ISSN (online): 2014-2242 / www.cac.cat

QUADERNS
DEL CAC

Accessibility and Standardisation: the Galician Subtitling Conundrum

Pablo Romero Fresco
Universidade de Vigo, GALMA
promero@uvigo.es

Paper received on 6 May 2021 and accepted on 23 June 2021

Abstract
In this day and age, the promotion of Galician as a minoritised language and the provision of equal access to audiovisual content for viewers with and without impairments should be compatible. Both are included within the fifteen inspiring principles of the Galician broadcaster CRTVG. However, when it comes to deciding if the errors made by speakers on TV must be corrected or reproduced in the subtitles, a conflict arises. If errors are corrected to promote good use of the language, viewers with hearing loss will be able to access the content, but they will be excluded from the fact that the speakers are making errors, which motivates this discussion in the first place. Drawing on the first model for the correction/reproduction of errors in Galician subtitling (Martínez Lorenzo 2021) and on a recent survey about this issue with hearing viewers (Suevos 2021), this article looks at the linguistic, social and political implications involved in the attempt to reconcile accessibility and standardisation in Galician subtitling.

Keywords
Accessibility, subtitling, Galician, language, audiovisual.

Resum
Actualment, la promoció del gallec com a llengua minoritzada i la facilitació d'un accés igualitari a continguts audiovisuals per a les persones espectadores amb discapacitats o sense haurien de ser compatibles. Tots dos aspectes es troben entre els quinze principis inspiradors de l'emissora gallega CRTVG. No obstant això, quan es tracta de decidir si els errors comesos pels parlants a la televisió s'han de corregir o reproduir als subtítols, es genera un conflicte. Si els errors es corregeixen per promoure un bon ús de la llengua, el públic espectador amb problemes d'audició podrà accedir als continguts però no tindrà consciència que les persones parlants cometen errors, que és la qüestió que motiva el debat en primer lloc. Prenent com a base el primer model per a la correcció/reproducció d'errors en la subtitulació en gallec (Martínez Lorenzo 2021) i un estudi recent sobre aquesta qüestió amb espectadors oients (Suevos 2021), aquest article se centra en les repercussions lingüístiques, socials i polítiques de l'intent de conciliar l'accessibilitat i l'estandardització en la subtitulació en gallec.

Paraules clau
Accessibilitat, subtitulació, gallec, llengua, audiovisual.

1. Media accessibility worldwide

Ever since it was first introduced in the US at the beginning of the 1980s in the form of captions or subtitles for viewers with hearing loss, media accessibility (MA) has evolved significantly, turning into a vibrant area of research, training and professional practice. Over the past years, it has undergone several transformations that have enabled it to become a source of critical reflection and a driver for social change. Greco (2018) refers to these transformations as the three shifts of accessibility: a shift from a particularist account to a universalist account of access, a transition from reactive to proactive models and finally a third shift from a maker-centred to a user-centred approach.

Until very recently, MA has been considered as a room within the overall audiovisual translation (AVT) building. In this particularist account, MA is the part of AVT that is devoted to blind and deaf users of audiovisual media who may need services such as subtitles, audio description or sign language interpreting/translation. However, the evidence that most access services are actually used by users with no impairments has led to a universalist consideration of MA as concerning "access to media products, services, and environments for all persons who cannot, or cannot properly, access them in their original form" (Greco 2018: 211). Under this consideration, MA encompasses services as varied as audio description, audio narration, dubbing, subtitling, clean audio, screen reading or tactile reproductions.

The second shift identified by Greco (2018) addresses the traditional reactive consideration of MA as an afterthought: access services (and translation) are normally produced over a few days during the distribution stage, for little remuneration

and involving no contact with the creative team of the film or play. Recent initiatives such as accessible filmmaking (Romero-Fresco 2019) and integrated theatre access (Fryer 2018) are proposing new models that consider access from the production stage involving collaboration between creators and access experts.

As for the third shift mentioned by Greco (2018), it is a reminder of the fact that, until very recently, most AVT and MA guidelines were based on the experience of well-seasoned professionals (Carroll & Ivarsson 1998). This is changing too. The cognitive turn experienced by (audiovisual) translation over the past decade (Chaume 2018; O'Brien 2011) has helped to provide guidelines with an empirical and scientific basis (Orero et al. 2018), and the proliferation of audience-reception studies has added a much needed user-led dimension. In a way, guidelines have been democratised insofar as many of them now include the input of a majority of viewers, or of a group that is statistically significant enough to be considered as a majority. This may be regarded as a step in the direction of the "nothing about us without us" slogan that many disabled people have supported for the past decades.

These shifts have helped to address what is termed the maker-expert-user gap (Branson: 2018; Greco: 2018) in MA. This refers to the gaps between those making films and those producing translated and accessible versions (maker-expert gap), between those making films and those receiving translated and accessible versions (maker-user gap) and finally between those producing translated/accessible versions and those receiving them (expert-user gap). Whereas accessible filmmaking and integrated theatre access have gone a long way towards addressing the maker-expert gap, an increasing number of scholars and artists are arguing that the gaps involving users are still far from being addressed. As noted by artist Jodee Mundy (2017), accessibility (understood as a service designed by non-disabled people for a film made by non-disabled people) is not the whole story, and the concepts of inclusion and participation come to the fore:

> Access is walking through the door. Inclusion is sitting at the table. Participation is eating the meal and talking about it.

According to this view, most current MA guidelines, with their emphasis on objectivity (their attempt to provide subtitles with an objective description of the sounds that deaf viewers cannot hear, or an objective description of the images that blind users cannot see), may enable users to understand the film, but not necessarily to engage with it. They reveal the non-disabled assumptions of the experts and show that despite being based on reception studies with users (such as, for instance, eye-tracking experiments), the user lens is still not built into them (Kleege 2018). As a reaction to this, an emerging wave of (mostly disabled) scholars and artists are proposing alternative and increasingly creative forms of MA not only to provide access to audiovisual media but also to contribute to a wider fight against ableism. This can be defined as a type of discrimination against people with disabilities that is not only manifested through individual opinions, but also through forms of exclusion that are codified and naturalised in various systems of power because they are built into the structure of our societies (Elmén 2016). This view of MA reflects and challenges present hierarchical structures and cultural norms (Ugarte Chacón 2014: 2). It is, therefore, a political tool.

As seen in the work of Kleege (2016) and Thompson (2018) about audio description, Butler (2018) and Zdenek (2018) about subtitles and the recent film *Dear Hearing World* (Docker: 2019) about sign language, the case for alternative and creative MA is an example of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991). It relates not only to the fight against ableism, but also to other forms of exclusion and oppression, including racism and sexism. What remains to be seen now is how MA and its political cause relate to minoritised languages which, by definition, are also oppressed and discriminated against. Based on the development of the first-ever subtitling guidelines in the Galician language, this article is a tentative attempt to discuss the complexity involved in balancing out and making compatible the rights of Galician speakers and those of Galicians with hearing loss.

2. Media accessibility in Galicia

MA in Galicia is still very much in its infancy. There is relatively little provision of MA services and research on the subject is very hard to come by. Mercedes Martínez Lorenzo's doctoral thesis (2021) and the publications derived from it (2019, 2020a, 2020b) are currently the main source of information available. In her thesis, Martínez Lorenzo sets out to analyse the quantity and quality of MA provided in Galicia and to produce the first subtitling guidelines in Galician. She looks at subtitling for viewers with hearing loss (which she refers to as inclusive subtitling), audio description and sign language interpreting/translation on TV and in film festivals, cinema venues and clubs.

