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## THE LANGUAGE OF ART IN TIMES OF DANGER<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Museums must communicate with visitors in a simple manner, which includes the use of plain language, language/text that is easy to read and understand, and audio descriptions, especially during emergencies. The disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the migration crisis have combined to make achieving this aim more difficult. The article briefly defines and describes these three communication strategies – plain Polish, easy-to-read text and audio description – before conducting a detailed analysis of a description of the Museum of the City of Lodz (Main Hall) interiors in two forms: an audio description and easy-to-read text, and making a comparative study of the two.

**Keywords:** plain language, easy-to-read and understand text, audio description, Polish language, Museum of the City of Lodz

The COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the migration crisis have heightened our focus on language and ethical communication. In times of danger, chaos and uncertainty, we attempt to manage challenging situations by using simple and clear language, which extends to the language of art and the language used by museums. During such times, museums should communicate with visitors in straightforward ways, such as through plain language, easy-to-read text (ETR), or audio description (AD).

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<sup>1</sup> The article is a result of the project “Increasing the accessibility of works of art through the use of plain, easy to read and understand language within audio description”, Initiative of Excellence – Research University (IDUB), Grants for Experienced Researchers, project no. 12/IDUB/ODW/2021.

It is important to note that plain Polish has been evolving since the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. This language approach is primarily audience-oriented, characterised by a clear text layout, simple syntactic structures and straightforward vocabulary. To date, simple Polish has been studied and implemented in functional texts (but can also be applied to cultural ones), primarily by the Laboratory of the Simple Polish Language at the University of Wrocław, where scholars have been researching text simplification methods since 2010, developing guidelines for plain Polish (a standard for a simple official language) and evaluating text comprehensibility.

In Poland, there are various tools designed to measure and simplify the intelligibility of the Polish language, such as *Jasnopis*<sup>2</sup> (2012, SWPS University), which assesses the difficulty of a given text, and *Logios*<sup>3</sup> (2010, Logios), the first Polish application that simplifies texts. In *Jasnopis*, you can paste text ranging from 100 words to 1,800 characters for analysis (in the paid version, longer texts can be analysed and automatically simplified). Users can also select additional filters, such as the education level, age and a range of suggested corrections, like synonyms or hypernyms. The application displays the text's difficulty class on a scale from 1 to 7, accompanied by a brief description, highlighting fragments that may be difficult for the recipient to understand. These passages are marked using different colours corresponding to various Fog Index levels. For linguistic analysis of texts, *Jasnopis* uses natural language processing tools, including the morphological analyser *Morpheus 2* and the disambiguation tagger *Concraft2*, and has incorporated GPT Chat's automatic text simplification function since 2023.

*Logios*, on the other hand, uses a proprietary Plain Language Index algorithm to determine the percentage of plain language in a text, measuring ten controllable style features. *Logios* has analysed 4,000 clear texts to create this index. Before analysis, users can specify the type (e.g., email, website, social media, contract) and genre (e.g., official, scientific, press) of the text and select parameters to be examined (e.g., terms, pronouns, sentence length, audience type, or formal tone) for better diagnosis. *Logios* has two applications: *Badacz*, which allows users to monitor language with audits and generate reports, and *Redaktor*, which supports employees in their daily writing tasks, simplifies text and educates. *Logios* is mainly used to simplify communication in companies, especially in the four most challenging Polish industries: banking, insurance, energy and telecommunications.

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<sup>2</sup> *Jasnopis*, <https://www.jasnopis.pl/> (15.05.2024).

<sup>3</sup> *Logios*, <https://logios.dev/> (15.05.2024).

Easy-to-read and easy-to-understand text, as the name implies, is used for written content but can also be applied to spoken language. ETR texts employ short, commonly known words and short sentences. They also incorporate graphics to illustrate and facilitate understanding, use large fonts, and ensure good contrast. The first Polish easy language texts were published in 2002 in the magazine *Spoleczeństwo dla Wszystkich* (Society for All) and were primarily created for people with intellectual disabilities. However, ETR is also beneficial for the visually impaired, elderly, deaf and foreigners. ETR standards are being developed by organisations such as Inclusion Europe, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled Persons, and the Polish Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability. In 2009, Inclusion Europe developed the European easy-to-read standard. In 2010, the Polish Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, a member of the Inclusion Europe network, published the Polish version of the guidelines *Informacja dla wszystkich* (Information for All)<sup>4</sup>. Between 2014 and 2016, Agnieszka Przybyła-Wilkin conducted the “Guidelines for the Polish Easy-to-Read Model” project as part of her doctoral thesis. Her research focused on understanding grammatical structures used by people with the Down syndrome. The outcome of the research includes guidelines for creating easy-to-read informational texts for this group<sup>5</sup>. She has developed, among other things, *Poradnik dla autorów łatwych tekstów*<sup>6</sup> (A Guide for Authors of Easy-to-Read Texts).

