



## Pedagogical Value of Didactic Audiovisual Translation through English Language Learners' perceptions


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<https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/cjes.98779>

**Abstract:** This paper assesses the validity of various modes of didactic audiovisual translation (DAT) in supporting foreign language learning, with a focus on a project conducted throughout 2022 and 2023. A total of 566 participants completed a comprehensive set of tasks, including an Initial Test of Integrated Skills (ITIS), a Final Test of Integrated Skills (FITIS), and a series of 30 piloted lesson plans - 15 for B1 and 15 for B2 levels. Of these, 55 participants additionally completed a delayed post-test consisting of a questionnaire. The data obtained from this questionnaire represent the primary contribution of this study to the field. These lesson plans followed a task-based learning structure and were designed around five modalities: subtitling, voice-over, dubbing, audio description, and SDH, in line with the methodological framework proposed by Talaván and Lertola (2022). Our findings suggest that all DAT modes contributed comparably to the development of language skills, linguistic components, and cross-curricular competences. Notably, revoicing techniques were perceived as particularly beneficial for enhancing oral skills. Participants reported high levels of engagement with the DAT-based project and expressed strong support for its recommendation to other language learners. Although some technical challenges were noted, participants also identified secondary gains in ICT skills. The study offers promising insights into the pedagogical value of DAT methodologies for comprehensive language learning.

**Keywords:** audiovisual translation; didactic audiovisual translation; English language learning; English as a foreign language

**Resumen:** Este artículo evalúa la validez de diversos modos de traducción audiovisual didáctica (TAD) en el apoyo al aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, centrándose en un proyecto llevado a cabo a lo largo de 2022 y 2023. Un total de 566 participantes completaron un conjunto exhaustivo de tareas, que incluía una Prueba Inicial de Destrezas Integradas (PIDI), una Prueba Final de Destrezas Integradas (PFDI) y una serie de 30 planes de clase pilotados - 15 para nivel B1 y 15 para nivel B2. De estos, 55 participantes realizaron además un test diferido consistente en un cuestionario. Estos planes de clase siguieron una estructura de aprendizaje basado en tareas y se diseñaron en torno a cinco modalidades: subtitulación, voice-over, doblaje, audiodescripción y subtitulación para personas sordas y con discapacidad auditiva (SPSDA), de acuerdo con el marco metodológico propuesto por Talaván y Lertola (2022). Nuestros resultados sugieren que todos los modos de TAD contribuyeron de forma comparable al desarrollo de destrezas lingüísticas, componentes lingüísticos y competencias transversales. Cabe destacar que las técnicas de revoicing se percibieron como especialmente beneficiosas para la mejora de las destrezas orales. Los participantes manifestaron un alto nivel de implicación con el proyecto basado en TAD y expresaron un fuerte apoyo a su recomendación para otros estudiantes de lenguas. Aunque se señalaron algunos retos técnicos, los participantes también identificaron beneficios secundarios en el desarrollo de competencias digitales. El estudio ofrece perspectivas prometedoras sobre el valor pedagógico de las metodologías TAD para un aprendizaje de lenguas integral.

**Palabras clave:** traducción audiovisual; traducción audiovisual didáctica; aprendizaje del inglés; inglés como lengua extranjera

**Contents:** 1. Introduction. 2. Theoretical framework. 2.1. Brief history and current state of Audiovisual Translation. 2.2. AVT as a language teaching resource and didactic audiovisual translation nowadays. 2.3. The TRADILEX Project. 2.4. Rationale for software selection. 2.5. Content selection and pedagogical criteria. 3. Methodological framework. 3.1. Task implementation: intralingual translation and DAT tasks. 3.2. Participants. 3.3. Data collection and data analysis. 3.4. Instruments and materials. 4. Results. 4.1. Identifying the preferred DAT mode (O1). 4.2. Identifying the most technically challenging DAT mode (O2). 4.3. Determining the most beneficial DAT mode for linguistic purposes (O3). 4.4. Identifying the participants' perceptions regarding the improvement of specific skills and abilities (O4). 4.5. Verifying the methodology and recommending it (O5). 4.6. Qualitative insights from the participants' justifications. 5. Discussion. 6. Conclusions

**How to cite:** Sabaté-Carrové, M.; Couto-Cantero, P.; Tinedo-Rodríguez, A. J. (2025). Pedagogical Value of Didactic Audiovisual Translation through English Language Learners' perceptions, en *Complutense Journal of English Studies* 33, e98779. <https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/cjes.98779>

## 1. Introduction

We live in a world with a growing consumption of audiovisual content, including advertisements, videos, documentaries, series, interviews and videoconferences. Digital technology plays a crucial role in today's world. This has had an obvious impact on audiovisual translation (AVT) as a field of study both for professional translation and scholarly research. Over the past few years, AVT has expanded and diversified as a discipline, affecting not only professional but also scholarly research. As Chaume (2018) states, "to date, this field of research has grown exponentially, parallel to the production, consumption, interaction with and general interesting audiovisual products. At the same time, translation studies have been growing as a discipline and, consequently, has been influencing audiovisual translation (AVT) research" (p.18).

In the educational field, AVT can also serve as a tool for learning English as a foreign language (EFL). This has led to the emergence of Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT) as a response to this demand (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2022; Talaván & Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023). For the past few years, innovative DAT-based projects have been launched and tested (Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2011; Talaván, 2013; Torralba, 2018). Other research and studies have demonstrated the benefits of AVT for improving fluency (Danan, 2010), pronunciation (Chiu, 2012), and rhythm (Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera, 2015). After these initial experiments, the time was ripe for a comprehensive initiative that would incorporate a wide range of DAT modes for language learning in an integrated environment.

This article presents an assessment of the TRADILEX Project (2020-2023), a research initiative funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, which developed and tested an online platform for learning English as a foreign language through various DAT modes. The study focuses on students' perceptions of the platform and analyses the feedback gathered from the pilot participants. What makes this study novel is that the assessment was conducted several months after the intervention, providing insights into longer-term perceptions—an approach not found in previous research, to the authors' knowledge. Up until now, LeViS and ClipFlair (Sokoli, 2015) have been the most notable platforms specifically aimed at learning a foreign language through DAT. TRADILEX seeks to expand this scope by offering a broader range of tasks and AVT modes. This study analysed the results of a questionnaire completed by fifty-five informants ( $n = 55$ ), all of whom were adult foreign language learners with higher education backgrounds. All participants demonstrated strong motivation to improve their English language skills. We employed a mixed-method approach for this study, combining both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data gathered from the questionnaire.

The results obtained indicated that all the DAT modes contributed to enhancing language skills, components, and cross-curricular competences in a similar manner. Moreover, according to participants' perceptions, revoicing modes appeared to be highly effective for enhancing oral skills. The TRADILEX project offered well-designed lesson plans, ITIS (Initial Test of Integrated Skills) and FITIS (Final Test of Integrated Skills), which included innovative content that fostered motivation. Furthermore, participants expressed interest in recommending this experience to other language learners, and despite encountering technical issues, they also reported secondary improvements in their ICT skills. The study offers promising insights into the pedagogical value of DAT methodologies for comprehensive language learning.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1. Brief history and current state of Audiovisual Translation

The history of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) is intricately connected with the film industry, serving the purpose of reaching a broad audience when audiovisual products are released. AVT, as highlighted by Díaz-Cintas (2001), is considered an essential element of cinema history, facilitating the transmission of cinematic art across different languages and cultures. Its origins trace back to the early 20th century, aligning with the emergence of cinema. Silent movies, despite lacking spoken language, incorporated linguistic information through intertitles, creating a narrative blend of image and language.

