



University College London

**Audio Description of Audiovisual Programmes
for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong**

by

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Declaration

‘I, [Hoi Ching Dawning LEUNG], confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.’

Signed:

Date: 8th June 2018.....

Abstract

Audio description (AD) is a means of translating visual and sound elements in audiovisual programmes, as well as in the performing and visual arts, into verbal elements, thus making these materials accessible to viewers with visual impairments. It has been a major area of interest within the field of audiovisual translation studies in recent years and a considerable amount of literature has been published on end users' reception in Western countries. When it comes to the Chinese speaking world, little literature is available on AD reception studies and no previous works have investigated the media uses and gratifications of the blind and the partially sighted in Hong Kong. The main purpose of this research is to examine the media use behaviour and motivations as well as the reception and preferences of the visually impaired audiences when consuming AD. After examining the main characteristics of AD and its history in Hong Kong, the study focuses on a media accessibility survey under the uses and gratifications framework, and an AD reception study. The views of 44 blind and partially sighted participants are elicited through individual face-to-face interviews. During the reception study, a pre-questionnaire, a questionnaire proper, experimental clips with different versions of AD, and a post-questionnaire were used to identify their AD preferences. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The results reveal that the participants are not satisfied with the current provision of AD services, they demand higher volumes of materials with AD, and have certain AD preferences that if taken properly into account by the industry could help improve their comprehension of audiovisual programmes. The findings offer important insights into the situation of AD in Hong Kong and recommendations are put forward for future developments to serve the community, especially in terms of training audio describers.

Keywords: *audio description; reception studies; media uses and gratifications; visual impairments; blindness; low vision; sight loss; the blind and partially sighted; media accessibility; media access; audiovisual translation; media uses; media use behaviours; media use motivations; film/movie viewing motivations; television viewing motivations; mass communication*

Impact Statement

Although the provision of audio description (AD) in Hong Kong is still far less developed than in other parts of the world, where AD has a longer tradition and is subject to legislation – some European countries, the USA, Australia and Canada –, it is also true that Hong Kong has been playing a pioneering role in the Chinese speaking world as far as AD is concerned. This thesis, the first study to be ever conducted on Cantonese AD, investigates AD from the users' perspectives, focusing on awareness, needs, preferences and gratification of the blind and partially sighted in Hong Kong. Substantial field work has been done among this hard-to-reach social group and practical insights and advice for AD provision in Hong Kong are provided.

Extensive research has shown that very few studies have been conducted on the uses and gratifications framework applied to the reception of AD in a Chinese context and, to date, none can be found with Hong Kong as the main case study. In this respect, it can be argued that this project is the first of its kind and therefore original. The research focuses on the media uses and gratifications of the blind and partially sighted people in Hong Kong as well as on the practice of AD in the same city and the results can be of interest to other Chinese and Asian communities and to stakeholders in Western countries wishing to gain some insights into the situation of AD in other continents. In particular, the methodology applied in this investigation offers the potential of being easily extrapolated and replicated in other local contexts. New results could be contrasted with those of this research as such an analysis may provide us with further insights into the cultural similarities and differences that characterise the AD preferences of people with visual impairments around the globe, when it comes to consuming audiovisual productions.

The empirical results yielded by this research have also opened up potential avenues for further investigation into topics such as the production of AD for the Hong Kong and Chinese markets and the role of audio describers in the process. This research can also serve as a point of reference for the drafting of a set of AD guidelines that could be used professionally in the Chinese world, both to inform the current AD practice in Hong Kong and in other Chinese-speaking areas as well as to train future professionals. Finally, the findings may prove of interest to the Hong Kong

government for the provision of AD at an institutional level and for the potential issuing of related legislation. In fact, while writing this thesis, AD has been growing significantly in Hong Kong, with the creation of the Audio Description Association (Hong Kong) and the funding by the Hong Kong government of some of the first social innovation projects focused on AD.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AD	audio description
ADAHK	Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong
ATV	Asia Television Limited
AuDeAHK	Audio Description Association (Hong Kong)
AVT	audiovisual translation
BSHK	Blind Sports Hong Kong
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
HKBN	Hong Kong Broadband Network
HKBU	Hong Kong Blind Union
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HKSb	The Hong Kong Society for the Blind
HKTv	Hong Kong Television Network Limited
i-CABLE	Hong Kong Cable Television Limited
NGO	non-governmental organisation
now TV	PCCW Media Limited
<i>p</i>	p-value
RTHK	Radio Television Hong Kong
<i>t</i>	<i>t</i> -value
TVB	Television Broadcasts Limited
SD	standard deviation
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

In recent years, audio description (AD) has become an increasingly prominent topic within audiovisual translation (AVT) studies and some researchers have shown a heightened interest in conducting reception studies in AD. The number of people with seeing difficulty in Hong Kong is estimated to be at around 174,800 (Census and Statistics Department 2014: 77). Compared to other Western and Asian countries (e.g. Korea and Japan), the provision of AD in Hong Kong is very limited: it is non-existent on television and there is no regular provision of AD in cinemas or museums, not to mention any current legislation regulating media access for the visually impaired. With great effort, it is up to local, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide AD services in this wealthy city. Although the development of AD in Hong Kong is relatively young, the provision of AD services has rapidly grown in the past few years and it now covers various areas: films (including live AD showing sessions in cinemas and pre-recorded AD available on DVDs), visits and outings, performing arts and visual arts. The government has also shown some awareness of the special needs of the visually impaired by producing short videos with AD. The NGO Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSBB) has developed AD services for visits and outings, where the role of the audio describers varies as they can serve as tour guides themselves in some cases or can simply complement the services offered by other tour guides. AD is also used in other areas of the visually impaired daily life, such as sports training.

In the past years, several tertiary elective courses focused on AD have been designed to train new blood for this service in Hong Kong and to equip them with professional skills. Training has been traditionally organised by professional associations and has

only lately been introduced in the curriculum of some degree programmes. The newly founded NGO Audio Description Association (Hong Kong), AuDeAHK, provides various AD training workshops to cater for the growing demand of AD services. Although there is still a long way to go, these initiatives clearly highlight the increasing attention that AD is receiving in Hong Kong.

So far, however, few studies on media accessibility for the blind and partially sighted in Hong Kong have been conducted and the investigation of AD in Hong Kong remains a relatively unexplored area. Questions have been raised about the reception of the end users of AD and about their AD preferences. In addition, no research has been found that surveyed the uses and gratifications of this sensory impaired group. It is, therefore, important to conduct research on these two fronts. The aim of this research is to investigate the media use behaviours and motivations, as well as gratifications of the people with visual impairments in Hong Kong, and more importantly their likes and dislikes regarding the AD provided for audiovisual programmes.

1.2 Research objectives and questions

The main objective of this study is to investigate the media uses and gratifications, and AD preferences of the visually impaired in Hong Kong, with special emphasis on the AD of feature films, as opposed to live events. Therefore, most of the examples to illustrate certain points throughout this project are to be seen in the context of the provision of AD for films in Hong Kong and, in most cases, the discussion is limited to only Cantonese AD for local films in Cantonese. Any departure from this focus will be explicitly mentioned when discussing the examples.

To find out the AD preferences of the visually impaired in Hong Kong, the following research questions are queried and tested in this doctoral project:

1. How aware are visually impaired audiences in Hong Kong of accessibility practices like audio description?
2. Given the current provision of film audio description in Hong Kong, are people with visual impairments satisfied with the current situation in Hong Kong?

3. What are their preferences when it comes to the nature of the AD of audiovisual programmes and the various types of AD services that they would like to be offered to them?

A tributary line of research tries to elucidate the participants' interest in the expansion of the provision of this access service to embrace other social spheres by addressing the following question:

4. Do visually impaired audiences want more provision of AD services to help them to gain access to other types of cultural and leisure activities/events apart from audiovisual productions?

The study has been divided into two main parts in order to examine these research questions. In part one, a media accessibility survey under the uses and gratifications framework has been designed to address the following issues:

- to investigate the actual ownership of media equipment by the visually impaired in Hong Kong;
- to study their media use behaviours and motivations; and
- to assess their satisfaction with the local media.

In part two, a three-stage AD reception study (including a pre-questionnaire, a questionnaire proper with experimental clips, and a post-questionnaire) has been conducted to investigate the following dimensions:

- to examine their needs as regards the provision of AD;
- to study how useful and helpful AD is for their comprehension of audiovisual programmes;
- to ascertain their AD likes and dislikes; and
- to identify some of the issues that need to be addressed in order to improve this service in Hong Kong.

In the following section, the justification for this research will be discussed to show the relevance of the research objectives as well as the research questions addressed.

1.3 Justification for the research

Although the development of AD for people who are blind and partially sighted in Hong Kong is in its infancy, the take-off has been rapid in recent years, with more stakeholders interested in the topic and more visibility of this practice in society. To a large extent, this is an ideal moment in history to conduct more investigation in order to examine the media access situation of this sensory impaired group and to identify their needs when it comes to AD services. As mentioned before, the aim of this research is to investigate the media use behaviours and motivations of the visually impaired in Hong Kong, as well as their AD preferences, especially in the case of audiovisual programmes. Since previous studies have not dealt with AD reception studies of people with vision impairments in Hong Kong, this research can provide some significant data on their likes and dislikes when confronted with the audiovisual media. The results of this research can serve as reference for assisting audio describers to gain a better understanding about the visually impaired in Hong Kong and how to provide AD services that suit their needs best. More importantly, currently there are no AD guidelines that cater for the Chinese community and it is hoped that the findings of this research can also serve as reference for drafting standards and guidelines that could be used in the production of AD scripts in Chinese. In addition, due to a lack of research on the media uses and gratifications of the visually impaired community in Hong Kong, this research may also provide some invaluable data on their media use habits and may serve as a media and AD needs analysis that would be beneficial for the providers of AD, be it TV broadcasters, cinema exhibitors, live events organisers or NGOs. It is also hoped that the findings may prove of interest to the Hong Kong government to boost their initiatives in the provision of AD at an institutional level and even for the drafting of potential related legislation. The outcomes of this investigation might also have a ripple effect in mainland China, where provision of AD is still incipient.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis has been divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction, provides some background information on the motivation for this research, the research objectives and questions of this study, as well as its justification.

Chapter 2 defines the nature of audio description and examines the different aspects that characterise this professional practice. It mainly deals with the links between AD and translation, the relationship between AD and language system, the profile of AD consumers, the various AD types, and the actual production of AD.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the development of AD around the world. The history and recent situation of the provision of AD, relevant media access legislation, and AD guidelines and training in the Western and Asian worlds are discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 focuses on the development of AD in Hong Kong and pays special attention to the background and disability-related legislation that is currently in place. Various types of AD services and AD training provided in Hong Kong are also explored.

Chapter 5 reviews some of the literature written on the topic of media uses and behaviours and discuss the worth of the uses and gratifications framework for this particular project. It also reviews various studies that consider different dimensions of AD.

Chapter 6 describes the methodology followed in the media accessibility survey and the AD reception study that has been conducted with the blind and partially sighted in Hong Kong.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the survey and the reception study and in Chapter 8 these results are analysed and discussed in greater detail.

Finally, Chapter 9 concludes this thesis by summarising its main findings and outcomes, pointing to potential future AD developments in Hong Kong, acknowledging some of the limitations of the study and offering recommendations for future research.

A bibliography and 19 appendices are attached to the end of this thesis, including copies of the participant information sheet; the informed consent form; the

questionnaire on Media Accessibility Survey; the pre-questionnaire, questionnaire proper and post-questionnaire of the Reception Study; the AD scripts of the experimental clips; as well as a DVD containing all the six clips used during the experiments. As some documents were originally developed in Chinese (version 1), a translation into English (version 2) has also been included for the benefit of the reader.

Chapter 2

The Nature of Audio Description

2.1 What is Audio Description?

Audio description (henceforth, AD) is also known as ‘audiodescription’, ‘video description’,¹ ‘Descriptive Video’,² ‘described video’ and ‘descriptive narration’ among others (Clark 2001; Piety 2004:453; Hernández- Bartolomé and Mendiluce Cabrera 2009). In this terminological landscape, ‘audio description’ is the only generic term and the most widely spread (Clark 2001; Hernández- Bartolomé and Mendiluce Cabrera 2009: 2), and, as it can be applied to various areas rather than limited to describing only videos, it will be used as the preferred term throughout this thesis.

As far as its positioning in academia is concerned, AD has been steadily gaining ground in the translation field in the past decades. Hyks (2005: 6), a veteran AD practitioner working in the UK, defines AD as:

a precise and succinct aural translation of the visual aspects of a live or filmed performance, exhibition or sporting event for the benefit of visually impaired and blind people. The description is interwoven into the silent intervals between dialogue, sound effect or commentary.

Another seasoned AD practitioner, Benecke (2004: 78), who has worked for many years at the broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk in Germany, specifies the elements that AD should include, by defining this professional practice as:

¹ ‘Video description’ is a term used by the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 in the USA (www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-cvaa).

² A service mark of the public TV Station WGBH’s Descriptive Video Service, based in Boston, Massachusetts, USA (Clark 2001).

the technique used for making theatre, movies and TV programmes accessible to blind and visually impaired people: an additional narration describes the action, body language, facial expressions, scenery and costumes. The description fits in between the dialogue and does not interfere with important sound and music effects.

Published by AENOR (2005: 4) as *Audio Description for People with Visual Impairment: Requirements for AD and Development of Audioguides*, the official Spanish National Standard UNE highlights the nature and function of AD as follows:

Audio description is an assistive service consisting of a set of techniques and abilities, whose main objective is to compensate for the lack of perception of the visual component in any audiovisual message, by providing suitable sound information which translates or explains, in such a way that the visually impaired perceive the message as an harmonious work and is as similar as possible to the way it is perceived by the sighted people. (in López-Vera 2006: 2)

AD should be thus seen as an assistive service for facilitating the comprehension of visually impaired audiences and helping them to get a better understanding of the described material. Although some may question whether AD is a derivative type of activity, it should be viewed as “a new product [...] a physical repackaging that serves to synchronize the descriptive content” (Piety 2004: 465). According to the US Copyright Office (2013: 1), “A derivative work is a work based on or derived from one or more already existing works” or “a ‘new edition’ of a preexisting work in which the editorial revisions, annotations, elaborations, or other modifications represent, as a whole, an original work”. If film is taken as an example, AD is “inserted only between the dialogue of a character and the narration, and relate[s] directly to the visual information in the film, rather than introduce new characters or action” (Piety 2004: 465). From this perspective, it can be safely argued that AD is not a derivative work as such, although it cannot be ignored that AD itself cannot stand alone and it is in a dependency relationship with an original programme or performance. As highlighted by Piety (2003: 25), AD is “subordinate to another text” and must be provided together with the showing of the described film for it to be meaningful. Indeed, “Important information for the consumer of [AD] is carried through the dialogue in the original production and the other audio cues, such as environmental sounds and music, that appear to the consumer as an audio amalgam” (Piety 2004: 455). Without AD, this information that can be only heard by the

visually impaired audience will be too cryptic for them to assign the correct meaning. To try and follow a film under such circumstances is not an easy task, as the meaning of the story will be incomplete and the enjoyment of the film will be seriously curtailed.

2.2 AD as a type of translation

In his seminal article, Jakobson (1959/2000: 114) introduced the following three types of translation: (1) “Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language”, which means the reworking of texts within the same language (e.g. from spoken English to written English), for example translating the dialogue of an English film into English subtitles; (2) “Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language”, which refers to the reworking of texts that takes place within different languages, such as translating the dialogue of an English film into Chinese subtitles; and (3) “Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems”, referring to changes, either in written or spoken form, that imply the transformation into other communicative, such as transforming a novel into a film or a poem into a ballet, also known as ‘adaptation’.

According to Díaz-Cintas (2008: 7), “AD consists in transforming visual images into words, which are then spoken during the silent intervals of audiovisual programmes or live performances”; a definition that foregrounds the involvement and transformation of two different types of sign – from visual signs to verbal signs. From this perspective, AD can be understood as a form of intersemiotic translation, albeit operating in the opposite direction to that proposed by Jakobson (1959/2000: 114), i.e. translating images and nonverbal signs into verbal signs.

Indeed, the nature of AD as an instance of intersemiotic translation has been also acknowledged by authors like Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004), Orero (2012), Chiaro (2013) and Mazur (2015), to name but a few. For his part, Benecke (n.d.: 1) suggests that AD should be called ‘partial translation’ as this professional practice “is not translation of an original as a whole but only of a part of

the original”. In the case of films, it means that the dialogue, sound effects, music and any other audio cues from the original film remain the same, and the visual images are translated into AD, as well as any necessary information to explain some of the audio clues.

As a type of translation, AD can be categorised as a mode within the wider field of audiovisual translation (AVT). AVT is an umbrella term that refers to the translation of audiovisual products, including modes like subtitling, dubbing, voiceover, and surtitling on the one hand.³ It also encompasses a set of practices that fall under the category of accessibility and include audio description for the blind and the partially-sighted (AD), sign language interpreting, subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing (SDH), and respeaking. For Chiaro (2013: 4-5), the terms ‘accessibility’ or ‘inclusion’ refer to “the provision of audiovisual products such as plays, films, and opera for all members of the public including those who are in some way sensorially (sic) challenged”. She also explains that “audiovisuals are made to be both heard (*audio*) and seen (*visual*) simultaneously [and] the verbal and visual contents of audiovisual products function inseparably to create a meaningful whole” (*ibid.*: 1). Since the end users are either hearing or visually impaired, they then miss the audio and/or visual information when encountering audiovisual material and this is the reason why special access services need to be offered to them.

The types of translation that assist the two sensory challenged groups to gain access to audiovisuals – i.e. sign language, SDH and AD – somehow fit into the definition of intersemiotic translation. Indeed, sign language interpreters translate verbal signs (*audio*) into nonverbal signs communicated through their hands, face and body; whereas SDH implies translating verbal information (*audio*) and other nonverbal acoustic information, such as music and sound effects, into writing, thus relating to both intralingual and intersemiotic translation. Finally, as has been explained previously, AD can also be considered another form of intersemiotic translation, as images, and to a lesser extent sounds, are translated into words.

³ Surtitling consists in the translation of dialogue and lyrics of performing arts projected above a stage in the theatre (Díaz-Cintas and Anderman 2009).

In the AD translation process, elements of the source text are translated into words that form the target text. In the case of film, the process consists in translating visual, and to a lesser extent audio, signs into verbal description. In this context, the source text is the original film, and the target text is the film with the addition of the AD. The multimodal nature of the source text is foregrounded by Reiss (1971/2000: 43), who talks about films being an audio-medial type of text that “is distinctive in [its] dependence on non-linguistic (technical) media and on graphic, acoustic, and visual kinds of expression. It is only in combination with them that the whole complex literary form realizes its full potential”. Chiaro (2013: 1) echoes her definition and states that films are “made up of numerous codes that interact to create a single effect [and] contain a series of verbal messages that will be perceived both acoustically and visually”. In this semiotic composite, verbal signs encompass acoustic elements such as dialogue exchanges between actors and song lyrics as well as visual elements in the form of written information that appear on screen, such as opening credits, closing credits, street signs, newspapers headlines, and text messages among others. On the other hand, nonverbal signs include both acoustic elements like sound effects, music, background noises and body sounds (breathing, hiccups, laughter, crying, etc.); as well as visual elements like actors’ facial expressions, gestures and movements, costumes, hairstyles, makeup, and so on. Table 2-1 below offers a synoptic overview of the various semiotic signs that contribute to the polysemiotic nature of the audiovisual products, adapted from Chiaro (2009: 143):

	VISUAL	ACOUSTIC
NONVERBAL	scenery, lighting, costumes, props, etc. ALSO: gestures, facial expressions, body movements, etc.	music, background noise, sound effects, etc. ALSO: laughter, crying, humming, body sounds (breathing, coughing, etc.)
VERBAL	street signs, shop signs, written realia (newspapers, letters, headlines, notes,), etc.	dialogue exchanges, song lyrics, poems, etc.

Table 2-1: The polysemiotic nature of audiovisual products (Chiaro 2009: 143)

As narrative descriptions that are delivered verbally, AD scripts are written to be spoken. When preparing the script, the audio describer will mainly translate the visual signs of the film into verbal information to be transmitted to the visually impaired audience. Sometimes, unfamiliar sounds and unidentified noises that cannot

be guessed by simply hearing them will also be mentioned in the AD in an attempt to assist the comprehension of the film on the part of the blind and partially sighted viewers (ITC 2000: 18; Chmiel 2015: 37). All in all, AD is an access service whose main objective is to help the visually impaired audience to enjoy a film by not missing the visual (or the audio) information.

2.3 The language of AD

Several studies based on corpus analysis have been carried out to investigate AD as a language system (Piety 2003; Salway 2007; Arma 2011). Piety (2003: 1; 2004: 453) has found AD to be a fundamentally unique process and has studied it from a discursive practice perspective, insomuch as it is a kind of visual assistive discourse that entails a human communication process. In his investigation, he transcribed the AD of four films, containing a total of 23,000 words, and studied the different types of information that audio describers provide. Inspired by Halliday's (1985) functional grammar, a paradigm that considers the process, the participants, as well as the circumstances that surround the communication act, Piety (2004: 459) classifies the information contained in the AD scripts into the following seven groups:

1. Appearance: The external appearance of a person, place, or thing.
2. Action: Something in motion or changing.
3. Position: The location of description or of characters.
4. Reading: Written or understood information that is literally read, summarized, or paraphrased.
5. Indexical: An indication of who is speaking or what is making some sound.
6. Viewpoint: Relating to text-level information and the viewer as viewer.
7. State: Not always visible information, but known to the describer and conveyed in response to visual information.

Salway (2007) conducted a corpus-based analysis of 91 film AD scripts in English and came up with a number of idiosyncratic features that are characteristic of AD, such as the frequent use of some words to describe the characters' appearances, the focus of attention, the interpersonal interactions, the emotional states, and the changes of location of objects and characters. A few years later, Arma (2011) analysed the appearance of adjectives in 69 AD scripts for films, also in English, and discussed a wide range of issues related to this lexical category, including the varying

volume of attributive, predicative, compound, comparative and superlative adjectives found in the corpus as well as the preference for the use of certain sequences of adjectives.

These studies clearly demonstrate that AD scripts do share some special lexical grammatical features, showing that this professional activity relies on a special use of the language system. To discuss AD from a language system perspective, its nature as a special text type and its use of the register should be further clarified. In order to analyse a text type and study its communicative purpose, the functional linguist Halliday (1978: 110) developed a register framework which could prove to be fruitful for this research project. This construct consists of three main components, namely (1) ‘mode’, which refers to the channel of communication and can be written or spoken; (2) ‘tenor’, which refers to the relationships that get established among the relevant participants in the communicative event; and (3) ‘field’, which refers to what is being actually discussed. Based on these theoretical premises, Biber (1993: 245) further developed the framework to include several situational differences in the parameters responsible for register variation in order to “define the target population as completely as possible”. He then suggested the use of ‘stratified sampling’, a type of probabilistic sampling method that can help to evaluate different text types: “In this method, subgroups are identified within the target population (in this case, the genres), and then each of those ‘strata’ are sampled using random techniques” (*ibid*: 244). The situational parameters of the register framework proposed by this scholar are shown in Table 2.2 below:

1	Primary channel	Written/spoken/scripted speech
2	Format	Published/not published (+ various formats within ‘published’)
3	Setting	Institutional/other public/private-personal
4	Addressee	(a) Plurality. Unenumerated/plural/individual/self
		(b) Presence (place and time). Present/absent
		(c) Interactiveness. None/little/extensive
		(d) Shared knowledge. General/specialized/ personal
5	Addressor	(a) Demographic variation. Sex, age, occupation, etc.
		(b) Acknowledgement. Acknowledged individual/institution
6	Factuality	Factual-informational/ intermediate or indeterminate/ imaginative
7	Purposes	Persuade, entertain, edify, inform, instruct, explain, narrate, describe, keep records, reveal self, express attitudes, opinions, or emotions, enhance interpersonal relationship...
8	Topics	

Table 2-2: Situational parameters listed as hierarchical sampling strata (Biber 1993: 245)

A corpus has been built with all the prerecorded Cantonese film AD scripts that are available on twelve DVDs commercialised in the Hong Kong market to date, and its main characteristics have been studied (see section 4.5.6). Table 2-3 below combines Halliday's (1978) concepts of mode, tenor and field (left column) with Biber's (1993) situational parameters (middle column) in order to evaluate the twelve AD scripts in Cantonese. The right column describes the main attributes that have been observed in the Cantonese AD scripts:

		Situational parameters	Film AD on DVD
Mode	1	Primary channel	Spoken (scripted)
	2	Format	Published (available in the market)
	3	Setting	Public / institutional / private-personal
Tenor	4	Addressee	(a) Plurality
			(b) Presence (place and time)
			(c) Interactiveness
			(d) Shared knowledge
	5	Addressor	(a) Demographic variation
			(b) Acknowledgement
Field	6	Factuality	Factual-informational, responding to the elements shown on screen
	7	Purposes	Describe, narrate, inform (very often describers do not express attitudes, opinions, or emotions in the AD)
	8	Topics	Depends on the described film, though many films tend to deal with drama, two are about romance and one is related to martial arts

Table 2-3: Situational parameters of film AD, according to Halliday's (1978) and Biber's (1993: 245) framework

To start with, the attributes of mode (i.e. primary channel, format and setting) of the prerecorded film AD script are discussed. The primary channel is spoken as the AD of the film on DVD is a scripted spoken text. The audio describer first writes an AD script, and then delivers the written AD as spoken text for its recording. As for the format, all these ADs are published as the DVDs of these films are easily available in the market for any interested parties to purchase. The setting is quite wide as these DVDs can be used by the public, by any institutions and by any individuals.

When it comes to the tenor, the addressees are unenumerated because the target audience of the DVDs cannot be specified, even though the primary, intended

audience will be the blind and the partially sighted living in Hong Kong. Typically, a spoken text is directed to addressees that are present, as in the live audio description of an opera or a theatre play, but in the case of prerecorded film AD the addressees are absent and the relationship between product and receptor is non-interactive. Only general knowledge is required on the part of the addressee to use the film AD on DVD. As for the addressor, demographic variation among the describers remains almost entirely unknown as no surveys or studies have been conducted on the sociological profile of these professionals. Only the sex of the describers can be identified through their voice in the AD sound track, with the majority of them being female, and very often their names are not acknowledged. In the second release of the film *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* (Johnnie To 2011), on DVD and with AD, the male describer's name appears written on the root menu, but it is unavailable in any audio format, which makes it very likely that only sighted viewers can know who the describer is. On one occasion, *Ip Man: The Final Fight* (Herman Yau 2013), the describer inserts her name in the AD sound track at the beginning of the film, of which she is in fact the scriptwriter, and her name is also included on the DVD cover. On another occasion, the same describer's name appears on the cover of the film *Two Thumbs Up* (Ho-leung Lau 2015), but this time she is not the scriptwriter.

As for information on the actual AD, purchasers can find out whether a film contains an AD track from the cover of the DVD, which usually also clearly states whether 'Cantonese AD' (or 'Mandarin AD') is included alongside with other available sound tracks, such as 'Cantonese (Dolby Digital 5.1)' and 'Mandarin (Dolby Digital 5.1)'.

Finally, the field (factuality, purposes and topics) is discussed. The AD found on the various DVDs translates the visuals of the film into verbal descriptions. The content of the AD is mainly based on what is happening on the screen, hence it can be said that it is factual-informational. The prerecorded film AD scripts have the ultimate purpose to describe the visuals of the film and to narrate the story in order to inform the blind and partially sighted audience and assist their comprehension of the story plot. In this respect, and according to the AD scripts checked for this research, Cantonese audio describers do not add, in general, any comments or personal feeling

in the description, thus contributing to an AD script of a factual-informational nature. However, on a few occasions, it is evident that some of the describers do not abide by this rule. In the very first film ever distributed on DVD with AD in Cantonese, *After Shock* (Xiaogang Feng 2010), the female describer uses a very dramatic style in her description and acts as if she were a storyteller. The same approach is also adopted by this describer in the film *Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2*. Another female describer, who happens to be the scriptwriter of the film as stated above, includes some interpretations in her AD and, for example, she comments on what the characters in the film are thinking at particular moments. The topic of most of the described films tend to deal with drama, two of them are about romance and one is related to martial arts.

2.4 The functions and principles of AD

The most important goal of AD is to allow the blind and partially sighted viewers to experience “the same effect that the images had on non-blind viewers” (Michalewicz 2015: 240). In other words, the visually impaired audience should be able to enjoy the audio described material in the same way as the sighted audience do. However, I would contend that to recreate sameness in the reception of the AD is chimerical and unattainable and professionals working in the field can only hope to recreate a similar or analogous effect at best. Indeed, even among the visually abled audience, the same programme will have dissimilar effects depending on the backgrounds and personal experiences of individual viewers.

In a more metaphorical manner, Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004: 266) suggest that the major aim of AD is to help the people with visual impairment by building “a bridge in order to bring audiovisual products closer” to them. It can be said that the goals are two-fold: the enjoyment of the film in itself, and the fostering of socio-cultural integration. The latter allows the blind and partially sighted to become a more integrated part of the society, as they can watch television, and go to the cinema or theatre to watch movies or plays with their family and friends. In fact, a previous study conducted by Schmeidler and Kirchner (2001: 205) reported that the legally blind viewers felt more comfortable to discuss audiovisual productions with sighted people if AD had been provided in those

programmes. It also implies assisting those who have visual-sensory impairments to learn about culture, including the social, historical and literary dimensions. In this respect, Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004: 266) provide the following example: “With the AD of habitual gestures – such as a finger on the lips – [blind people] can learn how to communicate and use them and, then, apply them to their lives”. To sum up, AD serves as a tool to assist the blind and partially sighted audience to enjoy audiovisual entertainment, whilst at the same time encouraging social integration and helping AD consumers to broaden their horizons in various aspects (Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera 2009: 3).

When it comes to the actual drafting of the AD script, the British ITC (2000: 9) *Guidance on Standards for Audio Description* propose three golden rules that they suggest have to be adhered to: “(1) describe what is there, (2) do not give a personal version of what is there and (3) never talk over dialogue or commentary”. The first rule of describing ‘what is there’ requires the use of precise language as specific terms are more preferable than general words. For instance, when describing an object, describers should resort to a member of a class (specific), instead of using a class/group (general) lexical item because “[t]he specific word tends to give colour and tang, tends to appeal to the imagination” (Brooks and Warren 1979: 247). In concrete terms, it means that ‘bulldog/German Shepherd’ should be used instead of the superordinate ‘dog’. In the same vein, when having to describe an action, specific words should be used and expressions like ‘somebody nibbles on/gulps down’ should be given priority over more monotonous ‘somebody eats’. By doing so, audio describers have more chances to be successful in their task as they need “to provide the information to which [the visually impaired] audiences do not have access, so that they can reconstruct the story told in the [source text] in the fullest possible way” (Remael *et al.* 2015: 11), to which we could add, ‘and in the most entertaining and enjoyable manner’.

The second rule, i.e. ‘do not give a personal version of what is there’, can be understood as another way of insisting on the describer being objective, or as objective as possible, by avoiding the addition of blatantly personal opinions such as ‘I like this character’ or ‘This scene is my favourite’, but also by being careful in the

choice of certain lexical items that may filter their own opinion or interpretation of the images. Nonetheless, establishing the limits of objectivity can be very hard and will always have to be left to the describer's discretion. A good example that illustrates this point is provided in the guidelines issued by the UK regulator, the British Office of Communication (Ofcom 2015: 21),⁴ whereby a description like 'A turreted bridge over a city river' would fall short of its communicative potential if the sighted audience can see the iconic London's Tower Bridge and, even without an identifying caption, understand that the city is actually London. For a successful outcome in this particular instance, the identification of the city as London should be included in the AD.

As for the third and last rule of never talking over dialogue or commentary, and given the fact that the visually impaired mainly rely on their hearing ability when watching films, this piece of advice should further extend to not talking over lyrics or critical sound effects, whenever possible.

2.5 Types of AD

Orero (2006, in Matamala and Orero 2007b: 333) has developed a taxonomy of AD types, containing six groups in total, according to the following axes:

1. the product: in which the AD can be dynamic (e.g. a film) or static (e.g. a picture) object. Furthermore, dynamic products can be classified into live productions (e.g. theatre plays, ballet performance) and recorded productions like TV programmes;
2. the broadcasting system: meaning that the actual AD for a given programme can be synchronic or pre-recorded;
3. the type of production: i.e. whether it is live or it has been pre-recorded but simulating a live production;
4. the process: indicating whether the AD has been done during the production or during the postproduction stages;
5. the AVT mode: indicating whether the AD has been added to an original programme that has been previously dubbed (dubbing + AD), subtitled (audiosubtitling), or voiced-over (voiceover + AD);
6. the narration: meaning whether the AD has been recorded beforehand or whether it is delivered live.

⁴ Although Ofcom's guidelines have not been scientifically proven, it is a document that "provides a code of practice for the handful of companies that provide TV AD" (Fryer 2010: 63).

Matamala (2007, in Matamala and Orero 2007b: 333) makes a broader distinction between two main types, live AD and recorded AD, depending on whether the programme or event to be described is being performed live or has been recorded beforehand. She then further subcategorises live AD into planned, improvised and a third group in between, which occurs when the audio describer has a chance to watch the audiovisual material before the actual AD event, but does not have enough time to write a script for it. Recorded ADs and planned live ADs give audio describers the opportunity to produce a scripted description after they have received a copy of the recorded programme, be it a film or a TV drama, or after they have had a chance to see the rehearsal(s) of a live performance or, increasingly more common these days, to receive a copy of the recorded performance. If the source text is a recorded programme, exact in and out timecodes can be identified and spotted for the insertion of the AD snippets. Improvised live ADs are unscripted and, according to Matamala (*ibid*), the semi-improvised live group tends to be also unscripted, though on occasions the event can also be partially scripted or semi-scripted. A typical example of the latter is the audio description of lion dance performances during the spring dinner in the Chinese New Year, when the audio describer is allowed to attend one of the rehearsals (Leung 2015). This experience is most fruitful for the professional, who can then prepare some notes with the keywords to be later used during the live performance for describing the movements and actions of the performers. These written notes tend to focus on the descriptions of set routines, especially for the opening of the show, the climax and the ending of the performance, but, during the live delivery of the AD, the audio describer has to improvise as some of the lion's movements and actions may be actually different to those choreographed during the rehearsal (see section 4.5.10 AD for Lion Dance Performance).

Table 2-4 below illustrates the various types of AD according to the different parameters discussed:

Type	Recorded AD	Live AD		
Sub-varieties		Planned	Between planned and improvised	Improvised (unexpected AD request)
AD script	Scripted	Scripted	Semi-scripted	Unscripted
Conditions for AD script preparation	Recording provided in advance	Chance to see rehearsal Recording provided in advance	Chance to see rehearsal Recording provided in advance	No chance to see rehearsal No recording provided
Examples	Films, TV programmes	Theatre plays Opera productions	Lion dance performance Theatre plays Opera productions	Any programme or performance, such as a parade, opera, or play.

Table 2-4: Types of recorded and live ADs

2.6 The AD consumers: people with visual impairments

The main consumers of AD are the blind and partially sighted, also referred to as the visually impaired; a general term that encapsulates both groups. *The Encyclopedia of Blindness and Vision Impairment*, edited by Sardegna *et al.* (2002: 29), defines ‘visually impaired’ as “a term that describes a recognizable defect or malfunctioning of the eye. Impairments are diagnosed and defined by a medical doctor. Visual impairments range from total blindness to low vision”. According to the international classification of diseases compiled by the World Health Organisation (WHO 205), there are four types of visual impairment: mild, moderate, severe, and blindness. Of these, moderate and severe visual impairment are grouped under the category of ‘low vision’ (WHO 2014). The Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan (Labour and Welfare Bureau 2014) offers a similar classification of visual impairment, as shown in Table 2-5 below:⁵

Classification of Visual Impairment	Visual Function
Mild low vision	Visual acuity: 6/18 to better than 6/60
Moderate low vision	Visual acuity: 6/60 to better than 6/120
Severe low vision	Visual acuity: 6/120 or worse; or Visual field: 20 degrees or less
Total blindness	No light perception

Table 2-5: Classification of Visual Impairment and Visual Function (Labour and Welfare Bureau 2014: 14)

⁵ See section 4.3 for further details on the population with visual impairments in Hong Kong.

In 2012, the WHO issued a report in which it estimated the number of people with visual impairments around the world for the year 2010. The data covered six regions – Africa, the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, South-East Asia and Western Pacific – and concluded that out of a total population of 6,737 million inhabitants, around 285 million (4%) were visually impaired, including 39 million blind people and 246 million with low vision. China (26.5%) and India (21.9%) were the two countries with the highest percentage of people with sight loss. As for their age, approximately 65% (186 millions) of the total visually impaired population were aged 50 and over; around 30% were in the 15-49 age bracket; and the rest were aged 14 and below.

The major triggers of visual impairment are uncorrected refractive errors and cataracts, with other causes being glaucoma, age related macular degeneration (AMD), trachoma, corneal opacities, and diabetic retinopathy (WHO 2012: 6). These eye diseases can lead to different types of sight loss that range from the loss of central or peripheral vision to the absence of sensitivity to light and colour (Hong Kong Blind Union 2013), which in turn materialises in a blurred vision or the inability to see some parts of the visuals. According to Sardegna *et al.* (2002: 29), blindness can be further categorised into two main types, congenital and adventitious, defined as follows:

Congenitally blind refers to an individual blind at birth or during the first five years of life. A congenitally blind child may not have visual memory [while] *adventitiously blind* refers to an individual who becomes blind after five years of age. This individual will probably have some visual memory and can use visualization.

The number of people who are born blind or have lost their vision in early infancy and have no visual memory is actually very small (Fryer and Freeman 2013: 413). In contrast, it is quite common that “people develop sight problems as they get older, through accident or illness”, hence suggesting that “the majority of AD users have access to visual memory” (*ibid.*). Given this finding, it is important for audio describers to remember that they “should take account of the fact that most potential users of [AD] will have some sight, or will have had sight at some stage” (Ofcom 2015: 20) when producing their scripts.

2.7 The ideal AD production team

To produce pre-recorded AD, the ideal production team should consist of at least four roles: an audio description writer, a sighted script quality supervisor, a blind description quality specialist and a voiceover artist (Audio Eyes, 2014) or voice talent, as illustrated in Figure 2-1 below:



Figure 2-1: Ideal four-role AD Production Team

Nonetheless, it is a rather common occurrence in the profession that the audio describer is the professional in charge of producing the AD script as well as delivering it orally, be it live or pre-recorded. This means that the audio describer can, in effect, perform the two roles and act as the AD writer and the voiceover artist as long as s/he has a clear and pleasant speaking voice (Orero 2005).

The AD of films is taken here as a prime example for discussing the four roles that take part in the production of ADs. In the first stages, the AD writer watches the audiovisual product, identifies the silences between the dialogue exchanges where the AD comments could then be inserted, and decides on the details to be described. As highlighted by some practitioners and academics, such as Hyks (2005) and Taylor (2015), the AD writer should use vivid words, and precise and concise language for the description (see also section 2.11). Once the AD is completed, a quality control check should take place, during which it is suggested that blind people be included so that they can volunteer comments for improving the description (Audio Eyes 2014; Remael *et al.* 2015: 10). This is, in fact, the practice that has been regularly adopted throughout the AD production process by the German television company

Bayerischer Rundfunk (Benecke 2004: 79; ADLAB 2014: 13). Therefore, both the sighted script quality supervisor and, more importantly, the blind description quality specialist should be jointly involved in providing feedback on the description to ensure its effectiveness and accuracy, making sure that the final product will cater for “the widest possible audience” (Audio Eyes 2014: online). As for the figure of the blind description quality specialist, it is suggested that the most ideal team should be composed of two professionals, one who is congenitally blind and a second one who has become blind later in life because their needs will be different as they may have different perceptions. Of course, this approach is rather onerous on the finances of the whole process and reaching a final, consensual script can be difficult to achieve if the suggestions of the two specialists are divergent. Once the AD script has been written and checked for accuracy, it is then ready to be recorded by the voiceover artist, sometimes also known as voice talent (Vercauteren 2007: 141). After this stage, the film with the AD is ready to be distributed and consumed by the visually impaired audience.

2.8 The visibility and invisibility of the audio describer

In his book *The Translator’s Invisibility*, Venuti (1995) discusses the visibility of translators in the actual translations that are produced in English-speaking countries. He states that “[t]he more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text” (*ibid*: 1-2). In the case of AD, the debate of whether it is better to have a describer that is visible or rather invisible in the process has also been raised. Chao (2002, in Yeung 2007: 241) claims that audio describers can perform two important roles. One is a subsidiary role as ‘co-narrators’, filling the silent blanks found in audiovisual products with snippets of information for the benefit of the visually impaired. The other is a more visible, pro-active role as ‘independent narrators’ who take full “control of the overall product by making their own narration, the dialogues and soundtrack work together” (*ibid*.). She also suggests the trope of the audio describers being architects in charge of constructing “a virtual world for people with visual impairments to exercise their imagination in the world” (*ibid*.).

The idea that the figure of the describer, as the translator to a large extent, should be secondary and unobtrusive is highlighted by Michalewicz (2015: 239), who reports that several professional guidelines openly advise that audio describers should take a “non-conspicuous” role. In a similar vein, the French Audio Description Charter proposes that “description must blend in with the film [and] remain out of the limelight” (Rai *et al.* 2010: 61); an idea that is also taken up by the Polish standards for AD, which state that “a good describer becomes invisible rendering visible the images they describe” (Szymańska and Strzemiński 2010: 13, quoted and translated in Michalewicz 2015: 239). And, yet again, a similar suggestion is put forward by Benecke (2004: 80) who advocates that “good audio-description should be unobtrusive and neutral, but not lifeless or monotonous. The voice should not draw attention to it but should be a coherent element of the description”.

2.9 Watching films with AD

The communication process of film viewing with the provision of AD is linear. In the sense that it starts from film text, ‘the sender’ as described by Chao (2002: 97), goes through an audio describer and ends up being consumed by an audience of visually impaired people. The describer has a dual role in this communication chain (*ibid.*). On the one hand, s/he is a receiver insofar as s/he has to view the original film as any other member of the audience, albeit with different interests and from a different perspective. On the other hand, s/he is also a sender in charge of writing the AD script and, very often, of orally delivering the AD in her/his role of voiceover artist. Chao (*ibid.*) illustrates the relationship between the film, the audio describer and the audience through a diagram, as presented in Figure 2-2 below:

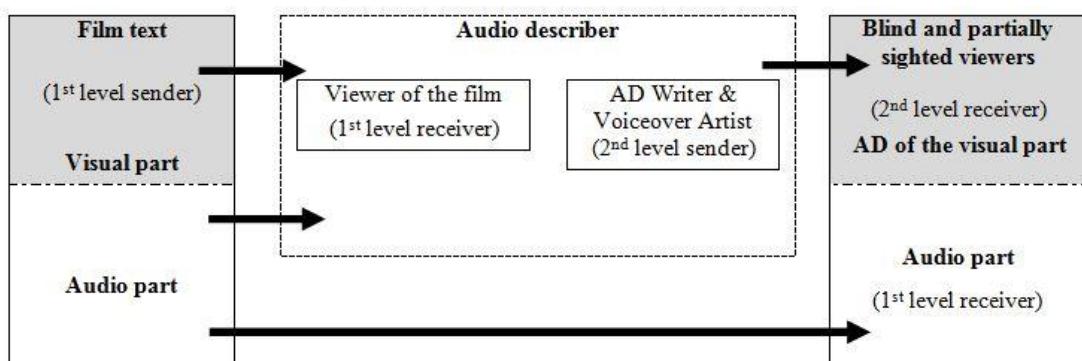


Figure 2-2: Dual communication role of audio describer and the relationship among film, describer and visually impaired viewers (Chao 2002: 97)

A film is composed of visual and audio parts. When it comes to the aural dimension, the film is ‘the first level sender’, while the audio describer and the visually impaired audience are ‘the first level receivers’ as they receive this audio layer of the original product intact, without having gone through any changes. On the contrary, the visual part of the film is directly unattainable by the visually impaired audience and has to be translated into words by the audio describer to successfully reach the viewers with vision loss. As in the case of the audio part, the film is ‘the first level sender’ of the visual part. The describer is ‘the first level receiver’ in the sense that s/he has to watch the film and get first-hand experience of the source text before proceeding to writing and re-presenting the visuals in an AD script, which will be subsequently delivered live and consumed by the AD users or orally recorded and later consumed by the AD users. But then, the describer becomes ‘a second level sender’ when s/he has to actually provide the written description (and verbal recording) of the visual impressions of the film, so that they can be enjoyed by the end users. By then, the blind and partially sighted audience have become ‘the second level receivers’ too.

Inspired by Chao (2002), below is a revised version that shows the dual communication role of audio describer in AD practice. There are a number of changes in this model. The first major difference is that producers are ‘the first level senders’, instead of the film text, because they are the ones that produced both the visual and audio parts of the film. Another major difference is that the programme, i.e. Programme 1 (film/documentary), becomes the ‘channel/medium’ and is referred to as the source text, while the programme with AD, i.e. Programme 2, has been included and becomes another ‘channel/medium’ referred to as the target text. The third and crucial difference is concerning the audio dimension. In a few instances, which happen far less often, the describer may have to describe unfamiliar and unidentifiable sounds in the film, and on these occasions s/he becomes ‘the second level sender’, whose main task is to help the blind and partially sighted audience (the second level receiver) to identify these sounds, as illustrated in Figure 2-3 below:

	Producers	Programme 1 (film or documentary) i.e. Source text	Audio describer		Programme 2 (film or documentary with AD) i.e. Target text	Blind and partially sighted viewers
Role	1 st level sender	Channel/medium	1 st level receiver	2 nd level sender	Channel/medium	2 nd level receiver (described programme) & 1 st level receiver (original film sound track)
Visual	Visual part of film making	Visual part of the film	Viewer of the film	AD Writer & Voiceover Artist	AD: Describe the visuals of the film	Viewer of the described film (2 nd level receiver)
Audio	Audio part of film making	Audio part of the film	Hearer of the film	AD Writer & Voiceover Artist	AD: Describe unfamiliar and unidentifiable sounds of the film	Hearer of the described film (2 nd level receiver) Hearer of the original film (1 st level receiver)

Figure 2-3: Dual communication role of audio describer in AD practice

When it comes to securing the enjoyment of the final AD product, from a communication perspective, Chao (2002: 96) is mainly concerned with how an audio describer (first level receiver) can help the visually impaired viewers (second level receivers) to have the same experience to that felt by the first level receiver. She considers this to be the key principle of AD and the biggest challenge in the AD production process, which is in itself highly arguable since replicating ‘the same’ experience is a toll ordeal, as counter argued by Remael *et al.* (2015). She suggests that if the audio describer takes the role of an ‘independent narrator’, s/he should master the film style and should aim to re-present the film viewing experience (*ibid*: 270). She also takes into account the fact that the visually impaired audience can have a similar viewing experience when compared to that of their sighted counterparts (*ibid*: 290). In a similar vein, Remael *et al.* (2015: 16) point out that “AD does strive to give its target audience an experience that is comparable to that of the sighted target audience”. From a translation perspective, “audio describers are also viewers” and they irremediably have “their own interpretation of the film” (*ibid*.: 15). Indeed, it is impossible for the blind and partially sighted viewers to have the same experience as the sighted viewers. What the visually impaired viewers can experience is only a similar, comparable, approximate experience, but it can never be

‘the same’ experience. In fact, the experience is not even the same among visually able people and different visually impaired people will enjoy the same audio described film in a different, individual manner.

2.10 Main competences of the audio describer

Díaz-Cintas (2007, in Matamala and Orero 2007b: 331-332) has developed a comprehensive list of the competences that are needed for the training of future experts in accessibility services, and grouped them into four main categories. As Díaz-Cintas’s taxonomy is an attempt to cover both SDH as well as AD, the list below has been slightly modified to concentrate solely on AD and to take into account the Hong Kong context:

- a) Linguistic competences:
 - ♦ excellent command of the mother tongue, i.e. Cantonese, in all its dimensions, especially regarding vocabulary, grammar and syntax;
 - ♦ creativity and linguistic sensitivity;
 - ♦ ability to edit and revise texts in the mother tongue;
- b) Competences related to the content:
 - ♦ general knowledge of the topic of disabilities and accessibility;
 - ♦ extensive knowledge of the world of blindness;
 - ♦ knowledge of cinematographic language and the semiotics of the image;
 - ♦ knowledge of other modalities of media accessibility;
 - ♦ knowledge of the labour market and laws concerning the production and distribution of AD;
 - ♦ extensive knowledge of the theory and practice of AD in all its dimensions;
 - ♦ knowledge of theatre, opera and similar live events that can be audio described;
 - ♦ knowledge of the history of the arts.
- c) Technological or applied competences:
 - ♦ computer literacy (general software and Internet);
 - ♦ willingness to update and learn new software;
 - ♦ ability to research and document oneself about potentially any issue;
 - ♦ ability to work with AD software;
 - ♦ advanced IT skills;
 - ♦ vocal and prosodic skills.

- d) Personal and general competences:
- ♦ encyclopaedic knowledge;
 - ♦ ability to self-learn;
 - ♦ ability to analyse, summarise and interpret information;
 - ♦ ability to think quickly, to relate ideas and react rapidly;
 - ♦ organisation, planning and information management skills;
 - ♦ reliability and punctuality;
 - ♦ ability to think critically in problem-solving and decision-taking processes;
 - ♦ labour flexibility and ability to work under stress and time constraints;
 - ♦ willingness to work as part of a team;
 - ♦ ability to act as an expert mediator in multicultural environments.

Other scholars and AD practitioners, such as Navarrete (1997) and Matamala (2006), have also devised their own lists of competences required to become successful audio describers. After comparing and contrasting numerous taxonomies and classifications, including the one by Díaz-Cintas (2007) presented above, the following seem to stand out as the main competences needed by an audio describer in order to be able to fulfil both roles, as AD writer and voiceover artist:

- 1) General knowledge of the visually impaired and the field of accessibility (Chao 2002: 171; Díaz-Cintas 2007);
- 2) empathy with the target audience and their needs. As foregrounded by Yeung (2007: 235), the audio describer should be able to imagine how the visually impaired experience the world through sensations other than visual ones;
- 3) an excellent command of the language used for the AD script and the voiceover (Orero 2005;⁶ Matamala 2006; Matamala and Orero 2007b; Díaz-Cintas 2007);
- 4) a clear and pleasant speaking voice (Orero 2005: 9);
- 5) good sight and hearing, whether aided or unaided (Orero 2005: 9);
- 6) powers of observation (Hyks 2005: 6);
- 7) an ability to summarise information accurately and objectively (Orero 2005; Matamala 2006; Matamala and Orero 2007b; Díaz-Cintas 2007);
- 8) an ability to critically select the most relevant information to be audio described (Matamala 2006; Matamala and Orero 2007b; Díaz-Cintas 2007);
- 9) a wide and eclectic cinematographic knowledge (Navarrete 1997; Díaz-Cintas 2007) as well as an interest in cultural activities (Díaz-Cintas 2007);

⁶ Some of the skills mentioned in Orero's (2005) paper are cited from a promotional leaflet issued by The Audio Description Association and The Open College Network West and North Yorkshire in the UK.

- 10) a good cultural, encyclopaedic knowledge (Navarrete 1997);
- 11) a commitment to fostering access for disabled people, and to the provision of quality AD for the blind and partially sighted people (Orero 2005);
- 12) an ability to work as part of a team (Orero 2005; Díaz-Cintas 2007).

2.11 The process of AD production

Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004: 270-271) list nine steps in the production and distribution of AD for films: (1) choosing suitable films, (2) viewing the film, (3) preparing a draft script, (4) synchronising the description with the film images and soundtrack, (5) rehearsing the description, (6) reviewing the description, (7) recording the description, (8) reviewing the recording, and (9) distributing the audio described film.

AD script writing can be considered to share many similarities with the writing process experienced in language teaching and learning. Langan (2008) divides the writing process into four main stages, namely (1) prewriting, (2) writing a first draft, (3) revising and (4) editing. Inspired by Langan's (*ibid.*) work, according to the nature of the various stages, and thanks to the practical experience that I have accumulated over the years as a practising audio describer in Hong Kong, I have merged the above mentioned nine steps (Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004) together with three newly added phases – namely conducting research on the selected film, editing the description, and proofreading the description –, to come up with a total number of 12 steps. In addition, further to the four main stages of writing process suggested by Langan (2008), a new main stage (post-writing) has been added to the AD production process because, on occasions, the description will be recorded and distributed in the form of DVD.

To gain a better overview of the whole process, the 12 steps – including the nine outlined by Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004), in blue, as well as the three new ones proposed on the basis of my professional experience, in black – have all been grouped under five main umbrella stages: (1) pre-writing, (2) drafting, (3) revising, (4) editing/proofreading, and (5) post-writing, as illustrated in Table 2-6 below:

Stages	Steps
Stage 1: Pre-writing	Step 1 - Choosing suitable films/assigning films
	Step 2 - Viewing the film
	Step 3 – Conducting research on the selected film
Stage 2: Drafting	Step 4 – Preparing a draft script
	Step 5 - Synchronising the description with the film images and soundtrack
Stage 3: Revising	Step 6 - Rehearsing the description
	Step 7 - Reviewing the description
Stage 4: Editing and proofreading	Step 8 – Editing the description
	Step 9 – Proofreading the description
Stage 5: Post-writing	Step 10 - Recording the description
	Step 11 - Reviewing the recording
	Step 12 - Distributing the audio described film

Table 2-6: Five stages of AD production

This detailed list of the various stages and steps encountered in the process of AD production for films and their subsequent distribution can be considered as one of the contributions of this thesis, inasmuch as it offers a comprehensive overview of the numerous steps that punctuate the professional practise. In what follows, these stages are discussed in detailed, using the Hong Kong socio-cultural context as the case study.

Stage 1: Pre-writing

The pre-writing stage refers to any preparations that need to be taken care of before the actual AD script writing can take place. There are three steps within this stage.

Step 1 - Choosing suitable films/assigning films. To date, in Hong Kong, AD is not provided for broadcast productions and the provision for film screening sessions in cinemas is rather limited and usually done on a voluntary basis. Therefore, on most occasions, it is the volunteers themselves who get to choose the films that they like to audio describe. However, when the service is requested by a film production

company or an organisation, the company will decide and assign which film is to be described. In the decision of what productions to audio describe, it has to be born in mind that not all the films are equally suitable for AD. Indeed, as highlighted by authors like Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004: 270), some films have “more action than dialogue, and the description would be almost continuous” with not much interference from the original; whereas in the case of other productions, in which the dialogue exchanges are profuse, users may find the AD “tiring to listen to, even irritating”. Given the little availability of films with AD in Hong Kong, it should not prove too difficult to find productions that blend themselves easily to be audio described.

Step 2 - Viewing the film. After a film has been selected, the recommendation is that audio describers should watch the whole film at least once to gain an overall idea of the characters and the plot. They should get first-hand experience, remember the mood and feelings of the film in their first watch, and try to re-create that mood when writing the AD script. They should then watch it for a second time in order to spot all the silent gaps in the dialogue that are suitable for inserting the AD information. To reinforce their empathy towards the target audience, Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (*ibid.*: 270) suggest that the audio describer could use a special technique and “view the film without the picture or use simspecs (a pair of glasses that simulate visual impairments)” so that they can put themselves in the shoes of the visually impaired audience.

Step 3 – Conducting research on the selected film. Conducting background research on the selected film to be audio described is highly beneficial for preparing the precise and accurate description of some of the visual elements shown in the films. For example, when describing Kung-fu films, the describers should conduct extensive research about martial arts and be able to identify the various moves and techniques, so that they can use the accurate lexicon to draft a more exciting and appropriate description of the fight scenes.

Stage 2: Drafting

The drafting stage implies the writing of the first AD script, and consists of two steps.

Step 4 – Preparing a draft script. While identifying suitable gaps for the overlaying of the AD, describers may want to start drafting the AD script as well. They should decide what, when, how and how much to describe. According to the AD guidelines prepared by the Ofcom (2015: 20) in the UK, visual elements that should be described greatly depend on the extent to which they are relevant to the storyline and the AD “should describe characters, locations, time and circumstances, any sounds that are not readily identifiable, on-screen action, and on-screen information”. As for when to incorporate the AD, a study carried out by Chmiel and Mazur (2011a, in ADLAB 2012: 50) in Poland, reported that most AD consumers found that the major barrier for them to receiving the AD is when it overlaps with dialogue. Hence, Puigdomènec *et al.* (2010: 40) advise that describers should insert descriptions “when there is no dialogue and always [try] to anticipate the action”, a piece of advice that is also found in Hyks (2005: 6). As far as possible, AD should not overlap with sound effects or song lyrics either, unless it is extremely necessary (Ofcom 2015: 21).

Two contrasting views of AD styles, namely objective vs. interpretative, have generated heated debate among scholars and professionals (see also section 2.12). In this respect, the USA approach towards AD is said to be more objective than that practiced in Europe (Audio Description Coalition 2009: 2) and so, for instance, when describing emotions, the USA solution may stay on the descriptive level and state ‘tears are pouring out of his eyes’ or ‘there is a big smile on her face’. In contrast, other professionals prefer to opt for a more interpretative approach and use adjectives such as ‘sad’ or ‘happy’ to describe the same emotions (Puigdomènec *et al.* 2010: 40).

Another aspect that sparks off an intense debate in academic exchanges is whether cinematic language and terminology should be used as part of the AD discourse or not. As pointed out by Orero (2012), filmic language has great importance in the

creation of the original production since it is the primary fabric for film directors to produce their oeuvre. Indeed, “a film has a paradigmatic connotation when the director has chosen specific cinematic aids to portray an effect, such as a camera angle or move, a colour filter, etc.” (*ibid.*: 18), which may be missed altogether by the visually impaired audience if this information is not somewhat conveyed in the AD. The traditional approach has been to avoid any reference in the AD to the technical artifice behind a film and many guidelines, such as the ones compiled by the Ofcom (2015: 21), discourage the use of filmic terms. Nonetheless, and against this traditional conception, a recent study by Fryer and Freeman (2013: 412) reveals that the majority of the visually impaired hold a positive opinion when it comes to the use of cinematic terminology in the AD.

As there are no standard guidelines in the Chinese context, the current situation in Hong Kong is rather fluid and different describers adopt their own AD style, be it objective or interpretative, in which cinematic terminology can be present or absent. In this sense, it seems peremptory that more reception studies on AD style should be carried out in order to elicit the end users’ preferences that could be the basis for the compilation of a set of AD standards targeted to the visually impaired population in Hong Kong.

Since describers should try their very best to assure that their descriptions fit in the silent gaps found between the dialogue, they should be fully aware of the importance of time restrictions, and only story-plot-related images should be described to assist the end users to follow the storyline. The Spanish Standard UNE 153020 also suggests that describers “must avoid causing the visually impaired listener to become tired due to saturation of information or anxiety due to a lack thereof” (Rai *et al.* 2010: 16). In other words, describers should not fill all the gaps (Cronin and King 1990) and some pauses should be respected, if possible, so that the audience does not feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they are receiving. Similarly, describers should not leave long empty breaks in their description because the visually impaired viewers may think that there has been a technical problem in the delivery of the AD or be anxious to know what is happening on the screen.

Step 5 - Synchronising the description. When drafting the AD, describers should also consider whether the AD inserts are well synchronised with the moving images on screen, although for authors like Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004: 270), this degree of synchronisation is nothing but utopian, “seldom achieved”, since as experience suggests “descriptions tend to appear just two seconds before the images”, a rather categorical assertion by the authors. Indeed, although it is true that achieving full synchronisation is difficult, such an argument that the descriptions appear ‘just two seconds, before the images’ is too dogmatic and bound not to be true in all cases. In fact, on occasions the description may even come slightly later than the images and the authors seem to be aware of this circumstance when they explicitly acknowledge that: “Thrillers should receive special treatment, since the description could be delayed after the action in order not to anticipate events and destroy the film’s atmosphere” (*ibid.*: 270).

Stage 3: Revising

The revising stage covers the two steps that should be carried out after the AD draft has been completed.

Step 6 - Rehearsing the description. Orally rehearsing the AD script is a crucial task, especially in the Hong Kong context where the majority of AD provision for films is done live. When making the AD recording, describers can retake the same line as many times as they deem necessary. However, in a live AD screening, the describer is involved in the continuous delivery the AD from the beginning to the end of the film, and there is no break in between. When a human error occurs, such as a slip of the tongue, a mispronunciation or a grammatical/syntactical mistake, there may not be a chance to rectify it. Sometimes, important information may be lost in this way. Conducting sufficient rehearsals before the actual event can help to reduce the chance of making such mistakes because the describer is more familiar with the AD script. One of the potential drawbacks of not rehearsing the script is that describers may not be aware that a given section of the description is too long to fit in a particular gap. Therefore, describers should run through the AD, out loud if possible, at least once in order to make sure that they have enough time to read aloud all the

descriptions that need to be inserted within the silent gaps in the dialogue, particularly the short ones.

Step 7 - Reviewing the description. Describers are advised to check whether there are any mistakes or inconsistencies in the AD. Accuracy of the AD is extremely important because a misdescription may result in puzzlement and miscomprehension of the story plot among the audience. One of the drawbacks of not reviewing the AD before it is recorded is that some inconsistencies that may have cropped up in critical moments, especially in fast changing scenes, may be overlooked and end up making it to the final AD version. In this part of the process, team work can be one of the solutions to avoid these potential mishaps and having a sighted script quality supervisor working in close collaboration with a blind description quality specialist can improve the chances of spotting any mistakes and, consequently, of boosting the quality of the end product.

Stage 4: Editing and proofreading

After revising the first draft, two more steps should be taken to finalise the AD script.

Step 8 – Editing the description. Once the first draft is considered to be finished, describers should polish the AD by creating more succinct descriptions and using targeted terminology where appropriate, as the use of accurate vocabulary can “keep description lively and brief” (Yeung 2007: 234). Any unnecessary words should be deleted to save time and the tone and style of the AD should be checked so as to make sure that they fit the mood of the film. In this regard, the use of more elegant wording is recommended if the AD is to accompany a literary film, whereas some slang could be resorted to if the film is about pop culture or youth delinquency. Attention should be also paid to the “moods and feelings of the film if [the describers] aim at creating comparable experiences for the unsighted as that experienced by the sighted” (Chao 2002, in Yeung 2007: 241). Effective use of punctuation is also highly recommended as it can help the end users to understand the description more efficiently.

Step 9 – Proofreading the description. Having an extra pair of eyes to check one's work is always a good way to spot any mistakes, inconsistencies or potential areas for improvement,_and describers should share their final work with other describers to achieve this goal.

By correcting the errors or receiving suggestions for improvement, confusion can be avoided and good professional practice can be enhanced among describers. Indeed, for professionals like Dosch and Benecke (2004) the ideal professional environment is the one that allows for collaboration between two colleagues, one sighted and the other visually impaired, so that they can advise and help each other to produce the most appropriate audio description possible.

Stage 5: Post-writing

Once the AD script is considered to be the final one, there are still three more steps to be taken. As mentioned previously, usually only live AD is available for audiovisual programmes, such as films and TV programmes, in Hong Kong. This means that only on very few occasions, is the AD prerecorded, as highlighted in the brief discussion below.

Step 10 - Recording the description

In the particular case of Hong Kong, the person in charge of writing and revising the AD script is also responsible for its live delivery. However, if the AD script has been produced to be recorded rather than delivered live, then it is more common to hire a professional voice talent to do the recording of the AD in studio.

At present, the practice of recording AD is not fully standardised and it varies greatly across productions because the actual sound mixing is usually done in a studio hired by the different film production companies that own the film to be described. As a result, instances can be found of productions in which the sound is recorded at a lower volume than the original version, some times is higher and on other occasions it is equalised. Further research will be necessary on the technical aspects of AD to reach a more detailed account of this professional practice.

Step 11 - Reviewing the recording

The ideal practice consists in conducting a final check of the recorded AD to ensure the best technical quality. It is suggested that a different person from the voice talent should review the recording. To date, in Hong Kong, only the AD recording of some films has been actually reviewed and the process was conducted by a different person. In these cases, the reviewer checked whether there were any missing or misplaced AD items (i.e. discrete insertions of AD narration into the original soundtrack) after sound mixing. In most cases, this step regarding the technical production of AD for films in Hong Kong is unknown by most describers.

Step 12 - Distributing the audio described films

At the time when this research was being conducted, pre-recorded AD was mainly found on DVDs and no described films had been broadcast on television, hence the emphasis on the former. In Hong Kong, only 12 DVDs of commercial films with AD in Cantonese are available in the market so far (see section 4.5.6). In 2013, a documentary entitled *A Wall-less World IV*, produced by the public broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong, was broadcast on TV without the provision of AD. Months later, and due to the interest it raised, the documentary was made available with AD and it has also been freely distributed on DVD. The DVD copies of this documentary are not for sale and some are kept in various public libraries in the city whereas others have found their way to some of the local NGOs working with people with visual impairments, such as the Hong Kong Society for the Blind.

2.12 The use of Audio Description in language teaching and learning

According to the definitions of AD presented at the beginning of this chapter (see section 2.1), it is clear that the traditionally upheld opinion by many scholars and practitioners is that AD is a service provided for the blind and partially sighted, in an attempt to assist them to understand and enjoy audiovisual materials (Benecke 2004: 78; Hyks 2005: 6; Matamala and Orero 2007b: 329; Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 58). Yet, it can be argued that this is a rather narrow conception of AD as the benefits of this professional practice can be expanded to other socio-cultural contexts too. In

fact, using AD as a pedagogical tool in (foreign) language teaching is one of them. In the following two examples, AD has been resorted to by teachers as an innovative way of fostering foreign language acquisition among sighted learners, with the added benefit of also promoting among them the field of accessibility and the inclusion of citizens with sensory impairments in a more just society.

