LYRICS *AGAINST* IMAGES: MUSIC AND AUDIO DESCRIPTION[1]

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Abstract

Music has been an integral part of films from as far back as the silent movie era, where a piano accompaniment was used to build the narrative and an orchestra was used to drown out the sound of the projector. Music in films can encompass a wide array of elements, from a song to a whistle, and can play many roles, as has been commented upon by many researchers. Due to the relevance of music in film narrative, it is an element which merits attention when it comes to making a film accessible, be it through Audio description, Audio subtitling, Sign Language or Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. This article focuses on Audio description (AD) and how music is handled in audio described films.

First of all, a brief review of existing AD guidelines will be presented in order to highlight the secondary role given to music insofar as these guidelines focus more on topics such as characters, locations, actions, credits, among others. This will be followed by an analysis of a corpus of audio described films, focusing on the treatment of songs with significant lyrics. Two different scenarios will be considered: on the one hand, films with song lyrics that can be understood by the audience because they share the same language and, on the other, English language films with song lyrics in a foreign language. Finally, this article proposes new approaches to the treatment of music in AD.

Resumen

La música ha sido una parte integral del cine desde la época del cine mudo, en el que se utilizaba un piano para construir la narración y se recurría a una orquesta para cubrir el sonido del proyector. Asimismo, puede abarcar un amplio abanico de elementos, desde una canción hasta un silbido, y puede desempeñar muchos papeles. Debido a la importancia de la música dentro de la narración fílmica, es un elemento que merece atención a la hora de hacer accesible una película, bien sea a través de la Audiodescripción, la Audiosubtitulación, el Lenguaje de Señas o la Subtitulación para Sordos. Este artículo se centra en la Audiodescripción (AD) y en cómo se trata la música en el cine audiodescrito.

En primer lugar, se presentará un breve repaso sobre las directrices de AD existentes con el fin de destacar el papel secundario que se ha dado a la música, dado que las directrices se centran más en asuntos como los personajes, las localizaciones, las acciones, los créditos, entre muchos otros. Más tarde, se presentará un análisis de un corpus de películas audiodescritas, centrándose en el tratamiento de las canciones con letras significativas. Así, se considerarán dos escenarios: por un lado, películas con canciones que la audiencia puede entender porque comparten la misma lengua y, por otro, películas en inglés con canciones en una lengua extranjera. Por último, este artículo propone nuevos acercamientos al tratamiento de la música en la AD.

1. Introduction

Within the existing AD guidelines developed by Spain, Belgium, UK, USA, and Australia up to May 2011 in relation to recorded AD of films, it is clear that film music is an aspect that has been largely neglected within AD studies. Until now, film music has been considered a secondary issue, unlike other elements such as characters, places, actions or credits.

One of the objectives of this article is to present an analysis of the existing guidelines and recommendations in this area. Once we have discussed how music is handled within existing AD guidelines, this article then outlines a comprehensive review of the various types and functions of music within film and concludes by giving some suggestions for AD that is more sympathetic to the use of music in films.

1.1. AD guidelines on Film Music

Although there are AD guidelines implemented in many EU countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Spain, and UK, to mention a few), their treatment of music is, for the most part, superficial – particularly so when considering that the types of music and their function in the film are so numerous and varied.

The aim of AD is to increase the understanding of films –in this case– by blind and visually-impaired people. Therefore, most of the AD guidelines consulted (ITC 2000; Benecke & Dosch 2004; AENOR 2005; Hörfilm 2005; Orero 2005; Remael 2005; Puigdomènech 2007; Vercauteren 2007; Puigdomènech, Matamala & Orero 2010; ADP 2009) say that the AD must not be used and/or introduced over dialogues, music or any other sound relevant for the comprehension of the film. In other words, the AD must be inserted during pauses or moments of silence. The reality is very different when one analyses actual examples of AD.

Among the AD guidelines dealing with film music, there are two main groups: those that mention music but do not give specific solutions and those that deal exclusively with certain types of music:

a) A commonly shared idea is that if music and other sounds do not represent an important function in terms of the tone or ambience of the film (ITC 2000, Hörfilm 2005, ADP 2009) or if they are not necessary to advance essential information to follow the plot (Benecke & Dosch 2004, Hörfilm 2005, Remael 2005, Puigdomènech 2007), there can be AD over them.

