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THE GREAT CHALLENGE OF TRANSLATION AND AUDIOVISUAL ACCESSIBILITY IN THE MEDIA¹

"I see, but not with my eyes. I listen, but not with my ears. I speak and they speak to me, without the sound of a voice. And I get excited to enjoy visions of ineffable beauty that I have never seen in the physical world. My visions reinforce my conviction that the world that creates the mind from countless suggestions and subtle experiences is more beautiful than the world of the senses." Hellen Keller (1880-1968)

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough." Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

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1. This editorial article has been written, to the best of our ability, following the recommendations to express ourselves in plain language. These guidelines are found in the short guide, *Lenguaje Claro. Comprender y hacernos entender (Plain Language. Understand and make ourselves understood)*, developed by the Instituto Lectura Fácil. You can access the document here: <https://repositorio.comillas.edu/jspui/retrieve/73454/GUIA%20DEF%20LENGUAJE%20CLARO.PDF>



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1. Introduction: a retrospective look

Eleven years have now passed since the first issue of the journal *MonTI* saw the light of day in the year 2009. That first emblematic issue, entitled *A (Self-) Critical Perspective of Translation Theories*, impeccably edited by Professor África Vidal Claramonte and Professor Javier Franco Aixelá, was born with a strong will to become an international benchmark in its own right in the field of Translation and Interpreting studies. In fact, as we speak, the editors of the present issue find ourselves here at the University of Virginia with the very first issue of *MonTI* in our hands. And, as incredible as it may seem, we did not bring it here from Spain or from Italy. Rather, we found it here, without even looking for it, not in Alderman Library, where, as in the majority of major university libraries in the United States, one can find the unexpected. Surprisingly, and what pleases us to no end, is that the original issue of *MonTI* was occupying a central spot on one of the shelves filled with books in the office of Joel Rini, Professor of Spanish Linguistics and Philology here at the University of Virginia, who most kindly loaned it to us.

The enthusiastic words of Franco Aixelá (2009:33-34), found in the initial pages of this first issue of the journal, clearly reflected the aforementioned will of *MonTI* becoming a benchmark of utmost quality in our discipline:

In our case, we have attempted to create a journal on the basis of a clear identity, as well as to give it visibility through *a special concern for quality*. It is an aspiration still to be achieved, but we can guarantee that there will be no lack of enthusiasm and commitment to meet these aims. To be more specific, the essential characteristics that will define our journal are: internationalism, plurality, rigor and internal democracy.

Internationalism in our journal will rest on *three pillars: multilingualism, electronic publication and accessibility* (Franco Aixelá 2009: 9-10) (Our italics).

Well then, after all these years, since these words were written, here we are, in a prestigious American university, thousands of kilometers from the Valencian Community, and we can truly affirm that this aspiration to become an international benchmark with “a special concern for quality” is already a goal achieved, as *MonTI* currently ranks among the scientific journals of our field with the highest quality rates.

The editors of this new issue, number 12, of the journal, entitled *Translation and Media Accessibility: from Theory to Practice*, are not at all

lacking that enthusiasm expressed by the editor of the first issue to continue contributing our grain of sand, and to continue in this fashion with this legacy of quality and rigor which has been maintained over the years by the commendable effort of all the authors who with their valuable research have contributed more than a hundred articles already, bringing *MonTI* to the highest level in the field of Translation and Interpreting studies.

What really draws our attention in the previous quotation is the fact that among the “three pillars” mentioned above (2009: 10), one finds, together with multilingualism, *electronic publication* and *accessibility*. And it is this extraordinary coincidence that really grabs our attention: First, because this new monographic issue of the journal, *Translation and Media Accessibility: from Theory to Practice*, will be precisely the first of the entire collection that will be published only and exclusively in an electronic version², continuing with that initial commitment to the internationalism of *MonTI*; and second, because the central theme of our issue is, as the title says, accessibility, although, at that time, the aim of accessibility did not refer so much to the sensory field, as to that of technological accessibility for the sake of that goal of internationalism we have just mentioned.

