

Open Access is just the Beginning: Multimodal Data Representations for Disability-Inclusive Datasets

Hannah Ackermans (Universitetet i Bergen)

This presentation will address the media-specific affordances of databases through the lens of accessibility to disabled users. Accessibility considerations make the modalities of databases obvious in ways that would otherwise remain obscured or taken for granted.

I will explore the intersection between databases and accessibility on three levels: metadata, metainterface, and multimedia. In each section, I outline accessibility considerations and its methodological implications. To appeal to the cross-disciplinary audience, I will use examples from a range of databases/datasets in various fields.

Metadata

Although a lot of attention is given to Open Access of data using the FAIR principles (findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability), they are rarely combined with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines' (WCAG) POUR principles (Perceivability, Operability, Understandability, Robustness). How do we combine the two to make data truly accessible?

Metainterface

Communication does not only happen between people, but also between interface layers. Attention to accessibility reveals these layers because it demonstrates how people are accessing the same data using different displays, assistive technologies, and settings.

Multimedia

Making multimedia data accessible tends to mean adding a media modality, such as adding captions or translations to audio. Adding these layers of data can be a valuable exercise to understand one's dataset, as well as create a richer dataset for people using it.

Bringing together these levels, I reflect in the conclusion on ways of accessing knowledge through disability on a technical and a human level.