    In this regard, while many guidelines and indeed individual researchers recognize the importance of music in the narrative and in the emotion conveyed by the material (ITC 2000, Remael 2005), the priority of AD is also acknowledged in specific circumstances.

b) The majority of AD guidelines discuss one or more types of film music. Most of them deal with songs –with or without lyrics–, open titles, end credits, and silence. Regarding the songs, many different recommendations can be found. Benecke (in a personal consultation and quoted in Puigdomènech, Matamala & Orero 2010: 10) recommends carrying out the AD leaving "some parts of the music or the song" to be heard and using "instrumental parts or some lines in between to describe what happens".

    More specifically, ITC (2000: 24) states that the audience wants to listen to the songs without AD and suggests three different options: a) "to pre-empt a song with a brief description"; b) "judge carefully when to intervene and when to stay silent during a song, to cause least offence"; c) "The third option is to let the music play and say nothing at all". ITC also refers to children's programs (2000: 29), indicating that "describers should avoid speaking over songs where possible", but "if vital information needs to be conveyed, it should be fit in after the first verse or during repetitions in the song or during instrumental passages". In this regard, ADP (2009: 16) advises not to describe during the verse of a song or its first chorus and, more specifically, to have "caution in talking over a 'song played on the radio' because its recognition by the audience and/or the audience's hearing its content may be important to setting a mood, recalling an era, making an emotional statement, etc.". Ofcom (2006: 31), in turn, proposes to audio describe during songs "where there is a reprise of the lyrics and where the lyrics are not relevant to the storyline", while Media Access Australia (2010: 12) says "let the music and ambient sound tell the story too". Finally, ITC (2000: 22) proposes the enjoyment of the musical theme tune without any description over it.

1.2. *Points missing and objectives of study*

As it was mentioned in the previous section, there is not yet an AD guideline dealing with a comprehensive set of types of music and providing recommendations for the AD when music comes along. The importance of film music has been mentioned but never tackled adequately and the ADs analysed as part of this article do not adhere to any one complete set of guidelines when it comes to music.

After the review of the existing AD guidelines and the role given to music, the purpose of this article is, firstly, to conduct a brief bibliographical review of film music. Secondly, certain results of the analysis of a corpus of audio described films will be presented, focusing on the treatment of songs with significant lyrics. This corpus is made up of audio described films with song lyrics in the same language as the original version of the film and the language of the audience as well as audio described films that include song lyrics in a language that is foreign to the audience. In this regard, various examples will be provided to illustrate how AD affects the reception of lyrics and the advantages and disadvantages of the strategies chosen will be considered.

The corpus consists of 30 films released between 2001 and 2009. The films analysed were chosen because their ADs were carried out in the last 10 years, which assures an updated exercise and also because their soundtracks are mostly made up of songs with lyrics, some of them popular thanks to their commercial success as musical hits.

2. Film music

While a complete literature review of this field is beyond the scope of this article, it will be covered in brief in order to debunk the possible obsolete considerations of film music as a simple addition to the narrative or as a subordinated element to the image. In contrast in this article, film music will be presented as an autonomous element.

Several researchers and experts on film music from varied film studies schools (Cohen 1990, 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2005; Bolivar, Cohen & Fentress 1994; Chion 1997; Lack 1999; Smith 1999; Garwood 2003; Gorbman 2003, 2007; Wright 2003; Lipscomb & Tolchinsky 2004; Goldman, Kramer & Leppert 2007; Hoeckner 2007; Kocjančič 2008) discuss the relevance of, and the role played by, music in film from the beginning of cinema. Music is recognised as an integral part of the sound of a film and the soundtrack of a film is an essential element of the narrative. This study agrees with the statement of Goldman, Kramer and Leppert (2007: 3), when they point out that:

the music of a film follows a narrative track, like the events of a story, but it also tends to take on a life or identity of its own, like the discourse that frames the story. The discursive dimension of film music lies beyond the soundtrack.