2. Accessibility as a goal in the redefinition process

No one doubts the important role that media accessibility plays, not only in Audiovisual Translation (AVT), but also in Translation Studies. Accessibility continues to be an open concept, because its ultimate objective, that of social integration and the elimination of dependency barriers, must be continually reexamined in relation to the changing circumstances of our environment and, above all, because the way we perceive this is continually being modified. In fact, new relationships of dependency that had gone unnoticed from a critical analysis or a “deconstruction” of what is often simply taken for

2. For the editors, educated in a pre-digital environment, it has been difficult and at the same time very nostalgic to give up the hard-copy publication. However, we are very aware of the environmental reality of our planet and we are proud to have been able to contribute to this unique electronic version in the fight against climate change, a reality, which although many insist on denying, represents a growing problem in our global world.

granted are reevaluated and discovered. Thus, accessibility is necessarily a project in a continuous state of redefinition, and we believe that it is good that this is the case. Specifically with regard to Translation Studies, it seems clear that the topic of accessibility has also broadened the concept of translation activity, and in doing so, the area of both the skills and the responsibilities of translation and interpreting professionals.

For reasons of academic convenience, it is about delimiting its scope of action, as it has been our intention when we were commissioned to launch this new issue of *MonTi*. In the “call for papers” sent out for this purpose, the exponential growth experienced in recent years by both audiovisual translation and media accessibility studies was precisely highlighted. It was also emphasized how the intersection between both spaces was equally widely represented both in academic research and university training as well as in professional practice in the heart of an inclusive society *that* increasingly demands diverse accessibility services.

These services include audio description for the blind and visually impaired persons (AD), subtitling for the deaf and the hard of hearing (SDH), respoken and other types of live subtitling, sign language interpreting, web accessibility, easy-to-read and plain language, etc. Therefore, media accessibility could be defined as “a set of theories, practices, services, technologies and instruments providing access to audiovisual media content for people that cannot, or cannot properly, access that content in its original form” (Greco 2016: 11).

Although the focus in the practice of media accessibility has tended to be on the quantity of content made available in AD and SDH, we are witnessing now a necessary shift towards the quality of this content. As Romero Fresco points out, once the targets concerning quantity have been met, the quality of accessible content plays a central role:

En Francia, España y el Reino Unido, se han aprobado recientemente nuevas directrices de accesibilidad, mientras que la investigación académica en TAV se está centrando cada vez más en enfoques experimentales y estudios de recepción con vistas a mejorar la calidad del SpS, la AD y las modalidades más “tradicionales”, como son la subtitulación interlingüística y el doblaje. (Romero-Fresco 2015: 164-165).

In this new scenario, the linguistic and translation competences together with the acquisition of technical skills and the new technologies implemented in the field of media accessibility are at the core of the imperative training of audiovisual translators, (audio describers, SDH authors, live subtitlers, respeakers, etc.) to ensure the highly valued quality in the different services offered by this discipline in an increasingly inclusive society. Accordingly, the aim we were pursuing in this special issue of *MonTI* on media accessibility was to look very closely at the gear that allows the coordination of those mechanisms involved in the different accessibility services while not losing sight of the essential aim of quality criteria. Therefore, we encouraged media accessibility experts in both academic and non-academic contexts (audiovisual translation scholars, professionals, trainers, etc.) to share with us the results of their research and the projects in which they had participated: from the translation projects themselves to the final result that we see reflected on different screens (cinema, television, tablet, computer, mobile phone, the back of an opera seat, etc.). In short, the ultimate purpose was to be led by their hand along all the ground covered from their training in the field of accessibility to the implementation of the different projects carried out in the different areas of this discipline.

In view of all the progress made in this field, the following thematic, topical choices were suggested, which represent in some way the state of play as far as the studies linking audiovisual translation with accessibility are concerned:

- Media accessibility: training, research and professional practice. A comprehensive overview on the concept, development and dimension of “accessibility”.
- Overview of the following areas of media accessibility: subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing (SDH), respeaking and other types of live subtitling, sign language interpreting, audio description for the blind and visually impaired persons (including AD for the screen, museums, live events, etc.), accessible filmmaking, accessible theatre and other forms of universal design, easy-to-read and plain language (cognitive accessibility), web accessibility, etc.
- Assessment criteria of media accessibility quality.

- Reception studies in the key modalities of audiovisual translation.
- Current scenario of accessibility labour market: working conditions, investment in the accessibility industry, etc.
- Didactics on media accessibility: teaching and training methods, theoretical frameworks, course content, curriculum design, linguistic and translation competences in audiovisual translator training, assessment, etc.
- Technological aspects of accessibility.

