"Tale as Old as Time": Animation as a Medium in Teaching Audiovisual Language and Audio Description

«Una historia de siempre»: la animación como medio de enseñanza del lenguaje audiovisual y la audiodescripción

(iD) VICENTE BRU GARCÍA
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6974-3230
University of Granada (Spain)

(iD) CRISTINA ÁLVAREZ DE MORALES MERCADO
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8298-8686
University of Granada (Spain)

ABSTRACT

This article presents a didactic sequence for learning the fundamentals of filmic audio description (AD) using audiovisual materials that employ animation techniques. The study also aims to raise students' awareness of animation as a technique rather than as a children's film genre. To achieve this, we review the principles of didactics in this translation modality and the principles of animation, we design sessions focused on teaching film language and AD quality standards, and we classify and analyse the most common errors made by students when creating audio description scripts (ADS). The study concludes that errors related to objectivity and the interpretation of film language are the most frequent, and that the sequence encourages students to be more interested in this technique and to recognize its importance in the history of cinema.

KEY WORDS: animation; audio description; film language; film genre.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta una secuencia didáctica para el aprendizaje de los conceptos fundamentales de la audiodescripción (AD) de películas, utilizando materiales audiovisuales creados con técnicas de animación. Además, el estudio persigue crear la consciencia, entre los estudiantes, de que la animación es una técnica antes que un género cinematográfico infantil. Para ello, se revisan los principios de la didáctica de esta modalidad de traducción y los principios de la animación, se diseñan sesiones enfocadas a la enseñanza del lenguaje de las películas y de los estándares de calidad de la AD y se clasifican y analizan los errores más comunes cometidos por los estudiantes al crear guiones de audiodescripción (GAD). El estudio concluye que los más frecuentes son los errores relacionados con la objetividad y la interpretación del lenguaje de las películas y que esta secuencia anima a los estudiantes a interesarse por esta técnica y su importancia en la historia del cine.

PALABRAS CLAVE: animación; audiodescripción; lenguaje de las películas; género cinematográfico.

1. INTRODUCTION: ANIMATION, BEYOND CHILDREN'S MOVIES

In his acceptance speech for his Best Animated Feature Oscar, director Guillermo del Toro defended animation as more than just a type of audiovisual product aimed at a children's audience: "Animation is cinema. Animation is not a genre. Animation is ready to be taken to the next step" (Carey, March 13, 2023). The assertion of animation as a distinct technique, different from live-action films, has permeated the film industry, which is increasingly investing in animated films with adult themes, as seen in *Sausage Party* (Vernon and Tiernan, 2016), or in more innovative techniques, such as the combination of digital and traditional animation (Faughnder, June 13, 2023). Moreover, society seems to be responding positively, with the emergence of a fan phenomenon surrounding animated series (Maier, 2019) and the box office success of films like *Inside Out 2* (Mann, 2024), which grossed over $1.5 billion globally (Northrup, August 1, 2024).

At the same time, audiovisual products' accessibility is increasingly considered as a necessity in today's society. This is reflected both in laws and in practice: Spain's General Law on Audiovisual Communication 13/2022 of July 7 mandates that all networks must offer part of their content with audio description (AD) and subtitles, whether live or on their video-on-demand platforms, whereas there is a prevalence of AD in platforms such as Netflix (2024), which even regulates its practice with quality standards.

However, the reality in audio describers' and filmmakers' training contrasts with the above. On the one hand, there are segments of the population that consider animation as just another genre, particularly associated with Disney, which is perceived to produce only children's content of lower quality than live-action cinema (Ávila, 2023). On the other hand, as Mazur and Chmiel (2021: 52) explain, "AD training is not yet fully fledged, and AD training methodologies and pedagogical approaches are still underdeveloped".

This study emerges from the convergence of the need to offer a quality methodology for AD teaching in university-level translation programs and the desire to dispel the misconceptions of animation as a children's genre by incorporating this knowledge into the broader context of audiovisual translation education.

The objectives of this study are:

- To establish a didactic sequence for teaching AD in audiovisual contexts, particularly in animated products.
- To identify the most common errors made by translation students using a rubric based on Jiménez Hurtado's (2010) classification for the analysis of audio description scripts (ADS).
- To assess the potential positive evolution in students' perception of animated films following the implementation of the proposed didactic sequence.