Regarding music in general within film, most of the experts mentioned above tend to agree on the significance of music when it concerns the transfer of emotions and the building of the narrative, the identification of characters, times, places and themes, among many other issues. In fact, some directors and producers are so conscious of the value and importance of music that they select it before shooting the film, as is the case for Quentin Tarantino, Martin Scorsese and Zach Braff, to mention but three, as they have confirmed in interviews when promoting their works.

As regards the specifics of song selection, Kocjančič (2008: 17) points out that scenes are on occasion adapted to the duration of a song and are "impressive mostly because of the dynamic, rhythm or melody selected". In the same line, Gorbman (2007: 151) indicates that the audience now hears melodies and "song lyrics are perceived to add to, rather than detract from, audio viewing". In the last decades, it is common to have films with a complete soundtrack of radio hits, or different combinations of source music and score (Wright 2003).

As a result, people are used to hearing the music in films but also the same music in other contexts, increasing its range and importance. For these reasons, as well as those put forward in the following section, the absolute significance and value of film music must be considered.

3. Functions of music in films

The functions of film music are countless. Most of the literature consulted and this study agree on the following main functions summarised by Carey and Hannan (2003: 164), basing their arguments on previous works of Karlin and Wright (1990: 127-175) and Gorbman (1987: 11-30):

- – to create a broad level of structural and stylistic unity, or musical "concept";
- – to create a sense of period, location, or cultural background;
- – to provoke a sense of epic grandeur;
- – to accompany and support action, such as providing a musical emphasis to sound effects;
- – to provide pacing, both in individual scenes and on a broader structural level;

- – to underscore dialogue;
- – to link scenes;
- – to emphasise or highlight movement, mood or humour;
- – to de-emphasise or contrast visual movement, mood or humour;
- – to show changes in moods and feelings, and accumulate emotional states;
- – to pre-empt the mood of an upcoming scene;
- – to play the thoughts of characters, rather than the actions;
- – to play an additional character, such as a ghost, or something imagined;
- – to provide a subtext: to inform the audience of events or circumstances of which the movie characters are unaware;
- – to flesh out the aural environment, contributing to a sense of spatial reality (diegetic music only);
- – to provide another level of rhythm to the rhythm of the editor's "cut";
- – and to follow the movement of the camera.

Outside of this classification, there are authors who stress the role of music as a signifier of emotion (Newcomb 1984, Smith 1999), while other scholars highlight its ability to evoke a season, a historical period, a cultural coding or even an ethnic flavour (Gorbman 2003, Wright 2003). This study also points out the significance of songs with lyrics and the use of pre-recorded music in films.

4. Classification of film music and the audience

Film music may be divided into two main groups: diegetic music –integrated music produced by people or devices that are part of the film's space– and nondiegetic music –background music produced outside the film's space. This study focuses on songs with lyrics that can be established as diegetic as well as nondiegetic music. It also incorporates songs that may be played diegetically at one point in the movie but at a later point may be played non-diegetically and vice versa. As part of the whole study, background music, the relevance of silence, musicals and sung music were taken into account and analysed, but they deserve detailed study in their own right.

   In the present study, particular importance was given to the relevance of the songs and their function within the films (Lack 1999, Anderson 2003, Carey & Hannan 2003, Dickinson 2003, Grossberg 2003, Reay 2004). One issue to take into account is whether among the audience of a film, there are listeners who are not familiar with the music and listeners who are. In relation to the AD, the describer has to assume both situations. Goodson (2001)

says that there is also the possibility that the audience may miss the song lyrics, but that they may be familiar with them to some extent. Assuming the audience does hear the lyrics, experts such as Gorbman (2003) analyse the particular reading of lyrics within the film, and experts such as Wright (2003) study the use of well known, recognisable pop songs and outline how these songs can carry their own sets of "emotional baggage" in terms of the feelings and associations they evoke. In short, these researchers point out how lyrics draw attention to music.

Frequently, song lyrics have a meaning within the narrative of a film. According to Anderson (2003: 105), songs work, "providing setting information, functioning as source scoring, explaining characters' thoughts and moods, providing commentary on the narrative, and maintaining continuity between story-lines". Grossberg (2003) points out that the memory of a song is always partly visual as well as auditory.