The first initiative demonstrates the validity of AD as a learning tool. The European project Foreign Language Learning through Interactive Revoicing & Captioning of Clips (ClipFlair, <http://clipflair.net/overview>), developed by various European universities between 2011 and 2014, encourages the use of various audiovisual translation modes, such as subtitling, revoicing and AD, for the purposes of foreign language learning. The project consists of a web platform that acts as a library of resources containing over 300 ready-to-use activities, in 15 different languages, including Chinese, at various levels of proficiency. Many of these activities exploit AD and they typically ask participants to describe the information contained in the images of the clips and to record and insert their own voice into the clip, in synchrony with what is happening on the screen. This ready-to-use material comes accompanied by corresponding lesson plans so that teachers can use them straight away for their lessons, without having to prepare too much themselves. Each ClipFlair activity has instructions as well as a suggested answer, so it can be used for self-study purposes or in class under teacher's guidance. The wide range of interactive activities found on the platform will help foreign language learners to practise reading, writing, listening and speaking in their target language.

In an attempt to engage teachers to develop their own interactive activities using the various audiovisual translation modes, ClipFlair also provides guidelines for activity creation and evaluation criteria. The platform also supports social-networking, offering Web 2.0 features (blogs, wikis, tags) that enable users to share their work, form groups, cooperate with other students, interact and rate the various activities. The versatility of the platform (online access, minimal software installation, launching from the web, no demand for advanced computer skills) along with its flexibility (in-class, distance or self-learning) and the highly motivating type of activities (interaction between text and video) are some of the upsides of this project.

The social networking orientation of the application, given the success experienced by other popular social networking sites, has the potential of acting as a powerful promotional element.

Kleege and Wallin (2015) also acknowledge the potential of AD as a teaching tool in general learning and provide some suggestions that could help students to improve their writing and critical thinking skills through guided description of visual material. They encourage delivering their suggested activities even without the presence of students or instructors who have visual impairments. One of their recommendations, focusing on writing practice, is what they name ‘Five and five’. Given an image, students work in groups and are requested to compile a list of five nouns and five adjectives to describe a given image. Then, they compare and contrast their lists of words, followed by a group discussion. Sample prompts to stimulate the ensuing debate are suggested by the authors in the form of questions: “What nouns and adjectives recur in every list?” and “Who named elements that others did not, and why?” (*ibid.*: online). Through the answers to these questions, editorialisation is brought to the fore and students are made aware that “whether or not the describer intends it, every description reflects the rhetorical ‘performance’ of the image or event and its reception” (*ibid.*). After the discussion, each group makes new lists of the best five adjectives and five nouns that they consider are most appropriate for the images under consideration, and then, using those ten words, students are encouraged to write a paragraph to describe the image in collaboration.

From the perspective of using AD strategies and techniques as a didactic tool to improve foreign language competence, the work conducted by Ibáñez Moreno and Vermeulen (2018) under the ARDELE project, is particularly relevant. Adopting a task-based approach, the scholars’ main objective is the exploration of the didactic potential that activities based on AD can have in the classroom of Spanish as a foreign language for Dutch-speaking Belgian students. Their observation and feedback provided by the participants allows them to conclude that these tasks are motivating for students and useful in enhancing their idiomatic competence. The results also demonstrate that activities that exploit AD help to boost the participants’

metacognitive strategies, thus making them more aware of their own learning process.

Another interesting development has been instigated by The National Distance Education University (UNED) in Spain, which has recently launched an MA programme entitled Audiovisual Translation and Foreign Languages Learning (https://formacionpermanente.uned.es/tp_actividad/idactividad/8610&idioma=en&idioma=en). One of its main objectives is precisely to prepare (future) teachers in the use of the various AVT modes, including audio description, as effective teaching and learning tools in the foreign language classroom.

Although a relatively recent development, AD seems to have been embraced by some academics as an exciting tool not only to learn foreign languages but also to hone their critical skills. Of course, a secondary benefit is that these students also learn about the needs of people with visual impairments and become more aware citizens.

Chapter 3

The Provision of Audio Description around the World

The development of AD in different countries is explored in this chapter. Many nations have launched media accessibility-related regulations and have made provision encompassing various types of AD, such as film AD, AD for TV, AD in theatres and opera houses, AD for visual arts and AD for visits. The main focus of this chapter is the development of AD for audiovisual programmes, especially films and TV programmes, around the world.

Films and TV programmes (in particular dramas) are very similar in nature: they are prerecorded audiovisual productions, whose main diegetic elements are characters, story plot (including conflict, climax and resolution) and setting. Even the actual format of many of these programmes are very similar and they usually start with opening credits and end with closing credits. One of the most telling differences is that TV series and dramas are usually divided into dozens of episodes, unlike films that tend to run for some 90 minutes.

As discussed in the subsequent sections, many countries have already passed legislative requirements for the provision of AD on TV, instigated by the different governments, but there are still few requirements for other forms of AD services, notably cinemas and the internet. Hence, in what follows, an examination is provided of the situation of AD provision for films and TV programmes around the globe.

3.1 The Provision of AD in the Western World

Audio description in the audiovisual media has been in existence in the Western world for more than 25 years, and scholars like Orero (2007a) traces some of the

pioneering practices in Spain to the 1940s, when the professional Gerardo Esteban started narrating films on the radio channel Radio Barcelona, and initiative continued by Jorge Arandes on Radio Miramar. In many countries in Europe and elsewhere, professional practices are regulated through legislation and/or guidelines and codes of good practice (Orero 2007b; Puigdomènec *et al.* 2010). The provision of AD in different media is prevalent throughout the West, and nations like the UK and the USA, for example, have made AD on TV and in cultural and artistic life compulsory through legislation (Matamala and Orero 2007a: 201).

3.1.1 United Kingdom

According to The Royal National Institute of the Blind People (RNIB 2014), it is estimated that there are over two million people in the UK with vision loss, including about 360,000 registered blind or partially sighted people. Almost 65% are women and more than 25,000 children aged 0 to 16 are visually impaired. One out of five people aged 75 and over and one out of two people in their nineties have some sort of vision impairment.

Media access legislation has been implemented in the UK since the mid-1990s. The 1996 Broadcasting Act imposed a 10% requirement for audio described programmes on digital terrestrial television. The 2003 Communications Act extended the legal requirements to include digital cable and digital satellite providers (Greening and Rolph 2007: 128; Rai 2009: 18). In 2004, Ofcom's Code on Television Access Services was published, and it required that 10% of programmes be audio described by the fifth anniversary of the issue of a digital license (Greening and Rolph 2007: 128). The Equality Act 2010 replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and imposed “a general duty of making ‘reasonable adjustments’ to ensure that disabled people are not substantially disadvantaged” (Collins 2012: 8). It requires that information be provided in an accessible format, which is also “relevant to the provision of television access services (including audio description)” (*ibid.*). Thanks to these regulations, blind and partially sighted people in the UK have been able to enjoy regular AD services on TV for many years now. In fact, AD now covers 20% of all the programmes broadcast on the largest TV channels, such as BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky (RNIB n.d.-a; RNIB 2016).

Beyond TV, AD is also available in approximately 300 cinemas in the UK (World Blind Union 2011: 36, 2016: 38; Your Local Cinema.com n.d.-a) and is provided through two systems: Digital Theatre Systems (DTS) and the Dolby ScreenTalk System. The former has been installed in over 200 cinemas, and the AD track is synchronised with the DTS time code. The first film ever to be released with AD using this system in the UK was *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, screened in 2002. Since then, more than 350 described films have been made available in cinemas throughout the country. The Dolby ScreenTalk System was developed later and has been installed in around 100 cinemas, and it ties the AD to the Dolby time code, but this system is no longer available in the market. In digital cinemas, AD is provided through the digital cinema package (DCP).

Blind and partially sighted viewers can listen to the AD via an infrared headset with the main film soundtrack coming from the cinema surround-sound in an auditorium equipped with any of the above three systems (Greening and Rolph 2007: 133-134; Rai 2009: 18-19; World Blind Union 2011: 36, 2016: 38). Viewers receive their own individual headset together with their ticket. The AD track is undetectable to those who do not wear a headset, which means that visually impaired viewers can watch and enjoy films with their sighted counterparts in the cinema (RNIB. n.d-b.).

In 2003, the UK Film Council offered partial funding for the installation of AD equipment in 78 cinemas across England. Although there is no regulation requiring the provision of AD services in cinemas in the UK, the stakeholders in the industry, such as cinema exhibitors, film distributors and equipment manufacturers, have supported the provision of AD in UK cinemas, with some distributors being particularly committed: AD is provided for 100% of UK film releases from Buena Vista International and Warner Brothers (Greening and Rolph 2007: 133-134). At present, the vast majority of Hollywood films released by UK distributors provide AD (World Blind Union 2011: 35-36, 2016: 37-38), and a large number of films with AD can be rented or purchased on DVD (www.yourlocalcinema.com/ad.dvd.html). According to the findings of the European project ADLAB (2012: 38), “Most audio described films in the UK are mainstream, popular choices”.

3.1.2 United States of America

The figures from the 2014 National Health Interview Survey show that 21.7 million USA citizens aged 18 and older are visually impaired, of whom around 9 million are men and 12.7 million are women (National Center for Health Statistics 2016). As one of the first countries to embark on the offering of this service, AD has been provided for TV and film viewers in the USA since the 1980s. In 1990, Boston public broadcaster WGBH developed and launched a free national Descriptive Video Service (DVS) to make TV programmes accessible to visually impaired viewers, and in 1997, WGBH started providing AD for regular screenings in cinemas. Today, DVS covers TV programmes, feature films, home videos, and other visual media (Cronin and King 1990; World Blind Union 2011: 42, 2016: 45). CBS, Fox, PBS and Turner Classic Movies provide regular audio described TV programmes (World Blind Union 2011: 43, 2016: 46). In November 1997, the film *The Jackal* was the first to be released with both closed captions and audio description, and its premiere was screened in the first theatre equipped with captioning and a DVS description system in the USA (DCMP 2015). With the advent of digital technologies, movie theatres have now switched to a digital system called Digital Cinema Package (DCP), which is supplied primarily by Fidelio and Sony Digital Cinema Entertainment Access. Via DCP, visually impaired viewers can receive the AD track via infrared or FM audio systems and headsets (American Council of the Blind 2016a; World Blind Union 2011: 44, 2016: 45-46). Currently, nearly 550 DVDs with AD have been released in the USA (American Council of the Blind 2016b).

The year 2000 marked a milestone for AD development in the USA, when the Federal Communications Commission imposed a rule requiring the major TV and cable networks to broadcast at least 50 hours of audio described programmes per quarter by April 2002. However, in 2002, this rule was overturned by the USA Court of Appeals. And yet again, the FCC's ruling was reinstated as one of the major initiatives of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, which was signed into law in 2010 (Mikul 2010; Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 23; DCMP 2015; World Blind Union 2011: 43, 2016: 45-46). The provision of AD has been mandated since 2012. According to the American Council of the Blind (online), "One year after the bill becomes law, it restores FCC rules requiring 4 hours per

week of video description on 9 television channels [...] in the top 25 most populated markets”. After four years, this number increases to 7 hours per week and “[a]fter 10 years, the bill permits the FCC to expand video description to 10 new markets annually to achieve 100 percent nationwide coverage” (*ibid.*)

The provision of AD services in the USA has been supported by the federal government. The Department of Education provides an annual fund of \$1.5 million for described media, according to an FCC report (DCMP 2015). The Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) of the National Association of the Deaf was awarded a cooperative agreement with the Office of Special Education Programs of the Department for the promotion and provision of described and captioned educational media to be adopted in elementary and secondary classrooms. In collaboration with the American Foundation for the Blind, the DCMP has created a set of AD guidelines that can be used for educational media productions. These guidelines later became the Description Key for Education Media, which was published in 2008 (DCMP 2015; World Blind Union 2011: 45, 2016: 48).

3.1.3 Spain

In Spain, the state facility Observatorio Estatal de la Discapacidad stated that there were 47,500 blind and 750,000 visually impaired people in the country in 2008 (ADLAB 2012: 13). AD on Spanish TV began in 1995. Since then, a number of TV series and cartoons for children have been described on the Catalan public TV channel TV3, and since 2007, film AD has also been available on TV3 every Friday. In 2002, the national public broadcaster RTVE included AD in the production of *Nicolás*, a cartoon series for children, and broadcast it with open AD. By 2010, there had been 881 hours of audio described TV programmes, with 868 of the hours having been provided by public TV, at national and local levels, in the various Comunidades Autónomas of the country (i.e. RTVE, Canal Sur Televisión, Canal Sur 2 Andalucía and TP de Catalunya) and by 13 private channels with national coverage (i.e. Antena 3 Televisión and the Disney Channel). Currently, the private broadcaster TVC provides more AD than the national public broadcasters and shows home productions with AD. In addition to domestic programmes, every year, some

Hollywood films are also described for DVD distribution and for TV broadcasting (ADLAB 2012: 22).

As far back as 1987, the ONCE (Spanish National Organisation for the Blind) was already recording AD for film on VHS tapes (Díaz-Cintas 2010). They developed an AD service called ‘Audesc’, for its own members, which they have used for the audio description of more than 500 films, national and foreign. The described films are not lent to non-members or the general public, nor are they sold in the market, and only ONCE’s members can borrow them. Things were soon to be changed and, in 2003, the first commercial DVD with AD was released in the Spanish market: the TV3 series *Plats Bruts* (2003) with AD in Catalan (ADLAB 2012: 27).

Spain is another example of a European country that has AD legislative provisions and initiatives in place. In January 2005, a set of standards for the creation and production of AD scripts was compiled under the Norma UNE 153.020, entitled *Audiodescripción para personas con discapacidad visual* (ADLAB 2012: 17). The White Paper of the Spanish audiovisual law Ley General Audiovisual mandates that government-owned channels provide AD for at least 10% of their programmes by 2015 (López Vera 2006: 148; Díaz-Cintas 2010). In another drive to raise the visibility of access services aimed at the audiences with sensory impairments, the national government created in 2005 the Centro Español del Subtitulado y la Audiodescripción (CESyA, www.cesya.es), whose main remit is to work for the promotion of accessibility to the media in order to achieve the social inclusion of people with sensory disabilities.

3.1.4 Germany

According to the German Association for the Blind and Partially Sighted, Deutschen Blinden- und Sehbehindertenverband (DBSV, n.d.), the estimated number of blind and partially sighted people in Germany at the beginning of the 2000s was 1.2 million. The first screening with AD in the cinema took place in 1989 with the film by Arthur Hiller entitled *See No Evil, Hear No Evil*. The year 1993 marked the beginning of the regular provision of AD on TV in Germany and the first film with AD on TV was aired by Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF) (Benecke 2004: 78;

Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 24; World Blind Union 2011: 46, 2016: 50). In 1997, the public broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR) was the first to begin a self-financed regular AD service, showing one described film every month. In 2001, BR broadcast over 40 audio described TV programmes, accounting for approximately 20% of all the audio described films that year. Thus far, it has produced AD for nearly 300 films, TV series, TV films and documentaries.

Nowadays, BR and Deutsche Hörfilm are the two main providers of AD in Germany. The former accounts for 30% of AD on German TV and DVD, while the latter provides film AD for other public broadcasters in the country. Currently, AD is non-existent on privately owned channels or Pay TV (Benecke 2004: 79; World Blind Union 2011: 46-47, 2016: 50-51). At present, “the AD broadcasts in Germany are mostly feature films” (ADLAB 2012: 21) and every week, roughly 20 to 30 films plus popular documentaries and programmes with AD are aired on TV, of which around five of these films are premieres and the rest are reruns.

According to ADLAB (2012: 21), “no films are produced already with AD” in Germany. Visually impaired viewers can obtain access to AD via digital equipment, i.e. satellite TV (DVB-S) or digital cable TV (DVB-C), where AD is offered on a second stereo channel. The producing TV stations and DVD companies subsidise most of the production of AD and some sponsors are needed for the provision of AD on DVD. At present, there are close to 130 DVDs with AD in the market (ADLAB 2012; Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 24; World Blind Union 2011: 47, 2016: 51). In Germany, the provision of film AD is particularly rife for films on TV and on DVD; however, to date, there is no regular AD service in cinemas. Since 2002, some regular monthly screenings with open AD have been arranged by the Bayerische Blinden- und Sehbehindertenbund e.V. (BBSB, Bavarian Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired). Films and co-productions, including cinema releases and AD produced for the DVD market, produced by BR, are played through a projector in a conference room in the BBSB (ADLAB 2012: 37-38). Since 2009, there has been an influential AD regulation for German public TV, known as the Rundfunkänderungsstaatsvertrag, which requires that “in addition to the already

existing commitment, more barrier-free broadcasts should henceforth be offered. It is hoped that this will lead to voluntary self-commitment” (ADLAB 2012: 16).

3.1.5 Poland

Poland has more than 1,650,000 people with visual impairment (Sadowska 2014: 125). According to Chmiel and Mazur (2011b: 279-281), two blind people took the initiative to introduce AD in Poland in 2006, although it was not a legal requirement, and the first audio described audiovisual product was a film. Since then, AD has been provided for over 10 films and more than 72 episodes of five TV series. The described episodes can be found on an online interactive television platform and blind and partially sighted viewers are required to obtain a password from the Polish Association of the Blind in order to view these episodes.

Currently, AD is produced by the subtitling for the deaf and the hard of hearing unit, the Interactive Media Centre, of the Polish national public TV broadcaster Telewizja Polska (TVP). Each week, TVP provides AD for eight hours of TV programmes and films, and is trying to meet a 10% target (Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 25; ADLAB 2012: 22). Blind and partially sighted viewers can access AD via satellite TV (DVB-S), digital cable TV (DVB-C) or terrestrial digital TV (DVB-T) (*ibid.*). The first DVD with AD in Polish was released in 2008 and, at present, at least 21 titles have been commercialised with AD on DVD, including eight documentaries issued by national institutions like the Polish Forest Directorate and the Institute of National Remembrance (ADLAB 2012: 28). In 2009, as a member of the European Union, Poland was required “to comply with EU regulations, such as the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)” which requires the provision of AD to help the visually impaired to enjoy audiovisual productions, with the added benefit of also helping them to “be integrated in the social and cultural life” (Chmiel and Mazur 2011b: 281). Furthermore, “[t]he amended Polish Radio and Television Act defines audio description and stipulates that TV broadcasters are obliged to offer at least 10% of their programmes (counted on a quarterly basis) with accessibility” (ADLAB 2012: 16). Audio describers in Poland either receive training overseas, such as in the UK, or are self-taught because there is no professional AD training offered in the country.

3.1.6 Australia

Vision Australia (n.d.) estimated that there were 357,000 blind and partially sighted people in Australia in 2013. In comparison to its European counterparts, the development of AD in Australia has been relatively slow (World Blind Union 2011: 38, 2016: 41). To date, the Australian government has not imposed any regulations on AD for broadcasters, and there is no regular provision of AD on TV. The only evidence that confirms the existence of described TV programmes in Australian television is a trial. From August to November 2012, there was a 13-week AD trial on one of the TV channels of the national public broadcaster, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Each week, a total of 14 hours of audio described programmes were broadcast in primetime from 5pm to 12am. Households with digital TVs/set-top boxes could hear the receiver-mixed AD (Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 6; Australian Blindness Forum 2012: 6, 2014: 4; Media Access Australia n.d.). The experiment did not seem to go as smoothly as planned and it is reported that ABC received more than 1,000 complaints about the AD service, among which the fact that many viewers heard the AD even though they had not turned it on (Mikul n.d.: 1). On the positive side, the trial did raise awareness of AD among the visually impaired, especially those who were born blind, and gave them an opportunity to experience TV with the help of technology for the first time in their lives. Attention was also brought to the selection of programmes and AD preferences. Some viewers found AD less useful when it was provided for “very dialogue-focused” programmes (Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 14) whilst others stated that the voice and tone of the describer should match the programme and should not be too mechanical as, otherwise, the AD was perceived as inconsistent and less enjoyable. In addition, text on screen should be included in the AD, particularly when news programmes were described, so that blind and partially sighted viewers would know who was being interviewed. The trial also gave rise to the development of Australian AD guidelines, and blind people stressed the importance of having AD consumers involved in discussions about AD best practices prior to the guidelines drafting process (*ibid*: 13-15).

In 2005, Red Bee Media received a one-off grant from the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to examine AD software and

equipment, and to produce 10 DVDs with AD. Red Bee Media and SubStation are particularly involved in the production of AD for local films, and Roadshow is the only Australian distributor to offer regular releases of films with AD. By July 2010, 26% of films available in the Australian market had AD on DVD. As for the situation in cinema exhibition, a one-off grant from the Federal Government was given to Media Access Australia in 2008 to install DTS systems in 12 independent cinemas in the country so that AD users could listen to the AD through headphones. Given this experience, in 2010, “Australia’s four major cinema groups, Hoyts, Village, Greater Union Birch Carroll & Coyle, and Reading, agreed with the Federal government to jointly fast-track new audio description and captioning technology as part of a plan to improve cinema access”, and it was projected that by 2014 more than 242 screens in 132 locations around the country would be able to provide AD services (Mikul 2010: 4).

3.2 The Provision of AD in the Asian World

As previously mentioned, AD has been in use for more than 25 years in some of the countries of the Western world and various nations have passed legislation regulating the provision of AD, especially by government-owned TV channels. Various guidelines and style books have also been drafted for regulating the production of professional AD across Europe.

In the Asian world, the provision of AD has been part of the socio-cultural life of places like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan since the beginning of the 1970s, 2000s and 2000s, respectively, and media access regulations have also been introduced in these regions. The regular provision of AD on TV can be found in Japan and South Korea. In contrast, the development of AD in Hong Kong and Mainland China began only in the 2010s and is at a very early stage, while AD on TV is still non-existent.

3.2.1 Mainland China

According to the estimated global data on visual impairments for 2010 by the World Health Organization (WHO 2012: 5), China, which has a population of more than 1.3 billion citizens, has approximately 75 million people with some kind of visual

impairment, of which 8 million are blind and 67 million have poor vision. Because AD services are not regulated by law in Mainland China, the provision of AD is very limited at institutional level. After carrying out extensive research, it seems that only one public library, the China Braille Library (<http://www.blc.org.cn>), which was founded in Beijing in 2011, provides AD for the special needs of those with some kind of visual impairment. The Audio Description Centre in this library consists of only three staff members, who are responsible for both the writing and delivery of AD scripts. Audio described films are shown weekly, but only those who live in the capital city have ready access to them. The library has taken the decision to upload the audio described material to its official website to increase accessibility.

In addition to this public library in Beijing, an organisation called Beijing Hongdandan Education & Culture Exchange Centre (www.hongdandan.org) has been offering AD services on a regular basis since 2005. Films with live AD are shown every week and are made available on several radio channels. The centre expanded its service to include Tianjin and Chengdu in 2009 and 2010, respectively. In Shanghai, an accessible film service was launched in 2009 to serve both the visually and the hearing impaired audiences and since 2012, audio described films have been available on a monthly basis at the Cathay Theatre cinema (China Disabled Persons' Federation 2012). All in all, in Mainland China AD services seem to be very limited in number and geographically, and are restricted only to films. In comparison, the provision of AD in Hong Kong is relatively more developed and has experienced rapid growth in the past five years. Since this paper concerns AD in Hong Kong, the following chapter 4 will discuss some of these developments in detail, focusing on AD services and training in this particular enclave.

3.2.2 Taiwan

The latest statistics by the Taiwanese Ministry of Health and Welfare (2016) show that, at present, there are over 57,000 visually impaired people in Taiwan. Although there is no mention of the provision of AD services in Taiwan's laws, Article 52 of the People with Disabilities Rights Protection Act states that the authorities should provide the disabled with "access-free to public information" (Laws & Regulations Database of the Republic of China 2015: online). That is, "Internet,

telecommunication, broadcasting, [and] TV program providers” should offer “access-free reading, watching, transfer, or transmission and other assistive, subsidised measures for people with visual, hearing, and speech disabilities” (*ibid.*), which should of course include the provision of AD services for the visually impaired. In December 2003, the then President of the Council for Cultural Affairs, Chen Yu-chiou, pledged the promise of the Council to foster the provision of AD. At that time, the Council lent its support to the local Audio Description Development Association to offer AD services. Since the 1990s, the Association has developed a range of didactic materials that are used in workshops aimed at training volunteers. In 2000, the association expanded its offerings and began AD services in theatres and, in 2001, it provided AD for a TV drama series. A year later, in 2002, it engaged in the provision of AD for museums and by 2003, it had provided AD for more than 20 films, dramas and dances on video and DVD (Audio Description Development Association 2005; Yeung 2007: 237). In 2009, the Audio Description Development Association was commissioned by the National Communications Commission (NCC) to investigate TV access policies, including AD, subtitles and sign language, in the UK, the USA, Japan and South Korea, and to make recommendations on TV access legislation, technology, services and labour distribution for various governmental departments in Taiwan (Chao 2009). In 2011, the League for Persons with Disabilities, R.O.C. (2012) requested that the NCC launch TV access services in line with the 2009 report results; however, the NCC argued that the cost was too high and that it preferred to encourage small-scale trials with public broadcasters. The fact is that the NCC is a body only responsible for media supervision and, as such, does not have the authority or the finances to subsidise trials of these nature.

3.2.3 Japan

Based on the survey results from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, there were 310,000 visually impaired people in Japan in 2006. According to the Japan Commercial Broadcasters Association (n.d.), taking advantage of advanced technological developments in the 1970s, sound multiplex broadcasting was launched, whereby giving people with visual impairment the opportunity to receive AD via secondary audio channels. In 1978, Nippon TV (NTV) began to serve “as a pilot station for practical application” (Japan Commercial Broadcasters Association

n.d.: online), which included the provision of AD for programmes broadcast on TV for the blind and partially sighted community in Japan. Since December 1982, accessibility services have become a regular feature in the mediascape of the country. In 1983, NTV started broadcasting a two-hour TV drama programme with regular AD service, which was the first of its kind in the whole world (ITC 2000: 5; Yeung 2007: 232). The AD was mixed into the original audio of the programme and became a form of open AD (DCMP 2015).

Since 1990, another TV broadcasting company, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK), has been offering AD (Disability Information Resources, n.d.), encouraged by the October 1997 amendment of the Broadcast Law, which “enabled broadcasters to provide multiplex broadcasting such as caption and audio description services that supplement television broadcast, without the need for licenses” (Japan Commercial Broadcasters Association n.d.). NHK, Japan Broadcasting Corporation, is the country’s only public broadcaster and has two channels: NHK (General) and NHK (Education). The latest statistics show that there has been an increasing trend in the provision of AD via both NHK channels. In 2011, NHK (General) offered 7.6% of its TV programmes with AD, amounting to around 666 hours of its annual broadcasting time, while NHK (Education) offered 10.7%, which is approximately 852 hours of audio described material (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2012b). Until 2014, NHK (General) has been providing AD for slightly less than one-tenth of its airtime, up to 876 hours annually, while NHK (Education) has been also increasing its output and in 2014 offered 1,059.5 hours of audio described programmes, or 13.7% of its total broadcasting time. Table 3-1 below illustrates the evolution in recent years of the provision of AD by the Japanese public broadcaster:

	NHK (General)	NHK (Education)
2011	665 hours 49 minutes (7.6%)	851 hours 47 minutes (10.7%)
2012	703 hours 10 minutes (8.0%)	928 hours 36 minutes (11.9%)
2013	782 hours 59 minutes (8.9%)	933 hours 7 minutes (12.0%)
2014	876 hours 23 minutes (10.0%)	1059 hours 7 minutes (13.7%)

Table 3-1: Hours of audio described programmes by NHK (General) and NHK (Education), from 2011 to 2014 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2012b, 2013, 2014, 2015)

It is projected that by 2017, NHK (General) will offer audio described programmes for 10% of its total broadcasting hours, while NHK (Education) will offer 15%. According to the figures in Table 3-1, it seems that NHK (General) has already met the target and that NHK (Education) will soon achieve it.

In addition, many private Japanese TV stations have also contributed, in percentages that vary from 1% to 3% of their total broadcasting time, to the pool of audio described programmes in the past years (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2012b, 2013, 2014, 2015). The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2012a) has supported the provision of AD for TV by drafting guidelines to ease the broadcasting for those with visual impairments. The guidelines were first established in 2007 and revised in 2012.

After extensive research, very little information has been found about the development of AD in other areas than TV in Japan. Only one figure concerning the release of AD for films on DVDs can be obtained: the NPO Media Access Support Centre (MASC), which compiles online databases for audiences interested in looking for DVDs and Blu-rays with Japanese AD, indicated that in 2008, 0.9% of Japanese films provided AD (Asakawa and Takagi 2010). Apart from being commercially distributed on DVD and Blu-ray, these audiovisual products can also be borrowed online from the Japanese Braille Library (Martínez-Sirés 2016).

At present, “no official, comprehensive guideline for Japanese AD” can be found (*ibid*: 40). The Japan Visualmedia Translation Academy (JVTA) has drafted a basic set of AD guidelines that is available online, and JVTA offers AD training for future describers in collaboration with MASC (*ibid*).

3.2.4 South Korea

In South Korea, there are approximately 220,000 registered blind and partially sighted people (Korea Blind Union n.d.). The offer of AD services started in the early 2000s, and their development has been rapid. In 2001, two of the largest nationwide TV networks, the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), started a trial AD service. In the same year, MBC

officially included AD in its broadcasting service, while the public service broadcaster KBS only started offering AD officially in 2003, as did some of the rest of the TV broadcasters in the country (Chao 2009: 19-20; the League for Persons with Disabilities, R.O.C. 2012). At present, AD is offered “on approximately 6% of programs on the four terrestrial broadcasters” (Blind Citizens Australia *et al.* 2012: 25). Information about audio described TV programmes can be accessed via the Korea Blind Union’s website (www.kbuwel.or.kr/Board/Screen/List).

According to the Ministry of Government Legislation in South Korea (www.law.go.kr/main.html), two pieces of legislation require broadcasters to provide access services to the media. Article 69, Item 8 of the Broadcasting Act mandates that broadcasters help people with disabilities to obtain access to audiovisual materials through the provision of sign language, closed subtitling and audio description, and the Korean Communications Commission provides full or partial funding for operators. In addition, Article 21(3) of the Disability Discrimination Act states that multimedia broadcast businesses operating on the television and the internet “shall provide convenience for disabled viewers, including [...] descriptive video services in order for the disabled to access and use such productions or services on an equal basis with persons without disabilities” (Statutes of the Republic of Korea n.d.: online). In its enforcement decree, Article 14, there is a specific media access requirement to help the visually impaired, stipulating that every scene and all text on screen should be audio described.

3.2.5 Thailand

According to the President of the Thailand Association of the Blind (TAB), there are around 170,000 blind people in Thailand (Pajee 2014). AD has had a relatively short history in Thailand, where it started being practised in approximately 2014. Funded by the National Broadcasting Television Commission (NBTC), the TAB has been a pioneer in the field, launching an AD project that will cost around Bt80 million (GBP 1,657,000). To be successful in this enterprise, the TAB has sought cooperation from TV channels and production companies to offer AD for their programmes. The Thai National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), together with Thai Public Broadcasting Service and Thammasat University’s Faculty of Journalism

and Mass Communication have worked in collaboration to provide AD for certain programmes so that blind and partially sighted viewers can select an AD channel via remote control. Some audio described programmes can be accessed online. The main goal of the TAB is to promote the production and broadcast of AD on TV because it wants to offer AD for live broadcasts so that the blind and partially sighted people can watch the shows with everyone else. Another reason for giving priority to TV programming is the fact that the Internet is not available everywhere in the country outside Bangkok. The TAB has negotiated with most TV stations, and hopes to ensure that there will be at least one hour of audio described programmes on every TV channel. The future of AD in Thai television looks rather promising and, so far, the proposals put forward by TAB have not been rejected (Pajee 2015). In 2014, GTH became the first Thai studio to add an AD track to the DVD release of the national film *Kidtueng Witthaya* [The Teacher's Diary] at a cost of about Bt500,000 (GBP 10,400). The AD script was written by one of the original scriptwriters of the film and when the AD script was finished, the scriptwriter consulted a group of visually impaired and included their suggestions in the revised version of the AD script. According to the scriptwriter, the major difference between AD in English and in Thai is that the English language is synthetic and precise while Thai is wordy and incline to use long syntactical structures, which makes it rather challenging to describe the visuals of a film in the short gaps that exist between the dialogue exchange (Pajee 2014).

3.3 Comparison of AD Provision across Countries

After reviewing the situation of AD provision in the above regions, it is found that some countries have a much longer history than others in the provision of AD for audiovisual programmes, with some of the pioneering experiences having taken place over 35 years ago. Japan started the provision of AD on TV back in the 1980s while the UK, USA, Spain and Germany did so in the 1990s. South Korea started its access services on TV in the early 2000s. In some countries, there exists legislation that regulates the provision of media access, both in the case of SDH and AD, and the percentages to promote the former are always more generous than in the case of AD. Some of the legislative acts about AD provision on TV set a compulsory AD quota of around 10% of their on air time, such in the case of the most watched TV

channels in the UK and Spain. In addition to these legislative measures, some TV broadcasters in the UK and Germany have led voluntary self-commitment and been providing 20% of their programming with AD. At a wider level, the European Parliament, which once suggested the possibility of imposing AD requirements on audiovisual products, seems to have changed its stance lately in what can be seen as a setback in this field. Indeed, according to one of the EU Legislation in Progress briefings (Katsarova 2017: 10), focused on *The Audiovisual Media Services Directive*, “The provisions on accessibility are deleted with reference to the proposed European Accessibility Act which sets accessibility requirements for a wide range of products and services including AVMS”. In countries like South Korea the promotion of access services is instigated from above and the Korean Communications Commission provides full or partial funding for making TV programmes accessible for the blind and the partially sighted. As for the Chinese speaking world, including mainland China and Taiwan, there is no official media access legislation nor is there any regular provision of AD on TV.

In addition to the provision of AD for TV programmes, most countries also offer AD services for films that are distributed on DVD or in the cinema. In the UK and the USA, between 550 and 1100 DVD titles include AD sound tracks while in Germany over 130 titles on DVD come accompanied with AD (American Council of the Blind 2016b; Your Local Cinema.com. n.d-b; ADLAB 2012: 26). In the specific instance of cinema distribution and exhibition, funding has been offered by some governments to support the installation of AD equipment in cinema theatres, as in the cases of the UK and Australia. The UK Film Council offered partial funding for the installation in 78 cinemas (World Blind Union 2011: 36, 2016: 38), while a one-off grant from the Federal Government in Australia supported 12 cinemas (Mikul 2010: 4). Although AD for films is available in Chinese speaking regions such as mainland China and Taiwan, there is virtually no information available that could reveal to what extend AD is provided in cinemas or commercially distributed on DVD.

Different from the countries that have experienced a more mature development in the provision of AD, Hong Kong has a much shorter history that can be traced back to the year 2011. In this short, though rather productive period of time, AD has made its

appearance in the cinema exhibition of films and, at the time of conducting this research, it is still non-existent on TV. As far as the regulation of AD requirements is concerned, no legislation has been passed or imposed on the broadcasting or film industries. More information about AD provision in Hong Kong will be discussed in the next chapter.

A most welcomed development in the field of accessibility has been the recent creation of the Media Accessibility Platform (www.mapaccess.org), which portrays itself as a global effort to shape a world where everyone, regardless of any sensorial or linguistic barriers, is granted access to audiovisual media. Its main objective is to facilitate access services by sharing information regarding practices, services, technologies, and instruments in media accessibility. One of its most salient features is the ‘accessometer’, as shown in Figure 3.1, which provides a world map of the legislation, standards and guidelines on media accessibility organised by countries:



Figure 3-1: Media Accessibility Platform's Accessometer

Taking into account the situation of AD in various countries around the world, this research investigates primarily the provision of AD for audiovisual productions, both films and TV programmes, in the Hong Kong context. Part of the project gauges the opinion of the audience and, with this objective in mind, a set of survey questions has been designed to elicit the participants' responses in these areas, with special emphasis on their AD preferences as well as their opinions about current and future AD provision. The ultimate goal of such research project is to obtain results that may serve as a reference for the Hong Kong government and thus inform future legislation on the topic as well as the development of AD for audiovisual programmes.

Chapter 4

The Development of Audio Description in Hong Kong

4.1 Background Information on Hong Kong

Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, is a melting pot for the East and West with an estimated population of 7.15 million inhabitants. One of the most heavily populated cities in the world, Hong Kong has a land population density of around 6,620 inhabitants per square kilometre (Information Services Department 2013a). Hong Kong is also one of the world's wealthiest cities, ranking fourth in terms of GDP per capita in 2010, and, according to the Wealth Report 2012 (Knight Frank Research 2012), it is expected to rank second by 2050.

Once a British colony, this international city was returned to China on 1 July 1997. Since then, it has enjoyed a high degree of autonomy under the principle ‘One Country, Two Systems’. After the 1997 handover, Hong Kong’s government started to promote Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese), the official language in Mainland China, as an essential language in Hong Kong. As established by Hong Kong Basic Law, both Chinese and English are Hong Kong’s official languages. In addition, the majority of the population speaks Cantonese and uses a form of written Chinese based on Standard Chinese (which is distinct from spoken Cantonese). Traditional Chinese characters are widely used in writing, whereas Cantonese and English are used in daily life and in announcements made in public places in Hong Kong. In addition to official documentation, notices, menus, signs and business correspondence are commonly provided in Traditional Chinese and English. Chinese and English are compulsory language subjects in both primary and secondary education. Putonghua has been a subject in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education

Examinations since 2000 and was included in the education policy to encourage local students to be “biliterate and trilingual” and to “master written Chinese and English [and] speak fluent Cantonese, Putonghua and English” (Education and Manpower Bureau 2005: 1).

4.2 Disability-related legislation in Hong Kong

The Disability Discrimination Ordinance was implemented in Hong Kong in 1996, the same year in which the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was also established. The EOC is a statutory body responsible for implementing the above-mentioned ordinance, whose ultimate aim is to promote equality and diversity and to foster an inclusive society in Hong Kong. The law protects people with disabilities and their associates against discrimination, harassment or vilification in the following areas: employment, education, access to and management of public premises, provision of goods, services and facilities, clubs and sporting activities, etc. (EOC n.d.). Since 31 August 2008, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has applied to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region as a part of the People’s Republic of China, which signed it on 30 March 2007 and ratified it in 2008 (Labour and Welfare Bureau n.d.). In 2012, China was reviewed by the CRPD committee but the next review has not yet been scheduled (Human Rights in China n.d.). Article 30 of the convention states that persons with disabilities should have equal rights to get access to any cultural, recreational, leisure and sport events, including television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, performances or services (Labour and Welfare Bureau n.d.). This is particularly relevant to AD services because it can increase accessibility for the blind and partially sighted. However, the article falls short of making any mention of any obligation for broadcasters, producers or exhibitors to provide access to their media for people with sensory impairments. In other words, there is no stipulation to ensure the provision of media access for audiences with varying sensory ability, such as audio description for the visually impaired or subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing.

In November 2002, the Legislative Council (LegCo) and the Broadcasting Authority (BA) proposed some subtitling requirements in an attempt to cater for the needs of

the hearing impaired. These requirements started to be included in domestic free television programmes from December 2003 (Information Technology and Broadcasting Branch 2002). According to these, licensees should provide Chinese subtitles “on the Cantonese channels for all news, current affairs, weather programmes and emergency announcements, as well as all programmes shown during prime time (7:00 – 11:00 p.m.)” (*ibid.*: 4). As regards the English channels, licensees should provide English subtitles for all news, weather, current affairs programmes and emergency announcements, as well as for the compulsory two hours of educational programmes per week targeting teenagers (*ibid.*: 3-4).

The visually impaired did not get as much attention as the hearing impaired and, to date, the Hong Kong authorities have not requested any broadcasting requirements for this particular group. In this regard, Hong Kong is lagging behind some Western countries like the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada and Spain, where legislation requiring a minimum percentage of audio described material on public television has already been implemented. In the UK, under the Broadcasting Act 1996 and the Communications Act 2003, at least 10% of audio described TV programmes should be provided each week (The National Archives n.d.-a, n.d.-b). In the USA, under the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010, four hours of audio described programmes should be available on nine TV channels per week, and AD is expected to be expanded to reach 100% nationwide coverage within 10 years (American Council of the Blind 2014a). In Spain, the White Paper of the Spanish Audiovisual Law (*Ley General del Audiovisual*) proposed that, by 2015, at least 10 % of the TV programmes broadcast on government-owned channels should be aired with AD (Díaz-Cintas 2010; López Vera 2006).

4.3 The Visually Impaired in Hong Kong

In the past, the Hong Kong government has encountered some difficulties in collecting reliable data regarding people with a disability, and both the 1976 Population By-census and the 1981 Population Census ran into trouble in this respect. Some of the main issues to come to the surface were (1) the fact that the concept of disability was understood differently by the Government and the survey respondents; (2) the section about classifying individual types of disability in the

questionnaire was too simple and inadequate; (3) many of the interviewers were students who lacked experience in handling complex concepts such as disability; and (4) the interviewees were unwilling to disclose information regarding family members with disabilities. Under these circumstances, the data collected could not reflect the real situation of the disable in Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department 2001b:1, 2008:1, 2014:1).

Due to its sensitive nature, the government considered that it was more appropriate to produce special reports on disabilities than to gather the information by means of the census. To solve the problem with data collection, interviewers equipped with better interviewing skills and more experience were recruited to conduct the survey for these special reports. Since then, the Census and Statistics Department of the Hong Kong government has so far published three Special Topics Reports on *Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases*. These three reports – number 28, published in 2001, number 48 in 2008 and number 62 in 2014 – include social data collected in the previous year via the General Household Survey. The reports contain territory-wide survey findings on people with one or more of the following types of disability:⁷

- (1) restriction in body movement;
- (2) seeing difficulty;
- (3) hearing difficulty;
- (4) speech difficulty;
- (5) mental illness/mood disorder;
- (6) autism;
- (7) Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD); and
- (8) Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD).

(Census and Statistics Department 2001b: vii, 2008: vii, 2014: vii)

Report No. 28 presents the findings of a survey conducted from January to December 2000 (*ibid.* 2001b: 2), whereas report No. 48 reveals the findings of interviews done between November 2006 and December 2007 (*ibid.* 2008: 2). The latest report, No. 62, discloses the results of a survey conducted throughout the entire year of 2013

⁷ ‘Mood disorder’, ‘SpLD’ and ‘AD/HD’ were not covered in Report No. 28

(*ibid.* 2014: 2). All three reports were published in the year following the conclusion of the survey.

Since the target group of this research is the visually impaired, only the survey findings of ‘persons with seeing difficulty’ will be discussed in these pages. The definitions of ‘persons with seeing difficulty’ in Reports No. 28 and No. 48 are almost the same. Only one wording is different at the end of the second sentence: ‘excluded’ is used in Report No. 28 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 16) while ‘not included’ is used in Report No. 48 (Census and Statistics Department 2008: 18). However, in Report No. 62, the definition has been revised, although most of the text remains the same. This special group of the population is defined in both Reports No. 48 (Census and Statistics Department 2008: 18-19) as follows:

‘Persons with seeing difficulty’ referred to those who had been diagnosed as being blind or having low vision under medical assessment tests *or* perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in seeing with one eye or both eyes whether with or without correcting glasses/contact lenses. Nevertheless, nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia were not included.

According to the survey findings, persons with seeing difficulty were classified into three categories as a proxy indicator on their severity of disability: (i) unable to see at all; (ii) required a specialised visual aid in order to be able to see well; and (iii) not required a specialised visual aid.

In Report No. 62 (Census and Statistics Department 2014: 18), it is only the first sentence of the definition and one word in item (ii) that have been revised as below:

‘Persons with seeing difficulty’ referred to those who had perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in seeing with one eye or both eyes whether with or without correcting glasses/contact lenses or using specialised visual aids/tools at the time of enumeration.

[...] (ii) required a specialised visual aid in order to be able to see [...]

In general, there are only minor changes to the definition contained in the latest report. Although these three reports may not be able to give a full picture of Hong Kong’s entire visually impaired population, the data are still very valuable and worth considering.

The Census and Statistics Department (2001a) revealed that the total population of Hong Kong in 2001 was around 6,710,000. The Special Topics Report No. 28 indicated that the estimated number of people with seeing difficulty in Hong Kong was 73,900, which at the time amounted to 1.1% of the population of Hong Kong. As regards the various types of seeing difficulty, 6,500 (8.8%) of those having visual impairment could not see anything at all, 29,100 (39.4%) required a specialised visual aid in order to be able to see well and 38,300 (51.8%) did not need any specialised visual aid (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 66).

In 2008, the total population of Hong Kong had risen to around seven million (Information Services Department 2012), and the number of people with seeing difficulty had followed suit and increased by around 66%, to some 122,600 individuals, thus amounting to 1.8% of the total population. According to the data, 11,400 (9.3%) of the visually impaired were unable to see at all, 9,600 (7.8%) depended on a specialised visual aid in order to have better sight, while 101,600 (82.9%) did not require any specialised visual aid (Census and Statistics Department 2008: 76).

By 2014, the Information Services Department (2015b) stated that the total population of Hong Kong had reached around 7,250,000. According to the Special Topics Report No. 62, the estimated number of people with seeing difficulty in Hong Kong had gone up to 174,800, amounting to 2.4% of the total population. The severity of the disability affecting this sector of the population was categorised into three main groups: around 7,800 (4.5%) were unable to see at all; 49,500 (28.3%) needed a specialised visual aid to see better; and the rest of them, approximately 117,500 (67.2%), did not depend on a specialised visual aid (Census and Statistics Department 2014: 77). Surprisingly, none of the three reports reflected the figures of those who were born blind or who became blind at a later age.

On a closer look, according to the global estimate provided by WHO (2012: 7), out of the total world population around 5% are visually impaired people, including those who are blind and have low vision. Compared to the data provided above, Hong Kong has a relatively lower percentage of blind and partially sighted people, with estimates ranging from 1.1% to 2.4% of the population (Census and Statistics

Department 2001b: 33; 2008: 38; 2014: 39). In addition, when comparing Hong Kong to a region of similar population such as Switzerland, which has a total of around 8 million citizens (The Swiss Federal Statistical Office 2017), the percentage of visually impaired population in Hong Kong is lower than that of Switzerland, which stands at approximately 325,000 individuals, i.e. 4% of total population (*swissinfo.ch* 2015).

4.3.1 Visual impairment according to age and sex

In 2001, of the 73,900 visually impaired people residing in Hong Kong, more than three quarters (55,900) were aged 60 and over, about 9% of them (6,900) were between 50 to 59 and 7% (5,100 persons) were aged 40 to 49. Around 5% (approximately 4,000) of the total were aged 15 to 39, and those under 15 accounted for 2.8% (2,100). Further, 41.7% of the visually impaired were male and 58.3% were female (Census and Statistics Department 2001b).

The distribution of the visually impaired population as regards age did change slightly in the data compiled for 2008, especially if the ageing of population is taken into consideration as the figures show that people with visual impairments are getting older in Hong Kong. Indeed, in 2008, of the 122,600 people with visual impairment, over 85% of them (106,000) were aged 60 and over, which was double the 2001 number. Around 6% of the visually impaired (7,700) were between 50 and 59, and 3% (4,100) were within the age group of 40 to 49. Roughly 3.5% (nearly 2,200 people) were aged 15 to 39, whereas those aged below 15 accounted for 1.2% (1,500). The distribution as regards the sex of the visually impaired changed only slightly, even if the gap has been growing wider between men and women, with 37.8% of the visually impaired population being male and 62.2% female (Census and Statistics Department 2008).

According to the findings for 2014, the population distribution of the people with sight loss was also similar to that for 2008, although this time, the data at the top end contained more detail. Of the total number of persons with sight dysfunction (174,800), around 85% (148,600) were aged 60 and above. Among this age group, almost 80% (114,400) were aged 70 and over, and the remaining were aged between 60 and 69 (14,700 and 19,500). Roughly 8% (14,200) were aged 50 to 59 while

about 3.5% (6,200) were aged 40 to 49. As in the previous two surveys, the number of those aged below 39 and with a visual impairment was far lower than the rest of age groups, ranging from 1,300 to 3,100. The sum of this age group did not exceed 5% of the entire visually impaired population.

Table 4-1 below offers a summary of all the data compiled in the three different surveys:

Age group	2001		2008		2014	
	No. of persons	%	No. of persons	%	No. of persons	%
<15	2,100	2.8	1,500	1.2	1,300	0.8
15-29	2,000	2.7	1,500	1.2	3,100	1.7
30-39	1,900	2.6	1,700	1.4	1,400	0.8
40-49	5,100	6.9	4,100	3.4	6,200	3.6
50-59	6,900	9.4	7,700	6.3	14,200	8.1
≥60	55,900	75.6	106,000	86.5	148,600*	84.9*
*Sum of :						
Age 60-64: 14,700 (8.4%)						
Age 65-69: 19,500 (11.1%)						
Age ≥ 70: 114,400 (65.4%)						
Overall	73,900	100	122,600	100	174,800	100
Median age (years)	70		76		76	

Table 4-1: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by age in 2001, 2008 and 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 34, 2008: 39, 2014: 40)

As illustrated in Figure 4-1 in a more visual manner, the data show that the majority of those with visual impairments are aged 60 and over:

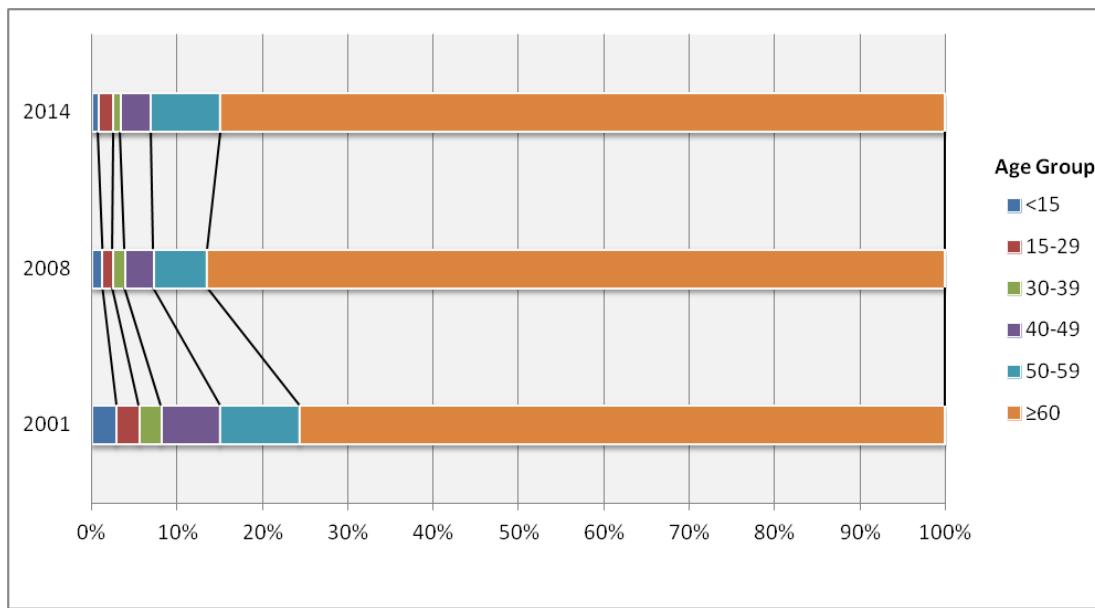


Figure 4-1: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by age in 2001, 2008 and 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 34; 2008: 39; 2014: 40)

As far as the sex of the visually impaired is concerned, women have always been more affected than men when it comes to seeing difficulties, as illustrated in Figure 4-2 below:

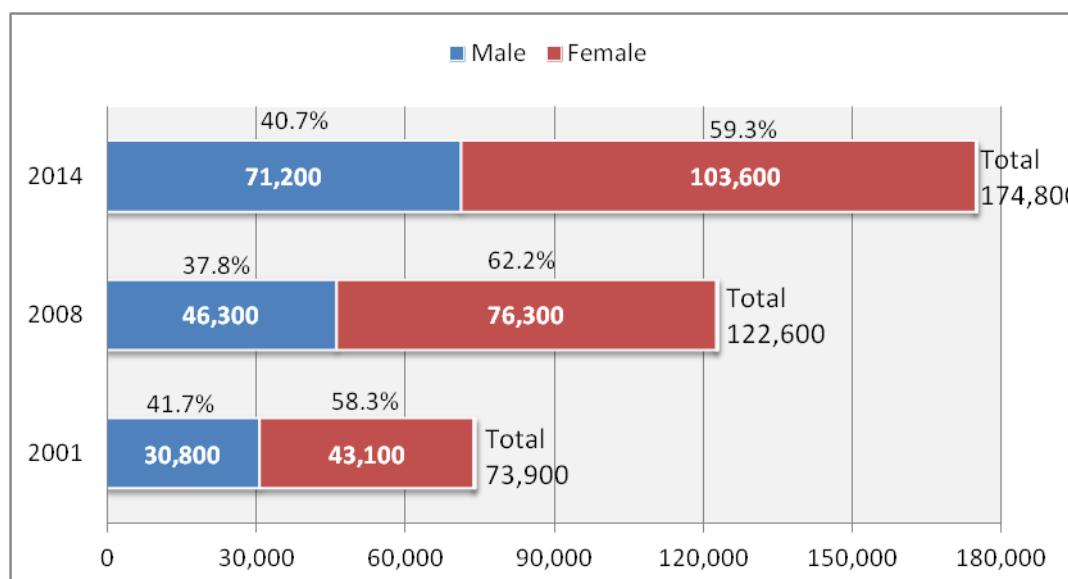


Figure 4-2: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by sex in 2001, 2008 and 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 34; 2008: 39; 2014: 40)

The distribution by age clearly suggests that ageing has to be one of the major reasons that contributes to sight loss. In addition, from the distribution by sex, one of the reasons why women suffer more from eye deterioration can be due to the fact that

they might have a longer life expectancy than men; hence, as they grow older, more women develop visual disabilities.

4.3.2 Visual impairment and marital status

As shown in Figure 4-3 below, in 2001, 2008 and 2014, around 90% of those with visual impairments were married (51.5%, 47.6% and 50.9%, respectively) or had been married (37.1%, 42.9% and 40.3% respectively), including those who were widowed, separated or divorced. This may be because the majority of this population was aged 40 and above:

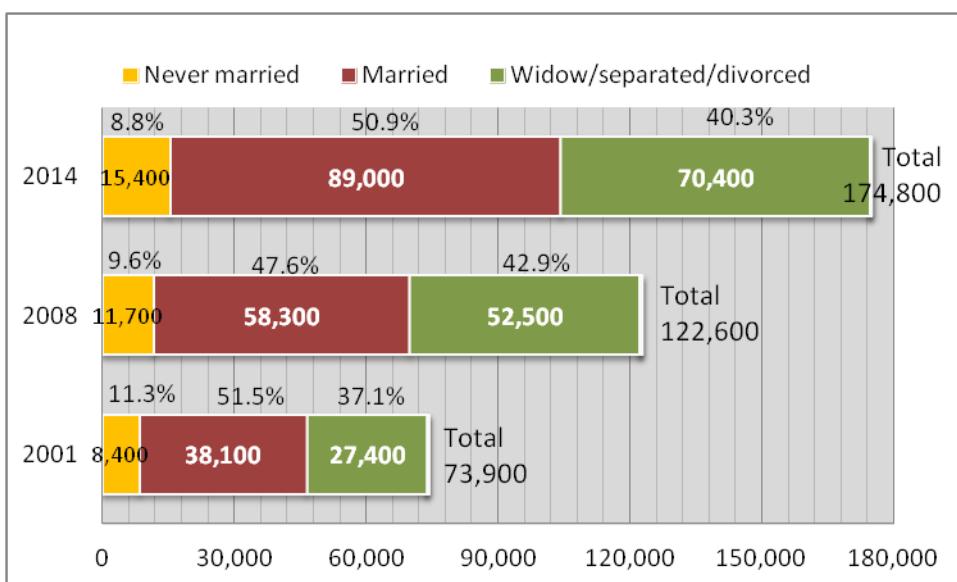


Figure 4-3: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by marital status in 2001, 2008 and 2014
(Census and Statistics Department (2001b: 37; 2008: 43; 2014: 44)

This type of information will be useful later for the discussion conducted in Chapter 8, in which the results obtained in the media accessibility survey are analysed, because whether individuals live with a spouse or other family members may have implications for the type of support they get when watching television, as these relatives may whisper and/or explain to them when they are unable to follow the plot of a programme.

4.3.3 Visual impairment and educational attainment

According to the Information Services Department (2012, 2013a), the educational level of the Hong Kong population was distributed as follows in 2005 and 2010: fewer than 7%, i.e. 6.4%, of the population were below the primary level and 19.3% had attained education up to the primary level only; 51.5% of the population had attained education up to the secondary level and slightly over 20% had attained education up to the tertiary level. In the data for the year 2012, the distribution of the figures shows some small changes (Information Services Department 2013a, 2015b). The factsheets stated that only 20.6% of the population had received primary-level education or below in 2012. This figure had dropped from 25.7% in 2005 to 19.6% in 2014. Those who had received secondary education remained more or less the same, around 50%. A total of 29.8% of the population had attained tertiary education in 2014, a gradual increased in the last 10 years, from 22.8% in 2005, as seen in Table 4-2 below:

Educational attainment	% of population aged 15 and over				
	2005	2007	2010	2012	2014
No schooling/Pre-primary	6.4	23.7	5.4	20.6	19.6
Primary	19.3		17.0		
Secondary	51.5	51.9	52.3	51.8	50.5
Tertiary	22.8	24.4	25.4	27.7	29.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4-2: Distribution of total population in Hong Kong by educational attainment from 2005 to 2014 (Information Services Department 2012: 2; 2013a: 2; 2015b: 2)

As shown in Table 4-3 below, compared with the total population, visually impaired people in Hong Kong have a relatively lower education level.⁸ Their education profiles in 2001, 2008 and 2014 were more or less similar, showing very little improvement, as illustrated in the following Table 4-3:

Educational attainment	2001		2008		2014	
	No. of persons	%	No. of persons	%	No. of persons	%

⁸ Before September 2012, there were seven forms in the old Hong Kong secondary education system, as follows: Form 1-3: Junior Secondary; Form 4-5: Senior Secondary (for Certificate-Level Exam); Form 6-7: Matriculation (for A-Level Exam). Students could drop out of school after either Form 3, 5 or 7.

No Schooling/ kindergarten	26,900	36.4	49,500	40.4	51,500	29.5
Primary	29,900	40.5	45,500	37.1	69,500	39.8
Secondary/ matriculation	13,400	18.1	21,400	17.5	40,700	23.3
Tertiary (Non-degree) ⁹	1,800	2.5	2,500	2.1	4,500	2.6
Tertiary (Degree)	1,900	2.5	3,600	2.9	8,600	4.9
Overall	73,900	100	122,600	100	174,800	100

Table 4-3: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by educational attainment in 2001, 2008 and 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 37; 2008: 43; 2014: 44)

In 2001, more than three quarters (76.9%) of the visually impaired had only up to a primary level of education, with 36.4% having received no schooling at all or having attended only kindergarten. This percentage in 2001 of no schooling or kindergarten among the visually impaired was five times higher than that of the general public, which was 6.4% in 2005 and was reduced to 5.4% in 2010.

More than 40% of the visually impaired had received only primary education in 2001, which was double the percentage of the total population in 2005 (19.3%) and in 2010 (17%). Just over 18% had studied at secondary level, which was not even half the percentage of the total population (around 50% in both 2005 and 2010). Only 5% had received tertiary education, a figure four times lower than that of the total population of Hong Kong: 22.8% in 2005, 25.4% in 2010 and steadily improving over the years (Census and Statistics Department 2001b).

According to recent statistics, the gap between the academic achievements of the visually abled and those of the visually impaired seem to have broadened, as the number of those among the total population who have received tertiary education has grown to almost 30% by 2014 (Information Services Department 2013a & 2015b), whereas the figure among the visually impaired drops to 7.5%.

In 2008, there were only slight differences in the percentages showing the distribution of the educational attainment of the visually impaired group compared to the data compiled from 2001. Similar to the situation in 2001, those who had received primary education or a lower level of education in 2008 remained the

⁹ ‘Tertiary (Non-degree)’ refers to diploma/certificate and sub-degree, including higher certificate, higher diploma, professional diploma, associate degree and pre-associate degree (Census and Statistics Department 2014: 218-219).

majority, accounting for about 77% of the whole group. Around 40% of the visually impaired population did not go to school or attended only kindergarten, whereas approximately 37% had attended primary school only. The percentage distribution of those whose education attainment was at the secondary and tertiary levels in 2008 was the same as in 2001. Almost 18% had received secondary education or had registered for it, while 5% had entered tertiary institutions. The minor difference is that nearly 3% of them studied for a degree. In other words, more people with seeing difficulties had an opportunity to attain a degree in 2008 than in 2001 (Census and Statistics Department, 2008). Figure 4-4 below depicts in an illustrative manner the educational achievements of the visually impaired in Hong Kong over a period of years:

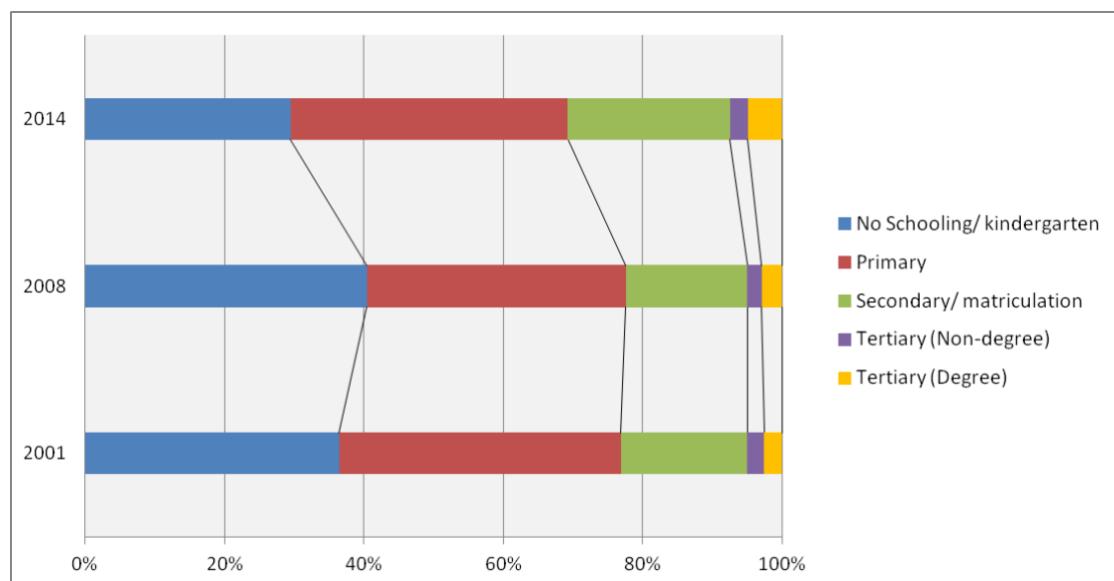


Figure 4-4: Distribution of persons with seeing difficulty by educational attainment in 2001, 2008 and 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 37; 2008: 43; 2014: 44)

Table 4-4 below shows the comparison of educational attainment between Hong Kong's visually impaired population in 2001, 2008, 2014 and its total population in 2014:

	% of visually impaired population			% of total population
	2001	2008	2014	2014
Primary and below	76.9 (36.4+40.5)	77.1 (40.4+37.1)	69.3 (29.5+39.8)	19.6
Secondary	18.1	17.5	23.3	50.5
Tertiary	5.0 (2.5+2.5)	5.0 (2.1+2.9)	7.5 (2.6+4.9)	29.8
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 4-4: Comparison of the percentages of educational attainment between the visually impaired population in 2001, 2008 and 2014 and the total population in 2014 in Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 37; 2008: 43; 2014: 44 and Information Services Department 2015b: 2)

By 2014, the situation might have improved slightly and the percentage distribution of educational attainment of the blind and partially sighted population were slightly higher than in previous years, though the differences with their visually abled peers are still striking and many more blind and partially sighted people achieve low education levels than sighted people. The percentage of those whose education level was primary or below decreased from 77.1% in 2008 to 69.3% in 2014, though, when compared to the total population distribution (19.6% in 2014), the gap is still a considerably big one (49.7%). Less than 25% of the visually impaired (i.e. 23.3%) had received secondary education by 2014, an improvement when contrasted with the 17.5% in 2008; however, this percentage was only half of that of the total population (50.5%). As for tertiary education, only 7.5% of the visually disabled achieved this level of higher education in 2014, of whom 4.9% had studied for a degree. However, the general public's achievement rate at this higher education level was four times higher at 29.8%. When it comes to people who were born blind or who had become blind later in life, the percentages are lower, even though the situation has improved in recent years, as shown by the rising numbers of those receiving secondary and tertiary education.

There are only two special schools for the visually impaired in Hong Kong: Ebenezer School and Ebenezer New Hope School. The former uses the mainstream curriculum of primary and junior secondary (Forms 1 to 3) education and provides four kinds of rehabilitation training: sensory-motor, orientation and mobility, low vision and Braille. Ebenezer New Hope School provides special education to those who also suffer from cognitive impairments.

4.3.4 Visual impairment according to employment, occupation and income

According to the two reports, 9,600, 8,700 and 16,700 people with visual disabilities were employed in 2001, 2008 and 2014, respectively. They were mainly engaged in three general sectors of the labour market: (1) wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels, (2) financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services and (3) public administration/community, social and personal services. The most popular type of job among them (roughly 30% to 40% of those employed) was ‘elementary occupations’ which include “street vendors; domestic helpers and cleaners; messengers; private security guards; watchmen; freight handlers; lift operators; construction labourers; hand packers; agricultural and fishery labourers” (Census and Statistics Department 2001b: 149, 2008: 175, 2014: 225). This may be attributed to the lower education received by the visually impaired. The other popular jobs were grouped into two broad categories: (1) managers and administrators, and professionals and associate professionals, and (2) service workers and shop sales workers. The median of their monthly income was HKD 8,000 (around GBP 800) in 2001, HKD 7,000 (around GBP 700) in 2008, and HKD 10,000 (around GBP 1,000) in 2014 (Census and Statistics Department 2001b, 2008, 2014). Compared to the median monthly salary of the general public in 2014, which amounted to HKD 14,800 (around GBP 1,480), the income of the visually impaired in the same year was two-thirds of that of their sighted counterparts; clearly indicating that the visually impaired have a much lower purchasing power (Information Services Department 2015a).

4.4 Media Access for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong

To date, there has been little research into the extent to which the blind and partially sighted can get access to the media in Hong Kong. There is not comprehensive data about their media uses and behaviours, although it seems legitimate to assume that, in general, they can obtain information from various channels, including television, cinema, VCDs/DVDs, Blu-rays, radio, books, magazines, newspapers and the Internet.