2. THEORICAL FRAMEWORK: AD AND ANIMATION, VISIONARY LANGUAGES

2.1. AD didactics: intersemiotic translation in our modern visual era

AD is a modality of accessible translation in which one semiotic code, i.e. verbal code, is used to convey another, i.e. visual code. This definition frames AD as within the third type of translation described by Jakobson (1959), namely intersemiotic translation (Mihalache, 2023). According to Remael et al. (2015: 9), "AD (...) offers a verbal description of the relevant (visual) components of a work of art or media product, so that blind and visually impaired patrons can fully grasp its form and content".

This definition underscores the importance of not only conveying the content of the filmic product but also offering a description of the manner in which it is presented. In the case of AD for animation, this raises the dilemma of whether it is necessary to inform users about the use of animation techniques in the audiovisual product and how to approach the creation of AD scripts (ADS) for these products (Martínez-Martínez, 2010). However, the author categorized animation as a genre primarily intended for children, which does not align with the reality of this technique, as will be discussed later.

While there is a type of static ADS, which describes elements that do not have a temporal projection, such as museum objects or heritage sites (Luque Colmenero and Soler Gallego, 2020), the AD of animated products belongs to dynamic AD. This involves using verbal code to present visual elements occurring in a multimodal audiovisual product under certain constraints. As Jiménez (2010) describes, these constraints include the necessity for ADS to be limited to the brief moments of space between dialogues, respecting the relevant moments of the film's soundtrack, and using linguistic strategies that can offer relative linguistic depth within the available time. This aspect is particularly interesting, as one of the main problems observed among students is that a significant percentage either used excessively long AD segments in their scripts or placed them during moments when the film's soundtrack provided dialogues or information that could elicit the action taking place.

AD studies have approached this modality from various perspectives over the years: the analysis of quality standards, such as the recent study by Font Bisier (2023) on the pertinence of updating the UNE 153020 standard, which dictates AD quality in Spain, based on a comparison with other standards; the comparison of translation practices in different languages, as seen in the study by Wang, Zou, and Wu (2024), which compared ADS in Chinese and English for an animated short film, highlighting the use of different strategies; or the ADLAB PRO project (Mazur and Chmiel, 2021), which established parameters used in different countries for creating ADS; or the pedagogical application of AD as a didactic tool for acquiring linguistic competencies in a foreign language, as investigated by the TRADILEX project (Navarrete, 2023).

However, for our study, the works of Jiménez (2010) and Jiménez Hurtado and Martínez-Martínez (2021) are of particular importance, as they delve into a methodological tagging tool for identifying and coding morphosyntactic, semantic, and pragmatic-discursive patterns in ADS. In 2010, the author established a three-level tagging system based on narrative structures used for analysing AD texts: a first narratological level, based on three essential elements in any narrative text—characters, setting, and actions; a second level for analysing the image itself and film language, focusing on the formal aspect of the source text; and a third level analysing the grammar of the AD segments used to observe the patterns followed by professionals. In the 2021 study, however, another level of analysis is added, related to the acoustic mode and its relationship with ADS. These four levels of analysis have been instrumental in creating the assessment rubric for our didactic sequence, as well as in designing the lesson plan for lectures on the principles of this translation modality.

It is also crucial to consider studies that have explored AD didactics and best practices for student training. The impetus to include accessible translation modalities in multimedia translation courses arose from initiatives like those of Díaz Cintas (2007), who advocates for quality training in this emerging profession; Remael and Vercauteren (2007), who emphasize the importance of training students in film language to better understand the semiotics of audiovisual texts; or Matamala and Orero (2007), who even propose an initial model for an AD course based on skills and essential content for AD practice.

Identifying linguistic, technological, and cinematographic competencies is essential for any AD training, and this has inspired our didactic sequence, which is largely based on educating students in the semiotic codes inherent in audiovisual and AD texts (Rodríguez and González, 2020).