3. The new contributions and the current research context on accessibility

The response to this initial forecast that we made is basically confirmatory of the proposed thematic lines, but with singularities and nuances that we think it is important to highlight taking into account the proposals submitted for publication. The central thematic axes were redefined in the following terms:

- Audiovisual accessibility on the web,
- Subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing people (SDH) in different contexts: movies, TV, performing arts, virtual reality, etc.
- Film Audio description,
- Museum Audio description,
- Accessible filmmaking, accessible cinema, and accessible filmmaker
- Accessible social interpreting,
- Sign language interpreting on television,
- Cognitive accessibility (Easy-to-understand accessibility services, Easy-to-read (E2R), Plain language (PL), Text simplification etc. ...).

and all of them, with the sole objective of creating an increasingly inclusive society, oriented mainly to serve diversity, attending not only to the linguistic and sensory barriers of the community of users, but also keeping in mind the cognitive barriers.

From the analysis of the new contributions it is possible to draw some initial conclusions. First, as regards the different areas of accessibility discussed in the different articles, we can conclude that, although it is true that the two modalities of audiovisual translation pioneering in the field of accessibility, audio description (AD) for the blind or partially sighted people

and subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH), are at the core of this monograph, it is no less true that their study here transcends the traditional fields of film and television to explore other contexts such as the performing arts, virtual reality, online television channels, museums, audiovisual content offered by online platforms, etc. Also, within the accessibility for the deaf, we find a novel reception study, the result of the application of eye-tracking technology to sign language interpreting. As for accessible filmmaking, which arose as an alternative approach to the current model of audiovisual translation and media accessibility (Romero-Fresco 2015), we can conclude that it is definitely here to stay. The tools needed to become an accessible filmmaker are explored here.

Second, and as far as the authorship of the articles is concerned, we can conclude that women represent an absolute majority in the field of accessibility, and although we are aware that, as we say in Spanish, “all those who are here, are; but not everyone who is is here”. This fact fills us with satisfaction for the recognition of the academic effort and personal dedication that this entails.

Finally, another fact that we do not want to fail to mention, and which has also made us feel proud since it is a good indicator of the great interest that accessibility is currently generating, is that some of the new contributions have been partly funded by national projects and, above all, by large-scale European projects. Among these European projects, we highlight two for their great potential in improving media accessibility services.

The first of these is the Horizon 2020 project³ (ImAc grant No 761974, <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/761974>). It is an immersive accessibility project of the European Commission, which, with a general budget of almost three million euros, has as its main goal to explore how accessibility services can be integrated into immersive media, its main objective being to ensure

3. The European Union concentrates a large part of its research and innovation activities in the Horizon 2020 Framework Program (H2020). This project integrates for the first time all phases of creation of knowledge up to the activities closest to the market: basic research, technology development, demonstration projects, pilot manufacturing lines, social innovation, technology transfer, etc ... with three strategic objectives: a) to create a science of excellence, b) to develop technologies and their applications to improve European competitiveness and c) to research the big issues that affect European citizens.

that immersive experiences are inclusive in different languages, attending to the needs not only of people with visual or auditory functional diversity, but also those of the elderly or those with learning difficulties:

The goal of Immersive Accessibility (ImAc) is to explore how accessibility services can be integrated with immersive media. It is not acceptable that accessibility is regarded as an afterthought: rather it should be considered throughout the design, production and delivery process. ImAc will explore new deployment methods for these services (Subtitles, Audio Description, Audio Subtitling, Sign Language) in immersive environments. We will move away from the constraints of the current technology, into a hyper-personalized environment where the consumer can fully customize the experience to meet his personal needs. For example, it may be more appropriate for subtitles to be read out-loud or the Audio Description presented as text. The key action in ImAc will be to ensure immersive experiences are inclusive across different languages, addressing the needs of those with hearing and low vision problems, learning difficulties and the aged.

