Access Services* included as Annex 2 in the Ofcom *Code on Television Access Services* (Ofcom 2010) contain some additional remarks on how to differentiate between subtitle reading and description (intonation/second voice), and they also note the need to avoid "clumsy overlaps" with song lyrics during front and end credits.

The *Audio Description Background Paper* (Mikul 2010, online), elaborated for Media Access Australia (MAA), includes as an appendix the *MAA's Draft Audio Description Guidelines*, which indicate that "for subtitled films, note the appearance of subtitles in the first instance, then prefix with 'subtitle' or 'he says', 'she says', etc.". They also advise reading the credits at the beginning of the program, describing the logos and reading out the major credits at the end, song titles and performers, if important, and all copyright warnings. Finally, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland also published in 2010 the *Guidelines – Audio Description,* which explicitly mention subtitled captions, relevant on-screen signs or writing, opening titles and end credits as elements to be audio

described. The only additional advice regarding text on screen is that, although AD should occur in dialogue breaks, it can encroach upon dialogue which is subtitled to read the subtitle.

Concerning research, the issue of text on screen has been tackled by few authors, who have either focused on film credits (Matamala and Orero 2011) or audio subtitling (Braun and Orero 2010). However, many articles describing the process of making an AD or analysing already existing ADs often identify texts on screen as a thorny issue.

This is the case of Remael and Vercauteren (2007), who analyse the exposition phase of ten films with AD in English – i.e. the first ten minutes. The authors state that film "beginnings are interesting and challenging because they contain a wealth of narratively important clues (visual, verbal, nonverbal aural clues, clues about the film genre and credits)" (Remael and Vercauteren 2007, 78).

Orero and Wharton (2007) explain the process of writing AD for *Torrente* 3 (2005), a successful Spanish film about a right-wing ex cop. The AD presents many challenges, and credits, inserts and text on screen in other languages are three of the aspects considered. Regarding credits, the authors state that it was "the part which proved most complex" (Orero and Wharton 2007, 170) because several elements had to be taken into consideration, namely a very

evocative melody with meaningful lyrics, credits, actions on screen, and even a written onomatopoeia. As far as written information or inserts are concerned, Orero and Wharton comment on the fact that on some occasions they could be easily read out, whilst in other moments there was not enough time to AD both the inserts and the action, and they had to prioritise. Finally, the authors wondered how to deal with text that appears on screen in a different language: for instance, English headlines in a Spanish movie, without subtitles in Spanish. After pondering the pros and cons of offering a translation which is not present in the original, and given the lack of time to offer a translation for each headline, a Spanish AD in which one headline is kept in English is proposed.

In another article, Orero (2011) dissects the AD of spoken, tactile and written languages in the film *Be with Me* (2005). The paper offers a thorough analysis of this film, which presents a wealth of written communications such as: text messages or Internet, chat language in which emoticons are used, logos, handwritten texts, texts written on a computer screen, texts written using a manual typewriter, etc. An interesting feature of these written texts is that they can either be in English, in English with incorporated iconography, or in Chinese, subtitled in the latter case. Apart from the AD of these features, Orero (2011, 255) pays special attention to the intonation, which is generally flat, and stresses that the AD:

concentrates on merely reading aloud the content of the messages. […]
No attempt is made at creating a narrative that should not be reduced to a
series of independent descriptions and actions […] and which should
allow the entire picture to emerge.

Chmiel and Mazur (2011), on the other hand, analyse seven audio
described materials in Polish focusing on several AD features:
presentation of characters, scene setting, logos, opening titles and
credits, use of tenses, colours, dramatic developments, flashbacks,
and excessive interpretation. Regarding logos, opening titles and
credits, they consider these as examples of text on screen to be
included in the AD and they point out that more research is needed
to know what the blind community expects. Their descriptive
analysis shows that logos of producers are generally audio described
and opening titles are read out if there is enough time, with differing
strategies depending on the action and characters shown
simultaneously. As for the end credits, the strategy changes
according to the product: in some cases only the most relevant ones
are read out whilst other AD scripts include comments such as "This
is the end of episode 6. End credits" (Chmiel and Mazur 2011, 288)
or a simple "The end".