Intertitles, as explained by Königsberg (2004), were white text on a black background, offering clarification or additional information alongside images; technological advancements then allowed the incorporation of sound recording, leading to the era of "part-talkies," as observed in Alan Crosland's *The Jazz Singer* (1927), where spoken dialogue and intertitles. Fully spoken films emerged in the late 1920s, exemplified by Brian Foy's

Lights of New York (1928) (Talaván et al. 2016). The challenge then arose to make these films accessible to a wider audience, leading to the options of subtitling or dubbing. In the realm of subtitling, Ivarsson and Carroll (1998) note the historical debate over intralingual subtitles, with claims dating back to 1909 or attributing Denmark as the pioneering country in implementing subtitling in 1929. These technological and linguistic developments underscore the evolution of AVT in tandem with cinematic progress.

In recent decades, technological advances have significantly shaped AVT practices. The development of sound technology and synchronized dialogue in the early 20th century marked a pivotal moment for the film industry that gave rise to dubbing as the main AVT mode in multilingual films. This shift not only expanded the global circulation of films but also gave an answer to the need for linguistic accessibility across different audiences. The rise of dubbing and synchronization techniques must therefore be understood as both a technological innovation and a response to cultural and communicative demands in multilingual contexts (Chaume, 2012; O'Sullivan, 2011).

In the last few decades, AVT has been used as a resource in language learning environments in two different ways. As Talaván (2010) affirmed it can be framed as a task or as a support. When conceived as a task, it means that the principles of pedagogical translation are applied to audiovisual texts with the purpose of making students engage with audiovisual texts in the role of prosumers by creating new texts using different techniques pedagogically adapted from different AVT modes so that learners may produce their own subtitles or dubs. International projects such as LeViS, ClipFlair, or PluriTAV are illustrative examples of this teaching technique known as Didactic Audiovisual Translation. The TRADILEX project has tested the effectiveness of two sequences of 15 lesson plans each, grounded in the principles of task-based learning including an audiovisual translation task as the core of each lesson plan. There are other studies that focus on the benefits of enhancing input with captioned materials (Vanderplank, 1988, 2016). These ones can be considered as a support.

## **2.2. AVT as a language teaching resource and Didactic Audiovisual Translation nowadays**

Audiovisual material has been widely used as a resource in language teaching since the 1980s (Geddes & Sturtridge, 1982; Sherman, 2003; Stemplesky & Aracario, 1990; Tomalin, 1986). Its use in the language classroom has improved students' learning, as it allows them to work with authentic language in class and engage in communicative situations (Buck, 2010; Ghia & Pavesi, 2016; Izquierdo et al. 2017; Navarro-Pablo et al. 2019; Pavesi, 2015). Technological advances have guided the evolution of how we use technology in the classroom, and currently, student-centred approaches emphasize the active role of students in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (Motteternan, 2013).

In this context, for several decades, AVT has been used as a resource in foreign language classes, specifically with subtitling as a supportive element (Duff, 1989; Holobow et al. 1984; Maley & Duff, 1983; Price, 1983; Vanderplank, 1988). More recently, the proactive role of students in subtitling and dubbing videos has proven to have a beneficial effect on language learning, leading to growing interest in Didactic Audiovisual Translation – or DAT – (Wang & Díaz-Cintas, 2022; Zabalbeascoa et al. 2012). LeViS (Sokoli, 2006), ClipFlair (Sokoli, 2015; Soler Pardo, 2020), diverse innovation networks based at the UNED (Talaván et al., 2016; Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2018, 2024), PluriTAV (Martínez-Sierra, 2018; Reverter Oliver et al. 2021) and TRADILEX (Plaza-Lara et al. 2024; Talaván et al. 2024) are clear examples of how DAT which consists of the applications of the principles of pedagogical translation to audiovisual text has become a field of study within Applied Linguistics, with English as the language that has been most studied.

DAT specifically refers to the use of audiovisual translation modes, such as revoicing (dubbing (DUB), audio description (AD) and voice-over (VO)) and captioning (subtitling (SUB) and subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH)), as pedagogical resources in language education (Talaván, 2019a, 2020). In essence, DAT focuses on designing, developing, and implementing educational tasks where students subtitle or dub a video clip using different strategies and available technology, including various applications and software.

Research on the didactic possibilities of DAT in language learning is an interdisciplinary field that integrates applied linguistics, language and literature teaching, translation studies, and education sciences. DAT has shown promising results in enhancing students' communicative competence across primary, secondary, and university levels (Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2021; Bausells-Espín, 2022 and 2024; Beltramello & Nicora, 2021; Bolaños-García-Escribano & Navarrete, 2022; Incalcaterra-McLoughlin, 2019; Torralba et al. 2022; Pintado-Gutiérrez & Torralba, 2022; Soler-Pardo, 2020), while also contributing to the development of digital literacy. Through active subtitling or dubbing of videos, students improve their digital skills, multimodality, and mediation, among other aspects (Martínez-Sierra, 2021). Moreover, DAT's versatility makes it suitable for both in-person and virtual educational environments, which has become particularly relevant in the context of hybrid and remote language teaching methods following the COVID-19 pandemic (Fernández-Costales et al. 2023).

Not only does DAT show promising results in developing students' communicative competence across primary, secondary, and university levels (Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2021; Bausells-Espín, 2022 and 2024; Beltramello & Nicora, 2021; Bolaños-García-Escribano & Navarrete, 2022; Incalcaterra-McLoughlin, 2019; Torralba et al. 2022; Pintado-Gutiérrez & Torralba, 2022; Soler-Pardo, 2020), but it also has significant implications for digital literacy. The active subtitling or dubbing of videos by students facilitates the development of their digital skills, multimodality, mediation, and multilingualism, among other aspects (Martínez-Sierra, 2021; Baños-Piñeiro et al. 2021). Moreover, DAT can be employed in both physical

and virtual educational environments, particularly relevant due to the prevalence of hybrid and non-face to face language teaching methods following the COVID-19 pandemic, as reported in Fernández-Costales et al (2023).

Over the past two decades, empirical research in this field has highlighted the advantages of DAT in foreign language education. Studies have shown that DAT effectively facilitates vocabulary acquisition (Lertola, 2019), and promotes intercultural competence (Borghetti & Lertola, 2014). It also enhances listening comprehension (Ávila-Cabrera, 2022; Navarrete, 2020) and improves writing skills (Ibáñez-Moreno & Escobar, 2021). Beyond its linguistic advantages, the use of DAT extends to crucial educational outcomes that enrich learning on multiple levels. DAT has also been shown to stimulate creativity (Ávila-Cabrera, 2022) and to enhance interaction and motivation in the classroom (Alonso-Pérez, 2019). These methods further support cognitive engagement by activating both higher and lower cognitive abilities, facilitating the connection of prior knowledge to new language input, and encouraging translanguaging practices—using both native and foreign languages interchangeably in the classroom (Baños-Piñero et al. 2021). Furthermore, DAT methodologies contribute to raising social and gender awareness, helping students to engage thoughtfully with diverse perspectives and develop a more nuanced understanding of social dynamics (Ogea-Pozo, 2018, 2020 and 2023). This multifaceted approach positions DAT as a valuable tool not only for language acquisition but also for promoting social learning and inclusivity in educational settings.

Recent studies underscore the benefits of integrated skills approaches (Sánchez-Requena et al. 2022) and explore and confirm the potential of DAT in innovative fields, including speech therapy (Fernández-Costales et al. 2023a). In sum, the validation of DAT as a viable methodology for foreign language learning has gained significant traction in recent years (Talaván et al. 2024). This accumulation of evidence reflects the growing recognition of DAT's transformative role in enhancing education. Additionally, while the general trend has focused on integrated skills, several studies have also demonstrated specific positive effects on language learning at the word and clause levels

### 2.3. The TRADILEX Project

This paper is based on the TRADILEX Project (2020-2023), a project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities that studied the scope and validity of audiovisual translation tools in developing the communicative competence of a foreign language through the analysis of specific sequences of lesson plans which follow the structure proposed by Talaván & Lertola (2022) for intermediate students. The main goal of TRADILEX was to determine the language gains after including the pedagogical use of AVT as a teaching and learning tool. As mentioned before, it is known as DAT. To this end, a thorough methodological proposal (Talaván & Lertola, 2022) was designed including complete tasks which used diverse the adapted techniques from specific AVT modes such as subtitling, dubbing or audio description. These tasks were designed according to the principles of task-based learning to enhance communicative competence in an integrated and differentiated manner.

