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How to sell your product: A lesson plan on dubbing to foster students' communicative skills

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Abstract

When learning a new language, improving speaking skills can prove challenging. Didactic audiovisual translation (DAT) has gained attention in the past decade for its potential in language learning, with extensive research validating its efficacy. However, application to English for specific purposes (ESP) is scarcer, despite demonstrated effectiveness (see, for instance, Ávila-Cabrera & Corral Esteban, 2021; González-Vera, 2021; Talaván, 2006). This paper presents two lesson plans aimed to foster ESP students' oral production skills following a communicative approach. Whereas a control group (CG) followed a traditional approach to speaking skills enhancement, the experimental group (EG) undertook active dubbing tasks. The methodology and materials are presented with the tasks and rubric used in evaluating students' performance. Findings indicate that students encounter challenges, particularly in speaking activities. Meanwhile, DAT emerges as a promising approach to enhancing motivation, encouraging students to recognize its significance in improving speaking skills. Future studies should analyse dubbing sequences to gain further insights into the potential improvement of speaking skills among EG students.

Keywords

Didactic audiovisual translation, dubbing, speaking, English for specific purposes, experimental approach

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1. Introduction

Ever since the 1980s, scholars have undertaken research on the didactic potential of audiovisual translation (AVT) for foreign language (FL) acquisition purposes. However, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of scholarly works in the field in the last decade. This is the result of the introduction and the use of the diverse AVT practices for didactic purposes in the classroom.

The history of didactic AVT (henceforth, DAT) can be divided into old 'passive' studies and new 'active' approaches. Among the first works within the field was a monograph by Laks (1957), but the first teaching-focused developments can be traced back to the 1980s (Bolaños-García-Escribano *et al.*, 2021). These were mainly based on subtitling as a passive tool inside the classroom. Scholars like Price (1983) and Vanderplank (1988) focused their research on activities based on reading subtitles inside the class for pedagogical purposes. The turn came in the 2000s, a decade in which subtitles remained the primary focus of research, but with the addition that students started to become active actors in the classroom, producing subtitles. In this period, some of the most relevant scholars were Williams & Thorne (2000), Sokoli (2006) and Talaván (2006). In the 2010s, a new era of possibilities opened for DAT as scholars started to research the use of a wider range of AVT modalities. This was also a decade of flourishing projects, supported by new educational policies promoted by the Council of Europe, such as Clipflair[1] or Pluritav.[2]

Nowadays, DAT is experiencing its apogee, with researchers studying it as an active tool and incorporating all kinds of AVT modalities. The research ranges from more general uses of DAT to more specific ones such as listening skills, vocabulary acquisition or intonation (Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2021). Recent projects, such as TRADILEX[3], explore the potential of DAT in language teaching through the creation of lesson plans that revolve around a wide variety of AVT modalities, from the more traditional ones – subtitling and dubbing – to accessibility modalities such as voice-over, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) and audio description (AD).

The aim of this paper is, therefore, to contribute to the field of DAT, studying its potential for the enhancement of English for specific purposes (ESP) students' oral production skills. To do so, a lesson plan based on dubbing was developed for the teaching of technical English at the University of Zaragoza's School of Engineering and Architecture.

2. Theoretical framework

This paper focuses on the use of dubbing as an active tool inside the classroom. Dubbing implies "replacing the original soundtrack containing the actors' dialogue with a target language recording that reproduces the original message, ensuring that the target language sound and the actors' lip movements are synchronized" (Díaz-Cintas, 2009, pp. 4–5). There is still limited research on didactic dubbing when compared to other practices such as subtitling. Yet, dubbing has numerous advantages as it is related to traditional acting (Wakefield, 2014) and can be beneficial for shy learners who may fear stage performance (Burston, 2005).

Dubbing as a pedagogical tool started to attract academic attention before the turn of the century (see, for instance, Duff, 1989). Dubbing is often used by language instructors to practise speaking (Talaván & Costal, 2017), so research has traditionally looked into how dubbing can foster pronunciation, intonation and fluency (Kumai, 1996). He and Wasuntarasoph

[1] See http://clipflair.net.

[2] See http://citrans.uv.es/pluritav.

[3] See https://tradit.uned.es/en/proyecto-tradilex-2.

(2015) investigated the effects of dubbing tasks for the enhancement of vocational students' pronunciation with remarkable results, especially on students' attitude towards the tasks. Sánchez-Requena (2018) published a pilot study in which she worked on fluency and pronunciation through dubbing tasks to enhance students' conversational skills and lower their anxiety levels. Other scholars have found additional benefits such as vocabulary acquisition (Danan, 2010).

English for specific purposes (ESP) remains an uncharted territory when it comes to using DAT methods in the classroom. This subcomponent of language teaching was developed to cover the specific communicative needs that some learners have as students' profiles and their necessities have been modified over the last decades (Fuertes Olivera & Samaniego Fernández, 2005). Research within this field and DAT is scarce, although several scholars have conducted studies to prove its effectiveness. One of the first pioneers in DAT for ESP teaching was Talaván (2006), who presented a language learning activity based on active subtitling to improve business English students' oral skills. Fifteen years later, Ávila-Cabrera (2021) published a study on the use of reverse subtitling in a business English class, which led to the SubESPSkills project (Ávila-Cabrera & Corral Esteban, 2021; Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez Arancón, 2021). The latest research has taken place in the field of architecture and engineering (see, for instance, González-Vera, 2021, 2022).

