

COST Winter School– Nov 25, 2020

Challenges in opera AD research

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Rad

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Operatic branch of the RAD project

Descriptive, process and user-centred methodologies:

- Technological approaches
- The **linguistic and semiotic characteristics** of opera AD
- The operatic **audio describer**
- **User** needs and preferences

Some factors that dictate our methodologies:

- The **live nature** of opera and other performing arts
- **Sampling** for the corpus and the user study
- A quest for **replicability**

The language of (live and pre-recorded) opera AD

Cross-fertilising results:

- Lexical complexity: word length, low frequency words...
- Legibility: mean sentence length, Gunning fog index...
- Register
- Semantics

Shortcomings:

- **Representativeness**
- Within the scope of corpus linguistics, some measurements and their results are heavily **influenced by the size** of the corpus (TTR, STTR)
- Can we extrapolate AD language results from one language to another?
- The lack of recorded versions = no assessment of words per second, effect of prosody...

The selection of signs in opera AD

Research question: What are the most salient signs in opera AD scripts?

- Are the most salient signs also those that characterise contemporary opera?
- Audio describers' strategies for picking and choosing.
- Users' interest.

Yet... Our departing analysis is semiotic and **not multimodal** due to the live nature of opera.

Reception study

Mixed-methods design combining a focus group and questionnaires.

Particular sample of participants: older AD users that have never attended an audiodescribed opera.

An opportunity to personalise the AD service: They requested a zarzuela.

Yet...

An impasse in in-person research
Online focus group?

Experimental research in opera AD

Live stimuli vs. recorded opera
Ecological validity

Bulky tools in the theatre?

“Portable options” could be neurocognitive testing and
EDA

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