In 2016, researchers, along with members of various European universities, expanded this proposal under the ADLAB PRO project, creating a series of materials for training future audio describers in cinema, theatre, and museums (Mazur and Chmiel, 2021). This project also delves into film language, although it does not provide rubrics or parameters for measuring the acquisition of knowledge and translation strategies necessary for this modality, which we considered in our study.

Another pertinent study is Jankowska's (2017), which offers an example of best practices for AD didactics using a blended teaching format with a clear sequence and a student-centred learning approach. While our study had a more limited number of sessions due to the module covering a wide range of audiovisual translation modalities, we attempted to replicate a similar model to achieve the positive results presented in this article.

Finally, we note Sobočan's (2019) study, which analyses the production of ADS for animated children's film trailers created by students comparing them to those created by professionals. Issues such as subjectivity, inconsistency in terminology, or omission of key elements were also found among the participants in the didactic sequence presented below.

We conclude this section by emphasizing the importance of grounding our sequence in a balance between the current professional market realities and theoretical foundations that enable students to adapt to the constantly evolving challenges of the profession.

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2.2. Animation: classical technique for filming the impossible

According to Wells (1998: 1), animation is a technique based on "animating images by hand, frame-by-frame". As Wells (1998: 12) indicates, this technique emerged even before the birth of the cinematograph itself, with inventions like the Praxinoscope from 1877, which consisted of a cylinder that rapidly displayed a series of static drawings inside it, creating the illusion of movement when viewed at high speed. After the creation of the cinematograph, animation contrasted with the realism of the live-action films of the Lumière brothers and was used to depict fantastic worlds, such as those designed by Méliès or Segundo de Chomón. As the art of cinema evolved, the technique of animation became increasingly limited and lost prevalence in mainstream cinema, with the exception of the Disney and Warner studios.

The popularity of these studios, whose target audience was primarily children, has led some in society to view animation as a genre, considered less serious than others, and aimed at children. However, as Wells (2002) points out, the animation technique itself can produce films that can be categorized into genres typically associated with live-action films, such as the Western in *Rango* (Verbinski, 2011), or even feature their own genres like deconstructive animation—films that are aware of their use of animation and employ it for comedic purposes, as in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (Zemeckis, 1988), where the world and physics of toons are highlighted and contrasted with the reality of live-action films. Therefore, animation is not confined to a type of cinema for a young audience: films like *Mary and Max* (Elliot, 2009), which deals with serious topics such as depression and loneliness, or acclaimed series like *South Park* (Parker and Stone, 1997), are primarily targeted at adults and can be framed within genres typical of live-action cinema (drama and comedy, respectively).

It is also important to note, as Wells (1998) mentions, that there are various techniques within the animation technique itself, all used in different types of films: some examples include traditional animation, that is, created by hand and animated at 24 frames per second, like the classic films from Disney or Warner; computer-generated animation (CGI), created from computer-designed images and digitally animated, as seen in *Frozen* (Lee and Buck, 2013) or even parts of films shot with cameras but with animation elements added in post-production, such as in one of the materials used in the didactic sequence, the remake of Disney's animated film *Beauty and the Beast* (Condon, 2017); or stop-motion, which involves the use of puppets, clay figures, or even Lego® figures to simulate movement through a succession of rapidly displayed images, as seen in *Chicken Run* (Park and Lord, 2000) or even a sequence from the classic adventure film *Jason and the Argonauts* (Chaffey, 1963).

It is, therefore, interesting when delving into the characteristics of animation, to consider the analysis by Martínez-Martínez (2010: 299) on the subject. In her chapter on AD in animation, she equates animated cinema with children's cinema and analyses it as if it were a genre, something that, as observed, does not align with the reality of cinematic art. Nevertheless, she mentions the conception of animated cinema as a metaphorical art, focused on the body language of characters, which relates to the depiction of impossible worlds or worlds that are difficult to achieve solely with the use of a

camera. This is especially evident in the subgenre of children's animated cinema, but it is not exclusive, as even in adult animation like *Animal Farm* (Halas and Batchelor, 1954), which adapts Orwell's famous novel, a series of mise-en-scène and framing elements are used that are associated with a stylized world.