The terms “plain Polish” and “easy-to-read and understand text” are often confused at a general public level, but not among researchers and NGOs focused on this area. As we have already seen, the two concepts function separately in scientific research and publications, target different audiences, and differ in form and purpose. Let us also emphasise that the guidelines for plain Polish include fewer restrictions on language and text style (the language is less formalised), compared to easy-to-read and understand texts. Additionally, plain Polish is more widely recognised and accepted in Poland, with a broader impact range. In contrast, easy-to-read and understand texts have received less publicity and research, and there is often an associated stigma and resistance to their use among those without in-depth knowledge of the subject. A common misconception is that these texts oversimplify and flatten information.

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<sup>4</sup> B. E. Abramowska (ed.), *Informacja dla wszystkich*, Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym, Warszawa 2012 [2010].

<sup>5</sup> A. Przybyła-Wilkin, *Badanie naukowe - składnia polskiego tekstu łatwego do czytania dla osób z zespołem Downa*, <https://sites.google.com/uw.edu.pl/badanieltacz/strona-glowna> (3.06.2024).

<sup>6</sup> A. Przybyła-Wilkin, *Poradnik dla autorów łatwych tekstów*, <https://sites.google.com/uw.edu.pl/badanieltacz/poradnik> (4.06.2024).

Nevertheless, both easy-to-read and understand texts, and simple texts should be publicly available. The need for them has been further emphasised by the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the migration crisis.

At the same time, it is important to emphasise that although the language of audio description, which is a verbal description enabling the reception of visual arts, primarily intended for the visually impaired, is not synonymous with easy-to-read and understand language or plain language, it does share some features with them: for example, relatively simple vocabulary (with explanations for specialised terms), simple syntax and organised information (similar pieces of information grouped). This is primarily because most people find it challenging to understand and retain large amounts of auditory information, and people with visual impairments perceive the world by building mental images from fragments, piece by piece, to form a coherent visual and semantic whole. Initially, easy-to-read and easy-to-understand language referred only to written texts and was intended for people with intellectual disabilities. However, now it is increasingly being used orally and can be aimed at a variety of museum audiences.

Recent research has begun to explore concepts such as simple audio description<sup>7</sup> and easy-to-understand audio description<sup>8</sup>. Researchers are investigating the possibility of using the principles of plain language to simplify audio description and they hypothesise that easy-to-listen-to and easy-to-understand audio description will be better understood by audiences and contribute to the popularisation of AD<sup>9</sup>. They demonstrate that by using easy AD to reduce the amount and complexity of information and language material, the audience would receive an immediate, clear, empathetic and concise message<sup>10</sup>. This would involve following rules like using one sentence per line of text, simple words, and explaining their meanings<sup>11</sup>. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) has developed the SO/IEC DIS 23859-1 standard *Information technology – user interfaces – Part 1: Guidance on making written text easy to read and easy to understand*, according to which easy-to-understand language

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<sup>7</sup> R. Bernabé Caro, P. Orero, *Easy to Read as multimode accessibility service*, “Hermeneus” 2019, no. 21, pp. 53–74.

<sup>8</sup> R. Bernabé Caro, *Easy audiovisual content for all: Easy-to-Read as an enabler of easy, multimodal access services* [PhD thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona], 2020.

<sup>9</sup> R. Bernabé Caro, P. Orero, *Easier audio description. Exploring the potential of Easy-to-Read principles in simplifying AD*, in: *Innovation in Audio Description Research*, eds. S. Braun, K. Starr, Routledge, London, New York 2021, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> C. Taylor, E. Perego, *New approaches to accessibility and audio description in museum environments*, in: *Innovation in Audio Description Research*, eds. S. Braun, K. Starr, Routledge, London, New York 2021, p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

can be applied within existing accessibility services, with “easy-to-understand AD” being one example.

To highlight this research problem, this article will analyse in detail a description of the Museum of the City of Lodz (Main Hall) interiors in the form of an audio description and an easy-to-read text, to then make a comparative study of the two.