This approach was piloted with adult students in non-formal educational contexts, especially in modern language institutes of the universities involved. In this regard, the necessary materials were drafted to conduct quasi-experimental research, which brought to the fore a representative indication in support of the potential benefits of this language learning technique. These results were reflected in an online platform that disseminated the use of this didactic resource. Some of the tasks created within the platform were undertaken with the help of a subtitle editor and a web-based voice recorder. It is expected that the benefits will then be shared among the population at large, thereby somehow promoting the development of plurilingualism among citizens who increasingly live their lives (and develop their lifelong learning) in a technological and online context. The target language of the project was English, given the current importance of this language in our globalized world, coupled with the necessity to make more frequent use of it.

### 2.4. Rationale for software selection

The selection of software tools for each DAT mode was made on account of their accessibility, usability, and pedagogical relevance. For captioning tasks (i.e. subtitling and SDH), students used Subtitle Edit, Subtitle Workshop, or Aegisub. These tools allowed precise time-coding, easy manipulation, and beginner-friendly features. For revoicing tasks (i.e. dubbing, voice-over, and Audio Description), tools such as Lightworks and Screencastify were employed.

Participants were trained in the use of each tool through brief tutorials and guidance documents. They were also encouraged to select the software they felt comfortable with. This variability in tool use imitates the flexibility often found in real-world professional environments and contributes to developing the students' digital and technical literacy. However, as noted in the results, the increased complexity of revoicing software may have influenced learner perceptions of task difficulty.

### 2.5. Content selection and pedagogical criteria

The audiovisual materials translated by participants were short, authentic clips (1–4 minutes), and were obtained from English-language media including TED Talks, educational YouTube channels, social campaigns, and interviews. This selection was guided by the following pedagogical criteria: (1) linguistic suitability for learners at the B1–B2 CEFR levels; (2) suitability to the learners' interests and motivations; (3) adaptability to different DAT modes (captioning and revoicing); and (4) inclusion of current, socially relevant topics such as sustainability, inclusion, digital safety, or mental health.



These pedagogical criteria were intended to promote learner engagement, favour vocabulary acquisition, and encourage reflection on intercultural and societal issues. The multimodal and socially contextualized nature of the videos supported the development of transversal skills such as mediation, creativity, and digital competence.

### 3. Methodological framework

The present study reported below attempts to answer the following research question

(RQ): To what extent is the methodological approach based on DAT useful for learning English as a Foreign Language?

The project covers various aspects of language skills from written and oral reception to written and oral production. Due to its wide scope, in this article we have narrowed down the research scope to five key points explored during its implementation. The main objectives (O) of this research are as follows:

- O1. Determine the most effective DAT mode (Subtitling, Dubbing, Audio description, Voice-over, SDH) for participants in learning English.
- O2. Identify the most challenging DAT mode for participants regarding technical issues.
- O3. Assess which DAT mode is better suited for improving oral and written production, as well as oral and written reception skills.
- O4. Examine participants' perceptions regarding the improvement of language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking, Creativity, Mediation, Grammar, and Vocabulary) after participating in the project.
- O5. Verify to what extent the participants' perceptions support TRADILEX as an appropriate platform to learn English as a Foreign Language.

To ensure that the benefits derived from the overall project reach a broader population beyond the immediate study sample, several dissemination strategies have been implemented. The educational materials and tasks developed within the TRADILEX platform are available as open-access resources. This allows teachers, learners, and educational institutions to integrate DAT-based methodologies into their own curricula. The platform includes user-friendly tools such as free subtitle editing and voice-recording tools, designed to support autonomous and classroom learning. Moreover, dissemination efforts have been made in the form of academic publications, workshops, and conference presentations addressed to foreign language instructors at different educational levels. In the long run, partnerships with language centres and public educational bodies may include DAT-based modules into their learning programs.

#### 3.1. Task implementation

During the intervention, participants followed the TRADILEX sequences (<https://www.tradilex.es/secuencias>) for B1 or B2, and engaged in intralingual, interlingual (direct and reverse) and intersemiotic translation tasks –i.e. they translated audiovisual content from English/Spanish into English/Spanish from a variety of TAV modes (subtitling, dubbing, voiceover, audio description and SDH). Every task required from students to engage in processing, reformulating and adapting spoken to written or revoiced language. For example, in subtitling, students condensed dialogue and fitted it into reading speed constraints, by putting it in writing, thereby improving their writing and reading skills. In dubbing and voiceovers, students had to reformulate the original voices and synchronized their speech, thereby improving their speaking and oral reception skills.

Audio description required from them to provide concise vivid descriptions of visual elements, thereby improving their vocabulary, creativity and mediation skills. For SDH, participants had to convey both linguistic and paralinguistic elements (i.e. tone, music, sound effects), thereby promoting their empathy and multimodal skills. All the tasks were carried out using free software (Subtitle edit, Lightworks, Screencastify, and Aegisub). Before starting on a task, participants received brief training on each tool as well as guidance on the linguistic and technical requirements of the DAT mode at hand. Each student completed a series of tasks, which were assessed through peer reviewing and instructor feedback, with an emphasis on both linguistic accuracy and multimodal communication.

#### 3.2. Participants

The study participants were language learners enrolled in various Spanish universities, specifically in language centres or degree programs related to English as a foreign language. Participants were selected through incidental sampling based on accessibility criteria (Marín-Díaz et al. 2017). The study involved students from seven university language centres that had previously collaborated in the TRADILEX pilot phase (2021-2022). Most participants were undergraduate students pursuing enrolled in degrees in fields such as English studies, Modern Languages, or Translation and Interpreting. Although the questionnaire did not include specific items about participants' previous training in translation or AVT, their academic background indicated that some exposure to language-related issues had been present. This data was clear when we verified that they were familiar with subtitling and revoicing as AVT tools.

The total sample size consisted of 55 individuals (N=55) who had participated in the TRADILEX project and accepted to complete this survey several months after the intervention, with 83.6% (N = 46) being female and 16.4% (N = 9) being male. In terms of age distribution, 54.5% (N = 30) fell within the 18 to 30 years age group, 26.3% (N = 13) were between 31 and 24, and 21.8% (N = 12) were above 24 years. As for their academic qualifications and educational background, 5.5% (N = 3) had completed secondary education, while 94.5%

(N = 52) had pursued higher education. These demographic data were relevant to understanding both the digital literacy and pedagogical preferences of participants. For example, younger participants were more comfortable with the platform and reported fewer technical obstacles, whereas older participants were more likely to value the social and ethical dimensions of DAT.

The socio-demographic data was crucial in contextualizing participants' perceptions, since age, educational background, and academic discipline can affect the attitudes towards technological learning, motivation and perceived English improvements. This was relevant when interpreting open-ended responses because translation-related degrees often referenced prior experience with audiovisual tools, whereas others described more generalized challenges.

### 3.3. Data collection and data analysis

For this study, an online questionnaire was developed using Google Forms as the data collection instrument due to its delayed post-test nature. Prior to launching the app (<https://www.tradilex.es/>), a series of pilot studies were carried out among language centres within the universities during 2021 and 2022. The necessary permissions were obtained from the appropriate university authorities involved in the pilot studies for the survey. Any queries from the teaching staff were addressed by phone and email correspondence. Throughout the data collection process, participants were assured of strict confidentiality and anonymity of their involvement, with an understanding that the data would be solely utilized for research purposes. The data collection phase occurred from January to February 2023.