Under the 7/2010 Audiovisual Act, all public channels in Spain are required to subtitle 90% of their content and to provide 10 hours a week of sign language interpreting and audio description. Table 1[1] includes data on subtitling provision by different public Spanish channels over the past five years. Whereas RTVE and the Catalan broadcaster TV3 are meeting or are close to meeting their targets, the Basque and Galician broadcasters are lagging behind significantly.

Unfortunately, the amount of hours subtitled is not the only issue in Galicia. As noted by Martínez Lorenzo (2021, p. 98), subtitle provision is very inconsistent in terms of channel, month, timeslot, type of production, audiovisual genre and episode. Viewers are kept in the dark as to which programmes are subtitled and, within the same programme, a subtitled episode may be followed by one with no subtitles. Cartoons produced in Galicia are not subtitled, and given that live

Table 1. Percentage of content hours subtitled a year between 2016 and 2020 by public broadcasters in Spanish, Catalan, Basque and Galician

Channel	Subtitling (total hours)
RTVE (2020)	
La 1	93.13%
La 2	93.59%
Clan	99.83%
24 Horas	95.35%
TDP	95.76%
Internacional Europa-África	96.90%
Internacional Asia	98.96%
Internacional America	97.45%
Catalonia (2020)	
TV3	70%
Super 3/33	85%
Esport3	42%
3/24	55%
Basque Country (2019)	
ETB1	18%
ETB2	46%
ETB3	58%
ETB4	19%
Galicia (2016-2018)	
TVG1 and TVG2	40%

Sources: Public broadcasters and Martínez Lorenzo (see note 1).

subtitles are still not available, chat shows, weather reports and sports are not accessible for viewers with hearing loss. Only one news report is shown with subtitles (on TVG-1 and during weekdays). There is no audio-described content on TVG and sign language interpreting amounts to five weekly hours, including a daily news programme (on TVG2 and during weekdays). The weekend news is thus not accessible. As far as film festivals, cinema venues and clubs are concerned, they are not bound by legislation on media access. Small, independent events or venues tend to provide mostly Spanish subtitles (designed for hearing viewers, rather than viewers with hearing loss) for foreign-language films. Galician subtitles are only used sporadically and the same goes for audio description, while sign language interpreting/translation is more commonly used for film presentations than to access film.

Martínez Lorenzo's (2021, 179) analysis of the quality of a sample of the subtitles provided by TVG is no more encouraging. She notes different issues that are caused either by the lack of information in the Spanish UNE subtitling guidelines (AENOR: 2012) (which until now have been the main reference for subtitling at TVG) or by errors made by the subtitlers. This includes problems with subtitle position (subtitles obscuring important on-screen information), timings (subtitles that are shown for too long or too short for the viewers to read), punctuation and the description of sounds for viewers with hearing loss. Particularly significant here is the inconsistency found when having to subtitle language errors made by the speakers, that is, when faced with the decision of whether the speakers' errors should be kept or corrected in the subtitles. Given that this is a very language-specific issue that plays a different role in Galician (as a minoritised language) than it does in Spanish, adhering to the indications in the Spanish UNE subtitling guidelines does not seem like a viable option. This makes Martínez Lorenzo's first-ever subtitling guidelines in Galician particularly timely.

The guidelines draw on existing empirical research included in guidelines from other countries and other languages, which position MA in Galicia in a complex and unusual scenario. When it comes to quotas of access provision, MA in Galicia is now in a similar position to where other countries (including Spain) were around 10 years ago. The upside is that producing guidelines now makes it possible to skip the expert-based approach and to provide them with a scientific grounding that can also democratise them, as they can be said to reflect the views of the users who took part in the studies they are based on. Finally, the guidelines must address an issue (reproduction or correction of errors in the subtitles) that is relatively new and likely to have social and political implications that have yet to be addressed. Thus, in a way, MA in Galicia is simultaneously operating in the past as far as development and provision is concerned, in the present with the production of contemporary guidelines founded on an empirical basis, and in the future, addressing a discussion that is new and whose implications are to some extent unknown. This article looks at the latter issue, where the interests of a minority language and its users are not aligned with those of a minority with impairments (people with hearing loss), which calls for difficult decisions.

3. The Galician subtitling conundrum

The mission of CRTVG as the public Galician broadcaster is set out in Article 4 of the Public Audiovisual Media Services Act 9/2011, in Galicia. This article includes the 15 so-called "inspiring principles" of the broadcaster, which include the requirements to promote and disseminate Galician culture, language and identity and to guarantee equal access, not least to people with disabilities so they can have access to audiovisual content. In theory, these 15 principles should be perfectly compatible, and yet, as will be discussed in the following sections, when it comes to dealing with language errors in Galician subtitles, the need to both standardise the language and provide access to viewers with hearing loss may come into conflict.

3.1 Subtitling as a language standardisation tool

In the Spanish context, the concept of "normativización lingüística" (language standardisation) refers to the selection and codification of a standard language, which corresponds to the idea of corpus planning in the literature in English (O'Rourke 2017). In contrast, "normalización lingüística" (language normalisation in this article) is concerned with the use of a standardised language in all areas of public life and is thus related to the concept of status planning in English (Cooper 1989; Kloss 1969). Both are connected to language planning, which encompasses all the official actions undertaken to determine how language is used and to protect the rights of individuals or groups to use and maintain languages (Spolsky 2003). In Galicia, language normalisation measures aim at increasing the number of speakers and their language skills, as well as claiming back social functions in the areas of education, government and media. Here, the role played by the public Galician broadcaster RTVG since its creation in 1985 is critical, as it includes four TV channels and three radio stations broadcasting content in Galician 24 hours a day seven days a week.

However, as noted by Martínez Lorenzo (2021, p. 365), TVG has been criticised for not making an effort to reach young adults (unlike the older population and children, who seem to be catered for by TVG and TVG2, respectively) and for the sometimes substandard use of the Galician language. The presence of Spanish expressions in the Galician used on TVG and TVG2 is seen as very detrimental to the perception, prestige and even survival of the Galician language. Recent data show that although 88.1% of the Galician population (around 2.3 million people) can speak the language, its use is much more restricted to the eldest generation (over 65 years old), in small rural areas (less than 10,000 inhabitants) and mostly between speakers of the same condition rather than to address someone of a higher socioeconomic status. In contrast, Spanish is the prestige language used by young people in areas over 50,000 inhabitants and in a wide range of communicative situations (IGE 2014: 2019).

Against this background, using a high-quality language model in the subtitles broadcast on TV can increase the positive perception of and motivation towards Galician. Conversely, if speech errors, often influenced by Spanish, are allowed to creep into written subtitles, it could contribute to damaging the integrity of the Galician language, preventing speakers from learning the correct language standard. The correction of the speakers' errors in subtitling is thus seen as a key normalisation and standardisation measure.[2]

Although the need to contribute to the standardisation of the language is the main argument for the correction of language errors in subtitles, other reasons may also be put forward. One of them is the transformation of oral speech into writing, which leads to the consideration of subtitling as written language and accounts for the omission of certain oral features such as discourse markers (Hatim & Mason 1997: 79) and the correction of grammar and lexical errors in the subtitles (Díaz Cintas & Remael 2008: 63). The rationale behind this approach is that errors in on-screen written language may be more noticeable than speech errors, which strengthens the case for correcting errors as a standardisation tool. Also, as found in the eye-tracking studies conducted by McConkie and Yang (2003) and Fernández-Torné et al. (2014), viewers may need extra time to look at non-standard language units in the subtitles, thus having less time to look at the images. However, more research is needed to assess this, as McConkie and Yang (2003) tested text reading instead of subtitling and Fernández-Torné et al. (2014) specify that their results are statistically inconclusive. In any case, should further research confirm this, it would potentially be more problematic in the case of deaf viewers with a prelingual hearing loss, who are often sign language users and are thus effectively reading subtitles in their second or even third language (Romero-Fresco 2018: 192).

