

Resolving Puzzles:

Reducing cognitive dissonance in 'puzzle films' for visually impaired (VI) audiences through adapted audio description (AD).

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Rationale

Puzzle Films:

- Deceptive
- Decipherable
- Impossible
e.g. Nolan films

Cognitive Dissonance:

- Resolution
- Narrative construction

Adapted AD:

- Audio intros
- Minimalist AD

Aims

Based on an analysis of existing AD and drawing on cognitive narratology frameworks, this project aims to develop a bespoke type of AD for highly complex films and provide a cognitive dissonance reduction strategy for VI audiences.

Methodology

Analysis of existing puzzle films

- Selected films with common traits
 - Corresponding AD
- Scripts
- Director's commentaries

Category-based analysis of significant narratological markers in the films and their representation in the AD.

Reception study with experimental material.

Previous Research

• 'Decipherable puzzle films' disrupt an individual's narrative sense-making, but "ultimately also offer ... satisfactory resolutions (Kiss & Willemsen, 2017, p. 52). Such narrative interference creates cognitive dissonance which "can block viewers' narrative construal" (ibid.).

• Giovanni (2014) states that audio introductions "can be a *complement to*, not a *replacement for*, cinema audio description: its features and functions are in effect complementary, not conflicting" (2014, p. 1). My aim is to design audio introductions that will provide increased recall.

• Vercauteren's (2022) analysis of AD and narratology indicates that narratology can "serve as a foundation for both source text analysis and target text creation." (2022, p. 78).

References:

- Giovanni, E.D. (2014) 'Audio introduction meets audio description', in *TRAlinea Special Issue: Across Screens Across Boundaries*, p. 7.
Kiss, M. and Willemsen, S. (2017) *Impossible puzzle films: a cognitive approach to contemporary complex cinema*. Edinburgh: University Press.
Vercauteren, G. (2022) 'Narratology and/in audio description', in *The Routledge Handbook of Audio Description*. Routledge.



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In the dream Cobb stands and looks up. As the sleeping Cobb hits the water, water bursts through the windows and engulfs the staircase towards the Cobb in the dream. Cobb wakes up in the bath.



... it looks like a colonnade reaching to infinity ... Ariadne stands in front of one of the mirrored doors, puts her fingertips onto it and pause the glass shatters. Behind it is a colonnade.



Cobb looks outside, his children are playing. Both children turn up to face him. The top wobbles slightly but continues to spin.