

Audio description in the digital age: Amateur describers, web technology and beyond

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ABSTRACT

Audio description is an aural translation of a filmed performance or a live event for the benefit of blind and partially sighted (BPS) people. It entails multiple actors including describers (those writing and editing a script), voice actors (those reading the script at silence spots), and technicians (those responsible for sound recording). It is thus a laborious and complex translational process, and still remains nearly off-limits to sighted laypeople. Recently, however, there have been new attempts to popularise the production of audio description. Among them is YouDescribe, a free web-based platform for adding descriptions to YouTube videos. Creating descriptions in YouDescribe or 'YouDescribing' is similar in varying degrees to emerging fields of translation studies, such as 'collaborative translation', 'volunteer translation', 'non-professional translation', 'community translation', and 'translation crowdsourcing'. More recently, a smartphone-based application for audio description has been developed in South Korea to allow describers to cooperate on a common project and improve the daily life of BPS people. These features have not been offered by traditional platforms, and constitute Audio Description 3.0, a new stage of development in audio description practice.

KEYWORDS

YouDescribe, audio description, participatory translation, non-professional describers, crowdsourcing

YouDescribe, 화면해설(배리어프리), 참여번역, 비전문가 번역, 크라우드소싱

1. Introduction

Audio description (AD) is an additional verbal commentary providing visual information for those who might be unable to perceive it.¹⁾ AD enables the blind and partially sighted (BPS) people to access films, TV programmes, and even live events such as theatrical performances, gallery tours, and football matches. AD is inter-semiotic and multi-semiotic translation because it involves “translating the visual (both verbal, such as subtitled speech or the headline of a newspaper, and non-verbal, such as an action sequence of two protagonists fighting) into spoken words” (Fryer 2016: 4).²⁾ In this article, AD means both an additional audio track in an audiovisual product (i.e. translation as a product) and translatorial activities including writing and recording verbal descriptions (i.e. translation as a process) (see also Szarkowsk 2011: 142).

Traditionally, AD has been researched in disability studies and media/film studies, but over the last decade its visibility has substantially increased in the field of audiovisual translation (AVT). Although many translation scholars still see AD as “a relatively young field” (Jankowska 2015: 16) and an “AVT newcomer” (Remael 2014: 135), there is a growing body of evidence that it has been evolving into a full-fledged subfield of translation studies.³⁾ For example, over the last few years we have witnessed AD books published in

1) AD is also called “video description”, “audio narration”, “descriptive narration”, and so forth (Hernández Bartolomé & Mendiluce Cabrera 2009: 2).

2) AD is generally considered “a discipline falling under the scope of Translation Studies (TS) and in particular of (Multimodal) Audiovisual Translation” (Arma 2011: 55). To understand AD as inter-semiotic translation, see Arma (2011: Chapters 1 and 3) and Fryer (2016: Chapter 1).

3) It might be claimed that AD is not yet an institutionalised subfield of translation studies, because it does not appear as a full-fledged chapter in reference books such as *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies*, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, and *John Benjamin’s Handbook of Translation Studies*.

translation studies book series, such as *Audio Description: New Perspectives Illustrated* (Benjamins Translation Library, 2014), *An Introduction to Audio Description: A Practical Guide* (Routledge's Translation Practices Explained, 2016), and *Researching Audio Description: New Approaches* (Palgrave Studies in Translating and Interpreting, 2016). In addition, the number of AD-related articles has greatly increased in translation studies journals, with topics ranging from cognitive narratology for AD (Vandaele 2012) to AD users' preferences (Chmiel & Mazur 2016) and the emotional impact of language in AD (Ramos 2016).⁴⁾ Furthermore, international conferences and seminars such as the Advanced Research Seminar on Audio Description were recently held in Europe and North America to report new research findings and synthesise existing knowledge.