Martínez-Lorenzo (2021: 71) points at another reason to justify the correction of errors in subtitles: the adaptation (or domestication, as per the term used by Venuti (1995)) of cultural references often found in the English-to-Galician translation of audiovisual material. She mentions the example of Galician fansubbing (subtitles made by fans outside the professional context) of Marvel's *Avengers: Endgame*, where the cheese dip Cheez Whiz was replaced in the Galician fansubs by "Estrella Galicia". According to Martínez-Lorenzo (2021: 71), "if such high degree of text alteration is accepted, a few language corrections here and there for the sake of language promotion and readability should not outrage any viewer".

These are undoubtedly powerful arguments to correct errors in the subtitles, but there is another side to this debate too.

3.2 Subtitling as an accessibility tool

The "standardisation argument" used to advocate the correction of errors in subtitling is very much in line with the universalist approach to MA, according to which access services concerns us all, or at least anyone who (for linguistic, sensorial or contextual reasons) does not have access to audiovisual material in its original form (Greco 2018). If access concerns almost all viewers, it makes sense to use subtitles as a standardisation tool in Galicia. This wide notion of access means that blind and deaf audiences can join forces with foreign viewers, as they are all "in the same boat" as far as access services are concerned (Romero-Fresco 2018: 194). This has proved very effective in helping to make a case to persuade streaming platforms such as Netflix to increase their access provision.

However, a growing number of artists and scholars such as Ellcessor (2015) are beginning to point at the complications brought about by this notion of access for all. Firstly, appealing to users that are not disabled may contribute to reinforcing "social hierarchies in which what really matters are the benefits that universal design brings to other (normative, able-bodied) people". For Ellcessor, this can be seen in arguments for captioning that prioritise language learning and children's literacy skills over the benefits for deaf and hard of hearing people,

very much related to the discussion proposed in this article. Secondly, amalgamating MA and AVT (and their users) may result in the consideration of accessibility measures as "options" or "customisations", that is, a matter of consumer choice rather than an issue of civil rights and political participation. Thirdly, Ellcessor mentions the common argument put forward under the principles of universal design that everyone is or will be disabled in one way or another, which is heavily criticised by the above-mentioned short film *Dear Hearing World* ("I am equal parts sick of your 'oh, I'm hard of hearing too, just because you've been on an airplane or suffered head colds'"). For Ellcessor, this argument denies the "lived experiences of disability and the importance of a disability identity or culture for many people". In her view, this may perpetuate ableist attitudes by failing to question, change or destroy them.

In other words, while the universal and wide notion of access may suggest that we are all in this together, reality contradicts this (ableist) assumption:

> A lot of us, by default, become activists because we've spent a lot of our lives fighting to get and ensure our basic rights. Whereas hearing people don't even question that right. (…) They are the ones who are looking and creating history and we are just pushed to the side. Being Deaf has always been a political thing. I don't know if it will ever stop being political. (In Martirosyan 2020)

Seen through this lens, the correction of errors in subtitling is no longer (or not only) a standardisation tool, but also a restriction of access and, ultimately, a political issue. By correcting these errors, the subtitler provides those viewers with hearing loss who have no access to the audio with the *what* (the content) but not the *how* (the way in which this has been said, that is, with errors). Here, the two abovementioned "inspiring principles" of CRTVG clash head on: the subtitles can either help to standardise the language or to provide full and equal access. Two key questions can help elaborate on this debate: Which one of these two priorities (standardisation or full access) is more important? And who gets to decide which one is more important?

The first question may have as many answers as people asked. One hypothesis could be that hearing viewers, who normally have access to the audio, may be happier to prioritise the standardisation function of subtitling than those viewers who are excluded from the audio and for whom access may be a greater concern. In the largest reception study conducted so far in Europe on SDH (Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) (Romero-Fresco 2015), 1365 hearing, hard of hearing and deaf people from Denmark, Poland, Italy, France and Germany, the UK and Spain replied to 81,900 questions about subtitling styles and viewing habits. One of those questions was about why they use subtitles, and it included answers such as "to understand/have access to audiovisual content" or "to improve my language skills". As shown in Table 2, both hearing viewers and viewers with hearing loss in Europe prioritise access over language. This also applies to Spain, although here the split is different, as almost half of the hearing viewers prioritise language over access. Yet, viewers with hearing loss in Spain seem almost exclusively concerned with access rather than language.

Admittedly, although the Spanish sample included Galician respondents, it was obtained throughout the whole country and it dealt with Spanish and not Galician. However, at the very least, this table provides relevant data as to the reasons why different types of viewers may use subtitles and what they think is more important.

An argument for the correction of errors in the name of standardisation is that the correction of errors in the subtitles and the provision of access do not need to be mutually exclusive, as corrected subtitles still grant access to the key element in the speech, i.e. what is said. Following from this, why would viewers with hearing loss (who are the ones excluded here) be interested in knowing whether the Galician spoken on TV includes errors or not? Is that relevant at all? Again, there may be as many answers as people asked, but the question is relevant for me (it is the very reason why I am writing this article), perhaps for you as a reader and certainly for the 322 people who decided to take part in the survey discussed in section 3.4. Why would it not also be relevant to at least some people with hearing loss? As noted by deaf writer and artist Liza Sylvestre, if she was interested in studying the use of a minoritised language such as Galician on TV, corrected subtitles would prevent her from doing so. These subtitles would present her with a reality (the speakers use perfect Galician) that is not true and, more importantly, with no way of knowing that it is not true.

Table 2. Reasons why viewers with and without hearing loss watch intralingual subtitles in Spain and in seven other European countries

	Spain		Europe	
	Hearing viewers	Viewers with hearing loss	Hearing viewers	Viewers with hearing loss
To have access to the original AV content	53%	92%	81%	87%
To improve language skills	47%	8%	19%	13%

Source: Personal collection.

It seems easier for hearing viewers to prioritise the language standardisation function of subtitles because, with a few exceptions (watching subtitles in contexts such as bars and hospitals, where the sound may be turned off), they have full access to audio and images. Corrected subtitles are thus ideal for these viewers, who have access to the content, can still hear that errors are being made by the speakers and can read the corrections in the subtitles. The best of both worlds – full access and language learning. In contrast, viewers with hearing loss have access to the content but are excluded from the knowledge that Galician is spoken with errors or, rather, are presented with a (non-existent) reality where Galician is spoken without errors. More specifically, we, hearing subtitlers, convey to viewers with hearing loss the linguistic reality that we would like to have (good usage of Galician on TV). It is hard not to see this as at least slightly patronising.