Nonetheless, even though academics are increasingly turning their attention to this branch of English language learning, there is still research to be done as this is an area that can greatly benefit from this new and innovative pedagogical tool as it creates "a context for students that would include real cases and simulations, through with [sic] students' attention could be drawn to the complexities of each situation" (Talaván, 2006, p. 317). Thus, this paper aims to evaluate the impact of DAT on oral production skills in ESP settings when compared to traditional communicative approaches.

3. Methodology

The present study gathers the results extracted from 97 students enrolled in the Degree in Engineering and Architecture who attended an elective module in technical English at the University of Zaragoza, Spain, in 2021–2022. The participants were divided into two groups: the experimental group (EG) with 50 students, and the control group (CG) with 47 students.

In order to pursue the aims of this study, three research questions (RQ) were proposed:

- RQ1. How do ESP students study English and, in particular, speaking skills, and how motivated do they feel to learn?
- RQ2. Do DAT activities enhance students' oral production skills to a greater or lesser extent than traditional activities?
- RQ3. What are students' final perceptions of DAT and traditional speaking activities upon completion?

With this in mind, a lesson plan was designed and implemented in this Technical English course to answer the research questions together with a pre- and a post-questionnaire. Thus, this paper follows a mixed-method approach in which quantitative and qualitative data is analysed and discussed in the following sections.

3.1. Technical English and oral skills

The module, Technical English, had theoretical and practical sessions. The latter focused on oral production and were used for the experiment. The sessions were divided into six topics and sought to attain similar objectives in both groups, through different methodologies: traditional for the CG and DAT for the EG.

The instruments of the study were the following:

- a pre-questionnaire that enquired students about their understanding of language learning;
- oral reception and production tests at the beginning and end of the semester to monitor progress;
- a post-questionnaire to establish their perception of the lesson plans and the practical sessions; and
- six lesson plans focused on rising students' oral production and reception skills which counted with one or two graded post-tasks which were used as part of each student's final marks.

This paper focuses on one of the lesson plans on pitch presentations. The lessons were designed from scratch and implemented simultaneously in both groups.

3.2. Pitch presentations: didactic dubbing lesson plan

The lesson plan used in the experiment (Table 1) focused on pitch presentations, which constitute innovative ways to sell a product or sharing your idea in a two-minute presentation. The aims of the lesson were that, in the end, students were able to deliver a good oral presentation, acquire sequence connectors for presenting an idea and, ultimately, foster their oral production skills.

Aims	CG Activities/Tasks	EG Activities/Tasks
	Warm-up	**Pre-viewing**
Delivering an oral presentation	- Reading - Vocabulary acquisition	- Reading - Vocabulary acquisition
Acquiring sequence connectors for presentations		- Listening
	Main activities	**While-viewing**
	- Reading comprehension - Listening - Class discussion	- Listening comprehension
	Practical task:	**Dubbing (EN-EN)**
	- Listening	**Post-viewing**
	Post task	- Speaking
	- Speaking	

Table 1. Lesson plan 4 aims and objectives (source: author)

The first stage of the lesson plan was the same for both groups. It started with a reading activity about pitch presentations, in which students had to identify true and false statements and explain the reasons for their answers. The aim was to introduce the topic while starting a class discussion to practice their spontaneous speaking. The second activity explored pitch structures and exposed students to new vocabulary. Finally, in the last activity, students had to decide between several statements about what to do and what not to do in a pitch presentation.

In the second stage, while EG students watched a video and answered questions, CG students undertook a reading activity after the visualization, and had a class discussion, monitored by the lecturers, which was the oral input they received. This change was primarily brought about by the fact that CG post-task varied, so it was considered essential to include more speaking practise at an early stage.

A second difference was introduced in the practical tasks. CG students did a listening activity and answered related questions in a test-like exercise by introducing their answers in Google

Forms. Meanwhile, EG carried out an intralingual dubbing activity. Students replaced the original soundtrack with their own dubbing whilst keeping in mind synchronisation and pronunciation.

In the final stage, both groups were administered the same activity. Students devised an innovative idea related to their university degrees and did a pitch presentation. Students produced a recording using the web platform Vocaroo[4], which was assessed by the lecturer.

This final task was worth 5 points out of 100 of the final mark. As stated, it was the same task for both groups: an oral task in which students demonstrated what they had learned during the lesson. For this reason, the marks extracted from it were used for the results analysis, resulting in a fair comparison between groups. The task was marked using a rubric (Table 2) based on previous prototypical models, in which four oral production aspects were analysed to obtain a final mark out of five.