In a more detailed article, Matamala and Orero (2011) tackle
the audio description of opening credit sequences, offering an

overview of credits in film history and identifying and analysing their three main constituents in a corpus of 20 films: superimposed written texts, visual elements (not texts) and audible elements. In relation to superimposed written texts, they focus on five aspects: logos, font type and lettering in titles, written captions, written indexic elements and other credits such as crew members.

Regarding logos, Matamala and Orero stress the wide array of different logos found and they state that even apparently standard logos from majors are sometimes adapted, deviating from the stereotype and defining the atmosphere of the film. The various strategies used in their corpus are described and the uneven treatment of logos is highlighted. Concerning the font type and the lettering used in titles, the authors consider them a feature which can raise expectations about the film, even though the way in which they are transferred into the ADs is nonconsistent. Written captions, the third element under analysis, generally present information about the time and setting of the action, but additional uses, such as reference to literary works inspiring the film, are also found in their analysis. The integration of written captions in the corpus is done using four strategies: captions read before they actually appear on screen; captions read as they appear without any further indication; captions integrated in the AD of the actions on screen, and captions which are preceded by the expression "A caption".

Finally, regarding credits with all the crew members, Matamala and Orero stress again the varying strategies and summarise them as follows: (a) omission, i.e. credits are not read at all, generally because the action begins simultaneously and has to be prioritised; (b) literal rendering, either synchronic or nonsynchronic. This strategy implies reading all the crew members acknowledged in the front credits, either at the same time as they appear (synchronic), before (nonsynchronic/previous), after (nonsynchronic/posterior) or both before and after (nonsynchronic/combined), depending on the gaps offered by the actions on screen and the soundtrack, and (c) condensation, either synchronic or nonsynchronic, the latter being also subdivided in combined, previous or posterior. In this case, only the most relevant actors and crew members are mentioned, mostly due to time constraints. Sometimes an explicit mention of the fact that "Most cast names appear" is included in the AD.

At the end of the article, they highlight the importance of opening credits and they also stress the relevance of intonation and good voicing to create the right atmosphere.

Beyond credits, inserts and logos, specific attention must be devoted to subtitles which are sometimes used in multilingual films to transfer the content of languages other than the main language of the film. These subtitles, which are used by nonvisually impaired audiences to access linguistically inaccessible content, are not

accessible to blind users and are generally voiced by using the so-called spoken subtitles or audio subtitling (AST), a practice used for whole films in some subtitling countries (Remael forthcoming). A voice talent or text-to-speech technologies are used to convert written subtitles into audio subtitles. Verboom *et al*. (2002), for instance, describe how foreign language films with Dutch subtitles are converted into audio subtitles using artificial voices in the Netherlands.

Braun and Orero (2010) go a step further and discuss the integration of AD along with AST in a seminal article which not only establishes the major challenges of this transfer mode, but which also presents a case study and discusses current solutions. Their thoughts are especially relevant for the present analysis because *Inglourious Basterds* is a multilingual film in which subtitled dialogue will have to be rendered next to the AD in order to make the whole film accessible, not only in traditionally subtitling countries, but also in the original version addressed to an English-speaking audience and maybe even in dubbed versions.