Films can also use songs with lyrics as a substitute for dialogue. They can "play" in a scene's beginning, stopping for the key action, and be played again at its end (Anderson 2003); even the act of repeating the song serves as an association with certain ideas, characters or feelings, etc.

5. What can be done in AD when music with lyrics is heard?

After having taken into consideration the existing AD guidelines about film music and film music studies and having shown the need and interest for research that focuses on the AD for film music, this article now presents an analysis of music from selected films. After each analysis, certain strategies or approaches for an alternative AD will be proffered.

One general point to note when analysing the effectiveness of AD for film is the importance of the actual moment or scene in the film where the song starts playing. Indeed as every song has a certain structure with its chorus and verses, and is based on rhythm and tones that determine the melody of the song, decisions made in this regard have a potentially significant impact on the effect of the song and lyrics.

5.1. Songs with lyrics in the same language as the film

This section deals with films whose original version is in English, the AD is in English and the lyrics are also in English. All the songs analysed below are songs that can be heard clearly, with the exception of those songs that, even when they belong to the diegetic music, cannot be understood by the

audience because there is dialogue spoken over them or their function is as background music in a given scene.

a) *Garden State* (Braff 2004)

As it was previously pointed out, Braff is one of the directors who choose the songs for the film soundtrack before even starting to shoot the film. Therefore, the role played by music is especially relevant here. In this film there are 13 songs, only one of which is completely covered[2] by the AD –"Lebanese Blonde" by Thievery Corporation. In this case, both the lyrics and the melody of the song could be considered as relevant to the film narrative as, for example, the slow-motion images.

In most instances where songs are played in this film, the AD allows the audience to hear the chorus –or part of it– as is the case with the first song of the film, "Don't panic" by Coldplay. This could be interpreted as an ironic commentary relating to that scene in the film and the lyric "we live in a beautiful world" can be clearly heard and is particularly evocative in this regard. Later on in the film three lines from "In the waiting line" by *Zero* 7 are heard, which could be interpreted as a clear expression of the physical and emotional state of the main character.

Most of the songs in this film are played during scenes where specific action takes place, making life "difficult" for the AD. For most of the songs –7 out of 10– the space allowed by the AD, i.e. that part of the song that is not over played by the AD, does not correspond to the chorus, instead the audible part of the song is a random line located somewhere in the middle of a verse.

A very thematically significant moment occurs when the main character meets a girl in the waiting room of a hospital. She passes him a pair of headphones saying: "You got to hear this one song. It'll change your life, I swear". The audience can hear the first verse of "New Slang" by The Shins: "Gold teeth and a curse for this town / were all in my mouth / Only, I don't know how". Four minutes later, the song continues with its third verse but the AD fills the entire space. The lyrics are about leaving one's home town, job, relationship and life, which exactly coincides with the main character's situation at that moment.

Finally, the two most dramatic and cathartic moments of the film are accompanied by "The only living boy in New York" by Simon & Garfunkel and "Let go" by Frou Frou. In the case of the first song, which could be interpreted

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2. *Covered* in this context means that the AD plays on top of the song thereby making the song and its lyrics inaudible to the audience.

as an expression of the characters' feelings, the audience cannot hear any lyrics until the end of the song when it is possible to hear: "Hey let your honesty shine, shine, shine / like it shines on me". The second moment comes along at the conclusion of the story: "So, let go / Jump in / Well, what you waiting for? / It's all right / 'cause there's beauty in the breakdown". The audience cannot hear the lyrics not because there is dialogue, but because there is AD playing over all of the song. If the AD had left some space for the songs to be heard, the audience would not have missed out on any action's description, because at that moment the main characters and the action were actually paused.

b) *A Lot Like Love* (Cole 2005)

This film has, at least, 12 songs with lyrics that can be clearly heard by the audience. Some of them have excerpts of dialogues intercut, but most of them are played completely. There are three songs which are completely covered by the AD and where the audience is unable to make out a single word. One such example is at the beginning of the film, when the song "Semi-charmed" by Third Eye Blind is played in its entirety for four minutes. The lyrics are about a goodbye between a man and a woman, exactly reflecting what is happening in the film. Listening to the music could in this circumstance have aided the audience's understanding of the moment. Ten minutes later, the same happens with the song "Walkin' on the sun" by Smash Mouth. The lyrics talk about courage, tomorrow, and the need to act now in order to have a better future. Every line in the song lyrics could be linked to the plot of the film, but due to the AD, it is not possible to hear them. The same goes for "Know nothing" by Travis. In this case, the audience cannot hear the lyrics partly because there are overlapping parts of dialogues, but mostly because of the AD. There could however have been space for both AD and lyrics, as the action, at that point of the film, is minimal.