The aforementioned descriptions of the Museum of the City of Lodz interiors were created as part of the project “Muzeum na wyciągnięcie ręki”<sup>12</sup> (Museum at Your Fingertips), a result of research conducted at the Department of Art History at the University of Lodz during the academic year 2015-2016. A key element to writing the descriptions was meeting and talking to visually impaired people who were beneficiaries of the Chance for the Blind Foundation, already relatively experienced in assessing and consulting on such descriptions. Their suggestions, combined with the efforts of second-year master’s degree students specialising in art criticism, led to the creation of nine audio descriptions for rooms in the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the City of Lodz “Z dziejów Łodzi. Historia - Kultura - Codzienność” (From the History of Lodz. History - Culture - Everyday Life) at the former palace of manufacturer Izrael Poznański on Ogrodowa Street. The rooms described include the Main Hall and Dining Room, Izrael Poznański’s Study, Mirror Room, Artistic Lounges, the Men’s Room (Władysław Reymont’s Study), a corridor from the private part of the palace, Sitting Rooms from the former residential part (Honey and Pistachio Sitting Rooms), Bedroom and Cooking Room from the former residential part, Small Dining Room (the first room of the Music Gallery), Fireplace Room (the second room of the Music Gallery) and the Garden. Additionally, a guidebook was produced, both as a brochure and an electronic guide, for the permanent exhibition at the Poznański Family Palace, featuring an easy-to-read text with simplified descriptions, written in large type and enriched with colour descriptions (in the book version only)<sup>13</sup>. All these descriptions can be downloaded to a tablet or smartphone.

The clear reduction of the verbal message, which proved essential when blind people evaluated the resulting audio descriptions, is especially noteworthy when observing how it transforms a rich, yet somewhat redundant text typical of an art historian using a schematic audio description, into a heavily reduced and simplified version suitable for people with mental disabilities

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<sup>12</sup> The “Muzeum na wyciągnięcie ręki” (Museum at Your Fingertips) project was implemented with financial support from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage under the “Accessible Culture” programme (2015).

<sup>13</sup> Muzeum Miasta Łodzi, *Wizyta*, <https://muzeum-lodz.pl/wizyta/dostepnosc/> (14.06.2024).

and small children. These simplified descriptions were also supplemented with a glossary of more difficult terms.

Below, we present an example of an audio description for the Main Hall of the Museum of the City of Lodz in three versions: the original version created by an art history student at the University of Lodz, the final official version posted on the Museum's website and easy-to-read text. This makes it possible to analyse the differences between them.

Below is the full description of the Hall by student Michał Cieślak, one of the participants in the project:

Just behind the entrance to the Museum of the City of Lodz is a small vestibule. To the right, you will find the entrance to the ticket office, and to the left, a reception window. Opposite is a large brown glass door leading into the hall. The hall is a spacious, two-storey room, roughly rectangular in shape. Its main feature is a stately staircase. The lobby gallery from the first floor is supported by three massive bronze pillars. The hall is illuminated by a large stained-glass skylight on the ceiling, although it is not strongly lit. On the ground floor, up to the middle of the first floor, the walls are lined with panelling in brown tending into red. The floor is grey. In the middle of the right-hand wall is a gas fireplace made of grey stone, adorned with a plant and floral ornament. The fireplace's decoration includes the letter P, the monogram of Izrael Poznański. This is a kind of coat of arms of the owner of the Palace, appearing repeatedly throughout the interior design. Above the fireplace is a painting on ceramic tiles. It depicts a landscape – a river and the surrounding vegetation. Along the right-hand wall, there is a bench, and behind it, a high, double-leafed, dark brown glass door leading to the Gallery of Polish Masters. Opposite the door, under the stairs, is a cloakroom. If you turn towards the front door, you will find a small brown wooden table with chairs to the right, approximately opposite the fireplace and the painting. Under the table, there is a red rug with floral motifs. Above the table is a television. To the left of the table is a sculpture of a female nude. In the immediate vicinity of the sculpture, to its left, is the staircase leading to the first floor of the Museum. Made of oak wood, the wide stately staircase is lined with a red carpet. It turns to the right and is interrupted by a landing at mezzanine level. The railings are carved – there are Art Nouveau motifs in the finials of the posts decorating the staircase. Having climbed the stairs, on the first floor one can see the gallery surrounding the hall on three sides; from the gallery, one can enter other rooms. To the left of the staircase are three windows adorned with red curtains. The upper part of the hall is in dark brown and red tones. Both the wallpaper on the walls and the carpet are dark red. The hall's upper portion features smooth brown pilasters. Opposite the staircase, another female statue can be admired<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> A. Pawłowska, J. Sowińska-Heim, *Audiodeskrypcja dzieł sztuki. Metody - problemy - przykłady*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2016, pp. 85-86. In this and in the following passages, emphasis is added by us.