Another research project framed within the Horizon 2020 program also deserves special attention: the EasyTV project (grant n° 761999, <https://easytvproject.eu/>). This project aims to promote a wider range of accessible media, being one of its objectives to innovate and promote the use of new technologies for accessibility. Another of its central goals is to improve personalization in the field of consumption and interaction with content, pursuing “a hyperpersonalized experience” for all:

EasyTV aims to innovate and kick-start the development of new accessibility technologies. The Project will break language barriers for all by developing technologies which can enhance the interaction and perform sign language translations towards an inclusive media interaction. The heart of EasyTV is an improved personalization of the content experiencing and interaction, towards a hyper-personalized experience to all.

Since the moment Article 7 of the directive 2010/13/EU (European Parliament and Council, March 10, 2016) according to which: “Member States will encourage audiovisual communication services under their jurisdiction to ensure that their services are gradually accessible to people with a visual or hearing disability,” was amended by directive 2018/1808: “Member States shall ensure, *without undue delay*, that the services offered by the communication service providers subject to their jurisdiction *continuously and progressively improve*

their accessibility for persons with disabilities through proportionate measures” (italics ours), the takeoff of accessibility has become an unstoppable reality.

As Jiménez Hurtado and Barnés Castaño (2020) point out in this very issue:

European countries have made great efforts to adapt their policies to the aspirations of the different strategies of the H2020 and thus promote modern, innovative and inclusive societies. At the same time, national legislation has boosted access to cultural heritage, which is enshrined as a right in article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2006).

To conclude, and as we noted earlier, the fact that some of the new contributions have been funded in part by European projects of the size of the H2020 framework program is a clear reflection of the good health that our discipline enjoys and the path ahead of us to continue researching in order to keep building an increasingly accessible and inclusive society.

4. Brief overview of the *Accessibility* areas

We could say that the 13 articles that we present here, each of them anchored in their respective areas of accessibility, make up a colorful *patchwork quilt* that shows the current panorama in the field of immersive accessibility, mainly in Europe. We will next briefly present each of them located in their respective areas of accessibility.

4.1 *Audio description*

In the article, “Detail in Museum Audio Description: An Experimental Approach”, the authors Celia Barnés Castaño and Catalina Jiménez Hurtado, carry out an interesting reception study in a group of 16 people with visual functional diversity (VFD). They reflect on the great interest in recent years aroused by this form of intersemiotic translation in which images are translated into words: a growing interest which is reflected both in research works in museum audio description and in the “implementation of this accessibility resource in museums.”

However, despite this growing interest in AD in museums, there is a significant lack of “reliable data on access to the knowledge it provides, as well

as its quality.” Along the same lines, Chica and Martínez (2016: 128) affirm that “one must become aware of the qualities of the cognitive processes that condition the understanding of the message among blind users.”

Holsanova (2016: 49), on the other hand, also extends to film audio description this lack of clear answers on the way in which users “understand verbal descriptions of visual information and what their preferences are.” Thus, and with the aim of filling this void, the authors of this article consider it essential to approach museum audio description from a new cognitive approach, implementing Holsanova’s theoretical framework on research in the creation of mental images (2016) and two theories from the field of cognitive psychology, the so-called Construal Level Theory (CLT) and the Grounded Cognition (GC). These two theories focus on these “possible differences of cognitive type between how people with blindness and visual impairment and those with normal eyesight imagine visual information.”

Based on the premises of these two theories, the authors carry out an empirical study with two initial two hypotheses,⁴ which, if confirmed, could help a lot in improving the accessible product.

The article “Prosodic Features in Spanish Audio Descriptions of the *Viv Corpus*” by María J. Machuca, Anna Matamala and Antonio Ríos studies in detail the prosodic features of pitch, duration and amplitude in a corpus of 10 Spanish audio descriptions, all of them coming from the fourteen-minute short film by the Catalan female director Núria Nia *What Happens While*. This fiction short film investigates audiovisual accessibility, and the 10 audio descriptions extracted for the corpus have been made by professional audio-describers. As the authors indicate, these 10 professional ADs were obtained from the Visual Into Words corpus (Matamala 2018), which is the only open access corpus that allows comparing different audio descriptions of a single content.

4. These are the two hypotheses put forth by the authors in their empirical study:

Hypothesis 1: “A higher level of concreteness negatively affects the content recall of audio-described works, especially if the VFD is congenital.”

Hypothesis 2: “People with VFD will prefer a less concrete level of museum audio descriptions, that is, they will show greater satisfaction when the audio description includes fewer details related to visual information, especially if the VFD is congenital.”