Regarding the genre of children's animated cinema, it is important to highlight, in addition to the use of clear and simple language by the characters or the use of emotionally charged and comedic situations to facilitate knowledge acquisition by potential viewers (Martínez-Martínez, 2010: 299), the use of music and songs to advance the plot (Randell Upton, 2017). This use of leitmotifs, songs to express the characters' feelings, and even to make the film memorable and evoke a sense of nostalgia afterward, is especially associated with Disney's princess films (Randell Upton, 2017). In this sense, when creating an AD script for an audiovisual product of this genre, it is important to consider the significance of the music in the film, as it often carries an informative weight similar to that of the dialogues, to avoid overshadowing these moments with descriptive audio.

It is evident thus that animation is merely one technique within the art of cinema, with mise-en-scène and framing techniques similar to those in some film genres, and with its own characteristics associated with the technique. As Jiménez (2010: 35) points out, it is essential to reflect on the possible strategies of making the technique visible or invisible in AD scripts. Given the lack of studies that reflect or conclude on the strategies for AD in animated products, ten AD scripts from different genres and animation techniques were analysed to observe whether references were made to the use of animation. Only the AD script for *The Lego® Movie* (Lord and Miller, 2014) refers to the use of Lego® blocks as the film's technique at the start of the opening credits, possibly due to the later appearance of live-action characters. Mihalache's (2023) study also makes the use of animation invisible, focusing instead on the use of lexicon and expressions typical of historical cinema. It is thus concluded that the invisibility of the technique in AD scripts legitimizes the conception of animation as a medium and not as a genre.

We will conclude this section by highlighting some studies that have delved into AD in animation and have proposed recommendations for creating AD scripts in these contexts. Martínez-Martínez (2010), as previously noted, delves into children's animated cinema and discusses strategies such as fostering imagination, using repetition, employing simple syntactic structures, or using simple yet magical lexicon. Additionally, Sobočan (2019), apart from reflecting on the differences between AD scripts created by students and professionals, analyses the AD scripts for trailers of children's animated films and emphasizes the importance of characterizing the characters and environments while maintaining a neutral perspective, something that will be taken into account in the didactic sequence.

3. METHODOLOGY: DIDACTIC SEQUENCE FOR RAISING AWARENESS ON ACCESIBILITY AND ANIMATION

3.1. Sample description

Since the chosen modality was AD, it was necessary to conduct this study within the only module in the bachelor's degree in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Granada that includes AD

learning in its syllabus: *Traducción Multimedia (Multimedia Translation)*. In this case, the group B of Multimedia Translation (French) was selected, consisting of 32 students during the 2023-2024 academic year. Of the sample, 68.75% (N=22) had French as their first foreign language (L2), while 31.25% (N=10) had French as their mother tongue. The participants' ages ranged from 21 to 23 years, with one individual over 40, and an equal gender distribution of 11 women and 11 men.

According to the module syllabus (University of Granada, 2024), students are required to have passed the modules Lengua A2 and Lengua B2 to enrol in this module, meaning that the entire sample (N=32) should have a C1 level in Spanish and at least a B2 level in French. Nonetheless, given the strong Erasmus presence in the group and the fact that the language of instruction for the assigned tasks was Spanish, five cooperative learning teams were organized for the second part of the didactic sequence. These groups were composed of four Spanish students and two French-speaking students, with two of the teams included five Spanish students and two international students.

3.2. Learning outcomes, contents and skills

Didactic sequence: AD and animation, modalities for changing our perspective		
Learning outcomes	Contents	Specific and transversal skills
- Conduct a narratological analysis of the components of an audiovisual product: characters, setting, and actions. - Understand the main components of mise-en-scène and framing, comprehend camera language, and identify its meaning within the context of film history. - Identify the different techniques used in audiovisual products: traditional animation, computer-generated, stop-motion, live-action, Technicolor, etc. - Understand the theoretical principles of AD. - Analyse a film product and establish strategies to intersemiotically translate that segment into an ADS. - Produce high-quality ADS following established guidelines and quality standards. - Identify and correct errors in ADS.	- Film Narratology: characters, setting, and actions. - Film Language: mise-en-scène and framing. - Camera Language and its Significance in Film History. - Animation as a Cinematic Technique: Characteristics and Typology. - Audio Description (AD): Definition, Origins, and Common Practices. - Audio Description Scripts (ADS): Creation, Strategies, and Quality Standards.	- Understand the principles of film language. - Appreciate the importance of animation in the history of contemporary cinema. - Advocate for animation as a technique rather than a genre. - Understand the fundamentals of AD and the intersemiotic translation from image to word. - Recognize the importance of AD as a means to provide access to knowledge for visually impaired individuals. - Understand the importance of delivering a quality product and adhering to the quality standards set by the client. - Be able to work effectively in a team.