In what follows, an overview is provided of the various local media mentioned above in Hong Kong.

4.4.1 Television

During the period when the research was being conducted (2013 to March 2016), the four free local TV providers in Hong Kong were: domestic public TV provider Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB), domestic public TV provider Asia Television Limited (ATV), public government-owned TV provider Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) and an online TV provider Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKT) which has not yet been granted a license. In April 2016, ATV could not renew its license and since then there was no more TV provision of ATV. Before April 2016, the two domestic public television programme service licensees in Hong Kong were TVB and ATV. Between the two of them, they provided four domestic channels in analogue format and 11 domestic channels in digital format, including simulcasts of the four analogue channels. To entertain and educate local residents, the two companies were requested to broadcast a wide range of television programmes: news, documentaries, current affairs, arts and cultural programmes, plus programmes for children (Communications and Technology Branch 2013). In January 2014, the public government-owned service broadcaster RTHK “commenced a trial run of three digital terrestrial television channels”, and on 2 April 2016, when ATV’s license expired, it began “simulcast[ing] the programmes of its digital TV channels on the two analogue channels vacated by AVT” (Communications and Creative Industries Branch 2016: online).

On 15 October 2013, Hong Kong Television Entertainment Company Limited (HKTVE) and Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV) were granted approval-in-principle for domestic free television programme service licences (Information Services Department 2013b). However, only HKTVE was granted a free TV licence in April 2015 (Communications Authority 2015). A year later, in April 2016, HKTVE began operating ViuTV and broadcasting free TV programmes. Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKT) also submitted an application for a licence in 2013 but was rejected and the company launched a shopping and entertainment platform called HKT Mall in 2014. Customers can shop online and watch free TV

programmes produced by HKTВ on the same platform. To sum up, the number of TV programme providers in Hong Kong that were offering a majority of free TV shows in Cantonese, during the research period (i.e. before April 2016), were four and include TVB, ATV, RTHK and HKTВ, whereas those doing so after April 2016 were also four and include TVB, RTHK, ViuTV and HKTВ.

In addition to four free television providers, Hong Kong also has three domestic pay television programme service licensees: Hong Kong Cable Television Limited, PCCW Media Limited and TVB Network Vision Limited. Together, these television operators provide around 400 channels, and they enjoy more lenient content regulation (Communications and Creative Industries Branch 2016).

As previously mentioned, the Hong Kong government passed subtitling requirements to meet the special needs of the hearing impaired in late 2002. Since then, public television operators have been required to provide subtitles in Chinese and English. However, no special requirements have been made to provide AD services to the visually impaired, who therefore cannot gain full access to television programmes.

4.4.2 Cinema, VCDs/DVDs and Blu-rays

At present, the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSB, www.hksb.org.hk/en) is the only organisation in Hong Kong that regularly screens films with AD for the blind and partially sighted in their own premises. The HKSB has also arranged a number of screening sessions at various cinema venues in the city and regularly loans accessible video tapes, VCDs and DVDs to its members. With fewer than 15 DVDs with Cantonese AD in the Hong Kong market, access to the audiovisual media for the visually impaired in Hong Kong is very limited (see also section 3.5.5).

4.4.3 Radio

At the time of writing, in 2016, there are three radio operators in Hong Kong. The public service broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) together with two commercial radiobroadcasters – Hong Kong Commercial Broadcasting Company Limited (Commercial Radio) and Metro Broadcast Corporation Limited (Metro) – operate a total of 13 local analogue radio channels. Since March 2011, digital audio broadcasting (DAB) services have been granted by the government and, according to

the Communications and Creative Industries Branch (2015), a total of 15 DAB channels are currently being provided by the only public service broadcaster, RTHK, and the two commercial broadcasters, namely, Digital Broadcasting Corporation Hong Kong Limited (DBC) and Metro. RTHK offers three specific programmes for people with visual impairments through two of its DAB channels: *Audio Book in Putonghua* [有聲好書(普通話版)], via its channel DAB 31; and *Audio Book in Cantonese* [有聲好書] and *Audio Art* [光影無限 LIKE - 電影/舞台劇], which can be listened to on channel DAB 35. On the *Audio Art* programme, introduced in March 2013, the soundtrack of a Cantonese film or stage drama is broadcast with AD on the last Sunday of each month. Sometimes, Cantonese films on DVD, which have been commercialised with Cantonese AD, are played on this programme (RTHK, n.d.). Section 4.5.6 4.5.6 offers further information on DVDs with AD available in Hong Kong.

4.4.4 Books, Magazines and Newspapers

The Information Accessibility Centre of the Hong Kong Society for the Blind provides Braille materials for its visually impaired members as well as other library services, by recruiting volunteers to record Cantonese audio books and periodicals. In addition to these resources, the Centre also offers Tele-digital Library Services and Netshare for the visually impaired. The former is a hotline for members to listen to local Chinese daily newspapers, periodicals, a voice-based library catalogue and talking books. The latter is a website that provides access to online news and magazines in a suitable manner for the visually impaired. Most recorded resources are in Cantonese but if any members need an article that has been originally published in an English-language newspaper, HKSBl will help them to find a volunteer to record it in English.

4.4.5 The Internet

To raise awareness among the general public about the importance of providing barrier-free websites for people with seeing difficulty, the Hong Kong Blind Union ran the ‘Overcoming Digital Divide – Web Accessibility & Visually Impaired Users Capacity Building Campaign’ from 2010 to 2012. Another initiative, the ‘WAFA –

Web Access For All' project, was sponsored by the Home Affairs Department in 2013 to provide testing and consultation services to improve the accessibility features of websites and mobile apps.

4.5 The Provision of AD in Hong Kong

Compared to other Western and Asian countries (e.g. Japan and Korea), the provision of AD in Hong Kong is very limited: it is non-existent on TV and there is no regular provision of AD in cinemas, museums or theatres. In addition, as discussed above, there are no legislative requirements emanating from the government for the provision of AD for any media, contrary to the provision in place for subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing. This means that, in effect, the development of AD provision in Hong Kong is being championed by non-profit organisations, which are the ones taking the lead in this area. Yet, as already mentioned, the drive is being propelled mostly by volunteers on a non-for-profit basis as the NGOs do not obtain any long term, regular funding directly from the Hong Kong government.

Awareness of the particular needs of visually impaired people as regards their access to the audiovisual media began to increase in Hong Kong only in 2009. It was at that time that AD services started to be introduced by local NGOs to meet the needs of visually impaired people and to help them better integrate into society. Three local NGOs are at present dedicated to providing AD services: (1) the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSB), which mainly provides AD for films, visits and outings and, occasionally, for plays, exhibitions and performing arts; (2) the Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK), which primarily offers AD for plays, performing arts and exhibitions; and (3) the Audio Description Association (Hong Kong) (AuDeAHK), which mainly provides professional AD training and public education and serves as an AD provider offering a wide range of AD services.

4.5.1 The Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSB) 香港盲人輔導會

The HKS (www.hksb.org.hk/en) was founded in 1956 to serve those with poor vision. It provides eye care and related services for those with poor vision,

rehabilitation and vocational training, educational support, employment guidance, an adaptive technology advisory service, technology applications for information and communication purposes, rehabilitation services for people with multiple disabilities and visual impairment (MDVI), as well as offering residential care for people with MDVI and aged blind people. To widen the number of educational opportunities and to enhance community support, the HKSBN has established several centres across the city for its members, such as the Centralized Braille Production Centre, the Parents Resource Centre for Visually Impaired Children and the Information Accessibility Centre, which runs a physical library and an online digital library for the visually impaired.

The HKSBN also provides AD for cultural and leisure activities (HKSBN n.d.), but it is dependent on external funding to maintain these activities. Since 2011, it has sought this funding through the Community Chest and the Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) initiative, which is an agency set up under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to encourage creative economy development in Hong Kong. At present, HKSBN is the only organisation in Hong Kong to show films with AD on a regular basis. In addition, it regularly loans accessible DVDs to its members and has arranged a few screening sessions with AD in the cinema in the past. An AD study group was set up in July 2012 within this organisation; and, since then, group meetings are held regularly from time to time so that audio describers can share their experiences, exchange ideas to improve AD services, and receive some AD and voice training. In addition, group members can suggest new initiatives and arrangements for further AD training and activities.

4.5.2 Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK) **香港展能藝術會**

Established in 1986, the ADAHK has been devoted to the development and the promotion of the arts among people with disabilities (PWDs) with the motto ‘arts are for everyone’. To achieve its various goals, the ADAHK (n.d.-a: online) has a two-directional approach – horizontal and vertical –, which is explained as follows:

The horizontal development is a general education and public sensitivity campaign to reach as many people (with and without disabilities) as possible to provide equal opportunity for PWDs to participate in the learning and creation of art, and to sensitise the community of the rights and needs of PWDs to engage in the arts.

The vertical development is a series of programs to provide opportunities for professional training for PWDs to develop and nurture their artistic talents, and to promote excellence in their work.

One of the ADAHK's priorities is to train trainers to work with PWDs, and it has invited overseas specialists to come to Hong Kong for a wide range of training activities and to share adaptive techniques to work with PWDs. With the support of The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the ADAHK launched the five-year Jockey Club Arts Accessibility Scheme and set up the first local arts accessibility service centre, known as the Jockey Club Arts Accessibility Service Centre (JCAASC). The Centre provides consultation, training and a myriad of services to create a barrier-free arts environment for the disabled (ADAHK 2008).

4.5.3 Audio Description Association (Hong Kong), (AuDeAHK) 香港口述影像協會

Founded in 2015, Audio Description Association (Hong Kong) (AuDeAHK) (<http://audeahk.org.hk/index/en/home/>) is a non-governmental organisation that works to raise the profile of AD in Hong Kong, and offers professional AD training and AD services for the community. Since the offer of AD is very limited in Hong Kong, the AuDeAHK takes a leading role in the provision of training and public education in the city and in other neighbouring regions such as Macao and Guangzhou. The form of AD training offered by AuDeAHK is usually workshop-based. Each workshop has a focus, for example, basic AD skills or AD for films (see also section 4.6.3). Other than offering AD public education sessions and AD training, AuDeAHK also provides numerous AD services: AD script writing; AD service consultation; research on AD users (reception studies and AD activity/event evaluations and analysis) and whole-package AD services from preparation (e.g. site visit) and research through AD script writing to AD quality control and AD delivery, especially for organisations for the blind and partially sighted (such as HKSBN) and for visually impaired individuals upon request. As a service provider, AuDeAHK offers a vast array of AD services, including AD for films, TV programmes, short

videos, performing arts, visual arts, exhibitions, tours/visits and events, such as lion dance performances, film festivals and music awards presentations ceremonies, to encourage social inclusion and increase accessibility for the visually impaired to cultural and recreational activities. AuDeAHK also hires blind and partially sighted people who are frequent AD users to work as Description Quality Evaluators, so that they can contribute to the evaluation of the quality of the AD and provide constructive feedback that can be used for its improvement after trial runs.

As shown below, in the discussion of the different types of AD provision in Hong Kong, the three associations – HKSBD, ADAHK and AuDeAHK – have played key roles in the development of AD practices in the city, especially as regards access to audiovisual material and the performing and visual arts. In addition, efforts have been made by these and other associations to grant the visually impaired access to other activities, such as outdoor outings and sports.

4.5.4 Film Showing Sessions with Live AD

Since March 2009, the HKSBD has offered a regular film showing service, which is held two or three times a month at its headquarters. Due to copyright issues, only live – instead of prerecorded – AD can be provided. Up until now, more than 200 film showing sessions of some 150 different films with live Cantonese AD have been organised. The majority are dramas and romantic films, whereas the rest are action films, martial arts films, comedies, historical films and thrillers. These films are mainly in Cantonese, with a few of them in Putonghua and English. The live AD is often provided in Cantonese even if the film is in Putonghua or English, but on two occasions – film showing sessions of *讓子彈飛* [*Let the Bullets Fly*] (Wen Jiang 2010) and 那些年，我們一起追的女孩 [*You Are the Apple of My Eye*] (Giddens Ko 2011) – live Putonghua AD was provided for films in Putonghua. When the film *The King's Speech* (Tom Hooper 2010) was screened with the original English soundtrack, live Cantonese AD and a translation from English into Chinese in Braille were provided, but this was a special occasion because the film was extremely popular.

As regards the provision of AD in these sessions, the HKSBN usually books a theatre with a capacity for at least 60 people where a copy of the film on DVD/VCD will be screened. The audio describer sits in the middle of the last row in the theatre and performs the AD using a microphone, which means that the AD is heard by all those present on the premises. The volume of the audio describer's microphone will be tested in advance and adjusted so that it will not interfere with the sound from the DVD/VCD. Audio describers are requested to prepare and rehearse their AD at home. A 10- to 15-minute introduction, i.e. an audio introduction, is usually provided at the beginning of the session by the audio describer, who takes the opportunity to talk about the cast, the costumes and the settings if they are special. In addition, s/he will remind the audience about flashbacks or fast-changing scenes in order to prepare them for these. A discussion is usually held immediately after the screening for the audience to ask questions about the film and to express their opinions on the AD provided. Thanks to the increasing awareness of the provision of AD for films, some visually impaired elderly persons have shown an interest in the service and, as a result, the HKSBN also offers this service at a few old people's homes in Hong Kong (Leung 2013).

Before the professional audio description training workshop held in July 2011 (see Section 4.6.1), audio describers were allowed to conduct live AD in their own ways. Some did not use an AD script at all, which meant that there was a good chance of occasionally missing out important information. This was not the only issue encountered: since only live AD was provided, a single audio describer was responsible for the AD of the whole film, which meant that there was usually no break during the session. Information risked being lost whenever there was a slip of the tongue or when any other undesirable physical reaction occurred (coughs or hiccups, for example). After the above-mentioned workshop, and in an attempt to minimise any potential downsides, the HKSBN decided to request audio describers to prepare their AD scripts in advance. This has meant a big step forward and has contributed to the increased professionalism of the AD services provided, although some issues may not be solved until prerecorded AD is tested and implemented on a regular basis. The AD editor from AuDeAHK has been invited to go through AD scripts as a gate-keeper of quality control at some of HKSBN's film showing sessions.

AuDeAHK also provides AD services for some film festivals, including the 4th Annual Ocean in Motion Film Festival that took place in Hong Kong in April 2015 and the 40th Hong Kong International Film Festival in March 2016. In the former festival, an experienced describer was asked to describe several documentaries on the spot. Because all of the documentaries were originally in English, the organiser dubbed them first into Cantonese before giving them to the describer for the production of the AD script in Cantonese. In the latter festival, AuDeAHK was invited to provide the AD editor, who, as the gatekeeper of the quality control, had to check the accuracy of each AD script against the moving images in the film and to ensure that AD principles had been appropriately applied. On these two occasions, the entire audience, which included both the sighted and the visually impaired, could hear the whole AD through loudspeakers in the venues. Notwithstanding the financial implications, and in addition to meeting the needs of the visually impaired, such AD screenings are also intended to raise awareness of AD among the general public, for whom some of them would have been their first exposure to AD.

4.5.5 Live AD in Cinemas

In some Western countries, such as the UK and the USA, the provision of AD is readily found in cinemas. In the UK, for instance, over 300 cinemas are equipped with either a Digital Theatre System (DTS) or a Dolby delivery unit to provide prerecorded AD (World Blind Union 2011: 35-36, 2016: 38; Your Local Cinema.com n.d.-a). In the USA, the practice of offering AD in cinemas has spread throughout at least nine states and is provided by MoPix, DTS Access, Fidelio and Sony (American Council of the Blind 2014b). In contrast to the increased attention that AD has received in some countries, and because this mode of translation is new to the Hong Kong film industry, none of the cinemas in the city are currently equipped with a system to support proper AD. As a result, no prerecorded AD is provided in cinemas. The only exception seems to be 葉問：終極一戰 [*Ip Man: The Final Fight*], a martial arts film shot by Herman Yau in 2013, that was shown with prerecorded AD in a reserved cinema in April 2013. The film director and screenwriter decided to add an AD soundtrack before the actual screening because delivering live AD for fight scenes would have been relatively difficult and may have detracted the sighted audience's attention from the diégesis of the film. Apart from

this exception, so far, only live AD has been provided in cinemas, and only on a handful of occasions, typically when a cinema theatre is booked by an organisation for visually impaired patrons. On these occasions, as was the case with the previously-mentioned film shows (see section 4.5.4), the audio describer uses an open microphone to perform the AD live. In these cases, a public address system (aka. PA system), which is an electronic sound amplification system that includes additional speakers in the cinema theatre, is used to deliver the AD that will be heard by sighted viewers as well as visually impaired ones. As the sound comes from additional speakers, the volume has to be carefully adjusted so that it does not interfere negatively with the original soundtrack. According to the HKSBS (2011a), 4 September 2011 was the very first time that a film was audio described by a trained audio describer in a reserved cinema in Hong Kong. The film was 竊聽風雲 2 [*Overheard 2*], directed by Felix Chong and Alan Mak in 2011, and around 100 visually impaired people and their families enjoyed watching it with live AD (*ibid.*).

4.5.6 AD on DVDs

Thanks to a greater social awareness of the needs of the visually impaired over the past few years, 12 audio described films have been commercially released on DVD in Hong Kong. In September 2010, the first DVD with a Cantonese AD soundtrack, corresponding to the film 唐山大地震 [*After Shock*] (Xiaogang Feng 2010), was released in Hong Kong (HKSBS 2010). Since then, more Chinese films with AD have become available on DVD. Some of them offer both Cantonese and Mandarin AD sound tracks, and all but one of the describers are female. A list of DVDs with AD available in Hong Kong is shown in the following Table 4-5:

Original title	Back translation	Director	Year	Cantonese AD (sex of describer)	Mandarin AD (sex of describer)
唐山大地震	<i>After Shock</i>	Xiaogang Feng	2010	✓ (female)	
單身男女	<i>Don't Go Breaking My Heart</i>	Johnnie To and Ka-Fai Wai	2011	✓ (male)	✓ (female)
奪命金	<i>Life Without Principle</i>	Johnnie To	2011	✓ (female)	N/A

桃姐	<i>A Simple Life</i>	Ann Hui	2012	✓ (female)	✓ (female)
DIVA 華麗之後	<i>DIVA</i>	Heiward Mak	2012	✓ (female)	N/A
大上海	<i>The Last Tycoon</i>	Jing Wong	2012	✓ (female)	N/A
葉問：終極一戰	<i>Ip Man: The Final Fight</i>	Herman Yau	2013	✓ (female)	✓ (female)
盲探	<i>Blind Detective</i>	Johnnie To	2013	✓ (female)	✓ (female)
救火英雄	<i>As The Light Goes Out</i>	Derek Kwok	2014	✓ (female)	N/A
單身男女 2	<i>Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2</i>	Johnnie To	2014	✓ (female)	✓ (female)
衝鋒車	<i>Two Thumbs Up</i>	Ho-leung Lau	2015	✓ (female)	✓ (female)
五個小孩的校長	<i>Little Big Master</i>	Adrian Kwan	2015	✓ (female)	✓ (female)

Table 4-5: List of DVDs with AD available in Hong Kong (HKS 2011b, HKS 2012a, HKS 2013)

A local production company called Best & Original Production Limited was responsible for producing the first four DVDs with AD for the Chinese market. According to AV Bi-Weekly (Zound 2012), the company put tremendous effort not only into the drafting of the actual AD but also into designing an audio menu on the DVD so that it can be used independently by the visually impaired. The DVD of *A Simple Life* is a typical example. Once the DVD is inserted in the player, the audience hears a narration prompting them to select either ‘AD soundtrack’ or ‘non-AD soundtrack’. If the AD soundtrack is selected, the next page of the menu informs the audience audibly that they can choose between the ‘Cantonese AD’ or the ‘Putonghua AD’ before the actual film starts. After the release of each of the DVDs, the company collected comments from HKS members for further improvement. The discussion included issues such as how many buttons should there be on the menu to simplify the selection process. Drawing on this feedback, the audio menus on the DVDs of *Life without Principle* and *A Simple Life* were revised and improved.

Besides being used for private consumption, DVDs may also be played on other media. The public service broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) introduced the programme 光影無限 LIKE - 電影/舞台劇 [Audio Art] on its digital audio broadcasting Channel 35 in March 2013. According to the programme description, the soundtrack of either a film or a stage drama in Cantonese is

broadcast with audio narration on the last Sunday of each month. Sometimes, Cantonese films with Cantonese AD available on DVD are also played in this programme (RTHK n.d.).

In addition to the provision of AD on DVDs of films, the RTHK produced, in 2013, a set of DVDs for its documentary series 沒有牆的世界 IV [A Wall-less World IV], whose main objective is to promote the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Each DVD contains the service for a different kind of accessibility, including subtitles in Traditional Chinese Characters and Simplified Chinese Characters as well as AD on Disc A, English subtitles on Disc B, and sign language on Disc C. It is believed that this set of DVDs is the first TV programme/documentary to offer prerecorded AD in Cantonese. One of the downsides of this initiative is that the DVDs are not for sale and may be difficult to come by. In 2016, RTHK started the production of AD for the fifth season of this documentary series.

4.5.7 Short Audio Described Videos

In June 2013, and in collaboration with the HKSBC, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) produced six videos with prerecorded AD, all of them available online. Five of these, each lasting about 23 minutes, are episodes from various series of the EOC's TV docudrama *A Mission for Equal Opportunities*, whilst the remaining video is an award-winning entry from a short video competition organised by the commission. All six videos were uploaded to the EOC YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/user/HKEOC) in order to raise awareness about discrimination in society and to promote equal opportunities for the visually impaired. The audio described materials, which are shown in Table 4-6 below, were carefully chosen to cover topics of interest to the target audience:

Series	Title	Aim
EOC's TV docudrama A Mission for Equal Opportunities	沒有眼神的微笑 [A Sightless Smile] – Episode 2, 1st Series (1998)	To promote equal opportunities among the visually impaired
	網路盲點 [Internet Blind-spot] – Episode 3, 2nd Series (2000)	To promote equal opportunities among the visually impaired when accessing the Internet
	緣來自平等 [Destined Equality] – Episode 1, 3rd Series (2003)	To promote equal opportunities among the visually impaired
	雙生兒 [Twins] – Episode 6, 3rd Series (2003)	To promote equal opportunities among students with specific learning disabilities
	按摩有罪 [Harassment] – Episode 1, 6th Series (2009)	To prevent sexual harassment
Special Merit Award winner of the EOC's video competition	Acceptance (2009)	To promote inclusion and diversity

Table 4-6: EOC's audio described short videos (EOC 2013)

4.5.8 AD for the Performing Arts and the Visual Arts

In the late 2000s, the ADAHK introduced *Playback for ALL*, a cultural initiative consisting in the staging of improvisational theatre plays with the provision of live AD. The theatre usually stages three to four plays a year, each time on a different theme. During the two-hour play, a host invites some members of the audience to tell a story of their own, related to the theme of the play. On the basis of the information provided by the audience, the performers will then improvise and act out those same stories (hence, the ‘playback’ in the title). Since May 2009, 20 performances of *Playback for ALL* with AD have been held, with an overall attendance of over 2,200 people (ADAHK n.d.-b).

The ADAHK also provides AD services for other types of performing and visual arts, such as some of the shows by the Hong Kong Ballet (for instance, the Open Dress Rehearsal of *Swan Lake*), the musical *Animal Farm*, and the painting exhibition *Best Wishes for the Family: Traditional Chinese Woodblock* (ADAHK n.d.-c). The ADAHK is not the only association promoting AD for the performing and visual arts since the HKSBN has also provided AD services for several stage dramas and live performances. During these events, when there are sighted people at the venue, headsets are offered to visually impaired audience members so that they can listen to the AD without disturbing their companions.

4.5.9 AD in Museums

During a nine-month project, funded by the Government's Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund), the AuDeAHK was able to launch, back in 2017, the initiative called 'Audio Description Services for Museums', with the main objective to increase visually impaired people's participation and interaction in society (SIE Fund 2017). The major beneficiaries are non-governmental organisations serving the blind and partially sighted. Live described tours are provided for permanent and special exhibitions at local museums, such as the special exhibition 'Eternal Life – Exploring Ancient Egypt' hosted at Hong Kong Science Museum, and the one entitled 'Miles upon Miles: World Heritage along the Silk Road' celebrated at the Hong Kong Museum of History. Other permanent and special exhibitions have also been organised at the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences. During the tour of these exhibitions, live AD is delivered via headsets. To complement the description, tactile props and diagrams are also provided to enhance the experience and assist the comprehension of the blind and partially sighted participants. For the exhibition on ancient Egypt, for instance, ten tactile props and seven tactile diagrams were prepared. Tactile props such as 6-inch mummies together with coffins were used when describing Nestawedjat's mummy and her three coffins. Other tactile props included dummies of canopic jars and small figures of the Egyptian god Anubis and scarab beetles among others. Tactile diagrams were also provided for Stela of Nefarious and Eye of Horus (Ming Pao 2017).

4.5.10 AD for Visits and Outings

The HKSBN has been organising outdoor activities with the provision of AD for its visually impaired members since 2011. To enrich their knowledge of local culture and nature, various visits/tours have been arranged so far. The following are three distinctive examples: a visit to the Legislative Council Building, culture tours on the tram and visits to the Hong Kong Wetland Park. The role of the audio describer is different for each of the events. In the first two activities, audio describers also serve as tour guides, while for the third, the audio describer usually works together with a guide.

The two-storey granite Legislative Council Building, also known as the Old Supreme Court Building, was built in the neo-classical style, opened in 1912 (Figure 4-5), and has a well-known blind-folded statue of Justice, represented by the Greek goddess Themis (Figure 4-6):



Figure 4-5: The Old Supreme Court Building in Hong Kong (The Court of Final Appeal Building – Photo Gallery, www.hkcfa.hk/en/about/cfa_building/CFAB_PhotoGallery/index.html)



Figure 4-6: Blind-folded statue of Justice in the Old Supreme Court Building in Hong Kong (The Court of Final Appeal Building – Photo Gallery, www.hkcfa.hk/en/about/cfa_building/CFAB_PhotoGallery/index.html)

Before its closure in August 2011, the HKSBC organised a guided visit, so that the visually impaired would have an opportunity to get to know this historical building and to learn about its design and facilities. AD was provided throughout the whole experience, and the audio describer also served as a tour guide. This was also the case with the two culture tours on the tram arranged for about 60 HKSBC members in 2012. To understand the relevance of this activity, it should be noted that Hong Kong has the largest fleet of double-decker trams in the world, which have been serving the city for more than a century and have thus become one of its iconic symbols (Figure 4-7):



Figure 4-7: Double-decker tramcar

In this case, two people were responsible for different parts of the tour: an expert with extensive knowledge of trams and their history, and an audio describer who also fulfilled the role of a tour guide and provided information about the main places and buildings along the way. All participants received a headset to listen to the AD and the information about the trams. On the upper deck, participants listened to the audio describer, who talked about the places and buildings they were passing, whilst on the lower deck, the expert introduced the tram and its history to enrich the participants' cultural knowledge. The latter brought along small model trams and sample tickets so that members could feel the appearance of the tram and the size of the tram ticket. The visitors were also given the opportunity to take part in a touch tour on which they were allowed to touch different parts of the tram (e.g. the wooden seats, the ceiling) and to feel textures and shapes. The tram went from one terminus to another, and when it arrived at the second terminus, the two groups swapped places and the tram returned to its starting point.

As regards the third audio described outing mentioned above, the HKSB organised three visits to the Hong Kong Wetland Park for its members in 2013. The Park preserves the wetland habitat and ecosystem within a 61-hectare suburban area and raises public awareness by educating visitors about its significance, value and biodiversity. Guided tours are provided for visitors to learn about the living

organisms and plants found in the wetland, but there is no official guided tour with AD for the visually impaired. The audio described visits organised by the HKSBSB signalled the first time that Wetland Park tour guides had cooperated with audio describers. The main duties of the tour guides remained the same as usual: they passed on knowledge on the features of the wetland and introduced facts about the animals and plants to be found in this type of ecosystem. Meanwhile, the audio describers focused on the appearance of animals and plants, the landscape and its attractions. On each visit, a group of around 45 participants was divided into three subgroups of 15 people, with one audio describer assigned to each subgroup. The visit began with a touch tour at the entrance, during which visitors were allowed to touch and compare life size statues of a wide range of wetland creatures and small bunches of real plants. Since the participants needed to be able to move around, headsets, instead of loudhailers, were used (Leung 2013).

The HKSBSB also arranges regular visits to museums and other public places, such as the Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum, the Hong Kong Space Museum, the Stanley Military Cemetery and the North Kowloon Magistracy. During the visit to the magistracy, visually impaired participants had an opportunity to go inside the railed bar where the defendant sits in the court to obtain a better understanding of the court setting.

4.5.11 AD for Lion Dance Performances

For two consecutive years, 2015 and 2016, AuDeAHK was invited to provide AD for the lion dance performance at the HKSBSB's spring dinner, which is a common gathering with relatives, friends or co-workers after the Chinese New Year. The lion dance is a unique live traditional Chinese performance that is popular not only in Chinese areas but also all over the world. It is the most common performance during the Chinese New Year celebrations in Asia and in Chinatowns throughout the world, and it has been featured in a wide range of kung fu films. Lion dance performances can take place in a restaurant, a ballroom or in the street. Those in the former locations have a set routine with an essential climax known as 採青, pronounced as 'choi cheng' in Cantonese and as 'cai qing' in Putonghua, which literally means 'pluck the greens/lettuce'. The lion dancers must rehearse the performance

beforehand because of the limited space provided in the actual venues. In contrast, street performers can move freely for their show and may not include the ‘choi cheng’ routine. In the street, the pace of the performance is slower, and there is usually more space, such as in a parade. When a describer knows that s/he is going to deliver the AD for an indoor performance, it is common that s/he can view the rehearsal in advance and make notes of some of the key movements and actions in order to better prepare for the production of the AD script. The describer should develop some notes to describe the set routine, i.e. the beginning, the climax and the end of the performance. S/he should also familiarise herself/himself with this kind of performance to be able to use the appropriate register and terminology freely in context. Having an extensive and detailed knowledge of this traditional dance will be helpful in case the performers make impromptu changes to certain movements and actions.

The martial arts-related performance usually lasts for 10 to 12 minutes. Responding to unique drumbeats, two performers (one at the head and the other at the tail of the lion), wearing tailor-made costumes, mimic movements of a lion/cat. To describe a lion dance performance, the describer will need first to depict the lion and then describe the eye dotting ceremony, a symbol of life giving. The lion’s forehead, eyes (left, then right), nose, mouth, ears, horn, back of the body and tail will be dotted. In these early stages, the describer should focus on the awakening of the lion. Next, the lion starts its own performance, bowing, walking, looking for food, eating, playing, jumping, lying low and rolling. The highlight of the performance is when the lion starts to ‘choi cheng’, a traditional custom that represents good luck. The lion will chew the lettuce and spit it out, which represents the spreading of wealth and prosperity. Finally, the lion will bow again. Throughout the performance, a Big Head Buddha carrying a rattan fan will lead the lion from the starting point to the place of ‘choi cheng’, and a drum, gongs and cymbals will be played for the performers to follow. During the whole event, the lion will also interact with the audience. Because many staff of the HKSBC are blind and partially sighted, the HKSBC is in favour of the provision of AD for lion dances to entertain all of the staff at the spring dinner to achieve social inclusion (Leung 2015; Media Access Australia 2015).

4.5.12 AD for Sports: The Guide Runners (Applied Audio Description)

The Hong Kong Blind Sports Federation (HKBSF, 香港盲人體育總會) runs six sports courses for the visually impaired, including swimming, golf, bowling, dragon boating, football and marathon running, of which the latter seems to be the most popular. Other organisations, such as Blind Sports Hong Kong (BSHK, 香港失明人健體會), also offer regular running training sessions. BSHK arranges three long-distance running training sessions every week to encourage the visually impaired to exercise and stay healthy. A number of its members take part in marathon running competitions in Hong Kong and abroad (for example, in Taiwan).

During the training session, a guide runner pairs up with a visually impaired runner. They start with warm-up exercises and move on to long-distance running training according to the visually impaired runner's ability. Both the trainer and the runner hold either end of a strip, and the trainer takes the lead. The visually impaired runner can sense the direction, motion and speed of the guide runner through the strip. The session finishes with stretching and cool-down exercises. AD can also be provided during these training sessions. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this should be categorised as applied AD because there is a dialogue between the parties involved and the visually impaired runner takes an active role when receiving the AD and responding to the description. In this case, the guide runner describes the details of the stretching movements during the warm-up and cool-down exercises, whilst the visually impaired runner follows the instructions. The conditions of the road and any obstacles ahead are described during the running session, and sometimes, the guide runner might even describe the scenery, the buildings and the objects to be found along the way. In this manner, the runners with sight loss can run in a safer and more familiar environment (Leung 2013).

4.6 AD Training in Hong Kong

As already mentioned, the development of AD in Hong Kong is at a very early stage, which in turn means that there is not much training available. However, some interesting, pioneering initiatives have been implemented, both by professional associations and by Higher Education institutions. Since the establishment of

AuDeAHK in 2015, more professional AD training has also become available, as discussed in the sections below.

4.6.1 Professional AD Training Workshop

Supported and funded by CreateHK, a year-long AD development programme called ‘Hong Kong Audio Description in Films Development Scheme’ was implemented from March 2011 to April 2012 (Create Hong Kong 2011; Government Information Centre 2011; HKSBN 2011c). Trainees were invited to attend seminars, workshops and a conference as part of this programme. In late July and early August 2011, two AD specialists from the USA and Taiwan were invited to give a five-day professional AD workshop with the aim to train local audio describers in Hong Kong. These experts taught participants how to write AD scripts and how to describe films and images (photos). Around 100 participants attended the workshop and about 60 of them received certificates in two categories: Basic Theory and Practicum. From among those who obtained both certificates, 15 trainees were then selected to perform AD in the film showing service held by the HKSBN during the following eight months (HKSBN 2012b).

4.6.2 Train-the-Trainers Workshop: Developing AD Skills

Organised by the ADAHK in early April 2013, the ‘Train-the-Trainers Workshop: Developing Audio Description Skills’ focused on the techniques needed to audio describe visual and performing arts. A specialist from the USA was invited to share her experience in providing AD in these specific cultural settings and participants were taught how to write AD scripts and how to describe paintings, photos, plays and operas. In one of the sessions, participants observed how live AD was performed for the above-mentioned theatre performance *Playback for ALL* (see section 4.5.8).

4.6.3 AuDeAHK: Basic AD Training, Genre-specific AD Training Workshops and Certificate Courses in AD

The mother tongue of most local people with a visual disability is Cantonese, a Chinese dialect. To date, AuDeAHK is a major professional AD training provider to offer workshops and courses in the native language of the local community and other Cantonese speaking regions (e.g. Macao) to train future describers. The medium of instruction of the above-mentioned training workshops organised by HKSBN and ADAHK were English and Mandarin with the support of simultaneous or consecutive interpretation into Cantonese. During the two workshops, the AD guidelines and examples introduced by the speakers from the USA did not always meet participants' needs in a Cantonese context because of language use and cultural differences. Even though one of the trainers was from Taiwan and used another Chinese dialect, Mandarin, there were many language variations, especially in terms of colloquial expressions, that interfered with the learning process.

Given this situation, the provision of AD training by a native Cantonese speaker was considered crucial and hence the birth of AuDeAHK. Because of the popular demand for AD services for film screenings and for tours/visits, the most common workshops that AuDeAHK offers are basic AD skills, an introduction to the AD of films/AD for tours/visits. During the basic AD training, participants learn fundamental AD skills and do some practice. One of the highlights of this workshop is that the trainer introduces how to communicate with blind and partially sighted people through role-play. In the more advanced and genre-specific workshops, participants have a practicum session. Participants range from frontline staff working at organisations that service people with sight loss to university students and staff holding upcoming AD events as well as people looking for opportunities to provide AD services in the future (Link Education 2015; Chan 2016).

One of its major clients is HKSBN, which is always in need of describers for its film showing sessions and other AD-related activities. AuDeAHK has been invited to train its staff and volunteers for these purposes. AuDeAHK also provides tailor-made AD workshops upon request. Various genre-specific AD workshops have been already designed and offered, including AD for visual arts, AD for outdoor visits,

AD for tandem cycling (*Apple Daily* 2015; *Sing Pao* 2015) and AD for textbook illustrations. AuDeAHK also offers training in the form of certificate courses. The Macao SAR government has invited AuDeAHK to deliver AD training courses for its civil servants and staff from various NGOs. Many participants were docents from different government departments, for example, Environmental Protection Bureau, Maritime Museum, The Macau Police Force Exhibition Hall and Cultural Institute of Macao. After acquiring AD skills, participants had a practicum session to apply what they have learnt.

The chief trainer/speaker at AuDeAHK is a native Cantonese speaker, a seasoned AD practitioner and a researcher and scholar in the field of AD. She has studied AD practice in the UK and has audio described a wide range of films, documentaries, short videos, theatre plays, visits and events over many years. She has been a guest speaker at international conferences, seminars and shared sessions and has delivered training and live AD demonstrations at various public events, universities, schools and organisations for the visually impaired.

4.6.4 AD Training in Higher Education

Several elective courses on AD have been introduced in higher education institutions in Hong Kong in recent years. In 2005, Yeung (2007: 234) developed a set of 30-hour AD teaching materials as part of a translation and interpreting course delivered at Hong Kong Baptist University. The materials included exercises for the AD of dramas, dances, *xiqu* (Chinese operas), films, paintings, museum tours and public events. Since there was no separate AD course to train her translation and interpreting students, in 2006, Yeung incorporated AD training in her ‘Translating across Media’ class, a module on intersemiotic translation that also covered other professional practices like interpreting and adaptation. Hence, only nine hours of original AD material (dramas and paintings) were used (Yeung 2007; Yeung, personal communication, 8 January 2014). Yeung (2005: 3) regards AD skills as ‘highly transferable’, especially for interpreting training, and she emphasises in particular the usefulness of practising students’ vocal skills, of enhancing the command of their mother tongue and the ability to provide an overall and focused description of pictures (*ibid.*: 4).

Since 2011, three elective undergraduate courses on AD have been designed, developed and taught at Chu Hai College of Higher Education: ‘Convergent Translation’, ‘Audiovisual Translation’ and ‘Media Communication for Performing Arts and Entertainments’. The first two courses focus only on AD for films whereas the third is devoted to the intricacies of AD for the performing arts and for entertainment productions, including films and television programmes. The majority of students who choose to follow these modules belong to the college’s Department of Journalism and Communication.

Chapter 5

Media Uses Survey and Audio Description Research

In recent years, a considerable body of literature adopting the uses and gratifications approach has investigated media use behaviour and the motivations among diverse age groups of viewers behind their decision to consume different types of media. These studies have mainly targeted the able-bodied and there is very little research on the media uses and satisfaction of the visually impaired, a sensory challenged group. In addition, a considerably larger and growing body of literature has studied AD from various dimensions and perspectives. Some of the most relevant research is discussed in this chapter.

5.1 The Uses and Gratification Theory

One of the main objectives of most communication theories is to try and explain the relationship that can be established between media products and their audience. The uses and gratifications theory is a widely-used theoretical framework that has proved to be of great use for “descriptive studies of media consumption patterns” (Priest 2009: 60). It investigates the motivations of people’s decision on consuming a particular type of media and satisfaction they may gain from it. According to this theory, people have both social and individual needs that can be fulfilled by different motives, behaviour and uses of the media (Koçak and Terkan 2009: 71). The five core elements that characterise the uses and gratifications model and that have been governing academic research to date were first presented by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1973: 510-511) and are the following: (1) The audience is conceived of as active – that is, an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal directed; (2) in the mass communication process, much of the initiative to link need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member, for example, children

use TV but a TV set does not use children; (3) the media compete with other sources of need satisfaction; (4) individual audience members are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives when confronted with media; (5) value judgements about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms. Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1973: 513) also highlight the central notion of media uses when they state that media are “used by individuals to connect (or sometimes to disconnect) themselves-via instrumental, affective, or integrative relations-with different kinds of others (self, family, friends, nation, etc.)” The exploitation of this framework seems extremely suitable for this research because its purpose is to investigate the media use of the visually impaired in Hong Kong and the gratifications they can obtain from using audiovisual media. This theory has been adopted to investigate their motivations for using audiovisual media, including TV and films (see section 6.2.1.3). The research will provide insights into how the target group uses media to meet their needs, will consider individuals’ motives for the use of audiovisual media and will gauge their degree of satisfaction, with the ultimate objective of improving the service. To reach this objective, several previous studies are considered in the following paragraphs in an attempt to bolster this research design.

A wide range of research has been conducted based on the uses and gratifications framework, and some scholars have even argued that “any attempt to speculate on the future direction of mass communication theory must seriously include the uses and gratifications approach” (Ruggiero 2000: 3). Studies have focused mainly on news media such as newspapers, news magazines, television news, broadcast news and network news (Mings 1997; Vincent and Basil 1997); radio (Albarran *et al.* 2007); television (Rubin 1983; Koçak and Terkan 2009); the Internet (LaRose and Eastin 2004; Song *et al.* 2004; Wang and Sun 2009) and new technologies (Albarran *et al.* 2007; Ferguson *et al.* 2007). In more recent years, the focus has shifted to the uses and gratifications of social networks such as Facebook (Park *et al.* 2009).

A number of studies have resorted to the use of a list of human needs in order to study uses and gratifications among various media. In the early 1970s, Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) conducted a uses and gratifications study in Israel using a

pilot-tested list of 35 social and psychological need statements to investigate the extent to which the functions of books, television, radio, newspapers or cinema could fulfil these needs among the 1,500 adults who were interviewed. First, the respondents were asked to answer questions like ‘How important is it for you to overcome loneliness when you are alone at home?’ In other examples of the needs that were tested by the researchers, participants were given closed-ended questions with options like: ‘to feel that I am utilising my time well’, ‘to spend time with friends’, and ‘to keep up with the way the government performs its functions’. If the respondents indicated that the selected need was ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’, they were then asked, ‘How much does listening to the radio help you to overcome loneliness when you are alone at home?’ The same question was repeated for the other four media analysed, namely reading books, viewing TV, reading newspapers and watching movies. The last question was an open-ended one asking participants, ‘Is there something else besides these media that helps you to overcome loneliness when you are alone at home?’ The results indicated that “integration into the sociopolitical order is best served by newspaper; while ‘knowing oneself’ is best served by books. Cinema and books are more helpful as means of ‘escape’ than is television” (*ibid.*: 164). The latter was observed to serve a variety of needs and the scholars recommended that more research of the same kind be carried out for cross-cultural comparison with theirs.

Replicating the pioneering study by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973), Elliott and Quattlebaum (1979) used a reduced list of 10 need statements to investigate the uses and gratifications of eight media: books, friends, magazines, films, newspapers, radio, recorded music and television. The respondents, 259 university students taking telecommunications and communications courses in the West and Midwest of the USA, had to answer 80 need statements using a five-point scale ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. The results showed that “television was the most generally satisfactory medium over the 10 needs and that film was the most need specific” (*ibid.*: 71). Revisiting the methodology of Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973), Bracken and Lombard (2001) conducted another replication in the late 1990s. A total of 241 urban college students in the USA were interviewed using 35 needs statements to examine their uses and gratifications of books, television, radio, newspapers and cinema. Their study found similar results to the previous studies and

they concluded that: “television was reported useful for fulfilling a variety of needs [and] particularly useful for ‘killing time’ but not ‘escaping from the reality of everyday life’”, whereas “[m]ovies were judged useful for fulfilling distinct needs” (*ibid*: 109).

This type of research on the media uses and gratifications of particular target groups has been conducted in different countries around the globe. In the United States, Albarran *et al.* (2007) studied young adult listeners’ uses and gratifications of AM/FM radio, MP3 players, Internet radio and satellite radio. They found “MP3 technology to be the preferred listening format [and] traditional radio to be only useful in specific situations and only preferred as a source of news and information” (*ibid*: 99) and not so much for listening to music. They concluded that MP3 players could provide more flexibility and choice to young adults when it comes to music listening, and they therefore ranked it as the top priority to meet their needs. Traditional radio was the second choice, which implied that the industry should “re-think how to entice younger audiences to return to the medium” (*ibid*: 100). In the same year, Ferguson *et al.* (2007) conducted a very similar experiment and examined how USA college students used MP3 players as compared to radio. They found that over 50% of respondents had some kind of MP3 player and their motivations for using them included “boredom, stimulation, entertainment, relaxation/escape, and loneliness”, with most of the respondents considering the device “as a companion” (*ibid*: 117). A similar conclusion to that of Albarran *et al.* (2007) was also drawn: traditional radio could not meet the challenge of the new MP3 players.

To study television uses and gratifications, Rubin (1983) examined the interactions of viewing patterns and motivations of 464 adults aged 18 to 89, a subsample of data selected from a larger sample of 626 participants in two Midwestern communities in November 1978. A list of 27 statements starting with ‘I watch TV…’, adapted from Greenberg (1974), Rubin (1977) and Rubin (1979), was used, including statements like ‘I watch TV [because it relaxes me]’ and ‘I watch TV [so I can get away from what I’m doing]’. A five-point scale ranging from ‘exactly’ to ‘not at all’ was used by the researcher. In this study, five factors were yielded: (1) Pass Time/Habit, (2) Information/Learning, (3) Entertainment, (4) Companionship and (5) Escape. Pearson product-moment correlations, canonical correlation analysis and multiple

regression techniques were adopted for further analysis and two main types of users were identified: (a) users of the television medium for time consumption and entertainment and (b) users of television content for non-escapist, information seeking.

In Turkey, Koçak and Terkan (2009) investigated the elderly's media use behaviour and television usage motives. They based their study on cluster sampling and distributed questionnaires to people in the districts of three counties in Konya, a major city in the Central Anatolia Region of Turkey. To study respondents' television viewing motives, a list of 35 statements similar to those of Rubin (1983) was used to conduct a factor analysis. Two experts were invited to check the items, and corrections were made according to their advice. A pilot test was carried out with 50 people, and the results were analysed to finalise the items. Eventually, 1,506 people aged 60 and over were interviewed. The data collected were analysed using the SPSS 15.0 statistical packet programme and both, a factor analysis and a reliability test, were conducted. Koçak and Terkan (*ibid.*) found that TV was by far the most popular medium among the respondents. On average, the elderly viewed television for four hours every day, and 76% of them watched TV most often for leisure. This was mainly due to four factors, which are grouped into rather eclectic categories: (1) relaxation, entertainment, companionship; (2) information, interpersonal utility, surveillance; (3) escape, social interaction; and (4) pass time, habits. The researchers concluded that watching television was the most important activity among the elderly because they lacked the opportunity of taking part in other types of leisure activities, and they suggested that social policies be developed to stimulate the elderly to partake in different social activities in order to "promote their life standard and make them lead happier and more active lives" (*ibid.*: 82).

Although numerous research projects based on the uses and gratifications approaches of different target groups have been conducted, very few of them are related to the disabled, especially to the visually impaired. One of the few studies in this field is the one conducted by Chao (2002), who studied the behaviour and motivations of 238 visually impaired people in Taiwan in respect to media accessibility. Her research approach was based on telephone surveys with the subjects. Since no complete demographic data of the target group were available at the time, she was faced with

enormous difficulties during the sampling (*ibid.*: 43) and, because of these sampling obstacles, she decided to include in her survey some visually impaired people who were teachers and Braille librarians, in order to achieve a more diverse sample (*ibid.*: 44). She investigated the opportunities available for unsighted people to access various kinds of media and found that more than 95% of the participants had television and radio at home. Around 70% had access to magazines because of NGO efforts to distribute free audio magazines and monthlies in Braille (RNIB, 2004). Over 80% of the respondents possessed cable television equipment, more than 50% owned a mobile phone and nearly 50% had a pager. Around half of the participants had a personal computer at home, but only 25% had proper Internet access. Although the participants faced many obstacles because of a chronic lack of audio materials, Chao (*ibid.*: 52) found that they were likely to obtain access to media because they showed relatively high possession of a wide range of communication devices. She also examined their motivations for using the media and found that “looking for shopping information” and “finding solutions to problems” (*ibid.*: 57) were the top two of their list. As they had seeing difficulties, they needed help from shopping channels to gain appropriate access to information, and they would make calls to call-in programmes to seek solutions and answers to their queries. “Passing time” and “sharing with family and friends” were the third and fourth most common motivations, respectively.

To conclude, many research projects have been conducted on the different ways in which people receive and enjoy information and entertainment, particularly on the uses and gratifications of different target groups in various countries. However, an extensive literature search has revealed that no previous research on the media uses and gratifications of the visually impaired has ever been carried out in Hong Kong. The aim of this research is therefore to fill this gap by conducting a survey among the visually impaired in order to gather useful data with which to analyse their needs and provide related supporting services to help them to gain more and better access to audiovisual media.

5.2 AD Research

In the words of Mazur and Kruger (2012: 3): “AD research is developing fast and in many different directions that promise to contribute towards the further development and deepening of the field of AVT, and also other fields like translation studies and film studies”. In a previous publication, Greening and Rolph (2007) had pointed out that more work should be done to raise awareness of the provision of AD, an opinion shared by Díaz-Cintas *et al.* (2007: 17), who go even further and state that awareness should be increased “even among the target audience”. Thus, to enable the visually impaired to obtain greater access to the audiovisual media, raising awareness of the effectiveness and development of AD is a critical step. Researchers who are devoted to helping the blind and partially sighted to gain greater access to different media have conducted AD research following various approaches, which, broadly speaking, seem to concentrate either on the linguistic dimension of the audio described text or on the perception and understanding of AD as a type of translation.

A number of studies have investigated the linguistic dimension of AD. Piety (2004) views AD as a professional practice with its own language system and considers AD narration as a discursive process. He suggests that when the visual images on a screen are built or rebuilt through AD, “being a consumer of AD can be viewed as an active cognitive process” (*ibid.*: 466). He also raises some questions about the type of information that should be audio described and the linguistic manner in which it should be represented. Sharing a very similar philosophy, Salway (2007: 171) analysed the AD of 91 film scripts in English and characterised some of the most salient idiosyncratic features of AD, which he claims “appears to be a special language”. He classifies the most commonly used words in AD into five main groups: (1) characters’ appearances, (2) characters’ focus of attention, (3) characters’ interpersonal interactions, (4) changes of location of characters and objects and (5) characters’ emotional states.

Adopting a similar approach, Bourne and Jiménez-Hurtado (2007) compare the audio described scripts of the film *The Hours* (Stephen Daldry 2003) in two languages, i.e. English and Spanish, paying special attention to the texts at the word and sentence levels and to the units of discourse. In their analysis, they discover that information

loss occurs when the Spanish AD is the translation of an AD script originally written in English. Palomo-López (2010) is one of the first scholars to focus her attention on the blind and visually impaired children, by comparing and contrasting the English and Spanish audio descriptions of the Disney film *Lady and the Tramp* (Clyde Geronimi and Wilfred Jackson 1955). Her findings highlight the need for providing different ADs for visually impaired children than that offered to adults. To foster children's language development and to develop in them a sense of social inclusion, the use of precise and specific descriptive words as well as simple sentence structures is encouraged. To help children understand some sounds that can be heard in the audiovisual programme, and with which they may be unfamiliar, those sounds should be described to facilitate association with words and, thus, help them expand their vocabulary.

Many academic studies have discussed the nature of AD as a kind of translation. A similar discussion has been put forward in section 2.2. In this sense, Hernández-Bartolomé and Mendiluce-Cabrera (2004), following Jakobson (1959), categorised AD as a case of intersemiotic translation within the wider field of audiovisual translation, considering it as the translation of one semiotic channel (images) into a different one (words). In their work, they present an overview of the Spanish project *Audesc*, which was developed by the National Organization of the Blind in Spain, the ONCE (Organización Nacional de Ciegos de España), in an attempt to boost the social visibility and practice of AD and discuss the role of the audio describer as an audiovisual translator. Coster and Muhleis (2007) prefer to consider AD as a case of intersensorial translation, and in their investigation of the complexity of AD, they introduce two keys concepts for its systematic analysis: visual intensity and the narrative of artworks. Visual intensity is defined in relation to the sensory characteristics of the artworks, while "narratives cover all aspects which can be possibly translated into words" (*ibid.*: 192). In their opinion, every artwork has its own signs, and these signs can be presented in a clear or ambivalent manner. The former scenario provides information that can be easily translated, while the latter conveys an array of meanings that can be hardly translated if "the visual effects cannot be represented through other fields of sensual imagination (such as touch or hearing)" (*ibid.*: 192). Similarly, Rodríguez-Posadas (2010: 195) defines AD as "a complex translation process" and "an innovative type of translation" (*ibid.*: 210).

So far, most AD research has been conducted on languages such as English, German and Spanish. Yeung (2007), however, has studied AD in a Chinese context, offering an overview of its professional practice in the Far East and identifying the interpreting-related and non-interpreting-related skills that an audio describer should have when embarking on the production of a description script.

To examine how to improve and broaden the provision of AD in order to help the unsighted, some AD research has been done on specific media and settings other than cinema. In this sense, to make opera more accessible, Matamala and Orero (2007a) suggest the use of recorded audio surtitling. Cabeza-Cáceres (2010) has also looked into the world of opera AD and proposed a new method that was eventually implemented at the opera house in Barcelona: the combination of audio introductions that the spectators could listen to before the actual performance together with the production of comprehensive AD for during the actual performance that avoids any overlap with the singing of the lyrics.

Although many studies have considered the linguistic and translation aspects of AD, with some scholars suggesting ways to improve actual professional practice, empirical AD research is very limited and only a few AD experiments are worth being highlighted. To evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of AD, Peli and Fine (1996) conducted an experiment with subjects with low vision and normal vision. A similar AD experiment was also carried out a few years later by Schmeidler and Kirchner (2001) to evaluate the benefits of AD. With the aim of exploring the ‘communicative nature’ of AD, Chao (2002) conducted an experiment with sighted and unsighted subject groups. In some circumstances, the sighted were blindfolded. The idea of blindfolding them was to allow them to simulate a similar experience to that of the visually impaired. The main objective of Chao (2002, in Yeung, 2007: 240) was to compare “the cognitive processes in visual experience and audio description experience” between the sighted and the unsighted. According to the author, the reception of the film was markedly different between the two groups of people: “The sighted view a film and witness a virtual reality constructed on-screen; whilst the unsighted experience a palpably ‘real’ reality as they listen to dialogues and sound effects of the film, which approximate closely to the everyday sounds that they hear” (*ibid.*: 241).

A year later, Chao (2003) conducted an AD experiment on the comprehension of television cartoons by visually impaired students in Taiwan. She studied the different watching reactions of the students who were exposed to television cartoons with and without AD, as well as the association between their comprehension level and their demographic data. She found that when they watched cartoons without AD, students tended to employ the ‘imagery code’ to construct and process information,¹⁰ which is similar to their watching behaviour when exposed to children’s TV programmes and variety shows. In contrast, when AD was provided, they switched to the ‘propositional code’, also called ‘verbal representation’, a mechanism associated with the behaviour of watching TV soap operas and which refers to the human ability to process verbal signs. She also highlighted a correlation between the parents’ education levels and the TV literacy of the visually impaired students: the higher the education level of the parents, the lesser time their visually impaired children watched cartoons.

Recently, researchers have studied the preferences of AD users. In 2009, the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) in the UK conducted a large-scale research study entitled ‘Bollywood for All: The Demand for Audio Described Bollywood films’ (Rai, 2009) to investigate the needs, language preferences and awareness of audio description among Asian users (including people of Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin only) in the UK and in India. There were two parts to the study. The first part was quantitative: with the assistance of 20 organisations working with the visually impaired, 260 blind and partially sighted Asians living in the UK completed a 10-minute survey of 14 questions either in community centres or at their homes through face-to-face or telephone interviews. Respondents were identified through various “approaches to generate contacts including the use of social networks of friends and relatives as well as visiting local shops, schools, colleges, hospitals and housing estates” (*ibid.*: 27). This approach is called ‘convenience sampling’ which is commonly-adopted when a group of participants is hard-to-reach (see also section 6.1). Questions regarding the participants’ age, eye condition, TV/DVD and cinema viewing habits were asked. However,

¹⁰ Also called ‘imagery representation’, the imagery code refers to a perception-based way of collecting information, an ability to process nonverbal signs.

Surprisingly, the interviewers did not ask when the respondents' impairments originated (congenital or acquired dysfunctions), which is a key factor (alongside blindness vs. partial sight difference) contributing to the heterogeneous character of the AD target group and specific preferences. (Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 61)

A short introduction to AD and an audio described clip were then provided to prepare the participants for questions about AD and audio described Bollywood movies. The second part was qualitative: individual in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with 50 people with visual impairments (half in the UK and half in India). During the 30- to 45-minute interviews, a three-minute Bollywood film clip with and without AD was played. The clip without AD was played first and followed by questions about it to examine the comprehension of the respondents. Then, the same clip was played with AD; respondents could choose AD in either Hindi or English. Finally, the same clip with alternate language of the AD was used. There were three major findings: first, AD in Hindi was preferred by the majority; second, the lack of awareness of AD among the Asian communities in the UK was remarkable; third, it is important to provide AD during songs so that the respondents can follow the story. As a result, eight recommendations were made for collaboration between the UK and India in order to improve AD service for Bollywood films.

Chmiel and Mazur (2012) have planned to conduct a large-scale AD reception research entitled the AD-Verba research project, in Poland. They designed a face-to-face questionnaire-based interview for the project, seeking to interview around 100-120 visually impaired people. The experiment was based on three parts: a pre-questionnaire, a questionnaire proper and a post-questionnaire. In the pre-questionnaire, 13 questions regarding personal details as well as AD in regards to TV and film watching habits were asked. The questionnaire proper was a reception study. A total of six clips (three clips with two versions of AD each of them) lasting no longer than three minutes each were used. All respondents watched one of the two versions of each clip and answered the comprehension and AD preference questions that followed. In the post-questionnaire, further questions about AD preferences were asked. Although their results have not yet been released, they have provided some methodological considerations for AD reception studies.

Having identified two major gaps in the provision of AD, namely the lack of empirical research on the parameters that most affect user's comprehension of enjoyment of AD and the vagueness of current standards in relation to the parameters that govern AD, Cabeza-Cáceres (2013) embarks for his doctoral project on the investigation of the effect that the speed of the narration, the describer's intonation as well as the degree of explicitation have in the understanding of AD by visually impaired audiences. Though heavily fragmented and punctual, his results are a step in the right direction to gain a better understanding of how visually impaired audiences actually appreciate audiovisual productions with AD.

The EU project ADLAB (2011-2014) has conducted extensive research in Europe thanks to the joint contribution of eight partners from six European countries, namely, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Poland and Germany, with the ultimate aim of identifying the present inconsistencies in AD crafting methods and provision policies at European level. The ADLAB report (2012: 50-52) concluded that at the time only Poland and Spain had done user reception studies, whilst other European territories, such as Flanders, Germany, Portugal and Italy, had not conducted any studies to investigate AD reception and consumer demand. ADLAB (*ibid.*: 50) reported the results of two AD reception studies in Poland by Chmiel and Mazur. The first survey included interviews with 18 people with sight loss after a film screening with AD: this was the pilot study of the AD-Verba research project by Chmiel and Mazur (2012) mentioned earlier, which is also described in Chmiel and Mazur (2011a) (Chmiel, personal communication, 4 May 2016). Some of the results have been released. Almost 90% of the participants agreed that AD improved the reception of the film. Half of the participants said that AD should include elements central to the plot as well as the most important characteristics of the actors/actresses and the setting. More than a quarter of respondents wanted more detailed descriptions, and 60% preferred that colours be mentioned. Regarding the voices of the describers, most participants (78%) stated that they had no preference between male and female.

The participants were also asked to rate the barriers they faced in receiving AD, with a scale ranging from 5, 'definitely yes', to 0, 'definitely not'. AD overlap with the original dialogue was the major barrier mentioned by the respondents. Not filling all

of the gaps and the voice talent reading the AD too slowly were also barriers that received high scores. In contrast, the items considered less of a barrier were non-synchronisation with the scene and reading too fast. The researchers also decided to test the use of evaluation adjectives, such as ‘beautiful’, ‘awful’ and ‘ugly’, since “[a]s evaluative adjectives reveal subjective interpretations of the visual material on the part of the audio describer, viewers may have different perceptions of what is beautiful, awful or ugly” (ADLAB 2012: 50). In addition, given the fact that “[t]hese adjectives [help to] provide concise descriptions, [it] may be treated as a manipulation of the film” (*ibid.*). A total of 71% of the respondents were in favour of the use of evaluative adjectives and, interestingly enough, more than 50% of them declared that they “do not accept [AD] with subjective interpretations” (*ibid.*). To further explore this issue, the two researchers asked the respondents to decide whether a set of items including evaluative adjectives were subjective or objective. The majority of them thought ‘sexy brunettes’ was subjective and that ‘attractive singer’ and ‘smart clothes’ were objective.

In the second survey conducted by Chmiel and Mazur (forthcoming, in ADLAB 2012: 50) 33 people were interviewed, most of whom had watched fewer than five hours of audio described programmes in their lives, and approximately one out of five had never watched any programmes audio described. Their AD preferences were thus elicited: half of them preferred the characters to be named immediately, whereas the rest of them preferred the characters to be named only when they appeared on screen. Almost all of them (98%) wanted colours to be mentioned in the AD. Many were in favour of “detailed descriptions of clothing when clothing plays a fairly important part in the scene” (*ibid.*). Regarding the use of similes, such as ‘a building as tall as 10 elephants placed one on top of the other’, the participants held different opinions. This survey also studied the use of evaluative adjectives in AD and the findings show that more than two-thirds of respondents preferred the use of these adjectives.

ADLAB (2012: 51) also reported findings from two surveys used to study end users’ AD preferences in Spain. CEIAF conducted a survey regarding AD in cinema within the Cine al Alcance de Todos project, between 2005 and 2006. Some of the results

reveal that most of the participants preferred that only one describer delivered the whole AD rather than having various voice talents. The quality of the voice was more important for the respondents than sex or age. The participants were satisfied with an open AD, and they also found a closed AD user-friendly and ‘perfect’. The participants stated that they found it taxing to listen to detailed ADs though they also mentioned the proviso that this depended on the genre of the film. Even more tiring for them was having to spend a long time listening, having to endure long pauses and having to cope with the loss of synchrony. Even though the participants supported the idea of downloading ADs from the Internet and synchronising them with the film in the cinema, not every participant had a computer, and some did not know how to use the Internet or the appropriate apps. All the participants preferred having film AD in cinemas, and half of them were unwilling to pay for the AD service.

According to the ADLAB report (*ibid.*), another AD survey conducted in Spain is the 2010TVC Audio Description Evaluation Report within the DTV4ALL project. The evaluation report concerns the blind and partially sighted viewers of the TVC channel in Catalonia, and it lists the characteristics of the end users. Among some of the findings it was discovered that the users had difficulty obtaining access to AD on TV, and some were unaware of the existence of the AD service on TV3. The users found it more helpful if there was more publicity about the audio described programme before it actually started. Most users watched TV3 programmes with AD and wanted more audio described programmes. Only a small number of users were satisfied with the current provision of AD on TV3. By order of preference, and given the choice, the users wanted films (84%), TV series (72%), documentaries (48%), humour programmes (26%), news (22%), cartoons (20%) and debates (2%) to be audio described if more AD services were to be available on TV3.

In recent years, works on reception studies have emerged that come up with findings that seem to contradict the suggestions provided in some of the AD guidelines available. Fryer and Freeman (2013) have analysed whether cinematic language should be part of the audio description script. They tested two different styles of AD for a classic film, *Brief Encounter* (David Lean 1945): a standard AD style following the Ofcom code, which specifies that “‘filmic’ terms such as camera angles should

not be used” (quoted in *ibid*: 414), and a ‘cinematic’ style that includes the use of filmic language. Participants taking part in the experiment were 36 blind and partially sighted people and 18 fully sighted people in the UK. Of the 36 participants with sight loss, 18 had some useable vision, while the rest had no useable vision. All of the sighted and visually impaired participants were shown the final seven-and-a-half minutes of the film with no AD, standard AD and ‘cinematic’ AD. The chosen clip:

contained visually distinctive cinematic effects and made narrative sense as a stand-alone piece. It also contained information [...] that [was] not referred to in the dialogue and, in the absence of description, could only be accessed through the visual code. (*ibid.*: 417)

To create the ‘cinematic’ AD, a method “explicitly referencing the camerawork and focalisation” (*ibid*) was adopted, and, for example, phrases such as ‘cut to the platform, to Laura, to the wheels of the Express on the rails’ and ‘extreme close shot’ were used. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’ was used to elicit the participants’ preferences to measure their AD experience. There were two sections of the questionnaire. The first section examined “the ease with which participants felt they could follow the plot” (*ibid*: 417). The second section, on the other hand, evaluated the participants’ reaction to the AD style of the two clips that provided description. It also contained questions regarding the participants’ AD style preferences. Fryer and Freeman (*ibid.*: 418) found that 66.7% of the participants with visual impairments preferred the cinematic AD: “Sixty-one percent (11/18) of participants with no useable vision and 72% (13/18) of participants with some useable vision preferred the cinematic AD” (*ibid.*), which suggests that “a description of the purely filmic elements was valued” (*ibid*: 422) by the participants. The paper then concludes that most current AD guidelines seem to overlook some cinematic elements that should be included in the description.

In conclusion, and after an extensive literature search, it can be confirmed that no previous empirical study of AD in films for the visually impaired in Hong Kong has been found. Of the works discussed in the previous pages, the ones with an empirical

slant have proved to be the most inspirational and instrumental for the research conducted for this project.

My research will not only focus on the provision of media accessibility services for the visually impaired in Hong Kong but it will also investigate the needs of the blind and partially sighted in this respect. In my opinion, it is of paramount importance to study (1) how useful and effective AD is for improving the comprehensibility of a film for the visually impaired, (2) what information should be included in the actual description and (3) how AD services can be improved, all of which are part of the objectives of this study. In a nutshell, as suggested by Braun (2008: 8), more research needs to be done “to investigate whether current practice coincides with audience expectations and preferences”.

Chapter 6

Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches have been adopted for the analysis of the media use behaviour, motivations and satisfactions of the visually impaired in Hong Kong and for the study of the reception of audio described films. First, a questionnaire that examines the media uses and gratifications of the visually impaired in Hong Kong was carried out, and immediately afterwards, an experiment to test and study the reception of AD was conducted. More details of the research design are given in the following sections.