After this descriptive analysis, they carried out a reception study in a group of 60 people, of which 29 had normal vision, and the remaining 31 presented visual functional diversity (VFD). As the authors indicate in the summary prior to their article, the objective of their work is to determine the preferences of users with and without loss of vision, and they conclude that their study “has shown how preferences correlate with certain prosodic values.”

Their research is also based on the verification of the scarce research that exists in the field of audio description in relation to the important role played by the voice of the audiodescriber. Among the works that could work in the same direction, the authors highlight that of Iglesias-Fernández, Martínez Martínez and Chica Nuñez (2015). The latter have carried out a small-scale piece of research in which they have demonstrated how the quality and adequacy of the voice of the audiodescriber to the scene in question favor more positive assessments by the end users of audio description.

The work of Laura Carlucci and Claudia Seibel, “The Specialized Discourse in the Inclusive Museum: Easy Reading versus Audio Description”, is a descriptive-comparative study that revolves around these two modalities of accessible museum translation mentioned in the title.

This comparative study, which has as its core the museum as a space for cultural participation and social inclusion for the group of users with sensory and cognitive disabilities, will allow one to gather valuable information that will be used to identify the different translation techniques used, and identify which have been the predominant ones when producing the audio description and easy-to-read of specialized texts.

The article “Who is Currently Audiodescribing in China? A study of Chinese Audiodescriber Profiles” by Irene Tor-Carroggio and Helena Casas-Tost closes this audio description section. We find ourselves again with another descriptive study focused now on the figure of the audiodescriber agent in this country. Since China is the country with the largest number of disabled people in the world, it is hard to believe that the various sensory accessibility services are unknown to the majority of the population.

With regard to audio description in particular, the authors confirm that it is still in an embryonic stage compared to many European countries that

have developed their own guides to “describe the best practices that should be applied to obtain quality audio descriptions” (Reviere 2016: 236).

The authors break down the reasons why AD in China is still taking its first steps. Among them, in the first place, what stands out is its almost exclusive dependence on local volunteers who do not receive any compensation for producing the audio description; second, the fact that only this translation service is accessible to films; and third, the lack of official regulations in the country and a firm law that favors these accessibility services.

Reception studies are not carried out in this country either (Tor-Carroggio and Casas-Tost 2020):

While the trend in the West is to carry out reception studies that attempt to delve into user preferences, needs and characteristics (Chmiel & Mazur 2012; Fresno 2014; Matamala et al. 2018), Chinese AD is a few steps behind since it still lacks a well-defined descriptive framework that contextualizes the service and provides a clear picture of how it is offered.

Given this scarcity of literature on the topic of AD in China, the authors of this article pursue a double objective in their study. First, to conduct an investigation of the history and state of the art of AD in this country, the corresponding legislation included. Second, to provide the most accurate profile of audiodescribers in mainland China. For this, the authors have prepared a questionnaire that they have distributed among 53 participants working in the most active AD centers in mainland China, located in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing.

The result of this study, the authors conclude, has identified six conflictive points that, if improved, would help ensure a long life for audio description in China.

4.2 Subtitling for the deaf

In this area we find three articles: “Untertitel für Gehörlose vs Subtitling for Deaf People: The Challenge of Making visible the Inaudible” by Carmen Cuéllar Lázaro, “Audiovisual Accessibility on the Web: Subtitling in the European Parliament” by Iris Serrat Roozen and “Accessible Scenic Arts and Virtual Reality: A Pilot Study with Aged People about User Preferences

when Reading Subtitles in Immersive Environments” by Estella Oncins, Rocío Bernabé, Mario Montagud and Verónica Arnáiz Uzquiza

The first article is a very complete comparative study that aims, as its author indicates at the beginning, to know the treatment that is given to subtitling for people with auditory functional diversity in German and Spanish throughout the last decades. This accessible translation modality has been studied in a corpus of films that covers a period of almost forty years. This long period of time has allowed the author to study the evolution of this type of subtitling in each of the two languages.