Table 1. Learning outcomes, contents and specific and transversal skills for the didactic sequence "AD and animation, modalities for changing our perspective".

3.3. Materials

To ensure that the training comprehensively covered the importance of animation as a technique for uniquely portraying a story, and to avoid overwhelming students with a large number of plots they would need to familiarize themselves with for the exercises, we decided to select a story that has been adapted to the big screen multiple times: *La Belle et la Bête*, an original tale by Gabrielle-Suzanne de Villeneuve (2014). This well-known French tale is familiar to the students, making it unnecessary to explain the plot or require them to read the original story.

In addition to this reason, there are three other factors behind the selection of this work: the supernatural and magical world plays an essential role in the plot, leading adaptations to rely on special effects and animation to convey this part of the story to the audience; music also plays a critical role, especially in the Disney versions, making it interesting to explore and work with examples of films where music serves as a key informational element and must retain prominence in the audio-described version of the work. Finally, the element of nostalgia is significant for the two 21st-century adaptations (Campbell, 2019), making it worthwhile to examine whether students' prior knowledge of the original story and films influences the objectivity required in their ADS.

To observe the different approaches to mise-en-scène and framing of the same story, four films that tell the same story but with different techniques and perspectives were selected: *La Belle et la Bête* (Cocteau, 1946), *Beauty and the Beast* (Trousdale and Wise, 1991), *La Belle et la Bête* (Gans, 2014), and *Beauty and the Beast* (Condon, 2017). However, since the didactic sequence was scheduled for seven sessions, it was not possible to work with all the films in their entirety, so the focus was on their trailers, as suggested by Sobočan (2019), along with clips available on YouTube and the Spanish audio-described version of the 2017 film, available on the iVoox platform.

As detailed in the next section, three graded assessments were established: a narratological and filmic analysis of a scene, an ADS for a trailer, and a group ADS. For the first exercise, students analysed the Spanish-language scene of the song "Beauty and the Beast" from the 1991 film; the second exercise involved creating an ADS for the trailer of *Beauty and the Beast* (Condon, 2017); and the third exercise tasked students with making the ADS for the trailer for the IMAX re-release of *Beauty and the Beast* (Trousdale and Wise, 1991), which is a version of the scene analysed in the first exercise.

Finally, for the in-class exercises, the first session used the trailers of all the adaptations, and the third session utilized the audio-described version of the song "Belle" from the 2017 adaptation. The UNE 153020 (AENOR) standard on AD, the quality standard for the modality in Spain, was also used to familiarize students with the most widely adopted standard in Spain. Additionally, a document titled *Introducción al lenguaje cinematográfico* (Introduction to Film Language), created specifically for this purpose, was provided, incorporating elements from a documentary on film language (Sensacine, 2021) and material from the course *Curso de Iniciación al Lenguaje del Cine* (Introduction to

Film Language) (Salas, 2015) at the University of Granada, to help students acquire knowledge about film language at their own pace.

3.4. Didactic sequence

The didactic sequence included a total of seven sessions spread over four weeks at the beginning of the academic semester, specifically in March. By this time, the students had already acquired knowledge about multimodality and the composition of audiovisual texts, as well as the dubbing modality.

When organizing the schedule for the didactic sequence, special attention was given to the importance of understanding film language before beginning exercises related to the translation modality. This approach aimed to provide students with sufficient time to reflect on their mistakes through timely feedback.

In the first session, students completed an initial questionnaire to assess their knowledge and familiarity with AD and their perception of animation. Following the questionnaire, a comparative viewing of the trailers from the previously mentioned films was conducted. The focus was on how characters and settings were presented, as well as which plot points were highlighted. After a brief discussion of these aspects, a lecture on the elements of narratology in any filmic product, based on Jiménez (2010), was delivered. To reinforce and ground these concepts, students were asked to read a document on film language to be discussed in the next session.