The growth of AD has also been observed in the field of practice. A major area of interest to practitioners is the institutionalisation of AD guidelines and training for audio describers. A case in point is a European project called ADLAB (2011–2014), which was implemented as part of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme to “train AD specialists and to design reliable and consistent guidelines for the practice of AD” (ADLAB Project Homepage n.d.). Another area that has garnered attention is how to better create and offer AD content. Among the recent attempts to facilitate the production and consumption of AD services is *YouDescribe* (<http://youdescribe.org>), an experimental web-based platform on which anyone can record and use descriptions of YouTube videos for free. YouDescribe entails the voluntary participation of numerous non-professionals in describing audiovisual products on the Internet.

Investigating AD service platforms such as YouDescribe is very significant. Such investigation would provide a better understanding

4) Journals such as *Perspectives* and *Across Languages and Cultures* published a special issue on AD, and addressed issues concerning AD in a special issue on AVT.

of the current situation of volunteer and non-professional translation. In addition, it would enable us to explore the possibilities of engaging the crowd in AD activities on the Internet. Non-professional AD is truly a new phenomenon that has not been researched systematically.

This study looks into the relatively uncharted territory of non-professional AD, drawing on audio-described videos in YouDescribe, and offers insights into what this new phenomenon might mean for AD practice and audio description studies. The study also briefly discusses the trajectory of non-professional AD practice.

2. YouDescribe: A new approach to audio description

YouDescribe is, to put it simply, “a free accessibility tool for adding audio description to YouTube videos” (YouDescribe 2015). It was developed by the Smith-Kettlewell Video Description Research and Development Center in California, with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education. As of 15 February 2017, YouDescribe had about 1320 audio-described videos, which range in kind from short animated films to dance videos and educational materials for the visually impaired.

YouDescribe provides a step-by-step instruction on how to create an AD soundtrack, which can be summarised as follows. First, log into YouDescribe and use the Search Page to find the video you want to describe. Second, watch the video in the Create/Edit window (see Figure 1), and click the Pause button at the location where you want to insert a descriptive clip. Third, click on Record and speak your description into the microphone. Fourth, press Stop when you are finished recording. Fifth, click the Upload button and check whether a new clip has been added to the table of clips.




Figure 1. Create/Edit Player (“Authoring Description”)



YouDescribe provides two modes of recording. One is Extended Description, a default mode which pauses the video for the description and resumes when the describer is finished speaking (as in consecutive interpreting). This mode is thus intrusive, but gives the describer more time to describe without interrupting the original soundtrack. The other mode is Inline Description, which allows the describer to speak while the video is playing (as in simultaneous interpreting). This is the common mode for describing movies and TV programmes, but it is much more challenging for amateur describers. Interestingly, for each segment of description, the describer can decide whether to use Extended or Inline, meaning that in one video clip the two modes can be used in varying orders and combinations.

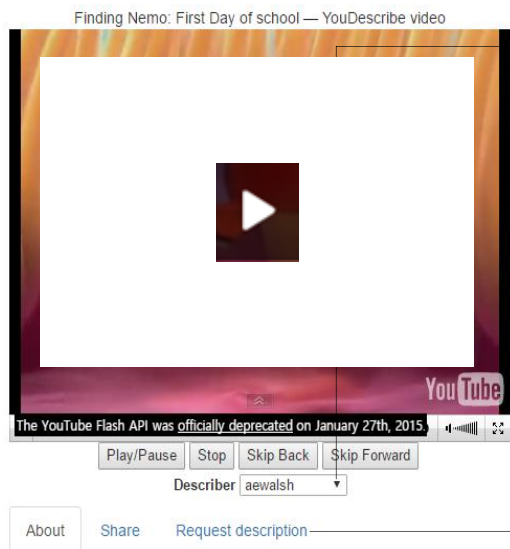
Figure 2. Adjusting the timing of audio description

Description Clips:					
Skip to	Nudge earlier	Start time in video (Mins:Secs.Millisecs)	Nudge later	Inline	Delete
Play	<< <	00:23.362	> >>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delete
Play	<< <	00:30.416	> >>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delete

Another important characteristic of YouDescribe is that describers can adjust the timing of their description. They can use the , ,  and

>> buttons to “nudge” the clip, as can be seen in Figure 2. The < and > buttons are used to adjust timing by a tenth of a second earlier or later, respectively, while the << and >> buttons adjust the start time of the clip by a full second earlier and later, respectively.