According to Braun and Orero, one challenge of AST is the fact that subtitles naturally entail a reduction of the source-text message and often rely on the visual input to compensate for this reduction, which creates a problem for visually impaired audiences, unable to access the visuals. A second challenge is the omission of

spoken language features in subtitling and the possibility of restoring some of those in the AST. Finally, the authors stress that:

> while non-subtitled films allow the AD to benefit to a great extent from what happens in the film dialogue, subtitled films provide only a reduced version of the dialogue and thus 'deprive' the AD of some of its anchorage.
>
> (Braun and Orero 2010, 176)

In their case study of 14 audio subtitled and audio described films available for an English-speaking audience, the assignment of voices for the AD narrative and the AST and the effect on character identification were studied. Various delivery techniques, generating either a dubbing or a voice-over effect, were identified and the importance of sound mixing was stressed. In a specific section of the article, various creative practices observed in their corpus were presented, such as restoring oral features in the AST, introducing nonstandard English accents, acting out the subtitles as opposed to simply reading them out, and compensating the lack of visual information by expanding or modifying the available subtitles. Finally, the article described the various strategies used to integrate the AST into the AD in the films under analysis: (a) changing the intonation; (b) saying "a subtitle" or "a caption reads" just before

reading the subtitle/caption; (c) quoting them as direct speech in the AD narrative; (d) naming the name of the speaker before reading out the subtitle, and (e) adopting more indirect strategies such as describing a character's gaze direction to help the audience infer who will speak next.

To sum up, most guidelines mention on-screen texts as important elements that generally need to be audio described if time allows, despite the many challenges they present. Summarisation seems to be a recurrent strategy, especially in long credit lists. Some guidelines also specify how these items should be included in the AD, making reference to intonation or other devices. Regarding research papers, they mainly describe the type of on-screen texts found in films and comment on the various strategies implemented in the selected corpora, with special emphasis on credits and subtitles.

3. Text on screen and AD: Possible strategies

The recurrent questions that describers ask themselves when preparing an AD is what to describe, when to describe it and how to describe it. There is not a single answer to these questions, because only a thorough film and scene analysis will dictate the best option

for each specific AD challenge. In this section, the focus will be on four relevant types of text on screen which appear in the film under analysis, discussing the possibly best strategy given all the constraints. The challenges posed to the describer and some strategies which can be successfully implemented when dealing with logos and credits (3.1); inserts or superimposed titles (3.2); various types of text on screen (3.3), and subtitles (3.4) are presented. The analysis will be based on specific fragments which will be first contextualised.

3.1. Logos and credits

The logos of The Weinstein Company and Universal Pictures are the first two images of the film and they are shown without any music or sounds. Then the music starts and opening credits, with changing typefaces, appear on a black screen. First, producers and directors are listed in four separate images in white font. Then music rises and the title appears written in yellow in a hand-scrawled font and with two clear misspellings: *Inglourious Basterds*. Immediately, in the same image and in a very small and standard font, the copyright and year of production are included. The next group of credits presents the main actors and actresses separately with the only difference that

the last caption indicates the character being interpreted next to the real name of the actress ("and Mélanie Laurent as Shosanna"). The capital letters in this group fade from yellow into orange before they finally disappear. The following set of credits is included under the heading "Co-Starring" and presents nine actors in two different sets of images. Finally, the word "Starring" displayed on a black screen introduces eight additional actors, one name per frame, with a varying white type of font. A total of five different types of fonts are used in the opening credits section, while music is heard and no action takes place.

Regarding logos, a synchronic description is feasible because there is no action and no music at the time. However, time is limited and the description should be brief, naming the company and giving a short description of the visuals. Logos are recurrent elements in films and some of them are often repeated, hence it would be highly useful to have standard forms which would allow visually impaired audiences to easily identify the logo. According to Matamala and Orero (2011, 49), who list the description of 14 logos, sometimes the AD explicitly indicates that the image is a logo, whilst on other occasions it does not. A feasible solution is to offer a short description and then add "The logo of + name of the company". A proposed AD for one of the logos could be as follows:

A starry space fades in from the blackness. From within, the rotating earth globe is swiftly approaching the screen. The logo of Universal Pictures.

Needless to say, it would be useful to have a single AD for each logo because this would make them easy to recognise. This is the aim of the opening logo and credits database (http://www.audiodeskrypcja.org.pl/index.php/baza-logotypow).