In the following section of the article, we present the final version of the same description for comparison. This description, along with others, was created in collaboration with the museum coordinator, Paulina Długosz, from the Dissemination and Education Department of the Museum of the City of Lodz, and a group of consultants with visual impairments.

You are in the Museum of the City of Lodz. Just behind the main entrance is a vestibule. To its right you will find the entrance to the ticket office, and to the left is a reception window. Opposite is a large brown glass door leading into the hall.

The hall is a spacious room extending over two storeys. It is rectangular in shape, measuring 10 by 13 metres. Its main feature is a stately staircase. It leads to the upper arcaded gallery, supported on the ground level by three bronze pillars. The hall is illuminated by a large skylight on the ceiling and three windows at both ground floor and gallery levels. Despite this, the hall is not very bright. Up to halfway up the first floor, the walls lined with panelling in brown tending towards red. The stone floor is grey.

In the middle of the right-hand wall stands a gas fireplace made of grey stone, with plant and floral motifs. The fireplace's decoration includes the letter P, the monogram of Izrael Poznański. Above the fireplace - a painting on ceramic tiles, depicting a landscape - a river and the surrounding vegetation, with distant figures walking. Along the right wall is a bench. Behind it is a tall, double-leafed, dark brown door leading to the Gallery of Polish Masters. Opposite the door, under the stairs, a cloakroom. To the left, in a small alcove, is a second bench.

Opposite the main entrance, a small brown table and chairs. Underneath is a red rug with a pattern. To the left of the table is a sculpture depicting a female nude. To the left of it is a stately staircase leading to the first floor. Wide, made of oak wood and lined with a red patterned carpet. It turns to the right and is interrupted by a landing at mezzanine level. Carved railings - in the finials of the posts, floral motifs with curved Art Nouveau lines. On the first floor, a gallery surrounds the hall on three sides. From here, one can go to four exhibition rooms: the study, the dining room, artistic lounges, and the mirror room. The gallery maintains a similar style to the ground floor. The dominant colour scheme is dark, broken by the red of the carpet and woven wallpaper. Paintings from the collection of the Museum of the City of Lodz are displayed on the walls.

From the ground floor lobby to the left of the main entrance, a corridor leads to the temporary exhibition gallery and café. We recommend starting your visit with the interiors on the first floor<sup>15</sup>.

Let us compare the two descriptions. In the final version, one sentence was added at the beginning ("You are in the Museum of the City of Lodz") and two sentences at the end ("From the ground floor lobby to the left of the main entrance, a corridor leads to the temporary exhibition gallery and café. We re-

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<sup>15</sup> Muzeum Miasta Łodzi, *Hol (wstęp)*, <https://muzeum-lodz.pl/wizyta/dostepnosc/> (14.06.2024).

commend starting your visit with the interiors on the first floor”). Additionally, the rooms accessible from the gallery were clarified, changing “other rooms” to “four exhibition rooms: the study, the dining room, artistic lounges and the mirror room”. These changes were made to reflect that the hall description is the first introductory segment initiating the tour of the Museum. Initially, students focused on descriptions of specific rooms without linking them to subsequent ones. In the final version, these descriptions were edited and organised into a coherent sequence following the tour’s direction. Another noticeable difference in the official version is the graphic division of the text into smaller fragments. This division helps organise the description and makes the information easier to assimilate for both the reader (Word file) and the listener, as it guided speakers recording the audio version (MP3 file).

We also observe several clarifications: spatial details (“to the right” replaced with “to its [vestibule’s] right”, “behind the entrance” replaced with “behind the main entrance”, adding information about window locations, as in “at both ground floor and gallery levels”), size (adding dimensions: “measuring 10 by 13 metres”, with the first number representing the length of the wall with the entrance door), material specifics (“stone floor”), and the appearance of the paintings (enhancing “a river and the surrounding vegetation” with “distant figures walking”).

The description is designed to ensure visitors always know which room they are in, understand the tour route and can visualize it (“leads to the [...] gallery” instead of “a gallery”). Clear and straightforward indications of the spatial location of objects are emphasised (“opposite the main entrance” instead of “If you turn towards the front door, you will find a small brown wooden table with chairs to the right, approximately opposite the fireplace and the painting”, “to the left of it” instead of “In the immediate vicinity of the sculpture, to its left”, “On the first floor, a gallery” instead of “Having climbed the stairs, on the first floor one can see the gallery”).