Figure 3. YouDescribe Player page



Describer's ID (Drop-down box): The user can find people (their ID) who audio-described the same YouTube video.

Share: The Share tab displays a URL for sharing the current video.

Request Description: This tab can be used to request a description for a particular video.

Title: Finding Nemo: First Day of school
Describer: aewalsh
Views with description (on YouDescribe): 24
Estimated Description Completeness: Well Described
Description: The opening scene from Disney-Pixar's "Finding Nemo"
 Good video to send to your friends on the first day of school

Well Described: This does not show the quality of the current video.

Property of Disney Pixar, all rights reserved.
Video author: trogdoor17
Views (on YouTube): 3,332,305, **Likes:** 0, **Dislikes:** 0

Likes/Dislikes: You may evaluate the current AD.

YouDescribe has useful features for ‘viewers’, as can be seen in Figure 3, a screenshot of a *Finding Nemo* video on the YouDescribe Player page. In the middle of Figure 3, there is a “Describer” drop-down box which enables viewers to choose the describer they would like (if the

current video has been described by multiple describers). In the About tab, viewers can check information about the described video, including video author (“trogdoor17”), views with description ($N = 24$), estimated description completeness (“Well Described”), and the number of likes and dislikes ($N = 0$). Viewers can also use the Share and Request Description tabs to find a URL for sharing the current video and to request a description for a particular video.

After all, YouDescribe represents a new approach to creating and accessing AD videos. It is an innovative departure from traditional audio-describing in terms of *who*, *what*, *where*, and *how*. More specifically, it invites **anyone** interested in AD to add descriptions to YouTube videos. It only uses **YouTube** as a source of AD content. It is a **World Wide Web** platform that controls both the production and consumption of AD videos. Most interestingly, it requires the ‘describer’ to do **all the work singlehandedly**, starting from choosing a video to writing, recording and editing verbal descriptions.⁵⁾

3. Unraveling ‘YouDescribing’

As shown in the preceding sections, YouDescribe provides a free, easy-to-use platform on which sighted people can create descriptions of YouTube videos. It is characterised by voluntary participation of non-professional describers, and seeks cooperation from a large, undefined pool of people in improving media accessibility. In this regard, **‘YouDescribing’** or describing videos on web platforms such as YouDescribe appears similar to emerging fields of translation, such as collaborative translation, translation crowdsourcing, and volunteer translation.⁶⁾ In this section, YouDescribing is compared to those

5) In this sense, we might be able to call this describer a *transedisher*, a new portmanteau word combining ‘translator’, ‘editor’, and ‘publisher’.

fields, in order to reveal its conceptual components.

Table 1. Conceptual components of YouDescribing

Fields of translation	Yes	Yes?	No
Collaborative translation		✓	
Volunteer translation	✓		
Non-professional (amateur/lay) translation	✓		
Netizen translation		✓	
Fan translation			✓
Translation crowdsourcing	✓		
Public service translation		✓	
Community translation		✓	
User-generated (user-created) translation			✓

Note. “Yes?” (the third column) denotes that there are conceptual uncertainties.

Table 1 shows whether YouDescribing belongs in each of the following fields of translation: (1) collaborative translation, (2) volunteer translation, (3) non-professional translation, (4) netizen translation, (5) fan translation, (6) translation crowdsourcing, (7) public service translation, (8) community translation, and (9) user-generated translation. For example, the second row indicates that YouDescribing may be a type of collaborative translation but it has features that are potentially incongruent with conceptual components of collaborative translation. The following bullet points summarise whether and how YouDescribing is similar to, or different from, the nine fields of translation.

- *Collaborative translation.* According to Cordingley and Frigau Manning (2017), the term *collaborative translation* has multifarious meanings and should be understood in the socio-historical context in which it is used. Recently, however, it has been used in the context of the so-called ‘technological turn’, referring to an online group translation project where the work is largely voluntary (Pym 2011: 77;

6) In this paper, YouDescribing is used as a genericised trademark or proprietary eponym, as in *Googling*.