Use of vocabulary and expressions related to the topic	**Use of English (grammar)**	**Fluency**	**Pronunciation**	**Mark**
Talk about the suggested topic. Provide new ideas. Proper and extensive use of vocabulary about the topic	Grammar is consistently accurate and appropriate for the level	Thoughts expressed completely with no pauses or hesitations	Pronunciation is excellent; good effort at accent	1.25
Speaking about the topic without providing new ideas. Use of a variety of expressions and vocabulary about the topic almost always right	Grammar is mostly always accurate and appropriate for the level	Thoughts expressed completely with one or two pauses or hesitations	Pronunciation is very good; good effort at accent	0.87
Wrong or very limited use of some of the expressions or the vocabulary about the topic	Grammar is sometimes accurate and/or not appropriate for the level	Some hesitations but manages to continue and complete thoughts.	Pronunciation is good; some effort at accent, but some words are mispronounced	0.67
Incorrect or irrelevant vocabulary	Grammar is rarely accurate or appropriate for the level	Speech is choppy and/or slow with frequent pauses, most thoughts are complete	Many words are mispronounced; and no effort towards a native accent	0.37
Incorrect or irrelevant vocabulary, it does not meet the criteria to be evaluated	Grammar is almost never or never accurate or appropriate for the current level	Speech halting and uneven with long pauses or incomplete thoughts	Pronunciation is lacking and hard to understand; no effort towards a native accent	0
				Overall grade out of 5

Table 2. Assessment rubric for oral production (source: author)

[4] See https://vocaroo.com.

4. Analysis

This paper follows a mixed-methods research approach in which quantitative and qualitative data are used to obtain answers to the research questions. Quantitative data were collected through a pre-questionnaire, a post-task after the completion of the lesson plan and a post-questionnaire. Meanwhile, qualitative data were collected through the open-answer questions of the post-questionnaire and would provide additional clarification of the quantitative data.

4.1. Pre-questionnaire

The pre-questionnaire's aim was to ask students about their anxiety and motivation towards speaking and listening activities. As this paper focuses on speaking skills, the analysis will only account for the results of the questions that were related to this skill. Thus, the pre-questionnaire was divided into two parts, the first one contained questions about participants' general information and the second part was, at the same time, divided into six dimensions (utility, pleasure and motivation, anxiety, listening, speaking and methodology) following Auzmendi Escribano's (1992) questionnaire model; meanwhile, the dimensions counted with several items or questions. Table 3 shows the general information questions about participants[5]:

	Items	Answers
General information	Item 1 – E-mail	Open-answer
	Item 2 – Surname, Name	Open-answer
	Item 3 – Age	21–22 / 23–24 / 25–30 / More than 30
	Item 4 – Gender	Male / Female / Other
	Item 5 – You are taking the subject of Technical English in your…	3rd year / 4th year / Master year / Other
	Item 6 – You are doing a degree in…	Architecture Chemical / Engineering Computer Science Engineering / Electrical Engineering / Electronic and Automatic / Control Engineering / Industrial Design and Product Development / Industrial Technologies Engineering / Mechanical Engineering / Telecommunications Engineering / Master
	Item 7 – Native speaker of …	Spanish / French / Italian / German
General information about their English	Item 8 – How long have you been studying English?	1–5 years / 5–10 years / More than 10 years/ Never
	Item 9 – As a whole, what level of English do you think you have (according to the European Common Framework of Reference for Languages)?	A1 (Basic) / A2 (Low-intermediate) / B1 (Intermediate) / B2 (Upper-intermediate) / C1 (Advanced) / C2 (Proficiency)
	Item 13 – How strong are your speaking skills in English?	A1 (Basic) / A2 (Low-intermediate) / B1 (Intermediate) / B2 (Upper-intermediate) / C1 (Advanced) / C2 (Proficiency)

Table 3. General information: pre-questionnaire items (source: author)

[5] At the beginning of the course, students were informed that their data would be used anonymously in research studies. They could opt not to participate in the project.

Participants in both groups, CG (N=47) and EG (N=50), were mainly male students (42, 88% in the EG and 35, 74.5% in the CG).[6] Most students were Spanish except for two Chinese-speaking students in EG and a Turkish-speaking student in CG. Their ages ranged between 21 and 30, with most of them being between the ages of 21 and 22 (29, 58% in the EG and 23, 48.9% in the CG). Students were also asked to specify the degree they were in to classify them and to know their interests. There was not a clear line of answers here as students were diverse, and there were students from Mechanical Engineering to Industrial Technologies Engineering, among others.

In terms of the participants' perception of their level of English, most of the students considered chose an intermediate level (20, 40% in the EG and 12, 25.5% in the CG) or an upper-intermediate level (15, 30% in the EG and 21, 44.7% in the CG). When asked to be more precise about their oral production skills level, the majority of EG students thought their speaking level was an intermediate level (23, 46%), while CG students' percentages were more spread: between intermediate (12, 25.5%) and upper intermediate (17, 36.2%).

The first dimension, utility (Table 4), attempted to assess the usefulness of English in general and the production of oral skills in particular. EG and CG students thought reading and writing were the most important skills in their studies and professional future, ranging speaking skills as "not important", which can be seen as students' perception of not developing their speaking skills during their academic years and, therefore, trying to pursue professional careers in Spanish companies where they would not need to use their English oral skills and where their communication in this language will be probably only through emails or reports.

	Items	Answers
Dimension 1 – Utility	Item 14 – Choose the order of the skills in terms of their importance for your studies	Ranking (Speaking – Listening – Writing – Reading)
	Item 16 – In my studies speaking skills are fundamental	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally disagree
	Item 18 – I consider reading and writing more important than listening and speaking	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 19 – In my professional future, listening and speaking will be the most important skills	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 20 – I hope to use a lot my speaking skills in my future career	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree

Table 4. Utility dimension in pre-questionnaire (source: author)

When asked about how fundamental speaking skills are for their studies and future careers, EG students considered oral skills more relevant than writing skills, with 27 (54%) of the students totally or strongly agreeing on its importance for their studies and 26 (52%) of them totally or strongly agreeing in its relevance for their future career. CG students' answers revealed similar results, as 34 (72.4%) students considered speaking skills fundamental for their studies, and 29 (61.7%) of them considered them essential for their professional future. This differs from the previous answer, reinforcing the idea of students' knowledge of the importance of English but not having enough resources to develop it.