Regarding credits, no action takes place, no lyrics are heard, and the rhythm is relatively slow. However, music is essential during the film and the audience must enjoy it to get the feel of the movie. Hence, the describer should ponder whether all names should be read or if, on the contrary, a selection should be made. Another important issue is that fonts change and this should also be included in the AD, although the degree of detail is debatable: color (yellow/white), typesetting (uppercase/lowercase) and typeface. Moreover, the title is misspelled and the describer should consider how to include this information. Additionally, it can be explicitly said that credits start to appear or simply read them out.

A possible AD, in which the pauses for music are indicated is shown next. Reading the credits nonsynchronically, in groups, so that the music can be better enjoyed, is considered the best solution.

[MUSIC]

White uppercase credits against a black background. The Weinstein Company and Universal Pictures present a Band Apart, a Zehnte, Babelsberg Film GmbH production. A film by Quentin Tarantino.

[MUSIC]

In yellow hand-scrawled letters, with both words misspelled: Inglourious Basterds.

[MUSIC]

Yellow uppercase credits. Brad Pitt, Christoph Waltz, Michael Fassbender, Eli Roth, Diane Kruger, Daniel Brühl, Til Schweiger and Mélanie Laurent as Shosanna.

[MUSIC]

White lower-case credits. Co-Starring: Gedeon Burkhard, BJ.Novak, Samm Levine, Omar Doom, Paul Rust, Richard Sammel, Alexander Fehling, Christian Berkel, Sönke Möhring.

[MUSIC]

White upper-case credits. Guest Starring: August Diehl, Julie Dreyfus, Sylvester Groth, Jacky Ido, Denis Menochet, Mike Myers, Rod Taylor, Martin Wuttke.

[MUSIC]

The most relevant information has been included in the AD and credits have been identified as such using a sentence which adds information about colour. An alternative approach would have been

to select only the most relevant ones, mimicking the strategy followed in the audiointroduction (see Chapter 1). In any case, analysing what elements are foregrounded in the opening credits (the credits themselves, the music, the action, etc.) can give some hints as to the degree of detail or synchronicity required in the AD.

The film also closes with credits, in this case all in yellow. Thirteen frames with the main crew members appear first and then, in a smaller font, eighteen frames with an extensive list of the crew members are shown. Information on music is also provided in four frames, and three stills are devoted to locations and special thanks. Then, there is a change in the music rhythm and the cast credits, also in yellow, start to roll. Logos, copyright information and the title in yellow and in the same font as in the beginning close the list and end the film. It is obvious that such an extensive list cannot be read, even if there is no action going on, hence the describer must select the most relevant text.

3.2. Inserts or superimposed titles

The film is divided into five chapters which begin with an intertitle in white font where the word "Chapter" and the number (Chapter One, Chapter Two, etc.) are underlined and displayed in lower-case

font, whilst the titles of the chapters, except for "Chapter One" ("Once upon a time… in Nazi-occupied France") are in capital letters (INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS, GERMAN NIGHT IN PARIS, OPERATION KINO, REVENGE OF THE GIANT FACE). In all cases intertitles are against a black background and there is enough time to read them out. Hence, the best strategy is to read them out with some additional indications about the lettering.

White lower-case letters against a black background: Chapter One. Once upon a time, in Nazi-occupied France.

Strategies in dubbed, voiced-over or subtitled versions may vary depending on whether the caption is kept in English with a voice-artist reading the translation, a subtitle in the target language is added or the whole frame is substituted by a target language intertitle. This replacement can even imply a change in the font, as is the case when comparing the original and the German version of this movie.

At the beginning of some chapters, an indication of the year and/or place where the action takes place is provided. For instance, at the beginning of Chapter One, the year "1941" is superimposed against a beautiful rural landscape. An axe is heard and there is no dialogue, so there is enough time either to read out "1941" using

intonation to indicate that this is text on screen, to read out "A caption: 1941"/"Caption reading 1941", or simply include this information into the description ("In 1941, a…") obviating the fact that it is text on screen.