It should be noted that the socio-demographic section of the questionnaire helped contextualize participants' responses across academic background and age groups. These responses allowed a more detailed interpretation of their perceptions regarding the TRADILEX method. The quantitative data from the Likert-scale items were analysed using descriptive statistical methods (frequencies, percentages and mean scores) to identify patterns in participants' perceptions of the different DAT modes and their effects on language learning. The qualitative data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were examined through thematic analysis. This allowed the research team to identify recurring topics and insights related to motivation, skill development and usability. This mixed-methods approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences with the TRADILEX method.

### 3.4. Instruments and materials

The questionnaire was specifically designed to assess the perception of participants involved in the project (See Appendix I). The novelty of this study lies in its ex post facto nature as it was implemented when a considerable span of time passed after the implementation and perceptions in this moment have never been measured in former studies to authors' knowledge. It comprised a sociodemographic section and ten core items. Each of these items followed an answer-plus-justification format: a closed-ended question using either a Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 4) or multiple-choice format was paired with an open-ended prompt that asked learners to elaborate on or justify their responses. This structure enabled the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data within a single instrument. This offered us a richer, more in-depth understanding of learner experiences. Rather than being structured in discrete "blocks", the questionnaire items were thematically organized around key areas such as AVT mode preference, perceived skill development, motivational impact, technical usability, and overall satisfaction with the platform and course design.

Overall, the questionnaire was divided into two main sections: sociodemographic data and perceptions. The sociodemographic section aimed to collect relevant information about the participants, such as age, gender, educational background, and other relevant factors. This contextual information played a crucial role in adequately interpreting and analyzing the data. On the other hand, the perception section consisted of ten items of questions exploring various topics, including the impact of the experience on language acquisition, motivation, and other relevant aspects. To ensure the validity of the instrument, it underwent validation by two external experts in the field. Prior to its implementation, the questionnaire was also piloted with external participants who were not involved in the project. By employing this comprehensive approach, the research team aimed to gain valuable insights into participants' perspectives regarding the project. The research protocol for this study received approval from the Ethics Committee of all universities involved in the study.

## 4. Results

In this section, we describe the analysis of the results based on the previously established objectives. Our first objective (O1) aimed to determine the most effective DAT mode (Subtitling, Dubbing, Audio description, Voice-over, or SDH) in terms of language learning as perceived by the participants. The second objective (O2) focused on identifying the most challenging DAT mode for participants in terms of technical issues. The third objective (O3) was centred around determining which DAT mode was considered most beneficial for improving oral and written production, as well as oral and written reception skills. The fourth objective (O4) aimed to identify the participants' perceptions regarding the improvement of specific skills and abilities (such as Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking, Creativity, Mediation, Grammar, and Vocabulary) after their participation in this project. Lastly, the fifth objective (O5) aimed to verify whether the TRADILEX methodology, topics and contents were suitable for enhancing participants' learning of English as a Foreign Language, and whether it could be recommended to other language learners. Throughout this analysis, we discuss the findings and insights obtained from each objective in relation to our research goals.

### 4.1. Identifying the preferred DAT mode (O1)

First of all, it was of paramount importance to ascertain the participants' preferred DAT mode, which held significant importance in determining the mode that should be given top priority. Figure 1 clearly illustrates the ranking of participants' favourite DAT modes.

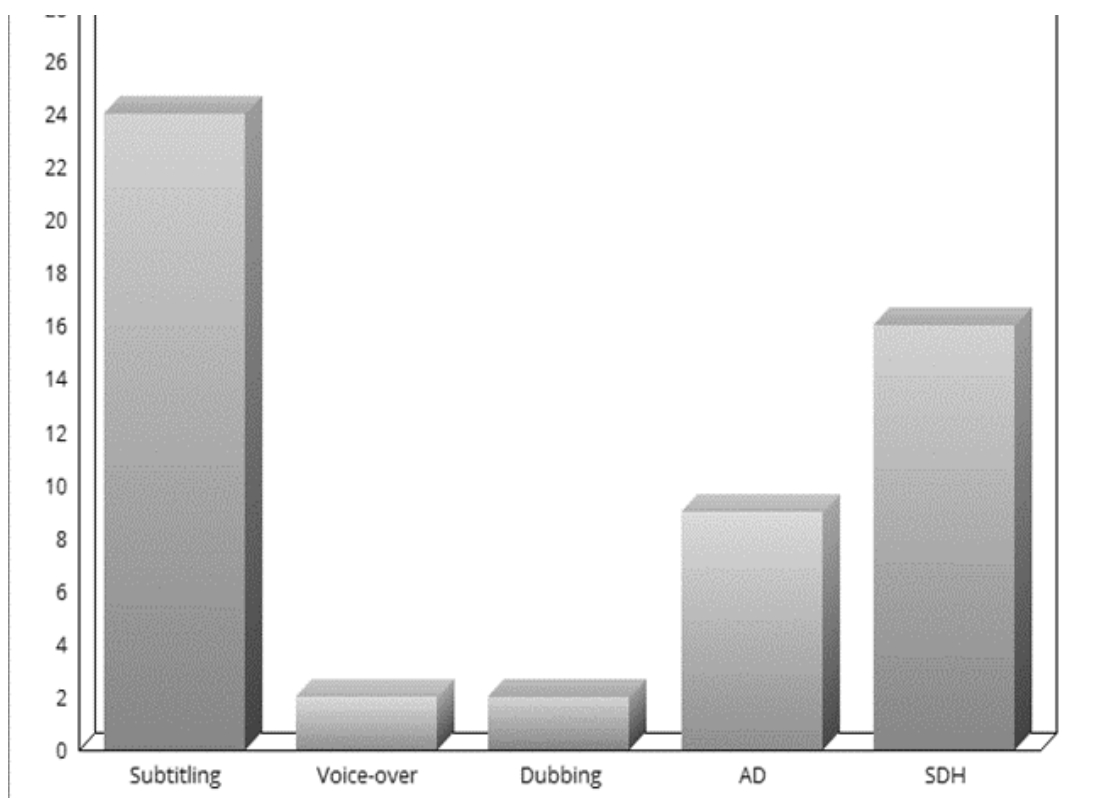


Figure 1. Bar graph illustrating the preferred DAT mode.

Note. The vertical axis represents the number of participants, while the horizontal axis displays the five DAT modes under analysis, Subtitling, Voice-over, Dubbing, AD and SDH. The bars depict the preferred DAT mode of the participants.

The data depicted in Figure 1 show that didactic subtitling emerges as the favoured DAT mode, with 24 participants (43.6%) selecting it as their preferred choice. This preference is attributed to various reasons, as expressed by participants. For example, one participant stated:

[S38] "It's very interesting and stimulating for the mind".

while another mentioned,

[S24] "I can read the contents and improve my level".

The results for didactic voice-over (N = 3, 5.5%) and didactic dubbing (N = 3, 5.5%) were noteworthy, as these modes received a lower level of favourability from participants. This could be attributed to the technical difficulties associated with revoicing. Participants who preferred voice-over expressed their love for translation and their interest in learning about different methods [S54]. Additionally, some participants found the experience of voice-over amusing, as they had not tried it before [S45]. Those who opted for dubbing acknowledged the technical challenges but found them motivating, stating: "I prefer dubbing because I think it's very difficult and I feel a lot of pride with the results" [S23]. This feedback underscored the notion that technical issues and glitches might contribute to the lower preference for these two modes.