Jiménez-Crespo 2017b).

YouDescribing may not be collaborative translation in two respects. First, as mentioned by Pym (2011: 77), the English noun *collaboration* has a negative connotation, as in the case of ‘French collaborators’ [collaborateurs français] who helped the Nazi occupation of France (cf. Cordingley & Frigau Manning 2017). Audio-describing can be seen as an altruistic activity (i.e. a social practice that supports a disadvantaged group), so it may not be appropriate to call YouDescribing ‘collaboration’. A good alternative may be “participative translation” (Pym 2011: 77) or participatory translation (as in ‘participatory democracy’), in which the epithet has a neutral or positive connotation. Second, technically speaking, YouDescribers do not cooperate on the same ‘document’ (video content). They individually write and read AD scripts, and cannot edit other describers’ scripts or recordings.

- *Volunteer translation.* YouDescribe allows anyone to create an AD soundtrack for free. The describers do not receive any incentive for their contribution.
- *Non-professional translation.* As will be noted in the next section, YouDescribe videos have various quality problems. It seems that its describers are non-professionals who have little understanding and experience of AD.
- *Netizen translation.* YouDescribing can be called ‘netizen translation’ simply because it requires the describers to access the Internet. J. Lee (2014: 146) defines netizen translation as “translation by Internet users exploiting collective intelligence in the virtual community of Web 2.0”, and asserts that it is characterised by “interaction and collaboration between participants”. From this perspective, it might be argued that YouDescribe is not a platform for netizen translation, because its users rarely interact and cooperate with each other.
- *Fan translation.* Fan translation is an umbrella term that refers to translation by and for fans. It is performed in various areas including films (fansubbing), video games (‘fan translation’), and comics

(scanlation). In the field of AD, there has been no report about people acting as ‘fan describers’ or ‘fan narrators’. In the future, however, some amateur describers may probably work on the subject of which they are a fan, in which case they could be seen as engaging in ‘fan description’.

- *Translation crowdsourcing.* Crowdsourcing involves a large, undefined pool of people participating in segments of a project on a voluntary basis. In the field of translation, it has been used for translation practices at technology businesses such as Facebook, Google, and Twitter. YouDescribing is crowdsourcing in that it involves outsourcing a large-scale translation job to “an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call” (Howe 2008: 99). It is an example of crowdsourcing characterised by an “open model” (vs. closed), “cause-driven processes” (vs. product-driven), and “solicited translations” (vs. unsolicited) (for details, see Jiménez-Crespo 2017a).
- *Public service translation.* The term *public service translation* is often perceived as synonymous with ‘community translation’, which Niska (2002: 135) defines as “written translation of informative texts [and other kinds of text], addressed by authorities or institutions [and other social agents] to people who do not understand texts in the language of the text producer” (as cited in Taibi 2011: 214). If we extended this definition, we could see YouDescribing as something of a ‘written **and oral** translation of texts, addressed by **various social agents** [including authorities], to people who do not understand texts in the language of the text producer (i.e. **visual** language)’. In addition, we might be able to call AD a ‘public service’, or “a service provided to people because it will help them, and not for profit” (Longman Contemporary Dictionary Online)
- *Community translation.* Community translation means different things, depending on whose perspective is considered. Taibi and Ozolins (2016: 10), for example, define it as “a subfield that covers written translation between public services [public institutions] and readers of non-mainstream languages”. To clarify this definition, they argue that

community translation has three main features in common: (1) “power imbalance”, (2) “language imparity”, and (3) “diversity of readership” (for details, see Taibi & Ozolins 2016: 11-16). Other scholars such as Pym (2011), O’Hagan (2011), and Gouadec (2007) explain the term in a more, or less, inclusive way. For example, Gouadec (2007: 35) provides a very general description of community translation, noting that it encompasses “all translating (and interpreting) carried out to facilitate inter-community relations within a given country where diverse linguistic (and cultural) communities cohabit”.