[6] Number of participants' responses are followed by the corresponding percentage *N, %.*

Dimension 2 (Table 5), on students' anxiety levels, focuses on their confidence to speak in front of others and how they feel when they are at the centre of the learning process and have to communicate in English.

	Items	Answers
Dimension 2 – Pleasure and motivation	Item 25 – I think that speaking skills are pleasant and enjoyable	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 27 – Traditional speaking activities (for example, discussions with classmates or presentations), are not attractive	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 28 – I want to understand and be able to communicate with people in English	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 30 – I am not good at speaking activities	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree

Table 5. Pleasure and motivation dimension in pre-questionnaire (source: author)

Students in the EG and CG thought that speaking was pleasant and enjoyable, with 21 (42%) of EG students and 18 (38.3%) of CG students totally or strongly agreeing with the statement. At the same time, students rejected traditional speaking activities, as 25 (50%) of EG students and 28 (59.6%) of CG students agreed with item 27. When asked if they wanted to be understood and be able to communicate in English, in both groups, students seemed to agree. However, when asked if they were not good at speaking activities, students revealed that they were aware of their weaknesses in this skill, as 26 (52%) of students admitted to being somehow not good at speaking activities in the EG, and 28 (59.5%) of CG students admitted the same. This reveals their willingness to improve their speaking skills but not wanting to do it using traditional methodologies as they had already used them but are not confident with their skills after trying them.

Dimensions 3 (Table 6) reveal students' confidence to speak in front of others and how they feel when they tend to communicate in English. The total percentage of students who show little or no confidence in their speaking skills was 25 (50%) in the EG and 20 (54.7%) in the CG, which reinforces the idea of their willingness to learn the language but their low self-esteem when having to face real situations in which they have to be the centre and feel uncomfortable when they have to communicate in English.

	Items	Answers
Dimension 3 – Anxiety	Item 32 – I have self-confidence when I face a speaking activity	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 34 – When I try to communicate in English, I feel uncomfortable and nervous	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally disagree

Table 6. Anxiety dimension: items pre-questionnaire (source: author)

Dimensions 4 and 5 deal with specific questions about listening and speaking, respectively. However, as this paper only focuses on speaking enhancement, Table 7 shows the items of dimension 5. When asked about the time students spend practising speaking skills, students answered that they do not spend enough time practising it inside and outside the classroom.

This deficit of practice is more pronounced outside, presumably because they are Spanish students living and studying in Spain.

	Items	Answers
Dimension 5 – Speaking	Item 41 – The amount of time I spend practising my SPEAKING skills in CLASS is sufficient	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 42 – The amount of time I spend practising my SPEAKING skills OUTSIDE the classroom is sufficient	Totally agree / Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree / Totally Disagree
	Item 43 – What kind of activities do you do to train or improve your speaking skills?	Discussions with friends or classmates / Interviews with a partner / Short talks / Oral presentations / Other
	Item 44 – How often do you practise your speaking skills?	Once a week / Twice - three times a week / Four - five times a week / More than five times a week

Table 7. Speaking dimension: items pre-questionnaire (source: author)

Regarding the materials students use to improve their speaking skills, most EG students marked the option short talks (19, 38%) followed by discussion with classmates (12, 24%), and similar results were shown by CG students as their preferred options were the same but reversed, discussion with classmates achieved a 36.2% (17) and short talks had a 34% (16). Thus, this demonstrates that students are used to traditional activities instead of trying new things. By contrast, a small group of students in both groups marked the other option, giving interesting responses such as "working for an American company" or "speaking with Erasmus students", which demonstrates that they want to have real-life conversations. Finally, when asked about the time they spent practising their speaking skills in both groups, the highest amount was "once per week" (38, 76% in the EG and 39, 83% in the CG), consistent with previous perceptions.

Dimension 6 (Table 8) deals with students' previous experience with AVT materials inside and outside the classroom. When asked about the frequency of working with audiovisual materials in the English classroom, most students in both groups pointed out that they had used them at least once, twice or thrice a week. However, a high number of EG students (14, 28%) said that they had never used them.

	Items	Answers
Dimension 6 – Methodology	Item 45 – How frequently have you used audiovisual materials in English classes?	Once a week / 2 - 3 times a week / More than 5 times a week / Never use them
	Item 46 – I know the main types of audiovisual translation (subtitling and dubbing)	Yes/no
	Item 48 – The use of activities based on DUBBING may contribute to the improvement of…	Listening / Reading / Speaking Writing / Vocabulary acquisition / None
	Item 52 – Have you ever done an activity in your English class with dubbing?	Yes/no

Table 8. Methodology dimensions: items pre-questionnaire (source: author)

More than half of the students in both groups (32, 64% in the EG and 39, 83% in the CG) claimed to know the main types of DAT modalities; however, 18 students in the EG (36%) stated that they did not recognise what these were. When asked about the benefits of dubbing,

CG students hardly selected the option "speaking skill", which may imply that they see this modality as a final product in which the voices are in the target language and do not see the process and the benefits it may have for FL. Finally, none of the EG students had ever done any dubbing activities, and only a reduced percentage of CG students (6, 12.8%) stated that they had used them in the past.

