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Audiovisual translation practices for language learning in ESP: Learners' perceptions of free commentary and narration

Traducción audiovisual para el aprendizaje de lenguas en IFE: Las percepciones de aprendices sobre comentario libre y narración

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Abstract: Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT) has gained increasing attention in the field of second language acquisition due to its potential to facilitate language learning through a range of translation-based methodologies, including subtitling, dubbing, or audio description. Among these, didactic revoicing is particularly notable for its ability to engage learners in the simultaneous development of multiple oral and written linguistic skills. However, the specific role of free commentary and narration within didactic revoicing remains underexplored. To address this gap, the present study examines English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of didactic narration and free commentary in fostering both productive language skills and non-linguistic competencies. A quantitative research design was adopted, employing a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to assess perceived potential improvement in productive linguistic skills through seven items and non-linguistic competencies through four items. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential non-parametric tests. Regarding linguistic skills, findings indicate that while grammar and writing skills received comparatively moderate ratings in terms of perceived potential development, other skills–such as fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary–were highly rated and perceived as having significant potential for improvement. For non-linguistic competencies such as self-assessment, content knowledge, engagement, and creativity, learners reported perceived gains across all measured areas. These results underscore the pedagogical value of didactic revoicing not only in enhancing productive language skills but also in fostering non-linguistic competencies. The findings suggest that reinforcing grammar and writing instruction within didactic revoicing could enhance its overall effectiveness. Future research should explore targeted

strategies for integrating explicit grammar and writing support within DAT-based activities.

Keywords: Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT), Didactic revoicing, Free commentary, Narration, ESP

Resumen: La Traducción Audiovisual Didáctica (TAD) ha recibido una atención creciente en el campo de la adquisición de lenguas extranjeras debido a su potencial para mejorar el aprendizaje de lenguas a través de diversas modalidades de traducción, como la subtitulación, el doblaje o la audiodescripción. Entre estas, el *revoicing* didáctico destaca por su capacidad para desarrollar simultáneamente múltiples destrezas orales y escritas. No obstante, el papel específico de la narración y el comentario libre dentro del *revoicing* didáctico sigue estando poco explorado. Por ello, este estudio analiza las percepciones de aprendices de inglés para fines específicos (IFE) sobre la efectividad de la narración didáctica y el comentario libre en la mejora de destrezas lingüísticas y no lingüísticas. Se optó por un diseño de investigación cuantitativo basado en el uso de un cuestionario con escala Likert de 5 puntos para evaluar las destrezas lingüísticas (siete ítems) y no lingüísticas (cuatro ítems). Los datos se analizaron mediante estadística descriptiva y tests no paramétricos. Los resultados sobre destrezas lingüísticas indican que, si bien la gramática y la escritura recibieron valoraciones moderadas, otras habilidades –como la fluidez, la pronunciación y el vocabulario –se evaluaron como áreas con un alto potencial de mejora. En cuanto a las destrezas no lingüísticas como la autoevaluación, el conocimiento temático, la implicación en el aprendizaje o la creatividad, los y las participantes percibieron avances en todas las áreas evaluadas. Estos hallazgos subrayan el valor pedagógico del *revoicing* didáctico, no solo en el desarrollo de destrezas lingüísticas, sino también en el fortalecimiento de destrezas no lingüísticas. Los resultados sugieren que se debe reforzar el papel de la gramática y la escritura dentro del *revoicing* didáctico. En estudios futuros, se debería explorar la integración de estrategias específicas para potenciar estas destrezas en actividades basadas en la TAD.

Palabras clave: Traducción audiovisual didáctica (TAD), *Revoicing* didáctico, Comentario libre, Narración, IFE

INTRODUCTION

The use of translation in foreign language (FL) learning has a long-standing tradition, largely due to its reliance on learners' first language (L1) as a foundation for acquiring a second language (L2). However, translation has historically been associated with the Grammar-Translation Method (Incalcaterra-McLoughlin and Lertola, 2014), an approach that emphasises the memorisation of vocabulary and grammatical rules for the purpose of translating texts between L1 and L2 (Benati, 2018). This method has been widely criticised and largely abandoned since the 20th century, as it has been argued that it fails to foster communicative and oral skills in the target language (Cook, 2010).

