

Universal design and museum visits

Frederic REICHHART^{A,1} and Aggée LOMO^B

^a*Institut national supérieur de formation et de recherche pour l'éducation des jeunes handicapés et les enseignements adaptés, France*

^b*Université de Strasbourg, France*

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Abstract

This work, based on study cases of museum accessibility policy, aims to describe and to analyze the conception, implementation and the use by visitors of visits proposed by several French museums in Paris (Musée du Quai Branly, Cité de la musique, Louvre museum, ...). The study cases are spring from printing data (promotional leaflets, informations sheets, press releases..) and formals interviews in order to catch the origin, conception and ideology of the visits. They also result from informal interviews and participant observation and immersion to get data about the use by visitors of universal design products, such as the “tactile gallery” at the Louvre Museum and the display named “Touch the music” at the Cité de la musique.

The pre-results highlight that the tactile gallery of the Louvre has been made especially for people with visual impairments, but everyone is welcomed to visit it. This gallery is not really an universal design product, it is more close from the adaptive approach, developed by Stry in 1997 [1] . However, this gallery, which is especially focused on touching, reflects a new way to approach art and to discover sculptures, which is not only based on a visual approach. It demonstrates the possibility to “see with hands and fingers”. The display “ Touch the music” at the Cité de la musique is organized in an universal design way. It appears as a proactive product which is not been made starting from special needs, but which has been realized in a multi sensorial way to discover and enjoy musical instruments.

References

- [1] Stry, Chr., (1997). The role of design and evaluation principles for users interfaces for all. In Proceeding of HCI, 477- 480.

¹ Corresponding Author.