6.1 Subjects and Sampling Method

The participants in this research were native Cantonese speakers with visual impairments and residing in Hong Kong. Forty-four blind or partially sighted participants were interviewed, of whom 25 were males and 19 females. Only those aged 16 years and above were recruited for the interviews to represent the ‘adult’ population.

According to the latest statistics from the ‘Special Topics Report No. 62: Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Illness’ provided by the Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong, the estimated population with visual impairment was 174,800 persons in December 2014, thus accounting for 2.4% of the total population (Census and Statistics Department 2014: 28). No detailed official demographic information for the visually impaired in Hong Kong was available when this research was being conducted. Without any comprehensive data about the profile of the target group, it was difficult for the researcher to conduct a random sampling, that is, a probability sampling method that requires drawing random samples from a sampling frame (Freedman 2004). So, in the end, a type of non-probability sampling –

convenience sampling (Denscombe 2007; Battaglia 2008) – has been adopted in this research.

Convenience sampling involves selecting a target population as subjects according to the researchers' convenience and accessibility (Baker 1999; Schonlau *et al.* 2002; Ross 2005; Denscombe 2007; Battaglia 2008; Gravetter and Forzano 2011). It has been argued by some scholars that a convenience sample “may not represent any definable population larger than itself” (Freedman 2004: 1). Others have claimed that the major problem of this sampling method is a potential selection bias (Freedman 2004; Wimmer and Dominick 2006). Although there has been much criticism of convenience sampling (Schonlau *et al.* 2002; Ross 2005), it has been considered to be the most suitable for this research because connecting with the visually impaired is extremely difficult (Chao 2002: 43; Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 61). For authors like Schonlau *et al.* (2002: 34), this target group is a highly “valuable hard-to-reach population”. Thus, convenience sampling is in fact ‘a practical necessity’ (Priest 2009: 222), and so ‘conveniently available participants were chosen.

Convenience sampling also seems to be the best choice on this occasion because of the limited time and resources available (Schonlau *et al.* 2002; Denscombe 2007; Gravetter and Forzano 2011). As stated by Stake (1995: 4), “Our time and access for fieldwork are almost always limited. If we can, we need to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry”. Ross (2005: 7) emphasises the significance of adopting convenience sampling:

The main assumption associated with convenience sampling is that the members of the target population are homogeneous. That is, that there would be no difference in the research results obtained from a random sample, a nearby sample, a co-operative sample, or a sample gathered in some inaccessible part of the population.

Conducted from 2013 to 2015, this research mainly relied on a convenience sample from a few “readily available groups” (Priest 2009: 79). Following Battaglia’s (2008: online) advice, the convenience sampling approach of this research was “unsystematically recruiting individuals to participate in the study”. Similar to the sampling approach adopted in the Bollywood for All project (Rai 2009: 27), this research has also used a range of approaches to generate contacts including the use of

social networks of friends and relatives as well as visiting local [events and organisations]. Participants were invited through the following groups that serve local visually impaired people in Hong Kong as well as at events attended by visually impaired people:

- The Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSBl): The researcher has been a volunteer at the Society since April 2011. Her duties are to perform AD for films and for visits/outings and to provide assistance during AD-related activities and at events for the visually impaired members. With the help of HKSBl's Information Accessibility Centre (i.e. the unit providing AD services), the majority of the blind and partially sighted participants for this research were recruited here.
- Blind Sports Hong Kong (BSHK): The researcher is a guide runner for this association. Participants were recruited after some of the training sessions.
- Ebenezer School & Home for the Visually Impaired: The researcher contacted the school to obtain the contact details of potential participants who were aged 16 or above, with their consent.
- Hong Kong Blind Union (HKBU): Using her network, the researcher recruited some visually impaired committee members to take part in this research.
- The World Blind Union – Asia Pacific Mid-Term Regional General Assembly 2014: The researcher attended this assembly as a participant and connected with some blind and partially sighted participants, including many from HKBU, the organiser of the assembly. After explaining her research, the potential research participants were invited for interviews.

Those invited from the above organisations can be considered to be “reasonably representative” of the visually impaired population of Hong Kong, in accordance with the postulates put forward by Gravetter and Forzano (2011: 152). To keep the potential problems of convenience sampling to a minimum, a clear description of who the subjects were and how the sample was obtained has been provided in detail (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, the researcher is a volunteer at two blind associations (HKSBl and BSHK), so she first of all invited the people that she knows from the two associations to take part in the research. Then, she invited the largest blind association, HKSBl, to help spread the word to its members, and those who were interested could provide their contact details. In addition, any visually impaired members who knew of any (non-members) relatives and/or friends who would like to take part in the research were also welcome to invite them. Thus, not all participants were active members of one of the associations as some of them were recruited individually, and the two associations bore no responsibility in regards to the participants' collaboration.

6.2 Data Collection Instruments

As already mentioned, this research focuses on the development of media accessibility for the blind and the visually impaired in Hong Kong and conducts an AD reception study. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches have been adopted to analyse the media use behaviour, motivations and gratifications of the visually impaired and to study their AD preferences when consuming audiovisual programmes. A questionnaire was used for the media accessibility survey, and a pre-questionnaire, a questionnaire proper based on the viewing of several experimental clips with different versions of AD and a post-questionnaire were also used for the reception study. In total, 206 questions were developed for this research. To ensure that the experiment would run as smoothly as possible, a pilot study was conducted first. In general, the data collection instruments of the pilot study and the real study were almost identical, and only a few minor adjustments were made following the pilot study. The details of the data collection instruments are presented in the sections below.

6.2.1 Part 1: Media Accessibility Survey

The first step was to investigate the actual situation of media accessibility for the blind and partially sighted participants in Hong Kong. Under the uses and gratifications framework, a questionnaire was designed and employed to ascertain their uses and gratifications when confronted with audiovisual media. There were a total of 104 questions in this survey and they can be found in Appendix D (Version 1

in Chinese and Version 2 in English). Several questionnaire items from other uses and gratifications research projects were adopted and modified to suit the needs of the current research. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. In Section A, data on participants' possession of media (equipment) was collected. In Section B and Section C, their media use behaviour and motivations were gathered to be later analysed. In Section D, their satisfaction with the local media was examined and personal details were collected. When designing this questionnaire, a number of previous studies were referred to, including Katz, Gurevitch and Hass (1973), Rubin (1983), Chao (2002: 50), Koçak and Terkan (2009) and Chmiel and Mazur (2012).

6.2.1.1 A – Possession of Media

In this section, the participants' possession of various media (equipment), such as TV, radio and newspapers, was examined by means of one question (Q1), in which there were 16 options provided for the respondents to choose from. It is important to know what the participants possess for the researcher to be able to compare their media use behaviour. Chao (2002: 50) asked similar questions in her study. The queries that make up this section can be found in Appendix D.

6.2.1.2 B – Media Use Behaviour

Next, a total of 41 questions were designed for this part. The distribution is as follows: 14 questions regarding participants' media use habits were asked – for example, the frequency of their use of different types of media. A five-point Likert scale (1 = 'Never'; 5 = 'Every day') was used. In addition, 27 further questions related to their use of radio, TV and films were also formulated. For instance, they were asked to rank the radio channels and TV broadcasters they used most often as well as to choose their favourite types of TV programmes and film genres. Given the focus of this research on audiovisual programmes, the respondents' language preferences for watching TV programmes and films were examined. The participants were also asked whether they had difficulty understanding the content of audiovisual programmes and, again, a five-point Likert scale (1 = 'Never'; 5 = 'Every time') was employed. Other items were used to identify the kind of difficulties they face when

experiencing audiovisual programmes. All these questions can also be found in Appendix D.

6.2.1.3 C – Motivations for Using Audiovisual Media

A list of statements was prepared to ascertain the motivations for TV and film viewing of the blind and partially sighted participants in Hong Kong. Most of the items were adopted from the uses and gratifications study on the TV viewing motivations of the elderly carried out in Turkey by Koçak and Terkan (2009: 79). Amendments of individual items were made to fit this research context and a total of 39 questions were created. Some items referred to the 35 need statements that Katz, Gurevitch and Hass (1973) used “to investigate if a particular medium is more helpful than others” (Bracken and Lombard 2001: 104). The data collected in this part of the survey were analysed adopting the same approach – i.e. a factor analysis and reliability test with the help of SPSS – as the one followed by Koçak and Terkan (2009), with similar factors categorised into four groups: (1) relaxation, entertainment, companionship, (2) information, interpersonal utility, surveillance, (3) escape, social interaction and (4) pass time, habits. In Koçak and Terkan’s (*ibid.*: 79) study, there were 35 items, of which only 20 were adopted to make this questionnaire more manageable and not too onerous on the participants, because studying the motivations of the participants was only part of this survey and there were many more questions in other sections. The participants might have found it tiring if there were too many items on the list since they mainly relied on listening to the information during the interview. Given that the list was designed to investigate the factors behind TV and film viewing, each statement started with ‘I watch TV (excluding film viewing...’ / ‘I watch films...’, and most were followed by the conjunction ‘because’ or ‘so’.

When compiling the list of responses that would be offered to the respondents in these closed questions, items that have been proposed by other scholars but were considered to be very similar to other items in the same category were deleted. For example, Koçak and Terkan’s (*ibid.*) list gave participants the following three options: ‘because it’s enjoyable’, ‘because it amuses me’, and ‘because it entertains me’. In this research, however, only ‘because it’s enjoyable’ and ‘because it

entertains me' were adopted. Another example can be seen in these three potential responses: 'so I won't be alone', 'when there's no one else to talk to or be with' and 'because it makes me feel less lonely', of which only the last two were adopted. Several items that were perceived as less relevant to this study were also excluded, such as, 'because it gives useful advice to protect my health' and 'because it gives me religious information'. Some items were slightly modified from the list provided by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) and, for example, the two responses 'to spend time with the family' and 'to spend time with friends' were rewritten as a single one: 'so I can spend time with my family or friends'. Similarly, the option 'to participate in discussions with my friends' was revised to become 'so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends'. Another need statement, 'to kill time', was amended and rephrased as 'because it gives me something to do to spend my time'. To localise the list of items for this research, a statement taken from Koçak and Terkan's (2009: 79) list was changed from 'to get information about events and issues in Turkey' to '...in Hong Kong'. In the end, the TV viewing list had 20 statements, while the film viewing list had 19 statements (refer to Appendix D). The last statement, No. 20, from the TV viewing list – 'because it's always there' –, was deleted from the list for film viewing because it was considered not applicable. As already mentioned, the statements fell under four categories. "Category statements were alternately presented to the respondents" (Rubin 1983: 41). In other words, statements that are similar in nature were not put closely together in the questionnaire. For example, the two statements 'because it's enjoyable' and 'because it entertains me', which are rather similar in nature were not followed one after the other immediately. In the end, 'because it entertains me' became statement number 4 and 'because it's enjoyable', statement number 12.

6.2.1.4 D – Satisfaction with Local Media

The objective of this short section, including 7 questions (see Appendix D), was to determine the extent to which the blind and partially sighted participants were satisfied with the distribution of local media, including TV programmes on TV, DVD and via the Internet, and films on TV, DVD and in the cinema. At the end, a general

question regarding their satisfaction with current local media was asked and a five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘Strongly disagree’; 5 = ‘Strongly agree’) was adopted.

6.2.1.5 E – Personal Details

This section had a total of 16 questions (Appendix D) and began with some common demographic questions regarding the respondents’ gender, age, marital status, education level, employment situation, personal monthly income and family monthly income. Then, to determine visually impaired participants’ eye and living conditions, this research asked them whether they were blind or partially sighted, whether they were blind from birth or had lost their vision afterwards, to describe how they could see things, to describe their degree of loneliness and to state who keeps them company. These questions had been also asked in such previous studies as Chao (2002: 46) and Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 75-76). In addition, to identify whether they received any support from their relatives, they were asked whether their family encouraged them to go out and even to go out alone. The decision to ask these demographic questions at the end of Part 1 is to decrease the potential embarrassment of some participants and is in accordance with the advice provided by Birn (2000: 93): “Embarrassing or intrusive questions, [such as about personal and family monthly incomes, and employment situation], are more likely to be answered if put in late in the questionnaire after rapport has been built up”. Moreover, “the participants would feel more at ease and ‘warmed-up’ when answering” (Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 69) questions related to age and education if they are not asked at the very beginning but rather after some other questions.

6.2.2 Part 2: AD Reception Study

Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 71) state that “the best way to learn about the preferences of target recipients of AD is through reception studies”. To test and study AD, the second part of this research is a three-stage AD reception study that is a modified replication of an AD reception study designed by Chmiel and Mazur (2012). A total of 102 questions were developed for this study and they can be found in Appendices E, F G and H of which Version 1 is in Chinese and Version 2 is in English. The various stages are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

After completing the media accessibility survey, the blind and partially sighted participants were invited to take part in the three-stage AD study: (1) the pre-questionnaire, (2) the questionnaire proper with several experimental clips with different versions of AD and (3) the post-questionnaire. During the pre-questionnaire interview (Stage 1), questions were asked regarding their experiences with using AD, their knowledge of and familiarity with AD and further information about their eye condition. Stage 2 was designed to study how the visual elements should be described for the visually impaired. Two different ADs for three short film clips were used for the experiment. The participants watched all of the film excerpts with either AD1 or AD2 and then answered questions based on the ADs of the film excerpts. In stage 3, a post-questionnaire comprised of some general AD preference questions was adopted to elicit the participants' responses. Previous research was referred to when designing this part, including the Bollywood for All project (Rai 2009), the ADLAB project (2013) and the research design proposed by Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 75-80).

6.2.2.1 Stage 1 -- Pre-questionnaire

The pre-questionnaire was designed to investigate the participants' AD experience, perception of AD, further TV and film viewing habits, and eye condition. There were 29 questions in total (see Appendix E). Some of the items were adopted from Chmiel and Mazur's (2012: 75-76) research design. A test on AD was developed by the author made up of eight true-or-false questions to examine the participants' understanding of AD. Each statement defines AD, and the participants had to decide whether, in their opinion, the definition was right or wrong. The purpose of this test is to determine the participants' perceptions of AD as any misunderstanding or misconception of what AD is may lead to a different set of preferences.

6.2.2.2 Stage 2 – Projection of Clips and Questionnaire Proper

Mirroring Chmiel and Mazur's experiment (2012), two alternative ADs ('AD1' and 'AD2') for three short film clips ('Film Excerpt A', 'Film Excerpt B' and 'Film Excerpt C') were used, so there were six experimental film clips in total. To keep the clip titles short and simple, Clips A1, B1 and C1 were used for Group 1 and Clips

A2, B2 and C2 were used for Group 2. Film excerpts from two local films in Cantonese, 父子 [After This Our Exile] (Patrick Tam 2006) and Z 風暴 [Z Storm] (David Lam 2014), were chosen as the material for the experimental screenings. All the six clips are available on the DVD (Appendix L). The respondents' lack of concentration or memory can be a methodological hurdle, and "sometimes it was difficult to discern whether we were in fact testing comprehension or the subject's memory span" (*ibid*: 72); therefore, the experimental clips were kept as short as possible. Each excerpt was a complete meaningful segment on its own lasting for about one minute. The scripts for all the clips were audio described in Cantonese by the author, an experienced female describer, who also recorded all the six AD options for the preference questions and saved them as MP3 files.

Each clip (A, B and C) examined a different dimension of AD. Clip A was extracted from the beginning of the Cantonese film *After This Our Exile* (2006), which was shot in Malaysia. The literal English translation of this Chinese film title is 'Father and Son', and the film is about their relationship. This clip tested how the characters should be named and when to describe sound effects. The UK guidelines state that "characters can be named the first time they appear on screen, unless their identity is to be kept secret" (ITC 2000: 16; Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 66), whereas the German guidelines suggest that a character should be "named once he or she has had their name mentioned in the film" (Rai *et al.* 2010: 5-6), a piece of advice on which the French and Greek guidelines also agree. When both the father and the son first appear on the screen in this film there is no dialogue whatsoever. When referring to the characters in the description, whether the describer should use the name of the character before it has been actually mentioned or make use of more generic terms such as 'boy' or 'man' was tested in the two Ads (see Figure 6-1 below). In addition, whether the relationship between the two characters should be included in the description was also investigated.



Figure 6-1: Ah-Boy and his father riding a bicycle (*After This Our Exile*, 2006)

For sound effects, the UK guidelines state that, “usually a sound effect, or the event leading up to it, is described just before it happens” (ITC 2000: 18). In Clip A, the father is riding a bicycle and his son is sitting on the back; suddenly, the bicycle overturns, and there is a sound effect. AD1 (Clip A1) describes the sound effect after it happens, while AD2 (Clip A2) describes the sound effect before it has happened. The AD variations are listed as follows (see Appendix I for the whole AD scripts for Groups 1 and 2):

Clip A1	Clip A2
A man	Father Ah Shing
A 9-year-old boy	His 9-year-old son Ah-Boy
<u>After</u> sound effect	<u>Before</u> sound effect

Clip B and Clip C were taken from another Cantonese film *Z Storm* (2014), which is a film about an investigation into a charity fund conducted by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in Hong Kong. Clip B tested the amount of detail and the use of filmic language in the description. This clip portrays an erotic scene that features an actor and an actress in a dimly lit hotel room. According to Remael *et al.* (2015: 14), sometimes, in scenes of this nature, “additional, more detailed information is added” to the description because “[s]uch a seemingly secondary element in the *mise-en-scène* can be important if it has a symbolic function”. AD1 (Clip B1) provides more details about the actress, such as the kind of

bathrobe she is wearing (Figure 6-2) and the colour of her skin after her bathrobe is removed (Figure 6-3), while AD2 (Clip B2) does not provide such details.



Figure 6-2: Angel in a peachpuff silk bathrobe (*Z Storm*, 2014)



Figure 6-3: Wong Sir pulls off her bathrobe and her fair skin shows (*Z Storm*, 2014)

As already mentioned, the UK guidelines disagree with the use of filmic language in the description (Ofcom 2015: 21, A4.29), but the study carried out by Fryer and Freeman (2013) highlights some of the benefits of using this kind of jargon. Therefore, the next item tested was the use of filmic language. AD1 (Clip B1) incorporated the camera angles and moves, whereas AD2 (Clip B2) did not. The AD variations are listed as follows (see Appendix J for the whole AD scripts for Groups 1 and 2):

Clip B1	Clip B2
Angel, in a <u>peachpuff silk</u> bathrobe, comes out from the bathroom.	Angel, in a bathrobe, comes out from the bathroom.
The camera pans up to show her from her feet to her face.	N/A
Wong Sir pulls off her bathrobe. <u>Her fair skin shows.</u> Close up. He forces himself on her in bed.	Wong Sir pulls off her bathrobe and forces himself on her in bed.
The camera pans to a close-up of a pinhole camera. (see Figure 6-4 below)	There is a pinhole camera.

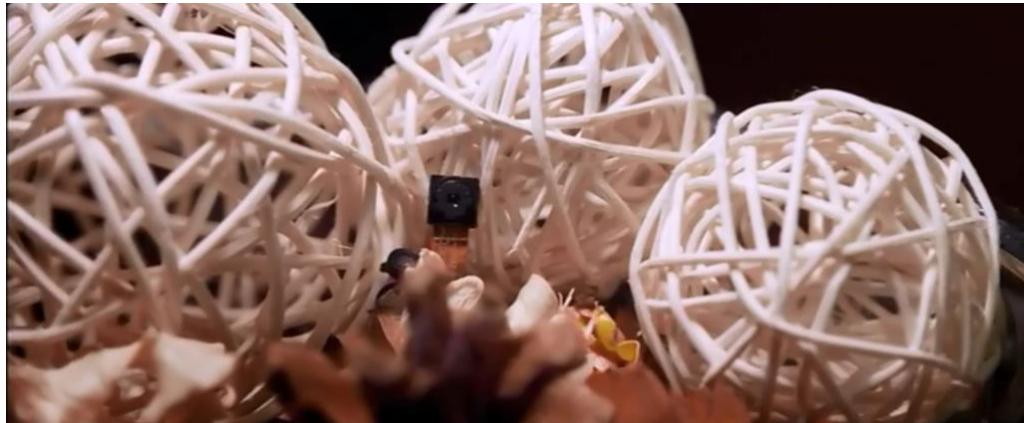


Figure 6-4: The camera pans to a close-up of a pinhole camera (*Z Storm*, 2014)

Inspired by Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 67), Clip C explored the effectiveness of introducing the character's name at the beginning of the line in a group scene. This scene shows five ICAC investigators (one female and four males) discussing a case (see Figure 6-5). The four men are of a similar age, and thus have a very similar-sounding voice. There is a lot of dialogue in the scene, the characters speak fast and their lines are quite short and sometimes overlap. In AD1 (Clip C1), the group scene is uninterrupted, i.e. there is no AD. In contrast, in AD2 (Clip C2), each line of the dialogue exchanges is introduced with the character's name. See Appendix K for the whole AD scripts for Groups 1 and 2.



Figure 6-5: (Left to right) ICAC officers Joe, On Sir, Luk Sir, Tammy and Siu-leung (*Z Storm*, 2014)

There were 18 questions in total in this part and the questionnaires used can be found in Appendix F for Group 1 and Appendix G for Group 2. All the participants answered the same 17 questions after experiencing either AD1 or AD2 for each of the three clips. The only difference was that Question 11, ‘Have you noticed the use of any filmic terms in the description?’, was omitted in the case of Group 2. A question on whether the participant had seen the selected film before was also asked. Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 77-78) asked this question at the beginning of each screening but, in this research, the question was asked after the participant had watched the relevant clip(s) and had answered all of the questions related to the film – that is, at the end of the first and third screenings. Clip A was screened first, then Clip B was shown second and Clip C was the third one. As mentioned, Clips B and C were taken from the same film, i.e. *Z Storm* (2014), so this question was not asked until the respondents had finished all the questions related to this film, and hence it was arranged at the end of the third screening. This was to avoid triggering the participants’ memory if they had watched the film before.

6.2.2.3 Stage 3 – Post-questionnaire

In Stage 3, a post-questionnaire was used, which included 55 questions about their general AD preferences relating to the AD voice, the channel of AD transmission and some of the dos and don’ts of AD (see Appendix H). Many items were directly taken from the questionnaire designed by Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 79-80), but some items were revised and localised to the Cantonese context, particularly the questions

regarding the descriptions of gestures and AD language. Several items were also added to enrich the content of the research.

The style used to describe facial expressions has sparked heated debate in academic circles. The two schools represent the objective approach (e.g. ‘She raises her eyebrows’) and the interpretative approach (e.g. ‘She looks surprised’), which is resorted to “for ease of comprehension or because of time constraints” (*ibid.*: 65). The two styles were tested in this research to gauge the reaction of the participants in this respect. The objective AD is more descriptive in nature, while the interpretative AD includes the use of evaluative adjectives and is thus more subjective. One tested item is ‘woman with big eyes, a straight nose and a small cherry mouth’,¹¹ (objective) vs. ‘beautiful woman’ (interpretative). By the same token, to further study the use of adjectives in AD, items concerning the use of emotive adjectives were developed using the objective approach and the interpretative approach. However, instead of providing only two options for the participants, as in the design of Chmiel and Mazur (*ibid.*), three choices were provided. The third option is a combination of both approaches. For instance, ‘he frowns’ (objective) vs. ‘he feels strange’ (interpretative) vs. ‘he frowns, feeling strange’ (objective and interpretative) or ‘she shrugs’ (objective) vs. ‘she is helpless’ (interpretative) vs. ‘she shrugs, a bit helpless’ (objective and interpretative).

Preference questions regarding the description of gestures were also used. The participants were asked to re-enact the gestures according to the description provided. Two gestures were tested: ‘swear-to-God’ and ‘an excited yes’. The perceptions of gestures of the visually impaired, especially the blind, tend to be different from those of the sighted; thus, the gestures were tested to determine whether there was a need to provide more detail when describing gestures. Two ADs of each gesture were provided to the participants. One more detailed than the other: ‘he swears to God with a hand gesture’ vs. ‘he swears to God, raising his three middle fingers’ or ‘he makes a “yes” gesture’ vs. ‘he makes a “yes” gesture with a fist pump’.

¹¹ ‘A small cherry mouth’ is the English translation of 櫻桃小嘴 in Chinese. It is a common expression to describe a beautiful woman’s facial features in the Chinese culture.

Unlike the seven-point scale used in Chmiel and Mazur's study (*ibid.*), to elicit the participants' responses in a more manageable way, a Likert-type five-point scale has been used for 13 of the questions beginning with 'It bothers me in AD when...' and another 13 questions which start 'AD should include...'. Half of these items were adopted from Chmiel and Mazur's (*ibid*: 79-80) design. The new items of the first type of question which starts with 'It bothers me in AD when...' concerned overlap with the first one or two words of dialogue with sound effects and song lyrics; describing a sound too early; not offering a description at all ('others laugh but I don't know what's happened on the screen to cause it'), delay in description ('others laugh first and I can't laugh at the same time with them'), and the tone of the describer which it is flat and monotonous. The new items of the second type of question, which begins with 'AD should include...', were related to describing unidentifiable sounds, gag reels,¹² behind-the-scenes features¹³ and the audio introduction. After that, an AD needs analysis was conducted to examine in which areas the participants needed AD the most. Their preferences in the language of AD and for future AD development were also investigated.

In order to collect further information for content analysis, as recommended by Wimmer and Dominick (2006), in Stage 2 two open-ended questions studying why the respondents prefer one description to another were added, while at the end of Stage 3, three open-ended questions regarding how AD provision can be increased and improved were asked.

6.3 Data Collection Procedures

More than 100 visually impaired people were contacted, of whom 70 showed interest in being participants and, in the end, 44 blind and partially sighted participants were recruited and interviewed. All of them were interviewed face-to-face individually for both the media accessibility survey before the screenings and the subsequent AD reception study. The participants chose the interview venue at their convenience: around 70% of them were interviewed at the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSBl) or the Hong Kong Blind Union (HKBU), 20% were interviewed at their

¹² A gag reel is a collection of scenes from a film or show in which the actors make errors or mistakes and laugh about them.

¹³ Behind-the-scenes features show the production of the film and the creation of the special effects.

home and 10% were interviewed in close proximity to their homes. The interviews were confirmed the day before they actually took place and then again several hours before. During the interview, each participant had to complete part 1, the media accessibility survey, watch the three video clips with the AD and complete part 2, about their experience of the AD reception. Two researchers collected data for this study. One was the author and the other was a third party, with vast experience in research matters. The reason for recruiting the experienced researcher to help sporadically was basically to prevent any embarrassment with the participants when questions of a personal nature were raised because some of the interviewees were acquainted with the principal researcher. The whole interview lasted on average around 1.5 hours, depending on individual participants. On occasions, some of them required the questions to be repeated, and these interviews thus took a longer time to be finished.

The copies of the AD reception study questionnaire proper were colour-coded. Pink was used for Group 1 and green for Group 2 for easy reference and filing. The first participant to commit to the experiment was assigned to Group 1, the second was assigned to Group 2, and so on. This assured equal numbers of participants in the two groups in case a potential participant declined the interview at the very last minute.

Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis with the blind and partially sighted participants to ensure that they would not miss any questions. The researcher asked the participants the questions in Cantonese and they answered orally (i.e. no Braille was used). Then the researcher recorded the answers on the questionnaire. No copies of the questionnaires were actually given to the participants as previous research experience suggests that large-print questionnaires for low-vision respondents to fill out by themselves may result in some questions or even whole pages left unanswered (Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 67). More importantly, the procedures to complete Stage 2 satisfactorily are complicated and required the researcher's full attention and supervision. As many participants had had prior contact with the principal researcher, and to avoid any embarrassment when answering questions regarding their personal details (especially income) or any inconvenience caused by closeness with the scholar, the principal researcher invited a third party to ask the survey questions. This colleague is an experienced investigator

involved in research related to government policies and with vast experience in conducting face-to-face interviews and in leading focus groups. He provided voluntary assistance in conducting some of the interviews for this research.

6.3.1 Pilot Test

A pilot test of the entire two-part study was carried out to ensure that the final study would run as smoothly as possible. The same procedures and materials as in the actual study were adopted. Only minor changes were made in the actual experiment which are described in the following sections. Of the 44 recruited participants, two of them (one male and one female) took part in the pilot test. Before the interviews, their consent was obtained. First, they listened to the audio files of the whole Participant Information Sheet (Appendix B) and to the whole Informed Consent Form (Appendix C), and then they were asked to sign the Participant Information Sheet. A signature card was provided (Figure 6-6) and placed at the signing area (Figure 6-7):



Figure 6-6: Signature card

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- 明白是次研究所得的資料及數據，皆會按照英國《1998年數據保護法案》的規定，被視作機密資料般處理；
- 明白到本人所提供的資料將會在是次學術研究的報告中用上，而本人有權要求是次學術研究報告的副本。整個研究會以機密及匿名的方法處理，以確保本人的身份絕對沒有可能在此報告中被識別；
- _____

簽 _____ 日期: _____

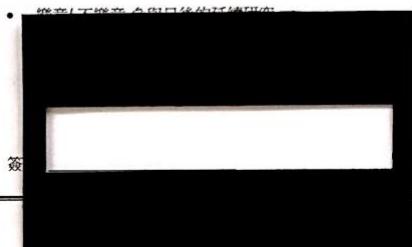


Figure 6-7: The signature card was placed on the Informed Consent Form for the participant to sign

The blind female participant signed the form whereas the blind male participant preferred recording an oral consent note. The latter method of acquiring consent was then adopted throughout the actual experiment. During the interview, they first completed the media accessibility survey and then the AD reception study. In the AD reception study, the male participant watched the assigned clips (Clips A1, B1 and C1) and answered the questions for Group 1 and the female participant those (Clips A2, B2 and C2) for Group 2. The pilot study was carried out successfully as both interviewees understood all of the questions and were able to answer them properly. The pilot participants gave valuable comments on the research topic, the shortcomings encountered during the pilot questionnaires were minimal and could be easily amended in the final survey. As the data gathered during the pilot was considered to be optimal, the decision was taken to use it together with the data

obtained in the actual study. Hence, the total number of 44 respondents. The minor changes proposed to the questionnaire are presented in the next section.

6.3.2 Changes to the questionnaire after the pilot test

In the pilot questionnaire for the media accessibility survey, both Hong Kong Television Entertainment Company Limited (HKTVE) and Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV) were included as options in Questions 4.4 and 4.15 because the two broadcasting companies were granted approval-in-principle for domestic free television programme service licences on 15 October 2013 (Information Services Department 2013b). However, after some investigation, it was found that the two companies would not be broadcasting any TV programmes during the research period. Therefore, the two options were omitted from the final questionnaire.

An extra option, ‘N/A’, was added to Question 4.12 and to all of the questions in Section D, which investigates satisfaction with local media, because some respondents did not know how to use the Internet and thus could not use any VOD services.

In Section E, which collects personal details, the option ‘Would rather not say’ was added to Question 2, which asked about age group, and ‘none’ was added to Question 13, which asked, ‘Who accompanies you more often?’

Regarding the questions in the AD reception study, in Stage 1 – Pre-questionnaire –, ‘In a restaurant’ was included in Question 4.4 to give a clearer idea of ‘reading aloud the food dishes from a menu’:

Stage 1: Question 4.4 – Original	Stage 1: Question 4.4. – Final version
Reading the dishes from a menu is AD.	In a restaurant, reading aloud the food dishes from a menu is AD.

In Stage 2 (the questionnaire proper), where the first part was related to Clip A, two changes were made in Question 7 (‘The timing of describing the sound of crush is perfect.’ To what extend do you agree with this statement?). In the original design, the assigned clip for each group was played once only. However, because both pilot

participants stated that they had not paid attention to details when viewing the assigned audio described clip (Clip A1 for Group 1 or Clip A2 for Group 2), the clip was played again, and the alternative clip (Clip A2 for Group 1 or Clip A1 for Group 2) was also played for comparison. This gave some insights into adding a sub-question, so the initial Q7 became Q7b. The added sub-question was placed before it, and that is Q7a, ‘In regard to audio describing the sound effect about the crash, do you think Clip A1 or Clip A2 is better? Play Clip A1 and Clip A2 once’.

In the post-questionnaire (Stage 3), two more options, ‘pre-recorded AD via headset, i.e. you will hear both the AD soundtrack and film soundtrack via headset’ and ‘no strong preference’, were provided in Question 2:

Stage 3: Question 2 – Original	Stage 3: Question 2 – Final version
<p>I prefer: (You can choose more than one option.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> live AD via speakers (e.g. situation in film showing session at HKSBNB) <input type="checkbox"/> live AD via headset (e.g. situation in cinema) <input type="checkbox"/> pre-recorded AD (e.g. on DVD) <input type="checkbox"/> all of the above</p>	<p>I prefer: (You can choose more than one option.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> live AD via loud speakers (e.g. situation in film showing session at HKSBNB) <input type="checkbox"/> live AD via headset (e.g. situation in theatre) <input type="checkbox"/> pre-recorded AD (e.g. on DVD/in this experiment) <input type="checkbox"/> pre-recorded AD via headset, i.e. you will hear both the AD sound track and the film sound track via headset <input type="checkbox"/> all of the above <input type="checkbox"/> no strong preference</p>

6.3.3 Actual experiment

Before the initial interview, participants’ informed consent was obtained. As mentioned before, the means of obtaining consent was changed from signing the Informed Consent Form in the pilot test to recording a consent message in the actual experiment. In the original research design, the blind and partially sighted participants were required to have a sighted third party present as a witness when signing the consent form. The third party had to be someone the participants trusted and could be a family member, a friend or a staff member at the interview venue (as in the cases of the Hong Kong Society for the Blind or the Hong Kong Blind Union). However, after the pilot test, it was found that some participants lived alone and could not be interviewed at any organisation. Therefore, to obtain their consent for

this research, an alternative solution was found: a short audio declaration was prepared for them. Since there were two researchers collecting the data, ‘notes to researcher – before conducting the research’ (Appendix A) were produced to ensure that the exact procedure was implemented in every interview. The procedure was as follows:

- 1) the researcher started recording
- 2) audio files of the whole Participant Information Sheet (Appendix B) and the whole Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) were played in front of the participant;
- 3) the researcher stated out loud the date of the interview, the project ID, and the research project title;
- 4) the researcher read out a short declaration, bit by bit, and the participant repeated after the researcher: “I, (name), understand everything on the Participant Information Sheet, and the Informed Consent Form. I consent to taking part in this research”.

The researcher then asked the participant whether s/he had any questions concerning the research or any of the information provided so far. If everything was in order, a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and the Informed Consent Form were given to the participant for their records. With the participant’s consent successfully obtained, the interview for Part 1, the media accessibility survey, began, with the audio recording continued throughout the whole interview. The whole interview was conducted in Cantonese. The researcher read the various questions and their options one by one, and the participant’s responses were recorded in writing. When Part 1 was finished, the AD reception study (Part 2) began immediately afterwards. Figure 6-8 below illustrates the process followed during the whole experiment according to the different screenings:

Sequencing of the AD reception study			
	Contents	Group 1	Group 2
Stage 1	Pre-questionnaire		
Stage 2.1	Screening: Film Excerpt A	Watch the first film excerpt with <u>AD1</u> (i.e. Clip A1)	Watch the first film excerpt with <u>AD2</u> (i.e. Clip A2)
	Questionnaire: Film Excerpt A	Answer questions based on Film Excerpt A 1. Watch the alternative clip (i.e. Clip A2) and the assigned clip (i.e. Clip A1) again for comparison.	Answer questions based on Film Excerpt A 2. Watch the alternative clip (i.e. Clip A1) and the assigned clip (i.e. Clip A2) again for comparison.
Stage 2.2	Screening: Film Excerpt B	Watch the second film excerpt with <u>AD1</u> (i.e. Clip B1)	Watch the second film excerpt with <u>AD2</u> (i.e. Clip B2)
	Questionnaire: Film Excerpt B	Answer questions based on Film Excerpt B	
Stage 2.3	Screening: Film Excerpt C	Watch the third film excerpt with <u>AD1</u> (i.e. Clip C1)	Watch the third film excerpt with <u>AD2</u> (i.e. Clip C2)
	Questionnaire: Film Excerpt C	Answer questions based on Film Excerpt C	
Post-questionnaire			

Figure 6-8: Illustration for the sequencing of the AD reception study

The participants first completed all of the questions in the pre-questionnaire (Stage 1) and then those in Stage 2. An AD reception study of some film excerpts followed. The participants watched the three film excerpts assigned to their group: Group 1 watched Clips A1, B1 and C1, while Group 2 watched Clips A2, B2 and C2. Each clip was immediately followed by the assessment of the participant's film comprehension level and his/her reactions to the AD they had heard, with the help of a list of questions. Previous research suggests that showing both AD versions of the same clip to the same respondent before asking questions would be "counterproductive" (Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 69) because the respondent would "already [have] been influenced by the contents of the first version" (*ibid.*). Therefore, in this research, the respondents watched only one clip first, i.e. the assigned clip, and then answered comprehension questions related to it. Then, when

AD preferences were to be made, the alternative clip from another group was played, and the assigned clip was played again if necessary. Participants of Group 1 viewed Clip A1 first and answered Q1 to Q6. As previously mentioned, when answering Q7a, ‘In regard to audio describing the sound effect about the crash, do you think Clip A1 or Clip A2 is better?’ Clip A1 was played again and Clip A2 was also played to the participants for making comparison. Then, the participants answered Q7b and whether they had watched *After This Our Exile* (2006) before (Q8). Afterwards, they moved on to the next clip (Clip B1) and answered Q9 to Q13. Finally, they viewed Clip C1 and answered Q14 and Q15. When answering Q16 (‘Do you prefer it when the names of the characters are introduced in a group scene before they speak?’), participants of Group 1 viewed also Clip C2 which included naming characters before they speak in the AD. At last, they told the researcher whether they had watched Z Storm before (Q17). The same procedures were adopted for Group 2. The variations were: they viewed Clip A2 and when answering Q7a, Clip A2 was played again and Clip A1 was played for comparison. Then, they watched Clip B2. When they answered Q12 ‘Do you think AD should include filmic language such as the movement of the camera (e.g. The camera pans up to show her feet to her face; Close up; The camera pans to a close-up of a pinhole camera.)?’, Clip B1 that contained the use of filmic terms in the AD was played to them. They then moved on to Clip C2.

Once Stage 2 was completed, each participant was required to complete the post-questionnaire (Stage 3). When Question 4, which was related to the descriptions of gestures, was formulated, the researcher asked for consent from the participant to take photographs to record their understanding of the descriptions of the gestures. If the participant refused to have photos taken, the researcher would replicate his/her gestures for the record.

Since there were two interviewers for this survey, to assure quality, the audio recordings of all of the preference questions regarding the audio description were played instead of being read aloud by the interviewer. At the end, the researcher thanked the participants for their collaboration and informed them that once the results of the research would be made public, a copy would be sent to them, if they were interested in them.

Chapter 7

Results and Discussion of Results

The SPSS computer programme has been used to analyse the quantitative data collected from the uses and gratification survey and the questionnaires of the AD reception study, whereas the text data from the experiment has been analysed qualitatively and quantitatively, though with a greater emphasis on the quality dimension. The results obtained from this analysis are presented in this chapter. Standard deviation (SD) is provided next to the mean, showing that when the SD is low, the participants provided similar scores that are close to the actual mean, while when the SD is high it indicates that the responses provided by the respondents are very polarised. First, the demographic information of the 44 participants is offered with special emphasis on the condition of their eyes. Second, the results related to the participants' possession of media (equipment) and their media use behaviour and motivations are presented. Third, the participants' satisfaction with the local media is revealed. Finally, the findings of the three-stage AD experiment are presented, including the respondents' answers concerning their TV and film viewing experience, their prior AD experience, their AD preferences, as well as their AD needs and opinions about potential future developments of AD in Hong Kong.

7.1 Demographic information of the participants

The following figures show the gender, age (Figure 7-1), marital status (Figure 7-2), education level, employment status (Figure 7-3), personal monthly income and family monthly income (Figure 7-4) of the 44 participants.

As can be seen from Figure 7-1, a total of 25 men and 19 women were interviewed, all of whom were aged 16 and above. Only one participant did not want to reveal

his/her age. The vast majority of the respondents (77%) were above the age of 40, with the largest group made up of people aged between 50 and 59 years (34%):

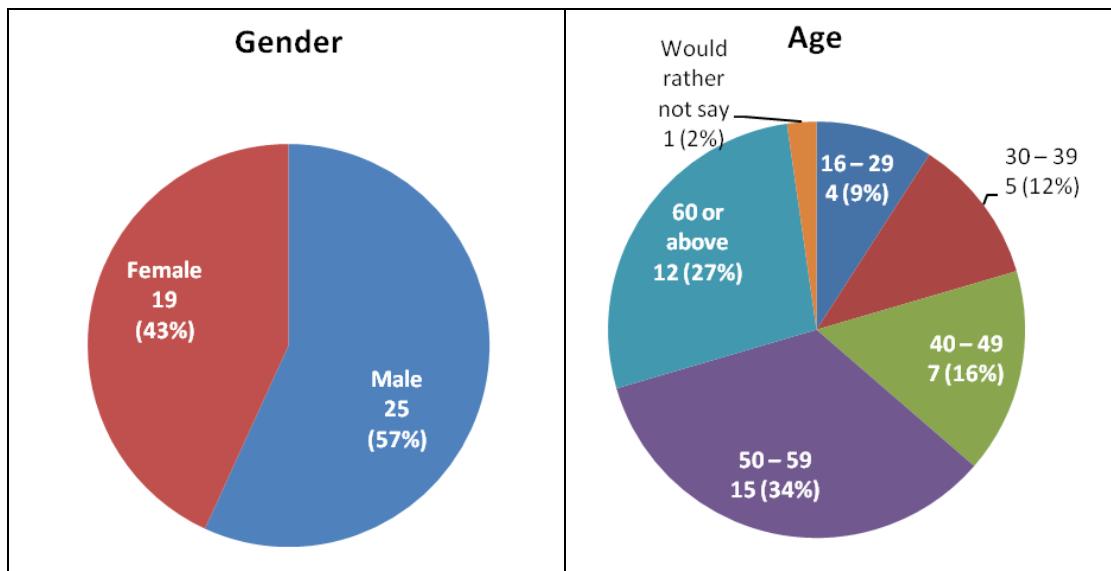


Figure 7-1: Gender and age of the participants

Figure 7-2 shows that just under half of the 44 participants (21 people, 48%) were single, whilst 20 of them (45%) were married, one (2%) was widowed and two (5%) were divorced/separated:

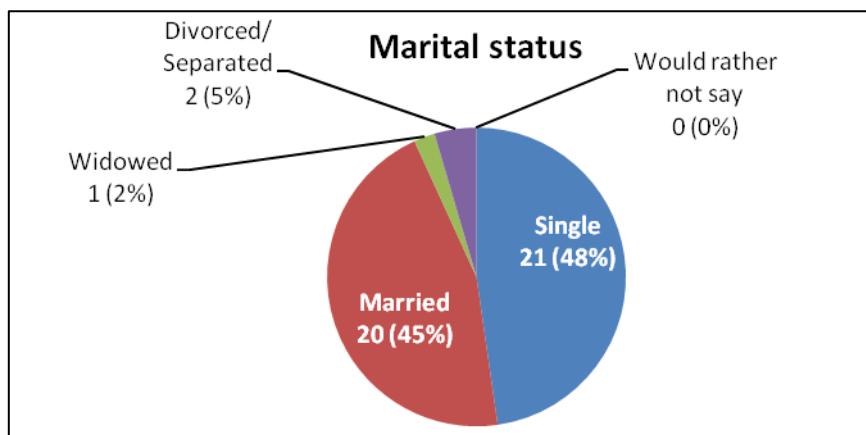


Figure 7-2: Marital status of the participants

As shown in Figure 7-3 below, the majority, that is, 31 of them (70%) had finished secondary school, eight (18%) had a bachelor's degree and two (5%) had received post-secondary education, such as higher diplomas and associate degrees. Three of them (7%) had attained only primary education. As for their employment status,

more than one-third (36%) were retired, 14% were unemployed at the time when the research was being conducted and 16% were homemakers. About one-tenth (9%) were students and two (5%) were professionals:

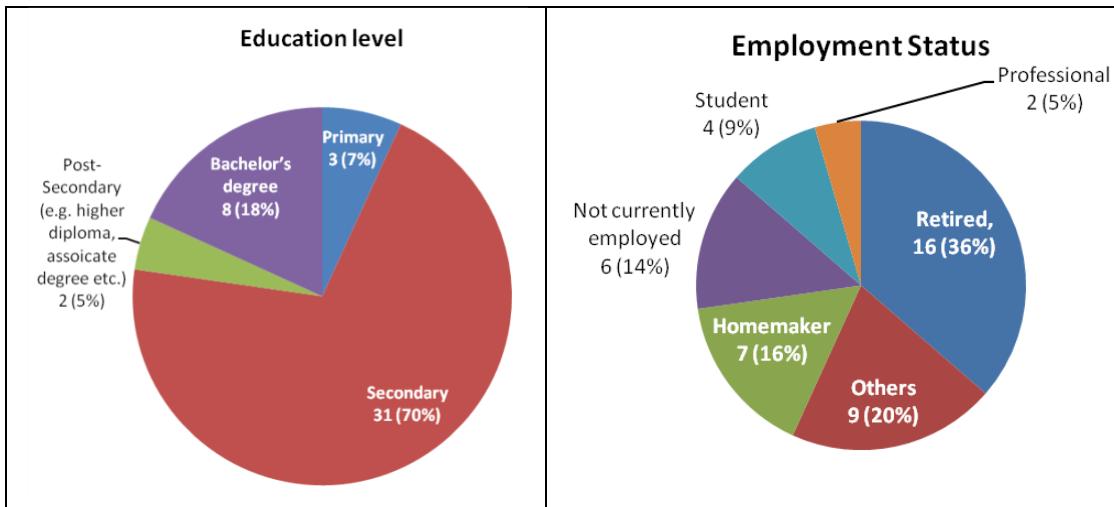


Figure 7-3: Education level and employment status of the participants

When it comes to their financial situation, and according to Figure 7-4 below, most respondents (75%) had a personal monthly income of less than HKD 10,000 (around GBP 1,000), while 50% had a family monthly income of less than HKD 50,000 (some GBP 5,000).¹⁴ Hong Kong being one of the most expensive cities in the world, the personal monthly income of the participants is considerably lower than the average amount earned in the city. The median personal monthly salary of the total population in Hong Kong for 2015 was HKD 15,500 (GBP 1,550) (Census and Statistics Department n.d.: online). A substantial number of participants preferred not to state their economic situation, which is rather unsurprising in a society in which these matters are usually kept private.

¹⁴ Since many of them would rather not disclose this information, the participants' family monthly income is relatively high in this research. Arguably, it was those who have low monthly income who opted to withhold this information.

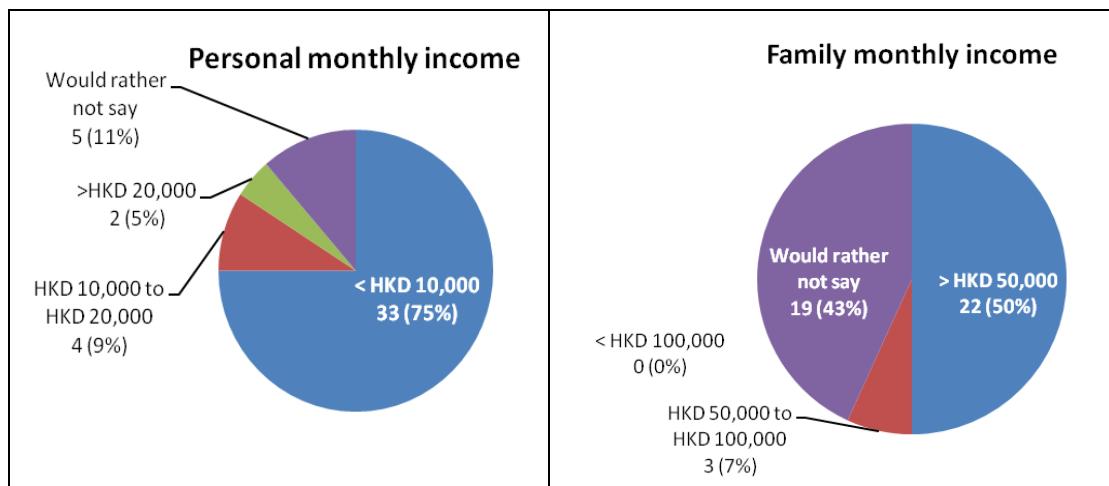


Figure 7-4: Personal and family monthly incomes of the participants

With such low income, it will be difficult for most of them to enjoy the purchase of expensive equipment, to take part in cultural activities or to embark on activities for which they have to pay large sums.

Table 7-1 below offers an overview of the participants' type of visual disability and their age at the onset of the impairment. Approximately two-thirds of the participants (65.9%) were blind and just over one-third (34.1%) were partially sighted. Of the 44 participants, seven (15.9%) were blind at birth and 22 (50%) became blind after birth. One of the blind participants could not tell when exactly he became blind and was only aware that his eye condition had gradually deteriorated after birth:

Type of visual impairment	At birth	After birth				Total
		1 to 5 years old	6 years old or above	Not sure	Sub-total	
Blind	7 (15.9%)	14 (31.8%)	7 (15.9%)	1 (2.3%)	22 (50%)	29 (65.9%)
Partially sighted	7 (15.9%)	2 (4.6%)	6 (13.6%)	0	8 (18.2%)	15 (34.1%)
Total	14 (31.8%)				30 (68.2%)	44 (100%)

Table 7-1: Distribution of the type of visual impairment and age at the onset of impairment

No official data from the Hong Kong government contains information about the total number of individuals who were born blind. In fact, after extensive research no official data could be found about the number of congenitally blind people among the visually impaired populations worldwide. For comparative purposes, the statistical information provided by Fryer and Freeman (2012: 17) may be of use as they claim

that “only 5% of the UK blind population is congenitally blind”. If this figure is then taken as a yardstick, the fact that seven of the participants in this research project were blind from birth, i.e. 15.9% of the total, may be considered as a sign of over-representation of this particular section of the population. This circumstance does not, however, invalidate the results yielded by the survey and the experiments.

According to findings presented in *The Encyclopedia of Blindness and Vision Impairment* (Sardegna *et al.* 2002: 29), and as discussed in section 2.6, congenitally blind participants who were blind at birth or who became blind during the first five years of life may not have visual memory, whereas the participants who became blind after the age of five probably have some residual visual memory and are capable of visualisation. Findings of this nature suggest that almost half of the participants may not have visual memory.

When answering the question about their eye condition, respondents were allowed to select more than one answer. Table 7-2 below shows the replies obtained, and given that 29 participants were totally blind, it is therefore not surprising that the highest percentage (65.9%) of respondents could not see anything at all:

The statement best describes what you are able to see (when wearing glasses or contact lenses if you use them)	No. of respondents (%) (N=44)
Read a newspaper	4 (9.1%)
Read a newspaper in large print	5 (11.4%)
Read a newspaper headline	9 (20.5%)
Recognise a friend across the road	3 (6.8%)
Recognise a friend across a room	5 (11.4%)
Recognise a friend who is at arm's length away	8 (18.2%)
Recognise a friend if I get close to his or her face	8 (18.2%)
See the shapes of the furniture in a room	13 (29.5%)
In a room during daytime, tell by the light where the windows are	14 (31.8%)
I cannot see anything at all	29 (65.9%)

Table 7-2: Eye condition of the participants

As for their immediate family environment, and as shown in Table 7-3 below, 75% of respondents lived with more than one family member, and over one-third (36.4%) lived with at least another visually impaired person under the same roof. More than half of the respondents (54.5%) were accompanied by a sighted person most often

and only two of them (4.5%) felt fully independent and did not need the help of anyone. The respondents' families had very positive attitudes towards encouraging the participants to go out (mean = 4.38) and even to go out alone (mean = 3.95). In addition, a large majority of participants (67.4%) did not feel lonely as 17 respondents (39.5%) rarely felt alone and 12 (27.9%) never felt alone. Only two respondents felt alone often (2.3%) and always (2.3%):

Family situation and reinforcement	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)	Mean (SD)
Size of family	1 person	11 (25%)
	2 people	8 (18.2%)
	3 people	7 (15.9%)
	4 people	13 (29.5%)
	5 or more people	5 (11.4%)
No. of visually impaired people living together	0	28 (63.6%)
	1	12 (27.3%)
	2	3 (6.8%)
	3	0 (0%)
	4	1 (2.3%)
	More than 4	0 (0%)
Who accompanies you more often?	A sighted person	24 (54.5%)
	A visually impaired person	15 (34.1%)
	Both sighted person and visually impaired person	2 (4.5%)
	None	2 (4.5%)
Does your family encourage you to go out? (Never = 1; Always = 5)	Never	0 (0%)
	Rarely	4 (9.1%)
	Sometimes	4 (9.1%)
	Often	5 (11.4%)
	Always	27 (61.4%)
	Not Sure	2 (6.8%)
Does your family encourage you to go out alone? (Never = 1; Always = 5)	Never	2 (4.7%)
	Rarely	5 (11.6%)
	Sometimes	7 (15.7%)
	Often	6 (14%)
	Always	21 (48.8%)
	Not Sure	2 (4.7%)
Best description of the situation (Never alone = 1; Always Alone = 5)	Never Alone	12 (27.9%)
	Rarely Alone	17 (39.5%)
	Sometimes Alone	11 (25.6%)
	Often Alone	1 (2.3%)
	Always Alone	1 (2.3%)
	Not Sure	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-3: Family situation and reinforcement of the participants

These findings are encouraging insomuch as they show that most of the blind and visually impaired participants are willing to go out, receive support from their families on a regular basis and have a reasonably positive outlook on life.

7.2 Part 1: Media Accessibility Survey

The second part of this analysis turns now to the results that can be gleaned from the media accessibility survey, namely (A) the figures on media (equipment) possession, as well as the participant's (B) media use habits, (C) motivations for using audiovisual media, and (D) satisfaction with local media.

7.2.1 A – Possession of media (equipment)

Table 7-4 shows that all of the respondents possessed TV sets and that 97.7% also had radio devices. All of them had mobile phones, but only 65.9% had internet access on their smart phones. A total of 75% of the respondents had DVD players, which is an important factor in terms of the availability of AD on DVDs, since this is one of the formats that most lends itself to carry AD tracks. On the other hand, only 31.8% and 52.3% of the respondents had Cable TV and VCD players, respectively:

Q1 – Which of the following items do you possess? You may choose more than one item.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)	Q1 (Con't)	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Television	44 (100%)	Laptop with internet access	19 (43.2%)
Cable TV	14 (31.8%)	Laptop without internet access	1 (2.3%)
VCD player	23 (52.3%)	iPad/tablet with internet access	4 (9.1%)
DVD player	33 (75%)	iPad/tablet without internet access	0 (0%)
Mobile with internet access	29 (65.9%)	Radio	43 (97.7%)
Mobile without internet access	15 (34.1%)	Newspaper	12 (27.3%)
Desktop with internet access	29 (65.9%)	Magazines	15 (34.1%)
Desktop without internet access	1 (2.3%)	Videogames console	3 (6.8%)

Table 7-4: Possession of media (equipment)

Overall, it seems that all participants are well provided on this front, and it could be argued that despite their low income, their possession of media is reasonably high and diversified.

7.2.2 B – Media use behaviour

This section first presents the participants' daily use of different types of media and then it shows the findings of their use of radio, TV and films, one by one. Discussions of the findings are also presented whenever appropriate.

7.2.2.1 Daily media use behaviour

Question 2 asked them how often they engage in activities closely related with the consumption of mass media. As shown in Table 7-5 below, and rather unsurprisingly, any type of reading tends to attract the lowest means, whether it is newspapers with adaptive equipment (mean = 2.36) or in Braille (mean = 2.29), or whether it is magazines with adaptive equipment (mean = 2.2) or in Braille (mean = 2.09). On the other hand, listening to the radio obtains the highest mean score (4.41) of all activities, indicating that the participants preferred to obtain their information and entertainment through the radio, as it relies solely on the audio channel. If this highest mean (4.41) is compared with the second highest mean (3.39 for television viewing, excluding film viewing), it can be observed that there is a significant difference ($t = 4.77, p < 0.005$) between the acceptance of these two activities among the visually impaired population in Hong Kong. In addition, the average means of going to the cinema and watching DVDs are 1.77 and 2.02, respectively, highlighting that, in general, the respondents rarely engage in these two activities. However, an interesting finding emerges from these data: the mean of using the internet for film/TV programme viewing (1.98) is significantly lower ($t = -5.11, p < 0.005$) than the mean of using the internet (excluding film/TV programme viewing), which goes up to 3.1, pointing to the fact that the participants would rather use the internet to do anything else other than film/TV programme viewing:

(Never = 1; Everyday = 5)	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Every day (%)	N/A (%)	Total (%)	Mean (SD)
Television viewing (excluding film viewing)	3 (6.8)	9 (20.5)	14 (31.8)	4 (9.1)	14 (31.8)	0 (0)	44 (100)	3.39 (1.32)
Television film viewing	18 (40.9)	18 (40.9)	6 (13.6)	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)	44 (100)	1.84 (0.91)
Cinema going	19 (43.2)	17 (38.6)	7 (15.9)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	44 (100)	1.77 (0.8)
DVD viewing	14 (31.8)	19 (43.2)	5 (11.4)	5 (11.4)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	44 (100)	2.02 (0.96)
VCD viewing	19 (43.2)	15 (34.1)	4 (9.1)	2 (4.5)	0 (0)	4 (9.1)	44 (100)	1.72 (0.85)
Reading newspapers (with adaptive equipment)	13 (30.2)	3 (7)	1 (2.3)	3 (7)	5 (11.6)	18 (41.9)	43 (100)	2.36 (1.68)
Reading Braille newspaper excerpts	20 (45.5)	6 (13.6)	7 (15.9)	2 (4.5)	7 (15.9)	2 (4.5)	44 (100)	2.29 (1.52)
Listening to newspaper hotlines	10 (22.7)	6 (13.6)	8 (18.2)	9 (20.5)	11 (25)	0 (0)	44 (100)	3.11 (1.51)
Reading magazines (with adaptive equipment)	12 (27.9)	4 (9.3)	4 (9.3)	2 (4.7)	3 (7)	18 (41.9)	43 (100)	2.2 (1.44)
Reading Braille magazines	21 (47.7)	7 (15.9)	8 (18.2)	4 (9.1)	3 (6.8)	1 (2.3)	44 (100)	2.09 (1.31)
Listening to talking magazines	9 (20.5)	11 (25)	13 (29.5)	6 (13.6)	4 (9.1)	1 (2.3)	44 (100)	2.65 (1.23)
Listening to radio	0 (0)	3 (6.8)	3 (6.8)	11 (25)	27 (61.4)	0 (0)	44 (100)	4.41 (0.89)
Using the internet for film/ TV programme viewing	22 (50)	7 (15.9)	7 (15.9)	4 (9.1)	2 (4.5)	2 (4.5)	44 (100)	1.98 (1.24)
Using the internet (excluding film/TV programme viewing)	9 (20.5)	4 (9.1)	14 (31.8)	4 (9.1)	11 (25)	2 (4.5)	44 (100)	3.1 (1.46)

Table 7-5: How often do you engage in these activities?

7.2.2.2 Media use behaviour of radio

After investigating the participants' daily use of various media, further analysis was conducted on their usage of radio, TV and films. First, the respondents were asked to rank the radio channels they had listened to most often in the two months prior to the interview (Q3.1). The top three preferences are analysed and presented below. The results, which are shown in Table 7-6 below, indicate that their first preference when it comes to listening to the radio was the public government-owned broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK, excluding DAB channels) with 63.6% of the respondents indicating that this was their first choice, which is a considerably higher percentage than the second most popular choice, Commercial Radio, at 18.2%. The rest of stations were rather marginal:

Q3.1 – Please rank the following radio channels you have listened to most often in the <u>past two months</u>, using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), excluding DAB channels	28 (63.6%)
Commercial Radio	8 (18.2%)
Metro Radio Hong Kong	3 (6.8%)
D100	3 (6.8%)
Digital Broadcasting Corporation (formerly) known as Wave Media)	1 (2.3%)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)- DAB Channels	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-6: First choice of radio channel preference

Regarding their second choice of radio channel preference (Q3.1), as illustrated in Table 7-7 below, the positions are reversed and the private broadcaster Commercial Radio tops the ranking with 53.8%, followed by RTHK (excluding DAB channels), with 23.15%:

Q3.1 – Please rank the following radio channels you have listened to most often in the <u>past two months</u>, using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Commercial Radio	21 (53.8%)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), excluding DAB channels	9 (23.15%)
Metro Radio Hong Kong	3 (7.7%)
Digital Broadcasting Corporation (formerly) known as Wave Media)	3 (7.7%)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)- DAB Channels	2 (5.1%)
D100	1 (2.6%)

Table 7-7: Second choice of radio channel preference

As Table 7-8 below shows, the highest third choice for radio is the private Metro Radio Hong Kong (35.7%):

Q3.1 – Please rank the following radio channels you have listened to most often in the <u>past two months</u>, using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Metro Radio Hong Kong	10 (35.7%)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK, excluding DAB channels	4 (14.3%)
Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)- DAB Channels	4 (14.3%)
Commercial Radio	4 (14.3%)
D100	4 (14.3%)
Citizens' Radio	1 (2.3%)
GZ Music Channel	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-8: Third choice of radio channel preference

Thus, the public government-owned broadcaster Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK excluding DAB channels) and the private broadcaster Commercial Radio are the most popular radio stations, foregrounding that when it comes to radio listening the blind and partially sighted people do not have a very strong preference on the use of public or private services, though they lean to using public services.

The next question (Q3.2) was phrased as ‘Did you know that there is a radio programme called 光影無限 LIKE - 電影/舞台劇 [*Audio Art*] on the public government-owned broadcaster RTHK’s DAB Channel 35?’ It is apparent from Figure 7-5 below that most of the respondents (77.3%) were aware of the radio programme *Audio Art*, as compared with 22.7% of them, who had never heard of it. This is a radio programme that broadcasts films and stage dramas with AD, in a similar fashion as the experience related by Orero (2007b) in Spain in the case of films, is aired on the RTHK’s DAB Channel 35, which could only be received via digital radios that support DAB+ standard, around once a month and has no catch-up service available online because of copyright issues related to the rather unorthodox distribution of the film through the airwaves:

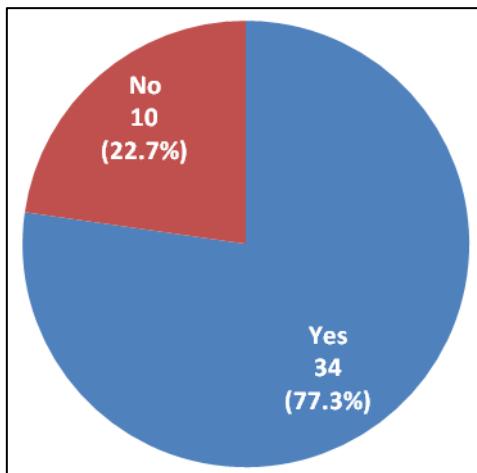


Figure 7-5: Awareness of *Audio Art* on RTHK's DAB Channel 35 (N = 44)

Question 3.3 tried to elicit the frequency of their listening to the programme. Comparing Figure 7-5 above and Table 7-9 below, it is rather surprising that although 34 (77.3%) of the respondents claimed to be aware of the radio programme *Audio Art*, only one respondent (2.3%) listened to it often and a substantial 56.9% of the respondents said that they either ‘never’ or ‘rarely’ listened to it. N35 even specified that although he knew about the presence of this programme, he chose ‘not available’ for this question because he did not have a digital radio. Hence, in addition to the 10 participants who had never heard of the *Audio Art* programme, there were in total 11 participants that chose ‘not available’ as their answer for Q3.3. The fact that no one chose listening to this programme every day is justified by it being broadcast only monthly:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Every day	N/A	Total	Mean (SD)
Q3.3 – How often do you listen to <i>Audio Art</i>?	20 (45.5%)	5 (11.4%)	7 (15.9%)	1 (2.3%)	0 (0%)	11 (25%)	44 (100%)	1.67 (0.92)

Table 7-9: How often do you listen to *Audio Art*?

Further analysis of this situation is provided in the following discussion.

7.2.2.3 Discussion on possession of media (equipment) and media use habits

Due to their visual impairments, the blind and partially sighted tend to enhance their reception of information by means of other senses and rely heavily on their hearing. Therefore, it is not unexpected that radio is the second most commonly owned media equipment, after television, with 97.7% of the participants possessing a radio set (see Table 7-4). However, when it comes to using the equipment the roles reverse and listening to the radio tops the first post, having the highest mean score (4.41), as shown in Table 7-5, and indicating that the respondents listen to the radio more often than they watch television. A surprising finding is the fact that although 77% of the respondents were aware of the existence of the public government-owned broadcaster RTHK's live radio programme *Audio Art*, aired on the digital DAB Channel 35 (see Figure 7-5), most of participants (52.3%) either 'never' (40.9%) or 'rarely' (11.4%) listened to it, as illustrated in Table 7-9. In addition to potentially not liking the programme, which is not a very plausible explanation, one of the likely reasons behind this state of affairs may be that the participants' radios did not support DAB channels. According to the Hong Kong government's website advice on digital audio broadcasting (www.digitalradio.gov.hk/en/faqs.html#q3), to listen to DAB channels, listeners must possess a device that supports DAB+ standard or a multifunctional digital radio that supports DAB+, FM and/or AM standard. In other words, if the participants did not have a device that supported DBA+ standard, they could not listen to the *Audio Art* programme, which may explain the low uptake. One assumption could be that because of the relatively low personal monthly income of most participants, their radio sets do not seem to be the most up-to-date ones to receive digital signals, though this is not very likely as a digital radio only costs around HKD200 (GBP20). Furthermore, copyright issues and legalities mean that no catch-up service for films and dramas with AD can be offered of the live broadcasts aired on the DAB Channel 35 via radio. A suggestion for future research would be to investigate further the technical issues that may hinder their enjoyment of programmes like *Audio Art*.