In recent years, however, translation has undergone a notable transformation as a pedagogical tool in FL education, driven by evolving methodological approaches, pedagogical advancements, and technological innovations. Accordingly, translation may now be integrated into more communicative approaches (Talaván *et al.*, 2023), challenging the criticisms it previously faced. One of the most significant developments in this regard is Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT), which integrates audiovisual translation (AVT) techniques into language learning to enhance linguistic competence (Lertola, 2019a; Talaván, 2020). This represents a shift from previous approaches that used AVT as a form of support in language learning (Talaván, 2010) in which learners were positioned in a more passive role as recipients of audiovisual input (Holobow *et al.*, 1984; Vanderplank, 1988). However, DAT encompasses a range of translation practices that may vary in their nature and pedagogical application (Plaza-Lara *et al.*, 2025; Talaván, 2020). Consequently, further research is needed to examine different DAT modalities and their potential impact on both linguistic and non-linguistic competencies in FL learning.

While certain DAT modalities, such as didactic subtitling and dubbing, have received considerable scholarly attention, other modalities–particularly free commentary and narration revoicing activities–remain largely unexplored by both researchers and practitioners, despite their potential for language learning (Baeyens-Morata, 2023; Botella *et al.*, 2025). This gap in the literature suggests a lack of understanding regarding how learners engage with and respond to free commentary and narration tasks. As a result, the limited awareness and empirical evidence surrounding these modalities may discourage language instructors from integrating them into their teaching practice. To address this research gap, the present study offers new empirical insights by exploring ESP learners' perspectives on the potential benefits of free commentary and narration revoicing activities in developing both linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies. By contributing to the limited body of

research on this DAT modality, this study aims to raise awareness among language practitioners about its potential pedagogical value and encourage its incorporation into FL instruction.

To achieve this objective, the article first provides a theoretical overview of DAT as a pedagogical approach in FL learning, with a particular focus on didactic revoicing and its application in previous studies. The research questions guiding this study are then outlined, followed by the methodology section, which includes aspects such as the ESP learning context, didactic implementation, participant characteristics, data collection instruments, and analytical procedures. The findings are subsequently presented and discussed, leading to the study's conclusions, which highlight its limitations and propose directions for future research.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Didactic Audiovisual Translation

DAT can be understood as the application of AVT techniques in FL learning, wherein "learners are involved in the audiovisual translation process itself, performing tasks such as subtitling, dubbing, or audio describing" (Incalcaterra-McLoughlin *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). This approach entails that language learners work on an audiovisual product using techniques similar to those employed by professional audiovisual translators, albeit with a primary focus on L2 learning (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023b).

DAT has the potential to enhance both oral and written skills–irrespective of the modality being employed (Talaván, 2020)–due to the inherent interplay between oral and written features in audiovisual texts (Alessandro and Zamora-Muñoz, 2024). Studies assessing the potential benefits of DAT in language learning have reported positive outcomes in various linguistic domains, including listening comprehension (Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014), writing (Talaván and Ávila-Cabrera, 2021), vocabulary (Lertola, 2019b), speaking (Danan, 2010), pronunciation (Chiu, 2012), fluency (Sánchez-Requena, 2016) or reading skills (Ávila-Cabrera, 2021; Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón, 2024). Furthermore, DAT activities have been investigated as a dual-purpose pedagogical tool, fostering both linguistic development and translation competence among Translation and Interpreting trainees (Clouet, 2024; Plaza-Lara and Fernández-Costales, 2022; Veroz-González, 2024).