There are other songs that are partially covered by dialogue where the lyrics are related to the conversation the characters are having at that moment. More importantly, these lyrics have a meaning in relation to the storyline, as is the case with "Save tonight" by Eagle-Eye Cherry, a song about enjoying the moment because there may be no tomorrow. The same goes for "Mint car" by The Cure. This song mixes lyrics on happiness and good feelings together with a lively melody; and in a very sad moment in the film, "Hands of time", by Groove Armada, is played. Finally, in a highly romantic scene, when Aqualung sings "Brighter than sunshine", a song whose lyrics refer to deep feelings and emotions, the AD only allows the audience to hear a couple of sentences,

ruining the atmosphere of the moment. This last song is also important be-
cause it is played again at the end of the film with the end credits.

Sometimes the AD gives space to the lyrics. When "Look what you've
done" by *Jet* is played, the first verse can be heard by the audience: "Take my
photo off the wall / if it just won't sing for you/ 'cause all that's left has gone
away / and there's nothing there for you to prove". This is a great example of
what was mentioned before: sometimes songs speak for the characters.

c) *Must Love Dogs* (Goldberg 2006)

In this film there are no songs that can be completely heard in an undisturbed
manner as all of them are covered by AD to some degree and some are also
covered by the dialogue. All the song lyrics have a connection to the plot of
the film. There are 11 songs, but the audience can only hear, for example, a
few sentences of the first verse from "When will I be loved" by Linda Ronstadt
("I've been cheated / been mistreated"), which exactly captures the emotional
state of the woman and also introduces what will happen in the next scenes.
From "Hey there lonely girl" by Eddie Holman only the chorus can be heard
("Hey, there, the lonely girl"), and the same goes for "The first cut is the deep-
est" by Sheryl Crow.

d) *Goal II: Living the Dream* (Collet-Serra 2007)

With 13 songs, the AD strategy followed in this film ensures that there are
moments when it is not possible to hear the song lyrics or indeed any of the
music at all due to the intrusion of AD as well as moments where the AD
abates and the lyrics can be clearly heard and understood by the audience.
The first song in the film played in its entirety lasts over two minutes ("Bright
idea" by Orson), but no lyrics can be heard. The song talks about being nerv-
ous because of fame, which, again, is a commentary on the emotions the
main character is experiencing. The same happens later with "Letting the ca-
bles sleep" from Bush, reflecting the difficult emotional state of the character
("Never seem to get in the place that I belong [...] / Silence is not the way [...]
I'm a stranger in this town"). There are other songs which help locate the ac-
tion, such as "Turning Japanese" by The Vapors when the football team goes
to Japan and others that speak for the characters or special situations, such as
"Feeling the moment" by Feeder.

In one very dramatic moment of the film, the AD gives a great deal of
space to the music and its lyrics, as they are both meaningful to the plot
and expressive of the feelings of both characters on screen. At one point the

audience can hear "I'm here without you baby / but you're still on my lonely mind / I think about you baby / and I dream about you all the time / I'm here without you baby / but you're still with me in my dreams / And tonight girl, there's only you and me" ("Here without you" by 3 Doors Down). Something similar happens with "Friday-Friday" by Boy Kill Boy.

e) *Stomp the yard* (White 2007)

This example is complicated in relation to the function of AD as most of the time the characters are dancing –and stepping. There are 15 songs with lyrics, some of them repeated during the film, but the AD covers all of them. Mostly they are hip-hop songs characterised by having strong rhymes, specific "street" references, complex lyrical combinations and longer than usual verses. There are only three songs where the audience can actually hear part of the chorus: in each case the line that can be heard coincides with the song's title, as in the case of "Go hard or go home" by E-40 and "Walk it out" by Unk. In the case of "Let's go (dirty)" by Trick Daddy, two lines of one verse can be heard.