4.2. Speaking task results

At the end of the lesson, both groups had to perform a speaking post-task, pitching an innovative idea in their field of study, marked with 5 points. The results were then gathered and analysed through SPSS (Figure 1) to see if there was any difference in the students' speaking skills between CG and EG after the completion of the lesson plan.

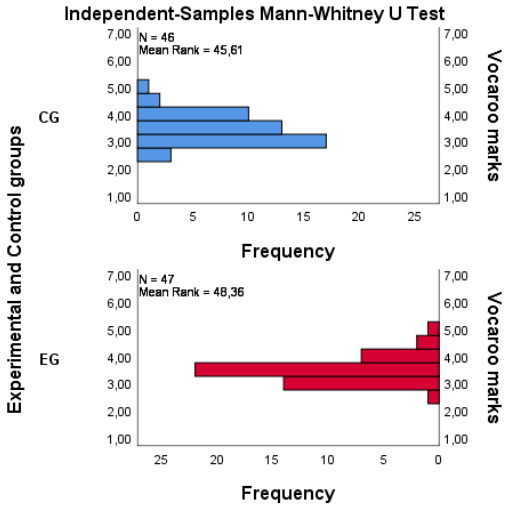

Figure 1. Independent samples Mann-Whitney U test (source: author)

First, a symmetric distribution test was performed to measure the proximity of the data to the centre of the distribution; the results were, then, corroborated with a normality test and a P-P plot test. This will indicate if the data are symmetrically distributed or deviate from normality which will tell us the test that should be applied to analyse the data and compare the group (Field, 2009).

On average, in the EG, students' speaking results were 3.48 out of 5. The data show a positive value of skewness (0.871) which indicates a pile-up of scores on the left side of the distribution. This means that most of the data are on the right-hand side of the histogram, and the median is larger than the mean. Furthermore, the positive value of Kurtosis (1.425) indicates a heavy-tailed distribution, a pronounced deviation of the data. In the CG, students' average on their speaking results was 3.43 out of 5. The data show a positive skewness (0.576), which indicates a concentration of scores on the left side of the distribution; the positive value of Kurtosis (0.161) indicates a heavy-tailed distribution with a pronounced deviation of the data. These results, which were corroborated by a normality test histogram and a P-P plot test, imply that the distribution in both groups is not normal, and a non-parametric test ought to be used for comparison purposes.

Thus, in order to see if the results of EG and CG are significant, a non-parametric test for independent samples (the Mann-Whitney U test) was performed. The null hypothesis, which states that the distribution of EG and CG across categories is the same, should be maintained as the result was higher than 0.05. The average marks in the EG did not significantly differ from the CG (U=1017.000, z=-0.517, p<0.605).

The marks in both groups were similar (Figure 1), varying from 2.5 to 5 points. The maximal difference between groups can be observed from 3.5 points upwards, where 31 EG students (red bars) stand out, opposite to the 26 students of the CG (blue bars). If we look deeper into this range of marks, both groups had a similar number of students with a maximum grade of 5 points. CG students obtained more 4.5 points than EG; however, this group also had a higher number of students with the lowest mark.

At the same time, Figure 1 also shows how CG students' marks (*M* = 3.43) are spread, and the range is higher, while in the EG (*M* = 3.48), the marks are gathered around the highest points. Thus, it is possible to conclude that both groups had similar grades and more tests are necessary to see an actual progression, although it is encouraging that results after just one dubbing lesson plan are this good. Future studies will compare all the lesson plans based on dubbing or traditional speaking activities to see if the gap is more pronounced under those circumstances.

4.3. Post-questionnaire

The post-questionnaire followed the same structure as the pre-questionnaire based on Auzmendi Escribano's (1992) model. However, this time, questionnaires from EG and CG were different as they focused on two methodologies, DAT or a more traditional communicative approach. Thus, the EG questionnaire had five dimensions, three of which focused on the usefulness and preferences of the methodologies, and two were specific about subtitling and dubbing. On the other hand, the CG dimensions were the same but without the dimensions of the DAT methodology. The questions gathered in this post-questionnaire were divided into qualitative and quantitative data. As this paper focuses only on Lesson Plan 4 and speaking skills, the items to be analysed will focus on those related to these two issues.

Dimension 1 in both groups focused on skills improvement after the course with the question "have you noticed any change in your speaking skills in English after completing the lesson plans?". In the case of speaking skills, the improvement was perceived similarly, as the most frequent answer in both groups was "big difference" (20, 48.8% in the EG and 20, 43.5% in the CG). Even more, no student in the EG marked the "no difference" option, proving that after implementing dubbing activities, students perceived an increment in their oral production skills, which was the aim of the study.

Dimensions 2 and 3 in the EG were about the DAT methodology students in this group had been following. In dimension 3, regarding the development of their English skills after the completion of dubbing tasks, speaking was, according to students' perception, the most developed skill, with 12 (29.3%) of "very well" answers and 14 (34.1%) of "well" answers to the question "how did dubbing help you develop your speaking skills?". This implies that students perceived speaking as the most developed skill, which could be related to the use of dubbing.