Given the observed improvements in specific linguistic areas through DAT, scholars have expanded their research focus to examine its non-linguistic outcomes as well. Engagement and motivation have been found

to increase through DAT (Talaván, 2013), potentially due to factors such as the engaging nature of audiovisual texts or the integration of technology. In addition to enhancing engagement and motivation, DAT has been shown to improve ICT competencies (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023b) owing to the continuous use of specialised software and online platforms. Moreover, the content of audiovisual texts has led researchers to identify DAT as a means of raising gender awareness (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2024; Zaragoza-Ninet and Ricart-Vayá, 2020) or intercultural awareness (Incalcaterra-McLoughlin *et al.*, 2020; Sanz-Moreno, 2023). This was further corroborated by Rodríguez-Arancón (2023), who found that learners demonstrated enhanced cultural awareness in both their L1 and L2. Additionally, that study revealed that learners perceived an improvement in their critical thinking skills as a result of engaging in various DAT tasks, a perspective also shared by language instructors who have implemented DAT in their teaching practices (Incalcaterra-McLoughlin *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, DAT has been used as a tool to foster creativity among learners (Ogea-Pozo and Ruiz-Espejel, 2024), with some scholars proposing didactic strategies for language instructors to integrate into their pedagogical approaches (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023a).

The linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes associated with DAT may vary depending on the AVT modality employed (Talaván, 2020), as different modalities possess distinct characteristics (Chaume Varela, 2004). Alonso-Pérez and Sánchez-Requena (2018) classify AVT modalities used in DAT into two primary categories: 1) subtitling and 2) revoicing. The subtitling modalities include intertitling, standard subtitling, surtitling, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, respeaking-based subtitling, fansubbing, and 3D subtitling. The revoicing modalities, as identified by the authors, encompass dubbing, voice-over, free commentary, narration, audio description, simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, as well as other forms such as karaoke, audio-subtitling, and fandubbing (Alonso-Pérez and Sánchez-Requena, 2018). In subtitling modalities, learners generate subtitles, whereas in revoicing modalities, they produce audio tracks (Talaván, 2020). Consequently, the final product in DAT tasks is either written (subtitles) or spoken (revoicing). However, DAT tasks can be designed to incorporate both written and oral skills, irrespective of the chosen modality. Given that this study focuses on free commentary and narration, the outcomes associated with revoicing modalities will be examined.

1.2. Didactic revoicing

Didactic revoicing is defined as the “recording of a new audio track for a particular video on the part of the [FL] students” (Talaván, 2020, p. 573). As outlined in the previous subsection, didactic revoicing encompasses various modalities, with dubbing being the most widely used activity.

Studies investigating dubbing as a revoicing practice for language learning have demonstrated its positive impact on speaking skills (Danan, 2010; Huang, 2022; Talaván and Costal, 2017), pronunciation (Chiu, 2012; He and Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Sánchez-Requena, 2016, 2020)–including stress placement (Luo *et al.*, 2016)–, fluency (He and Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Sánchez-Requena, 2016, 2020), writing (Danan, 2010) and overall linguistic proficiency (Sánchez-Requena, 2016, 2020; Zhang, 2016). Research on other revoicing activities, such as audio description, has examined lexical accuracy (Calduch and Talaván, 2017) and general linguistic proficiency (Talaván and Lertola, 2016). Additionally, studies on voice-over have explored pronunciation and intonation (Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón, 2018). However, free commentary and narration remain underexplored, with Lertola (2021) representing a notable exception.

Free commentary is an AVT modality more closely associated with adaptation than translation (Chaume Varela, 2004). It involves a non-literal rendition of the text, incorporating additions and omissions, as fidelity to the original audiovisual content is not the primary objective (Chaume Varela, 2004). Conversely, narration, which is not typically regarded as a significant AVT practice in professional contexts (Chaume Varela, 2004), is a revoicing activity wherein the original content is described and summarised to align with the visual input (Pérez-González, 2019). When FL learners engage in these revoicing practices, they may approach them either as a creative exercise (free commentary) or as an intersemiotic translation task, in which learners interpret visual elements from the video into their L2 rather than relying on a pre-existing script (Talaván *et al.*, 2023).