Notwithstanding, the case of didactic AD was intriguing. Despite being provided with identical software for all three revoicing modes (voice-over, dubbing, and AD), a larger number of participants (16.4%, N = 9) opted for this DAT mode. They cited reasons such as, "I think that it is the best way to know what is occurring during the scene" [S16], and "I have been exposed to audio description resenting and I think it is a field for me, very creative" [S40]. This preference could be attributed to participants' prior practice with voice-over and dubbing, which made them more familiar with revoicing software. Additionally, participants found the task interesting from a professional perspective and appreciated its social applications in terms of media accessibility.

Regarding didactic SDH, it garnered the preference of 29.1% of participants (N= 16). Participants had positive views on this DAT mode, highlighting that it is challenging and contributes to the development of awareness and knowledge about emotions [S29]. One participant mentioned, "It's a challenge for me because trying to express the emotions and also the tone of the voice is so difficult for explaining it to a deaf person. It's inspiring as well, and it's due to the help we offer to these people with hardening [sic] of hearing. I have found out in subtitling a future job that I enjoy how I never enjoy doing something, except translating of course" [S32].

Overall, the data thus indicated a clear preference for didactic standard subtitling, followed by didactic SDH, didactic AD, and didactic dubbing and didactic voice-over. The discrepancies between captioning DAT modes and revoicing DAT modes may have been influenced by individual preferences or technological factors, but further investigation is necessary to reach a solid conclusion.

It is important to clarify that, although subtitling also involves technical tools, revoicing tasks like dubbing and voice-over were significantly more complex due to the need for precise audio synchronization, timing and voice modulation. In contrast, subtitling tasks involved textual input and basic timecoding, which most participants found more intuitive. Participants were provided with brief training explanations for each tool but audio-editing software (e.g., Lightworks and Screencastify) required more training time. This may explain the lower preference for revoicing DAT modes. In other words, the technical complexity, rather than lack of interest, may have accounted for the lower enthusiasm for revoicing-based DAT modes.

#### 4.2. Identifying the most technically challenging DAT mode (O2)

When considering the aspect of technology, it is crucial to bear in mind how participants perceived the difficulty in using the software they were provided with, as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Software grouped by DAT mode, and the number of participants who reported difficulty in using the software.

DAT mode	N	Software	N
Revoicing	30	Lightworks	12
		Loom	5
		Screencastify	5
		iMovie	8
Captioning	12	Subtitle edit	4
		Subtitle workshop	3
		AEGISUB	5

Based on the data presented in Table 1, it could be concluded that revoicing software posed greater challenges and technical difficulties, whilst captioning software was more user friendly and better received. These findings aligned with the preferences for different DAT modes, emphasizing the significance of addressing technology and seeking ways to enhance the usability of specific DAT software. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that participants reported an improvement in their ICT skills ( $M = 3.364$ ,  $SD = 0.704$ ) because of their participation in the project.

#### 4.3. Determining the most beneficial DAT mode for linguistic purposes (O3)

Exploring the impact of different DAT modes on the development of various language skills, language components and competences from participants' perspective was also of significance. Table 2 provides a frequency breakdown, indicating the number of participants who perceived to have developed a specific skill through different DAT modes. In this regard, intralingual subtitling seemed to be highly effective for enhancing writing skills ( $N = 29$ ), while voice-over appeared to be essential for the improvement of listening skills ( $N = 32$ ). Additionally, intralingual dubbing exhibited interesting effectiveness in terms of developing speaking skills ( $N = 24$ ). In the case of AD, it shows a notable impact on listening skills, and for SDH, it proves to have a remarkable effect ( $N = 31$ ) on improving writing skills.

Table 2. Skills and language components that participants perceive to have developed in function of the DAT modes

DAT mode / Skills and components	Speaking	Listening	Writing	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary	Mediation	Creativity	Translation Skills
Subtitling	11	23	29	14	21	23	13	7	14
Voice-over	24	32	11	3	13	19	11	11	10
Dubbing	24	22	14	8	12	21	15	10	9
AD	25	29	19	6	20	24	18	17	9
SDH	15	29	31	18	24	26	19	16	16

Given the apparent similarities between captioning and revoicing modes, Figure 2 classifies DAT modes into these two large categories to explore their respective impacts on the enhancement of various language skills, language components and competences. By analysing them together, crossing the data yielded more comprehensive and insightful results.

While Figure 2 offers a clear understanding of how participants perceived the development of different skills, enhanced competences, and improved management of language components, it was of uttermost



importance to conduct a detailed statistical analysis to further investigate the significance of these differences. Therefore, a chi-square test was employed in Table 3 to delve into the variations and determine whether they were statistically significant or not.

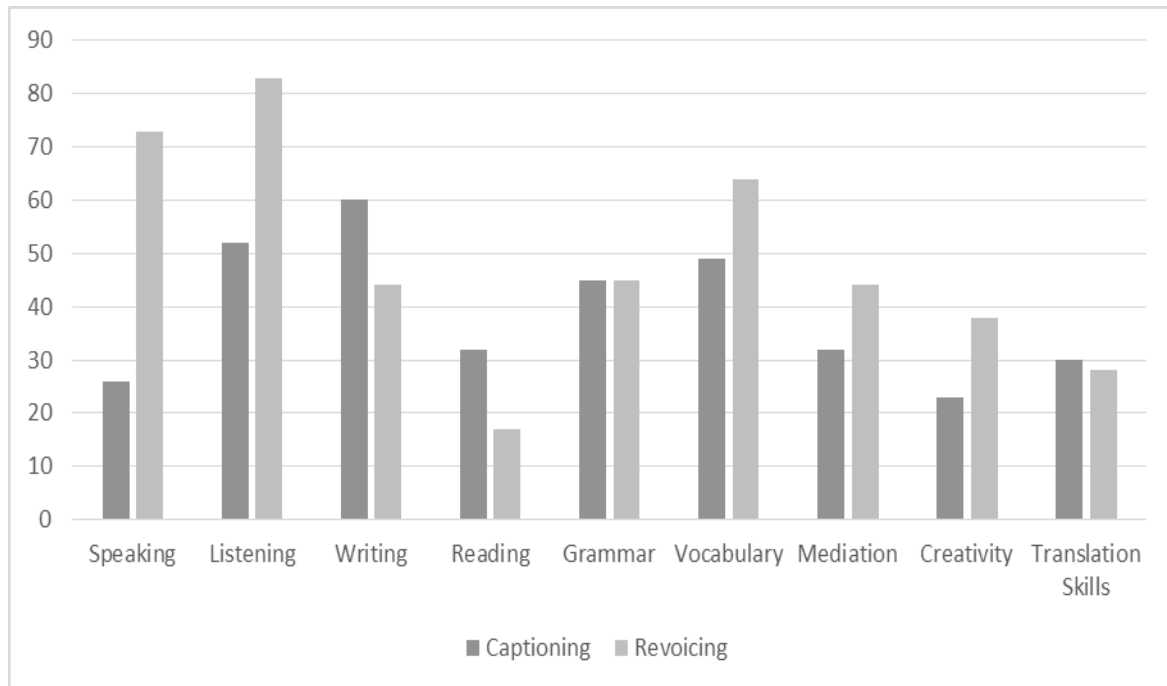


Figure 2. Participants' perceptions on the development of language skills, components, and competences through the two main categories of DAT modes.

Note. The vertical axis represents the number of participants, the horizontal axis displays the language skills, components and competences. The bars depict the preferred DAT category for captioning or revoicing.

Table 3. Chi-square test exploring differences between captioning and (re)speaking DAT modes and participants' perceptions across language skills.