AD may be a subfield of community translation in the following senses:

- AD facilitates communication between two different communities, namely ‘BPS’ (the non-mainstream community) and ‘non-BPS’ (the mainstream community).
- AD is translation for a particular community, and is created by a specific translational approach (see Lesch 1999: 92).
- AD and the AD users can be explained from the perspective of Taibi and Ozolins’s (2016: 10) three features of community translation. First, the AD users are a disempowered social group. Second, in the area of AD, language asymmetry is always present in the sense that visual language (i.e. the dominant language) is not available to AD users. In addition, AD is severely constrained by the spatio-temporal aspects of original soundtrack. Third, the AD users consist of different subgroups including the congenitally blind (CB: those born unable to see), adventitiously blind (AB: those who lost sight through illness or accident), and partially sighted (PS: those with partial vision loss). The kind of language used in AD may have to do with users’ visual acuity and sight experience.
- *User-generated translation.* In the field of AD, the translators (describers) and translation users (BPS persons) are totally different, even though the describers are able to watch (use) audio-described videos. It can be observed, however, that some professional describers are PS people, who are ‘AD users’ in the original sense.⁷⁾

7) In South Korea, for example, there is a professional audio describer with low vision

In sum, YouDescribing is a web-based translation crowdsourcing project based on voluntary participation of amateur audio-describers. It might be a subtype of community translation, although it does not fit in well with what has been traditionally discussed in the field of community translation. It is quite different from fan translation and user-generated translation, because audio describers do not fall into the category of ‘fans’ or ‘[AD] users’.

4. Challenges and tasks

YouDescribe unravels new facets of AD as both product and process. It represents an innovative undertaking to ‘rewrite’ web-based content for BPS people and to allow non-experts to participate in AD. Also, it embodies recent developments in both AD practice and **audio description studies**. However, there are four practical issues that should be resolved to bring substantive changes to YouDescribe/YouDescribing.

First, according to the author’s review of scores of video clips in YouDescribe, there is great room for improvement in the quality of AD. The quality problems vary in kind, and most of them appear attributable to describers’ lack of understanding of what/how to write. Some of the common problems can be summarised as follows:

- Most describers use the Extended mode for convenience. This would negatively affect AD users’ reception of the videos.
- AD overlaps with dialogue.
- Some describers use filmic language. AD guidelines recommend that cinematic terminology should be avoided, although some AD users feel a greater sense of presence when watching a movie with cinematic AD (Fryer & Freeman 2013).

(Nae-young Kang).

- Many videos have long silence (which is very rare in professional practice).
- Characters and spatio-temporal settings are described insufficiently. They constitute “*what* of AD”, i.e. the key elements of descriptions (Fryer 2016: 55-58).
- Summarisation techniques are used more often than necessary.
- The reader’s voice is too loud or too soft to hear.

In fact, in an attempt to prevent the above problems, YouDescribe offers training videos on the “Do’s and Don’ts of Video Description”, which introduce basic principles of description in plain English. The following is an excerpt from a training video titled “Video Description Guidelines: How to Know What to Say”.

Ten general principles of description

- Describe what you see.
- Describe that which is most significant in the allotted time.
- Do not explain what you think is going on or why.
- Do not describe moods, motives or reasoning of the characters.
- Do not inject personal interpretations or opinions.
- Do not censor the material.
- Do not summarise.
- Use the present tense.
- Use the same name for characters, places, objects, etc. throughout.
- Definite article use (3:50-10:55)

Rules for media description

- Describe scene changes when they are not obvious from the audio.
- Read verbatim words and subtitles that appear.
- Follow the action whenever possible.
- Do not describe over dialogue.
- Do not describe obvious sound cues.
- Do not give away secrets/surprises/sight gags.
- Do not refer to camera angles or the television screen (10:56-17:01).