An equivalent situation for hearing viewers would be if there was a bleep censor (the beep sound normally used to censor profanity) for every occurrence of an error in the speakers' speech. Hearing viewers would then have access to the correct form in the subtitles, but not to the error. In this scenario, hearing viewers would still be in a more advantageous position than viewers with hearing loss reading corrected subtitles, as they would at least know that errors are being made every time they hear a beeping sound. Yet, it is hard to see how hearing viewers would accept this, even if it is for language standardisation purposes. Insofar as possible, they want to access reality as it is or, at the very least, have a say instead of having someone decide for them. In a society that promises full access to everyone, there is no reason why those viewers with hearing loss who would like to access the reality of the Galician language and participate in this debate should accept corrected subtitles.

Viewers with hearing loss may also rightfully demand to have a say, that is, to have a choice between corrected and uncorrected subtitles. Whenever demands such as this one (or others about having different sets of subtitles for different groups of viewers with hearing loss) are made, they are rejected due to their cost, as if it were (only) a financial issue. However, other factors come into play such as power, which indicates this may actually be a political issue. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when most sports competitions were held in empty stadiums, viewers were exposed to the unusually naturalistic sound of the players shouting to one another with no chants from the crowd. The Spanish streaming platform Movistar+ decided to use DJs to recreate the stadium atmosphere sound of the Spanish football league and replace the live sound from the empty stadiums (Cifuentes 2020). Although 80% of the viewers chose the recreated atmosphere, Movistar+ decided to keep offering the live sound, which entails an extra cost, as capturing the sounds from the players requires equipment and set-up that is not normally used in standard competitions. This was, however, not an issue. As long as some hearing viewers want access to the real sound, they have the right to access it.[3]

If the speakers' errors are corrected in the subtitles, those viewers with hearing loss who wish to have access to the reality of the language as it is will not have the right to do so. They do not have enough power, so they do not get to decide (which answers the second question posed above). Many of them will not even get to know that this is happening at all. Considering all this, it seems difficult to reconcile the use of subtitles to both standardise and provide full and equal access to all viewers, which makes Martínez Lorenzo's proposal, discussed in the next section, all the more valuable.

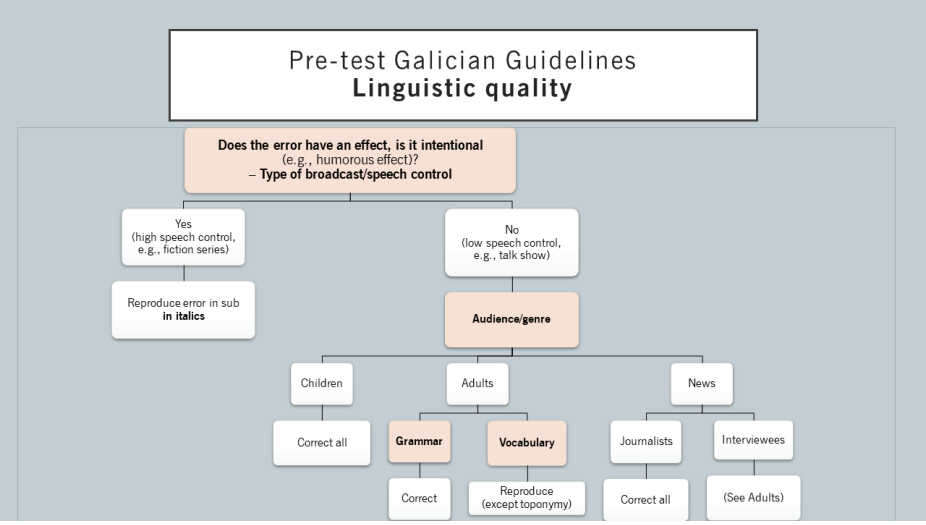
3.3 Martínez Lorenzo's proposal

As noted by Martínez Lorenzo (2021), subtitling guidelines take different approaches with regard to this issue. The ISO/IEC standard (2018) advises reproducing all errors, whereas other guidelines decide between error reproduction or correction depending on the genre (BBC 2019) and degree of formality of the film (Catalan guidelines) or on whether the errors are plot-related (Netflix 2018). In Galicia, TVG seems to lean towards the correction of errors in their subtitles, but there do not seem to be any consistent criteria in their subtitles, not least regarding the differentiation between correcting grammar errors and lexical errors.

In an attempt to find a middle ground between language promotion and accessibility, Martínez Lorenzo (2021: 213–229) presents a model for the reproduction or correction of language errors in same-language subtitling in Galician based on five levels. The first two levels (speech control and audience/audiovisual genre) concern the audiovisual material and the other three (intentionality/effect, type of error and formatting) are related to the errors.

Speech control refers to the speakers' "degree of control or spontaneity" in a programme. It is high in fictional films and low in interviews and other unscripted contexts. Although the final decision as to whether to correct errors or not depends on a combination of different levels, the general idea is to recommend more correction in situations of low speech control and less correction in situations of high speech control. Also related to the audiovisual material and its reception is the distinction in the model between adult and child audiences and between news and other genres. For Martínez Lorenzo (2021: 352), children "should be presented with correct language, favouring the learning of the standard" and errors in the news should also be corrected so that the programme does not lose credibility. Regarding errors, a key consideration is that of intentionality and effect. For Martínez Lorenzo (2021: 350), "an error has an effect if it is plot-related, for instance, if it causes humour or a reaction in characters, plot development or the dialogue". And she adds: "an error with an effect may be considered intentional and planned". In her view, with a few exceptions, errors in audiovisual material with high speech control, such as fictional films, are likely to be intentional and to have an effect, whereas content with low speech control is likely to have errors that are spontaneous, unintentional and unplanned.

Figure 1. Model for the reproduction or correction of oral language errors



Source: Martínez Lorenzo, 2021.

In her model, all intentional errors, or errors with an effect, should be maintained regardless of the type of programme. As for unintentional and spontaneous errors, they should all be corrected in children's programmes and in news programmes when uttered by journalists (Martínez Lorenzo 2019: 229):

> Alongside toponymy, plot-unrelated, incorrect vocabulary should also be corrected in two types of broadcasts: in news programmes, when reporters speak, and in content for children and adolescents. News programmes being purely informational, the likelihood of journalists making intentional language mistakes is rather low. Journalists' speaking has been criticised for not being high-quality (Cidadanía 2002: 277; Hermida Gulías 2012: 47-48; Ramallo Fernández 2017: 463). In addition, a low linguistic quality may threaten informational rigour, that is, a piece of news delivered with language errors may lose content reliability. Consequently, Spanish words, *castelanismos*, and hybrid lexis, *hipergaleguismos*, in the speech of journalists are not to be reproduced in the subtitles but substituted by their correct Galician forms.

Finally, in adult programmes with speakers other than journalists, unintentional vocabulary errors are to be reproduced and grammar errors should be corrected. The rationale behind this distinction is that reproducing vocabulary errors can help to convey the speakers' idiolect. In contrast, leaving grammar errors in the subtitles could be detrimental to speakers learning Galician, given that, as shown in Silva-Valdivia's studies (2006: 2013), grammar is often not being learnt correctly:

> This correction of vocabulary [for journalists] does not apply to interviewees or eyewitnesses in news programmes, who speak freely (low speech control) and whose idiolect should be respected.