Television is the other medium most frequently used by the visually impaired, and all 44 respondents confirmed their possession of TV sets (see Table 7-4). Table 7-5

shows that the activity of television viewing (excluding film viewing) had the second highest mean score (3.39), indicating that the respondents watched TV programmes, other than films, quite often. What is telling is that their consumption of films on TV is rather low, scoring a mean of 1.84 and placing this activity on twelfth position (out of 14). Of the 44 participants, around two thirds (65.9%) had internet access via mobile and desktop computers (Table 7-4), but the participants seem to go online for other reasons than film/TV programme viewing, whose mean scored 1.98 (Table 7-5).

Perhaps, one of the main findings from this enquiry is that the respondents rarely engaged in film viewing, be it on television or through the internet. As shown in the same table, the means for television film viewing, cinema going, DVD viewing and VCD viewing were rather low (1.84, 1.77, 2.02 and 1.72, respectively) when compare with other activities. This situation could be explained by the fact that very few films are currently being made available to the visually impaired with AD, whether in cinemas, TV or DVD. Thus, it can be argued that, as the offer of films with AD is nearly non-existent nowadays, the participants had to find other social and cultural alternatives to spend their spare time. In fact, this line of argumentation would seem to be supported by the later finding that many of the interviewees would love to have more programmes available with AD, of which the results are presented in Table 7-49 and discussed in section 7.3.3.10 about government intervention on AD provision.

7.2.2.4 Media use behaviour of TV viewing

The 44 interviewees were then asked to answer a number of questions (Q4.1 until Q4.17) regarding their TV viewing habits and they were given the option to choose a maximum of five favourite types of TV programmes out of 20 types provided to them (Q4.1). The top five are listed in Figure 7-6 as follows:

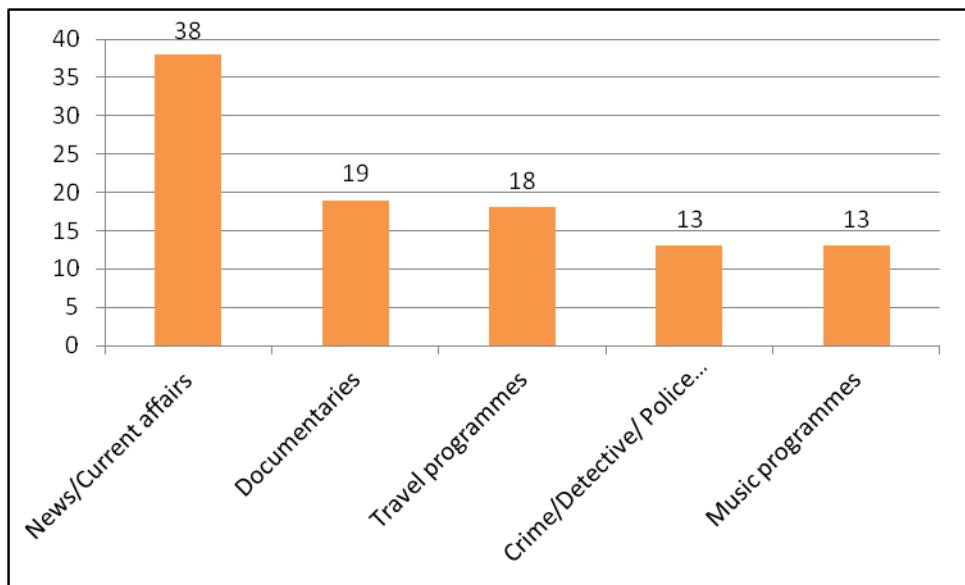


Figure 7-6: Favourite Types of TV programmes (Top five)

From the information contained in Figure 7-6, it can be seen that the news/current affairs category received the highest score, with a whopping 86.4% of the respondents picking it as one of their favourite types of TV programmes. The other top favourite types, at a long distance, were documentaries (43.2%), closely followed by travel programmes (40.9%), and then crime/detective/police procedural dramas (29.5%) and music programmes (29.5%) with the same number of people.

The bottom four and least favourite TV programmes among the participants are shown in Figure 7-7, as follows:

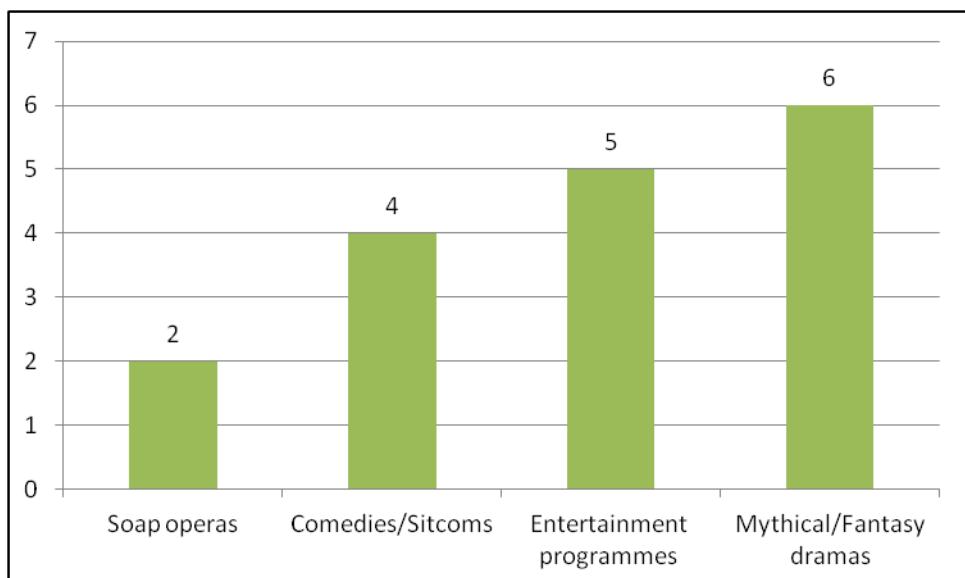


Figure 7-7: Favourite Types of TV programmes (Bottom four)

This figure indicates that only two respondents (4.5%) chose soap operas in their top five favourite types of TV programmes, placing it as the least appreciated of TV genres. Other choices that did not gain much support were comedies/sitcoms (9.1%), entertainment programmes (11.4%) and mythical/fantasy dramas (13.6%).

The next question, Q4.2, attempts to find out about the respondents' preferences regarding the language used in the TV programmes. Interviewees were allowed to choose more than one item. In Table 7-10 below, it can be observed that the blind and partially sighted respondents unanimously prefer Cantonese TV programmes and series spoken in Cantonese (100%), closely followed (all over 84%) by programmes produced originally in other languages (such as Japanese, English, Korean and Putonghua) as long as they have been dubbed into Cantonese. A total of 59.1% prefer programmes in Putonghua and only 52.3% like TV programmes and series in English:

Q4.2 – What are your preferences as regards the language of TV programmes? You may choose <u>more than one item</u>.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Cantonese TV programmes and series in Cantonese	44 (100%)
Japanese TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese	42 (95.5%)
English TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese	39 (88.6%)
Korean TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese	39 (88.6%)
Putonghua TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese	37 (84.1%)
Putonghua TV programmes and series in Putonghua	26 (59.1%)
English TV programmes and series in English	23 (52.3%)

Table 7-10: Language preferences for TV programmes

Questions 4.3 to 4.6 related to the use of local free and pay TV providers, to which all the 44 participants gave their responses. Question 4.3 asked the respondents to choose the type of local service they used most often. It is interesting to see in Figure 7-8 that only two respondents (4.5%) used pay TV most often, even though pay TV services are very common in Hong Kong, while most of the respondents (88.6%) opted for watching free TV most often:

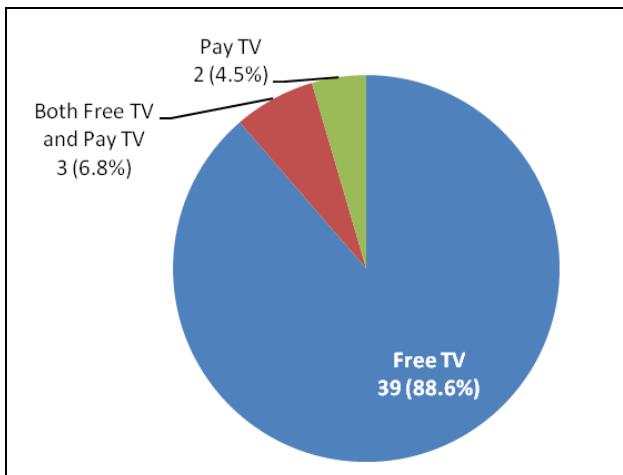


Figure 7-8: Type of local TV service used most often (N = 44)

Then, Question 4.4 asked the respondents to rank the free local TV providers they had used most often at home in the two months prior to completing the questionnaire. Table 7-11 below shows that the overwhelming majority of the respondents (86.4%) had watched the public Television Broadcast Limited (TVB) most often in the two months prior to the survey, while the other TV stations (including the public government-owned broadcaster RTHK Ch31-33, public broadcaster Asia Television Limited and online public TV station Hong Kong Television Network Limited) could not compete with TVB and scored rather low percentages:

Q4.4 – Please rank the following <u>free local TV providers</u> you have used most often at home in the <u>past two months</u>, using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB)	38 (86.4%)
RTHK Ch31-33	3 (6.8%)
Asia Television Limited (ATV)	2 (4.5%)
Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKTV) [A new channel that provides free live and video-on-demand TV programmes online]	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-11: Most often used free local TV providers in the two months prior to the survey

Question 4.5 asked them about the important factors that affect their preference of using a particular free local TV provider. As shown in the following Table 7-12, the provision of quality local TV dramas (mean = 2.91) is the least important factor affecting the participant’s preference for choosing a free local TV provider, whereas providing quality news and/or current affair programmes, in contrast, is the most significant factor when choosing a free local TV provider, with a mean of 4.18:

Q4.5 – Considering your answer to ‘Question 4.4’, please state the importance of the following factors affecting your preference of using a free local TV provider over some others.	
(1- Not at all important; 5- Extremely important)	Mean (SD)
It provides quality news and/or current affair programmes.	4.18 (1)
It provides quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing.	3.59 (1.31)
It provides other quality TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>).	3.52 (1.23)
I am used to watching this channel.	3.48 (1.4)
I have no other choice.	3.4 (1.47)
It provides quality foreign TV dramas (original).	2.93 (1.45)
It provides quality local TV dramas	2.91 (.46)

Table 7-12: Factors affecting the choice of a free local TV provider

Question 4.6 elicited whether the respondents had used any pay local TV providers at home in the two months before taking part in the questionnaire. Only eight interviewees, out of the 44, had pay local TV at home, a rather low number that could be explained on the basis of the low income acknowledged by the participants. Table 7-13 shows that half of those who had pay local TV at home, i.e. 4 people, had chosen to watch Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (i-Cable) most in the two months prior to the survey. This choice may be due to the fact that i-Cable has a longer history of providing pay local TV services than PCCW media Limited (now TV) and TVB Network Vision Limited:

Q4.6 – Please rank the following pay local TV providers you have used most often at home in the past two months , using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	Score in preference
Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (i-Cable)	4 (50%)
PCCW Media Limited (now TV)	2 (25%)
TVB Network Vision Limited	2 (25%)

Table 7-13: Most often used pay local TV providers at home in the two months prior to the survey

Question 4.7 asked them about the important factors that have an impact on their preference of using a pay local TV provider. As already seen in the figures provided in Table 7-12 regarding free TV, the data in Table 7-14 below indicate that providing quality news and/or current affair programmes (mean = 4.12) is also the most important factor that they bear in mind when choosing a pay local TV provider, though in this particular instance the number of participants (i.e. 8) is rather low to draw meaningful conclusions:

Q4.7 – Considering your answer to ‘Question 4.6’, please state the importance of the following factors affecting your preference of using a pay local TV provider over some others.

(1- Not at all important; 5- Extremely important)	Mean (SD)
It provides quality news and/or current affair programmes	4.12 (0.64)
It provides quality foreign TV dramas (original).	3.38 (1.12)
It provides quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing.	3.38 (1.12)
It provides quality local TV dramas.	3.25 (1.28)
It provides other quality TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>).	3.12 (0.84)
I have no other choice	3.12 (1.55)
I am used to watching this channel.	3 (1.4)

Table 7-14: Factors affecting the choice of a pay local TV provider over some others

As shown in Table 7-15 below, most of the visually impaired people (31 individuals, 70.5%) interviewed for this survey claimed that they experience difficulties understanding the TV programmes they watch sometimes (36.4%), often (20.5%) and every day (13.6%), which is a rather high percentage and mean (3.11). Only 3 people (6.8%) claimed to never encounter difficulties and 10 of them (22.7%) indicated that rarely:

(Never = 1, Every day = 5)	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Every day	N/A	Total	Mean (SD)
Q4.8 – How often do you have difficulty in understanding the TV programmes you watch?	3 (6.8%)	10 (22.7%)	16 (36.4%)	9 (20.5%)	6 (13.6%)	0 (0%)	44 (100%)	3.11 (1.12)

Table 7-15: Frequency of having difficulty in understanding the content of the TV programmes you watch

Given the fact that most participants acknowledged to experience a certain degree of difficulty in understanding the content of TV programmes, the next question, Q4.9, explores the nature of these obstacles. When asked about their challenges to understand audiovisual productions, the interviewees were allowed to choose more than one item, and each choice accounted for one point. From Table 7-16 below, it can be seen that ‘I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information’ (38 points; 86.4%) and ‘I don’t understand the content of a foreign programme when there is no Cantonese dubbing’ (36 points; 81.8%) were the two

most common difficulties that they encountered when trying to follow the content of the TV programmes. ‘The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information’ also receives a high score (31 points; 70.5%), placing it in third position:

Q4.9 – What kinds of difficulty? You may choose <u>more than one item</u>	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information.	38 (86.4%)
I don't understand the content of a foreign programme when there is no Cantonese dubbing.	36 (81.8%)
The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information.	31 (70.5%)
The plot is too fast.	16 (36.4%)
Some actors/actresses do not enunciate properly.	13 (29.5%)
I don't have any difficulty at all.	3 (6.8%)

Table 7-16: Difficulties in understanding the content of the TV programmes you watch

Furthermore, the participants’ appreciation regarding the provision of online TV services were also elicited. Most surprisingly, perhaps, is the fact that around two-thirds of the respondents (65.9%) had not watched any programmes on the internet TV channel HKTВ ever. Of those who had (15 people), the vast majority of them (14 people) liked the online live TV channel HKTВ, whilst only one respondent did not like it, as shown in Figure 7-9 below:

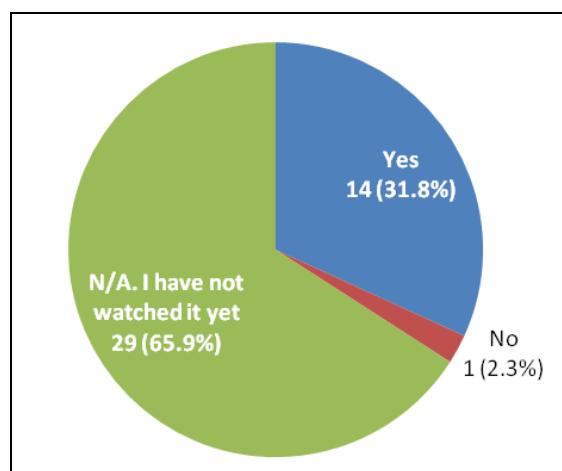


Figure 7-9: Do you like the online live TV channel HKTВ?

Table 7-17 provides the results regarding the participants’ use of video-on-demand (VOD) services: 28 respondents (65.1%) confirm to like these services, even though only 17 of them (43.5%) used these services in their daily lives:

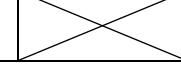
	Yes	No	N/A
Q.4.12 – Do you like online video-on-demand (VOD) services?	28 (65.1%)	1 (2.3%)	14 (23.5%)
Q.4.14 – Do you use online VOD services?	17 (43.6%)	22 (56.4%)	

Table 7-17: Preference in using video-on-demand (VOD) services

Question 4.13 was an open-ended question to further explore why the respondents liked VOD services, but no one answered it and no conclusions can be therefore drawn. Given the fast developments taking place on this front, future research should concentrate on eliciting some information from this sector of the population to make sure that they are not left behind. Question 4.15 asked them about their use of VOD services in more detail. To this question, only 16 respondents provided an answer, of whom eight (50%) acknowledged to have used VOD services provided by TVB most often in the two months prior to the survey. No other provider had been used most often by more than a quarter of the respondents, as shown in Table 7-18 below:

Q4.15 – In regard to online VOD services, please rank the following local TV providers you have used most often in the <u>past two months</u>, using ‘1’ for the one used most often.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 16)
Television Broadcast Limited (TVB)	8 (50%)
Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKTV)	4 (25%)
RTHK Ch31-33	2 (12.5%)
PCCW Media Limited	2 (12.5%)

Table 7-18: Preference in using VOD services of the local TV providers most often in the past two months

Table 7-19 compiles the difficulties that the interviewees encountered when using the online VOD services. Only 18 participants addressed this question, Q4.16. They were allowed to choose more than one item and the most common challenge, mentioned by 66.7% of the interviewees, was ‘I cannot get a complete picture of the video as I miss too much visual information’. ‘Poor web accessibility: I have no information about the website layout, so I can’t get to the programme I want to watch easily by myself’ was the second most common difficulty, chosen by 55.6% of the respondents, when they are using online VOD services, and only one respondent seemed to cope well with this service:

Q4.16 – What kinds of difficulty do you encounter when using VOD services? You may choose more than one item .	No. of respondents (%) (N=18)
I cannot get a complete picture of the videos as I miss too much visual information.	12 (66.7%)
Poor web accessibility: I have no information about the website layout, so I can't get to the programme I want to watch easily by myself.	10 (55.6%)
There's no hotline for me to call to ask about technical questions.	9 (50%)
I don't have any difficulty at all.	1 (5.6%)

Table 7-19: What difficulties do you encounter when using online VOD services?

The media that the respondents use to watch TV programmes (excluding films) were also investigated. For this Q.4.17, as with the previous one, interviewees were allowed to choose more than one item. Table 7-20 below presents the findings and foregrounds that the vast majority of the respondents (86.4%) used a TV set to watch TV programmes most often, while a much lower percentage (25%) mentioned using mobile phones to watch TV programmes:

Q4.17 – How do you watch TV programmes (excluding film viewing) most often? You may choose more than one item .	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
On TV	38 (86.4%)
On Mobile	11 (25%)
On the internet	6 (13.6%)
On DVD	6 (13.6%)
On VCD	2 (4.5%)

Table 7-20: How do you watch TV programmes (excluding film viewing)?

7.2.2.5 Discussion on their preference about TV programmes and TV providers

When the research was conducted, during the years of 2013 to 2015, no AD was available on TV in Hong Kong, which, to a large extent, justifies the finding (Figure 7-6) that the favourite types of TV programmes among the participants was news and current affairs programmes, with a total score of 38 (86.4%). Their second favourite type of TV programme was documentaries, with a total score of 19 (43.2%). These results seem to be quite common among the sighted as well as the visually impaired population across the world. Indeed, the ITC (2000: 8) reported that in the UK “most visually impaired people like to watch the same sort of programmes as the sighted audience, with news [and] documentaries [...] high on their list”. News and current

affairs productions are the most popular as it appears that people with visual impairments do not have to put much effort into obtaining the information from these programmes because of their informative nature. These programmes are always filled with narration and interviews, which makes them more audio driven and less dependent on the images than films or animation, for instance. As highlighted by Fryer (2016: 103), these type of productions “already rel[y] heavily on aural cues” that the visually impaired can receive without much cognitive effort. Although no AD is provided, such programmes are largely self-explanatory and are “regarded to have sufficient spoken content to be easily followed” (ITC 2000: 6). In fact, according to the same guidelines, news and current affair programmes are not suitable for AD, as they “offer little opportunity for [AD] because they both have tightly-worded almost continuous scripts” (*ibid.*: 8).

Apart from the easiness of their reception, another possible justification for the success of these two TV genres among the visually impaired is that one of the main reasons why this sector of the population watches TV is to be informed and to learn about what is going on in their community and around the world. This explanation is supported by the findings regarding their motivations for watching TV, which show that the two main priorities for the blind and partially sighted in Hong Kong to watch TV is ‘because it provides information of personal interest to me’, with a mean of 4, and ‘because I can learn what’s going on in the world’, with a mean of 3.8 (see section 7.2.3 for a more detailed discussion).

The information gathered in Figure 7-7 shows that the two least popular types of TV programmes were soap operas (4.5%) and comedies/sitcoms (9.1%). Unlike news/current affairs programmes and documentaries, soap operas and comedies/sitcoms rely on strong storylines that usually take a longer time to develop (i.e. demand more concentration) than, for instance, the news, which normally last only a few minutes each. Another linked reason that justifies why they may be unpopular is because the visually impaired have difficulty in comprehending the plot and in obtaining a comprehensive overview of these programmes without some additional help. According to Table 7-16, which shows and ranks a list of the participants’ difficulties when encountering TV programmes, the item ‘The plot is

too difficult to understand without extra information' reached a high score of 31 points (70.5%), placing it on third position. From the same table, the option 'I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information' was the one to score the highest, with 38 points (86.4%), whilst the second challenge was 'I don't understand the content of a foreign programme when there is no Cantonese dubbing', with 36 points (81.8%). In general, 13.6% of the respondents had difficulty, on a daily basis, in understanding the TV programmes they watched, and 20.5% acknowledged that they often had difficulty (see Table 7-15). Another reason why comedies/sitcoms were unpopular could be related to their amusing nature and the intrinsic links that are created between words and images, which are intended to ultimately induce laughter from the audience. As reflected in the second part 'AD bothers me when...' in Table 7-46 (see section 7.3.3.5), many respondents found it extremely troublesome when other viewers laughed but they did not know what had happened on the screen.

The majority of respondents (89%) watched free TV most often, even though pay TV services are very common in Hong Kong (see Figure 7-8). The Television Broadcast Limited (TVB) was the station that had been watched most often in the two months prior to the interviews (see Table 7-11). Only eight respondents out of the 44 had pay local TV, and half of them preferred Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (i-Cable) (see Table 7-13). The data from Tables 7-12 and 7-14 regarding the respondents' preferences for choosing free and pay local TV providers have been used again to produce Table 7-21 below, which compares the means of the factors affecting the choice of using free and pay local TV providers:

	Mean	
Factors affecting the choice of using (considering the TV providers they use most often in the past two months)...	Q4.5 – a free local TV provider (N = 44)	Q4.7 – a pay local TV provider (N = 8)
It provides quality news and/or current affair programmes.	4.18	4.12
It provides quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing.	3.59	3.38
It provides other quality TV programmes (excluding films).	3.52	3.12
I am used to watching this channel.	3.48	3
I have no other choice.	3.4	3.12
It provides quality foreign TV dramas (original).	2.93	3.38
It provides quality local TV dramas	2.91	3.25

Table 7-21: Comparison of factors affecting preferences for using free and pay local TV providers

The participants considered that the provision of quality news and/or current affair programmes was the most important factor (mean = 4.18) dictating their choice of a particular TV broadcaster. The same factor scored also the highest (mean = 4.12) when they chose to go for a pay local TV provider. This can be justified on the basis of the high ranking given by the interviewees to news/current affair programmes as their preferred type of TV programme. The item specifying that ‘it provides quality local TV dramas’ ranked the last one (7th) of them all, with a mean of 2.91, when considering free TV service broadcasters, but it weighed considerably more in the case of pay TV providers, with a mean score of 3.25 (placing it the fourth choice, out of seven). This may indicate that whether free TV stations can provide quality local TV dramas is not a very important factor directing the decision of the visually impaired, perhaps because this is somewhat compensated by the fact that the participants could easily obtain access to free programmes and they are grateful for that. Another possible explanation to this situation is that the visually impaired had no other choice and had to settle for free local TV providers (mean = 3.4).

7.2.2.6 Media use behaviour of film viewing

After studying the general TV viewing habits of the respondents, their film viewing habits were scrutinised. The first question, Q5.1, concerned the film genre(s) that they like most. Interviewees were allowed to choose up to five items from a list of 14 provided to them. Their top five favourite film types are presented in Figure 7-10 below:

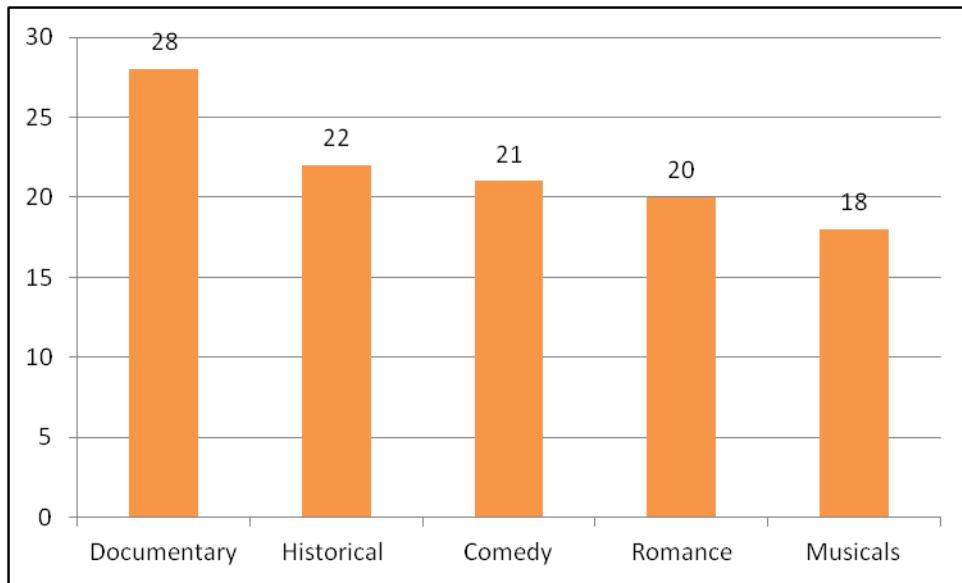


Figure 7-10: Favourite types of film (Top five)

This table shows that 63.6% of respondents selected documentaries as their favourite type of film; with historical films (50%) being the second most popular choice, closely followed by comedies, romance and musicals, which completed the list of the five most liked types. In contrast, horror (13.6%) and action (15.9%) films were the least popular among the participants, as shown in Figure 7-11:

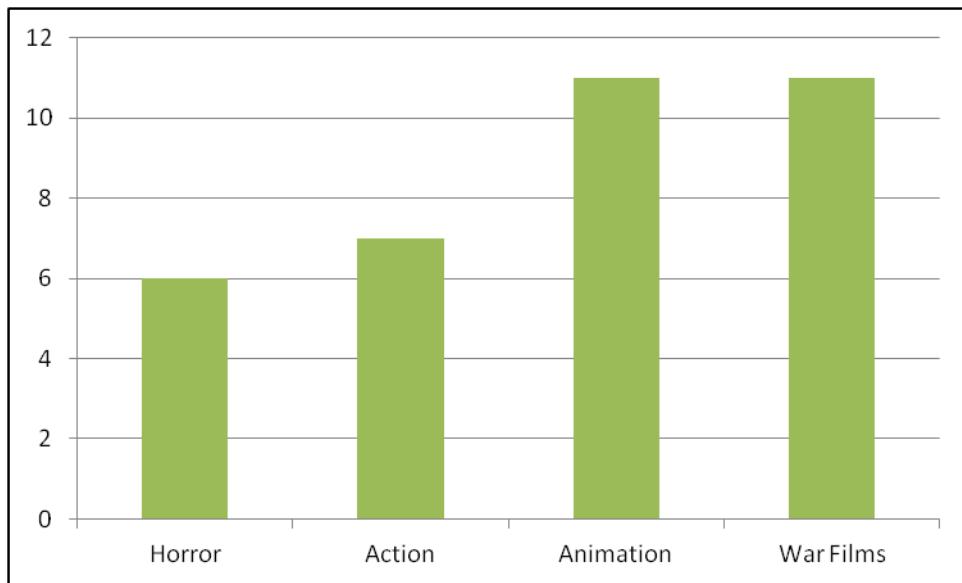


Figure 7-11: Favourite types of film (Bottom four)

The following question, Q5.2, related to the language used in the film. Again, interviewees were allowed to choose more than one item from a list of seven

provided to them. As can be seen in Table 7-22 below, all 44 respondents without exception (100%) enjoy films in their native language, that is, Cantonese, and very few of them seem to like films spoken in Putonghua (50%) or in English (36.4%). Similar to the results obtained in the previous Q4.2, which gauged their preferences regarding the language used in the TV programmes and series, most of the respondents were also happy with foreign films as long as they are dubbed in Cantonese:

Q5.2 – What are your preferences as regards the language of films? You may choose <u>more than one item</u>.	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
Cantonese films in Cantonese.	44 (100%)
Foreign films with Cantonese dubbing.	42 (95.5%)
English films with Cantonese dubbing.	38 (86.4%)
Putonghua films with Cantonese dubbing.	37 (84.1%)
Putonghua films in Putonghua.	22 (50%)
English films in English.	16 (36.4%)

Table 7-22: Language preferences of films

The participants were then requested to answer the question of whether they had any difficulty in understanding the content of the films (Q5.3), for which a five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘Never’; 5 = ‘Every time’) was used. The results, shown in Table 7-23, indicate that, similarly to the case of TV programmes, the vast majority of the respondents (81.8%) also experience difficulty in understanding the content of the films they watch sometimes (38.6%), often (31.8%) and every time (11.4%). These figures are slightly higher than in the case of non-fictional programmes and the mean score also goes up from 3.11 to 3.36. Also noteworthy of mention is the fact that the three participants that claimed to never encounter any challenges when watching factual programmes, do now experience some degree of difficulty when confronted with productions of a fictional nature:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Every time	N/A	Total	Mean (SD)
Q5.3 – Do you have any difficulty in understanding the content of films?	0 (0%)	8 (18.2%)	17 (38.6%)	14 (31.8%)	5 (11.4%)	0 (0%)	44 (100%)	3.36 (0.92)

Table 7-23: Frequency of having difficulty in understanding the content of films

To further explore the type of difficulties the respondents have to face when watching films, a selection of eight topics was provided for them to choose from, and they were allowed to select more than one item. As illustrated in Table 7-24 below, ‘I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information’ (95.5%) was the top difficulty mentioned by the respondents when they tried to understand the content of the films, with two other choices in joint second place, namely: ‘I don’t understand the content of a foreign film when there is no Cantonese dubbing’ (88.6%) and ‘The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information’ (88.6%). All in all, the results are very similar to those shown in Table 7-16, which compiles the results of the difficulties they encounter in understanding TV programmes, apart from the latter difficulty, which in the case of non-fictional programmes was much lower (70.5%). This finding highlights the negative impact that the more complex semiotic nature of films has on the visually impaired audience’s comprehension of the films and raises the need to prioritise the provision of AD services for this type of productions in the first instance:

Q5.4 – What kind(s) of difficulty? You may choose <u>more than one item</u>	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information.	42 (95.5%)
I don’t understand the content of a foreign film when there is no Cantonese dubbing.	39 (88.6%)
The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information.	39 (88.6%)
The sound effects are too loud and cover the dialogue	33 (75%)
The plot is too fast	25 (56.8%)
Some actors/ actresses do not enunciate	10 (22.7%)
Other difficult out of the choices	3 (7%)
I don’t have any difficulty at all	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-24: Difficulties in understanding the content of films you watch

The respondents were also asked in Q5.5 to indicate how many DVDs they had bought in the past three years prior to the survey, and to give their reasons for such purchases, Q5.6. Figure 7-12 below shows that, overall, the visually impaired are not very keen on buying these products, a fact that may be due to their low income. A total of 56.8% of the respondents had not bought any DVDs in the three years prior to the survey; a percentage that had increased to 68.2% if we only consider the year immediately before the survey. In addition to the potential financial implications, the low number of purchases of DVDs among the participants may also result from the limited number of DVDs with AD that are actually available in the market, together with the gradual phasing out of this media format:

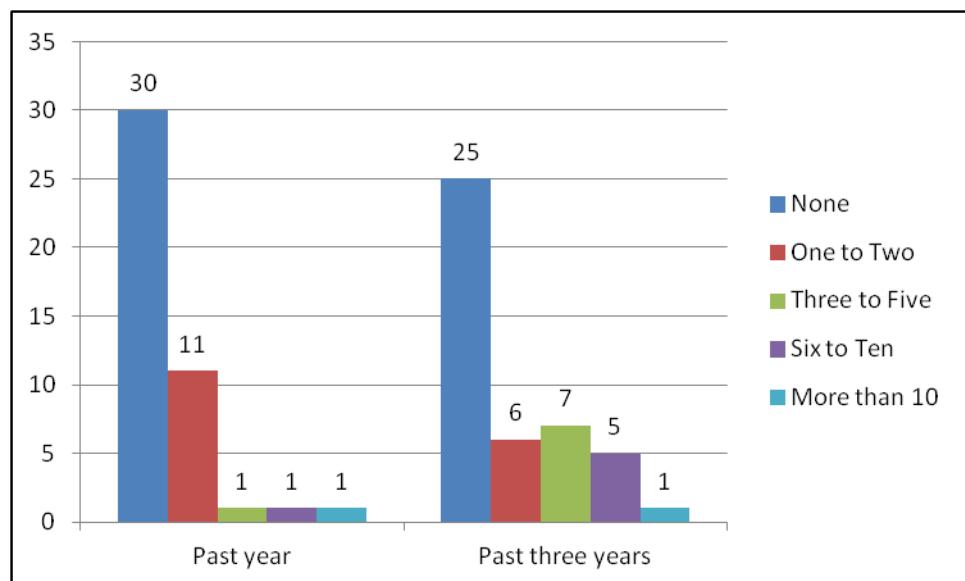


Figure 7-12: How many DVDs have you bought in the...?

The respondents were then asked why they bought DVDs, Q5.6, and were given the option to choose more than one reason. According to Table 7-25, the two main reasons, with 75% of the choices in both cases, highlight the freedom that the format offers them: 'I can have more control over the watching experience than using the TV' and 'I can watch the film whenever I want to'. Just over half of the 20 respondents that answered this question stated that they bought a DVD because 'Audio description is provided' (52.6%), which is in itself a rather interesting finding because it means that the other half of the respondents, who do buy DVDs, are not particularly concerned with the provision of AD on DVD. If we add these numbers to the high percentages found in Figure 7-12, of visually impaired not purchasing any

DVDs at all, the landscape is rather bleak for the consumption of pre-recorded AD services of films in Hong Kong:

Q5.6 – Why do you buy DVDs? You may choose <u>more than one item</u>	No. of respondents (%) (N = 20)
I can have more control over the watching experience than using the TV.	15 (75%)
I can watch the film whenever I want to.	15 (75%)
I hadn't watched the film before and I wanted to watch it.	12 (63.2%)
Audio description is provided.	10 (52.6%)
I like the film and saw it first on TV.	9 (47.4%)
I like the cast.	4 (21.1)
I like the director.	3 (15.8%)

Table 7-25: Reasons for buying DVDs

The last question in this section, Q5.7, asked the participants about the location where they watch films most often. As can be seen in Table 7-26 below, almost half of the respondents (48.8%) watched films at the film showing sessions projected at the Hong Kong Society for the Blind. The rest of locations are rather marginal in terms of the number of people taking the opportunity to consume AD. In the second place, only seven respondents (16.3%) watched films on DVD most often:

Q5.7 – Where do you watch films most often?	Score in Preference (%) (N = 44)
In the film showing sessions at the Hong Kong Society for Blind	21 (48.8%)
On DVD	7 (16.3%)
In the cinema	6 (14%)
On TV	6 (14%)
On the internet	2 (4.7%)
Somewhere else	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-26: Where do you watch films most often?

7.2.2.7 Discussion of preferences of film genres

In Hong Kong, the majority of film screenings with AD are provided in film screening sessions organised by the HKS. Most of the films showcased are dramas and romance, with a few documentaries as well as historical, horror and action films also played. Interestingly, even though documentary films were the participants' top choice when they were asked about their favourite film genres, their screening at the

HSKB premises are rather limited. Indeed, Figure 7-10 shows that around two thirds of respondents chose documentary as their favourite type of film, while the historical genre (50%) was the second most popular type. As previously discussed, one possible explanation for this choice is that documentaries “tend to be more informative, include more or less objective accounts of facts, historic events, social issues or natural phenomena [...] documentaries more often rely on off screen narration and interviews” (Maszerowska 2015: 27). The informative nature of this film genre, relatively independent of the images, may facilitate the easier comprehension of the audiovisual content. When no AD is available, blind and partially sighted people may find documentaries easier to understand than, say, science fiction films; hence its ranking at the top of the list. Qualitative research, such as focus groups and individual face-to-face interviews, could be conducted in the future to investigate why the group of visually impaired people is interested in the documentary genre in order to ascertain whether this preference is because they can understand the content of this type of genre more easily than other, even though there is no provision of AD, or because they simply like the informative nature of this genre type, which can broaden their encyclopaedic knowledge.

Horror (13.6%) and action (15.9%) films were the two least popular film types and fewer than one fifth of the respondents picked these two types of film among their favourites, as shown in Figure 7-11. A possible explanation is that both film types rely heavily on cinematographic conventions and special editing. Borrowing from Perego (2015: 30), cinematography refers to “how shots are filmed” and editing refers to “the relations between different shots”. In horror movies, film language plays a pivotal role, as tension is built by “the cinematic trope of metonym, whereby a part represents the whole. A shot of a hand pushing open a door allows us to speculate (fearfully) as to who the owner of the hand may be” (Fryer 2016: 106). In addition, camerawork is essential. For example:

Filming over a character’s shoulder as they walk away gives us the sensation that the character is being followed. Voyeuristic camerawork focusing on a character carrying out everyday activities such as cooking, filmed through an uncurtained window or an open doorway, especially at night, gives the sense that they are being watched. (*ibid.*)

All of these examples show how tension is gradually generated in horror films through different kinds of camerawork and special effects. Similarly, when watching action films without AD, visually impaired people might miss a lot more than in other films because usually there are many fight scenes, and the montage of the sequences is done in fast editing. According to Fryer's study (2016: 44), one partially sighted person and occasional AD user, confided in her that, "In action films that have very fast sequences I might have to say to someone sitting next to me, you know, what happened there? Um...because I don't always see the fast action". As highlighted by Maszerowska (2015: 28), action films present "rapid shot changes and short average shot lengths to heighten the pace of the events", which adds complexity to the audio description. In general, if AD is unavailable in horror and action films and the camerawork and editing are difficult, if not impossible, to be appreciated from the audio track, it is problematic for blind and partially sighted people to be able to enjoy a similar experience to that of their sighted counterparts, to the detriment of their enjoyment of this type of films. This might, in turn, be the reason why these two genres are less popular than some others.

Another possible explanation is that it might be difficult for the blind and partially sighted to follow the storyline and understand the content since, in contrast to documentaries, horror and action films usually resort to storylines that make the most of the visuals. This line of argumentation tallies with the findings compiled in Table 7-24, which show a list of the different types of difficulties that the participants experienced during film viewing. Statements such as, 'I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information' and 'The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information', were at the top of the list, with 42 points (95.5%) and 39 points (88.6%), respectively. As Table 7-23 shows, 11.4% and 31.8% of the respondents expressed that they had difficulty in understanding the content of films every time and often, respectively, which suggests that the provision of AD could prove of enormous benefit to increase the accessibility of films.

7.2.3 C – Motivations for using audiovisual media

Section C of the survey focuses on the participants' motivations for both TV viewing and film viewing, for which a five-point Likert scale (1 = 'Strongly disagree'; 5 =

‘Strongly agree’) was adopted. First, the mean of each of the items surveyed is presented. Then, the results of the factor analysis are discussed.

According to the means of the 20 motivation statements offered to the participants in reference to their TV viewing motivations, their most important motivation, as shown in Table 7-27, is ‘because it provides information of personal interest to me’ (mean = 4), closely followed by ‘because I can learn what’s going on in the world’ (mean = 3.8) in second place, and ‘because it entertains me’ (mean = 3.66) and ‘to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong’ (mean = 3.66) in joint third place. However, there is no significant difference between the top two motivations ($t = 1.77, p > 0.05$), indicating that both of them could be understood as having the same importance for the participants. The means of the last nine motivations are all below 2.5, signifying that they do not really stimulate the respondents to watch TV:

Q6 – I watch TV (excluding film viewing)...	Mean (SD)
because it provides information of personal interest to me.	4 (0.81)
because I can learn what’s going on in the world.	3.8 (0.88)
because it entertains me.	3.66 (0.94)
to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong.	3.66 (0.91)
so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends.	3.34 (1.1)
so I can pass on information to others.	3.2 (1.19)
so I can spend time with my family or friends.	3.05 (1.28)
because it relaxes me.	2.91 (1.24)
because it’s enjoyable.	2.73 (1.23)
because it gives me something to do to spend my time.	2.57 (1.27)
because it’s a habit, just something to do.	2.57 (1.37)
because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I’m bored.	2.45 (1.37)
just because I like it.	2.42 (1.45)
because it’s always there.	2.41 (1.32)
because it’s a pleasant rest.	2.34 (1.28)
when there’s no one else to talk to or be with.	2.32 ((1.36))
when I have nothing better to do.	2.32 (1.36)
so I can get away from what I’m doing.	2.23 (1.34)
because it makes me feel less lonely.	2.23 (1.33)
so I can forget about daily problems.	1.91 (1.14)

Table 7-27: TV viewing motives

Table 7-28 rates the importance granted by the participants to the 19 motivations for film viewing that were presented to them. According to the mean of each motivation,

the most important one is ‘because it entertains me’ (mean = 3.77), followed by ‘because it provides information of personal interest to me’ (mean = 3.39) in the second place, ‘so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends’ (mean = 3.32) as third option, and ‘because it relaxes me’ (mean = 3.27) in the fourth place. However, once more, there is no significant difference between the top two motivations ($t = 1.95$, $p > 0.05$) and both can be interpreted as being equally important. The last eight motivations at the bottom of the table, whose mean scores are below 2.5, do not seem to motivate the respondents to watch films. An important finding is that most visually impaired people tend to watch films for their ludic and enjoyment dimension and not so much to escape solitude or isolation:

Q7 – I watch films...	Mean (SD)
because it entertains me.	3.77 (1.05)
because it provides information of personal interest to me.	3.39 (1.28)
so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends.	3.32 (1.22)
because it relaxes me.	3.27 (1.15)
so I can spend time with my family or friends.	3.23 (1.3)
because it's enjoyable.	3.09 (1.24)
so I can pass on information to others.	2.82 (1.15)
because it's a pleasant rest.	2.64 (1.3)
to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong.	2.61 (1.1)
because I can learn what's going on in the world.	2.57 (1.23)
because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored.	2.55 (1.3)
just because I like it.	2.45 (1.3)
so I can get away from what I'm doing.	2.32 (1.39)
so I can forget about daily problems.	2.3 (1.37)
because it gives me something to do to spend my time.	2.16 (1.26)
when I have nothing better to do.	2.14 (1.1)
when there's no one else to talk to or be with.	2.11 (1.26)
because it makes me feel less lonely.	2.11 (1.08)
because it's a habit, just something to do.	1.91 (0.96)

Table 7-28: Film viewing motives

A factor analysis and a reliability test were conducted to study the above motivations of the respondents, using SPSS and based on a similar data analysis approach carried out by Koçak and Terkan (2009). The factor analysis examines the variable relationships, and the reliability test (Cronbach's alpha) evaluates the internal consistency of the factor analysis, that is, how closely related a set of factors are as a group. Twenty questions related to the motivations for TV viewing were factor

analysed using principal component analysis with varimax rotation in an effort to replicate the work done by Koçak and Terkan (2009). Four factors (A, B, C, and D) were yielded from the factor analysis that explained 70.264% of the variance for the entire set of variables. In addition, even though some of the factors have relatively low loadings, they were still grouped into the assumed four factors. To support this approach, a reliability test was conducted for each factor to ensure its Cronbach's alpha. As shown in Table 7-29, the Cronbach's alphas of all four factors are above 0.7, indicating that the level of internal consistency of these four factors is acceptable.

The factor loadings are presented in the following Table 7-29:

I watch TV (excluding film viewing)...	Mean	SD	Factors			
			A	B	C	D
because it gives me something to do to spend my time.	2.57	1.27	0.89			
because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored.	2.45	1.37	0.82			
when I have nothing better to do.	2.32	1.36	0.74			
because it's a habit, just something to do.	2.57	1.37	0.67			
because it's always there.	2.41	1.32	0.39			
just because I like it.	2.42	1.45	0.16			
because it relaxes me.	2.91	1.24		0.56		
because it's a pleasant rest.	2.34	1.28		0.45		
because it's enjoyable.	2.73	1.23		0.44		
when there's no one else to talk to or be with.	2.32	1.36		0.3		
because it makes me feel less lonely.	2.23	1.33		0.28		
because it entertains me.	3.66	0.94		0.22		
so I can forget about daily problem.	1.91	1.14			0.52	
so I can get away from what I'm doing.	2.23	1.34			0.31	
so I can spend time with my family or friends.	3.05	1.28			0.16	
because I can learn what's going on in the world.	3.8	0.88				0.87
because it provides information of personal interest to me.	4	0.81				0.8
so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends.	3.34	1.1				0.22
so I can pass on information to others.	3.2	1.19				0.21
to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong.	3.66	0.91				0.06
Reliability test: Cronbach's alpha			0.87	0.86	0.79	0.73
Eigenvalue			9.187	2.201	1.559	1.105
% of Total variance			25.94	19.32	14.14	10.86
Total variance						70.264%

Table 7-29: Factor loadings of TV viewing motives

The factor labels proposed by Koçak and Terkan (2009) suited the extracted factors in this survey and were therefore retained. Factor A was labelled ‘Passing time/Habits’ and included the following six statements: (1) ‘because it gives me something to do to spend my time’, (2) ‘because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I’m bored’, (3) ‘when I have nothing better to do’, (4) ‘because it’s a habit, just something to do’, (5) ‘because it’s always there’ and (6) ‘just because I like it’. Factor A explained 25.94% of the variance.

Factor B, labelled ‘Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship’, also included six items as follows: (1) ‘because it relaxes me’, (2) ‘because it’s a pleasant rest’, (3) ‘because it’s enjoyable’, (4) ‘when there’s no one else to talk to or be with’, (5) ‘because it makes me feel less lonely’ and (6) ‘because it entertains me’. The variance explained by Factor B was 19.32%.

Factor C, labelled ‘Social interaction/Escape’, was the one to include the lowest number of items, only three: (1) ‘so I can forget about daily problems’, (2) ‘so I can get away from what I’m doing’ and (3) ‘so I can spend time with my family or friends’. Factor C explained 14.14% of the variance.

Finally, factor D was labelled ‘Information/Interpersonal Utility/Surveillance’ and was made up of the following five statements: (1) ‘because I can learn what’s going on in the world’, (2) ‘because it provides information of personal interest to me’, (3) ‘so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends’, (4) ‘so I can pass on information to others’ and (5) ‘to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong’. Factor D explained 10.86% of the variance.

The nineteen questions related to motivations for film viewing were also factor analysed using principal component analysis with varimax rotation in an attempt to replicate the work by Koçak and Terkan (2009). Four factors (A, B, C, and D) were yielded from the factor analysis that explained 76.09% of the variance for the entire set of variables. In addition, even though some of the factors had relatively low loadings, they were grouped into the assumed factors. To support this, a reliability test was conducted for each factor to ensure its Cronbach’s alpha. As shown in Table

7-30 below, the Cronbach's alphas of all four factors are above 0.7, proving that the level of internal consistency of these four factors is acceptable:

I watch films...	Mean	SD	Factors ¹⁵			
			A	B	C	D
because it's a habit, just something to do.	1.91	0.96	0.771			
because it gives me something to do to spend my time.	2.16	1.26	0.747			
because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored.	2.55	1.30	0.727			
when I have nothing better to do.	2.14	1.10	0.696			
just because I like it.	2.45	1.30	0.610			
so I can pass on information to others.	2.82	1.15		0.835		
to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong.	2.61	1.10		0.820		
because I can learn what's going on in the world.	2.57	1.23		0.811		
because it provides information of personal interest to me.	3.39	1.28		0.656		
so I can get away from what I'm doing.	2.32	1.39			0.664	
so I can spend time with my family or friends.	3.23	1.34			0.616	
so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends.	3.32	1.22			0.407	
so I can forget about daily problem.	2.3	1.37			0.284	
because it relaxes me.	3.27	1.15				0.805
because it entertains me.	3.77	1.05				0.537
because it's a pleasant rest.	2.64	1.30				0.348
because it's enjoyable.	3.09	1.26				0.273
because it makes me feel less lonely.	2.11	1.08				0.218
when there's no one else to talk to or be with.	2.11	1.26				0.091
Reliability Test: Cronbach's alpha			0.889	0.870	0.821	0.877
Eigenvalue			10.141	2.051	1.167	1.097
% of Total variance			28.62	18.43	17.45	11.59
Total variance						76.09%

Table 7-30: Factor loadings of film viewing motives

Similarly to TV watching, the factor labels proposed by Koçak and Terkan (2009) also suited the extracted factors for film viewing and were therefore retained. Factor A was labelled 'Passing time/Habits' and it included the following five items: (1) 'because it's a habit, just something to do', (2) 'because it gives me something to do

¹⁵ Factors A, B, C and D generated by the SPSS computer programme are random, and it does not affect the results.

to spend my time', (3) 'because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored', (4) 'when I have nothing better to do' and (5) 'just because I like it'. Factor A explained 28.62% of the variance.

Factor B, labelled 'Information/Interpersonal Utility/Surveillance', included these four assertions: (1) 'so I can pass on information to others', (2) 'to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong', (3) 'because I can learn what's going on in the world' and (4) 'because it provides information of personal interest to me'. The variance explained by Factor B was 18.43%.

Factor C was clustered under the umbrella category of 'Social interaction/Escape', and it included four statements, as follows: (1) 'so I can get away from what I'm doing', (2) 'so I can spend time with my family or friends', (3) 'so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends' and (4) 'so I can forget about daily problems'. Factor C explained 17.45% of the variance.

Finally, factor D was labelled 'Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship' and it included the largest number of items, six: (1) 'because it relaxes me', (2) 'because it entertains me', (3) 'because it's a pleasant rest', (4) 'because it's enjoyable', (5) 'because it makes me feel less lonely' and (6) 'when there's no one else to talk to or be with'. Factor D explained 11.59% of the variance.

These factor loadings are used in the following discussion.

7.2.3.1 Discussion on factors affecting the length of TV and film viewing

Using the previous factor loadings, a linear regression analysis was performed to determine the factors that affect the length of TV viewing and film viewing. The independent variables were taken from the four factors analysed from viewing motives and labelled as (1) 'Passing time/Habits', (2) 'Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship', (3) 'Social interaction/Escape' and (4) 'Information/Interpersonal Utility/Surveillance' (see Table 7-29 and Table 7-30). The results in Table 7-31 below show that the influence of the four factors affecting

TV viewing was statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$), meaning that the four factors have no significant influence on the length of TV viewing:

TV viewing motives	Sig.
Information/Interpersonal Utility/Surveillance	.128
Passing time/Habits	.365
Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship	.231
Social interaction/Escape	.450
Dependent Variable: The length of TV viewing	

Table 7-31: Linear regression analysis showing factors affecting the length of TV viewing

Similarly, Table 7-32 below shows that the influence of the four factors affecting film viewing was also statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$), meaning that the four factors have no significant influence on the length of film viewing:

Film viewing motives	Sig.
Information/Interpersonal Utility/Surveillance	.273
Passing time/Habits	.575
Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship	.934
Social interaction/Escape	.752
Dependent Variable: The length of film viewing	

Table 7-32: Linear regression analysis showing factors affecting the length of film viewing

In Koçak and Terkan's study (2009: 81), "all the television viewing motives included in the regression analysis show a significant relationship with the length of television viewing" ($p < 0.001$). For example, "if the importance given to the Relaxation/Entertainment/Companionship factor increases one unit, the length of television viewing increases by around 2.3 minutes" (*ibid.*). Crucially, their findings are contrary to the results of this research. One explanation is that the ages of the participants in these two studies were very different. Koçak and Terkan (2009: 75) interviewed only elderly people aged 60 and above, whereas in this research the interviewees were blind and partially sighted people aged 16 and above, of whom only 12 participants (27.3%) were aged 60 or above. According to Koçak and Terkan (2009: 70), the elderly have a great deal of free time, and TV viewing "predominantly consumes their free time". In addition, they found that TV viewing was ranked the highest (76%) among their daily activities. In contrast, the visually

impaired participants in Hong Kong listened to radio (mean = 4.41) much more often than they sat in front of the TV, be it watching films (mean = 1.84) or other type of programmes (mean = 3.39) (see Table 7-5). Another potential explanation is that the 20 statements about TV and film viewing motives that they used in their study in Turkey, and that have been also employed in this questionnaire, may not be as suitable for the Hong Kong context. An obvious suggestion from this outcome is that a new set of motive statements be developed for future research that would use some of the findings from this study to make them more suitable for the situation found in Hong Kong.

Even though the linear regression analysis of TV viewing showed that the relationship between the four factors and the length of TV viewing was statistically insignificant, when the 20 motive statements were considered separately, one of them, i.e. ‘to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong’ ($t = 2.227, p < 0.05$), did have a positive impact on how often the participants engaged in TV viewing. Therefore, it can be concluded that the motivation of obtaining information about events and issues in Hong Kong is the one to have a statistically significant effect on the frequency of TV viewing.

7.2.4 D – Satisfaction with the local media

This section investigated the extent to which the participants were satisfied with the local media, for which a five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘Strongly disagree’; 5 = ‘Strongly agree’) was used:

Q8 – To what extent do you agree with the statements below?	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	N/A (%)	Total	Mean (SD)
I am satisfied with the TV programmes (excluding films) provided on Hong Kong TV.	2 (4.5)	14 (31.8)	9 (43.2)	6 (13.6)	3 (6.8)	0 (0)	44	2.86 (1)
I am satisfied with the TV programmes (excluding films) provided in Hong Kong via the internet.	1 (2.3)	9 (21)	17 (40)	2 (4.7)	3 (7%)	11 (25.6)	43	2.91 (0.93)
I am satisfied with the TV programmes (excluding films) available on DVD in Hong Kong.	2 (4.5)	8 (18.2)	17 (38.6)	6 (13.8)	3 (6.8)	8 (18.2)	44	3 (1)
I am satisfied with the films provided in Hong Kong's cinemas.	6 (13.6)	9 (20.5)	12 (27.3)	12 (27.3)	2 (4.5)	3 (6.8)	44	2.88 (1.14)
I am satisfied with the films available on DVD in Hong Kong.	4 (9.1)	7 (15.9)	12 (27.3)	13 (29.5)	3 (6.8)	5 (11.4)	44	3.1 (1.12)
I am satisfied with the films provided on Hong Kong TV.	4 (9.1)	17 (38.6)	12 (27.3)	9 (20.5)	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	44	2.67 (1)
In general, I am satisfied with the current media provided in Hong Kong (e.g. radio, TV, cinema, etc.).	2 (4.5)	7 (15.9)	18 (40.9)	15 (34.1)	2 (4.5)	0 (0)	44	3.18 (0.92)

Table 7-33: Satisfaction with the local media

As shown in Table 7-33 above, all of the means range from 2.67 to 3.18, indicating that respondents are rather neutral in terms of their agreement with the seven statements presented to them. The only finding that stands out is the fact that the participants were slightly dissatisfied with the films provided on Hong Kong TV, as a total of 21 of them disagreed (17) or strongly disagreed (4), and the mean score was the lowest of all at 2.67. Their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs is reflected in their demands for a better provision of AD for local media, whose results are shown and investigated in section 7.3.3.6, where the AD needs analysis is conducted.

7.2.4.1 Discussion on satisfaction with local media in Hong Kong

Table 7-31 above shows that, in general, according to the means obtained for each of the various statements, the respondents were neutral in terms of their agreement with the following six assertions, all of which started with the clause ‘I am satisfied with...’: (1) ‘the TV programmes (excluding films) provided on Hong Kong TV’, (2) ‘the TV programmes (excluding films) provided in Hong Kong via the internet’, (3) ‘the TV programmes (excluding films) available on DVD in Hong Kong’, (4) ‘the films provided in Hong Kong’s cinemas’, (5) ‘the films available on DVD in Hong Kong’, and (6) ‘the films provided on Hong Kong TV’. However, two findings stand out. The first one is that just over a third of the respondents (36.3%) were not satisfied with the TV programmes (excluding films) as they disagreed (31.8%) or strongly disagreed (4.5%) with that statement. The second finding is that almost half of the 44 respondents (47.7%) were also unhappy with the films provided on Hong Kong TV, with 38.6% disagreeing and 9.1 strongly disagreeing. In other words, even though the majority of the respondents (86.4%) watched TV programmes (excluding film viewing) on TV on a regular basis (see Table 7-20), the reality is that most of them are not happy or satisfied with the programmes being offered on Hong Kong TV. Given the fact that TV is one of the major media that visually impaired people most resort to in their daily life, it is recommended that the provision of AD on TV should be at the top of the agenda as one of the main priorities to enhance and champion accessibility.

7.3 Part 2: AD Reception Study

This section presents the results obtained from the pre-questionnaire, questionnaire proper and post-questionnaire used for this survey.

7.3.1 Stage 1: Pre-questionnaire

In the pre-questionnaire, the participants’ understanding and experience of AD were elicited. They were also asked about their viewing condition when confronting audiovisual media and other similar questions.

7.3.1.1 Understanding of AD

First, the participants' familiarity and experience in regards to the consumption of AD was explored by asking them whether they had ever heard about audio description services (Q1) prior to the experiment and whether they knew what AD actually was (Q2). The results, as illustrated in Figure 7-13 below, show that all of the interviewees (100%) had heard of audio description and all but two of them (95.5%) knew what it was:

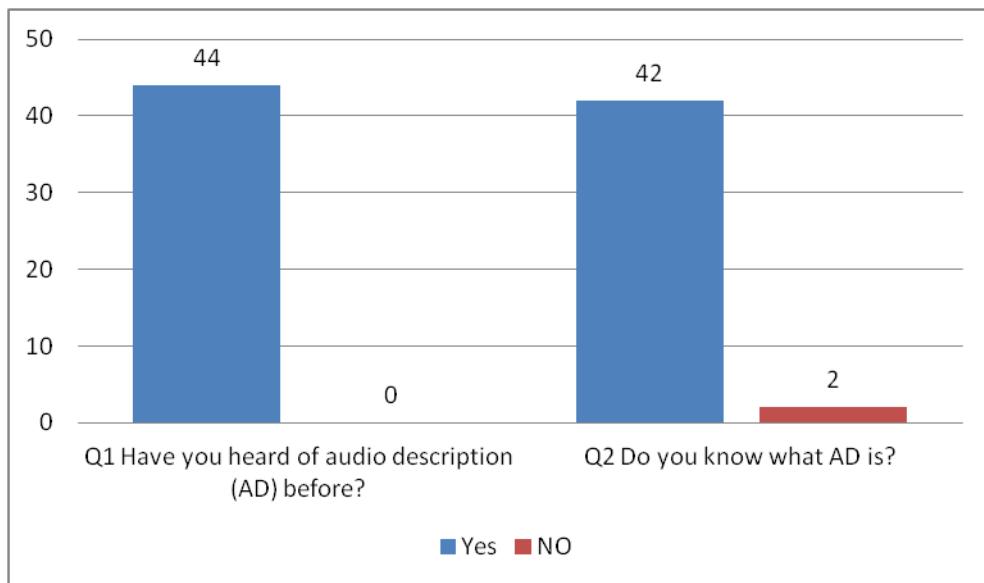


Figure 7-13: AD experience

The respondents were then asked whether they had watched any audio described programmes before (Q3). As shown in Table 7-34 below, only four respondents (9.1%) had not watched AD before, whilst the rest of them had experienced watching AD programmes at some point before the actual interview. Nearly two-thirds of the total respondents (63.6%) indicated that they watched audio described programmes 'sometimes' (38.6%), 'often' (13.6%) or 'always' (11.4%):

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total	Mean (SD)
Q3 – Have you watched audio described programmes before?	4 (9.1%)	12 (27.3%)	17 (38.6%)	6 (13.6%)	5 (11.4%)	44 (100%)	2.91 (1.12)

Table 7-34: Frequency of audio describing programme viewing

After that, a test to gauge the participants' understanding of the nature of AD (Q4) was administered in the form of eight statements that the participants had to rate as true or false. Table 7-35 below clearly shows that some items have a higher percentage of correct answers than others. Two statements had a 100% correct response rate, namely Question 4.3 ('AD tells you the place where a character is when scenes change with the use of expressions such as "in the bedroom" and "on the bus"'), and Question 4.8 ('AD tells you what a character is doing'). On the flip side of the coin, Question 4.1 ('AD tells you what the characters in a film/TV programme are thinking') was the one to attract the lowest number of correct answers (45.5%), raising the issue of the debate between subjective and objective approaches to AD. Generally speaking, their knowledge of AD is fairly advanced and accurate:

Q4 – Below are some statements about AD. Please decide whether they are TRUE (T) or FALSE (F).		Correct answer	No. of correct answers (%) (N = 44)
4.1	AD tells you what the characters in a film/ TV programme are thinking.	False	20 (45.5%)
4.2	Audio guides (mainly provided in museums) and AD are exactly the same.	False	27 (61.4%)
4.3	AD tells you the place where a character is when scenes change with the use of expressions such as 'In the bedroom' and 'On the bus'.	True	44 (100%)
4.4	In a restaurant, reading aloud the food dishes from a menu is AD.	False	31 (70.5%)
4.5	Audio describers include their feelings/thoughts in the AD. For example, ' <i>He is a bad guy</i> ' or ' <i>The girl is naughty</i> '.	False	31 (70.5%)
4.6	In the AD, the audio describer says things like ' <i>Guess what will happen next?</i> ' or ' <i>Let me explain it to you...</i> ' etc.	False	36 (81.8%)
4.7	Reading aloud the subtitles of the dialogue exchanges in a film/TV programme is AD.	False	41 (93.2%)
4.8	AD tells you what a character is doing.	True	44 (100%)

Table 7-35: A test of AD understanding

The respondents' test results were further analysed to ascertain the individual knowledge of each of the participants. Thus, for every correct answer respondents got 1 point, with 8 points being the maximum score any of them could achieve. Of the 44 participants, only 6 of them (13.6%) scored full marks, whilst 33 respondents (75%) received between 5 and 7 points out of the potential 8. Five participants

(11.3%) scored 4 or less marks, and the mean score of the test is 6.23, as indicated in Figure 7-14:

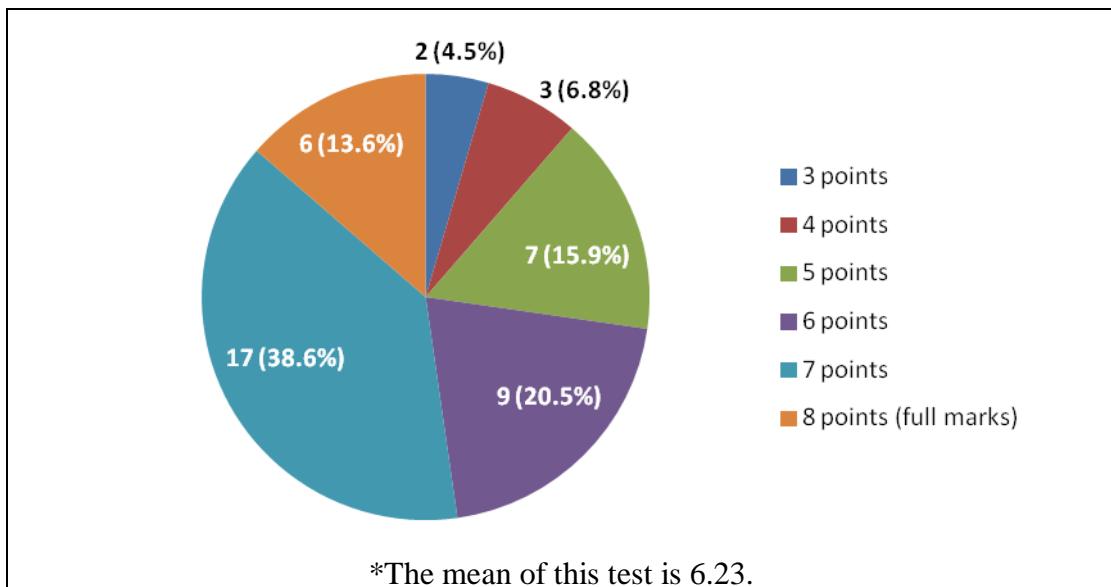


Figure 7-14: Total score of individual participants in the test of AD understanding

To categorise the degree of understanding of each participant, those who received 0 to 4 points were considered to have an insufficient knowledge of the practice of AD, those who received 5 to 6 points were considered to have an average understanding of AD, and those who received 7 to 8 points were considered to have a good understanding of AD. Figure 7-15 below illustrates that just over one-tenth of the respondents, 5 people (11.4%), had an insufficient understanding of AD, while an ample majority of respondents, 39 individuals (89%), had an average (16 individuals, 36.4%) or good (23 individuals, 52.2%) understanding of AD:

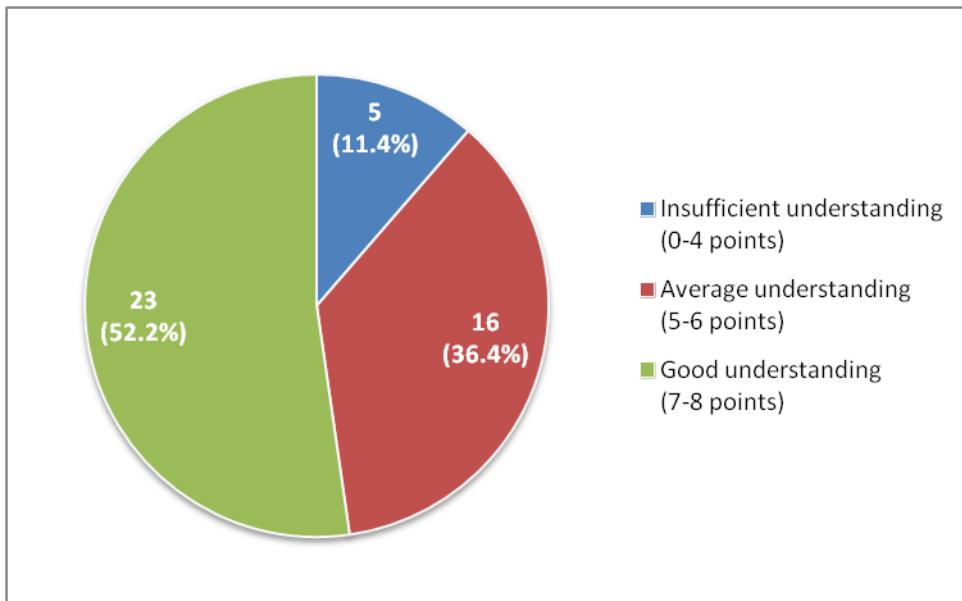


Figure 7-15: Degree of understanding of AD

7.3.1.2 Discussion on understanding of AD

Before conducting this research, all of the interviewees (100%) had heard of AD and all but two of them (95.5%) knew what it was (see Figure 7-13). Only four interviewees (9.1%) had not watched any audio described programmes; the rest of them (90.9%) had experience watching AD programmes (see Table 7-34). However, when they took the AD test, only 6 of them (13.6%) had a perfect score (8/8), while 17 (38.6%) received 7 out of 8 points (see Figure 7-14), which is considered to indicate a good understanding of AD. A total of 36.4% of the participants had an average understanding and just over 10% had an insufficient understanding of AD. This indicates that although the majority thought they knew what AD was, they might not have had a very clear idea of what it actually was, and some might have overestimated their degree of understanding. All of the respondents gave the correct answer, ‘True’, to Question 4.4, which stated that ‘AD tells you the place where a character is when scenes change with the use of expressions such as “In the bedroom” and “On the bus”’; and to Question 4.8, indicating that ‘AD tells you what a character is doing’. This shows that all of the participants understood the basic elements of AD.