f) *What Happens in Vegas* (Vaughan 2008)

There are at least 17 songs within the soundtrack of this film. 8 of them are completely covered by AD. One such example occurs at the beginning of the film. "Grace Kelly" by Mika is played over a three minute section. Its lyrics are about not being liked, which could be interpreted as having a direct link to the theme and future content of film. The same happens again with "I want a new drug" by Greenspeekers, "Hit me with your best shot" by Pat Benatar, "Get down on it" by Kool & The Gang's, "It's alright" by Asa Semple, and "Save the best for the last" by Vanessa Williams.

There are other examples of songs covered completely by AD where the role of the music is possibly to inject irony or humour. After the two main characters experience some "relationship issues" and end up hating each other, "Love" by Matt White is played, giving an ironic connotation to the scene, with such lyrics as "I just want it to be loved" when the characters clearly want the opposite. Sometimes rhythm and melody are as important as the ironic lyrics, as is the case when the song "Are you gonna be my girl" by Jet is played. Other examples of humorous lyrics are "I hate you (My friend)" by John Oszajca's.

Some of the songs are partially covered by dialogues. In addition some of the songs in question have been chart hits and as such can be regarded as

hugely popular songs and widely recognisable due to their past commercial success, as is the case with "We are the champions" by Queen. In this example the AD leaves space at least for the chorus to be heard, as it does in "What a Feeling" by Irene Cara, a well-known song thanks to the success of the film *Flashdance* (Adrian Lyne 1983).

It is important to quantify the extent to which song lyrics are being subordinated by the AD. In the following table the percentages of AD's coverage are presented. Column one shows the total number of songs with lyrics that were analysed; column two shows the percentage of songs with lyrics where the entire space taken up by the song –including music– is covered by the AD; column three shows the percentage of songs with lyrics covered by a combination of AD and dialogue; column four shows the percentage of songs where the AD and dialogue allow some space; and column five shows the percentage of songs where the audience can hear only two lines or less of the song lyrics.

Total number of songs with lyrics analysed	% of songs with lyrics covered completely by AD	% of songs with lyrics covered completely by a combination of AD and dialogue	% of songs with lyrics where there is a lot of space for the melody and/or lyrics		% of songs with lyrics where only 2 lines or less of the song are not covered
293	28%	33%	39%		21%

Table 1. Space for music: lyrics in English

It should be noted that while it has been identified that in 39% of songs (with lyrics) the AD leaves space for music, the figure of 21% represents the percentage of songs in which the AD leaves space for 2 lines or less of the lyrics of the song.

The examples outlined above are a small illustration of the relevance of songs with lyrics within a film. The question here is, are AD and the enjoyment of songs in film mutually exclusive? Why can the audience not receive appropriate levels of AD and still be able to hear the important song lyrics, when the verses and chorus have so much to say? The AD should allow the audience to enjoy the music and to understand the lyrics. If they are not able to, they may miss part of the film's message as lyrics are, without question, relevant to the full understanding of a film. It is therefore important for AD to take into account which elements need to be prioritised. Therefore, space for this kind of music should be allowed, not just in children's programs or films, but in all types of films.

5.2. *Songs with lyrics in a foreign language*

There are many films in English that include music in other languages in their soundtrack. This decision can be arbitrary or can have a clear objective. Foreign music is frequently used to create a sense of location, cultural coding; it can also provide a subtext. This section analyses some examples in Spanish, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Russian, Hungarian, French and Portuguese in order to explore the possible reasons behind their inclusion in films.

a) *Closer* (Nichols 2004)

This film has three song examples in Portuguese by Bebel Gilberto: "Samba da bencão [Samba of the blessing]", "Tanto tempo [So much time]" and "Mais feliz [Happier]". The three songs are played when the main characters, Alice and Larry, are in a photo exhibition. There is some dialogue over the songs, and also parts where nothing can be heard besides the AD. It is possible that the lyrics could have a direct relation with the feelings and emotional status of both characters.