Martínez Lorenzo's model was tested with 33 fourth-year students of the BA in Translation and Interpreting at University of Vigo, who were asked to subtitle a series of clips with the Spanish UNE subtitling standard and with that of Martínez Lorenzo's inclusive subtitling guidelines in Galician. The latter include the model for the reproduction or correction of language errors, which was refined as per the feedback provided by the students. Given that the model ultimately concerns users, it was also tested in a subsequent project as a survey whose results are included in the next section.

3.4 The (hearing) users' view

As part of her MA dissertation for the BA in Translation and Interpreting at University of Vigo (2021), Sabela Suevos prepared a survey to gauge viewers' take on the issue of correction versus reproduction of errors in Galician subtitling. The survey was made up of an introduction contextualising the debate and ten sentences with errors and two subtitling options (with and without corrections). In order to cover the different scenarios and levels envisaged in Martínez Lorenzo's model, the ten examples included different speakers and genres. These were a character in a short fiction film, a character in a feature-length fiction film, a character in a children's animation programme, the narrator in a documentary, the city mayor in an interview, a spontaneous on-street interviewee, a politician in a news programme, the presenter of a news programme, the presenter of a chat show and the presenter of the weather forecast. The examples had six grammar errors and four vocabulary errors, including incorrect use of pronouns and verbs and the presence of *castelanismos* (interferences from Spanish) and *hipergaleguismos* (words that are incorrectly "Galicianised" so that they look less like Spanish words). The survey ended with an open-ended question for general comments and ten demographic questions to identify respondents' profiles and viewing habits.

Given that anyone in Galicia can be regarded as a potential subtitle user, the questionnaire was disseminated online with no specific filtering regarding respondents' profiles, other than their being based in Galicia. The questionnaire was available online for ten days and was filled in by 322 respondents which, along with the comments made in the open-ended question, shows evidence of the interest that this issue has triggered amongst a wide range of viewers. As reported in figures 2-6 below, the most recurrent profile was that of a 51-to-64-year-old female Galician-speaking teacher/lecturer with a university degree. In general, approximately two thirds of the respondents were female, with a fairly even spread of age ranges (lower for under 19 and over 64) and occupations, although teachers made up one third of the whole sample. Galician is the most commonly used language, with more respondents (51%) using it more often than Spanish (36%). Another important element to add to the respondents' demographic profile is that 75% of them use subtitles regularly, mostly (in 92% of the cases) to watch foreign-language films.

The results of the survey leave very little room for doubt as to the majority view and indeed did not change once the sample reached the first 100 respondents, which attests to the statistical significance of the survey. In eight out of the ten examples, the preferred option was to correct the errors in the subtitles, with support from over 75% of the total respondents. The only exceptions were the two fiction films, where a majority of respondents opted for maintaining the speaker's dialectal trait (57% vs. 43%) or characteristic grammar error (72% vs. 28%).

The strong preference for correction over reproduction of errors found in the survey is maintained across ages, gender, education and all the other demographic aspects analysed, with one interesting exception – the distinction between teachers, on the one hand, and experts in hearing and sign language interpreters (SLI) on the other. As shown in Table 3, teachers (and experts in linguistics) show an even stronger tendency to favour correction than the overall sample, while experts in hearing and sign language interpreters seem to favour the reproduction of errors. Although their preference is not as extreme as that of teachers for the correction of errors, it is unequivocal – they would keep the errors in eight out of the ten examples.

Needless to say, the study has its limitations. As a first tentative survey on the subject conducted within the framework of a supervised MA dissertation, there are only ten sentences for the users to choose whether they would rather reproduce or correct errors in the subtitles[4] and, most notably, all respondents are hearing. However, the results are still worth taking into account given the size of the sample (considerably larger than the average surveys conducted in AVT and MA), the unequivocal trend towards correction of errors and the tendency shown by hearing experts and sign language interpreters to favour the reproduction of errors.

Also interesting are the open-ended comments made by some of the respondents, which echo the two stances analysed in sections 2.1 and 2.2 and can thus be divided into those that refer to language and those that refer to viewers with hearing loss. Seventy per cent of the comments addressing the issue of language (made mostly by teachers) favour the correction of errors in all cases but fiction. The reasons provided relate to the need for language normalisation and preservation and the importance of distinguishing between errors and dialectal traits. Interestingly, 30% of the comments made about language point out that as well as in fiction, errors could be maintained in situations of live spontaneous speech as they are part of the speaker's idiolect:

> For example, if a politician misplaces a pronoun, the Galician speakers who hear it will build an image of him or her as a person who does not speak much Galician or does not master it much, which carries a lot of implications from the point of view of its social meaning.

In contrast, 90% of the comments referring to deafness or viewers with hearing loss (made mainly by sign language interpreters and experts in hearing) support the reproduction of errors in all cases but fiction. The reasons provided revolve around equality and the fight against exclusion and discrimination in general:

> Subtitles are supposed to provide access to deaf people and, then, preserve the language. By correcting errors, we don't allow viewers with hearing loss to be part of the same reality as hearing viewers, so with the exception of fiction, it seems to me that correcting errors in other cases would be discriminatory.

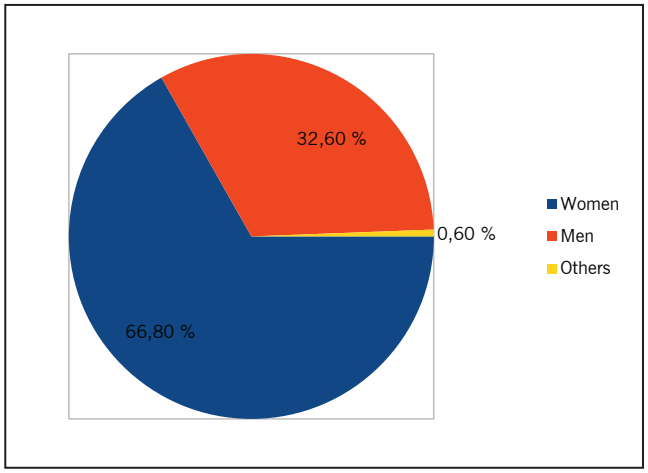
In sum, only those respondents who build their arguments around deafness, equality and inclusion (mostly SLIs and hearing experts) are likely to support the reproduction of errors. The majority, though, focus mainly on language, which leads them to favour correction.

4. Final thoughts

This article is a tentative attempt to discuss the complexity involved in reconciling the possibility of using subtitling both as a standardisation tool for Galician speakers and also as an access tool for viewers with hearing loss.