The ordering of the text is also noteworthy, placing all elements relating to one issue in the same sentence (e.g. lighting: “a large skylight on the ceiling and three windows at both ground floor and gallery levels”, whereas in the first version, “skylight” and “windows” appear in separate fragments).

Gerund clauses predominate (“Above the fireplace - a painting” instead of “Above the fireplace is a painting”, “lined with panelling” - “are lined with panelling”, “under the stairs, a cloakroom” - “under the stairs, is a cloakroom”, “table and chairs” - “you will find [...] table with chairs”, “carved railings” - “The railings are carved”).

The professional description also introduced some simplifications, such as changing “two-storey” to “two storeys”. However, despite the overriding principle of avoiding specialised vocabulary, the official version retained terms like “landing”.



We also observe a reduction in redundant elements (e.g. “it” in “it depicts a landscape”), repetitions (from “in dark brown and red colours. Both the wallpaper on the walls and the carpet are dark red” to “The dominant colour scheme is dark, broken by the red of the carpet and woven wallpaper”) and excess adjectives (in the fragment “three massive bronze pillars”, the word “massive” was removed; in “high, double-leafed, dark brown glass doors”, “glass” was removed; in “small brown wooden table”, “wooden” was removed; and “made of oak wood, the wide, stately staircase” was divided into two fragments: “a stately staircase [...] Wide, made of oak wood”). All of this is done to avoid inundating a visually impaired person with an excess of information, particularly details of little relevance to art history (e.g. “Above the table is a television”). The descriptions in the project are targeted at highlighting the most characteristic elements of the museum spaces. This informational restraint also helps visitors with visual impairments to have their own thoughts and arrive at their own conclusions rather than being presented with ready-made solutions (for instance, the sentence “This is a kind of a coat of arms of the owner of the Palace, appearing repeatedly throughout the interior design” concerning the letter P was eliminated).

We now present a section concerning the hall described in easy-to-read text. This version is designed for children, people with mental disabilities and the visually impaired. Below is the electronic version, without illustrations, for comparison with the final version of the audio description later in the article.

## 1 THE HALL

You are in room 1 (the map is on the last page). This room is the hall. The rooms to the left of the hall used to be offices. In the rooms to the right, there was a shop. Anyone could come to the shop and buy materials to sew clothes. There is also a fireplace to the right. On the fireplace, you can see the letter P, which is the first letter of the Poznański family surname. The letter P can be seen in many places in the palace.

Above the fireplace, there is also a painting. Look at the painting up close. It is painted on tiles. The wooden staircase in the hall leads to beautiful rooms upstairs.

Go upstairs to room 2 (the map is on the last page).

### GLOSSARY:

**HALL:** this is the name of the first room after entering a large house or palace. In small houses or apartments, this room is called the hallway.

**TEXT IN THE ILLUSTRATION:** This is a large corridor. This is the way guests of the Poznański family and clients used to enter the palace.

In the middle of the corridor is a fireplace with the letter P on it. The letter P stands for the surname Poznański<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Muzeum Miasta Łodzi, *Przewodnik w formacie tekstu łatwego do czytania*, <https://muzeum-lodz.pl/wizyta/dostepnosc/> (14.06.2024).