b) *Garden State* (Braff 2004)

In the beginning of the film, the main character is on a plane and there is a lot of turbulence. Shown in slow motion, the scene illustrates a chaotic moment where all the passengers, apart from the emotionless main character, are screaming, crying, and are generally speaking, terrified. One woman is singing a Hindi religious song. It could be related to the emotional state of the character, or serve to counteract the stress of the moment in question. It is the only song in the whole film in a language other than English.

c) *Everything is Illuminated* (Schreiber 2005)

Although the main character comes from the US, the film takes place mainly in the Ukraine. Apart from the background music composed by Paul Cantelon, the audience are presented with music in a variety of different languages, principally in Russian and Hungarian, such as "Zvezda Rok-n-rolla [Rock n' roll star]" and "Dikiy Muzhchina [Wild man]" by Leningrad, both ska-punk songs. These songs are made up of vulgar lyrics containing what is called "Russian mat", a form of Russian underground slang full of vocabulary of obscenity used in Russian and other Slavic language communities and censored in the media (Erofeyev 2003). All these songs are covered by the AD. Only the first and last verses of the song "Amari Szi Amari [She is ours]" by Csokolom

can be heard, but not all of the melody, which normally serves to underpin the action and create a sense of location and cultural background. It may be argued that this is an indispensable part of the director's message.

d) *Goal!* (Cannon 2005)

This film also has an example, at the beginning, when "Sin ella [Without her]" by Gypsy Kings is played and where the AD covers almost everything apart from the chorus "Cómo podrías tú vivir sin ella" [How could you live without her].

e) *A Good Year* (Scott 2006)

This is a special case as the film starts in London but then moves to France and half of the soundtrack –13 songs out of 26– are in French. In general, the lyrics of the songs locate the action in one country or the other but also on occasion serve a secondary function, such as making fun of the character. A good example is when the main character flies from England to France and then, while driving a mini-car, "Moi... Lolita [Me... Lolita]" by Alizee can be heard on the radio. Although the lyrics of this song are not in direct relation to the plot, the audience could be expected to recognise it as this song was popular in 2001: "C'est pas ma faute / et quand je donne ma langue aux chats / Je vois les autres / Tous prêts à se jeter sur moi (...) Si j'entends tout autour de moi" [It's not my mistake / and if I want to quit / I see the others / All ready to throw themselves upon me (...) If I hear everything around me]. Almost invariably in this film, the AD does not allow any space for the audience to hear the lyrics, even when there is no dialogue over them.

f) *Goal II: Living the Dream* (Collet-Serra 2007)

There is a moment in the film where "La camisa negra" [The black shirt] by Juanes is played. Apart from being a popular song, at least for the Spanish-speaking audience, it can also be related to the feeling the boy has about his brother and his family situation at that moment. The AD covers a lot, but at least it leaves space for part of the chorus: "hoy tengo en el alma una pena / y es por culpa de tu embrujo / que tengo la camisa negra / y una pena que me duele" [Today my soul is in pain / and it's because you have bewitched me / I have the black shirt / and a sorrow that is hurting me].

Later "Cógelo" [Take it] by Muchachito Bombo Infierno is played but in this case the audience can only hear the lyric "cógelo", which is part of the chorus. These lyrics could be deemed as an expression of the feelings of the

character but they also provide wordplay with football, the main topic of the film.

g) *Slumdog Millionaire* (Boyle & Tandan 2008)

Many songs in this film are in Hindi. The first example the audience can hear is "O… Saya" by A.R. Rahman and Maya Arulpragasam, having its chorus in Hindi, but its verses in English. In the case of "Ringa Ringa" by Alka Yagnik & Ila Arun, everything is in Hindi. The song talks about how much the main character described in the lyrics has suffered because a man has taken advantage of her.

In the end of the film, "Jai Ho" by Sukhwinder Singh, Tanvi Shah and Vijay Prakash is unusual, as its lyrics are in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Spanish. The lyrics talk about having lost the faith in the past regarding his/her love.