A quick review of videos in YouDescribe would reveal that many of the above principles are not followed faithfully. It may be claimed that a poorly described video is better than nothing and that the attempt to create AD is important in itself. It should be noted, however, that if AD were poor, the users would possibly switch off AD and return to the 'original' (i.e. audiovisual products without AD). A similar situation was already reported in the domain of video game translation. In North America, fans of Japanese video games returned to fan-localised games due to the poor quality of official translations.

Then, there is one important question to be answered: is it possible for non-professionals to create high-quality AD? Some researchers have studied the potential and feasibility of amateur AD. For example, Fels and Branje's (2012) experiment indicates that those with little or no previous experience of AD can produce feasible descriptions by using *LiveDescribe*, another stand-alone application for AD (<http://www.livedescribe.com>). This experiment also suggests that the quantity of ADs available to BPS people could be increased significantly through appropriate (or minimal) training. Still, we do not know how to make more people try harder and cooperate to produce better descriptions.

Second, YouDescribe has no system for the sharing and editing of AD scripts, so the script writer and reader are one and the same. This is greatly different from what has been observed in wiki-based websites where users can cooperate to produce and edit work. It might thus be suggested that YouDescribe should be changed into **WeDescribe**, an imaginary system that could better exploit the modes of collective intelligence and division of labour. More specifically, in the near future the describers should be allowed to share scripts, so that they can efficiently create a new audio track or different versions of the same content. If then, they could contribute in a way that makes the best use of their strengths. For example, those with a great

talent for narration may use existing scripts to produce better recordings.

Third, it seems that videos to be described are chosen arbitrarily without considering the actual needs of BPS people. Although YouDescribe is an *experimental* platform aimed at investigating the possibility of mass-producing feasible amateur ADs, it should help describers choose videos that are most relevant to the needs of BPS people. Many of the videos currently available in YouDescribe do not address subject matters that BPS people really want. It is now necessary to prioritise video content about public service and BPS people's daily needs (e.g. information on eye doctors and new welfare services for BPS people) and to avoid 'entertainment' videos that provide neither pleasure nor useful information.

Fourth, there is still an acute lack of public awareness of YouDescribe and amateur audio-describing. Many sighted people are not well aware of or interested in issues about media accessibility, much less web platforms such as YouDescribe and LiveDescribe. Some may claim that sighted people will not understand BPS people's needs and AD cannot be of an interest to the general public. However, we learned from experience that non-monetary incentives can be used to encourage laypeople to translate web documents in a collective and efficient way. We also know that in some conditions a great number of people volunteer to help others through translation. For example, in a nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan and a sponsorship programme for poor children in less developed countries, people volunteer to translate letters for those in need. **Audio description crowdsourcing** is quite different from translation crowdsourcing for businesses such as LinkedIn, which some criticised for attempting to entice people to translate their commercial website for nearly nothing (McDonough-Dolmaya 2011). Fans translate for free because they gain pleasure, reputation, self-satisfaction, and knowledge in the process.

Likewise, sighted ‘laypeople’ — those who are not expected to have great proficiency in a foreign language (cf. *fan translators* with a high level of foreign language proficiency) — are willing and able to describe videos for free. It is thus important to better inform how to participate in YouDescribing. One idea is to create a ‘Share with Your BPS Friends’ button in every YouTube video page. This button would connect the viewer to an Create/Edit Page in YouDescribe or LiveDescribe.

5. Towards Audio Description 3.0

YouDescribe is truly a new approach to audio-describing. It seeks to change AD practice, drawing on web technologies and voluntary cooperation from an undefined, large pool of sighted people. It integrates two relatively new “actors”, namely the crowd and technology (S.-B. Lee 2016),⁸⁾ into the production and consumption of AD, thereby opening an era for **Audio Description 2.0**. It also marks a starting point of **the sociological and technological turn in AD**, although it faces some challenges and tasks.