Let us now examine the key differences between this description and the audio description (AD). The latter is formatted in large type and is available only in the reading version, accompanied by a map of the ground and first floors. In the brochure version, it also includes illustrations. The description of the hall is preceded by an introduction to the life of Israel Poznański and follows a consistent structure common to most descriptions: “You are in...”. The description features short, simple sentences, fewer gerund clauses, and an imperative tone (“Go upstairs”, “Look [...] up close”), which are absent in the AD. Instead, the AD primarily employs the indicative mode and suggestions/recommendations (e.g., “you will find”, “We recommend starting...”), allowing visitors more freedom to explore and interpret the museum independently, without imposing ready-made solutions, as seen in easy-to-read text examples like “leads to beautiful rooms”, “the letter P can be seen in many places in the palace”, “It is painted on tiles” or “hall: this is the name...” (compared to a much more neutral and distancing “The hall is...”). This is undoubtedly an even more simplified, abbreviated version, full of schematism (room 1, room 2..., the buzzword “beautiful”), and repetitions of nouns (room, hall, shop, fireplace, painting, corridor, letter P), verbs (to be, to be called), and particles (also), grammatically symmetrical structures (“The rooms to the left of the hall used to be...”) / “In the rooms to the right there was...”), identical phrases (“there is also a fireplace” / “there is also a painting”, “to the right” appears twice), as well as identical information (“on the fireplace, you can see the letter P” / “a fireplace with the letter P on it” - “the letter P, which is the first letter of the Poznański family surname” / “The letter P stands for the surname Poznański”). Instead of explaining difficult terms, such as the hall (“The hall is a spacious room”), the easy-to-read text includes a glossary (“HALL: this is the name of the first room [...]”). The description is reduced almost exclusively to listing the objects in the room (fireplace, painting, wooden staircase). There is more emphasis on historical facts (“used to be offices [...] was a shop. Anyone could come to the shop and buy materials to sew clothes”) rather than a detailed description of the room itself. The room is presented in a general sketchy manner and the positioning of objects is approximate and inaccurate (e.g., the location of the fireplace: “on the right” vs. “In the middle of the right-hand wall”; the location of the letter P: “On the fireplace” vs. “The fireplace’s decoration includes”). Only the essential key elements of the Museum are described, such as the historic assemblages marked with the letter P. The simplified description focuses on the sense of sight (“see”, “look”, maps, illustrations), while the AD understandably emphasises spatial awareness, using prepositions of place (right, opposite, above, middle). Instead of verbs like “see” and “look”, it uses “depict” (“depicts”, “depicting”). The simplified description also highlights interesting tidbits (“It is painted on tiles”). Both texts

serve informative and communicative functions. The easy-to-read text also has an impressive function, using the imperative mode and evaluative vocabulary (“beautiful”). The poetic function is absent, though both texts refer to aesthetic experiences, especially the AD, but not directly through the language itself. In the easy-to-read text, the aesthetic experience comes from observing the rooms, objects and illustrations in the brochure, whereas in the AD, it derives from the atmosphere of the museum.

At the Museum of the City of Lodz, visitors can download a guidebook in transparent print (enlarged print with Braille), which includes Braille maps and Tiflographs. The museum also offers gloves for visitors to touch selected artefacts, such as fireplace mantels, candlesticks, chairs, desks and replicas of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century items like a telephone, a polyphone and elements of a woman’s wardrobe. These features greatly enhance the art experience for visitors with visual impairments. However, it seems that a blind or visually impaired person appreciates personal interaction with a sighted person more than the artefacts, e.g., during a guided tour of the exhibition.

Between 2017 and 2020, the Museum of the City of Lodz underwent significant refurbishment to revitalise its historic architectural fabric and adapt the space for visitors with mobility disabilities. This redesign introduced new facilities and exhibitions, including “Łódź w Europie. Europa w Łodzi. Ziemia obiecana wczoraj i dziś” (Lodz in Europe. Europe in Lodz. The Promised Land Yesterday and Today), an exhibition on the history of Lodz, featuring multimedia, interactive games and tactile models accessible to visually impaired visitors.

As of 2024, the museum offers text boards, video recordings of guided tours, audio descriptions (including objects reproduced as Tiflographs) and detailed text in both a leaflet form and as an audio guide. While the Museum of the City of Lodz does not provide a traditional guidebook, each exhibit area includes a leaflet or an audio option for more in-depth information.

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## JĘZYK SZTUKI W CZASACH ZAGROŻENIA (streszczenie)

Muzea powinny komunikować się ze zwiedzającymi w prosty sposób, m.in. poprzez użycie prostego języka, języka/tekstu łatwego do czytania i zrozumienia czy audiodeskrypcji, szczególnie w czasach zagrożenia (potrzebę tę pogłębiły dodatkowo pandemia COVID-19, wojna na Ukrainie i kryzys migracyjny). Artykuł pokrótce definiuje i opisuje te trzy zagadnienia, czyli prostą polszczyznę, tekst łatwy do czytania i zrozumienia oraz audiodeskrypcję, by następnie poddać szczegółowej analizie jeden z opisów wewnątrz Muzeum Miasta Łodzi (Hol główny) w dwóch wersjach: w formie audiodeskrypcji i w wersji tekstu łatwego do czytania oraz dokonać studium komparatystycznego między nimi.

**Słowa kluczowe:** prosty język, tekst łatwy do czytania i zrozumienia, audiodeskrypcja, język polski, Muzeum Miasta Łodzi

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