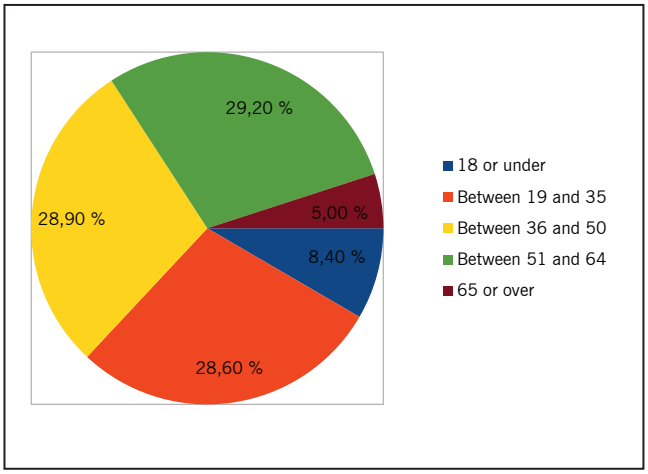
The case for using subtitles for standardisation purposes is a powerful one. Considering the low use of Galician amongst young speakers in urban areas where Spanish is dominant, the presence of errors on Galician TV can have a negative impact on the prestige, use and, eventually, preservation of the language. Subtitles, which have traditionally been shown to aid language learning (Talaván 2006), can contribute to minimising this impact by correcting these errors and boosting literacy in Galician. The complexity lies in the fact that, in doing so, access for viewers with hearing loss[5] is compromised. These viewers are still provided with the content of the speech in the subtitles, but they are excluded from the fact that the speakers are

Figure 2. Respondents' gender



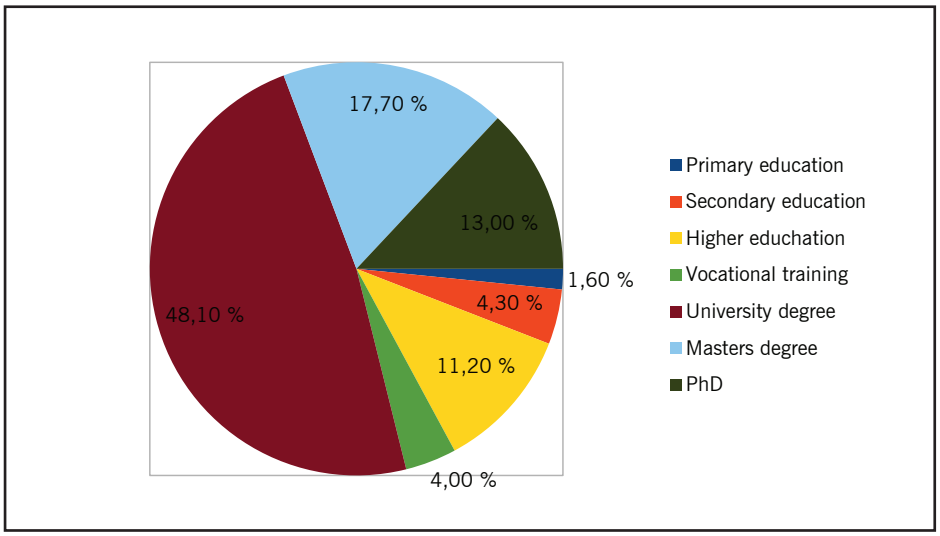
Source: Suevos, 2021.

Figure 3. Respondents' age



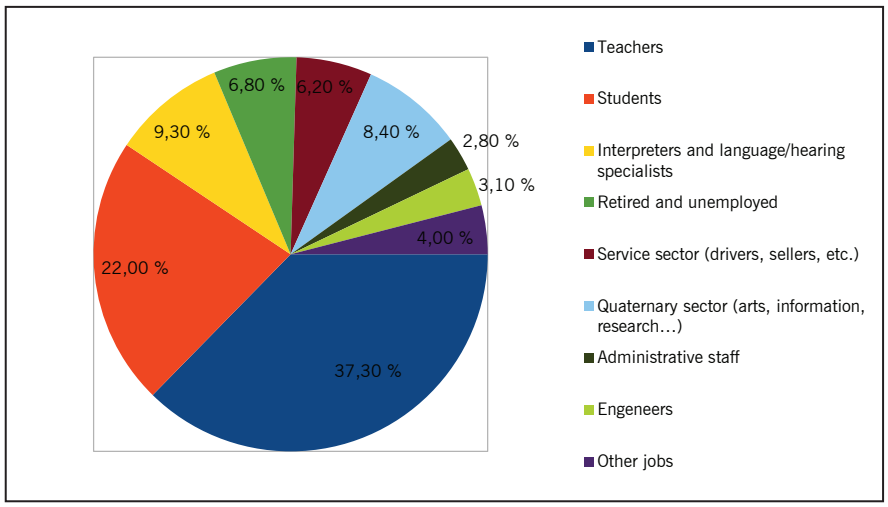
Source: Suevos, 2021.

Figure 4. Respondents' education



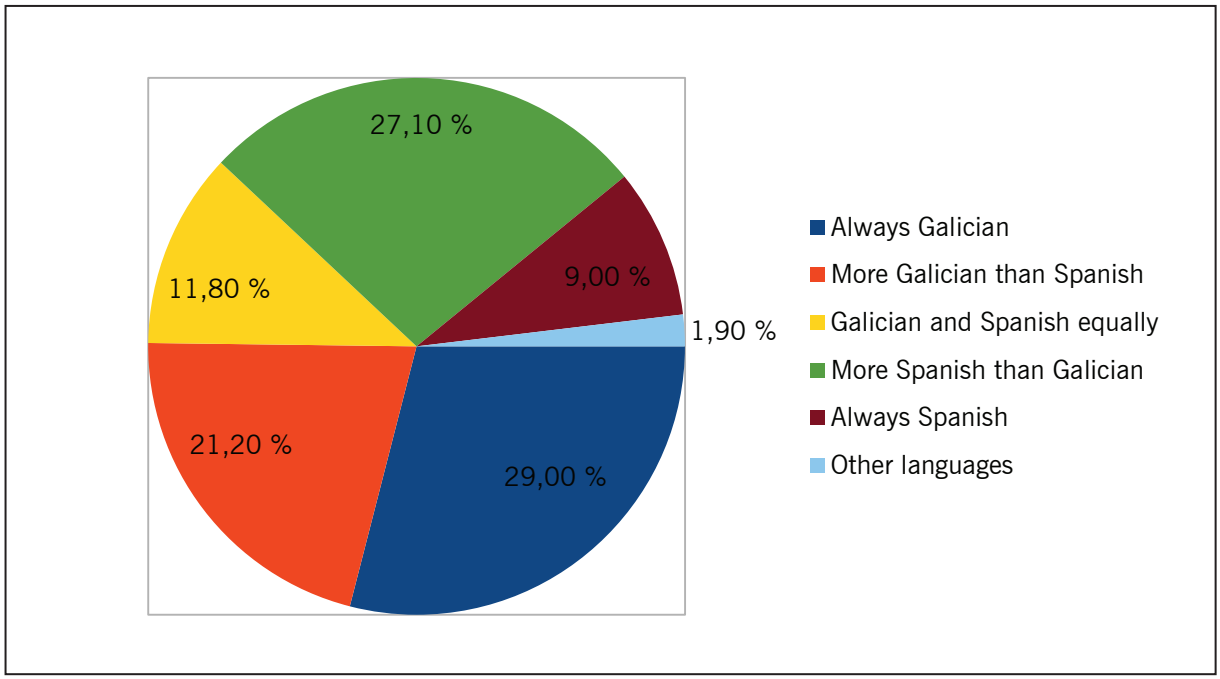
Source: Suevos, 2021.

Figure 5. Respondents' occupation



Source: Suevos, 2021.

Figure 6. Respondents' use of Galician and Spanish



Source: Suevos, 2021.