Skill	Measure	Captioning	(Re) Speaking	Total
Creativity	Count	23	38	61
	Standardized residuals	-1.11	1.11	
Grammar	Count	45	45	90
	Standardized residuals	1.12	-1.12	
Listening	Count	52	83	135
	Standardized residuals	-1.53	1.53	
Mediation	Count	32	44	76
	Standardized residuals	-0.43	0.43	
Reading	Count	32	17	49
	Standardized residuals	3.03	-3.03	
Speaking	Count	26	73	99
	Standardized residuals	-3.90	3.90	
Translation	Count	30	28	58
	Standardized residuals	1.16	-1.16	
Vocabulary	Count	49	64	113
	Standardized residuals	-0.25	0.25	
Writing	Count	60	44	104
	Standardized residuals	2.92	-2.92	
Total	Count	349	436	785

A chi-square test was performed with the purpose of assessing the association between DAT modes (categorised as captioning and (re)speaking) and the different language skills. The tests reported that the association was statistically significant as  $\chi^2(8) = 34.92$ ,  $p < .001$ . The standardised residuals shed some light on specific skills, showing that (re)speaking seemed to foster oral production skills, whilst captioning

showed a tendency to be associated with positive perceptions of the improvement of written production and reception. These findings support the hypothesis that the combination of DAT modes follows an integrated skill approach to language learning.

#### 4.4. Identifying the participants' perceptions regarding the improvement of specific skills and abilities (O4)

In addition to analysing frequencies, it was crucial to explore participants' perceptions. Figure 3 illustrates their perception of improvement in reading, listening, writing, speaking, creativity, mediation, grammar, and vocabulary after the intervention, as measured on a Likert scale.

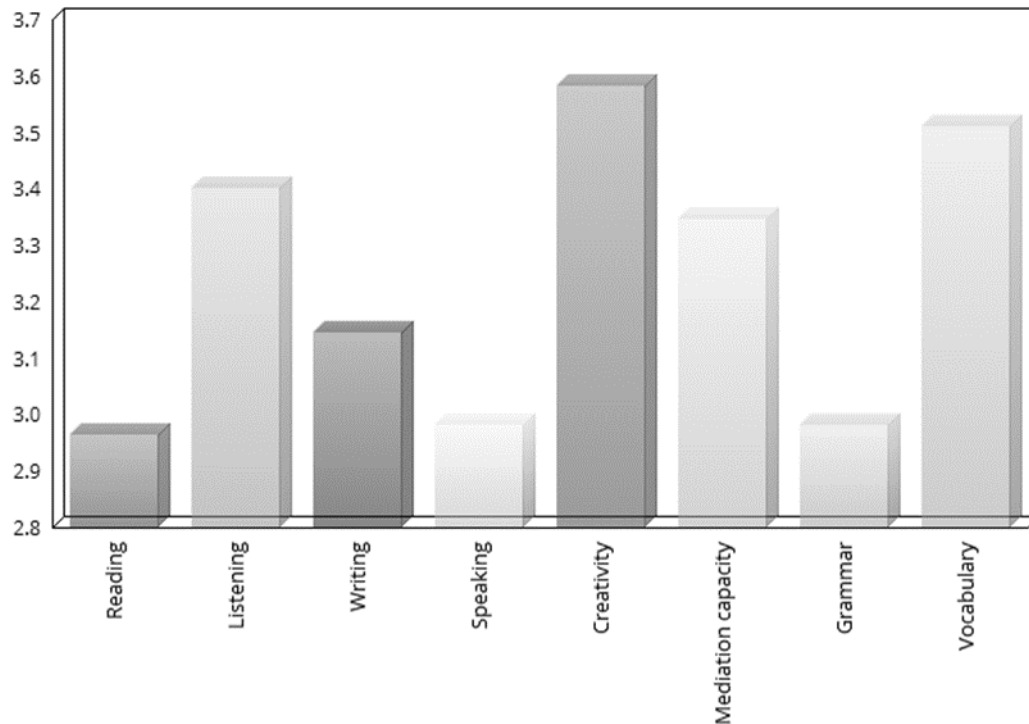


Figure 3. Perception of improvement of reading, listening, writing, speaking, creativity, mediation, grammar, and vocabulary after the intervention according to a Likert scale

Source: <https://www.chartgo.com/get.do?id=6d4595f793>

#### 4.5. Verifying the methodology and recommending it (O5)

Exploring the impact of the DAT approach (Talaván & Lertola, 2022) is crucial. Two questions in the questionnaire focused on assessing the participants' likelihood of recommending the course to someone in learning a language, and their perception of the TRADILEX methodology. By examining the relationship between these two questions using a contingency table (Table 5), we could gain insight into the likelihood of recommending the course based on a positive perception of the DAT approach.

Table 5. Table of contingencies representing the relationship between the implementation of the DAT methodology and the likelihood of recommending the course to others on behalf of participants.

TRADILEX Methodology	Recommendation of the course			Total
	Disagree	Agree	Absolutely agree	
Disagree	0	3	1	4
Agree	1	10	11	22
Absolutely agree	0	3	26	29
Total	1	16	38	55

In order to analyse the results from a statistical perspective, a Chi-square test was implemented. The results, presented in Table 6, revealed a significant association between the variables under investigation. The obtained  $p$ -value of 0.007 is smaller than the conventional threshold value of 0.05, leading us to accept the alternative hypothesis, which suggests a correlation between the variables.

Table 6. Chi-square test of the contingencies table

	Value	Df	p-value
$\chi^2$	13.987	4	0.007
N	55		

The results indicated a correlation between the participants' positive perception of the TRADILEX methodology and their likelihood of recommending the course to others. Figure 4 highlights the significance of delving into the DAT-based methodology and course design, as students highly valued the topics, the contents of the texts and tasks included in the lesson plans ( $M = 3.509$ ,  $SD = 0.540$ ). Additionally, the videos that formed the backbone of the ITIS, FITIS, and each lesson plan within the sequences were also well-received ( $M = 3.564$ ,  $SD = 0.536$ ). It is important to clarify that even though the assertions in the questionnaire for this question seemed to be positive, the Likert scale allowed to show agreement or disagreement and that is why results over 3 implied positive perceptions.

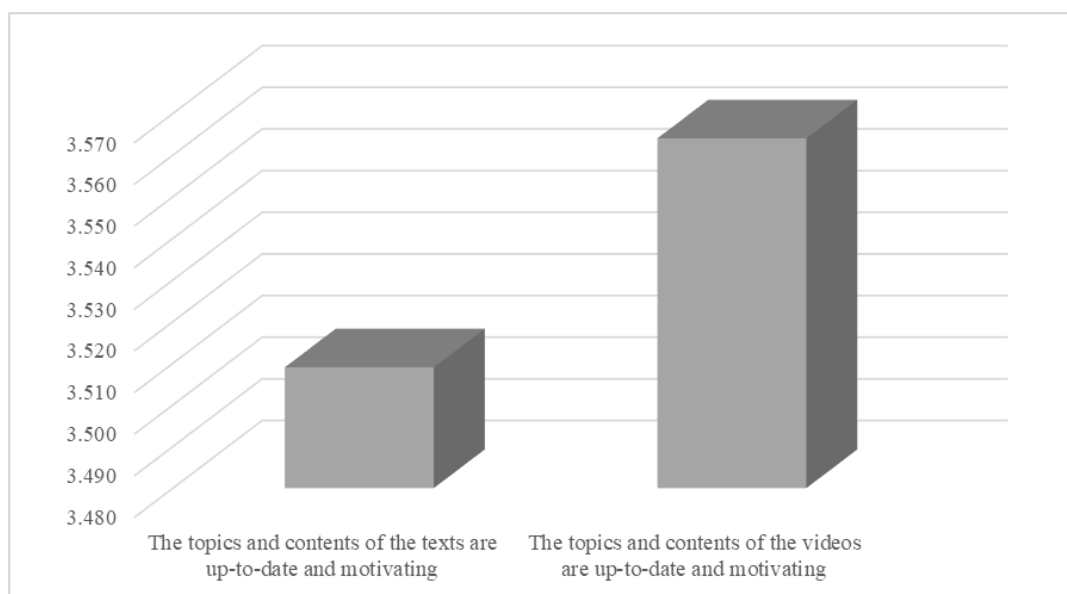


Figure 4. Perception of texts, tasks and videos included in the TRADILEX course.