In the second session, the aspects of film language that were not well understood were discussed and then applied through a guided analysis by the instructor of the musical scene "Something There" from *Beauty and the Beast* (Trousdale and Wise, 1991). This scene shares similar themes and grammar with the one student would analyse independently in Task 1, which they began in the second session and were required to submit before the third session.

In the third session, the difficulties encountered in Task 1 were discussed, and the basic concepts of the AD translation modality were introduced through both a lecture and an analysis exercise of an audio-described scene from *Beauty and the Beast* (Condon, 2017). Students were also asked to read the UNE 153020 Standard on AD to understand the quality standard for AD in Spain. Additionally, the audiovisual text for Task 2, the trailer from the 2017 version, was introduced so that students could familiarize themselves with it and begin working on their ADS.

Once students had read the UNE 153020 standard, the fourth session focused on understanding it through examples and exercises using scenes from *La Belle et la Bête* (Gans, 2014). This helped students identify which AD segments adhered to the quality standard, and which contained errors. They were then given time to individually complete the ADS for Task 2, the trailer for *Beauty and the Beast* (Condon, 2017).

A significant portion of the fifth session was dedicated to analysing the errors students made in Task 2, providing feedback, and sharing strategies used by other students that could help improve their ADS. After reviewing the types of errors and strategies, teams were formed for Task 3, and the audiovisual text to be audio-described, the IMAX re-release trailer of *Beauty and the Beast* (Trousdale and Wise, 1991), was presented.

The sixth session was dedicated to group work for Task 3, which had to be submitted at the end of the class. Finally, the seventh session consisted of a peer review of Task 3. Each team's ADS was assigned to another team, which had to evaluate the task using the same rubric used by the teachers in the previous task, raising their awareness of potential errors. After the peer review, the instructor provided an overview of the common errors observed across all groups and asked students to revise their ADS and submit a final version, which was graded for the final evaluation. Lastly, a final questionnaire was administered to gather students' impressions and self-assessment regarding their knowledge of AD and their perception of animation.

3.5. Assesment tools

To evaluate the acquisition of knowledge, three tasks were established: an analysis of a scene, guided by specific questions and conducted individually, to assess the knowledge gained in narratology and film language; and two ADS tasks for trailers, one individual and one group-based, as previously described, aimed at assessing the acquisition of knowledge about AD.

For the analysis task, attention was focused on the correct use of terminology and the relevance and depth of the responses. Regarding the ADS tasks, the following rubric was established, based on the typology of errors outlined by Jiménez (2010) (Table 2 in next page).

4. RESULTS

To better understand the results obtained, we will begin by comparing the initial and final questionnaires to identify changes in students' self-perception and their perception of animation. We will then conclude with a comparison of the different errors made in Task 2 and Task 3.

4.1. Questionnaires: improvement in skills and beliefs

The questionnaires were divided into four sections (apart from a demographic section that was not considered in this study), each reflecting a different part of the study. Therefore, we will follow this structure to discuss the results, comparing the answers obtained in both instruments.

Rubric for assesing ADS			
EVALUATION CRITERIA		**1–10**	**CORRECTION/ JUSTIFICATION**
Technical parameters	AD cues are placed in the gaps of the soundtrack, avoiding overlap with important dialogue or songs. (-1 per error)		
	The ADS is presented in a format that follows the standards explained in class. (-0.5 per error)		
	There is temporal synchronization between the AD cues and the on-screen events. (-0.5 per error)		
	The accessible translation modality is mistaken (i.e. using strategies for Subtitling for Deaf and Hard of Hearing [SDH]). (-2 per error)		
	A scene is interpreted subjectively, or a value judgement is made about an element of the text. (-0.5 per error)		
	Creativity (+0.5 per good solution)		
Narratological parameters	Characters are not properly introduced, their description is incorrect, or their identity is revealed prematurely. (-0.5 per error)		
	The location (temporal or spatial) is not correctly described or is confused with another location. (-0.5 per error)		
	A character's action is misinterpreted, information about a future event is given too early or too late, or this information is omitted. (-0.5 per error)		
	Creativity (+0.5 per good solution)		
Cinematography parameters	Relevant information for understanding the plot of the audiovisual product is omitted. (-0.75 per error)		
	Focus is placed on image elements that are not relevant to the plot. (-0.5 per error)		
	Creativity (+0.5 per good solution)		
Sound parameters	An AD cue is placed when the sound is important for understanding the plot. (-0.5 per error)		
	An AD cue is placed when the information can be ellicited from the film's own soundtrack. (-0.5 per error)		
Language parameters	Grammar and orthography. (-1 per error)		
	Specialised terminology. (-0.5 per error)		
	Elaborate language. (+0.5 per good solution)		
FINAL MARK			