Rather surprisingly, over a third of the respondents (38.6%) did not seem to know the differences between audio guides and AD as they thought that ‘Audio guides (mainly

provided in museums) and AD are exactly the same' (Question 4.2). Audio guides are informative in nature and they are most commonly used to provide background information for exhibits in museums – for example, they are often used to give the historical details about archaeological artefacts. Sometimes, commentaries on exhibits may also be available on audio guides. In contrast, AD is more descriptive in nature, and would include details about the appearance, colour and size of archaeological artefacts.

It is also telling that 54.5% of the respondents thought that 'AD tells you what the characters in a film/ TV programme are thinking' (Question 4.1), suggesting that the respondents might have different perceptions of AD or may have been exposed to different practices. Although many current guidelines have made it clear that audio describers should adhere to the objectivity principle and should not add their own opinions to the AD, it could be argued that this type of information is still not well rooted in the Hong Kong environment. Indeed, the French AD guidelines state that "The describer must not interpret the images but describe them" (Rai et al. 2010: 61), whilst the American AD guidelines specify that "Subjective or qualitative judgments or comment [...] constitute an interpretation on the part of the describer and are unnecessary and unwanted" (*ibid.*: 76). If describers tell AD users what the characters are thinking, it is likely that they are interpreting the visuals to a large extent. To avoid this type of practice, it would be beneficial to draft a set of guidelines that have the backing of some of the major stakeholders in the field and can thus help to regulate and homogenise the production of AD in Cantonese.

One finding was unexpected: 13 respondents (9.5%) gave the wrong answer to Question 4.4, as they thought that 'In a restaurant, reading aloud the food dishes from a menu is AD'. This situation is totally unrelated to the practice of AD unless the person who read the names of the dishes also described what they looked like.

7.3.1.3 Experience of AD and other related questions

Question 5 was included in the questionnaire in order to elicit the respondents' consumption of AD services. The participants were offered 10 services in the form of sub-questions as well as two extra, open sub-questions for AD services that were not

mentioned in the 10 sub-questions. The data in Table 7-36 indicate that 75% of the interviewees had been to the film showing sessions organised by the HKSBl and 63.6% had watched audio described films in cinemas. The two other most popular events that they had enjoyed with AD were outings/visits (59.1%) and theatre plays (59.1%). On the other scale of the spectrum, only one interviewee had watched films on the internet and TV dramas on DVD, whereas none of them had ever watched TV dramas online:

Q5. Yes, I have watched/been to...	No. of respondents (%)
Film showing sessions at the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSBl).	33 (75%)
Films in cinemas.	28 (63.6%)
Outings/Visits.	26 (59.1%)
Theatres.	26 (59.1%)
Films on DVD.	23 (52.3%)
Museums.	22 (50%)
Art exhibitions/galleries.	13 (29.5%)
Films on the internet.	1 (2.3%)
TV dramas on DVD.	1 (2.3%)
TV dramas on the internet.	0 (0%)

Table 7-36: Use of AD services

To further explore why they had taken part in the film screening activities organised by HKSBl, a follow up question was asked (Q6), to which only 28 interviewees responded, as they were the ones that had attended the film screening activities in cinemas organised by the HKSBl. They were offered five different options, from which they could choose as many as they wanted. Table 7-37 below summarises the participants' answers, their main reason for their attendance being 'because it provides audio description'; a response given by a substantial 89.3% of respondents. Their second choice, 'because I want to watch films with my friends', also scored highly, with 78.6%. Meanwhile, only 25% of the participants chose 'because there is a shuttle bus service to attend the event' as a reason:

Q6 – If you answered Yes to 5.2 above, why do you take part in the film screening activities in the cinema organised by HKSBC? (You can choose more than one option.)	No. of Respondents (%) (N = 28)
Because it provides audio description.	25 (89.3%)
Because I want to watch films with my friends.	22 (78.6%)
Because I want to watch films with my family.	13 (46.4%)
Because the ticket is sponsored.	13 (46.4%)
Because there is a shuttle bus service to attend the event.	7 (25%)

Table 7-37: Reasons for taking part in the film screening activities in cinemas organised by HKSBC

All 44 participants were then asked in Question 7 about the number of described films that they had watched so far. Figure 7-16 shows that just below one-fifth (8 individuals, 18.2%) of the respondents had not watched any audio described films at the HKSBC, while most of them (16 individuals, 36.4%) had watched one to five audio described films by the HKSBC and 7 participants (15.9%) had assisted to between 6 and 10 screenings. Only 13 interviewees (29.6%) had watched more than 10 audio described films (9 individuals) and more than 20 audio described films (4 individuals) at the HKSBC:

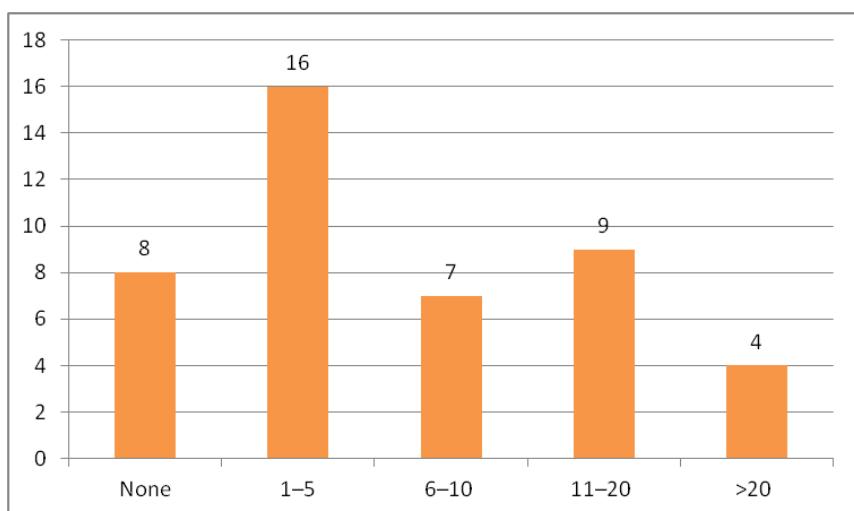


Figure 7-16: Number of audio described films the interviewees had seen so far at the HKSBC

In addition, the respondents were instructed to inform the researcher about the amount of time that they spent daily on watching TV/films, not necessarily with AD (Q8). A total of 43 participants answered this question. From the data contained in Figure 7-17, it is apparent that almost half of the respondents (20 people, 46.5%) spent less than one hour watching TV/films daily and another 16 respondents (37.2%) only spent between 1 and 2 hours per day on the same activity. Relatively few

respondents (7 individuals, 16.3%) spent more than two hours per day watching TV/films. One of the plausible reasons for this low exposure may be the limited offer of productions that have been audio described:

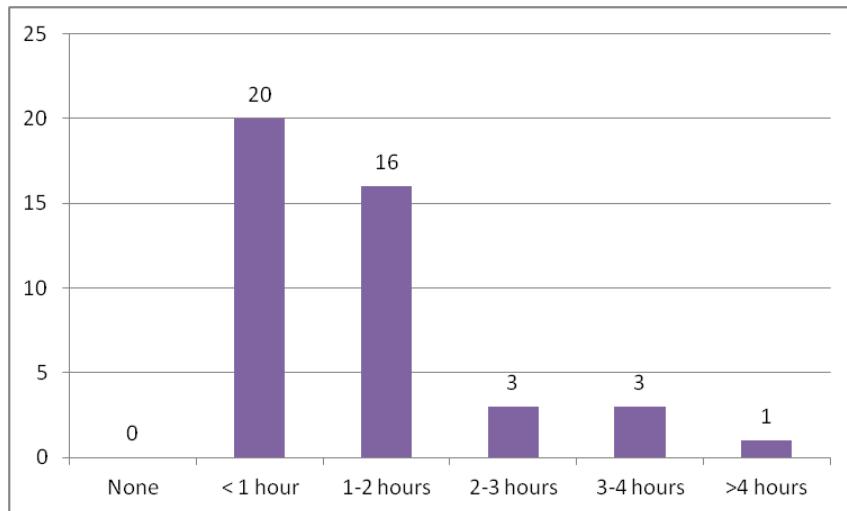


Figure 7-17: Number of hours the interviewees spent daily watching TV/films

In Question 9, the participants were given a list of six statements that described their visual ability when watching TV and were given the freedom to choose as many of the options as they thought applied to them. As illustrated in Table 7-38 below, a majority of 28 respondents (63.8%) claimed that they could not see anything at all, while only two respondents (4.5%) stated that they had no difficulty at all following what was being displayed on the screen:

Q9 – In regard to your eye condition, when watching TV: (choose all the options that apply to you)	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
I cannot see anything.	28 (63.8%)
I have difficulty seeing the picture on the TV screen.	12 (27.3%)
I have difficulty seeing text on the TV screen.	12 (27.3%)
I have difficulty seeing image details on the TV screen.	10 (22.7%)
I am only able to see the light coming off the TV screen.	7 (15.9%)
I don't have any difficulty following what is happening on the screen.	2 (4.5%)

Table 7-38: Your vision when watching TV

To elucidate their habits when watching programmes and films on TV, the participants were given a list of six items that provided different means to assist them in watching programmes and films on TV (Q10). They were given the option to

choose as many of the statements as they felt reflected their own circumstances. As shown in Table 7-39 below, the vast majority of the respondents (43 individuals, 97.7%) seemed to resign themselves to only try to pick up as much as they could from the sound of the film or programme when there was no AD, which comes to show that AD is an important service for them as a tool to obtain more information. Interestingly, none of the respondents wore special stronger glasses or used a magnifier when watching the television, whereas 40.9% asked friends and relatives to explain things to them and 34.1% got literally closer to the screen to be able to appreciate some of the details:

Q10 – How do you watch programmes and films on TV? (choose all the options that apply to you)	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
I just try to pick up as much as I can from the sound of the film or programme when there is no AD.	43 (97.7%)
I ask someone to assist me by explaining what happens on the screen.	18 (40.9%)
I watch the programmes with AD.	17 (38.6%)
I get closer to the TV screen.	15 (34.1%)
I wear special stronger glasses.	0 (0%)
I use a magnifier.	0 (0%)

Table 7-39: How do you watch programmes and films on TV?

The last question of Stage 1, Question 11, focused on the participants' main sources of information to find out about services suitable to them. The results shown in Table 7-40 indicate that the principal source of information that most visually impaired resort to, in order to find out about products and services specially designed for them, are their associations. The '24-hour tele-digital library for the visually impaired hotlines run by the Hong Kong Society for the Blind' ranked top and was chosen by a large majority of 86.4% of the respondents, followed by 'other organisations for people with disabilities like the Hong Kong Blind Union', with 63.8% of the replies. Rather tellingly, only 25% claimed to obtain information from 'the internet' and 47.7% of them obtained information from 'press, radio and TV':

Q11 – What are your sources of information to find out about products and services specially designed for the visually impaired? (You can choose <u>more than one</u> option.)	No. of respondents (%) (N = 44)
24-hour tele-digital library for the visually impaired hotlines run by the Hong Kong Society for the Blind.	38 (86.4%)
Other organisations for people with disabilities, like the Hong Kong Blind Union.	28 (63.8%)
Family and friends.	22 (50%)
Press, radio and TV.	21 (47.7%)
The internet.	11 (25%)

Table 7-40: Source of information regarding products and services for the visually impaired

The information gleaned from this question is a rather important finding because all of these media – i.e. press, radio, TV and, especially, the internet – are very common and extremely popular among the sighted population. The fact that the visually impaired do not seem to be making the most of them raises issues about the need for finding ways to better utilise these social media channels to improve the flow of information about products and services that are specially designed for the visually impaired. In addition, given that all participants owned a mobile, it would be interesting to look into the development of an easy-to-use application that could contain this type of information.

7.3.2 Stage 2: Projection of Clips and Questionnaire Proper

The results from the AD reception study, in which various short video clips with AD were used as stimulus, are discussed in this section. Twenty-two participants formed part of each of the two groups – Group 1 (which watched Clip A1) and Group 2 (which watched Clip A2) – and the results are shown in the same figures for ease of comparison. Some of the questions that tested the participants' comprehension of the various clips were open-ended, and the correctness rates are also presented in the following pages. The clips and audio description scripts can be found in Appendices I, J, K and L (a DVD), respectively.

7.3.2.1 *Naming the characters*

Clip A1 provides a general description of the characters – for example, ‘a 9-year-old boy’ and ‘a man’ –, while Clip A2 provides more details about the characters – e.g. ‘Son Ah-Boy’ and ‘Father Ah Shing’. The first question posed to the respondents

after having been exposed to Clips A1 and A2, each with a different AD, was whether they knew who the boy on the bike was, for which the correct answer was ‘Ah-Boy’ or ‘the son’. Figure 7-18 contains the answers obtained, showing that Group 2 performed much better than Group 1:

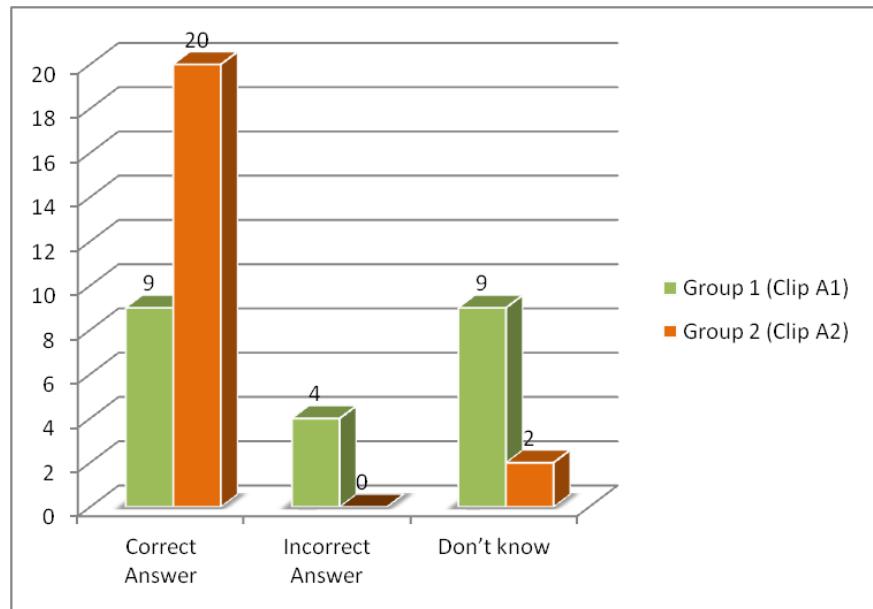


Figure 7-18: Q1 – Who is the boy on the bike?

The nine respondents of Group 1 that gave the correct answer (all of them could name the boy) might have received some help from the AD in which ‘the boy’ was used as the subject of the sentences to describe his actions throughout the clip. These respondents managed to follow the story plot closely and provided the correct answer when later in the same clip the mother of the boy called him ‘Ah Boy’ and starting from then on, the boy was named. The rest of Group 1 either did not have any clue who the 9-year-old boy was, or they gave ‘a 9-year-old boy’ as the answer which was regarded as incorrect in this case.

In the second question about this clip, the participants were asked who the man on the bike was; for which the correct answer was ‘the father’. Figure 7-19 shows the results to this query, in which yet again Group 2 outperformed Group 1:

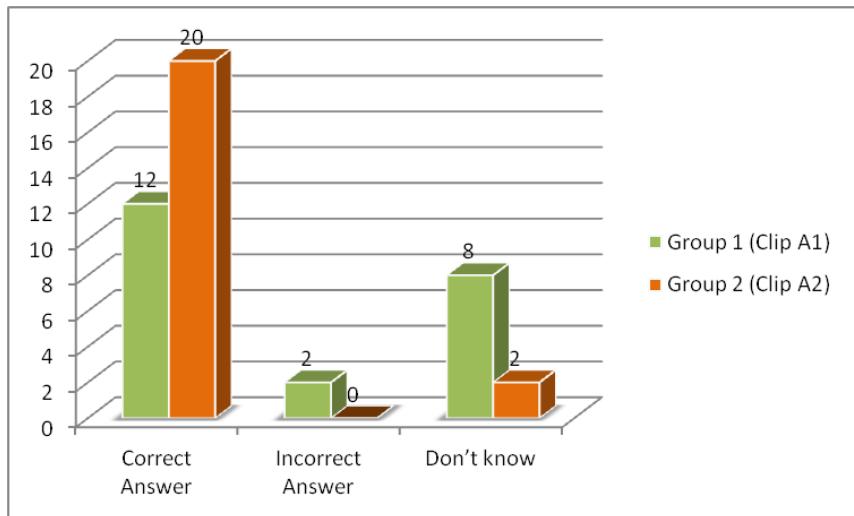


Figure 7-19: Who is the man on the bike?

The next question, Q3, queried what the relationship between the boy and the old man was, with the correct answer being ‘son and father’. On this occasion, the results of the correct and incorrect answers are much more similar between the two groups, as presented in Figure 7-20:

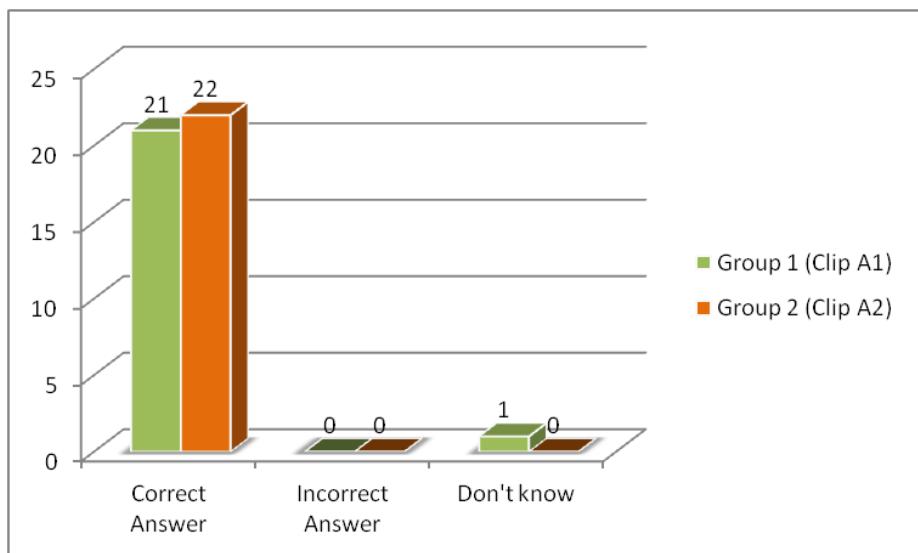


Figure 7-20: What is their relationship?

According to Figures 7-18 and 7-19 above, a large majority of the participants (20) from Group 2, who had watched the clip with the more detailed AD, were able to answer these two questions, Q1 and Q2, correctly. However, of those who watched Clip A1, which contained a less detailed AD, nine of the 22 participants had no idea who the boy was and eight of the 22 participants did not know who the man was

either. Interestingly, though, based on the data shown in Figure 7-20 above, no matter whether the respondents were from Group 1 or Group 2, almost all of them were able to tell that the man and the boy were father and son. A possible explanation is that the participants who could get the correct answer presumed their relationship by experience or by common sense. Another possible explanation is that one of the descriptions read: ‘The boy holds a hand-held windmill in one hand and his other hand holds the man tightly’ which gave a clue to the participants.

The participants were then asked, in Q4, whether in their opinion the characters should be named as soon as they appeared on screen or only when they were being named in the film. As can be seen from Figure 7-21 below, nearly two-thirds of the respondents from both groups (28 individuals in total, 63.6%) preferred that the characters be named as soon as they appear on screen. Over one-fifth of them, i.e. 10 individuals in total representing 22.7%, preferred that the characters be named when they are actually named in the film, and for six respondents (13.6%) this was not an issue:

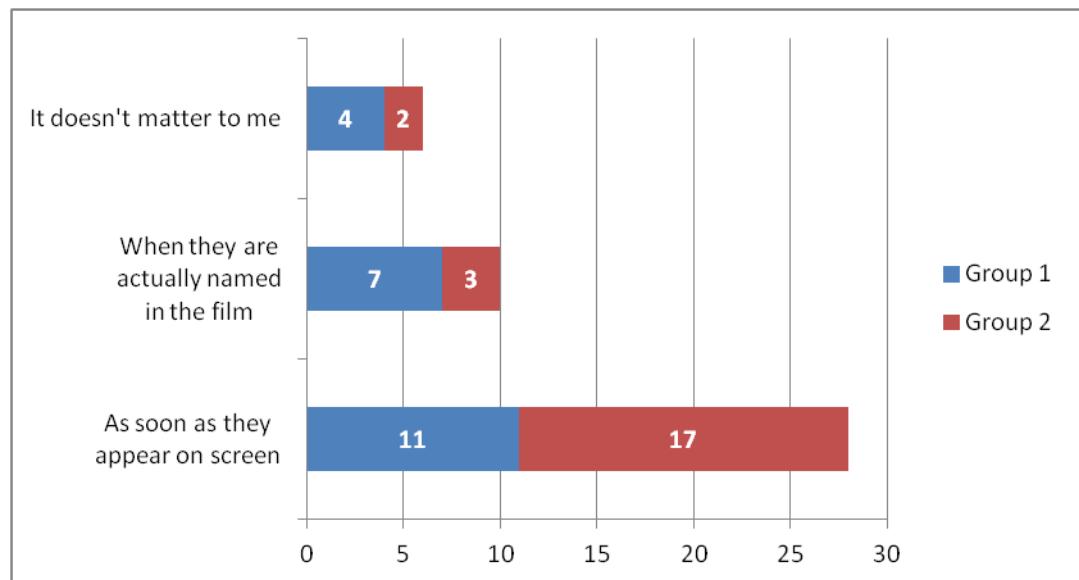


Figure 7-21: Naming the characters

After answering Question 4, all the respondents listened to the audio files of the descriptions of Clip A1 and Clip A2, and were asked to choose whether, in general, they would prefer a more or less detailed description (Q5). Figure 7-22 shows that a staggering 83.7% of all the respondents from both groups (i.e. 36 people) preferred

the more detailed AD included in Clip A2, with only 7 individuals (16.3%) opting for Clip A1:

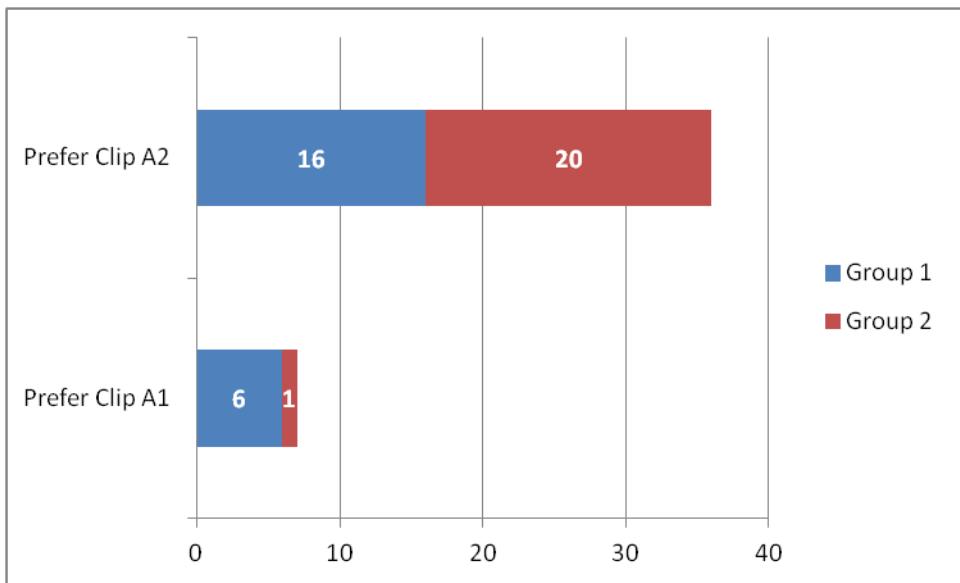


Figure 7-22: Clip A: Which audio description do you prefer?

Question 6 is open-ended and the answer to this question will be used in the section 7.3.3.8, which provides suggestions for the production of Chinese AD guidelines.

7.3.2.2 *Describing sound effects*

Clip A was also used to test when to describe the sound effect when the bicycle suddenly overturns. Clip A1 provides the description after the sound effect, whereas Clip A2 offers it before the actual sound. Both clips were played to the two groups of respondents, and they were asked to decide whether Clip A1 or Clip A2 provided, in their opinion, a better timing in the description of the sound effect about the crash (Q7a). As shown in Figure 7-23 below, more than two thirds of all the respondents (30 people in total, 71.4%) were in favour of the AD presented in Clip A2, in which the sound effect is described before it actually happens, whilst two participants (4.8%) had no preference between the two clips and 10 of them (23.8%) opted for Clip A1:

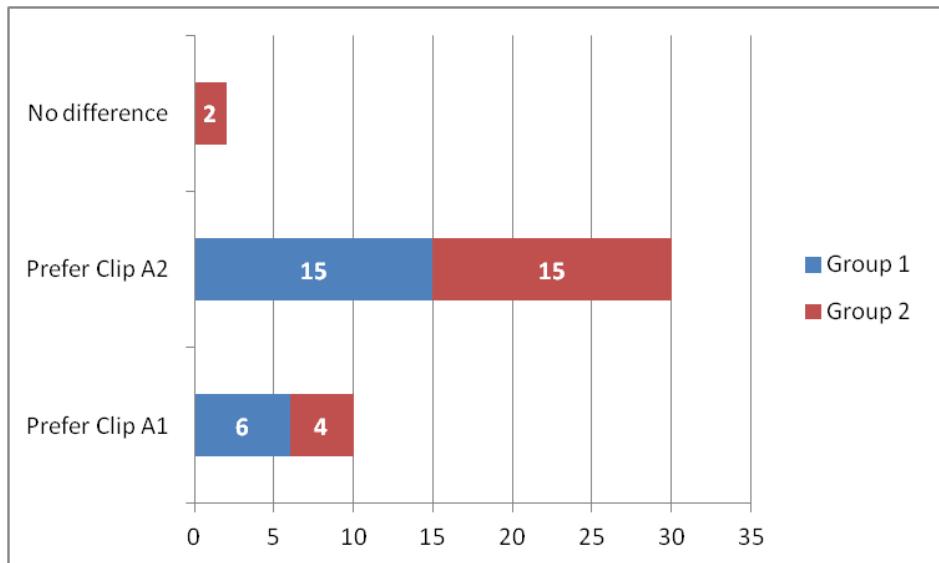


Figure 7-23: When to describe the sound effect?

A follow-up question was asked, Q7b, to further explore the respondents' preferences for either Clip A1 or Clip A2. It was phrased as follows: 'The timing of describing the sound of the bicycle suddenly overturning is perfect. To what extent do you agree with this statement?'

Figure 7-24 presents the data on the extent to which the participants approved of the timing of the description in their chosen clip. For Clip A1, three out of the 10 participants who preferred this clip strongly agreed that the description after the sound effect was perfect, whilst six of them simply agreed and the remaining person was neutral. As for Clip A2, the answers were more heterogeneous: 11 of the 30 participants who had opted for this clip strongly agreed that the description before the sound effect was perfect, and 15 agreed with the same statement; whilst 3 people were neutral and one seemed to have changed his/her mind by showing his/her disagreement with the statement:

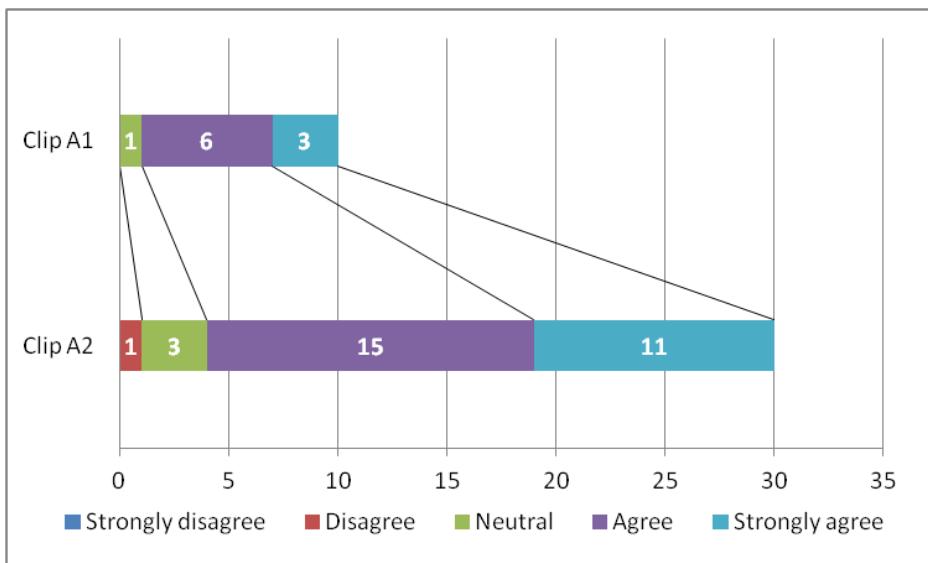


Figure 7-24: Timing of describing the sound of bicycle suddenly overturned

The last question, Q8, regarding Clip A aimed to check whether the respondents had watched the film *After This Our Exile* before. Figure 7-25 below shows that the majority of the respondents in the two groups (36 individuals in total, 81.8%) had not seen the film before the research was conducted, whilst 8 people (18.2%) had already seen it:

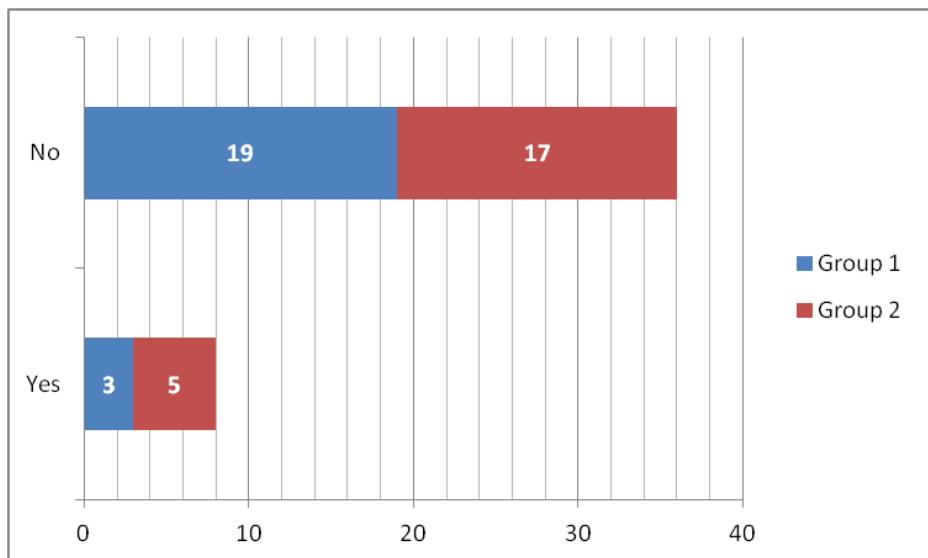


Figure 7-25: Have you seen the film *After This Our Exile* before?

7.3.2.3 How detailed should AD be?

The results of watching Clip B1 and Clip B2 are provided in the following diagrams. As already mentioned (see section 6.2.2.2), Clip B1 comes accompanied with a detailed AD in which filmic language is used (e.g. ‘the camera moves up to show...’), while Clip B2 does not include any filmic language and deliberately avoids the mentioning of details about the scene. After watching their respective assigned clip once, the two groups of participants then listened to the alternate version of the clip. After all this viewing, they were asked to choose which one of the two ADs they preferred by means of opining on two different excerpts from the AD script. In Q9.1, participants were given the following two descriptions, extracted from Clip B1 and Clip B2, and asked to select their favourite one:

From Clip B1	From Clip B2
Angel in a peachpuff silk bathrobe	Angel in a bathrobe

Figure 7-26 shows the results of this choice between the two descriptions, in which it is obvious that the vast majority of the participants in the two groups (41 individuals altogether, 93.2%) preferred the description presented in Clip B1, with only three respondents (6.8%) opting for Clip B2:

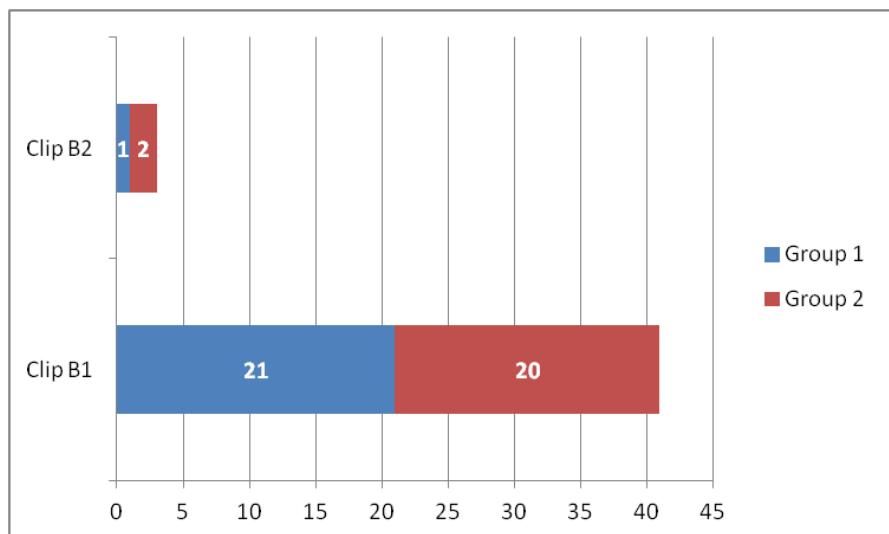


Figure 7-26: Clip B: Which description do you prefer? (Q9.1)

In Q9.2, participants were also asked to choose between two descriptions of the same event, extracted from Clips B1 and B2:

From Clip B1	From Clip B2
Wong Sir pulls off Angel's bathrobe. Her fair skin shows.	Wong Sir pulls off Angel's bathrobe.

Figure 7-27 below illustrates the answers provided by the 44 participants, which are very similar to the findings indicated in Figure 7-26. Indeed, an even larger majority of respondents in the two groups (42 individuals, 95.5%) opted for the description offered in Clip B1, whilst only 2 interviewees (4.5%) preferred the description offered in Clip B2:

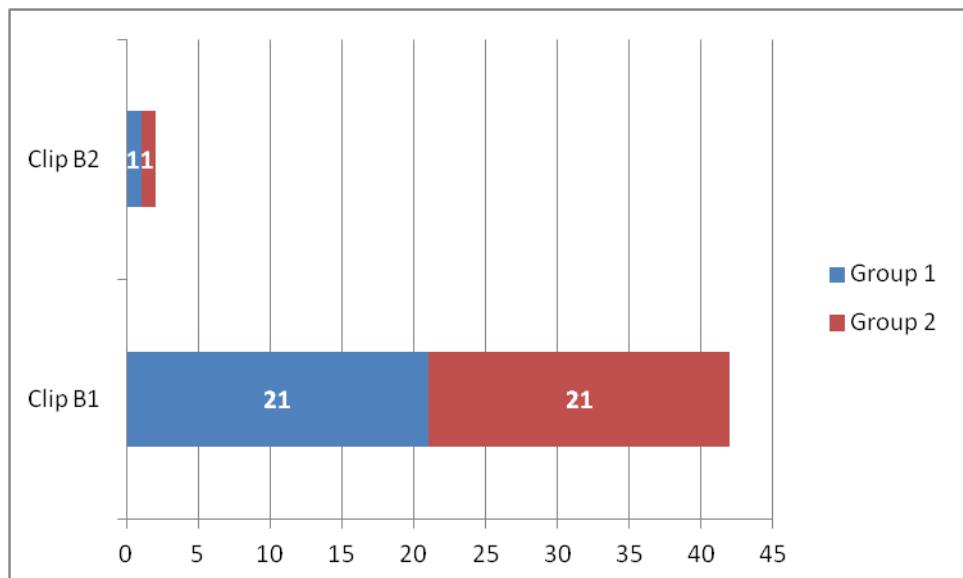


Figure 7-27: Clip B: Which description do you prefer? (Q9.2)

All in all, most participants clearly showed a distinct preference for more detailed descriptions, such as those providing the colour (peachpuff) and material (silk) of the bathrobe and the skin complexion (fair) of the female character; a finding that should be borne in mind when producing future ADs.

Question 10 is open-ended and the answer to this question is discussed in session 7.4.3.8.

7.3.2.4 The use of filmic terms

The other tested item in Q11 related to another controversial issue in the production of AD: the use of filmic language in the AD script. The respondents in Group 1, who watched Clip B1, were asked whether they had noticed the use of any filmic terms in the description (Q11). Group 2, however, could not be asked the same question because no filmic terms had been used in the AD of Clip B2. As Figure 7-28 below shows, the majority of the respondents (17 people, 77.3%) did not notice the use of filmic terms in the clip, whilst only five of the 22 participants (22.7%) had observed some filmic language in their assigned clip. Nonetheless, of these five participants only one (N43) could actually remember an example ('The camera pans to') of one of the expressions that had been used:

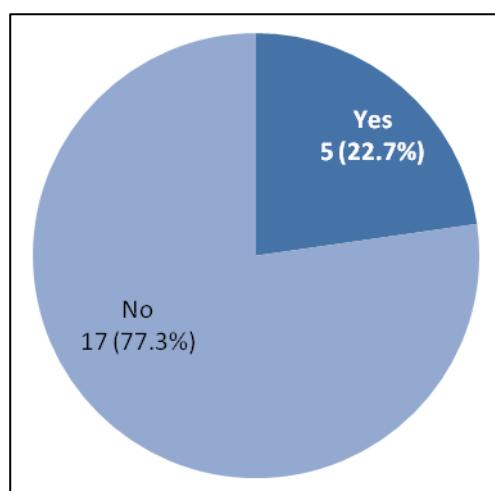


Figure 7-28: Noticed the use of any filmic terms in Clip B1 (Group 1 only)

Both groups of respondents were then asked, Q12, whether they thought some filmic language should be included in the narrative of the AD: 'Do you think AD should include filmic language, such as the movement of the camera (e.g. 'The camera moves up to show her feet to her face'; 'Close up'; 'The camera pans to a close-up of a pinhole camera')?'.

From Figure 7-29 below, it can be appreciated that the large majority of the respondents (37 people, 84.1%) were positive about filmic terms and expressions being used in the composition of ADs. Two respondents (2.45%) had no preference and only five participants (11.4%) were against this linguistic usage:

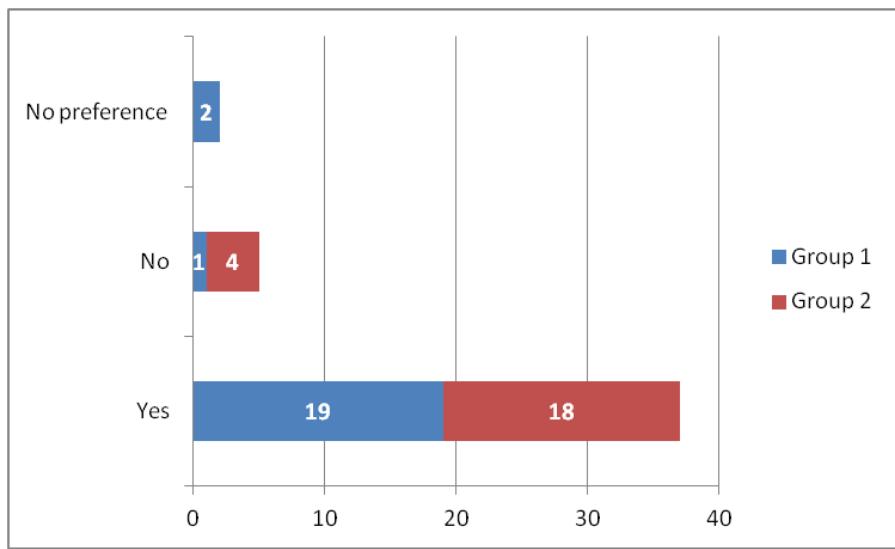


Figure 7-29: Preference regarding the use of filmic language in AD

In Question 13, the respondents were asked to state how easy it was for them to visualise the actual descriptions when filmic terms were being used. As can be seen from Figure 7-30, 36 of them (81.8%) found it easy. Two respondents (4.5%) claimed that they were able to visualise the descriptions but had some difficulty to do so, and only just over one-tenth of them (five people, 11.4%) could not visualise the descriptions at all. One person (2.3%) felt unable to provide an opinion for this question:

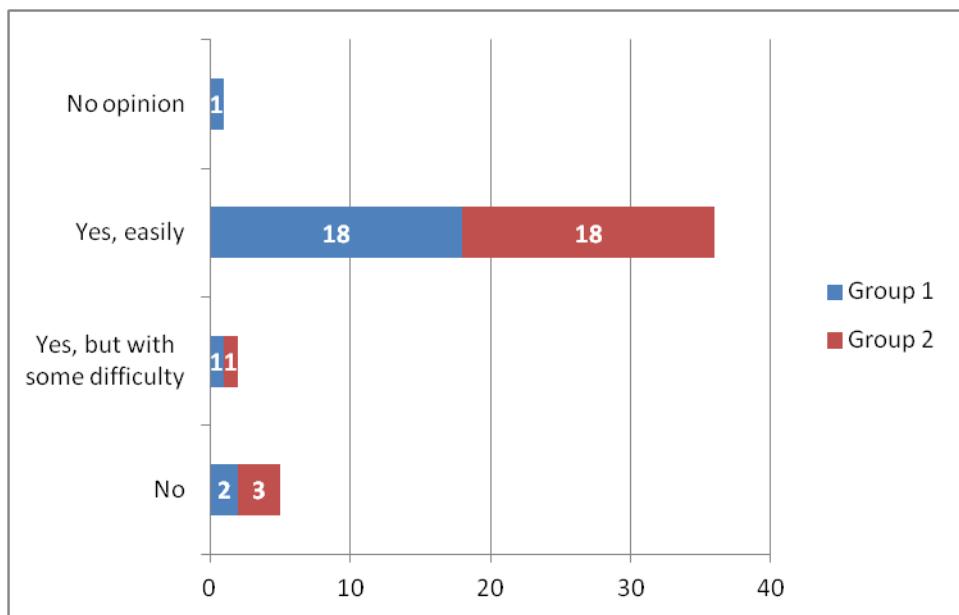


Figure 7-30: Visualising descriptions with the help of filmic terms

7.3.2.5 Discussion on the use of filmic language in AD

The ITC (2000: 6) Guidance on Standards for AD suggests that “it is important to try to understand why a director has chosen to film a sequence in a particular way and to describe it in terms which will be understood by the majority” of blind and partially sighted people. Fryer and Freeman (2013: 414) pointed out that this guidance assumes that “‘the majority’ do not understand cinematic terms”. However, “most potential users of audio description will have some sight, or will have had sight at some stage” (Ofcom 2015: 20, A4.23). Many blind and partially sighted people lose their sight because of ageing, illness or accidents later in life. In other words, “the majority of AD users have access to visual memory” (Fryer and Freeman 2013: 413). Hence, there is a good chance that the majority may have watched films and observed camerawork and editing before they lost their sight; thus, it is likely that they will be able to associate cinematic terms with related camerawork and editing. Piety (2004: 454) states that, “The language that consumers of audio description use in daily life is [...] shaped by the sighted world” because blind and partially sighted people “are the members of speech communities that are made up mostly of people without significant visual impairments”. Thus, blind and partially sighted people may also understand cinematic terms. In fact, the addressees (visually impaired audience) and the addressor (audio describer) in AD should be sharing the same general knowledge of visual properties in films. This is supported by studies on children who were blind at birth, and could use visual language appropriately (Warren 1994; Wyver *et al.* 2000). This is also advocated by Piety (2004: 466), who found that no matter whether they were born blind or became blind afterwards, they “are members of the same speech communities as are sighted persons”. In other words, the “consumers of audio descriptions will have used visually based word meanings in conversations with sighted interlocutors and hence should require little or no special language consideration” (*ibid.*).

In this research, only Group 1 was assigned to watch an experimental audio described clip with the use of filmic language (Clip B1), but 17 out of 22 respondents (77.3%) were not aware of the use of filmic terms (Figure 7-28 above). Of the five respondents (22.7%) that noticed the filmic terms, only one (N43) was able to

mention a filmic term that was used in the clip, i.e. ‘the camera pans to’. This indicates that the use of filmic terms may be subtle to AD users.

Group 2 watched an experimental audio described clip without the use of filmic language (Clip B2) and then watched the alternate clip (Clip B1) that used filmic language, to elicit their AD preference. Afterwards, all of the respondents from Groups 1 and 2 were asked to state their AD style preference: 37 of the 44 visually impaired respondents (84.1%) were in favour of including filmic language in the AD script, whilst five of them (11.4%) showed a preference for standard AD and only two people (4.5%) declared themselves neutral. Figure 7-31 below shows their AD style preference according to their sight characteristics:

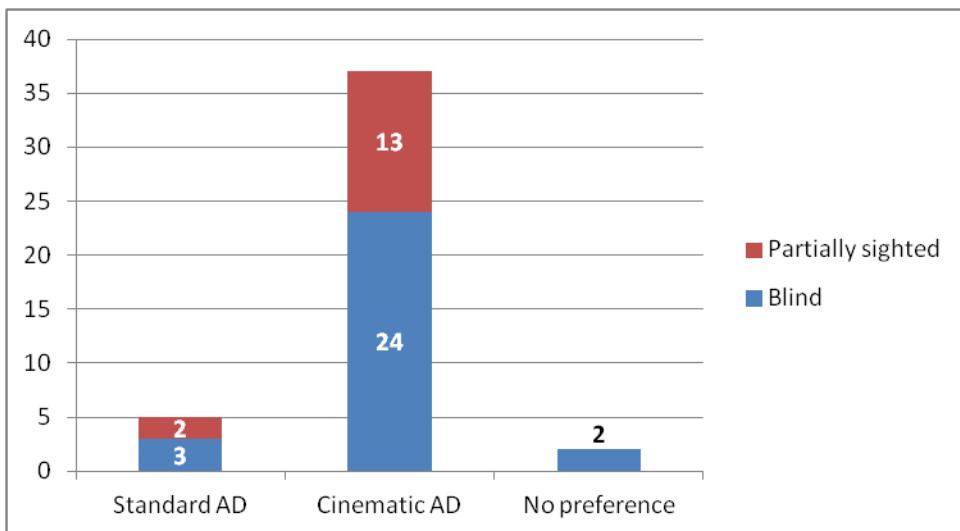


Figure 7-31: AD style preference according to sight characteristics

The above findings are similar to those of Fryer and Freeman (2012: 17), who, in their experiment with 36 participants (18 blind and 18 partially sighted), discovered that 24 out of the 36 (66.7%) preferred cinematic AD, against 12 of them (33.3%), who were more inclined to standard AD, as illustrated in Figure 7-32 below:

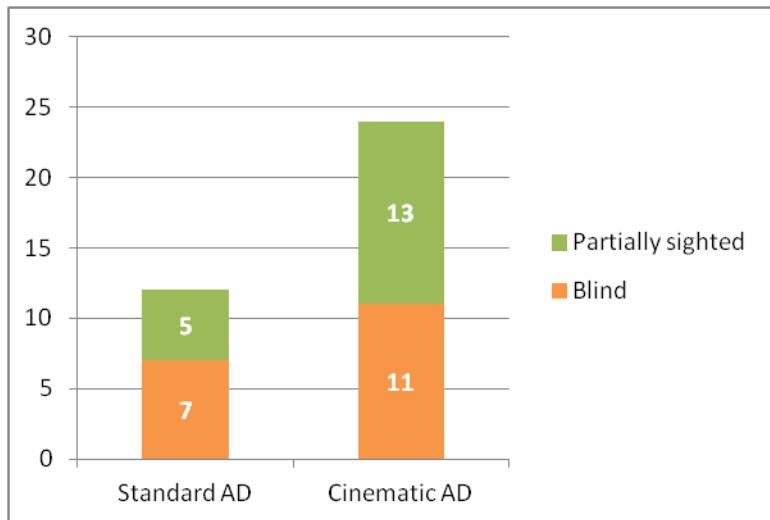


Figure 7-32: AD style preference according to sight characteristics (Fryer and Freeman 2012: 17)

When we take a closer look at the AD style preference of those congenitally blind (i.e. blind at birth),¹⁶ five out of seven participants, who were born blind in this study, thought that AD should include filmic language. Remarkably, the results are completely opposite to those encountered by Fryer and Freeman (2013), who presented their results separately in a later article. They stated that five out of six participants (83%) with congenital blindness preferred the standard AD style (*ibid.*: 418). Two male, congenital blind participants volunteered the reason for their choice. One found filmic terms, such as “Dissolve to Milford”, very technical, and another found describing camera angles “too clinical” (*ibid.*: 421). Further research should be conducted in order to explore such a difference between the two different pools of participants. Open ended questions should be asked to elicit why the participants who were blind from birth in Hong Kong prefer the use of filmic language in AD.

In this research, to further examine the effectiveness of the use of filmic terms in AD, all 44 respondents were asked to state how easy it was for them to visualise the descriptions when filmic terms were used. Most of them, i.e. 36 out of the total 44 (81.8%), found it easy, foregrounding the fact that the use of filmic terms was effective in this case. Given that the majority of AD users may understand filmic language, it might be advisable that guidelines, such as the ones proposed by the British Ofcom (2015: 21, A4.29), entitled *Code on Television Access Services*, be

¹⁶ In this research, the congenitally blind are only those blind at birth. Some authors prefer to consider the age at onset from birth to 5 years as congenitally blind.

revisited so that they can reconsider statements like the following one: “‘filmic’ terms such as camera angles should not be used”.

7.3.2.6 *Naming characters in group scenes*

The last few questions were related to Clip C, in which a group scene was depicted. Clip C1 had no AD so as not to interrupt the natural flow of the group scene, while in Clip C2, all the characters were introduced before uttering their lines.

First, the participants had to identify how many characters were speaking in the clip (Q14). The question was open-ended, and the correct answer was ‘five characters’. Figure 7-33 below shows that the 44 participants provided a wide variety of responses ranging from ‘two’ to the correct figure of ‘five’:

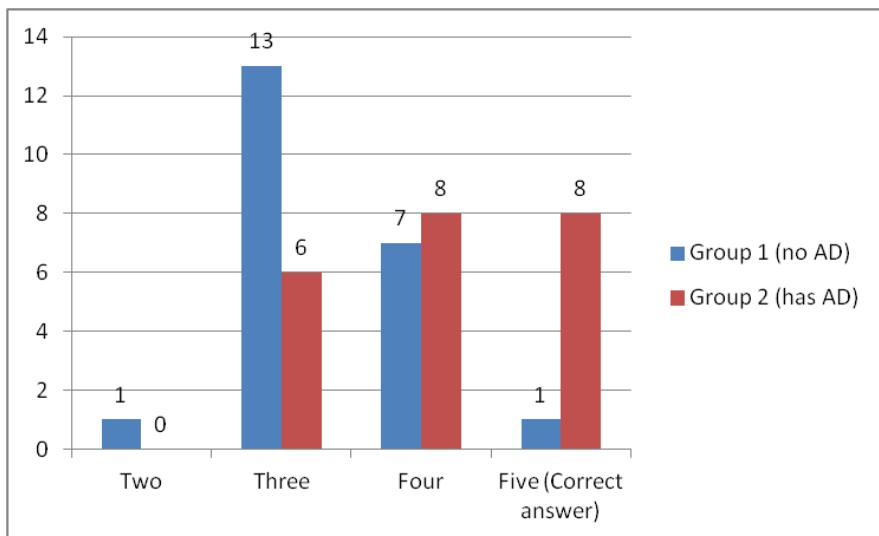


Figure 7-33: How many characters speak in the clip?

As mentioned before, participants in Group 1 listened to the clip without any interruption of AD and the majority of them thought that there were ‘three’ (13 individuals, 59.1%) and ‘four’ (7 people, 31.8%) characters in the scene, and only one participant (4.5%) was able to give the correct number. Rather surprisingly, one participant (4.5%) thought that there were only two characters talking in the scene. In contrast, respondents from Group 2 had a much better understanding of the dynamics in the clip thanks to the fact that the AD had been used to introduce the name of the characters before they spoke. Hence, 36.4% of the participants (i.e. eight

participants) gave the correct number, another eight thought the number of characters on screen was four, whilst six people (27.3%) believed there were three characters. No one in this group thought that there were only two characters:

The questionnaire progressed to Q15, an open-ended question in which participants were asked to identify how many characters were actually male. In fact, four out of the five characters were men. The performance on this question was similar to that on the previous Q14, as shown in Figure 7-33. According to the results offered in Figure 7-34 below, Group 1 did not perform well. Only one participant (4.5%) gave the correct answer, while the rest of participants got it wrong and 12 of them (54.5%) thought that there were only two male characters, seven participants (31.8%) mentioned three men in the scene and two respondents (9.1%) indicated to have recognised only one male character. Group 2, on the other hand, had a better performance overall as 31.8% of participants (i.e. seven people) were correct. Nonetheless, eight people (36.4%) thought the correct number was three men, six participants (27.3%) went for two male characters on screen and only one respondent (4.5%) thought to have heard only one man:

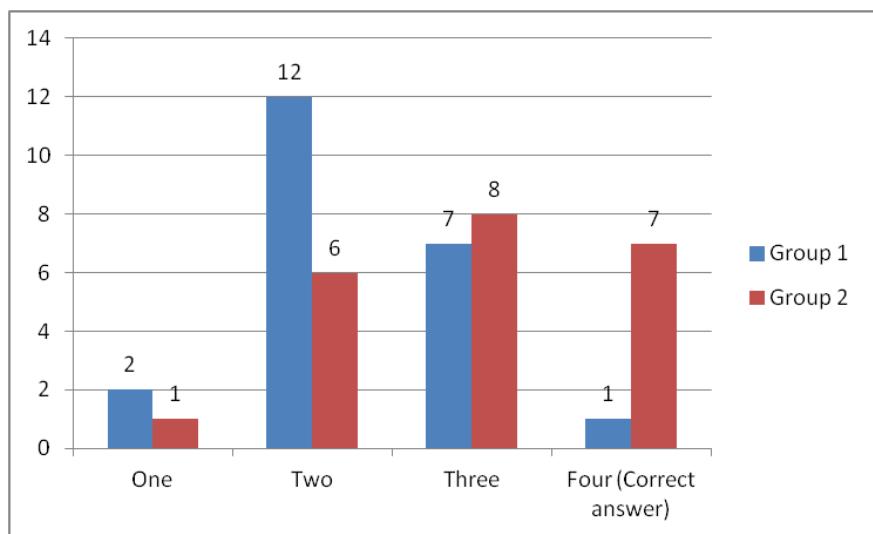


Figure 7-34: How many characters are male?

The penultimate question, Q16, measured the participants' preferences for introducing the characters' names in a group scene, and asked them the following: 'Do you prefer it when the names of the characters are introduced in a group scene before they speak?'. As can be seen in Figure 7-35 below, almost 90% of the

participants from both groups (a total of 39 people) preferred naming the characters before they spoke, versus a minority of only five people (11.4%), who were happier with no introductions:

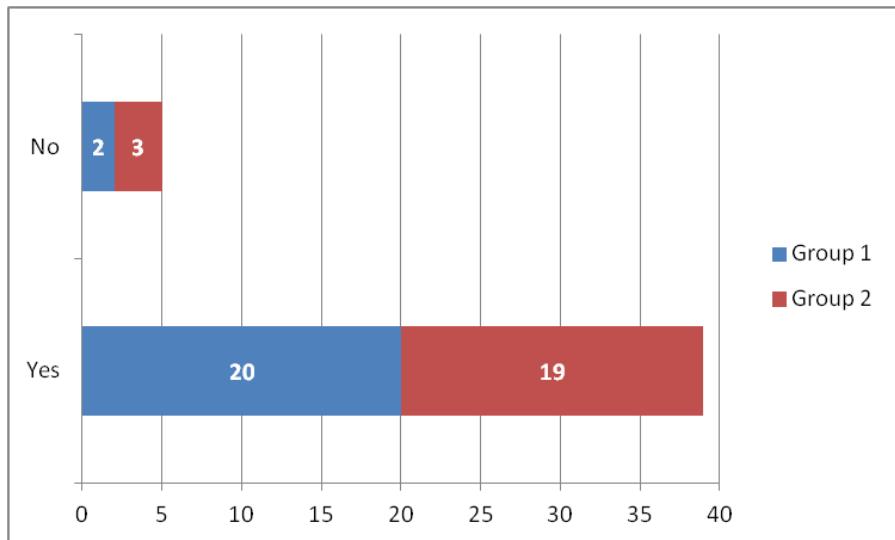


Figure 7-35: Preference for naming the characters in a group scene

Question 17 focused on Clips B and C and asked the participants if they had watched the film *Z Storm* before. As illustrated in Figure 7-36 below the vast majority of the 44 respondents (38 people, 86.4%) had not watched the film *Z Storm* before the research was conducted:

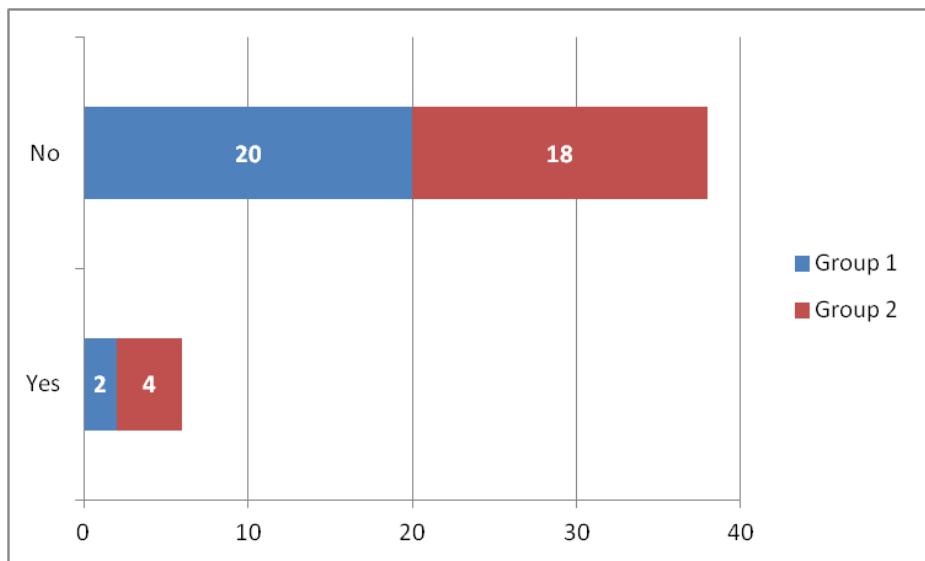


Figure 7-36: Have you seen the film *Z Storm* before?

7.3.3 Stage 3: Post-questionnaire

Further results about AD preferences are presented in this section. A question, Q1, enquiring about their preferences as to the audio describer's voice being feminine or masculine was asked. Table 7-41 below shows that more than half of the 44 interviewees (22 individuals, 54.5%) had no strong preference about whether the description was read by a man or a woman. A total of 12 people (27.3%) stated that it depended on the nature of the film/programme, whilst the rest of the respondents did have a more marked preference that gave a slight margin of predominance to the female voice:

Q1 - I prefer when the audio description is read by:	No. of respondents (%) (N=44)
It doesn't matter to me.	24 (54.5%)
Depends on the film/ programme.	12 (27.3%)
A woman.	6 (13.6%)
A man.	1 (2.3%)
A man and a woman.	1 (2.3%)

Table 7-41: Preference concerning the audio describer's voice

The participants were then asked about their preferences for live and pre-recorded AD in Question 2, and they had the choice of selecting more than one option. As shown in Table 7-42, pre-recorded AD (e.g. the one found on DVDs or used in this experiment) was ranked highest by the respondents, with 27 of them (61.4%) choosing it. An equally substantial number of respondents preferred live AD, whether closed via headset (25 individuals, 56.8%) or open via loud speakers (22 people, 50%); while only 15 respondents (34.1%) preferred pre-recorded AD via headset, whereby they could hear both the AD and film soundtracks:

Q2 – I prefer: (You can choose more than one option.)	No. of respondents (%) (N=44)
Pre-recorded AD (e.g. on DVD/in this experiment).	27 (61.4%)
Live AD via headset (e.g. situation in theatre).	25 (56.8%)
Live AD via loud speakers (e.g. situation in film showing session at HKSBN).	22 (50%)
Pre-recorded AD via headset, i.e. you will hear both the AD sound track and the film sound track via headset.	15 (34.1%)
All of the above.	2 (4.5%)
No strong preference	2 (4.5%)

Table 7-42: Preference of live or pre-recorded AD

Based on these findings, it is proposed that the production of pre-recorded AD be the main priority when providing AD services. The differences between live AD and pre-recorded AD have already been discussed in section 2.5, focused on the various types of AD.

7.3.3.1 Use of evaluative and emotive adjectives vs. objective descriptions

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this research comes from the participants' feedback for Question 3, in which they were asked to decide which description they prefer. There are in total six sets of descriptions provided to them. Table 7-43 below shows the respondents' preferences when exposed to the use of evaluative and emotive adjectives:

	Description	No. of respondents who prefer... (%) (N=44)
Comparison One	attractive singer	14 (31.8%)
	long-legged singer in a miniskirt	30 (68.2%)
Comparison Two	beautiful woman	7 (15.9%)
	woman with big eyes, a strong nose and a small mouth	37 (84.1%)
Comparison Three	Her eyes and mouth wide open.	18 (40.9%)
	She looks frightened .	26 (59.1%)
Comparison Four	His lips curl and eyes protrude.	16 (36.4%)
	He is angry .	28 (63.6%)

Table 7-43: Which description do you prefer?

According to Comparison One and Comparison Two, when describing physical appearance, most of the respondents preferred objective descriptions, such as 'long-legged singer in a miniskirt' (30 individuals, 68.2%) and 'woman with big eyes, a strong nose and a small mouth' (37 individuals, 84.1%), to the use of evaluative adjectives that added a more subjective slant to the script: 'attractive singer' was chosen by 14 people (31.8%) and 'beautiful woman' by only 7 participants (15.9%).

However, the results from Comparison Three and Comparison Four show that the respondents preferred the use of moving and poignant adjectives to describe emotions. Thus, they rated expressions like 'She looks frightened' (26 people, 59.1%)

and ‘He is angry’ (28 people, 63.6%) much higher than descriptions that only commented on the facial expressions of the characters, such as ‘Her eyes and mouth wide open’, which was preferred by 18 people (40.9%), or ‘His lips curl and eyes protrude’, which gained the support of only 16 people (36.4%).

The study also provided the participants with two more descriptions of the same emotions, in which they were offered three options, from which they had to choose their preferred one, as illustrated in Table 7-44:

	Description	No. of respondents who prefer... (%) (N=44)
Comparison Five	He frowns.	3 (6.8%)
	He feels strange.	4 (9.1%)
	He frowns, feeling strange.	37 (84.1%)
Comparison Six	She shrugs.	3 (6.8%)
	She is helpless.	5 (11.4%)
	She shrugs, a bit helpless.	36 (81.8%)

Table 7-44: Which description do you prefer?

Both queries, Comparison Five and Comparison Six, focused on the description of facial expressions/gestures and offer participants three different versions rather than two as had been done in the rest of queries. The first option remains on the descriptive level (‘He frowns’ and ‘She shrugs’), while the second option resorts to the use of emotive adjectives in the description (‘He feels strange’ and ‘She is helpless’) and the third and final description is a combination of the two previous ones (‘He frowns, feeling strange’ and ‘She shrugs, a bit helpless’).

As shown by the results compiled in Table 7-44 above, the third option was the favourite of most of the respondents and more than 81% of them, in both cases, preferred having emotive adjectives combined with descriptions of facial expressions/gestures in the AD. Given this finding, it will be easy to recommend that combined descriptions be used in the production of AD scripts, though such an approach may not always be feasible because of time restrictions. Indeed, describers should bear in mind the predilection of the audience but, since the gaps for inserting AD during film/TV programmes are limited, professionals will have to determine whether the third style of describing emotions is viable on a case by case basis.

7.3.3.2 Discussion on the use of evaluative and emotive adjectives in AD

As displayed in Table 7-43, the majority of the respondents preferred a more objective approach when describing appearance, that is ‘long-legged singer in a miniskirt’ (68.2%) and ‘woman with big eyes, a strong nose and a small mouth’ (84.1%), instead of using evaluative adjectives (e.g. ‘*attractive* singer’ and ‘*beautiful* woman’), which are deemed to be more subjective. This finding is in sharp contrast to that of the pilot study carried out by Chmiel and Mazur (2012) as part of the AD-Verba research project, in which it was revealed that 71% of respondents were in favour of the use of evaluative adjectives (e.g. *beautiful*, *awful*, *ugly*) in AD. Their study also asked participants further questions in an attempt to test which phrases they considered to be subjective or objective. They found that most respondents found ‘*sexy* brunettes’ subjective but ‘*attractive* singer’ and ‘*smart* clothes’ objective. These results were considered inconclusive and even paradoxical because 54% of the respondents claimed that they did not accept subjective interpretations in AD (ADLAB 2012: 50).