In the light of these results, the project seems to have offered an appropriate set of lesson plans, with up-to-date and motivating contents which fostered motivation, and participants showed a high likelihood of recommending this experience to language learners. All the DAT modes seemed to enhance language skills, components, and cross-curricular competences in a similar way. Besides, revoicing modes proved to be highly effective for the enhancement of oral skills according to participants' perceptions. One of the main drawbacks was linked to technology and the use of specialized software, particularly for revoicing DAT modes, which could be accounted for by their lower popularity among participants. Despite technical issues, participants affirmed to have improved subsidiarily their ICT skills.

As regards the Qualitative insights from the participants' justifications, respondents were asked to complete questions about (a) their preferred AVT mode, and (b) a justification of their choice. A qualitative analysis of their answers has been carried out by annotating the corpus of answer with the following code: (a) fun, (b) creativity, (c) personal preference, (d) accessibility, (e) clarity, (f) translation, (g) professional development, (h) emotions. This allowed a systematic analysis of the answers. Besides, a sentiment analysis was performed, and it allowed to add four extra categories according to the sentiment found in each answer: (i) positive sentiment, (j) mixed sentiment, (k) negative sentiment, (l) neutral sentiment.

Table 7. Frequency of mentions across key categories by AVT mode

AVT Mode	N	Fun	Creativity	Personal Preference	Accessibility	Clarity	Translation	Professional Development
Subtitling	26	3	1	10	2	5	3	2
SDH	13	3	0	2	2	6	0	0
Audio description	10	1	2	3	0	1	1	2
Voice-over	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Dubbing	4	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	55	9	3	17	5	13	4	4

Table 7 presents the frequency of mentions for each audiovisual translation (AVT) mode within the main qualitative categories. Subtitling was the most frequently mentioned mode ( $n = 26$ ), particularly in personal preference ( $n = 10$ ), clarity ( $n = 5$ ), and fun ( $n = 3$ ). For example, participant 19 stated, “I chose subtitling because I think it’s less stressful and I think I’m good at it,” illustrating personal preference, while participant 44 noted, “I learnt a lot of English using this mode,” highlighting clarity. SDH received 13 mentions, especially in clarity ( $n = 6$ ) and accessibility ( $n = 2$ ). Participant 5 emphasized accessibility, saying, “I feel like the main reason for subtitles to exist is to make media accessible to people with disabilities.” Audio description accounted for 10 mentions, including personal preference (participant 7: “I like this”) and professional development (participant 4: “I have improved more my English”). Voice-over and dubbing had fewer mentions ( $n = 2$  and  $n = 4$ , respectively), mostly related to fun and personal preference. For instance, participant 23 expressed pride in dubbing: “I prefer dubbing because I think it’s very difficult and I feel a lot of pride with the results.”

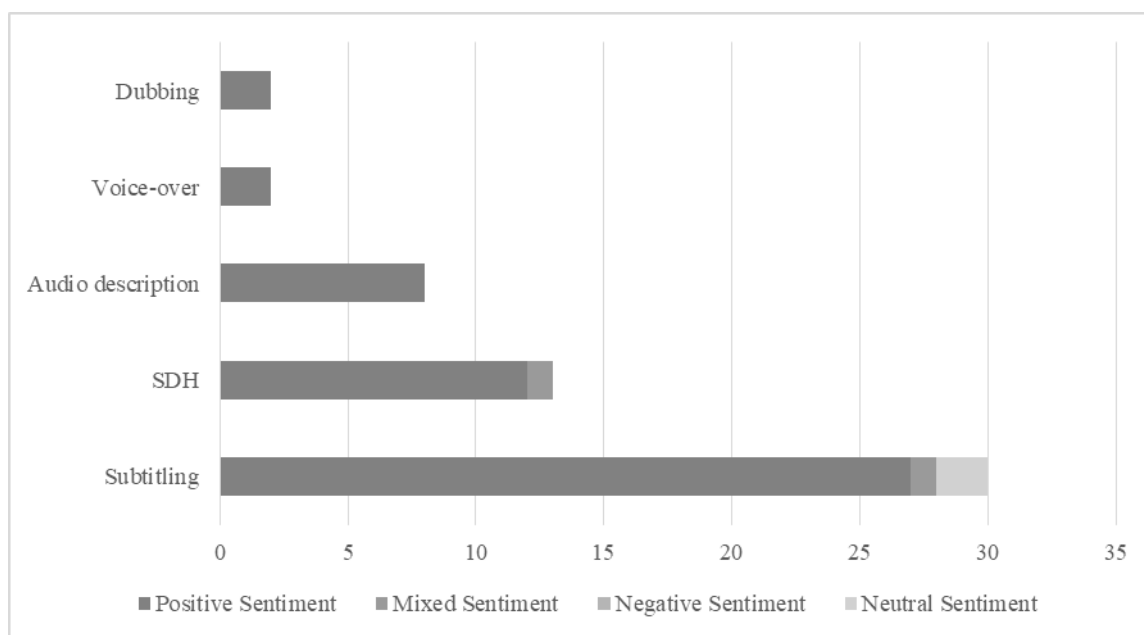


Figure 7. Sentiment distribution according to mentions by AVT mode

Figure 7 illustrates the distribution of sentiment expressed by respondents regarding different audiovisual translation (AVT) modes. Subtitling received the highest number of positive sentiments (27), with only one mixed sentiment and two neutral mentions, and no negative sentiment recorded. SDH followed with 12 positive sentiments and one mixed sentiment, while audio description was marked exclusively by eight positive sentiments. Voice-over and dubbing had fewer responses but were entirely positive, with two mentions each and no mixed, negative, or neutral sentiments. Overall, the data suggest a predominantly positive perception of all AVT modes among respondents, with subtitling being the most favourably viewed mode in terms of sentiment.

## 5. Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the effectiveness of different DAT modes in language learning, as perceived by the participants. The study focused on five specific objectives, namely determining the most effective DAT mode in terms of language learning (O1), identifying the most challenging DAT mode for technical issues (O2), determining the DAT mode considered most beneficial for language production and reception skills (O3), identifying the participants’ perceptions regarding improvement in specific language skills and abilities (O4), and verifying the suitability of the TRADILEX methodology for enhancing language learning (O5).

The results of O1 indicated that didactic subtitling emerged as the preferred DAT mode among participants, followed by didactic SDH, didactic AD, didactic dubbing, and didactic voice-over. These findings are in line with previous studies that have highlighted the popularity and effectiveness of subtitling in language learning, aligning with previous research by authors like Dollerup (1974) and Vanderplank (1988), who highlighted the effectiveness of subtitling in language learning. Participants found didactic subtitling interesting, stimulating for the mind, and helpful for improving language levels. In contrast, revoicing modes like voice-over and dubbing were perceived to be technically challenging by the participants, corroborating findings by authors such as Sánchez-Requena (2016) and Hai Yen (2021).

It is important to clarify that, unlike earlier studies such as Vanderplank (1988), which explored the passive reception of subtitled audiovisual material (e.g., watching subtitled films without production tasks), the present study is grounded in an active application of DAT. Participants were not merely exposed to media content; rather, they created subtitles, dubbed, revoiced, and developed AD and SDH content themselves as part of the learning process. This shift from passive to active use is a fundamental distinction. In the active model, learners engage cognitively, linguistically, and technically with the material, which promotes deeper language processing, multimodal learning, and digital literacy skills. Our findings not only confirm



the value of subtitling as a pedagogical tool, as noted by Vanderplank (1988) and others, but also go further by demonstrating how an active approach based on creation of audiovisual materials can lead to better learner involvement and empowerment.