Table 2. Rubrics for the assessment of ADS for the didactic sequence "AD and animation, modalities for changing our perspective".

The first section aimed to gather data on students' interests and self-perception regarding their translation and language skills. In the initial survey, 78.13% (N=25) reported having a C1 level in all linguistic skills of their foreign language (French or Spanish, in the case of Erasmus students), while 3.13% (N=1) claimed to have a C2, and 18.75% (N=6) reported having a B2 level. Regarding their translation skills, 5 Erasmus students stated that it was their first time taking translation modules and thus lacked confidence in their abilities, 7 students were dissatisfied with their skills due to previous negative experiences in translation modules, 2 Erasmus students expressed uncertainty about their ability to perform well in reverse translation, and the remaining students (N=18) felt capable of handling translation tasks. In terms of interests, the majority (53.13%, N=17) reported being passionate about music, 31.25% about sports, and 21.88% about video games. The interest in audiovisual products was analysed in the next section and was not included in this part of the survey.

In the final questionnaire, 75% (N=24) indicated that their translation skills had improved, particularly among Erasmus students, who noted that familiarity with audiovisual products helped them produce higher quality intersemiotic translations. Additionally, 34.38% (N=11) reported improvements in their language skills.

The second section focused on film language. A total of 93.75% (N=30) identified themselves as fans of audiovisual products, while two individuals indicated a lack of interest in cinema. Only 9.38% (N=3) had previously taken courses on film language or photography, highlighting the importance of dedicating time to correctly explain basic concepts to enable students to apply them in their ADS. Regarding the assessing questions about types of shots or editing, only one person answered all the questions correctly, and they were one of the students who had taken a film course. In the final questionnaire, 100% (N=32) of participants indicated that their interest in cinematic art had increased, with some even stating that "it is a more complex and interesting art form than I previously thought." Regarding the control questions, 90.62% (N=29) achieved a positive result, with one or two errors at most, 3.25% (N=1) had more than three errors, and 6.25% (N=2) obtained the highest score. Finally, some suggestions for content improvements included dedicating more time to lectures using examples and a preference for using examples not based on *La Belle et la Bête*.

The third section addressed animation itself. In the initial survey, 84.38% (N=27) indicated that animation was a genre rather than a technique, and 75% (N=24) associated it with childhood. However, 46.88% (N=15) identified themselves as fans of animated films and mentioned some audiovisual products that were not exclusively for children. These results contrasted with those obtained in the final questionnaire, where 100% indicated that animation was a technique, 87.5% (N=28) reported an increased interest and appreciation for the technique, and some comments expressed an interest in consuming more animated products and learning more about different types of animation.

Lastly, the fourth section assessed students' knowledge of the studied modality, AD. In the initial survey, 56.25% (N=18) reported being familiar with the modality, and 31.25% (N=10) had previously

created ADS in other modules like *Traducción 1 C* (German Translation). Regarding the control questions, two students (6.25%) confused this modality with subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing ("it is the placement of subtitles to describe the audio"), and the majority (N=19) were unable to define the concept of intersemiotic translation. However, in the final questionnaire, 90.6% (N=29) were able to correctly define this term, and 78.13% (N=25) correctly answered the assessing questions about the characteristics of AD. Additionally, 84.38% (N=27) expressed interest in further exploring this modality.

4.2. Errors in ADS: improvements by cooperative work

In this section, we will highlight the most common errors made by students, categorized by type of error as indicated in Table 2, and by assignment, to observe improvements in the group assignment.