A possible reason to explain why the participants in this study prefer objective descriptions to more subjective ones is that the former provide more specific features about the described characters (e.g. ‘big eyes’ and ‘long-legged singer’), which in turn may help the blind and partially sighted participants to visualise better the characters. More importantly, as highlighted by Mazur and Chmiel (2012: 177), “viewers can use this information to decide if the characters are sexy/[beautiful/attractive] or not, depending on their perception of sex appeal [or attractiveness]”. Although it seems that using evaluative adjectives is preferable in AD, it is of course subject to time constraints, especially in films: “[W]hen longer descriptions cannot be included in the script and the identification of such features is important for the plot, the use of such evaluative adjectives should seriously be considered by audio describers” (*ibid.*).

As shown in Table 7-43, around two thirds of the participants in this study indicated that they preferred the use of emotive adjectives when dealing with emotions, such as ‘frightened’ (59.1%) and ‘angry’ (63.6%), which tend to be more subjective, to objective descriptions (e.g. ‘Her eyes and mouth wide open’ and ‘His lips curl and

eyes protrude’). In this case, the results are similar to those of the study conducted by Mazur and Chmiel (2011), later reported by Mazur (2014), who interviewed 30 blind and low-vision Polish participants. In their study, more respondents preferred emotive adjectives, as in ‘She looks *frightened*’, (66%) to objective descriptions, as in ‘She shifts her weight from foot to foot. Her eyes are wide open’ (34%) (Mazur 2014: 184). These results may be explained by the fact that “[f]acial expressions are extremely difficult to describe objectively and briefly since the human face is able to express highly complex emotions thanks to numerous muscles” (Mazur and Chmiel 2012: 177). One facial movement may indicate multi-faceted emotions. For instance, ‘frown’ (i.e. bringing your eyebrows together) can be interpreted as annoyance, puzzlement or worry. If objective details of facial expressions are used in AD, blind and partially sighted users may find the descriptions difficult to comprehend. Vercauteren and Orero (2013: 193) point out that “[a]lthough [objective] descriptions accurately mention the many muscles used to modify the facial features (describe what you see), it would be very hard for the audience to derive the ‘correct’ emotion from this description”. In examples like “her upper eyelids and brows rise; her jaw drops open” and “her eyelids tighten as her brows draw together and she presses her lips together”, the authors suggest that the former should be replaced with “the lady is surprised” and the latter with “the lady is angry” (*ibid.*: 193). Vercauteren and Orero (*ibid.*: 192) go on to state that several studies have found that certain emotions seem to be universal and can be easily identified, which prompts them to recommend that emotive adjectives be adopted in AD. The benefits are “economizing on time and reducing the inference load on the part of the blind viewer” (Mazur 2014: 183).

In her article, Mazur (2014: 184) raised the concern that “even if the movements were described correctly, it is uncertain whether the blind will be able to link the description with a particular emotion”. The outcome of this research may help address this concern. Indeed, the respondents seemed to need help in understanding certain emotions and their related body language, as tested in Comparison 5 and Comparison 6. When presented with three different AD options, the majority of the respondents, by a large margin, preferred the third option (Table 7-44), perhaps because it helped them to associate facial expressions/gestures with certain emotions: (1) the description of facial expressions/gestures, such as ‘He frowns’ (6.8%) and

‘She shrugs’ (6.8%), (2) the use of emotive adjectives in the description, such as ‘He feels *strange*’ (9.1%) and ‘She is *helpless*’ (11.4%) and (3) a combination of the two, such as ‘He frowns feeling strange’ (84.1%) and ‘She shrugs, a bit helpless’ (81.8%). However, time constraints are an issue in describing audiovisual programmes and one of the major challenges encountered by audio describers is that they must fit their descriptions into the silent gaps found between dialogue and sound effects (Dosch and Benecke 2004: 24; Mazur and Chmiel 2012: 178; Vercauteren and Orero 2013: 194). The third option, which provides the details of facial expressions/gestures and emotions, usually takes twice as much time as the other options, and thus it can only be adopted if time permits.

7.3.3.3 Describing gestures

Question 4 asked the participants to replicate gestures in response to four descriptions read to them. This part focused on two gestures – ‘swear-to-God’ and ‘Yes’ gestures – and tested which descriptions of the gestures were easiest to comprehend by the audience, who had to re-enact them. Each gesture was described in two different manners: Version A simply named the gesture (‘He swears to God with a hand gesture’ and ‘He makes a “Yes” gesture’); whereas Version B provided more details about the gestures (‘He swears to God, raising his three middle fingers’ and ‘He makes a “Yes” gesture with his fist clenched and swung downward’). Version A of the description was read first and then Version B. Table 7-45 displays the number of respondents who correctly performed the gestures that were being described in the AD:

Q4 – Please, show the described gesture.	No. of respondents with correct gesture (%)	No. of respondents with incorrect gesture (%)	No. of respondents who have no concept about the gesture (%)
1a. He swears to God with a hand gesture.	12 (27.3%)	25 (56.8%)	7 (15.9%)
1b. He swears to God, raising his three middle fingers.	30 (68.2%)	14 (31.8%)	0 (0%)
2a. He makes a ‘Yes’ gesture.	20 (45.5%)	16 (36.4%)	8 (18.2%)
2b. He makes a ‘Yes’ gesture with his fist clenched and swung downward. ¹⁷	8 (18.2%)	34 (77.3%)	2 (4.5%)

Table 7-45: Test of showing correct gestures according to the AD

As far as the swear-to-God gesture is concerned, when the description lacked details and mentioned only ‘with a hand gesture’ (option 1a), just 12 participants (27.3%) were able to replicate the gesture correctly. In contrast, when the details were included in the AD (option 1b), the success rate increased dramatically and 30 respondents (68.2%) imitated the gesture correctly. Concerning the descriptions of the ‘Yes’ gesture, 45.5% of the respondents (20 individuals) made the gesture correctly when they heard ‘He makes a “Yes” gesture’ (option 2a). However, when the description included the details of such gesture, ‘with his fist clenched and swung downward’ (option 2b), the success in replicating the gesture decreased and only 18.2% of the respondents (8 people) were able to re-enact it correctly. One assumption is that the AD might not have been clear enough and the participants might not have fully understood or visualised what ‘swung downward’ means. Further discussion is provided in the following section 7.3.3.4 below.

7.3.3.4 Discussion on how to describe gestures

The reception of the descriptions of two common gestures among the Hong Kong population was investigated in this research. A quick overview of the nature of gestures may help contextualise this part of the research. Kendon (1988) was the first to describe five kinds of gestures, which a few years later McNeill (1992) put in a cline that he named the Kendon’s continuum, as follows:

¹⁷ The research was done in Cantonese, and there is no Cantonese equivalent of ‘fist pump’. Therefore, the gesture was described in detail, i.e., ‘with his fist clenched and swung downward’.

Gesticulation → Language-like Gestures → Pantomimes → Emblems → Sign Languages

According to McNeill (*ibid.*: 37), as we move from left to right in this cline: “(1) the obligatory presence of speech declines, (2) the presence of language properties of the gestures increase, and (3) idiosyncratic gestures are replaced by socially regulated signs”. In this categorisation, both gesticulation and language-like gestures are accompanied by speech. The former refers to “idiosyncratic spontaneous movements of the hands and arms” (*ibid.*); for example, when the speaker points at someone while saying ‘You’re the one responsible’. The latter is similar to gesticulation in form, but it encompasses gestures that “are grammatically integrated into the utterance” (*ibid.*); in other words, it can complete the meaning of a sentence as in the case of a speaker saying, “‘the parents were all right, but the kids were [gesture],’ where the gesture fills the grammatical slot of an adjective” (*ibid.*). For her part, Mazur (2014: 185) describes gesticulation as a ‘discourse-supporting gesture’ that “accompanies and reinforces what is being said, but also gestures that in a way repeat what is being said” and goes on to suggest that “gesticulation could potentially be left undescribed, as the meaning of a message would be conveyed by the verbal content of the utterance anyway”.

Emblems, in contrast, may not be accompanied by speech and they are standardised gestures (e.g. the OK sign) that “can function as complete utterances in their own right” (Mazur 2014: 180). In her paper, Mazur (*ibid.*) highlights that both language-like gestures and emblems should be described to ensure that they can be understood by the target audience and she provides two examples. The first one is, “When someone says ‘It was shaped like this’ and then shows the shape using their hands (a language-like gesture), a description is necessary to understand the meaning conveyed by the speech–gesture combination”; whilst the emblem occurs when someone uses “the OK gesture” (*ibid.*).

Pantomimes, or dumb shows (McNeill 2011: 346), refer to hand gestures that “depict objects or actions, but speech is not obligatory” (McNeill 1992: 37), whereas sign languages “are full-fledged linguistic systems with segmentation, compositionality, a

lexicon, a syntax, distinctiveness, arbitrariness, standards of well-formedness, and a community of users” (McNeill 1992: 38).

In the case at hand in this experiment, the swear-to-God gesture and the ‘Yes’ gesture often accompany speech. In the first instance, it is typical for Chinese people to use the swear-to-God gesture, consisting in the raising of the three middle figures and pointing them upward, when they say ‘I swear’, as illustrated in Picture 1 below:



Picture 1: Swear-to-God gesture

As for the second gesture, the fist-pump gesture is widely used in the world, especially when people yell: ‘Yes!’, as seen in Picture 2 below:



Picture 2: Fist-pump gesture

According to the Kendon's continuum, both gestures can be categorised as 'gesticulation', since they are idiosyncratic spontaneous movements that usually occur during speech; and, in the terminology used by Mazur (2014), they are 'discourse-supporting gestures'. If we were to follow Mazur's (*ibid.*: 180) recommendation, the description of these two gestures could be omitted in the AD as they tend to reinforce and repeat what is being said. However, the findings of this research (see Table 7-45) appear to indicate that the participants did not seem to have a very clear idea of what the swear-to-God gesture looked like at first. When a general description was provided ('He swears to God with a hand gesture'), only 12 participants (27.3%) performed the gesture correctly; 25 of them (56.8%) performed it incorrectly and 7 interviewees (15.9%) had no concept of what the gesture was. However, once a more detailed description was offered to the participants in the form of 'He swears to God, raising the three middle fingers', the number of those making an incorrect gesture dropped from 25 to 14 (31.8%), whilst the number of those re-enacting it correctly surged from 12 to 30 (68.2%), and all participants have a concept of the gesture. In other words, the percentage of those who obtained a better idea of what the swear-to-God gesture looks like increased 2.5 times from 27.3% to 68.2%.

We then considered the performance of the respondents who were blind at birth, that is, seven respondents in this research (see Figure 7-37 below). It is assumed that those who were blind from birth may not have any visual memory, so it is not surprising to see that none of them could do the correct swear-to-God gesture, as they might not have any concept of the gesture at all when the description read 'He swears to God with a hand gesture'. However, when a more detailed description was provided, there was noticeable improvement: two of the respondents (28.6%) who were born blind could make the correct gesture when the description was 'He swears to God, raising the three middle fingers', demonstrating that the provision of enough detail does facilitate the comprehension of this gesture among some of the participants:

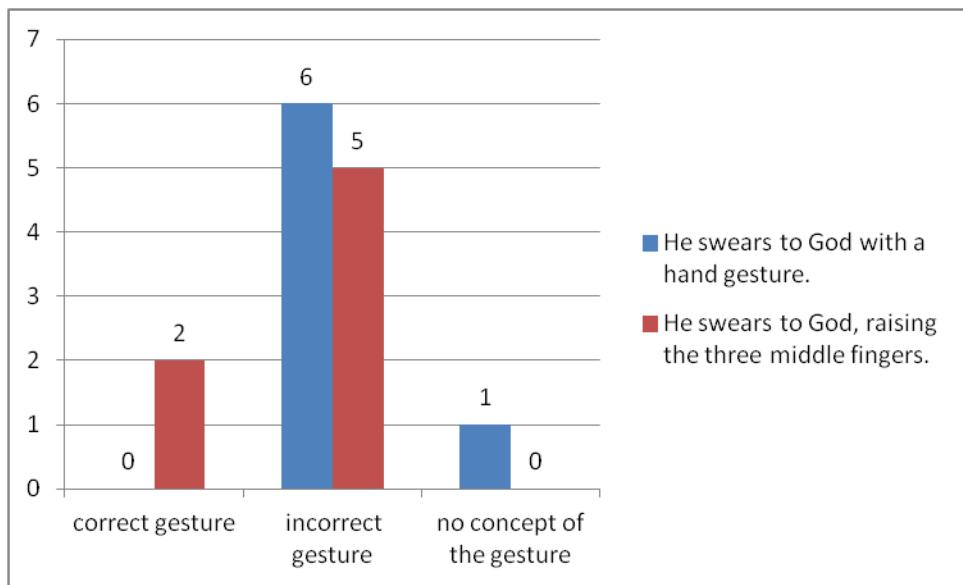


Figure 7-37: Respondents blind at birth showing correct swear-to-God gestures according to the AD

However, the details of a gesture may not always be of assistance to the AD end users' comprehension, as confirmed by the findings regarding the 'Yes' gesture shown in Table 7-45. Twenty of the participants (45.5%) were able to demonstrate the correct gesture when they simply heard the name of the gesture, "He makes a 'Yes' gesture" (Q2a). However, when more details of the 'Yes' gesture were given (Q2b: "He makes a 'Yes' gesture with his fist clenched and swung downward"), only eight of the respondents (18.2%) were able to make the correct gesture. On the other hand, by comparing their results of Questions 2a and 2b from their individual questionnaires, the six out of eight respondents did not have any idea of what the 'Yes' gesture was when they heard it described as (Q2a), but when they heard more details of the gesture (Q2b), they made an attempt at re-enacting it, even though they failed to make a correct gesture. This shows that the AD somehow helped them to get a better understanding, if still not clear enough, of what the 'Yes' gesture is.

The performance of the seven respondents who were blind at birth was then considered and it was found that they did not gain much from the detailed description in this case (see Figure 7-38 below), as none of the seven respondents could get it right. One respondent who had no concept of the 'Yes' gesture from the description tried to do the gesture when he received the additional information 'with his fist clenched and swung downward'; however, he made the wrong gesture. As presumed, the seven blind at birth participants may not have any visual memory, and they may

not know what is the gesture that people would do when they yell ‘Yes!’. Further studies should be conducted on how to describe this kind of common gestures to try and find the best way of describing them for the visually impaired audience:

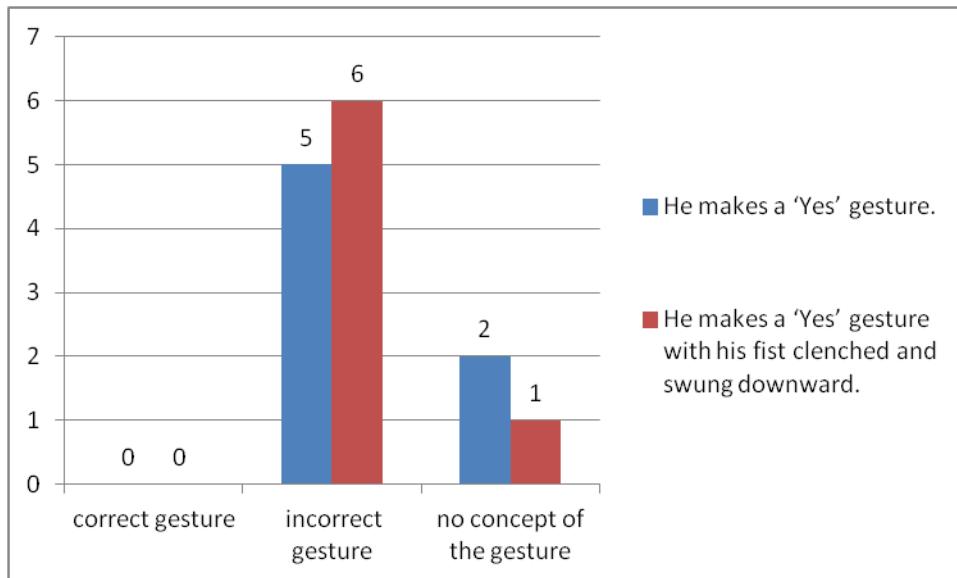


Figure 7-38: Respondents blind at birth performing correct ‘Yes’ gestures according to the AD

Szymańska and Strzemiński (2010: 26, in Mazur 2014: 182), two blind people credited to have established Poland’s AD standards, recommend that instead of naming a given gesture the describer should describe the gesture as: “In this way, the blind can learn how a given gesture is actually performed”. Although this recommendation provides some insight into how to describe gestures, it may not be applicable in all contexts as the findings of the current research seem to indicate. Sometimes, a detailed description of the gesture is necessary, whereas on other occasions, naming the gesture may be sufficient.

The main function of AD is to facilitate the comprehension of the visuals to the blind and the partially sighted end users and although the information can indeed be conveyed through verbal content, describers should also consider whether the descriptions of the gestures in the AD can actually help users visualise the message. More research should be done on this topic to investigate whether naming or providing the details of a certain gesture is more suitable in certain contexts of AD. How to better describe different common types of gestures and how to name them should also be examined, and an AD glossary of widely used gestures could be

prepared for describers for reference. When the same descriptions are used for the same gestures over time, chances are that the visually impaired audiences may become more familiar with such descriptions and be able to visualise the gestures more easily, hence promoting the enjoyment of audiovisual products among this sector of the population.

7.3.3.5 Effectiveness of AD and more AD preferences

Further questions were asked to all 44 participants, using a five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’) to indicate their preferences. Table 7-46 has been divided into three main parts to include the ‘Effectiveness of AD’, the situations when AD may be seen as problematic – ‘AD bothers me when...’ – and the wishes of what the audience think ‘AD should include...’. The table also contains the mean scores of the various statements posed to the participants:

Q5 – To what extent do you agree with the statements below?	Mean (SD)
Q5.1 – Effectiveness of AD	
AD helps film comprehension.	4.64 (0.49)
Q5.2 – AD bothers me when...	
the AD overlaps with dialogue.	4.27 (0.79)
the AD is read too slowly and includes unnatural pauses.	4.02 (0.73)
others laugh but I don’t know what’s happened on the screen to cause it (i.e. a lack of description).	3.68 (1.1)
the AD overlaps with sound effects.	3.64 (1.12)
others laugh first and I can’t laugh at the same time with them (i.e. delay in description).	3.59 (1.09)
the AD is read too fast.	3.55 (0.93)
the AD overlaps with the lyrics of a song.	3.52 (1.09)
the AD describes a sound too early, before it actually happens (e.g. a long gap until a bomb explodes).	3.43 (1.11)
the AD fills all pauses between dialogues.	3.39 (1.37)
the AD is not synchronised with the picture and is read <i>after</i> what is described.	3.26 (1.26)
the audio describer speaks in a flat tone/monotone.	3.23 (0.94)
the AD overlaps with only the first one or two words of dialogue and the words are relatively unimportant (e.g. conjunctions/connectives).	3.07 (1.07)
the AD is not synchronised with the picture and is read <i>before</i> what is described.	2.7 (1.26)

Q5.3 – AD should include...	
an audio introduction (AI) as a complement.	4.25 (0.87)
colours.	4.14 (0.82)
the AD writer's name (the one who wrote the AD script).	4.14 (0.77)
the voice talent's name (the one who performs the AD).	4.05 (0.9)
all opening titles, time permitting.	3.95 (0.91)
all closing credits, time permitting.	3.8 (1.17)
similes, e.g. <i>a building as tall as 10 elephants put one on top of another.</i>	3.39 (1.19)
unidentifiable sounds.	3.34 (1.28)
gag reels/behind-the-scenes clips at the end of the film.	3.27 (1.13)
gag reels/behind-the-scenes clips and special features on DVD.	3.11 (1.06)
evaluative adjectives (e.g. beautiful, ugly).	3.11 (1.32)
logo of the film studio.	3.05 (1.28)
aspects that are irrelevant to the plot.	2.27 (1.09)

Table 7-46: Effectiveness of AD and other AD related preferences

First, the mean score of the effectiveness of AD to understand an audiovisual production is 4.64, which indicates that most of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘AD helps film comprehension’. This finding shows the importance that blind and partially sighted people place on AD to help them understand the content of films, but it does not necessarily shed much light on whether they are satisfied with the current provision of film AD in Hong Kong.

Second, even though AD can assist end users to enhance their comprehension of the film, it might still have the pernicious side effect of disturbing users in some situations. To find out, the participants were presented with a list of 13 potentially bothersome situations and asked to rate them from the least (1) to the most (5) problematic ones. The two most annoying situations for the participants were when ‘the AD overlaps with dialogue’ (mean = 4.27) and when ‘the AD is read too slowly and includes unnatural pauses’ (mean = 4.02). The mean difference in this case is significant ($t = 2.046, p < 0.05$), underscoring the valid priority of their top concern. The third most troublesome situation that can ruin an AD experience is when ‘others laugh but I don't know what's happened on the screen to cause it (i.e. a lack of description)’ with a mean score of 3.68. At the other end of the cline, the fact that ‘the AD is not synchronised with the picture and is read before what is described’

was the one circumstance to attract the lowest score of negative ratings, with a total mean of 2.7.

The research also investigated the type of elements that, in the opinion of the participants, should be included in the AD. The top four most desired elements, all scoring above 4, were ‘an audio introduction (AI) as a complement’ (mean = 4.25); ‘colours’ (mean = 4.14); the inclusion of ‘the AD writer’s name (the one who wrote the AD script)’ (mean = 4.14); and the acknowledgement of ‘the voice talent’s name (the one who performs the AD)’. However, the differences between the means of these three elements are not significant. The *t*-value of the mean difference between ‘an audio introduction (AI) as a complement’ and ‘colours’ is 0.696, *p* > 0.05, the *t*-value of the mean difference between ‘an audio introduction (AI) as a complement’ and ‘the AD writer’s name (the one who wrote the AD script)’ is 1.04, *p* > 0.05 and the *t*-value of the mean difference between ‘colours’ and ‘the AD writer’s name (the one who wrote the AD script)’ is <0.001, *p* > 0.05. All this means that there is no clear priority among these three items and any of them can be considered equally important for the improvement of AD.

The opinion of the participants as regards the mentioning of the names of the professionals involved in the creation and delivery of the AD is a rather interesting finding. At present, the common practice in Hong Kong is that the person who writes the AD script is usually the same one who delivers it because the AD is normally live and is unlikely to have a commercial future. In this sense, it would be probably more common to expect that the audience would like to know the name of the voice talent, as this professional is, to some extent, the more ‘visible’ one. However, and by a small margin, respondents wanted to know the name of the AD writer more than the name of the voice talent, indicating that they seem to value the creation of the AD more than its actual performance.

7.3.3.6 AD needs analysis, language of the AD and AD provision in Hong Kong

In addition to the three broad sections discussed above, namely Q5.1, Q5.2 and Q5.3, the research also paid attention to three other areas of interest: Q5.4 ‘AD needs analysis’, Q5.5 ‘language of the AD’ and Q5.6 ‘AD provision in Hong Kong’. All 44

participants used the same five-point Likert scale (1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’) to indicate their preferences. Table 7-47 below summarises the results obtained when the participants were given the opportunity to rate the contexts and situations in which they would like to get AD services as well as their preferred language. Rather unsurprisingly, the participants seemed to have embraced AD very enthusiastically and wanted to see more of it in virtually all contexts as the mean scores for all the seven options offered to them were 4 and above. Of these, the visually impaired gave priority to having more AD services on TV and outing/visits, both attracting the same mean score of 4.25. The lowest mean score, though still pretty high with a 4, was for the availability of AD services in theatres.

When it comes to their preferred language for the AD, the top choice is Cantonese AD for Cantonese programmes/films (mean = 4.68), closely followed by Cantonese AD for non-Cantonese programmes/films (mean = 4.43), foregrounding that Cantonese AD is the main priority for the visually impaired respondents in Hong Kong under all circumstances, well ahead of Putonghua (mean = 3.05) and English (mean = 2.82).

In addition, most of the respondents categorically disagreed with the statement that there was enough provision of AD in Hong Kong, with a mean of 1.82:

Q5.4 – AD Needs Analysis	Mean (SD)
I would use AD services more often if they were available...	
on TV.	4.25 (0.87)
on outings/visits (e.g. theme parks, sightseeing hot spots).	4.25 (0.84)
in the cinema.	4.18 (0.95)
in museums (e.g. Space Museum, Museum of History).	4.14 (1)
on DVD/Blu-ray.	4.07 (0.93)
at art exhibitions/galleries (e.g. for paintings, sculptures).	4.05 (1)
in theatres (performing arts, e.g. stage dramas, dances, operas).	4 (1)
Q5.5 – Regarding the language of AD, I prefer...	
Cantonese AD for Cantonese programmes/films.	4.68 (0.47)
Cantonese AD for non-Cantonese programmes/films.	4.43 (0.63)
Putonghua AD for Putonghua programmes/films.	3.05 (1.48)
English AD for English programmes/films.	2.82 (1.47)
Q5.6 – I think there is enough provision of AD in Hong Kong.	1.82 (0.76)

Table 7-47: AD Needs Analysis, language of AD and AD provision in Hong Kong

Question 6 is an open ended question that asked the participants to volunteer suggestions on how to increase the provision of AD in Hong Kong. The findings from this enquiry are discussed in the following section.

7.3.3.7 Discussion on the importance of Cantonese in AD services in Hong Kong

In the following pages, the findings from the previous sections regarding the language preference of the visually impaired when watching TV programmes and films are dissected. Cantonese, the mother tongue of all the participants, plays an expected vital role in the enjoyment of the audiovisual media as well as in the practice of AD in Hong Kong. As Tables 7-10 and 7-22 show, it comes as no surprise that the blind and partially sighted respondents unanimously preferred TV programmes, series and films to be broadcast or played in Cantonese. Even though Hong Kong is considered by many as a biliterate and even trilingual international city, in the sense that its residents are encouraged to “master written Chinese and English [and] speak fluent Cantonese, Putonghua and English” (Education and Manpower Bureau 2005: 1), the reality is that the majority of the visually impaired respondents that took part in this study preferred to watch English TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese (88.6%) and English films also with Cantonese dubbing (86.4%). Only half of the respondents (52.3%) selected the option of English TV programmes and series in English as one of their choices, and barely one-third (36.4%) of the participants showed a preference for English films in English. In what concerns the use of Putonghua, an ample majority of the respondents preferred Putonghua TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese (84.1%) and Putonghua films with Cantonese dubbing (84.1%). Around half of the interviewees preferred Putonghua TV programmes and series (59.1%) and Putonghua films in their original language (50%). Similarly, the vast majority of respondents (ranging from 88.6% to 95.5%) preferred TV programmes and series and films in other foreign languages, such as Japanese and Korean, as long as they are dubbed in Cantonese. When it comes to the factors affecting their choice of a free or private TV station, one of the respondents’ main concerns was the provision of quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing; an item which was ranked second on the lists, as shown Tables 7-12 and 7-14. It is believed that the main reason for this is that,

irrespective of the multilingual image fostered by the Hong Kong authorities, most respondents found it difficult to understand the content of foreign TV programmes and films (see Tables 7-16 and 7-24), unless they are in Cantonese.

As for the language of the actual AD script, the respondents showed a strong preference for Cantonese AD. The majority preferred Cantonese AD for both Cantonese programmes/films (mean = 4.68) and non-Cantonese programmes/films (mean = 4.43), as shown in Table 7-47. Thus, a helpful suggestion for future AD practice is to first dub foreign audiovisual programmes or films into Cantonese, if copyright is granted, and then to add Cantonese AD for the visually impaired in Hong Kong, a practice that is also followed in many other so-called dubbing countries, where the AD is done following the dubbed version of the film. On the commonly used digital TVs in Hong Kong, only two audio channel options are typically available. According to the current practice of local public service TV providers, when a TV programme in a foreign language is broadcast, one channel provides the original soundtrack and the other provides the soundtrack with the dubbed dialogue in Cantonese. It is suggested that to facilitate future AD development and to better serve a wider blind and partially sighted audience, both Cantonese AD and Cantonese dubbing could be mixed with the original audio, which includes the background sounds, and be broadcast on the secondary channel. In this case, TV providers may choose to broadcast the same programme twice: the first time, offering the original version and the version with Cantonese dubbing, and the second time, the original version and the Cantonese dubbed version with Cantonese AD. The latter option is not without its challenges as it would be an open AD, which means that sighted people who do not need it will not be able to switch it off and may find it an impediment for their enjoyment of the programme.

Regarding the provision of AD on DVDs, it is recommended that there be more DVDs with AD that follows the current practice as illustrated. In addition, given the potential offered by current technology, multiple AD soundtracks could be offered on a single DVD as, for instance, two concurrent, not mixed soundtracks – one in Cantonese dubbing and another one in Cantonese AD – can be provided for foreign films commercialised on DVD. The audience can then choose whether to activate

them both at the same time or only the AD. This would cater to almost the entire blind and partially sighted audience, whether they preferred Cantonese dubbing of films in foreign languages or not.

For live film screening sessions such as those organised by the HKSBB (see section 4.5.4), in addition to providing a foreign film dubbed into Cantonese together with Cantonese AD, a separate session of the same audiovisual material in its original language (limited to English and Putonghua only, considering the language environment in Hong Kong) with the provision of Cantonese AD could be held in order to cater for the needs of those who are interested in the original language.

7.3.3.8 Implications and Suggestions for Chinese AD Guidelines

Below are some implications and suggestions that could be used for drafting Chinese AD Guidelines, especially for AD users in Hong Kong, based on the findings of Stages 2 and 3 in the AD reception study discussed above. As indicated, this section does not intent to volunteer a complete set of guidelines to adhere to in the creation of audio descriptions in Chinese. Rather, the below thirteen points are put forward as suggestions that emanate from the research conducted among visually impaired people, and that will hopefully help complement the rest of parameters that should be included in a complete set of AD guidelines, like use of certain lexicon, presentation speed, recording specifications, and so on. Given the infancy of AD in the Chinese speaking world, further research in the area could focus on the production of fully-fledged AD styleguides that would then take care of the whole process and be as detailed as possible.

The main suggestions thus emerging from the surveys and the experiments that could help enhance the quality of the end product and could be included in professional guidelines are as follows:

- 1) **Naming characters:** The characters should be named as soon as they appear on screen, as this was the preferred approach by most of the participants. If possible, and time permitting, descriptions of the relationships between the characters as well as their ages should be included. For example, in the scene

used from the film *After This Our Exile*, the appearance of the two main characters could be audio described as follows: ‘Father Ah Shing is riding a bike and his 9-year-old son, Ah-Boy, is sitting on the back’. Participant N44 indicated that this description was clearer as the intimacy between the father and son was explicitly stated, whilst respondent N9 stated that this description gave him a better understanding and, hence, that he was able to follow the story more easily.

- 2) **Naming characters in a group scene:** In a group scene, each character should be named before s/he speaks.
- 3) **Use of filmic terms:** Filmic terms, such as ‘close-up’ and ‘the camera pans up to...’, should be used without any problem in order to help AD users better visualise the film.
- 4) **Describing characters’ appearance:** Details of the characters’ facial features and clothing should be provided with matter-of-fact descriptions as in ‘long-legged singer in a miniskirt’ and ‘woman with big eyes, a strong nose and a small mouth’, instead of resorting to the use of evaluative adjectives that allow the introduction of too much subjectivity, such as ‘attractive singer’ and ‘beautiful woman’.
- 5) **Describing emotions:** The use of emotive adjectives should be given priority instead of merely describing facial expressions. Hence, descriptions like ‘she looks frightened’ and ‘he is angry’ would be generally more appropriate than ‘her eyes and mouth wide open’ and ‘his lips curl and eyes protrude’. If time permits, emotive adjectives combined with the description of facial expressions and/or gestures could be also used as in, for example, ‘he frowns, feeling strange’ and ‘she shrugs, a bit helpless’
- 6) **Describing gestures:** The name of the gesture should be mentioned in the AD (e.g. ‘he makes a “Yes” gesture’) and, if time permits, details about the gesture should be also provided, particularly in those cases when it can be anticipated that the gesture may be unknown or little known by the target audience (e.g. ‘he swears to God, raising his three middle fingers’). It is suggested that a glossary of common hand gestures and facial expressions be prepared for its use by describers.

- 7) **Inclusion of more details in the AD (e.g. colour/material):** Time permitting, descriptions should include information about colours, the materials and any further description of the visuals that may be relevant to set the scene. In the clip used in this experiment, from the film *Z Storm*, detailed descriptions such as ‘Angel in a peachbuff silk bathrobe’ and ‘Wong Sir pulls off Angel’s bathrobe. Her fair skin shows’ proved to be the most popular among the majority of the participants. Respondent N4, for instance, commented that these descriptions helped him better imagine the scene; a sentiment also shared by interviewee N44, who pointed out that this type of detail helped him visualise the scene better and understand it more easily.
- 8) **Sound effects:** When appropriate, sound effects should be anticipated and described before they actually occur.
- 9) **Use of Cantonese in the elaboration of AD:** As discussed, most participants preferred the AD to be in Cantonese. For this reason, some of the linguistic dimensions of the Cantonese language, such as the use of certain syntactical structures and the choice of particular lexical items, should be discussed in the guidelines too.
- 10) **Audio introductions:** These should be prepared as a complement to the main AD.
- 11) **Acknowledgements:** The names of the AD writer name and the voice talent should be mentioned whenever possible.
- 12) **Overlapping:** Describers should avoid the overlapping of dialogue and the AD script in all cases and at all costs.
- 13) **Rhythm of the AD:** Describers and voice talents should aim at providing an AD that is not read too fast or too slowly. Likewise, they should avoid the inclusion of unnatural (long) pauses that may lead the audience to believe that there has been a glitch in the delivery of the AD.

Given the above suggestions, more thought should be given to the drafting of AD, as previously discussed in section 2.11. The process of AD production recorded in these pages is mainly based on the author’s practical experience in Hong Kong, accumulated over the years. The information contained in this section could be hopefully integrated into the design of future AD guidelines. In addition to these 13

main recommendations, the guidelines should also include information and suggestions on the best AD production process. On this front, the possibility of teamwork with visually impaired colleagues is strongly encouraged, along the lines of the AD practice pioneered by the German broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk and depicted by Benecke (2004: 79) in the following terms:

The Description is written by a team of three, one of them is blind. This reflects the idea that two people who watch the same scene will not always see the same things, so as a team they can monitor and complement one another. The blind member of the group will indicate where he needs the description and how much and what kind of information is necessary.

7.3.3.9 Participants' Views on the Future of AD in Hong Kong

In the last part of the post-questionnaire, the interviewees were asked to specify their priorities for the future development of AD services in Hong Kong. A list of 10 items was provided to them, so they could rank them with '1' being their highest priority and 10 their lowest (Q7). Table 7-48 below contains the results obtained when concentrating only on the first priority chosen by each of the respondents. According to the participants, the AD service that they would like to see further developed in the future and that, consequently, received the most votes as their first priority, by a substantial margin, was for 'programmes other than films on TV', with 23 people choosing it. The second and third places as their top priority were increasing the volume of AD services 'in cinemas' (9 people) and 'on outings/visits' (4 people), respectively. Interestingly enough, none of the respondents considered as their highest priority to promote the production of AD for 'films on DVD/Blu-ray' or for 'programmes other than films on DVD/Blu-ray', which can be read as a symptomatic statement on the decline of these two media formats:

Q7 – Regarding future development of AD services, please <u>rank</u> the following items in terms of your PRIORITY, ‘1’ being the highest priority.	No. of respondents (N=44)
1. For programmes other than films on TV.	23
2. In cinemas.	9
3. On outings/visits (e.g. theme parks, sightseeing hot spots).	4
4. For films on TV.	3
5. On the internet.	2
6. In theatres (performing arts, e.g. stage dramas, dances, operas).	1
7. In museums (e.g. Space Museum, Museum of History).	1
8. At art exhibitions/galleries (e.g. for paintings, sculptures).	1
9. For films on DVD/Blu-ray.	0
10. For programmes other than films on DVD/Blu-ray.	0

Table 7-48: First priority for the future development of AD services

Table 7-49 below presents the overall ranking of each of the options for future AD development. The score of each item has been calculated by using only the first three priority rankings provided by all 44 participants (i.e. 132 selections), with each preference counted as one point.

Q7 – Regarding future development of AD services, please <u>rank</u> the following items in terms of your PRIORITY, ‘1’ being the highest priority.	Overall Score (N=132)
1. For programmes other than films on TV.	27
2. In cinemas.	22
3. On outings/visits (e.g. theme parks, sightseeing hot spots).	18
4. For films on TV.	16
5. For films on DVD/Blu-ray.	11
6. In theatres (performing arts, e.g. stage dramas, dances, operas).	11
7. In museums (e.g. Space Museum, Museum of History).	11
8. On the internet.	6
9. At art exhibitions/ galleries (e.g. for paintings, sculptures).	4
10. For programmes other than films on DVD/Blu-ray.	3

Table 7-49: Overall rankings of the future development of AD services

Table 7-49 shows similar results to those in Table 7-48, though the differences are less acute between the different programmes: the top highest priorities for future AD service development were ‘for programmes other than films on TV’ (27), ‘in cinemas’ (22) and ‘on outings/visits’ (18). The fact that the development of more AD services ‘on outings/visits’ is ranked so highly by the participants clearly signals that many of

them have a strong desire to go outside and have more contact with nature; a finding that is further discussed in the next chapter.

If we take a closer look at their top 3 choices, ‘for films on DVD/Blu-ray’ moves from bottom position to 5. However, surprisingly, ‘AD on the internet’ falls from 5 to 8 position, when VOD is getting more popular and is about to supersede DVDs and Blu-rays. It is believed that many of these participants lack technological knowledge and may not realise the actual evolution of the media industry with more services like VOD and global players like Netflix or Amazon Prime. In contrast, another explanation is that even though they have sufficient technological knowledge, they find the web inaccessible and cannot get access to the programmes they want. This is reflected from Table 7-19. When answering the question phrased ‘What difficulties do you encounter when using VOD services?’, 10 out of 18 respondents chose the option ‘Poor web accessibility: I have no information about the website layout, so I can’t get to the programme I want to watch easily by myself.’

7.4 Government intervention on AD provision

In Stage 3 of the AD reception study, Question 5.6 concentrated on teasing out whether, in the opinion of the participants, there is enough provision of AD in Hong Kong, and the mean is very low: 1.82. In other words, most of the participants were unsatisfied with the current provision of AD services (see Table 7-47). Question 6 was open-ended to try and elicit the participants’ views on how the provision of AD could be boosted. Participants gave their suggestions freely. Many of them gave a few suggestions among which some were the same and could be grouped together as follows: 61% (27 out of 44) suggested that there should be more AD training so that more professionals could be prepared to deliver this service. The other three main propositions were that there should be more government support (indicated by 36% of the respondents, 16 out of 44), that AD-related legislation should be adopted (supported by 14% of the participants, 6 out of 44), and that there should be more support from the stakeholders like producers, film companies and TV broadcasters (advocated by 20% of the respondents, 8 out of 44). From these answers, it clearly transpires that a substantial number of participants think that the Hong Kong government should be the one to shoulder the responsibility of facilitating and raising

the profile of AD services to the public in the city, rather than other social stakeholders like media distributors, TV broadcasters or cinema exhibitors.

In this respect, the Hong Kong government has taken a historical leading role in launching schemes, whose main objective is to fund projects aimed at people with different disabilities in society, including the visually impaired community. As an example of their commitment, the Disability Discrimination Ordinance was implemented in Hong Kong back in 1996, and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was also established in the same year. More recently, according to some of the latest figures provided by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (2016: 1), “the recurrent expenditure on rehabilitation in 2015-16, including financial assistance to individual persons, is estimated to be \$28.6 billion” in HKD, which equates around GBP2.86 billion.

Because of its unique historical and political context, as having been a British colony for many years, then handed over back to the People’s Republic of China, and currently being ruled under the motto ‘one country, two systems’ (see Chapter 4), the situation of AD in Hong Kong, a city with only seven million people, cannot be compared directly with that found in some large Western countries such as the UK and USA, which have a population of over 65 million and 325 million, respectively. Nonetheless, examples of government support for the promotion and development of AD in these Western countries where AD has a much richer history may serve as a reference and yardstick for the Hong Kong government. Media access legislation, including sign language, subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing and AD, has been implemented in the UK since the mid-1990s. With the enactment of the 1996 Broadcasting Act and the 2003 Communications Act, AD is currently being provided on 20% of all of the programmes broadcast on the largest TV channels in the country, such as BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky (RNIB n.d.-a; RNIB 2016). In the USA, another leading country in this field, the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act was signed into law in 2010. The act calls for an escalation of what they refer to as video description provision on TV, and it is expected that after the first 10 years of its implementation (i.e. by 2020), video/audio description will be expanded to achieve 100 percent coverage nationwide. Other measures to incentivise

the development of AD are illustrated in the provision, by The Department of Education of the USA, of an annual fund of \$1.5 million for the description of audiovisual media (DCMP 2015). Spain is another Western country with AD legislative provisions and initiatives in place, that could serve as inspiration for Hong Kong. The White Paper of the Spanish audiovisual law, the so-called *Ley General Audiovisual*, mandates that government-owned channels provide AD for at least 10% of their programmes by 2015 (López Vera 2006: 148; Díaz-Cintas 2010).

In addition to establishing some milestones on the provision of certain AD minimums that would have to be respected and adhered to on TV broadcasting, and provided that the Hong Kong government is willing to offer continuous support for the provision of AD services, some of the findings from this research could be used as yardsticks that could help establishing an order of priorities. Hence, as indicated in Table 7-49, the visually impaired participants' top three priorities for the future development of AD services were 'for programmes other than films on TV', 'in cinemas' and 'on outings/visits (e.g. theme park, sightseeing hot spots)'. It is thus suggested that the Hong Kong government could start by funding and regulating these three services first, with the provision of AD services for TV programmes other than films as the highest priority.

All in all, all the quantitative data were presented and the major findings were discussed. The next chapter is the conclusions.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

8.1 Main conclusions

Given the fact that little research has been conducted so far on the needs of the visually impaired in Hong Kong, one of the most salient points of this study is that it contributes to raising awareness and interest about this social group and the professional practice of AD. Never before has a survey on media uses and gratifications or an investigation into the needs of media accessibility of a sensory impaired audience been conducted in Hong Kong, not to mention a detailed analysis on the specific professional practice of AD in a Chinese speaking context. This research was intended to contribute to the media uses and gratifications of the blind and partially sighted people in Hong Kong as well as to the practice of AD in the same city. Although this study has been conducted in the Hong Kong context, it is hoped that the results can be of interest to other Chinese and Asian communities as well as to stakeholders in Western countries that may want to have some insights into the situation of AD in other continents. In particular, the methodology applied in this investigation offers the potential of being easily extrapolated and replicated in other local contexts.

Similar to Fryer and Freeman's study (2012) which had 14% of participants who were blind from birth, this research recruited 15% of congenitally blind participants who may be over-represented. The current research provides some significant data on the likes and dislikes of a given visually impaired group when confronted with audiovisual media, and the results could serve as a fruitful reference for assisting audio describers to gain a better understanding of the visually impaired community in Hong Kong and, in turn, to target the provision of AD in a manner that best suits their needs. It is also hoped that the findings may prove of interest to the Hong Kong

government for the provision of AD at an institutional level and even for the issuing of potential related legislation. Such a move could be a way of keeping apace with similar developments in accessibility taking place in more progressive countries, such as the UK and the USA, where visually impaired people can enjoy the provision of a minimum of hours of AD under the Broadcasting Act and the Communications Act, respectively. Finally, it is also hoped that this research can serve as a point of reference for the drafting of a set of AD guidelines that could be used professionally in the Chinese world.

The research questions raised in Section 1.2, namely the uses and gratifications of local media, AD provision and AD preferences of people with visual impairments in Hong Kong, have been answered. After having conducted the present study under the uses and gratifications framework, we have a better understanding of the actual ownership of media equipment by the visually impaired in Hong Kong, and it seems that they are well provided for in this regard as they all possess TV sets, all but one own radios and all of them have mobile phones, of which around two-thirds have internet access. However, they do not seem to use digital radio channels and are relatively reticent to using VOD services.

Concerning their media use behaviour with respect to local media, listening to the radio and watching TV (excluding film viewing) have been found to be their major daily activities. The major motivation for watching factual programmes on TV (excluding film viewing) was ‘because it provides information of personal interest to me’. Further analysis suggested that ‘to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong’ positively affected their frequency of TV viewing, which to some extent contrasts with the way sighted people tend to gain access nowadays to this type of information through online services. When it comes to film viewing, their major motivation was ‘because it entertains me’ and participants’ main dissatisfaction in this respect was the scarce provision of films on Hong Kong TV.

The three-stage AD reception study conducted with the 44 subjects has revealed that the participants did confirm that the provision of AD helped them in understanding better the audiovisual programmes. They have certain AD preferences in terms of AD styles and linguistic and practical choices, with some of the most notable

findings being the following: they prefer the use of filmic language and emotive adjectives in AD. They also prefer the details of facial features and clothing, rather than the use of evaluative adjectives when describing appearance. Other AD preferences are: naming gestures, and if time permits, details should also be provided; naming the characters as soon as they appear on screen, and describing sound effects before they actually occur.

The participants complained that the provision of AD in Hong Kong is insufficient to meet their needs and the majority of the subjects stated that if more AD services were available, they would certainly use them more often. Of special interest to them is the increasing of AD provision on TV, on outings/visits as well as in the cinema. Their suggestions for improving the future development of AD services in Hong Kong were mainly focused on the possibility of getting the government to be more involved in this topic, by instigating the promulgation of media-accessibility related legislation, by offering more subsidies and by facilitating the training of future audio describers.

Although the provision of AD in Hong Kong is still far less developed than in other territories where AD has more tradition and is heavily legislated, like in some European countries, the USA, Australia and Canada, it is also true that Hong Kong has been taking a pioneering role in the Chinese speaking world as far as AD is concerned. From a quantitative perspective, Hong Kong has witnessed the production of AD soundtracks in Chinese, including both Cantonese and Putonghua, of more than 10 film titles on DVD, which serve not only viewers in Hong Kong, but also those in mainland China, thus being the very first film titles that serve a wide spectrum of Chinese-speaking communities (see section 4.5.6). In addition, extensive research has shown that very few studies have been conducted on the uses and gratifications framework applied to the reception of AD in a Chinese context and, in fact, to date none can be found with Hong Kong as the main case study. In this respect, it can be argued that many parts of this study are the first of its kind and therefore original.

8.2 Implications for the training and future development of audio description in Hong Kong

This AD reception study has confirmed the usefulness and helpfulness that the provision of AD in audiovisual programmes has in assisting comprehension by the blind and the partially sighted in Hong Kong, who by and large found the provision of AD in the audiovisual media beneficial for their needs. This minority group confirmed that the inclusion of AD in audiovisual media helps them to obtain more information and, hence, to enjoy the programmes better and showed a distinct inclination to consume more audio described programmes in the future and to demand higher levels of media accessibility.

As Iglesias Fernández (2010: 216, in Chmiel and Mazur 2012: 62) mentions, “reception studies in AD should not stop at users’ preconceived preferences but further expose them to actual AD products for assessment”. Along this line, the feedback provided by the blind and partially sighted participants in this study has been instrumental in providing some useful insights into their AD preferences, from the users’ perspective. This feedback should help improve the way in which the description of certain elements is conducted, such as the use of emotive adjectives or the naming of the characters to name but a few. The results of this research have also opened up potential avenues for further investigation into topics such as how AD should be produced in the Hong Kong and Chinese market, what the role of audio describers should be, and how audio describers should perform AD.

Some suggestions on drafting AD guidelines for the Chinese context have been provided in Section 7.3.3.8, where a set of potential aspects to be included in the guidelines has been volunteered, on the basis of the empirical results yielded by this research. This contribution, which is believed to be the first of its kind in a Chinese context, can be used as the basis for the development of educational material that could then be used in the training of future audio describers and it can also serve as a useful reference for current AD practitioners in Hong Kong and in other Chinese-speaking areas.

It is proposed in these pages that the local government can play an important role in the future development of AD services in Hong Kong. Its intervention would be most appropriate in the development of AD services and can take the form of any of the various different models outlined in Section 7.3.3.10. One potential way forward would be for the government to establish and fund a bureau, whose responsibility would be the provision of AD services, in close collaboration with an NGO that has the right expertise in this field. As shown in Table 7-49, the first priority mentioned by the majority of the participants is the provision of AD for programmes, other than films, that are broadcast on TV. In this respect, the government could encourage local public (and private) TV stations to provide an average of 10% of their programmes with AD, which would be similar to practices already in place in countries such as the UK and Spain. Whichever provider bets on the production of more AD will have the potential of increasing its audienceship with the addition of the blind and visually impaired, as there is virtually no competition by other channels. The second priority for most participants is the increment in the provision of AD in cinemas. Yet again, another way for the government to stimulate development in this area could be the offer of financial support to those cinemas that are willing to install AD facilities in their theatres, in a way similar to what has been done in the UK, for instance. The third priority mentioned by the subjects is the increase in the provision of AD in outings/visits. On this front, the government could sponsor some of the organisations that organise these kinds of activities and, in an ideal scenario, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in Hong Kong could take a leading role and offer a wide range of activities with AD primarily aimed at the visually impaired citizens, which would certainly be a major stepping stone in the creation of a more inclusive and just society.

It is expected that the leading role of the government in these initial stages would help raise the visibility of AD in the Hong Kong society and, hopefully, some of the private stakeholders (cinema distributors, private TV broadcasters, VOD distributors etc.) will also start contributing to the production of AD as a financial proposition that could enable them to attract more audience and boost their social marketing.

8.3 Limitations of the research

A number of limitations that have become apparent during this research with people with visual impairments need to be considered so that they can be minimised in future investigations. First of all, researchers must be aware of the fact that reaching out to people with vision loss is a hard task, as acknowledged by Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 61) when they state that, “In fact, one of the major hurdles in reception research including blind and partially sighted participants is getting access to them”. For this reason, this research has had to resort to a convenience sample of subjects by adopting a non-probability sampling technique, whereby participants were selected because of their convenient proximity to the researcher and ease of reach. In other words, the participants were “‘convenient’ sources of data for researchers”, which fulfils “the primary selection criterion [that] relates to the ease of obtaining a sample” (Battaglia 2008: online).

In this research, visually impaired participants were recruited via the social networks of the researcher and some of the participants, who actively encouraged other subjects to take part. This approach is similar to the one adopted in the ‘Bollywood for all’ project carried out by Rai in 2009, in which respondents were identified through various “approaches to generate contacts including the use of social networks of friends and relatives as well as visiting local shops, schools, colleges, hospitals and housing estates” (*ibid.*: 27). One of the main drawbacks of using convenience sampling, in whichever country, is that the researcher may only be able to reach a rather slanted sample of subjects, made up of those who are relatively active participants in social gatherings and events. Those who spend most of their time at home are of course more difficult to reach and without their contribution any results will always be ‘incomplete’ to a certain degree. In the case of Hong Kong, this problem cannot be solved until the government begins to include in the population census, which is held every ten years in the city, comprehensive demographic data about the people with physical as well as sensory disabilities. By doing so, a clearer picture of the demography of Hong Kong’s disabled could be obtained, and random sampling might then become a possibility for this type of research.

Furthermore, conducting interviews with visually impaired people can be a challenging and time-consuming activity. One of the main priorities in this study was to make the interviews as convenient as possible for the subjects in order to facilitate their full participation in the survey. Another goal was to ensure that the respondents were interviewed in places with which they were familiar and felt at ease. To achieve these two goals, one of the consequences was that more time and effort were required. For instance, all of the interviews had to be conducted individually, on a face-to-face basis, to ensure that all the questions in the survey were answered, and finding suitable venues at which the interviews could be conducted was also problematic as their number was very restricted. In the case of this research, around 60% of the participants were interviewed at the offices of NGOs working for rights of the visually impaired, including the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKS) and the Hong Kong Blind Union (HKBU), while one-fifth of the interviews took place at the homes of the participants. The rest were conducted in locations near the participants' homes, such as restaurants and cafeterias. This situation is again comparable to the already mentioned 'Bollywood for all' project, in which around two-thirds of the interviews were conducted at the homes of the respondents and the rest at community centres easily accessible to the participants (Rai 2009: 27).

To conclude this section, the words of Chmiel and Mazur (2012: 61) are most suitable as they foreground the fact that "reaching study participants is a difficult, time- and effort-consuming activity that requires flexibility".

8.4 Recommendations for future research

Given the difficulty of reaching a large number of subjects, as recorded in many other previous surveys with people with hearing and visual sensory impairments (Chao 2002; Neves 2005; Chmiel and Mazur 2012), a substantial number of 44 visually impaired participants from Hong Kong were interviewed to find out about their media uses and gratifications as well as their interest in and exposure to AD services. The findings can be regarded as invaluable insomuch as this is one of the first studies of its kind. However, when compared to the whole visually impaired population of Hong Kong, the sample population and the results from this investigation can be considered modest and might only provide a fractured insight

into this social group. Nonetheless, one of the upsides of this research is the fact that it is one of the very first steps in eliciting the AD preferences and media uses of this minority group. Future similar research with more time and manpower, conducted on a larger sample of subjects is recommended so that the results obtained in this project can be validated, further nuanced or rejected.

To further elicit respondents' answers, some suggestions to improve the questionnaire design of media uses and gratifications are in order. In the 21st century digital world, when studying the possession of media equipment, it is imperative to investigate whether the television sets and radio devices that the visually impaired own are up-to-date and compatible with digital technology and future media uses and gratifications studies should include options related to the availability of 'Digital Radio' and 'Digital TV'. As technology keeps changing, so should new studies in this area. In the particular case of Hong Kong, for instance, DAB radio channels (e.g. RTHK's Channel 35, which broadcasts *Audio Cinema*) can only be accessed through DAB radio sets but "Conventional Frequency Modulation (FM) / Amplitude Modulation (AM) radios cannot receive DAB programme channels" (Digital Audio Broadcasting n.d.: online), which in part justifies the fact that many visually impaired do not make use of the AD broadcasts *Audio Art* despite being aware of its existence. The current reality in Hong Kong is that no provision of AD is offered on TV, but the distinct possibility that AD may be available in the not-so-distant future signifies that the role of digital television will be much more important in the lives of sensory impaired citizens as AD soundtracks would be delivered via separate audio channels on TV. This also means that closed AD tracks will be on offer for viewers to choose and, from this future perspective, it is worth investigating whether the participants already possess media equipment that can support AD provision. Along the same lines, it will be of great interest to investigate the levels of technological literacy of this sector of the audience and to evaluate further their use of VOD services, mobile applications and other online services that could substantially improve their access to audiovisual media and seem to be underused at this point in time.

Many other suggestions for future studies focused on the reception of AD can also be put forward. First of all, and according to the results yielded by this research, the

majority of the participants were in favour of the filmic AD style in which open references to the technical editing and montage of the audiovisual programmes are mentioned. One avenue for further research could be the study of how filmic language should be best used in the drafting of AD scripts, which may in turn serve as a fruitful reference for the compilation of a list of filmic terms that could be used by practitioners in their daily professional work. In addition, reception studies that compare the comprehension of audio described audiovisual material by congenitally blind people as compared to the understanding of those who became blind later in life may also be worth examining. These studies have the potential of shedding light on the way in which visual memory affects the comprehension of AD and the results obtained from such academic incursions would help improve the production of AD scripts. Furthermore, different AD solutions for the same scenes and suggestions for the drafting of AD guidelines could be tested using a similar approach to the one adopted in this research, albeit with the inclusion of longer experimental clips. The results from such research can provide rich insights into AD practice and, most importantly, into the end users' reception of AD programmes. With their feedback, appropriate amendments can be incorporate into future AD guidelines, if appropriate. Finally, it would be of great interest if replications of this research could be conducted in different regions so that the results can be compared and contrasted with those of this research as such a comparative analysis may provide us with further insights into the cultural similarities and differences that characterise the media uses and gratifications as well as the AD preferences of people with visual impairments around the globe.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Notes to researcher–Before conducting the research

研究員指引：訪問開始前

程序：

1. 開始錄音
2. 先播放《參加者須知》和《知情通知書》的錄音
3. [研究員讀出]

- ◆ 訪問日期：?年?月?日
- ◆ 研究項目編號: 5138/001
- ◆ **香港視障人士之媒體無障礙及電影口述影像調查**

4. [研究員先讀，參加者跟住講]

我，_____ (姓名) _____，完全明白《參加者須知》和《知情通知書》的內容。我同意參與這項研究。

Notes to researcher

Before conducting the research

The procedures go:

1. Voice recording starts
2. Recorded audio clips of the whole **Participant Information Sheet**, and the **Informed Consent Form** will be played.
3. Researcher says:
 - ◆ the date of interview;
 - ◆ the project ID (**5138/001**); and
 - ◆ the research project title: **Media Accessibility and Audio Description of Films for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong**
4. Researcher reads out the short declaration bit by bit and the participant repeats after the researcher. The declaration looks like this:

“I, (name), understand everything on the Participant Information Sheet, and the Informed Consent Form. I consent to taking part in this research.”

Appendix B1: Participant Information Sheet (Chinese)

參加者須知 你會有一份副本作保留

本研究已獲 UCL 的學術研究道德委員會所批准 (項目編號): 5138/001

研究題目: 香港視障人士之媒體無障礙及電影口述影像情況

姓名 梁凱程

工作地址 Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS)
University College London
50 Gordon Square, Room 206
London WC1H 0PQ

電話號碼 XXXXXXXX

電郵 dawning.leung.13@ucl.ac.uk

我們誠意邀請你參與是次 UCL 的哲學博士生的學術研究，這是一個自願參與的研究，你並不會因為拒絕參與，而蒙受任何損失。假若你同意參與， 你仍然有權於任何情況下中止是次研究而不用作出任何解釋。

研究內容:

- 本研究有三大目的: 1. 探討現時為香港的視障人士而設的口述影像服務情況； 2. 探討他們於使用媒體時的習慣及需求； 3. 最終目標是透過本研究所提供的數據，從而改善中文口述影像的服務。
- 本研究共有兩部分： 1) 媒體無障礙調查 及 2) 口述影像實驗。
- 只有 16 歲或以上的視障人士才會被邀請成為參加者。

若答應參與, 會有甚麼程序?

- 如果你同意參與本研究，你可以選擇何時何地去進行媒體無障礙調查 及口述影像實驗。
- 甲部: 媒體無障礙調查需時約 30 至 45 分鐘，你會被問及你所擁有的媒體(設備)及使用情況；當使用影音媒體時的行為及動機；以及你對本地媒體的滿意程度。
- 乙部: 當你完成了甲部後，緊隨其後的是一個約 30 分鐘的口述影像實驗。該實驗分三個部份: (1) 實驗前問卷；(2) 影片播放及實驗問卷；(3) 實驗後問卷。第一部分，我們會問一些關於你的視力和口述影像經驗的問題。第二部分，你會觀看數段附有口述影像的片段，然後就有關片段回答一些問題。第三部分，我們會問一些問題，了解你對口述影像的喜好。

有誰會知道我的參與, 以及研究完成後會有甚麼跟進?

- 所有參加者皆是不記名，而你的名字只會被負責是次研究的人員所知道。研究進行中或結束後，嚴格的保密將會一直貫徹。假若此研究被出版或公開，你的匿名保密保障將一直維持。
- 所有資料將會根據英國《1998 年數據保護法案》收集及保存。
- 假如在研究完成後，你有興趣了解研究的結果，請按上面的資料聯繫我們。

確保匿名及嚴格保密的安排:

- 假如你決定參與，你會收到這份參加者須知的副本，將由你保管，而你將會被要求簽署一份知情通知書或錄製一段知情錄音。
- 提交一份完整的問卷調查意味著這是知情的參與。
- 正因為這是匿名的參與，一旦你已提交你的問卷調查，我們是沒有可能抽走你的數據。

假如你有任何問題或需要更多資料，請立刻聯絡我。

多謝你參與本研究

Appendix B2: Participant Information Sheet (English)

Participant Information Sheet

You will be given a copy of this information sheet.

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): **5138/001**

Title of Project: **Media Accessibility and Audio Description of Films for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong**

Name LEUNG Hoi Ching Dawning
Work Address Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS)
University College London
50 Gordon Square, Room 206
London WC1H 0PQ
Contact Details XXXXXXXX
Email dawning.leung.13@ucl.ac.uk

We would like to invite you to participate in this study, undertaken as part of a PhD research carried out at University College London. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. If you decide to take part in it, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

Details of the study:

- The objectives of this research are to investigate the current provision of audio description (AD) for visually impaired people in Hong Kong as well as their habits and needs when it comes to media accessibility. The ultimate aim of the research is to provide useful data for improving audio description services in Chinese.
- The study includes TWO parts: 1) a media accessibility survey; and 2) an AD experiment.
- Visually impaired people aged 16 years and over will be recruited as participants.

What will happen if I agree to take part?

- If you agree to take part, you will decide when and where the media accessibility survey and the AD experiment will be conducted.
- Part 1: Media accessibility survey. The survey will take 30 to 45 minutes, and you will be asked to answer some questions about the media equipment you own and use, your behaviour and motivations when using audiovisual media, and your degree of satisfaction with local media.
- Part 2: Once you have answered the survey questions, we will move on to the AD experiment, which will take about 30 minutes. This experiment is divided into three stages: (1) pre-questionnaire, (2) projection of clips and questionnaire, and (3) post-questionnaire. In Stage 1, you will be asked some questions about your eye condition, and about your experience of using AD. In Stage 2, you will be shown a few video clips with audio description. Afterwards, you will be asked some questions about the clips you have just watched and about the audio description provided. In Stage 3, you will be asked some general questions about your preferences when it comes to audio description.

Who will know that I took part, and what will happen after the study?

- All the participants are anonymous, your name will only be disclosed to the research team responsible for conducting the interviews. Confidentiality will be maintained during the study and after it has finished. If the study is published or presented to a wider audience, your anonymity will be respected through anonymisation procedures.
- All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- If you would like to find out more about the results of the study once it has finished, please feel free to contact us using the details above.

Arrangements for ensuring anonymity and confidentiality:

- If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form or to record a consent clip.
- Submission of a completed questionnaire implies consent to participate.
- As participation is anonymous, it will not be possible for us to withdraw your data once you have returned your questionnaire.

Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Many thanks for your help with this research project

Appendix C1: Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research Study (Chinese)

參與是次學術研究的知情通知書

當你閱讀或聽取完本研究的《參加者須知》後，請填妥此份知情通知書。

研究題目: 香港視障人士之媒體無障礙及電影口述影像情況

此研究已獲 UCL 的學術研究道德委員會所批准(項目編號): 5138/001

多謝你有興趣參與是次研究，在研究開始之前，你應該已從研究人員那裡得到本研究的詳細資料。

倘若你對以上資料或解釋存有任何疑問，請在諮詢完研究員後，再決定是否參與這項研究，而你會有這份知情通知書的副本，讓你可以隨時參考。

參與者聲明

我 _____

- 已閱讀或聽取上述有關資料及《參加者須知》，以及明白本研究的內容；
 - 明白到假如我決定終止參與是次研究，我可以通知研究員即時作出有關安排；
 - 明白到本人的訪問是會有機會被錄音或錄影，而本人亦同意將該錄音或錄影用作是次學術研究；
 - 同意及明白到本人的個人資料只會被是次研究所用；
 - 明白是次研究所得的資料及數據，皆會按照英國《1998 年數據保護法案》的規定，被視作機密資料般處理；
 - 明白到本人所提供的資料將會在是次學術研究的報告中用上，而本人有權要求是次學術研究報告的副本。
- 整個研究會以機密及匿名的方法處理，以確保本人的身份絕對沒有可能在此報告中被識別；
- 樂意/不樂意 參與日後的延續研究。

簽署: _____ 日期: _____

Appendix C2: Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research Study (English)

Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research Study

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Project: Media Accessibility and Audio Description of Films for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): **5138/001**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Before you agree to take part, you should have received detailed information on the project from the person organising the research. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in or not. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Participant's Statement

I _____

- have read/listened to the notes given above and the Information Sheet, and understand what the study involves;
- understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw immediately;
- understand that my participation will be taped/video recorded and I consent to the use of this material as part of the project;
- consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study only;
- understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998;
- understand that the information I have submitted will be published as a report and I will be sent a copy upon request. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications;
- agree / am not happy [delete as appropriate] to be contacted in the future for participation in follow-up studies.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D1: Part 1 Media Accessibility Survey Questionnaire (Chinese)

香港視障人士之媒體無障礙及電影口述影像調查

引言

本研究有三大目的: 1. 探討現時為香港的視障人士而設的口述影像服務情況; 2. 探討他們於使用媒體時的習慣及需求; 3. 最終目標是透過本研究所提供的數據, 從而改善中文口述影像的服務。本研究共有兩部分: 1) 媒體無障礙調查 及 2) 口述影像實驗。

甲部: 媒體無障礙問卷調查

甲部: 媒體無障礙調查需時約 30 至 45 分鐘, 你會被問及你所擁有的媒體(設備)及使用情況; 當使用影音媒體時的行為及動機; 以及你對本地媒體的滿意程度。請在適當的方格內填上剔號「✓」。

A) 媒體(設備)的擁有情況

1) 你擁有以下哪些選項? 你可以選**多於一項**

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 電視機 | 7 - 手提電腦 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 有線電視 (例如: i-cable, now TV 等等) | <input type="checkbox"/> 7a) 能夠上網 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - VCD 播放器 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7b) 不能夠上網 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - DVD 播放器 | 8 - iPad/tablet |
| 5 - 手提電話 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8a) 能夠上網 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5a) 能夠上網 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8b) 不能夠上網 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5b) 不能夠上網 | 9 - 收音機 |
| 6 - 桌上電腦 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 報紙 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6a) 能夠上網 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 雜誌 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6b) 不能夠上網 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 - 遊戲機 |

B) 使用媒體的習慣

2) 你參與以下事項的頻密程度如何?