At the beginning of Chapter Three, two inserts also appear, namely the year (1944) and the month (JUNE) in white letters against a black background. Music is heard and there is no dialogue, so again all strategies are possible in this instance.

An insert is also used to indicate a change in location and in time, namely when Operation Kino begins. The words "The village of Nadine" are written on screen as the tavern La Louisiane is shown. There is enough time and, again, it is either possible to read the caption indicating it is a caption, read it changing the intonation or integrate the information about the village in the AD. It must also be stressed that these words can be changed in other dubbed or subtitled versions, and the AD must take into account these adaptations.

A final example is found in Chapter Five, in which the setting is indicated by means of the caption "Night of 'NATION'S PRIDE' premiere", while no dialogue but Bowie's *Putting out fire* song is heard. In this case the same strategies can be applied, carefully timing them so as not to overlap with the lyrics.

Various strategies have been proposed for the different examples, but one question remains to be answered: should a film be consistent in the way captions are referred to? It could be argued that consistency enhances comprehension but not only each film but also each scene presents its own challenges, making it difficult to establish clear norms. Only empirical research that takes into account users' preferences can give the answer to the question and lead to guidelines that, while establishing general principles, allow for the fact that each unique scene brings unique challenges that have to be met in a way that best translates the effect of the original.

3.3. Various types of text on screen

During the film various texts written on objects or indicating places can be spotted, each representing varying degree of relevance for the plot. The ones listed below are the main ones, with proposed ADs only for the most interesting cases.

3.3.1. Notes on a ledger and passport information

Colonel Hans Landa visits LaPadite's farm and asks for a Jewish family who used to live in the area. He asks Mr LaPadite for the children's ages and writes them down in a ledger. This information is conveyed visually, but the audio provides redundant information: the sound of Hans Landa writing down something is heard and the specific information annotated is also transmitted orally through the dialogue. Taking into account that the information is transmitted through two different channels (audio and video), the AD should contain no more than a reference to the fact that he is writing down the replies of Mr LaPadite. The same happens later in the film when Shosanna gives her French passport to Fredrick Zoller. The German soldier reads her new identity (Emmanuelle Mimieux) aloud, hence the only relevant thing to include in the AD is that she hands him the passport and he reads it.

3.3.2. Words on a rifle/blade

The words "Inglourious Basterds" are written on a rifle that Lt. Aldo Raine leaves on the floor. There is enough time to read this highly

relevant inscription, hence a suitable option would be the following, integrated in a longer AD, clearly synchronised with the sound.

On fallen leaves, Aldo Raine leaves a rifle with the words Inglourious Basterds written on its butt.

On the contrary, later in the film an inscription is visible on a blade that Hugo Stiglitz is sharpening but the words are upside down, impossible to read and of minor relevance, hence this information can be obviated.

3.3.3. Headlines

Newspaper clippings with headlines are also visible at various points but their relevance is different depending on the scene. Two examples will be presented next to illustrate this type of text on screen which is often found in films. In the first instance, when presenting Hugo Stiglitz, newspaper headlines in German without subtitles in English indicate what he is famous for. Next, an off-screen narrator in a newsreel style explains all the details while images of Stiglitz's famous killings are shown. In this case, although relevant, the headline is not accessible to the English-speaking

audience who do not read German. Furthermore, the key information related to his killings is conveyed via other channels, another instance of the already mentioned visual-oral redundancy. Therefore, it is not necessary to read the headlines, neither in the original nor in a translated version.

A second example, later in the film, is when a soldier reads a newspaper. The headline is visible but it is not relevant for the plot and not understandable for the audience who do not read German. Omission is therefore the proposed strategy also in this second instance.

3.3.4. Cinema lettering

Part of the action takes place at a cinema and images of the cinema lettering with the title of the movies shown are visible at certain points. Shosanna also appears either washing or changing these letters. Each scene will determine the degree of detail the AD will contain, depending on the dialogue, its redundancy with the coming or overlapping dialogues and the soundtrack. For instance, the first time the cinema appears, there is no dialogue and the information can be briefly included in the setting information.