In sections 2 and 3 of this article a detailed must-read report is offered for all those interested in the field of subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) in Spain and in the *untertitel für Gehörlose und Hörgeschädigte* (UGH) in Germany. Thus, for example, we are presented in the first of these sections with an overview that begins with the first subtitles aimed at the deaf community broadcasted on the American public television in the early 1970s, all the way to the first subtitles broadcasted in Spain in 1990, with a very small and sporadic offer of programs with subtitles. At present, this path started in the seventies is at an optimal point in our country, since, as Cuéllar (2020) points out: “the percentage of subtitled content on television is now close to 100%, as shown in the data from the Spanish Center for Subtitling and Audio Description (CESyA), from where daily monitoring of subtitling and audio description services is carried out.”

The second article stems from the restlessness of its autor. As the author herself affirms, given “the impact of digitalization on people’s lives; above all, in that of people with some kind of sensory disability”. In her study, she analyzes the fulfillment of the accessibility guidelines for audiovisual content established by the WCGA 2.0 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) on the EuroparlTV online television channel.

Her objective is to conduct a systematic study of the very aspects of subtitling. To this end, she has created the EMPAC corpus that includes the English and Spanish subtitles of the videos broadcasted by this online television channel over a period of eight years. In an initial phase of her analysis, she studies whether these videos are accessible and if they meet the guidelines for accessibility to Web 2.0 content, in order to study later a key parameter within subtitling: subtitle reading speed.

Finally, the article that closes this section, “Accessible Scenic Arts and Virtual Reality: A Pilot Study with Aged People about User Preferences when Reading Subtitles in Immersive Environments” is a far-reaching reception study that investigates preferences between subtitling for deaf people and hard-of-hearing (SDH), and in easy-to-read subtitles (E2R) for the elderly⁵. Both types of subtitles (in Spanish) were created for a 360° video of the opera *Roméo et Juliette* (original version in French). The reception study was conducted with 8 people (five women and three men) with ages that span from 50 to 79 years. It is important to note here that none of the participants in the study were deaf or used hearing aids.

4.3 Accessible cinema

In his article, “The Accessible Filmmaker and the Global Film”, Pablo Romero-Fresco offers us, as he mentions at the beginning of his study, an alternative approach to the current model of audiovisual translation and media accessibility: *accessible filmmaking*.

Accessible filmmaking thus implies integrating audiovisual translation and accessibility in the same process of creating a filmic text. Convinced, as we are, that this is the best of all possible scenarios, his goal in this article is to specify what filmmakers need in order to become accessible filmmakers.

He introduces a new concept in his study, *the global film*, which refers to both the original and the translated, accessible versions of a film, in order to help filmmakers broaden their perspective beyond the original version of their films.

4.4 Interpreting

In this area we find two articles, one on sign language interpreting in television and another one coming from the field of accessible social interpreting.

The article by Saida Ansari-Naim, “Social and Accesible Interpreting: A proposal of Disciplinary Connection”, is a new study in the field of

5. The fact that the rate of life expectancy in Europe is increasing, together with the low birth rate of the old continent, make the population of older people increasingly greater. This reality needs imperatively media accessibility services so that the community of the aged is not at risk of social exclusion.

accessibility which demands from the beginning (2020) its own space for social interpreting within the realm of the “generic domain of accessibility”.

The author states that by doing this “we reinforce that which justifies the use of this term to differentiate a parcel of activity within the general practice of translation and interpreting”. In this sense, the figures of the interpreter or translator as subjects who eliminate the communicative barriers acquire “the role of mediator agents of accessibility”.

The second article in this area, “Sign Language Interpreting on TV: a Reception Study of Visual Screen Exploration in Deaf Signing Users” by the authors Marta Bosch-Baliarda, Olga Soler-Vilageliu and Pilar Orero is a novel reception study within accessibility for people with functional auditory diversity, which, as the authors indicate, makes up for the lack of this type of study: “In addition to the limited broadcast time and variety of TV genres offered in sign language, *best practice guidance based on test results for this access service is also limited.*” (italics ours).

The authors analyze how a community of sign language users of 32 deaf people explores a television screen, which is in turn divided into two screens: a large screen for viewing content and a small screen for sign language interpreting. The composition of the screen changes as the small SLI screen pivots. This positional change of the small screen is done in order to first record the eye movements of the users through the Eye Tracker, and then evaluate the content recall through two questionnaires. The results obtained are interpreted in terms of perceptual strategies developed by the community of sign language users.