	1 從不	2 偶爾	3 間中	4 時常	5 每天	6 不適用
2.1 看電視 (不包括看電影)						
2.2 看電視播放的電影						
2.3 去戲院						
2.4 看 DVD						
2.5 看 VCD						
2.6 (用輔助用具/儀器)閱讀報紙						
2.7 閱讀點字的報紙摘錄						
2.8 收聽報紙熱線						
2.9 (用輔助用具/儀器)閱讀雜誌						
2.10 閱讀點字雜誌						
2.11 收聽錄音雜誌						
2.12 收聽電台						
2.13 上網看電影或電視節目						
2.14 上網 (不包括看電影或電視節目)						

3. 電台

3.1) 請你就剛過去的兩個月最常收聽的電台頻道排序。請用“1”代表最常收聽，如此類推。

	香港電台(RTHK)，不包括數碼電台頻道(DAB)
	香港電台(RTHK)的數碼電台頻道(DAB)
	商業電台
	新城電台
	香港數碼電台(前身稱為“雄濤電台”)
	鳳凰 U 電台
	民間電台
	其他: _____
	其他: _____

上述全不適用

3.2) 請問你知道香港電台的數碼頻道 35 台，有一個叫「光影無限 LIKE - 電影/舞台劇」的節目嗎？

- 知道
 不知道

3.3) 假如你知道「光影無限 LIKE」這個節目，你多久收聽它一次？

- 從不
 偶爾
 間中
 時常
 每天
 不適用

4. 電視

按照你觀看電視的習慣(不包括看電影)，請回答以下問題。

4.1) 你喜歡以下哪些電視節目種類? 最多可選 5 類。

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 新聞/時事 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 科幻/穿越時空 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 紀錄片 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 - 旅遊節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - 肥皂劇 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 - 烹飪節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - 古裝 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 - 綜藝節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 處境喜劇 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 音樂節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 警匪/推理/法證 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 體育節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 法律 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 - 清談節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 - 政治(例如： <u>選戰</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 - 真人實況節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 - 救人職業主題
(例如： <u>仁心仁術</u> 、 <u>烈火雄心</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 - 問答節目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 神話傳說 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 其他: _____ |

4.2) 就電視節目的語言而言，你有甚麼偏好？你可選多於一項。

- 1 - 廣東話節目，用廣東話播放
 2 - 英語節目，用英語播放
 3 - 英語節目，有廣東話配音
 4 - 普通話節目，用普通話播放
 5 - 普通話節目，有廣東話配音
 6 - 日文節目，有廣東話配音
 7 - 韓文節目，有廣東話配音
 8 - 其他: _____

4.3) 哪種本地電視服務是你最常用的?

- 免費電視
- 收費電視
- 免費及收費電視
- 上述皆沒有

4.4) 請就最近兩個月你在家中最常收看的本地免費電視台排序。(“1”代表最常看)

亞洲電視 (ATV)
無線電視 (TVB)
香港電視(HKTV) [一個全新的網上電視頻道，有點播服務]
港台電視 31 至 33 台

上述皆沒有(若選擇了“上述皆沒有”，請於問題 4.5 中，選擇“不適用”及到問題 4.6。)

4.5) 考慮到你對「問題 4.4」的回應，是什麼原因令你決定收看某一個本地免費電視台，而不是其他呢? 請選出以下各因素的重要性。

(1 - 毫不重要; 5 - 極為重要)

提供有質素的本地電視劇	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的原聲海外電視劇	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的海外電視劇，並設有廣東話配音	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的新聞/時事節目	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的電視節目(電影除外)	1	2	3	4	5
我並沒有其他選擇	1	2	3	4	5
我已習慣收看該頻道	1	2	3	4	5
其他原因: _____	1	2	3	4	5
其他原因: _____	1	2	3	4	5

不適用

4.6) 請就最近兩個月你在家中最常收看的本地收費電視台排序。(“1”代表最常看)

有線電視
now TV 電訊盈科
無線電視收費台
香港寬頻 bbTV

我沒有收費電視。

4.7) 請考慮到你在「問題 4.6」的回應，是什麼原因令你決定收看某一個本地收費電視台，而不是其他呢? 請選出以下各因素的重要性。

(1 - 毫不重要; 5 - 極為重要)

提供有質素的本地電視劇	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的原聲海外電視劇	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的海外電視劇，並設有廣東話配音	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的新聞/時事節目	1	2	3	4	5
提供有質素的電視節目(電影除外)	1	2	3	4	5
沒有其餘的選擇	1	2	3	4	5
已習慣收看該頻道	1	2	3	4	5
其他:	1	2	3	4	5
其他:	1	2	3	4	5

不適用

4.8) 收看電視節目時，會否遇到理解內容上的困難?

- 從不
- 偶爾
- 間中
- 很多時
- 每次

4.9) 哪些困難? 可選多項。

- 由於我錯失了太多視覺資訊，因此我未能夠全面了解內容。
- 有些演員咬字不清。
- 劇情發展得太快。
- 由於沒有額外資料提供，因此劇情很難明
- 假如沒有廣東話配音，我難以明白海外節目的內容。
- 沒有任何問題。
- 上述皆沒有。
- 其他: _____

4.10) 你喜歡「香港電視」這個網上直播頻道嗎?

- 喜歡
- 不喜歡
- 不適用，我未曾看過「香港電視」。

4.11) 為什麼? _____

4.12) 你喜歡網上隨選視頻點播(VOD)服務嗎?

- 喜歡
- 不喜歡
- 不適用

4.13) 為什麼? _____

4.14) 你有否使用網上隨選視頻點播(VOD)服務嗎?

- 有
- 沒有 (若選擇“沒有”，請於問題 4.15 及 4.16 選擇“不適用”)

4.15) 關於使用網上隨選視頻點播(VOD)服務，請按最近兩個月你最常收看的本地電視台排序。
(“1”代表最常看)

	亞洲電視 (ATV)
	無線電視 (TVB)
	香港電視 (HKT) [提供免費網上電視劇集]
	港台電視 31 至 33 台
	有線電視 (i-CABLE)
	now TV 收費台

- 上述皆沒有
- 不適用

4.16) 你在使用網上隨選視頻點播(VOD)服務時，會遇到甚麼問題? 可選多於一項。

- 有障礙網頁: 由於我並沒有任何有關網站版面設計的資料，因此我未能輕易地觀看我想收看的節目。(*請假設上網暢順，與接收無關)
- 因為我錯失了大量視覺資訊，令我未能確切理解影片內容。
- 沒有熱線電話讓我詢問技術上的問題。
- 完全沒有問題。
- 其他: _____
- 不適用

4.17) 你最常在哪裡收看電視節目(不包括看電影)? 可選多於一項。

- 在電視
- 在互聯網
- 透過 VCD
- 透過 DVD
- 在手機

5. 電影

按照你觀看電影的習慣，請回答以下問題。

5.1) 哪類電影是你的喜好? 最多可選 5 項。

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 動作片 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 - 恐怖片 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - 冒險片 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 - 音樂劇 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - 動畫 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 歷史片 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - 笑片(喜劇) | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 愛情片 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - 警匪/偵探片 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 - 科幻片 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 紀錄片 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 - 戰爭片 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 - 歌劇 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 - 其他: _____ |

5.2) 就電影的語言而言，你有甚麼偏好? 可選多於一項。

- 1 - 廣東話片，用廣東話播放
- 2 - 英語片，用英語播放
- 3 - 英語片，有廣東話配音
- 4 - 普通話片，用普通話播放
- 5 - 普通話片，有廣東話配音
- 6 - 外語片，有廣東話配音
- 7 - 其他: _____

5.3) 你收看電影時，會否遇到理解內容上的困難?

- 從不 偶爾 間中 很多時 每天

5.4) 哪些困難? 可選多項。

- 由於我錯失了太多視覺資訊，因此我未能夠全面了解內容。
- 有些演員咬字不清。
- 劇情發展得太快。
- 由於沒有額外資料提供，因此劇情很難明。
- 聲音效果太大，以致覆蓋了對白。
- 在沒有廣東話配音的情況下，我未能了解外語片的內容。
- 沒有任何困難。
- 上述皆沒有。
- 其他: _____

5.5) 在過去一年/過去三年間，你購買過多少隻 DVDs?

	沒有	1至2	3至5	6至10	多於10
過去一年					
過去三年					

5.6) 為何購買 DVDs? 可選多於一項。

- 1 - 我喜歡這部電影，第一次是在電視上觀看的。
- 2 - 我未曾觀看過該部電影，我希望觀看它。
- 3 - 我喜歡該導演。
- 4 - 我喜歡該演員陣容。
- 5 - 比起透過電視收看電影，我有更多自由選擇如何收看。
- 6 - 我可以隨時觀看電影。
- 7 - 因為有口述影像服務的提供
- 8 - 其他: _____

5.7) 你最常在哪裡觀看電影?

- 1 - 電視台播放
- 2 - 在互聯網
- 3 - 透過 VCD
- 4 - 透過 DVD
- 5 - 在戲院
- 6 - 在香港盲人輔導會的電影欣賞會
- 7 - 其他: _____

C) 使用影音媒體的動機

6) 觀看電視的動機

你對下列陳述的同意程度。(*注意：問題 10 和 15 的語序有不同)

	我看電視 (除電影外)…	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 中立	4 同意	5 非常 同意
1	因為可以打發時間					
2	因為它提供了我有興趣的資訊					
3	因為能知天下事					
4	因為它帶給我娛樂					
5	因為這是習慣					
6	因為它令我沒有那麼寂寞					
7	因此我可以把資訊傳給其他人					
8	因為它令我開懷					
9	因為在我沉悶時，它能幫助我消磨時間					
10*	當沒有人陪伴我，或和我傾談時，我會看電視					
11	因為我就是喜歡看					
12	因為這是很好的享受					
13	因此我能忘記日常的問題					
14	因此我和家人或朋友有討論的話題					
15*	當我沒有其他事情做的時候，我會看電視					
16	因為這是一種宜人的休息方法					
17	可以了解香港的情況					
18	因此我能夠和家人或朋友共渡時光					
19	因此我可以放下我手頭上的工作					
20	因為電視經常在我左右					

7) 觀看電影的動機

你對下列陳述的同意程度。(*注意：問題 10 和 15 的語序有不同)

	我看電影…	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 中立	4 同意	5 非常 同意
1	因為可以打發時間					
2	因為它提供了我有興趣的資訊					
3	因為能知天下事					
4	因為它帶給我娛樂					
5	因為這是習慣					
6	因為它令我沒有那麼寂寞					
7	因此我可以把資訊傳給其他人					
8	因為它令我開懷					
9	因為在我沉悶時，它能幫助我消磨時間					
10*	當沒有人陪伴我，或和我傾談時，我會看電影					
11	因為我就是喜歡看					
12	因為這是很好的享受					
13	因此我能忘記日常的問題					
14	因此我和家人或朋友有討論的話題					
15*	當我沒有其他事情做的時候，我會看電影					
16	因為這是一種宜人的休息方法					
17	可以了解香港的情況					
18	因此我能夠和家人或朋友共渡時光					
19	因此我可以放下我手頭上的工作					

D) 對本地媒體的滿意程度

8) 你對下列陳述的同意程度。

		1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 中立	4 同意	5 非常 同意	6 不適用
1	我滿意由本地電視台所提供的電視節目 (電影除外)						
2	我滿意由本地電視台所提供的網上電視 節目 (電影除外)						
3	我滿意電視節目 DVD 於本地提供的情況						
4	我滿意本地戲院所提供的電影						
5	我滿意電影 DVD 於本地提供的情況						
6	我滿意本地電視台所提供的電影						
7	總概而言，我滿意現有的本地媒體 (例如：電台、電視台、戲院，等等)						

E) 個人資料

1. 性別: 男 女
2. 年齡: 16-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 或以上 不便透露
3. 婚姻狀況:
單身
已婚
喪偶
離婚/分居
不便透露
4. 教育程度(請只選擇你最高的教育程度):
未受任何正統教育
小學
中學
專上教育 (高級文憑、副學士等)
大學
碩士
博士或以上
不便透露
5. 就業情況:

<input type="checkbox"/> 管理人員	<input type="checkbox"/> 持家者
<input type="checkbox"/> 行政人員	<input type="checkbox"/> 退休人士
<input type="checkbox"/> 專業人士	<input type="checkbox"/> 現階段沒有工作
<input type="checkbox"/> 點字製作員	<input type="checkbox"/> 不便透露
<input type="checkbox"/> 技術人員	<input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> 學生	
6. 個人每月收入:
<\$10,000
\$10,000 to 20,000
>\$20,000
不便透露
7. 家庭每月收入:
<\$50,000
\$50,000 to 100,000
>\$100,000
不便透露
8. 視障的情況:
失明
弱視
9. 自哪時起，你失去視力或出現視障的情況?
自出生起
自 _____ 歲

10. 哪一句能反映你的視力(包括帶上眼鏡/隱形眼鏡的情況下)? 可選多於一個答案。
我能夠清楚:

- 閱讀報紙
- 閱讀放大了的報紙
- 閱讀報紙上的標題
- 在馬路對面認出我的朋友
- 在房間中認出我的朋友
- 在一臂之隔的距離認出我的朋友
- 在面對面的情況下認出我的朋友
- 在房間中看到傢俱的外型
- 在日間透過窗外的光找到該窗的位置
- 我看不到任何東西

11. 家庭人數:

- 1人
- 2人
- 3人
- 4人
- 5人或以上

12. 你與多少個視障人士共同居住? _____

13. 誰最常陪伴你?

- 健視人士
- 視障人士
- 沒有

14. 你的家人鼓勵你出外嗎?

- 從不
- 偶爾
- 間中
- 很多時
- 經常
- 不肯定

15. 你的家人鼓勵你獨自出外嗎?

- 從不
- 偶爾
- 間中
- 很多時
- 經常
- 不肯定

16. 下列哪句項最能反映你的現況?

- 從不寂寞
- 偶爾寂寞
- 間中寂寞
- 很多時寂寞
- 經常寂寞
- 不肯定

感謝你完成第一部份的問卷。
我們現在會進入第二部份: 口述影像實驗。

Appendix D2: Part 1 Media Accessibility Survey Questionnaire (English)

Survey on Media Accessibility and Audio Description of Films for the Visually Impaired in Hong Kong

Introduction

The objectives of this research are to investigate the current provision of audio description (AD) for visually impaired people in Hong Kong as well as their habits and needs when it comes to media accessibility. The ultimate aim of the research is to provide useful data for improving audio description services. The study includes **TWO parts: 1) a media accessibility survey; and 2) an AD experiment.**

Part I: Media Accessibility Survey

The media accessibility survey will take 30 to 45 minutes, and you will be asked to answer some questions about the media (equipment) you own and use, your behaviour and motivation when using audiovisual media, and your degree of satisfaction with local media. Put a **tick (✓)** in the relevant box.

A) Possession of media (equipment)

1) Which of the following items do you possess? You may choose more than one item.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – Television | 7 – Laptop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – Cable TV (e.g. i-cable, now TV etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> 7a) With internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 – VCD-player | <input type="checkbox"/> 7b) Without internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 – DVD-player | 8 – iPad/tablet |
| 5 – Mobile phone | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5a) With internet access | <input type="checkbox"/> 8a) With internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5b) Without internet access | <input type="checkbox"/> 8b) Without internet access |
| 6 – Desktop | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6a) With internet access | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 – Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6b) Without internet access | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 – Newspapers |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – Magazines |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 – Videogames console |

B) Media use behaviours

2) How often do you engage in these activities?

	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Every day	6 N/A
2.1 Television viewing (excluding film viewing)						
2.2 Television film viewing						
2.3 Cinema going						
2.4 DVD viewing						
2.5 VCD viewing						
2.6 Reading newspapers (with adaptive equipment)						
2.7 Reading Braille newspaper excerpts						
2.8 Listening to newspaper hotlines						
2.9 Reading magazines (with adaptive equipment)						
2.10 Reading Braille magazines						
2.11 Listening to talking magazines						
2.12 Listening to radio						
2.13 Using the internet for film/ TV programme viewing						
2.14 Using the internet (excluding film/TV programme viewing)						

3. RADIO

3.1) Please rank the following radio channels you have listened to most often in the past two months, using '1' for the one used most often.

	Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), excluding DAB channels
	Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) – DAB channels
	Commercial Radio
	Metro Radio Hong Kong
	Digital Broadcasting Corporation (formerly known as Wave Media)
	Phoenix U Radio
	Citizens' Radio
	Other: _____
	Other: _____

None of the above

3.2) Did you know that there is a radio programme called *Audio Art* (光影無限 LIKE - 電影/舞台劇) on RTHK's DAB Channel 35?

- Yes
 No

3.3) If so, how often do you listen to this programme?

- Never
 Rarely
 Sometimes
 Often
 Every day
 Not applicable

4. TELEVISION

Regarding your television viewing habits (*excluding film viewing*), please answer the following questions.

4.1) Which of the following types of TV programmes are your favourite? Please choose a maximum of 5 items from the list below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – News/Current affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 – Mythical/Fantasy dramas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – Documentaries | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – Science fiction dramas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 – Soap operas | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 – Travel programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 – Costume dramas | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 – Cookery programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 – Comedies/Sitcoms | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 – Entertainment programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – Crime/Detective/Police procedural dramas | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 – Music programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 – Legal dramas | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 – Sport programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 – Political dramas | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 – Talk shows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 – Dramas about life saving occupations, (e.g. doctors and firemen) | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 – Reality shows |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – Quiz shows |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 – Other: _____ |

4.2) What are your preferences as regards the language of TV programmes? You may choose more than one item.

- 1 – Cantonese TV programmes and series in Cantonese
 2 – English TV programmes and series in English
 3 – English TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese
 4 – Putonghua TV programmes and series in Putonghua
 5 – Putonghua TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese
 6 – Japanese TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese
 7 – Korean TV programmes and series dubbed in Cantonese
 8 – Other: _____

4.3) Which type of local TV service do you use most often?

- Free TV
- Pay TV
- Both
- None of them

4.4) Please rank the following free local TV providers you have used most often at home in the past two months, using '1' for the one used most often.

Asia Television Limited (ATV)
Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB)
Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKTV) [A new channel that provides free live and video-on-demand TV programmes online]
RTHK Ch31-33

None of the above (Choose 'Not applicable' in Question 4.5 and move to Question 4.6)

4.5) Considering your answer to 'Question 4.4', please state the *importance* of the following factors affecting your preference of using a free local TV provider over some others.

(1 – Not at all important; 5 – Extremely important)

It provides quality local TV dramas.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality foreign TV dramas (original).	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality news and/or current affair programmes.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides other quality TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>).	1	2	3	4	5
I have no other choice.	1	2	3	4	5
I am used to watching this channel.	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Not applicable

4.6) Please rank the following pay local TV providers you have used most often at home in the past two months, using '1' for the one used most often.

Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (i-CABLE)
PCCW Media Limited (now TV)
TVB Network Vision Limited
Hong Kong Broadband Network (HKBN) bbTV

I don't have any pay TV.

4.7) Considering your answer to 'Question 4.6', please state the *importance* of the following factors affecting your preference of using a pay local TV provider over some others.

(1 – Not at all important; 5 – Extremely important)

It provides quality local TV dramas.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality foreign TV dramas (original).	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality foreign TV dramas with Cantonese dubbing.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides quality news and/or current affair programmes.	1	2	3	4	5
It provides other quality TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>).	1	2	3	4	5
I have no other choice.	1	2	3	4	5
I am used to watching this channel.	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	1	2	3	4	5

Not applicable

4.8) Do you have any difficulty in understanding the content of the TV programmes you watch?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Every time

4.9) What kinds of difficulty? You may choose more than one item.

- I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information.
- Some actors/actresses do not enunciate properly.
- The plot is too fast.
- The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information.
- I don't understand the content of a foreign programme when there is no Cantonese dubbing.
- I don't have any difficulty at all.
- None of the above.
- Other: _____

4.10) Do you like the **online live TV channel HKTV?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable. I haven't watched it yet.

4.11) Why? _____

4.12) Do you like **online video-on-demand (VOD) services?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable.

4.13) Why? _____

4.14) Do you use online VOD services?

- Yes
- No (**Choose 'Not applicable' in Question 4.15 & 4.16**)

4.15) In regard to online VOD services, please rank the following local TV providers you have used most often in the **past two months, using '1' for the one used most often.**

	Asia Television Limited (ATV)
	Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB)
	Hong Kong Television Network Limited (HKT) [Provides free TV dramas online]
	RTHK Ch31-33
	Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (i-CABLE)
	PCCW Media Limited (now TV)

- None of the above
- Not applicable

4.16) What kinds of difficulty do you encounter when using VOD services? You may choose more than one item.

- Poor web accessibility: I have no information about the website layout, so I can't get to the programme I want to watch easily by myself.
- I cannot get a complete picture of the videos as I miss too much visual information.
- There's no hotline for me to call to ask about technical questions.
- I don't have any difficulty at all.
- Other: _____
- Not applicable

4.17) How do you watch TV programmes (*excluding film viewing*) most often? You may choose more than one item.

- On TV
- On the Internet
- On VCD
- On DVD
- On mobile

5. FILMS

Regarding your film viewing habits, please answer the following questions.

5.1) What types of films are your favourite? Please choose at maximum 5 items in the list below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – Action | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 – Horror |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 – Adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 – Musicals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 – Animation | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 – Historical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 – Comedy | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – Romance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 – Crime/Detective | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 – Science fiction and fantasy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – Documentary | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 – War films |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 – Drama | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 – Other: _____ |

5.2) What are your preferences as regards the language of films? You may choose more than one item.

- 1 – Cantonese films in Cantonese
- 2 – English films in English
- 3 – English films with Cantonese dubbing
- 4 – Putonghua films in Putonghua
- 5 – Putonghua films with Cantonese dubbing
- 6 – Foreign films with Cantonese dubbing
- 7 – Other: _____

5.3) Do you have any difficulty in understanding the content of films?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Every time

5.4) What kind(s) of difficulty? You may choose more than one item.

- I cannot get a complete picture as I miss too much visual information.
- Some actors/actresses do not enunciate.
- The plot is too fast.
- The plot is too difficult to understand without extra information.
- The sound effects are too loud and cover the dialogue.
- I don't understand the content of a foreign film when there is no Cantonese dubbing.
- I don't have any difficulty at all.
- None of the above.
- Other: _____

5.5) How many DVDs have you bought in the ...?

	None	One to two	Three to five	Six to Ten	More than 10
Past year					
Past three years					

5.6) Why do you buy DVDs? You may choose more than one item.

- 1 – I like the film and saw it first on TV.
- 2 – I hadn't watched the film before and I wanted to watch it.
- 3 – I like the director.
- 4 – I like the cast.
- 5 – I can have more control over the watching experience than using the TV.
- 6 – I can watch the film whenever I want to.
- 7 – Audio description is provided.
- 8 – Other: _____

5.7) Where do you watch films most often?

- 1 – On TV
- 2 – On the Internet
- 3 – On VCD
- 4 – On DVD
- 5 – In the cinema
- 6 – In film showing sessions at the Hong Kong Society for the Blind
- 7 – Other: _____

C) Motivations for Using Audiovisual Media

6) Motivation for TV Viewing

To what extent do you agree with the statements below?

	I watch TV (<i>excluding film viewing</i>)...	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
1	because it gives me something to do to spend my time					
2	because it provides information of personal interest to me					
3	because I can learn what's going on in the world					
4	because it entertains me					
5	because it's a habit, just something to do					
6	because it makes me feel less lonely					
7	so I can pass on information to others					
8	because it relaxes me					
9	because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored					
10	when there's no one else to talk to or be with					
11	just because I like it					
12	because it's enjoyable					
13	so I can forget about daily problems					
14	so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends					
15	when I have nothing better to do					
16	because it's a pleasant rest					
17	to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong					
18	so I can spend time with my family or friends					
19	so I can get away from what I'm doing					
20	because it's always there					

7) Motivation for Film Viewing

To what extent do you agree with the statements below?

	I watch films...	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
1	because it gives me something to do to spend my time					
2	because it provides information of personal interest to me					
3	because I can learn what's going on in the world					
4	because it entertains me					
5	because it's a habit, just something to do					
6	because it makes me feel less lonely					
7	so I can pass on information to others					
8	because it relaxes me					
9	because it helps me pass the time away, particularly when I'm bored					
10	when there's no one else to talk to or be with					
11	just because I like it					
12	because it's enjoyable					
13	so I can forget about daily problems					
14	so I can participate in discussions with my family or friends					
15	when I have nothing better to do					
16	because it's a pleasant rest					
17	to get information about events and issues in Hong Kong					
18	so I can spend time with my family or friends					
19	so I can get away from what I'm doing					

D) Satisfaction with the local media

8) To what extent do you agree with the statements below?

		1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	6 N/A
1	I am satisfied with the TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>) provided on Hong Kong TV.						
2	I am satisfied with the TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>) provided in Hong Kong via the internet.						
3	I am satisfied with the TV programmes (<i>excluding films</i>) available on DVD in Hong Kong.						
4	I am satisfied with the films provided in Hong Kong's cinemas.						
5	I am satisfied with the films available on DVD in Hong Kong.						
6	I am satisfied with the films provided on Hong Kong TV.						
7	In general, I am satisfied with the current media provided in Hong Kong (e.g. radio, TV, cinema, etc.).						

Appendix E1: Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 1: Pre-questionnaire (Chinese)

乙部: 口述影像實驗

此實驗分為三個階段:

第一階段 - 實驗前問卷: 我們會問一些關於你的視力和口述影像經驗的問題。

第二階段 - 影片播放及實驗問卷: 你會觀看三段附有口述影像的片段，然後就有關片段回答一些問題。

第三階段 - 實驗後問卷: 我們希望了解你對口述影像的喜好。

第一階段--實驗前問卷

1. 你聽過口述影像嗎?

- 有
 沒有

2. 你知道口述影像是甚麼嗎?

- 知道
 不知道

3. 你曾否觀看過設有口述影像的節目?

- 從不
 偶爾
 間中
 很多時
 經常

4. 以下的句子是有關口述影像的描述。請回答「是」或「否」。

4.1)	口述影像會告訴我們電影/電視節目中的演員的內心想法。	是	否
4.2)	語音導賞(主要在博物館提供)和口述影像是同一樣東西。	是	否
4.3)	當場境改變時，口述影像會以「在睡房」、「在巴士上」等描述來讓我們知道演員身在何方。	是	否
4.4)	在餐廳，大聲讀出餐牌內的菜式是口述影像。	是	否
4.5)	口述影像員會把他們的個人情感加入口述影像中。例如說:「佢喺一個壞人」或「呢個女仔真係頑皮」。	是	否
4.6)	在口述影像中，口述影像員會說出以下說話：「估吓嚟緊會發生甚麼事？」或「等我向你解釋……」之如此類。	是	否
4.7)	看電影/電視節目時，大聲讀出演員對答的字幕是口述影像。	是	否
4.8)	口述影像會告訴你演員正在做甚麼。	是	否

5. 口述影像服務的使用: 你會否透過以下途徑使用口述影像服務?

		有	沒有
5.1)	於香港盲人輔導會(下稱：輔導會)舉辦的電影欣賞會。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.2)	於戲院播放的電影。若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.3)	播放電影 DVDs。若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.4)	於網上播放的電影。若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.5)	播放電視劇 DVDs。若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.6)	於網上播放的電視劇。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.7)	劇院：表演藝術 -- 舞台劇、舞蹈、歌劇。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.8)	博物館：例如: 到香港賽馬會博物館等等。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.9)	藝術展覽/廊：畫作、雕塑。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.10)	郊遊/參觀：到香港濕地公園等等。 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.11)	其他: _____ 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		
5.12)	其他: _____ 若適用，請指出口述影像的語言: <input type="checkbox"/> 廣東話 <input type="checkbox"/> 英文 <input type="checkbox"/> 普通話 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他: _____		

6. 若你在問題 5.2 的回答為「是」，為什麼你會參加輔導會在戲院舉辦的電影欣賞會**? (可選多於一項)**

- 因為有口述影像提供
- 因為我希望和朋友一同看電影
- 因為我希望和家人一同看電影
- 因為戲票有贊助
- 因為有接駁巴士服務
- 其他: _____
- 不適用

7. 至今，你於輔導會看過多少部電影?

- 沒有
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- >20

8. 每天，你平均花多少時間於觀看電影/電視?

- 沒有
- < 1 小時
- 1-2 小時
- 3-4 小時
- > 4 小時

9. 根據你的視力狀況，當收看電視時：(請選擇以下所有適用於你的情況)

- 我在跟進螢幕所發生的事情上，沒有任何問題。
- 我在觀看螢幕上的畫面時，有困難。
- 我在觀看螢幕上的畫面細節時，有困難。
- 我在觀看螢幕上的字幕時，有困難。
- 我只能看到螢幕所發出的光。
- 我甚麼都看不到。

10. 你如何觀看電視上的節目及電影?(請選擇以下所有適用於你的情況)

- 我會帶特製眼鏡。
- 我會坐近電視螢幕。
- 我會用放大鏡。
- 我會找人協助我及解釋螢幕上的內容給我知道。
- 在沒有口述影像的提供下，我會盡力去透過聲音去了解電影或節目的內容。
- 我收看有口述影像的節目。
- 其他: _____

11. 你是從哪裡得知有關專門為視障人士所提供的產品和服務? (可選多於一項)

- 香港盲人輔導會為視障人士所提供的 24 小時電話數碼圖書館熱線
- 其他為殘障人士提供服務的機構，如：香港失明人協進會
- 互聯網
- 報章、電台、電視
- 家人及朋友
- 其他: _____

~我們現在開始觀看三段影片。 ~

Appendix E2: Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 1: Pre-questionnaire (English)

Part II: Audio Description Experiment

This experiment is divided into three stages:

Stage 1 – Pre-questionnaire: You will be asked some questions about your eye condition, and about your experience of using audio description (AD).

Stage 2 – Projection of clips and questionnaire proper: You will be shown three video clips with audio description. Afterwards, you will be asked some questions about the clips you have just watched and about the AD provided.

Stage 3 – Post-questionnaire: You will be asked some general questions about your preferences when it comes to AD.

Stage 1 – Pre-questionnaire

1. Have you heard of audio description (AD) before?

- Yes
- No

2. Do you know what AD is?

- Yes
- No

3. Have you watched audio described programmes before?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

4. Below are some statements about AD. Please decide whether they are **TRUE (T)** or **FALSE (F)**.

4.1)	AD tells you what the characters in a film/TV programme are thinking.	T	F
4.2)	Audio guides (mainly provided in museums) and AD are exactly the same.	T	F
4.3)	AD tells you the place where a character is when scenes change with the use of expressions such as ‘In the bedroom’ and ‘On the bus’.	T	F
4.4)	In a restaurant, reading aloud the food dishes from a menu is AD.	T	F
4.5)	Audio describers include their feelings/thoughts in the AD. For example, ‘He is a bad guy’ or ‘The girl is naughty’.	T	F
4.6)	In the AD, the audio describer says things like ‘Guess what will happen next?’ or ‘Let me explain it to you...’ etc.	T	F
4.7)	Reading aloud the subtitles of the dialogue exchanges in a film/TV programme is AD.	T	F
4.8)	AD tells you what a character is doing.	T	F

5. Use of AD services: Have you ever watched/been to the following events with the provision of AD?

		YES	NO
5.1)	Film showing sessions at the Hong Kong Society for the Blind (HKSBB). If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.2)	Films in cinemas. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.3)	Films on DVD. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.4)	Films on the internet. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.5)	TV dramas on DVD. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.6)	TV dramas on the internet. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.7)	Theatres: performing arts - dramas, dances, operas. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.8)	Museums: Hong Kong Racing Museum etc. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.9)	Art exhibitions/galleries: paintings, sculptures. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.10)	Outings/Visits: Hong Kong Wetland Park etc. If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.11)	Other: If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
5.12)	Other: If applicable, please specify the language of the AD : <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Putonghua <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		

6. If you answered Yes to 5.2 above, why do you take part in the film screening activities **in the cinema organised by HKSBB**? (You can choose more than one option.)

- Because it provides audio description
- Because I want to watch films with my friends
- Because I want to watch films with my family
- Because the ticket is sponsored
- Because there is a shuttle bus service to attend the event
- Other: _____
- Not applicable

7. How many audio described films have you seen so far at the HKSBB?

- None
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- >20

8. How much time do you spend daily on watching TV/films?

- None
- < 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- 3- 4 hours
- > 4 hours

9. In regard to your eye condition, when watching TV: (choose all the options that apply to you)

- I don't have any difficulty following what is happening on the screen
- I have difficulty seeing the picture on the TV screen
- I have difficulty seeing image details on the TV screen
- I have difficulty seeing text on the TV screen
- I am only able to see the light coming off the TV screen
- I cannot see anything

10. How do you watch programmes and films on TV? (choose all the options that apply to you)

- I wear special stronger glasses
- I get closer to the TV screen
- I use a magnifier
- I ask someone to assist me by explaining what happens on the screen
- I just try to pick up as much as I can from the sound of the film or programme when there is no AD
- I watch the programmes with AD
- Other: _____

11. What are your sources of information to find out about products and services specially designed for the visually impaired? (You can choose more than one option.)

- 24-hour tele-digital library for the visually impaired hotlines run by the Hong Kong Society for the Blind
- Other organisations for people with disabilities, like the Hong Kong Blind Union
- The internet
- Press, radio, TV
- Family and friends
- Other: _____

~ We are going to watch three clips. ~

Appendix F1:**Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 2: Questionnaire Proper for Group 1 (Chinese)****第二階段 -- 影片播放(A1, B1, C1)及實驗問卷**

你將會觀看三段有口述影像提供的片段。觀賞時，請嘗試投入，如在家中或戲院中觀看。 看畢後，我會向你提問一些有關該三段影片的內容及口述影像的問題。請謹記這不是一個測驗。在回答問題時，請放鬆。

影片 A1

播放影片 A1，只可播一次。

1. 在單車上的男孩是誰?

- _____
 不知道

2. 在單車上的男人是誰?

- _____
 不知道

3. 單車上的男人和男孩是甚麼關係?

- 舅父和外甥
 父親和兒子
 朋友
 司機和乘客
 鄰居
 其他: _____
 不知道

4. (告訴受訪者，男孩其實就是男主角 Ah-Boy，而該男人就是其父親 阿勝，再問…) 在你的立場而言，你認為口述影像應該在角色一在螢幕出現時，便提及其角色名稱；還是應等到戲中有人稱呼該角色時，才提及角色名稱？

- 一出現便提及
 等角色的名稱在戲中被提及時
 沒有所謂

5. 你較喜歡以下哪個描述? (聽 MP3 ‘Audio 5a &5b’)

a) 一個男人踩單車，一個9歲男仔坐喺佢後面。	b) 爸爸阿勝踩單車，佢9歲嘅仔Ah-Boy坐喺佢後面。
-------------------------	------------------------------

6. 為什麼? _____

7a) 你認為影片 A1 或是影片 A2 形容單車突然翻倒的音效較好？(播放影片 A1 和 A2，各一次。)

- 影片 A1
- 影片 A2

7b) 「在形容單車突然翻倒的聲音時，時間配合得十分完美。」你在多大程度上同意這說法？

- 極不同意
- 不同意
- 中立
- 同意
- 極同意

8. 你曾否看過《父子》這部戲？

- 有
- 沒有

影片 B1

播放影片 B1，只可播一次。

9. 你較喜歡以下哪個描述？(聽 MP3 ‘9.1a & 9.1b; 9.2a & 9.2b’)

1a) Angel 著住件 桃紅色絲質 浴袍。	1b) Angel 著住件浴袍。
2a) 黃Sir 一手扯開Angel件浴袍，佢露出白滑肌膚。	2b) 黃Sir 一手扯開Angel件浴袍。

10. 為什麼？

11. 你有否注意到我們用上電影術語？

- 沒有
- 有。你可否說出那些電影術語？

12. 你認為口述影像應該加上電影語言嗎，如：鏡頭的移動（例如：鏡頭由腳向上移影到佢塊面；近鏡；鏡頭 pan 去床頭擺設，一個針孔攝錄機嘅大特寫）？

- 應該
- 不應該
- 無意見

13. 如果口述影像加入這些電影術語，是否有助你將描述形象化？

- 否
- 是，但仍有些困難
- 是，容易了
- 無意見

影片 C1

播放影片 C1，只可播一次。

背景：一班廉政公署的專員正在調查一單案件。

14. 有多少個角色在這段影片中說話？_____

15. 有多少個男性？_____

16. [請讓參加者看完 Clip C2，再回答這條問題] 在一個集體的場景中，你認為口述影像應否在各角色說話之前，先介紹角色名稱？

- 應該
- 不應該
- 無意見

17. 你曾否看過《Z風暴》這部戲？

- 有
- 沒有

Appendix F2:**Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 2: Questionnaire Proper for Group 1 (English)****Stage 2 – Projection of clips and questionnaire proper**

You will watch three short audio described video clips. Watch them as if you were at home/at the cinema. After watching them, I will ask you some questions about their content and audio description. Please be reminded that **this is NOT a test.** Please relax and take it easy when answering the questions.

Clip A1

Play Clip A1 once only.

1. Who is the boy on the bike?

- _____
 I don't know.

2. Who is the man on the bike?

- _____
 I don't know.

3. What is their relationship?

- Uncle & nephew
 Father & son
 Friends
 Driver & customer
 Neighbours
 Other: _____
 I don't know.

4. (Tell the participant, the boy is in fact the main character ‘Ah-Boy’ and the man is his father ‘Ah-Shing’, then ask...) In your opinion, should the characters be named as soon as they appear on screen or only when they are named in the film?

- As soon as they appear on screen
 When they are actually named in the film
 It doesn't matter to me

5. Which description do you prefer? (Listen to Clips 5a & 5b)

a) A man is riding a bicycle and a 9-year-old boy is sitting in the back.	b) Father Ah-Shing is riding a bicycle and his 9-year-old son Ah-Boy is sitting in the back.
---	--

6. Why? _____

7a) ‘In regard to audio describing the sound effect about the crash, do you think Clip A1 or Clip A2 is better?’ Play Clip A1 and Clip A2 once.

- Clip A1
- Clip A2

7b) ‘The timing of describing the sound of **bicycle suddenly overturned** is perfect.’ To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

8. Have you seen the film *After This Our Exile* before?

- Yes
- No

Clip B1

Play Clip B1 once only.

9. Which description do you prefer? (Listen to Clips 9.1a & 9.1b; 9.2a & 9.2b)

1a) Angel in a peachpuff silk bathrobe	1b) Angel in a bathrobe
2a) Wong Sir pulls off Angel’s bathrobe. Her fair skin shows.	2b) Wong Sir pulls off Angel’s bathrobe.

10. Why? _____

11. Have you noticed the **use of any filmic terms** in the description?

- No
- Yes. Can you mention some of them?

12. Do you think AD should include **filmic language** such as the movement of the camera (e.g. **The camera pans up to show her feet to her face; Close up; The camera pans to a close-up** of a pinhole camera.)?

- Yes
- No
- No preference

13. When these terms are included, is it easy for you to visualise the descriptions?

- No
- Yes, but with some difficulty
- Yes, easily
- No opinion

Clip C1

Play Clip C1 once only.

Context: Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) officers are investigating a case.

14. How many characters speak in the clip? _____

15. How many characters are male? _____

16. [*Show Clip C2 to the participant before answering this question*] Do you prefer it when the names of the characters are introduced in a group scene before they speak?

- Yes
- No
- No preference

17. Have you seen the film Z Strom before?

- Yes
- No

Appendix G1:**Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 2: Questionnaire Proper for Group 2 (Chinese)****第二階段 -- 影片播放(A2, B2, C2)及實驗問卷**

你將會觀看三段有口述影像提供的片段。觀賞時，請嘗試投入，如在家中或戲院中觀看。 看畢後，我會向你提問一些有關該三段影片的內容及口述影像的問題。請謹記這不是一個測驗。在回答問題時，請放鬆。

影片 A2

播放影片 A2，只可播一次。

1. 在單車上的男孩是誰?

- _____
 不知道

2. 在單車上的男人是誰?

- _____
 不知道

3. 單車上的男人和男孩是甚麼關係?

- 舅父和外甥
 父親和兒子
 朋友
 司機和乘客
 鄰居
 其他: _____
 不知道

4. (告訴受訪者，男孩其實就是男主角 Ah-Boy，而該男人就是其父親 阿勝，再問…) 在你的立場而言，你認為口述影像應該在角色一在螢幕出現時，便提及其角色名稱；還是應等到戲中有人稱呼該角色時，才提及角色名稱？

- 一出現便提及
 等角色的名稱在戲中被提及時
 沒有所謂

5. 你較喜歡以下哪個描述? (聽 MP3 ‘Audio 5a &5b’)

a) 一個男人踩單車，一個9歲男仔坐喺佢後面。	b) 爸爸阿勝踩單車，佢9歲嘅仔Ah-Boy坐喺佢後面。
-------------------------	------------------------------

6. 為什麼? _____

7a) 你認為影片 A1 或是影片 A2 形容單車突然翻倒的音效較好？(播放影片 A1 和 A2，各一次。)

- 影片 A1
- 影片 A2

7b) 「在形容單車突然翻倒的聲音時，時間配合得十分完美。」你在多大程度上同意這說法？

- 極不同意
- 不同意
- 中立
- 同意
- 極同意

8. 你曾否看過《父子》這部戲？

- 有
- 沒有

影片 B2

播放影片 B2，只可播一次。

9. 你較喜歡以下哪個描述？(聽 MP3 ‘9.1a & 9.1b; 9.2a & 9.2b’)

1a) Angel 著住件 <u>桃紅色絲質浴袍</u> 。	1b) Angel 著住件浴袍。
2a) 黃Sir 一手扯開Angel件浴袍，佢露出白滑肌膚。	2b) 黃Sir 一手扯開Angel件浴袍。

10. 為什麼？

11. (不適用，已刪除)

12. [請讓參加者看完 Clip B1，再回答這條問題] 你認為口述影像應該加上電影語言嗎，如：鏡頭的移動 (例如：鏡頭由腳向上移影到佢塊面；近鏡；鏡頭 pan 去床頭擺設，一個針孔攝錄機嘅大特寫)？

- 應該
- 不應該
- 無意見

13. 如果口述影像加入這些電影術語，是否有助你將描述形象化？

- 否
- 是，但仍有些困難
- 是，容易了
- 無意見

影片 C2

播放影片 C2，只可播一次。

背景: 一班廉政公署的專員正在調查一單案件。

14. 有多少個角色在這段影片中說話? _____

15. 有多少個男性? _____

16. 在一個集體的場景中，你認為口述影像應否在各角色說話之前，先介紹角色名稱？

- 應該
- 不應該
- 無意見

17. 你曾否看過《Z風暴》這部戲？

- 有
- 沒有

Appendix G2:**Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 2: Questionnaire Proper for Group 2 (English)****Stage 2 – Projection of clips and questionnaire proper**

You will watch three short audio described video clips. Watch them as if you were at home/at the cinema. After watching them, I will ask you some questions about their content and audio description. Please be reminded that **this is NOT a test.** Please relax and take it easy when answering the questions.

Clip A2

Play Clip A2 once only.

1. Who is the boy on the bike?

- _____
 I don't know.

2. Who is the man on the bike?

- _____
 I don't know.

3. What is their relationship?

- Uncle & nephew
 Father & son
 Friends
 Driver & customer
 Neighbours
 Other: _____
 I don't know.

4. (Tell the participant, the boy is in fact the main character ‘Ah-Boy’ and the man is his father ‘Ah-Shing’, then ask...) In your opinion, should the characters be named as soon as they appear on screen or only when they are named in the film?

- As soon as they appear on screen
 When they are actually named in the film
 It doesn't matter to me

5. Which description do you prefer? (Listen to Clips 5a & 5b)

a) A man is riding a bicycle and a 9-year-old boy is sitting in the back.	b) Father Ah-Shing is riding a bicycle and his 9-year-old son Ah-Boy is sitting in the back.
---	--

6. Why? _____

7a) ‘In regard to audio describing the sound effect about the crash, do you think Clip A1 or Clip A2 is better?’ Play Clip A1 and Clip A2 once.

- Clip A1
- Clip A2

7b) ‘The timing of describing the sound of **bicycle suddenly overturned** is perfect.’ To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

8. Have you seen the film *After This Our Exile* before?

- Yes
- No

Clip B2

Play Clip B2 once only.

9. Which description do you prefer? (Listen to Clips 9.1a & 9.1b; 9.2a & 9.2b)

1a) Angel in a peachpuff silk bathrobe	1b) Angel in a bathrobe
2a) Wong Sir pulls off Angel’s bathrobe. Her fair skin shows.	2b) Wong Sir pulls off Angel’s bathrobe.

10. Why? _____

11. (Not applicable. Deleted.)

12. [Show Clip B1 to the participant before answering this question] Do you think AD should include **filmic language** such as the movement of the camera (e.g. **The camera pans up to show** her feet to her face; **Close up**; **The camera pans to a close-up** of a pinhole camera.)?

- Yes
- No
- No preference

13. When these terms are included, is it easy for you to visualise the descriptions?

- No
- Yes, but with some difficulty
- Yes, easily
- No opinion

Clip C2

Play Clip C2 once only.

Context: Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) officers are investigating a case.

14. How many characters speak in the clip? _____

15. How many characters are male? _____

16. Do you prefer it when the names of the characters are introduced in a group scene before they speak?

- Yes
- No
- No preference

17. Have you seen the film Z Strom before?

- Yes
- No

Appendix H1: Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 3: Post-questionnaire (Chinese)

第三階段 -- 實驗後問卷

1. 我較喜歡由……提供口述影像。

- 一位男性
- 一位女性
- 一位男性和一位女性
- 視乎電影/節目
- 無所謂

2. 我較喜歡: (可選多於一項)

- 透過揚聲器播放的現場口述影像 (例如: 輔導會電影欣賞會的情況)
- 用耳機收聽的現場口述影像(例如: 在劇院的情況)
- 預錄的口述影像 (例如: 在 DVD 或本實驗中的情況)
- 用耳機一次過收聽兩條聲道：預先錄製好的口述影像聲道和電影聲道
- 上述全部
- 沒有太大的偏好

3. 你較喜歡以下哪個描述?

1a) 有吸引力嘅歌手	1b) 擁有一雙長腿，著住短裙嘅歌手
2a) 靚女	2b) 一個眼大大、鼻高高、櫻桃小咀嘅女人
3a) 佢睜大對眼，掰大口	3b) 佢好驚
4a) 佢撇起嘴、雙眼突出	4b) 佢好瞓

5a) 佢皺眉	5b) 佢覺得好困惑	5c) 他皺眉，覺得好困惑
6a) 佢聳聳肩	6b) 她好無助	6c) 她聳聳肩，好無助

4. 請跟著描述做手勢。[研究員請注意：如對，打 [✓]; 如錯，打 [✗]。如參加者手勢錯了，請徵求同拍照。)

1a) 佢做咗個手勢向天發誓	1b) 佢舉起三隻手指向天發誓
2a) 佢做咗個「得咗」嘅手勢	2b) 佢做咗個「得咗」嘅手勢，握拳向下一chok

5. 你在多大程度上同意下列的說法？

(1 - 極不同意; 5 - 極同意)

1) AD 有助對該電影的理解。	1	2	3	4	5
2) 當.....，AD 反而騷擾了我					
2.1) AD 讀得太快	1	2	3	4	5
2.2) AD 讀得太慢及加插不自然的停頓	1	2	3	4	5
2.3) AD 填滿了對話之間的所有空檔	1	2	3	4	5
2.4) AD 和對白重疊了	1	2	3	4	5
2.5) AD 只是和對白的第一、兩個字重疊，而那些字相對來說較不重要，如：連接詞	1	2	3	4	5
2.6) AD 和聲音效果重疊了	1	2	3	4	5
2.7) AD 和歌詞重疊了	1	2	3	4	5
2.8) AD 和螢幕畫面並不是同步，而是在畫面出現前已描述了	1	2	3	4	5
2.9) AD 和螢幕畫面並不是同步，而是在畫面出現後才描述	1	2	3	4	5
2.10) AD 在聲音並未實際發生前，便作出了過早的描述（如：隔了一段時間才有爆炸聲）	1	2	3	4	5
2.11) 其他觀眾發笑，而我卻不知道為何（即是：描述不足）	1	2	3	4	5
2.12) 其他觀眾發笑，而我卻未能和他們同時發笑（即是：描述有延誤）	1	2	3	4	5
2.13) 口述影像員的聲線平淡/單調	1	2	3	4	5
3) AD 應該包含了.....					
3.1) 帶有評價的形容詞（如：漂亮、醜陋）	1	2	3	4	5
3.2) 顏色	1	2	3	4	5
3.3) 不知明的聲音	1	2	3	4	5
3.4) 明喻，例如：這幢大廈有如十隻大象一隻疊一隻般高	1	2	3	4	5
3.5) 電影製作公司的標誌	1	2	3	4	5
3.6) 在時間許可下，講述所有片頭內容	1	2	3	4	5
3.7) 在時間許可下，講述所有片尾的演員和攝製人員名單	1	2	3	4	5
3.8) 口述影像撰稿員的名稱	1	2	3	4	5
3.9) 配音員的名稱（演繹口述影像的那位）	1	2	3	4	5
3.10) 演前簡介*作為補充	1	2	3	4	5
3.11) 電影片尾的製作花絮及NG片段	1	2	3	4	5
3.12) 在DVD裏的製作花絮、NG片段及特別收錄等等	1	2	3	4	5
3.13) 和劇情無關的情節	1	2	3	4	5

*演前簡介 (Audio Introduction) :

- 邊個演咩角色
- 描述特別造型
- 提醒有特別拍攝手法

(1 - 極不同意; 5 - 極同意)

4) AD 的需求評估

我會更頻密去使用AD服務，當AD能於……提供

4.1) 電視	1	2	3	4	5
4.2) 戲院	1	2	3	4	5
4.3) DVD/Blu-ray	1	2	3	4	5
4.4) 劇院(表演藝術，如：舞台劇、舞蹈、歌劇)	1	2	3	4	5
4.5) 博物館(如：太空館、歷史博物館)	1	2	3	4	5
4.6) 藝術展覽/廊(如：畫作、雕塑)	1	2	3	4	5
4.7) 郊遊/參觀(如：主題公園、旅遊景點)	1	2	3	4	5
4.8) 其他：	1	2	3	4	5

5) AD 的用語

我較喜歡…

5.1) 廣東話節目/戲，用廣東話AD	1	2	3	4	5
5.2) 非廣東話節目/戲，用廣東話AD	1	2	3	4	5
5.3) 英語節目/戲，用英語AD	1	2	3	4	5
5.4) 普通話節目/戲，用普通話AD	1	2	3	4	5
6) 我認為香港已有足夠的AD服務提供	1	2	3	4	5

6. 你認有什麼辦法可以有助增加 AD 服務?

(注意: 如果參加者提到有需要立法，請問他是在那方面……)

7. 就 AD 服務日後的發展，請為下列各項按照你個人喜好排序，“1”代表最優先。

電視上播放的電影
電視節目，電影除外
戲院
電影 DVD/Blu-ray
節目 DVD/Blu-ray，電影除外
網上
劇院(表演藝術，如: 舞台劇、舞蹈、歌劇)
博物館(如：太空館、歷史博物館)
藝術展覽/廊(如:畫作、雕塑)
郊遊/參觀(如：主題公園、旅遊景點)

8. 其他有關現有 AD 服務的意見/建議

a) 對於改進香港現有的 AD 服務，你有沒有建議？

b) 有沒有任何其他意見？

9. 對於將來有關 AD 服務的研究，你有興趣參與嗎??

- 有
 沒有

是次問卷已完成

****敬請注意，請勿和第三者討論是次研究的內容****

多謝你的寶貴時間及參與。

Appendix H2: Part 2 AD Experiment–Stage 3: Post-questionnaire (English)

Stage 3: Post-questionnaire

1. I prefer when the audio description is read by:

- a man
- a woman
- a man and a woman
- depends on the film/programme
- it doesn't matter to me

2. I prefer: (You can choose more than one option.)

- live AD via loud speakers (e.g. situation in film showing session at HKSB)
- live AD via headset (e.g. situation in theatre)
- pre-recorded AD (e.g. on DVD/in this experiment)
- pre-recorded AD via headset, i.e. you will hear both the AD sound track and the film sound track via headset
- all of the above
- no strong preference

3. Which description do you prefer?

	1a) attractive singer		1b) long-legged singer in a miniskirt
	2a) beautiful woman		2b) woman with big eyes, a straight nose and a small cherry mouth
	3a) Her eyes and mouth wide open.		3b) She looks frightened .
	4a) His lips curl and eyes protrude.		4b) He is angry .

	5a) He frowns.		5c) He frowns, feeling strange .
	6a) She shrugs.		6c) She shrugs, a bit helpless .

4. Please, show the described gesture. (To researcher only, if correct, put a tick [✓] in the box; if wrong, put a cross [✗]. Ask for their permission; take photos of their gesture if it is wrong.)

	1a) He swears to God with a hand gesture.		1b) He swears to God, raising his three middle fingers.
	2a) He makes a ‘Yes’ gesture.		2b) He makes a ‘Yes’ gesture with his fist clenched and swung downward.

5. To what extent do you agree with the statements below?

(1 – Strongly disagree; 5 – Strongly agree)

1) AD helps film comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
2) It bothers me in AD when:					
2.1) the AD is read too fast	1	2	3	4	5
2.2) the AD is read too slowly and includes unnatural pauses	1	2	3	4	5
2.3) the AD fills all pauses between dialogues	1	2	3	4	5
2.4) the AD overlaps with dialogue	1	2	3	4	5
2.5) the AD overlaps with only the first one or two words of dialogue and the words are relatively unimportant (e.g. conjunctions/connectives)	1	2	3	4	5
2.6) the AD overlaps with sound effects	1	2	3	4	5
2.7) the AD overlaps with the lyrics of a song	1	2	3	4	5
2.8) the AD is not synchronised with the picture and is read <i>before</i> what is described	1	2	3	4	5
2.9) the AD is not synchronised with the picture and is read <i>after</i> what is described	1	2	3	4	5
2.10) the AD describes a sound too early, before it actually happens (e.g. a long gap until a bomb explodes)	1	2	3	4	5
2.11) others laugh but I don't know what's happened on the screen to cause it (i.e. a lack of description)	1	2	3	4	5
2.12) others laugh first and I can't laugh at the same time with them (i.e. delay in description)	1	2	3	4	5
2.13) the audio describer speaks in a flat tone/monotone	1	2	3	4	5
3) AD should include...					
3.1) evaluative adjectives (e.g. beautiful, ugly)	1	2	3	4	5
3.2) colours	1	2	3	4	5
3.3) unidentifiable sounds	1	2	3	4	5
3.4) similes, e.g. <i>a building as tall as 10 elephants put one on top of another</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3.5) logo of the film studio	1	2	3	4	5
3.6) all opening titles, time permitting	1	2	3	4	5
3.7) all closing credits, time permitting	1	2	3	4	5
3.8) the AD writer's name (the one who wrote the AD script)	1	2	3	4	5
3.9) the voice talent's name (the one who performs the AD)	1	2	3	4	5
3.10) an audio introduction (AI) as a complement	1	2	3	4	5
3.11) gag reels/behind-the-scenes clips at the end of the film	1	2	3	4	5
3.12) gag reels/behind-the-scenes clips and special features on DVD	1	2	3	4	5
3.13) aspects that are irrelevant to the plot	1	2	3	4	5

(1 – Strongly disagree; 5 – Strongly agree)

4) AD Needs Analysis					
I would use AD services more often if they were available...					
4.1) on TV	1	2	3	4	5
4.2) in the cinema	1	2	3	4	5
4.3) on DVD/Blu-ray	1	2	3	4	5
4.4) in theatres (performing arts, e.g. stage dramas, dances, operas)	1	2	3	4	5
4.5) in museums (e.g. Space Museum, Museum of History)	1	2	3	4	5
4.6) at art exhibitions/galleries (e.g. for paintings, sculptures)	1	2	3	4	5
4.7) on outings/visits (e.g. theme parks, sightseeing hot spots)	1	2	3	4	5
4.8) Other:	1	2	3	4	5
5) Language of AD					
I prefer ...					
5.1) Cantonese AD for Cantonese programmes/films	1	2	3	4	5
5.2) Cantonese AD for non-Cantonese programmes/films	1	2	3	4	5
5.3) English AD for English programmes/films	1	2	3	4	5
5.4) Putonghua AD for Putonghua programmes/films	1	2	3	4	5
6) I think there is enough provision of AD in Hong Kong	1	2	3	4	5

6. How do you think the provision of AD could be boosted?

(Remark: If the participant thinks there is a need for legislation, ask: in which areas...)

7. Regarding future development of AD services, please rank the following items in terms of your PRIORITY, '1' being the highest priority.

for films on TV
for programmes other than films on TV
in cinemas
for films on DVD/Blu-ray
for programmes other than films on DVD/Blu-ray
on the internet
in theatres (performing arts, e.g. stage dramas, dances, operas)
in museums (e.g. Space Museum, Museum of History)
at art exhibitions/galleries (e.g. for paintings, sculptures)
on outings/visits (e.g. theme parks, sightseeing hot spots)

8. Further Comments/Suggestions on current AD services

a) Do you have any suggestions to improve the current AD services in Hong Kong?

b) Any other comments?

9. Would you like to participate in future research in regard to AD services?

- Yes
 No

This is the end of the survey.

****Please be reminded that**
you should NOT discuss the content of this research with a third party.**

Thank you very much for your time and help.

Appendix I: AD Scripts for Clips A1 and A2

Clip A

Extracted from 父子 [*After this our exile*] (Patrick Tam 2006)

Duration: 1:08

Time code	AD Script of Clip A1 (Group 1)	AD Script of Clip A2 (Group 2)
00:00	一架單車喺鄉間小路上慢駛 [A bicycle is going slowly on the road in countryside]	一架單車喺鄉間小路上慢駛 [A bicycle is going slowly on the road in countryside]
00:06	一個白色手携風車，迎風旋轉 [A white hand-held windmill is rotating]	一個白色手携風車，迎風旋轉 [A white hand-held windmill is rotating]
00:09	風車背後係一片綠色嘅樹叢 [Behind the hand-held windmill is a green grove]	風車背後係一片綠色嘅樹叢 [Behind the hand-held windmill is a green grove]
00:13	一個男人踩單車，一個9歲男仔坐喺佢後面 [A man is riding a bicycle and a 9-year-old boy is sitting in the back.]	爸爸阿勝踩單車，佢9歲嘅仔Ah-Boy，坐喺佢後面。 [Father Ah-Shing is riding a bicycle and his 9-year-old son Ah-Boy is sitting in the back.]
00:18/00:20	(00:18) 男仔一隻手拎風車，另一隻手緊緊攬住個男人 [The boy holds the hand-held windmill in one hand and his other hand holds the man tightly]	(00:20) Ah-Boy 一隻手拎風車，另一隻手緊緊攬住爸爸 [Ah-Boy holds the hand-held windmill in one hand and his other hand holds his father tightly]
00:24		單車突然翻倒 [The bicycle suddenly overturned]
00:26	單車突然翻倒 [The bicycle suddenly overturned]	
00:28	男仔扎醒，佢望一望間房，地下一角嘅座枱風扇 [The boy wakes up, feeling scared. He looks around the room and there is a fan at the corner on the floor]	Ah-Boy 扎醒，佢望一望下間房，地下一角嘅座枱風扇 [Ah-Boy wakes up, feeling scared. He looks around the room and there is a fan at the corner on the floor]
00:36	(慢) 佢喺床舖起身，望出窗外，天色昏暗 [(Slow) He sits up and looks outside. The sky is dark]	(慢) 佢喺床舖起身，望出窗外，天色昏暗 [(Slow) He sits up and looks outside. The sky is dark]
00:47	樓下飯廳，一個長髮女人坐喺飯枱前，有D南洋糕點 [The floor below is the dinning room. A woman with long hair sits at the dinning table. There are some Nanyang pastries.]	樓下飯廳，佢媽媽亞蓮坐喺飯枱前，有D南洋糕點 [The floor below is the dinning room. His mother Ah-Lin with long hair sits at the dinning table. There are some Nanyang pastries.]
00:54	男仔由樓梯落嚟，佢卒吓對眼，望住個女人 [Coming down from the stairs, the boy rubs his eyes and looks at the woman]	Ah-Boy 由樓梯落嚟，佢卒吓對眼，望住媽媽 [Coming down from the stairs, Ah-Boy rubs his eyes and looks at his mother]
01:06	媽媽遞糕點俾Ah-Boy [Mother gives some cakes to Ah-Boy]	媽媽遞糕點俾Ah-Boy [Mother gives some cakes to Ah-Boy]

Appendix J: AD Scripts for Clips B1 and B2

Clip B

Extracted from Z 風暴 [Z Storm] (David Lam 2014)

Duration: 1:06

Time code	AD Script of Clip B1 (Group 1)	AD Script of Clip B2 (Group 2)
00:04	澳門霓虹燈下，黃 sir 嚰酒店房，赤裸上身，食住雪茄，訓係床上。 [In Macau, under the neon lights, Wong Sir is in a hotel room. His upper body is naked. Smoking cigar. Lying in the bed.]	澳門霓虹燈下，黃 sir 嚰酒店房，赤裸上身，食住雪茄，訓係床上。 [(Slow) In Macau, under the neon lights, Wong Sir is in a hotel room. His upper body is naked. Smoking cigar. Lying in the bed.]
00:12	Angel 著住件桃紅色絲質浴袍，喺廁所出黎，鏡頭由腳向上移影到佢塊面。 [Angel, in a peachpuff silk bathrobe, comes out from the bathroom. The camera pans up to show her from her feet to her face.]	Angel 著住件浴袍，喺廁所出黎。 [Angel, in a bathrobe, comes out from the bathroom.]
00:20	Angel 行埋黃 Sir 度，坐係床邊，低頭 [Angel walks towards Wong Sir and sits on the bed, lowering her head]	Angel 行埋黃 Sir 度，坐係床邊，低頭 [Angel walks towards Wong Sir and sits on the bed, lowering her head]
00:32	黃 sir 係床邊櫃筒，拎左幾疊一千蚊紙出黎 [Wong Sir takes out a few piles of 1000 bank notes from a drawer]	黃 sir 係床邊櫃筒，拎左幾疊一千蚊紙出黎 [Wong Sir takes out a few piles of 1000 bank notes from a drawer]
00:43	一疊一疊扱向 Angel 塊面，Angel 避開 [throws them in Angel's face one by one. She dodges]	一疊一疊扱向 Angel 塊面，Angel 避開 [throws them in Angel's face one by one. She dodges]
00:50//00:53	(00:50) 黃 sir 一手扯開 Angel 件浴袍，佢露出白滑肌膚，Angel 雙手縮喺胸前。 近鏡 ，黃 sir 全身壓住 Angel 落床。 鏡頭 pan 去床頭擺設，一個針孔攝錄機嘅大特寫 [Wong Sir pulls off her bathrobe. Her fair skin shows. Close up. He forces himself on her in bed. The camera pans to a close-up of a pinhole camera.]	(00:53) 黃 sir 一手扯開 Angel 件浴袍，Angel 雙手縮喺胸前。黃 sir 全身壓住 Angel 落床。 床頭擺設有個針孔攝錄機 [Wong Sir pulls off her bathrobe and forces himself on her in bed. There is a pinhole camera.]

Appendix K: AD Scripts for Clips C1 and C2

Clip C

Extracted from Z 風暴 [Z Storm] (David Lam 2014)

Duration: 1:10

Time code	AD Script of Clip C1 (Group 1)	AD Script of Clip C2 (Group 2)
00:01	(快) ICAC 辦公室 白板係人物關係圖 [(fast) ICAC Office, relationship chart on the whiteboard]	(快) ICAC 辦公室 白板係人物關係圖 [(fast) ICAC Office, relationship chart on the whiteboard]
00:04	江蕙玲，走咗 [Wai Ling Kong passed away]	江蕙玲，走咗 [Wai Ling Kong passed away]
00:06	張強，被破壞 [Keung Cheung's office was vandalised]	張強，被破壞 [Keung Cheung's office was vandalised]
00:08	陳智才，意外死亡 [Chi Choi Chan died in an accident]	陳智才，意外死亡 [Chi Choi Chan died in an accident]
00:10		安 Sir 話 [On Sir says]
00:23	陸 Sir 拎起間尺指示 [Luk Sir takes a ruler and points at the chart]	陸 Sir 拎起間尺指示 [Luk Sir takes a ruler and points at the chart]
00:43		Tammy 話 [Tammy says]
00:55		(快)Joe 話 [(fast) Joe says]
01:04		細良話 [Siu-leung says]
01:08		安 sir 話 [On Sir says]

Appendix L: DVD including all the six clips of the AD reception study

Group 1 (3 clips): Clips A1, B1 and C1

Group 2 (3 clips): Clips A2, B2 and C2

Appendix M: English-Chinese Glossary of Terms Related to AD

English Term	Chinese Term	Definition
Audio describer/Descriptor	口述影像員	a person who describes an audiovisual production, live performance or exhibit (e.g. artwork) to make them accessible to audiences with visual impairments; writes an AD script and also voices it
Audio Description (AD)	口述影像	the translation of visual and sound elements contained in audiovisual programmes, as well as in the performing and visual arts, into verbal elements, thus making these works accessible to audiences with visual impairments
Audio description editor	口述影像審稿員	a person who revises AD scripts for quality control
Audio description quality evaluator	口述影像質量評估員	a person who evaluates the quality of AD and provides feedback for improvement
Audio description (script) writer	口述影像撰稿員	a person who writes an AD script to describe an audiovisual production, live performance or exhibit (e.g. artwork) but does not voice it

Audio description user	口述影像使用者	a person who uses AD to assist comprehension of what is being screened or performed. Users are mainly blind or partially sighted
Described tour	口述影像導賞團	a guided tour with the provision of AD for exhibitions (e.g. in museums, art galleries) or outdoor visits
Impromptus audio description	即席口述影像	a live description delivered right on the spot of an activity or event, without any preparation
Live audio description	現場口述影像	a running description of an audiovisual production, live performance, exhibit (e.g. artwork) or as part of a described tour
Pre-recorded audio description	預錄口述影像	a recorded AD sound track commonly found on DVDs and nowadays on video on demand (VoD) platforms or a recording of AD mixed in the original sound track of audiovisual productions
Voice talent	聲音演繹	a person who delivers AD, either live or pre-recorded, using the script written by someone else