3.3.5. Captions and arrows for characters

Characters are sometimes identified by written words on screen. Four examples are presented next: first of all, after Sergeant Rachtman says "Everybody's heard of Hugo Stiglitz", all the soldiers who are close to both Rachtman and Stiglitz laugh and music changes so as to introduce the Basterd's image. On-screen words, in a comic style, cover the entire screen, and only Stiglitz's face can be seen. A second example is when Shosanna Dreyfus, who owns a cinema and goes by the name of Emmanuelle Mimeux, is introduced with a caption indicating not only her name but also the time elapsed since her family's massacre ("SHOSANNA DREYFUS. Four years after the massacre of her family"), which allows the audience to identify the character and the time of the action. The same typography is used in the third example to present Joseph Goebbels ("DR. JOSEPH GOEBBELS. The number two man in Hitler's Third Reich"), whilst the music changes in such a way that it clearly marks the appearance of this cinematographical device. Finally, a white arrow next to the name is used to indicate the presence of Hermann Göring and Martin Bormann at the premiere and their exact location among the crowd. All these examples present different approaches to text on screen which have to be dealt with differently in their corresponding AD, taking into

account the silent gaps, the amount of coexisting visual information, the possible aural-visual redundancy and the role of the music.

3.3.6. Maps

Maps also include words written on them (France, Bay of Biscay), but common sense says it is definitely easier to indicate "a map of France" than to indicate a map with the word "France" written on it. When a specific location is shown on the map, such as the small village Nadine, the dialogue makes it explicit ("You'll go to a little village called Nadine"), so the AD should only include, if possible, that a certain character points to the map.

3.3.7 Card game

There is a long scene in a tavern, where German soldiers and the German actress von Hammersmark play a card game in which players have to guess the names of famous characters written on cards stuck to the foreheads of other players. The players are therefore trying to guess a name that other players and the audience can see, so the describer must try to give a similar experience to the

blind and visually impaired audiences and provide the information, if feasible. In fact, the first scene inside the tavern starts with one soldier trying to guess who the character written on his card is, so the audience definitely needs a brief description of what is going on.

In the tavern playing the Who Am I card game.

The dialogue, probably with AST, plus an expanded AD in the brief silent moments (for instance, when the soldiers clap their hands) will enable extra information to be given.

3.3.8. Napkin

There is one instance in which the text written on a napkin is highly relevant for the plot. Film critic Hicox and two Basterds, Wilhelm Wicki and Hugo Stiglitz, meet the German actress von Hammersmark at a tavern to discuss how to infiltrate and plant explosives at a premiere. Staff sergeant Wilhelm is celebrating at the tavern his son's birth and asks von Hammersmark for an autograph for his newborn. The German actress signs an autograph on a napkin and kisses it. Then, Hicox gives himself away and a firefight begins. Only von Hammersmark survives and she is rescued by Lt. Aldo

Raine. Later, Colonel Hans Landa goes to investigate the situation at the tavern and finds not only a high-heeled shoe but also the autographed napkin, which allows him to deduce that the German actress works for the Allies. In this case it is of the utmost importance not only to describe that von Hammersmark signs and kisses the napkin but to make explicit that later on Colonel Hans Landa reads the name "von Hammersmark". However, this is not a problem for the describer because Colonel Hans Landa reads this information aloud. The only difficulty is that it is read in German, subtitled in English in the original version, hence the need to include an audio subtitle, as will be explained in the next section of the article.

3.4. Subtitles

Inglourious Basterds is a multilingual film in which various languages are spoken apart from English, as indicated next:

Dialogues in French (for instance, Mr LaPadite<>LaPadite daughters, Hans Landa<>Mr LaPadite, Shosanna<>Fredrick Zoller, Shosanna<>Marcelo, Shosanna<>Landa).