It is also worth noting that, beyond the appreciation of the cognitive and linguistic benefits of SDH by participants, SDH also holds significant social value. This DAT mode fosters awareness of communication barriers faced by the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities. As a result, SDH promotes empathy and inclusivity. Indeed, since learners simulate the process of subtitling for accessibility, they gain an insight into the ethical dimensions of language mediation and the importance of universally accessible material. In this regard, SD is not only a pedagogical tool for language teaching but also as a means of promoting social responsibility and encouraging social empowerment through language learning.

O2 focused on the most technically challenging DAT mode. The results showed that revoicing software posed greater challenges compared to captioning software. These findings align with the participants' preferences, as revoicing modes received lower favourability. Similar findings have been reported in previous studies, emphasizing the importance of addressing technical issues and enhancing the usability of DAT software (Díaz-Cintas, 1997).

O3 aimed to determine the most beneficial DAT mode for different language skills and abilities. Participants perceived revoicing modes (voice-over and dubbing) to be highly effective for enhancing oral skills, while no significant differences were observed between captioning and revoicing modes for writing, reading, grammar, vocabulary, mediation, creativity, and translation skills. These results are consistent with prior research conducted by Williams & Thorne (2000) and Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón (2018), who emphasized the pedagogical value of revoicing modes, particularly for oral skills development. Additionally, studies have explored the positive effects of subtitling on various language skills and components, such as oral comprehension and vocabulary acquisition (Alabsi, 2010; Ghoneam, 2015; C.K. Hsu et al. 2013; Latifi et al. 2011).

O4 investigated participants' perceptions regarding improvement in specific language skills and abilities. The results depicted in Figure 3 showed a positive perception of improvement in reading, listening, writing, speaking, creativity, mediation, grammar, and vocabulary after the TRADILEX-based intervention. These findings align with previous research by Talaván et al. (2016), Talaván et al. (2016), who emphasized the benefits of DAT modes, particularly subtitling, in language learning and content acquisition.

The results depicted in Figure 3 demonstrated a positive perception of improvement for a significant range of language skills—reading, listening, writing, speaking—as well as transversal skills such as creativity, mediation, grammar, and vocabulary. Although these findings quantitatively confirm those obtained in previous research (e.g., Talaván et al. 2016; Talaván & Lertola, 2016), in our study, the participants' qualitative feedback also revealed the existence of increased learner engagement, a sense of autonomy, and heightened awareness of language use in multimodal contexts. Some participants noted that having to re-write dialogue for subtitles or dubbing forced them to internalize grammar and vocabulary in more meaningful ways. Others highlighted how mediation tasks involved in AD and SDH enhanced their intercultural sensitivity and pragmatic competence. These insightful comments suggest that learners also experienced increased awareness of how language functions in authentic communication contexts.

Finally, O5 verified the suitability of the DAT methodology and its potential recommendation to other language learners. The results indicated a significant association between participants' positive perception of the DAT methodology and their potential recommendation to other language learners. This finding suggests that the DAT methodology, which integrates various DAT modes for language learning, has the potential to be a valuable teaching and learning resource. These results align with the theoretical background, where previous authors emphasized the importance of DAT as a tool in foreign language teaching and the benefits of accessible and inclusive audiovisual production (Talaván, 2019b; Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014; Talaván et al. 2022; Talaván et al. 2016).

Regarding the potential recommendation of DAT methodology to other learners, we want to highlight that the overall perception was strongly positive. However, it is important to note that these findings are situated within the specific pedagogical framework and implementation conditions of the TRADILEX project. The project offered carefully designed support, tools and activities, which may not be present in other similar learning environments. Therefore, the results support the promise of DAT as a flexible and engaging learning approach. Despite this, caution must be applied if we extrapolate DAT methodology to different institutional, linguistic, or technological contexts. Future research should explore how DAT can be adapted to different learner profiles, educational systems, and resource levels. Similarly, research should investigate whether similar benefits are observed when implemented outside the TRADILEX environment. One clear issue that can be confirmed is that DAT holds strong potential as a language learning methodology, especially if applied with adequate technical and pedagogical support.

In summary, the study's results are well-supported by previous research conducted by various authors, validating the effectiveness of DAT modes, especially didactic subtitling, in language learning. The findings support the preference for didactic subtitling and highlight the importance of addressing technical challenges in revoicing modes to enhance their usability. Furthermore, the study underscores the positive impact of DAT modes, particularly revoicing modes, on oral skills development and overall language competence. The DAT methodology stands as a promising approach to language teaching and learning resource, aligning with previous studies advocating for DAT as a valuable resource for foreign language learning. The integration of various DAT modes in language learning may, in the near future, enhance language skills and competences in a technologically driven, globalized world. Future research can further explore the effectiveness of DAT

modes in different language learning contexts and populations, providing valuable insights for language educators and learners alike.

## 6. Conclusion

The results of the intervention demonstrated the significant usefulness of DAT within the domains of applied linguistics and education. From the data gathered we conclude that the preferred DAT mode was found to be subtitling. This choice was attributed to its effectiveness in motivating students, as they could immediately observe the outcome of their work on the screen, and to the software's user-friendliness compared to the more complex specialized software used in revoicing modes. The development of the new DAT platform was a key advancement of the TRADILEX project, as it successfully addressed many of the technical difficulties encountered by participants in earlier revoicing tasks. The platform aimed to simplify the user experience, reduce reliance on external tools, and increase learner autonomy. Although formal usability data is still limited, preliminary feedback suggests improved accessibility and engagement by the learners.

The positive outcomes of the different DAT modes were equally positive, with revoicing modes displaying greater enhancement of oral skills. This aligns well with language learning theories emphasizing the significance of comprehensible input (Ellis, 2005). In addition, participants expressed positive attitudes towards the TRADILEX project and were more inclined to recommend the course to other language learners. The contents and the design of the lesson plans received favourable feedback, as they were thoughtfully designed to address social issues, and maintain language learners' motivation by means of up-to-date and relevant content.

However, several limitations must be acknowledged. It is important to acknowledge that the nature of the questionnaire was ex-post facto, as it was administered a year after the pilot study's implementation. Consequently, this delayed data collection contributed to a low response rate, resulting in the number of respondents falling short of the research team's initial expectations, with only 55 participants completing the questionnaire out of the 556 who completed the DAT courses during the academic year 2021/22 (Fernández-Costales et al. 2023). This limits the generalization of the findings and suggests the need for follow-up studies using longitudinal and, perhaps, more diversified data collection methods. Nevertheless, the data gathered from the questionnaire proved valuable and insightful, confirming the positive perceptions of the project's integrated skills approach in the lesson plans, as well as its overall methodology.

One of the main goals of the project, beyond validating its teaching approach, was to develop a virtual platform to facilitate language learners' engagement with DAT activities and tasks. Ultimately, the aim was to reduce dropout rates associated with the use of specialized software, particularly in revoicing DAT modes, which often present challenges. Future studies should explore the platform's on participants' perceptions and determine whether this user-friendly virtual environment ([www.tradilex.es](http://www.tradilex.es)) contributes to a more favourable long-term perception of DAT inasmuch as it contributes to reduce dropout rates, improve usability, and enhance learner satisfaction.

In conclusion, although our research demonstrates that the methodological approach based on DAT and designed within the project significantly impacts language education, the results should be interpreted within the contexts of these methodological limitations. As far as this study is concerned, the results further strengthen our initial question regarding the efficacy of the DAT-based approach for language learning.

## Funding

This research has been funded by the R&D&i Project TRADILEX, which is affiliated with the "Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia" (UNED). The project was funded by the "Agencia Estatal de Conocimiento" (State Agency of Knowledge) under the code PID2019-107362GA-I00/AEI/10.13039/501100011033.

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