It is noteworthy that technical errors were the most frequently made by students in Task 1: 68.75% (N=22) of the students made two or more errors classified as technical. The most common errors, made by 31.25% (N=10), involved misinterpreting the visual content of the trailer and overlapping AD with important dialogue. Interpretations were particularly related to the appearance of the castle ("neglected hall") and the appearances of the Beast ("a dangerous monster") and Belle ("a very attractive woman"). Additionally, two students (6.25%) confused AD with SDH and created an ADS with descriptions of sounds, and 8 students failed to indicate the timing for the AD cues, resulting in format errors. In the second assignment, however, only 3 groups made interpretation errors ("they dance clumsily"; "the ugly monster"; "they fall in love"), indicating an improvement in the ADS.

31.25% (N=10) made errors related to narratological aspects, which are significant from a theoretical perspective. Five students advanced the identity of the main character ("the princess Belle appears") or even the identity of the voices ("Lumière speaks with Din Don"), which is inherently ambiguous in the trailer and should be omitted to maintain the effect intended by the director; 2 students also advanced the location ("in the Beast's room"), and in 3 instances, the actions performed by the characters were misinterpreted ("the woman touches the rose", "she closes the door"). However, no such errors were made in the second assignment, and one group even provided highly accurate descriptions of the characters' costumes and appearances.

In the cinematographic section, 53.13% (N=17) of participants made errors related to film language aspects. For instance, 10 individuals described irrelevant details, such as camera movements ("the camera tilts up to a castle with a lit window"), irrelevant details ("on the table, there is a globe, candles, and scrolls"), or even hashtags at the end of the trailer. Conversely, 7 people omitted relevant information, such as the fact that the painting features three people dressed in luxurious clothing ("a beast breaks a painting of a child") or the falling rose petal at the end that identifies the film. These errors were corrected in the second assignment, where only one group made a significant omission (the angels indicating the dance scene on the ceiling).

Eight students (25%) made errors related to sound in the first assignment: 5 placed descriptions during moments when listening to the trailer's music (the chords of "Beauty and the Beast") were crucial, and some even filled the entire trailer with descriptions except for dialogue, which prevented the music from being heard, a clue to identifying the film; 8 others described visual aspects that could be understood from the sound ("a door opens", "the Beast breaks the painting"). In the second assignment, given the special emphasis placed on these aspects during the fifth session, no errors related to sound were observed.

Finally, concerning linguistic aspects, 25% of students (N=8) made grammar, syntax, or typographical errors in the first assignment. Notably, only 5 of these were Erasmus students, while the remaining three were native Spanish speakers. These errors were eliminated in the second assignment, with two groups even using sophisticated, film-specific vocabulary ("the chandelier illuminates the shiny floors of the ballroom where Belle and the Beast dance the waltz").

5. CONCLUSIONS: IMPROVING ANIMATION'S AWARENESS

This article reviewed literature on AD and animation, focusing especially on the fundamentals of animation as a technique rather than a genre and the principles for teaching this modality. A didactic sequence was proposed for teaching animation AD with the overarching goal of highlighting animation's significance in film history.

The implementation of this didactic sequence revealed the most common errors made by students in creating ADS: technical aspects such as interpreting elements of the film or omitting and excessively describing non-functional elements were most significant, especially in the first assignment, whereas the group assignment largely eliminated these errors.

Finally, questionnaires demonstrated a shift from perceiving animation as a genre (84.34% of respondents) to unanimously recognizing animation as a technique, with an increased interest in learning more about this type of film (87.5%).

Some limitations of this study include the time constraints of the module, which limited the ability to dedicate more time to AD, the nature of the sample with a significant number of Erasmus students who may not have fully grasped some instructions, and the selection of materials, which might not be pertinent for current generations.

Future research could involve replicating this didactic sequence in other modules such as Translation and Accessibility in the Master's Degree in Professional Translation at the University of Granada; studying differences in translation strategies used by professionals across different types of animation; and teaching AD through other techniques such as stop-motion.

We hope this study highlights the importance of animation in film history and the relevance of understanding its language and techniques for the effective creation of animation ADS.

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