As in the previous section, a table of data is presented in order to understand the impact of AD on foreign language songs and in particular the percentages of songs when the AD covers the whole song, the percentage of songs when AD and dialogues cover them, and the percentage of songs when the audience can hear the lyrics and music. 12 out of 30 films analysed in the corpus have songs with lyrics in a language other than English.

Total number of songs with lyrics analysed	% of songs with lyrics covered completely by AD	% of songs with lyrics covered completely by a combination of AD and dialogue	% of songs with lyrics where there is a lot of space for the melody and/ or lyrics		% of songs with lyrics where only 2 lines or less of the song are not covered
38	31.5%	36.8%	34.2%		15.7%

Table 2. Space for music: lyrics in a foreign language.

As before, it should be noted that while 34.2% of songs have space for the lyrics and melody, in 15.7% of songs only 2 lines or less of lyrics can be heard.

Ultimately, the AD scriptwriter should consider the diversity of the target audience. In today's multicultural society there are many people who understand these foreign songs with lyrics, as well as people who may not. In both cases, the music plays a particular role here. For those who understand the lyrics, it could be the same situation as in the previous section (cf. section 5.1.) in terms of the specific significance of those lyrics. For those who do not understand the lyrics, the music can have an even more interesting effect

here, since it can emphasise the curiousness, the location, the cultural back-ground, and the foreignness of the people, among many other characteristics. Therefore: what happens if the audience listening to the film can understand the original version or what happens if they do not understand the lyrics, but they want to enjoy the original soundtrack?

Regarding the popular songs that were referenced, it is worth mentioning that the basic structure of a pop song could provide the key to the decision regarding how to audio describe the scene. It was observed that most of the ADs started in the middle of a verse and/or chorus. Taking into account that almost all these songs have verses and a chorus that is repeated, in order for the audience to better understand the general meaning and content of the song, it would be advisable to avoid "interruptions" and to try to, at least, let start and/or finish a verse and/or the chorus. In fact, there would be a clear benefit to the audience if the AD were to take into account the timing and rhythm of the song. From the audience's point of view, this would be less confusing and more pleasant than only picking up certain snippets of lyrics at random points in a song.

6. Conclusions

Although, according to Remael (2009: 2), the first task for AD scriptwriters is "to identify the gaps", they should also consider if these gaps are filled by music, among other elements. As it was mentioned before, some guidelines suggest that, if necessary, AD should go over dialogues and other sounds of the original soundtrack. But occasionally, the question should be is the AD actually more important than the original work with its dialogues, sounds and silences?

There are many sounds that cannot be identified by the audience without the aid of AD. However, in the case of music, and especially songs with lyrics, the support of the AD is not always required, and music in its own right also needs time and space to express and fulfil its function within the film. AD usually takes into account the source, but it should focus more on the func-tion of songs rather than where music comes from (radio, television, etc.). In any case, AD does not describe the music, but the action taking place in the scene. The consideration as to what is more important –describing the action or letting the music be heard is a rather subjective one that ideally should in-volve the director. This article has analysed a number of scenes where action, music and AD could have interacted better.

As previously defined, film is a "form of entertainment that enacts a story by sound and a sequence of images giving the illusion of continuous

movement" (Princeton University Wordnet, 2011). Consequently, AD should pay as much attention to the sound as it does to the image. None of these elements can be underestimated as they can carry equal weight within the film.

The conclusion of this study is not to suggest the removal of AD nor indeed downplay its role. The idea proposed here is that in order for the audience to enjoy the film, they should be able to understand it in its entirety. The role of AD, thus, should be to enable the audience to build its own perception of the film, but guided by what the director had in mind, and thereby form their own, fully informed interpretation. AD should help the audience in this regard and act as a form of support mechanism; however, it must recognise when to allow the sound to also be a principal character in the film.

It is neither the aim of this study to suggest the negative value of AD in terms of music conveyance in films, nor to consider AD as a handicap with respect to the original version. This study acknowledges both the interpretative and heterogeneous processes of AD, as well as the convergence and co-existence processes taking place within the filmic product. Nevertheless, this study brings into consideration the role of music in films and how it has been partly neglected until recent times.

In the future, other aspects and types of music such as background music, musicals, leitmotivs, songs sung by characters, popular music, among others, should be considered regarding AD.

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