Dimension 4 in the EG and dimension 2 in the CG asked students about the lesson plans in general. Students thought the instructions in Lesson Plan 4 were clear-cut, as 28 (68.3%) students in the EG and 32 (69.6%) in the CG totally or strongly agreed. Thus, the lesson plans were easily understood by them.

When asked to rate the enhancement of their English skills (Figure 2 for the EG and Figure 3 for the CG), the skill that improved the most was speaking. However, EG students ranked it higher, with 32 (78%) of them placing it as their most developed skill compared to a 23 (52.2%) in the CG. Thus, this shows that dubbing tasks are perceived by students as a good source for improving their oral production skills. It can be related to the fact that students had to work on their pronunciation and speed through intralingual dubbing in this lesson.

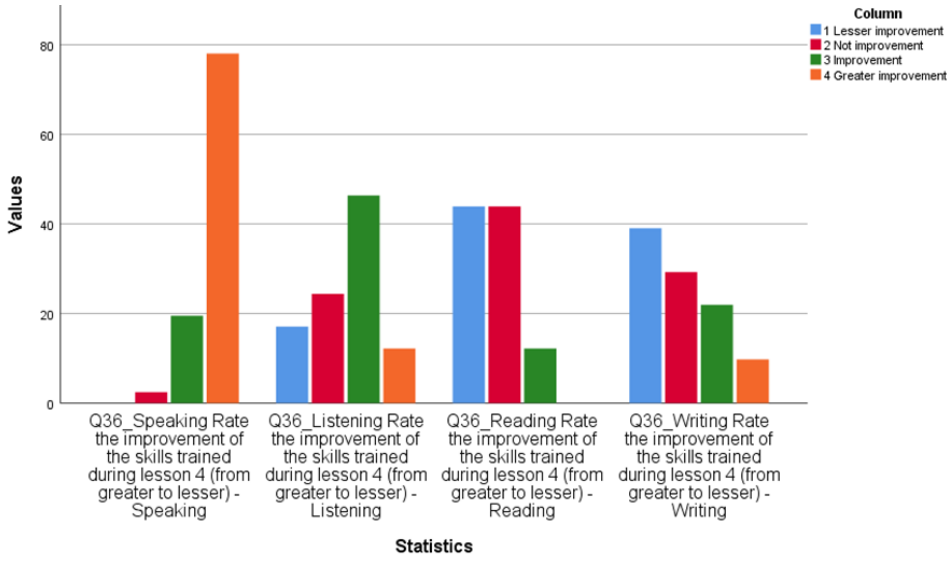

Figure 2. Question 36 descriptive statistics (EG) (source: author)

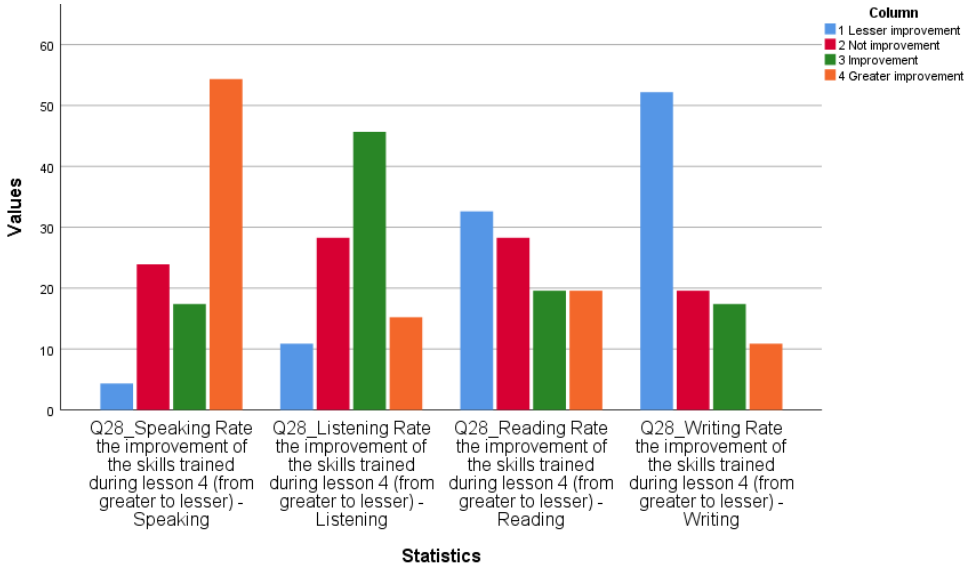

Figure 3. Question 28 descriptive statistics (CG) (source: author)

The last quantitative question in this dimension was related to the time students spent completing the different tasks to see if there was a difference between EG and CG. According to their answers, in the EG, most students felt that they spent between 1 and 2 hours completing the tasks (19, 46.3%), which is the allotted time. This was also the most common answer among CG students (21, 45.7%). However, the second most common answer in the EG ("between 2 hours and 3 hours") differs from the one given by CG students ("between 30 minutes and 1 hour"). This can be related to the fact that a dubbing activity requires more time as students have to become familiar with software.

Open-question answers in this dimension dealt with students' experience with the lesson plans. In order to analyse students' answers to Lesson Plan 4 responses, the answers were gathered through QDA Miner Lite[7], and descriptive codes were assigned and classified as positive, negative and neutral responses (Figures 4 and 5).