Table 3. Results of the survey for all respondents, for the teachers and for SLIs and hearing experts

	All respondents		Teachers		SLIs and hearing experts	
Context	**Keep**	**Correct**	**Keep**	**Correct**	**Keep**	**Correct**
Political	18.1	81.9	15	85	73.3	26.7
Documentary	11.2	88.8	8.3	91.7	46.8	53.3
Fiction	57.5	42.5	59.2	40.8	63.3	36.7
Children's programme	8.1	91.9	5	95	33.3	66.7
Political	19	81	11.7	88.3	76.7	23.3
Interviewee	20.9	78.8	15.8	84.2	83.3	16.7
Fiction	72.4	27.6	70.8	29.2	96.7	3.3
News	17.4	82.6	12.5	87.5	63.3	36.7
Weather	22.8	77.2	17.6	82.4	56.7	43.3
Chat show	16	84	13.3	86.8	72.4	27.6

Source: Suevos, 2021.

making errors, which is the reality that motivates this debate and the reason why subtitles are used as a standardisation tool in the first place. More importantly, this is happening at a time when the historical disability slogan "nothing about us without us" is coming into its own, as an increasing number of scholars and artists with disabilities are criticising the notion of accessibility as a process whereby a non-disabled expert grants disabled users access to a piece of work designed by a non-disabled artist. Accessibility is now being complemented with the notions of inclusion and participation in the creation and accessibility process and is becoming a political tool in a wider fight for diversity and against the discrimination of people due to their gender, sex, race, class, sexuality, religion, disability or physical appearance.

Against this complex background, Martínez Lorenzo's attempt to produce a model for the reproduction/correction of oral language errors in Galician subtitles that can work as a happy medium between standardisation and access is both timely and brave. It is also very useful in that it considers different options and scenarios depending on the speech control of the speaker, the audiovisual genre and the intentionality, effect and type of error. I agree with Martínez Lorenzo's proposal that, in principle, errors should be reproduced in fiction but should be corrected in children programmes, whether or not scripted, since the latter are part of an overall learning process and children are not so likely to be interested in the fact that a few errors have made their way into a programme. The same may hold for the odd error made by a news presenter in a scripted programme.

However, errors in the spontaneous speech of an interviewee may pose a different scenario. Here, Martínez Lorenzo recommends correcting all grammar errors (although not vocabulary errors), which is backed up by most of the respondents of the above-discussed survey. In my view, though, this undermines the access provided for viewers with hearing loss. Whether or not a speaker (be they a politician or not) makes grammar mistakes is an important part of their idiolect (their idiosyncratic use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) and of how they come across to others. It is likely to provide relevant information for the hearing viewers, who hear the error, read the corrected subtitle and "build an image of him or her as a person who does not speak much Galician or does not master it much, which carries a lot of implications from the point of view of its social meaning" (see the survey above). If the speaker is a politician, this factor may even carry some weight for viewers when it comes to deciding who to vote for. If the speaker is a young, urban, Spanish-speaking professional who has decided to move to a village and set up a farm in a rural area, the grammar errors they make when interviewed in Galician are a key part of who they are, which is the reason why the interview is being conducted. This will not be accessible for viewers with hearing loss, who are excluded from this reality and exposed instead to a "linguistically photoshopped" version of a speaker using perfect grammar. I agree with the group of sign language interpreters and hearing experts in the survey who consider that, at least in situations of unplanned speech (or low speech control), the priority must be to provide equal access to "the what" and "the how". This would involve reproducing the grammar errors rather than correcting them. If there is a concern that viewers may end up learning incorrect Galician, the errors can be marked in the subtitles with a note or, for instance, in italics. Otherwise, if these errors are corrected, we may be replacing one type of discrimination (that of the Galician language) with another (that of viewers with hearing loss).

The Galician language has at its disposal other tools to achieve normalisation. TVG itself is a good example, as it sets out to promote and disseminate Galician culture, language and identity. Journalists can then be expected and even required to make good use of the language. Subtitles, however, are first and foremost an access tool for those who need them the most, i.e. viewers with hearing loss. If we correct the grammar errors of a politician or a spontaneous speaker, we will be presenting viewers with hearing loss with a fake reality (speakers with perfect grammar) hoping that it becomes true. As hearing viewers, we know it is not true (for we can hear the errors), but viewers with hearing loss have no way of knowing. Would we accept this type of manipulation (or modification of reality) if it were forced on us, hearing viewers, for the sake of the normalisation of a minoritised language? My guess, based on the above-mentioned analogy of the bleep censor and the examples of Movistar+, is that we would not. Then again, this is just my point of view as a hearing academic, with no more value than that.

Regardless of the different opinions and stances that may be adopted in this complex debate, some interesting lessons may be learnt. The first one is related to Ellcessor's (2015) warning about the problems involved in the otherwise very useful idea of universal access, that is, the fact that access benefits all. The risk here is to prioritise the benefits that universal design brings to able-bodied people (in this case the role of subtitles as a standardisation tool) over the interests of disabled people. The second one, also drawing on Ellcessor, is the failure to acknowledge the disabled experience. As seen above, all the hearing respondents who chose correction and commented on it did so taking into account issues of language, but not mentioning deaf viewers. In contrast, those who took the latter into account and commented on it (mostly sign language interpreters and hearing experts) opted for reproducing the errors of spontaneous speakers.

The reality is that even though we are using the same access services, we are not all in the same boat, and we are navigating a mediascape that has been designed by and for hearing people. MA may be still starting in Galicia, but it is doing so at a time when access is rapidly giving way to inclusion and participation. In this context, the current MA set-up in many countries where people with disabilities still play a very passive role may soon reveal itself as an anomaly. This can help us question how much "about them" we have been doing "without them" and give way to a more collaborative model for MA training (co-teaching),

research (including surveys such as the one discussed above, which is still to be disseminated amongst viewers with hearing loss) and professional practice (collaboration between access experts and consultants with disabilities).

This would be a very valuable contribution of MA to a more inclusive and diverse society and a good standpoint from which to consider how subtitles can help in the standardisation of a minoritised language such as Galician.

Notes

1. Thanks are due to Laura Feyto, head of access services at TVE, and Marijo Deogracias (University of the Basque Country) for providing the data about RTVE and ETB. The information about Catalonia can be found in the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation's Annual Report (CCMA: 2021) and the Galician figures have been gathered by Martínez Lorenzo from direct contact, observation and official reports (CRTVG 2017a, 2017b, 2018 in Martínez Lorenzo: 2021).
2. It is worth noting here that what this involves is the correction of vocabulary and grammar errors (e.g., misplacement of atonic pronouns, wrong punctuation and accent marks, incorrect verb tenses), not of dialectal traits. TVG has often been criticised for not featuring enough of these traits, which are regarded as a sign of the richness and variety inherent to the Galician language.
3. Thanks are due to Jacobo Currais (University of Vigo) for mentioning this.
4. Two of those examples, the ones about fiction films, could have been better chosen, as one of them includes a dialectal trait, which is neither a vocabulary nor a grammar error, and the other one features a stereotypical error that may have led users to opt against correction.
5. A thorough discussion of the heterogeneity involved within the group of what are called viewers with hearing loss is beyond the scope of this article. However, suffice it to say that hard-of-hearing viewers and those who lose their hearing later in life can use their residual hearing to access some of the audio and tend to favour verbatim subtitles.

References

AENOR. *Subtitulado para personas sordas y personas con discapacidad auditiva (UNE 153010)*, 2012.

Branson, J. "Bridging the Maker-User Gap: the Case of the Italian Short Film Acquario". *Understanding Media Accessibility Quality (UMAQ) Conference, 4-5 June 2018*.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 2019. *BBC Subtitle Guidelines*. http://bbc.github.io/subtitle-guidelines/ [Consulted: 21.4.2021].