4.5 *Easy-to-understand accessibility services (E2U Access services)*

(Easy-to-read (E2R), Plain language (PL))

Two articles have been included in this area: “New Taxonomy of Easy-to-understand Access Services”, by Rocío Bernabé Caro and “The Expert in Easy-to-understand Language: A New Educational and Professional Profile in the Field of the Spanish Language”, by Blanca Arias-Badia and Anna Fernández-Torné.

In the first of these, the author asks whether the audiovisual content provided by the accessibility services available to us (audio description, subtitling

or sign language) is also accessible from a cognitive point of view for users who:

- a) can see but have difficulty in reading or understanding written content,
- b) can see and hear but have difficulty in understanding the content, or
- c) users with multiple needs: for example, one user may have hearing loss and may also have problems reading subtitles; others may have visual loss and have difficulty understanding a dense audio description which has been offered as an alternative.

To answer this question, Bernabé Caro presents a classification of accessibility services that use simplification methods to facilitate access for people with comprehension difficulties, be they because of reading or learning deficiencies, temporary disability or insufficient language levels.

The second article is a hopeful study, as it opens the door to a new professional path in the field of Spanish language: the expert in the creation, revision and adaptation of easy-to-understand content through the tools of Easy-to-read (E2R) and plain language (PL). These two tools were born as cognitive accessibility services, initially aimed at those with cognitive disabilities. However, as the authors state, “with the passage of time, the range of ideal recipients of these services has expanded, as it has been shown that they can also benefit from them (...) the elderly and people with little command of language, among others.”

4.6 Art accessible through the sense of touch

Teresa Díaz Díaz, in her article, “The Translation of Concepts and Works of Art through Touch: A Forgotten Sense in the Theory and Practice of Translation”, claims the sense of touch to translate concepts in the field of visually impaired people. The author laments the hegemonic position that audio description occupies for people with visual functional diversity: “Everything is focused on audio description for the blind, without realizing that the visually impaired person not only uses his or her hearing to grasp the surrounding world and learn new disciplines, but also smell, taste and touch”. She believes that the lack of literature on the important role that the senses of taste, smell, and especially touch play in people with visual functional diversity has its origin

in the fact that “all efforts to make people with visual impairment learn have been focused throughout history on trying to understand each other through oral language.”

5. Some final words

It has become clear that the goal of these three pillars of the founding issue mentioned above is satisfied, to a greater or lesser extent⁶, in *MonTI* 12, which is why we must be proud of the work accomplished and move forward with the initial commitment to internationalism, quality and rigor in the study of all the subdisciplines of our field, both the traditional and the new, as well as those, which, to be sure, will be forthcoming.

We would like to conclude this introductory editorial article of *MonTI* 12 by expressing our sincere gratitude to all female authors and male authors who have contributed to this monographic issue, making us participants in the most precious gift: their research. We extend our thanks to all the people who have been part of the Board of Referees for this issue, for their invaluable help in the process of selecting the articles, and for giving us some of their time. We would also like to thank the Board of Advisors, and especially the Editorial Board, which has been steadfast, so that *MonTI* can continue to maintain that “especially remarkable level of quality” of which we spoke at the beginning. And last but not least, our deepest thanks go to Professor Juan Antonio Albaladejo of the Universitat d’Alacant. Without him, believe you me, this issue would not have been possible.

6. Although *MonTI*'s commitment to linguistic diversity has been very clear since the birth of the first volume, our being aware that one of the most important shortcomings of most academic journals on Translation and Interpreting lay, ironically, in its linguistic limitations, in this monographic issue of *MonTI* 12 that we present here, the great effort for multilingualism that we have always pursued is not reflected. Only two languages, Spanish and English, appear in this issue. Of the thirteen articles published here, seven of them were received in Spanish and six in English. And although we are aware that English is the language of science, this balance of two languages seems poor in relation to the effort of our journal to give visibility to as many languages as possible. Since from this issue number 12 and moving forward, *MonTI* will be an exclusively electronic publication and space will no longer be a problem, we encourage from this page that future researchers send us their work in any language they prefer apart from English.

Paraphrasing Franco Aixelà (2009: 37), the editors of this issue also believe that the best presentation of a journal is its own articles. We present here *MonTI* 12, our journal, your journal. You be the judge.

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