Dialogues in German (for instance, Goebbels<>interpreter/lover, Goebbels<>Zoller, German soldiers and officers, Hitler<>German soldiers, von Hammersmark<>German soldiers at the tavern.)

Sentences in Italian (for instance, Landa> Basterds at the film premiere).

Depending on the version and the audiovisual transfer used (dubbing/subtitling/voice-over), the presence of subtitles, and consequently the AD and AST strategies, will vary. Also, even in the same film, various strategies can be used depending on whether the foreign language is used only in isolated words or in full dialogues. For instance, in the original version, many conversations in French and in German are subtitled, whilst some sentences or words in German, Italian and French are not subtitled. The latter is generally due to three reasons: the presence (a) of what could be termed international words; (b) of visuals which make the core meaning explicit, and (c) of an interpreter who translates the foreign words.

Firstly, isolated words well known from the language, such as *Merci* or *Au revoir* in French, *Nein* in German or *Scusa* in Italian, are not subtitled. The audience is expected to understand the words even if they do not know the language. Secondly, there are sentences that are not subtitled in the English version whose meaning is

compensated by the action on-screen. For instance, a captured German soldier is asked by the Basterds about the type of artillery and the position on a map. The reply of the soldier, in German, is not subtitled but the gesture of pointing to the map, which is what should be described, is meaningful. Finally, there are sentences which are conveyed by an interpreter, sometimes in combination with subtitles: for instance, Goebbels's lover is introduced as the French-German interpreter and acts as such when Goebbels talks to Shosanna. Another instance is when the Basterds stop a group of German soldiers and Lt. Aldo Raine communicates with one of them thanks to an interpreter who produces a shorter version in English.

In those cases where subtitling is used because the original content has to be transferred, various issues have to be considered. First of all, the describer has to decide how to introduce the subtitles and whether a single strategy should be implemented for the whole film. Possible strategies include: (a) adding the word "Subtitles" before actually reading them; (b) changing the intonation; (c) naming the character who is talking before reading what s/he actually says, and (d) even adding an audio input, which has been termed as earcon (nonverbal audio messages) to indicate the presence of subtitles. This latter proposal, not tested nor proposed until now, has been inspired by the works of Encelle *et al.* (2011) who use earcons to mark set changes. Secondly, the describer has to

ponder whether to literally read all the subtitles or summarise them even further. Time constraints will probably dictate the best strategy for each particular scene, although a certain degree of consistency would be desirable. Thirdly, and also depending on time constraints, the inclusion of oral markers present in the original version but deleted from the written subtitles has to be considered. Fourthly, the type of voice (natural/synthetic) has to be decided upon, as well as its intonation (acted/not acted) and the effect on the audience (voice-over/dubbing). Finally, additional considerations include the integration of AST with the AD and character identification, as already pointed out by Braun and Orero (2010). AST undoubtedly merits more attention than can be given in a chapter which aims to offer an overview of various types of text on screen.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, in the film under analysis text on screen appears in various forms: logos and both opening and final credits, inserts and intertitles, words written on various objects (ledger, riffle, newspaper, etc.), and subtitles. This chapter has described the many instances found and has suggested ways of approaching their audio description, taking into account the constraints posed by each

particular scene. A short overview of the proposals found in the literature has also been presented, showing that logos and credits have attracted the attention of most guidelines.

All in all, it has been demonstrated that text on screen often conveys meanings which help audiences make sense of the film and therefore it has to be carefully considered and integrated in the accessible version of the movie. The strategies to accomplish it successfully are varied, as previously described, and include diverging possibilities ranging from omission to a literal rendering of the text on screen. Moreover, the ways to indicate that text on screen is voiced are not uniform: the source of the text can be indicated ("A subtitle reads:" or "A caption:") but other strategies can be used such as changing the intonation, using another voice, or including an earcon, among others. Despite the many possibilities, only a thorough film analysis of the many codes used in each scene by describers and continuous testing with blind and visually impaired audiences by researchers will provide the best answer, which will probably have to be flexible enough to adapt to the many possible situations.

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