Butler, J. "Integral Captions and Subtitles: Designing a Space for Embodied Rhetorics and Visual Access". *Rhetoric Review*, 2018, *37*(3), 286–299. https://doi.org/10.1080/07350198.2018.1463500

Carroll, M.; Ivarsson, J. *Code of Good Subtitling Practice*. London: European Association for Studies in Screen Translation, 1998.

Chaume, F. "An overview of audiovisual translation: Four methodological turns in a mature discipline". *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 2018, 1(1), 40–63. https://www.jatjournal.org/index.php/jat/article/view/43/3

Cifuentes, P. "Cuatro de cada cinco españoles eligen ver el fútbol con los sonidos enlatados del FIFA". *El Confidencial,* 16-07-2020. https://www.elconfidencial.com/deportes/futbol/2020-07-16/cuatro-de-cada-cinco-espanoles-ven-el-futbol-con-el-ruido-virtual-de-un-dj-que-pincha-sonidos-del-fifa_2683491/

Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals (CCMA). *Memòria anual de la Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals*. 2020. Barcelona: CCMA, 2021. https://statics.ccma.cat/multimedia/pdf/7/9/1626432387497.pdf

Corporación Radio e Televisión de Galicia (CRTVG). *Informe sobre a xestión de servizo público da Corporación de Radio e Televisión de Galicia 2016*. Santiago de Compostela: CRTVG, 2017a.

Corporación Radio e Televisión de Galicia (CRTVG). *Memoria de servizo público 2017*. Santiago de Compostela: CRTVG, 2017b

Corporación Radio e Televisión de Galicia (CRTVG). *Memoria de servizo público 2018*. Santiago de Compostela: CRTVG, 2018. https://bit.ly/3aJdegJ

Crenshaw, K. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color". *Stanford Law Review*, 1991, 43(6), 1241-1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Díaz Cintas, J.; Remael, A. *Audiovisual translation: subtitling*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Docker, A. *Dear Hearing World*. Red Earth Studio, 2019.

Ellcessor, E. "Blurred lines: Accessibility, disability, and definitional limitations." *First Monday*, 2015, 20(9). https://firstmonday.org/article/view/6169/4904

Elmén, B. *Robert McRuer on Crip Theory*. 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZW6yoqINv4&t=247s

Fernández-Torné, A.; Matamala-Ripoll, A.; Vilaró, A. "The reception of subtitled colloquial language in Catalan: an eye-tracking explanatory study". *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2014, 11, 63–80.

Fryer, L. "Staging the Audio Describer: An Exploration of Integrated Audio Description". *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 2018, 38(3). http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/6490/5093

Greco, G.M. "The Nature of Accessibility Studies". *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 2018, 1(1), 204–232. https://www.jatjournal.org/index.php/jat/article/view/51/10

Hatim, B.; Mason, I. *The Translator as Communicator*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 1997.

Instituto Galego de Estatística (IGE). *Coñecemento e uso do galego*, 2014. Santiago de Compostela: IGE, 2014.

Instituto Galego de Estatística (IGE). *Enquisa estructural a fogares. Coñecemento e uso do galego. Resumo de resultados 27/9/2019*. 2019. https://www.ige.eu/estatico/estatRM.jsp?c=0206004&ruta=html/gl/OperacionsEstruturais/Resumo_resultados_EEF_Galego.html

ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 35. 2018. ISO/IEC 20071-23:2018. *Information technology – User interface component accessibility – Part 23: Visual presentation of audio information (including captions and subtitles)*. https://bit.ly/3feDr9g [21.4.2021].

Kleege, G. "Audio Description Described: Current Standards, Future Innovations, Larger Implications". *Representations*, 2016, 135(1), 89–101.

Kleege, G. *More than Meets the Eye: What Blindness Brings to Art*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Martínez Lorenzo, M. "Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Galicia(n): State of the Art and Proposals for Improvements". In: González, M.G. (ed.), *Proceedings of the V Conference of the PhD Programme in Communication*. Universidade de Vigo, 2019, 19-35.

Martínez Lorenzo, M. " La accesibilidad a los medios y las lenguas minorizadas: estado de la cuestión del subtitulado para sordos (SpS) en la televisión de Galicia (TVG)." In: Waluch de la Torre, E.; Popek-Bernat, K.; Jackiewicz, A.; Beltrán Cejudo, G. (eds.). *Las lenguas ibéricas en la traducción y la interpretación.* Warsaw: Biblioteka Iberyjska, 2020a, 225–249. https://mhprl.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Las-lenguas-ibericas.pdf

Martínez Lorenzo, M. "Subtitling for Social and Language Minorities: Subtitling of Oral Errors and Dialectal Features in the Case of Minoritised Languages". *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 2020b, 3(2), 310–327. https://doi.org/10.47476/jat.v3i2.2020.123

Martínez Lorenzo, M. *Media Accessibility in Galicia(n): Guidelines for Inclusive Subtitling*. Universidade de Vigo, 2021. PhD Thesis. http://www.investigo.biblioteca.uvigo.es/xmlui/handle/11093/2548

Martirosyan, L. "Artist Christine Sun Kim on 'deaf rage,' the Super Bowl and the power of sound". *The World*, 2020. https://www.pri.org/stories/2020-02-13/artist-christine-sun-kim-deaf-rage-super-bowl-and-power-sound

McConkie, G.; Yang, S. "How Cognition Affects Eye Movements during Reading". In: Hyönа, J.; Radach, R.; Deubel, H. (eds.), *The Mind's Eye: Cognitive and Applied Aspects of Eye Movement Research*. Amsterdam: North Holland, 2003.

Mundy, J. *Definition of Access, Inclusion and Participation*. Twitter, 2017. https://twitter.com/JodeeMundy/status/880254164231573504

Netflix. *Timed Text Style Guide: General Requirements*. 2019. https://bit.ly/3rlE7vM [21.4.2021].

O'Brien, S. *Cognitive explorations of translation*. London: Bloomsbury, 2011.

Orero, P.; Doherty, S.; Kruger, J.-L.; Matamala, A.; Pedersen, J.; Perego, E.; Romero-Fresco, P.; Rovira-Esteva, S.; Soler-Vilageliu, O.; Szarkowska, A. (2018). "Conducting experimental research in audiovisual translation (AVT): A position paper". *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, 2018, 30, 105–126. https://www.jostrans.org/issue30/art_orero_et_al.pdf

Romero-Fresco, P. *The Reception of Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Europe*. Bern, Berlin, Brussels, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2015.

Romero-Fresco, P. *Accessible Filmmaking: Integrating Translation and Accessibility into the Filmmaking Process*. London: Routledge, 2019. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429053771

Romero-Fresco, P. "In support of a wide notion of media accessibility: Access to content and access to creation". *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 2018, 1(1), 187–204.

Spolsky, B. *Language Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Suevos, S. *Accesibilidade e normalización no subtitulado galego*. Vigo: Universidade de Vigo, 2021.

Talaván Zanón, N. "Using subtitles to enhance foreign language learning". *Porta Linguarum: Revista Internacional de Didáctica de las Lenguas Extranjeras*, 2006, 6, 41–52.

Thompson, H. "Audio Description: Turning Access to Film into Cinema Art". *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 2018, 38(3). https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/6487/5085

Venuti, L. *The translator's invisibility*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Zdenek, S. "Designing Captions: Disruptive Experiments with Typography, Color, Icons, and Effects". *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 2018, 23(1).