[7] This is a free-version software for computer-assisted qualitative analysis.

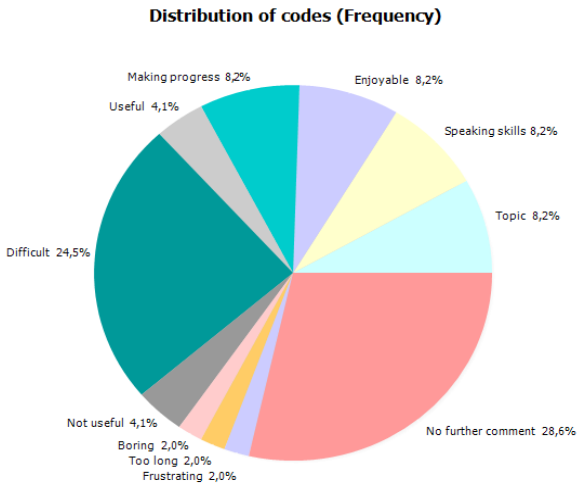

Figure 4. Q38 codes frequency: case study (EG) (source: author)

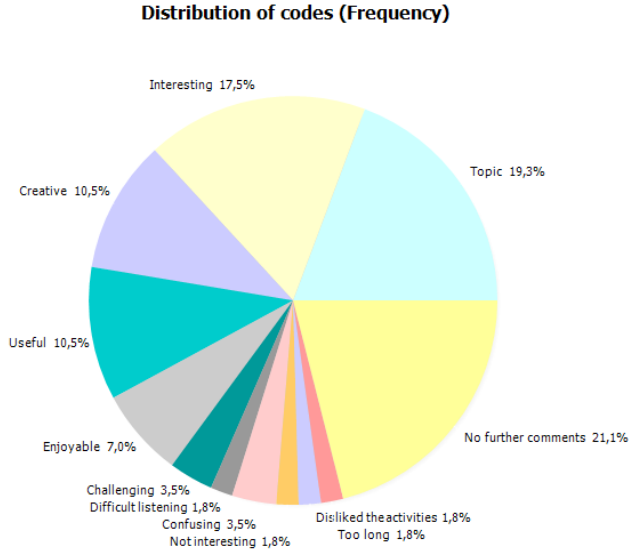

Figure 5. Q24 codes frequency: case study (CG) (source: author)

Figure 4[8] shows the answers given by EG students, while Figure 5 does the same with the answers by CG students. In the EG, positive and negative comments have similar results (36.9% and 34.6%, respectively). One of the most recurrent answers was the difficulty of the video, which can be related to students' perception of having spent more time than the allotted one. However, students also alluded to their speaking skills enhancement and the enjoyability of the activities, proving that DAT activities can reduce students' anxiety levels which results in a better perception of their skills' enhancement.

In the CG, most students thought the topic was interesting, and the creative part was useful. However, on a more negative note, some students expressed that the lesson plan was challenging and that the activities were confusing and not interesting. The latter may be related to the fact that all the activities were traditional tasks, which suggests that students want something more innovative in their studies.

[8] In the data Figures, QDA Miner Lite indicates the decimal marker using a comma by default, but following English grammar and punctuation rules, it should be a period.

The last dimension questions had the same purpose in the EG and CG, to see students' methodological preferences after completing the lesson plans. However, the questions were phrased differently for each group.

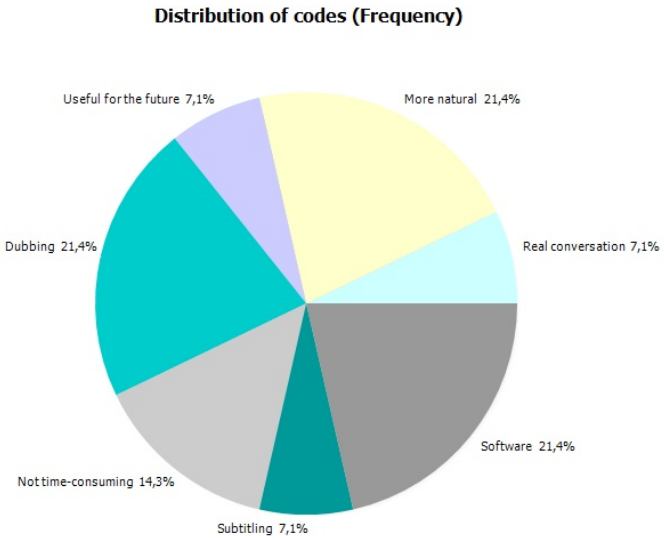

Figure 6. Q57 distribution of codes: traditional method category (EG) (source: author)

First, students were asked if they thought the time invested in their post tasks was less or more according to the methodology they had used. Students in both groups considered having worked slightly more (34.1% in the EG and 41.3% in the CG) than if using a different methodology. However, as noted above, it was the EG students who perceived spending a higher amount of time on their post-task in Lesson Plan 4. Then, students were asked about their methodological preferences. More than half of EG students (65.9%) stated that they would repeat the experience of using a DAT methodology. Meanwhile, CG students preferred not to try a new method and to continue doing traditional activities.