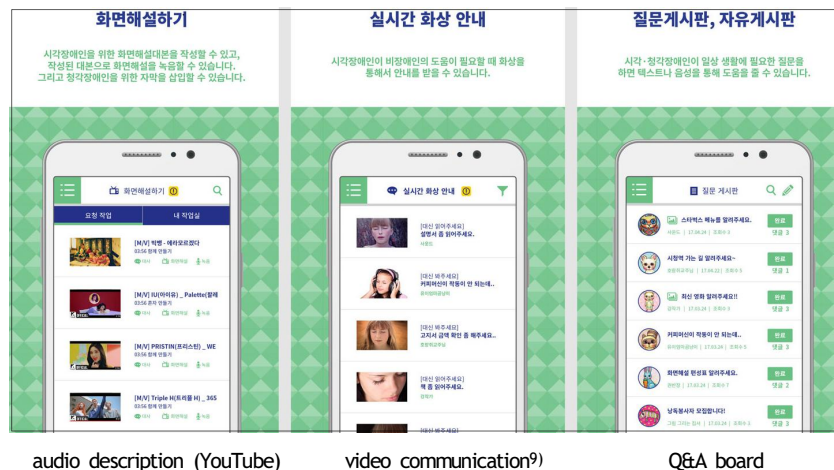
It is interesting that as of this writing, YouDescribe has just been upgraded. It now allows viewers to rate the quality of a description with up to five stars and to choose feedback comments from a list of suggested improvements. In addition, it provides a wish list, a visual timeline, and a notes field for drafting descriptions. These new features will likely enhance the quality of descriptions and make it much easier to create descriptions.

Coincidentally, a similar but more innovative attempt is being made in South Korea. In May 2017, a professional audio describer

8) Lee cites the crowd (non-professional translators) and technology (machine translator) as two important actors in a future network of translators.

launched *SoundPlex*, a smartphone-based application for the visually impaired (see Figure 4). SoundPlex enables users not only to describe YouTube videos singlehandedly (as in the case of YouDescribe), but also to share AD scripts and record descriptions on the basis of existing scripts. In addition, it allows users to provide descriptions that could meet BPS people's daily needs. For example, in a Q&A board, sighted users can give oral answers to BPS users' questions.

Figure 4. SoundPlex's services



It is argued that YouDescribe v.2 and SoundPlex sport features that define **Audio Description 3.0**. Audio Description 3.0 is quite different from Audio Descriptions 1.0 and 2.0, in terms of who describes what on what platforms. The three developmental stages of Audio Description are compared in Table 2.

As compared to the two previous stages, Audio Description 3.0 is more inclusive and friendlier to both AD users and describers. It reflects the actual needs of BPS people, pursues interaction between

9) As of the current writing, the developer plans to add a feature supporting video communication between sighted users and BPS users.

the BPS and non-BPS communities, and uses more of collective intelligence and technology. It is in line with recent developments in translation studies, in the sense that technology and non-professionals are increasingly placed in the centre of discussion, and that translation users and translators are more interactive.

Table 2. Comparisons of Audio Descriptions 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0

Ver.	Describers	Platforms	Sources
AD 1.0	A small number of professional describers	Computers and software programmes	Traditional audiovisual products (e.g. films, TV programmes) and live events requiring AD
AD 2.0	Numerous non-professional describers (who contribute largely individually)	World Wide Web	Free, existing web-based content (YouTube)
AD 3.0	Numerous non-professional describers (who are easily accessible and work together on a common project)	World Wide Web (fixed) and Mobile Web	Audiovisual products and real-world needs (e.g. Q&A boards, wish lists, real-time communication)

Audio Description 3.0 will become a topic of ample discussion. It will be discussed not only in the particular context of aural translation but also in the general context of “non-professional interpreting and translation (NPIT)” (see Antonini et al. 2017). It can offer useful insights into translation research and practice because it mirrors the new encounter between translation and technology, the blurred distinction between professional and amateur translators, and the growing dialogue between translators and translation users. It is a microcosm that demonstrates various technological and sociological aspects of translation studies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Nae-young Kang for her permission to reuse the image of SoundPlex [Figure 4].

FUNDING

This work was supported by Hankuk University of Foreign Studies Research Fund.

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Received: May 29th, 2017

Revised: September 10th, 2017

Accepted: September 15th, 2017