When asked to be more specific with an open-answer question, EG's responses of not wanting a new methodology (Figure 6) show that their main reasons were that activities in a more traditional approach were more natural and less time-consuming. Some students proposed blending both methodologies and incorporating more class discussions and group activities.

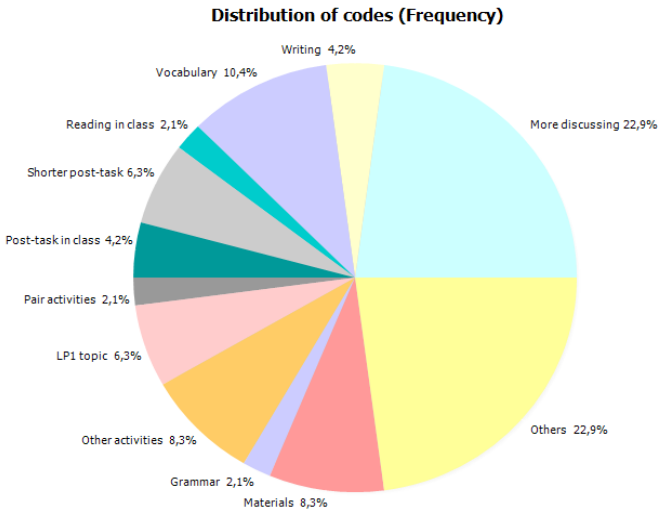

Figure 7. Q46 distribution of codes changes category (CG) (source: author)

Meanwhile, CG students who chose to try a new method (Figure 7) did it because they wanted to try dubbing activities and felt that a DAT methodology would imply more speaking enhancement and more realistic situations.

Finally, students commented on any elements to be improved. The EG answers were coded in changes and no changes, as some of them thought the lesson plans did not need any improvement. One of the most recurrent answers was to change the software. However, students were free to use any of their choices, which was, by contrast, what some of the students highlighted: the liberty to choose the dubbing software that best suited them. Another change was related to the time they spent doing the post-tasks. Most of the students claimed to spend the allotted time on their autonomous work, so this could imply students' reluctance to do extra work. In the CG, the categories were the same, with changes and no changes, and students suggested how to improve the lesson plans. Some argued that having more discussions in class was necessary to improve their speaking skills, while others pointed to having readings aloud to improve their pronunciation.

5. Findings

The pre-questionnaire revealed the obstacles students find when studying English (Research Question 1), and in particular when dealing with speaking activities. Students are willing to make themselves understood in real-life conversations and consider speaking skills highly important for their future careers. Yet, traditional activities were a constant in students' responses, and it could be argued that these lead to a lack of motivation and anxiety. Moreover, most of the students felt that oral communication was significant in their future, although many of them demonstrated a lack of confidence. Thus, this implies that the teaching of speaking skills in ESP must be rethought, and didactic dubbing opens new possibilities.

In the speaking task (Research Question 2), both groups obtained remarkable marks (EG M=3.48, CG M=3.43). The speaking results from the EG were favourable, with all receiving more than half of the possible points and most with marks between 3.5 points and 5 points out of 5. However, the comparison between groups proved that there were no significant differences between EG and CG, which means that it is not possible to demonstrate tangible differences between DAT and traditional activities. This is a limitation to be addressed in the future with a full sequence, which would offer more data to establish whether there is a clear improvement among EG participants.

Finally, students' final perceptions (Research Question 3) indicated that DAT constitutes an opportunity to enhance motivation. EG students' perception towards new methodologies was highly positive, especially for improving their speaking skills. Moreover, once they had tried it, most students aimed to keep studying English with this method, which proves that even with its drawbacks, students' preferences for the methodology are clear. One of the drawbacks is students' time perception, as they feel that they spend more time than necessary doing the dubbing activities. However, this phenomenon is likely due to the disinclination of some students towards autonomous work, as it is important to note that CG students also perceive that they have dedicated more time to these activities than EG students. Thus, it could be argued that once students try DAT, reactions are highly positive, and the great majority consider that this methodology is fundamental to their speaking skills enhancement.

6. Conclusions

Following the scarce studies on DAT in ESP settings, the aim of this paper was to fill in this gap by presenting a study that took place at the University of Zaragoza, Spain, with students enrolled in a Degree in Architecture and Engineering. An experiment was conducted to ascertain what the

benefits of dubbing were when it came to enhancing oral skills. ESP students' low self-esteem and motivation may be partially due to the use of traditional activities. The implementation of a more innovative lesson plan based on DAT has lowered students' anxiety levels and raised their confidence while facing speaking activities.

Although increasingly common and necessary, ESP courses are still elective modules. The study was conducted with limited time available to implement the methodology, so future studies should be carried out over longer periods to see if this improvement in learning is greater over time. As this paper focused on one lesson plan, it has not been possible to extract far-fetching conclusions about how significant the differences among students' marks are. Still, both groups obtained high marks. As a result, it could be argued that DAT activities are, at least, as effective as traditional speaking activities.

Further studies should investigate how didactic dubbing can be introduced in the ESP classroom to foster not only oral production skills but also oral reception skills. Apart from speaking skills, research is needed on written skills improvement, as students also write scripts during dubbing tasks. Moreover, future courses should emphasise the use of DAT for this skills' development by introducing other modalities of AVT, such as AD through voicing tasks in which speaking is combined with the other skills.

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