The study on free commentary by Lertola (2021) found that pre-service teachers perceived significant improvements in their writing and speaking skills, alongside a moderate enhancement of their grammatical knowledge. Furthermore, participants reported finding the activity engaging and applicable to their future teaching practices. However, the overall scarcity of empirical studies investigating the potential benefits of free commentary and the limited attention given to other revoicing activities, such as narration, underscore the need for further research to evaluate their linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes.

2. THE PRESENT STUDY

Given the potential effectiveness of various didactic revoicing modalities in enhancing linguistic and non-linguistic skills and the scarcity of research on free commentary and narration as DAT modalities, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring ESP learners' insights into potential linguistic and non-linguistic skills development through the use of those DAT modalities. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research questions (RQs):

- RQ 1: To what extent do ESP learners anticipate improvement in different productive linguistic skills through didactic revoicing practices?
- RQ 2: Which productive linguistic skills do ESP learners consider to be more, average, or less likely to improve through didactic revoicing practices?
- RQ 3: To what extent do ESP learners anticipate improvement in different non-linguistic skills through didactic revoicing practices?
- RQ 4: Which non-linguistic skills do ESP learners consider to be more, average, or less likely to improve through didactic revoicing practices?

This section delineates the methodology employed to address the study's RQs. It first describes the ESP teaching and learning context of the study. Then, a subsection is devoted to explaining the didactic implementation designed to engage learners in the narration and free commentary tasks, as well as to elicit their responses to the questionnaire used. Subsequently, the characteristics of the study participants are outlined. This is followed by a detailed account of the instruments and procedures used for data collection. Finally, the statistical analyses applied in the study are presented.

2.1. Teaching and learning context of the study

This study was conducted within an ESP setting, making it essential to examine the characteristics of ESP in relation to the participants' learning context. ESP, which–as previously mentioned–stands for English for Specific Purposes, is an approach to language teaching that focuses on addressing learners' current or future academic and professional needs (Anthony, 2018). ESP is closely tied to specific disciplines (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998), meaning that ESP for Engineering may differ significantly from ESP in fields such as Health Sciences, as it tends to be tailored to the distinct linguistic and communicative demands of each domain.

Studies exploring DAT in ESP contexts have examined disciplines such as Engineering (Gonzalez-Vera, 2021), Commerce (Ávila-Cabrera, 2021),

Speech Therapy (Fernández-Costales *et al.*, 2022), Translation and Interpreting (Clouet, 2024; Plaza-Lara and Fernández-Costales, 2022; Veroz-González, 2024), or Teacher Training (Lertola, 2021). However, each study adopts a distinct approach and modality, adapting DAT to the specific needs of the sample under investigation. In this study, the ESP discipline is Engineering, which influences key instructional aspects such as specialised terminology and the learners' specific objectives. The development of pedagogical tasks in ESP requires a needs analysis, a process that involves collecting relevant information to design a curriculum aligned with learners' requirements (Brown, 2016). This analysis takes into account their existing linguistic competencies and their ability to function in specific communicative contexts (Woodrow, 2017). The participants in this study identified several key needs at the beginning of the course, including enhancing their employability, improving communication skills for English-Medium Instruction (EMI) courses, preparing for potential international exchanges, and acquiring proficiency in General English.

To address these needs, the didactic revoicing task developed for this study was designed to simulate a real-world professional scenario. The task incorporated content relevant to future courses in the participants' Engineering curriculum and provided exposure to both academic discourse and basic interpersonal communication. By integrating discipline-specific language and authentic communicative contexts, the task aimed to support learners in achieving their academic and professional objectives.

2.2. Didactic implementation

The didactic implementation of the revoicing activity adhered to the guidelines proposed by Talaván (2020) for DAT didactic units, with a particular focus on the recommendations outlined in Talaván *et al.* (2024) for free commentary revoicing tasks. The didactic process followed the sequential steps detailed in Table 1.

I	Description	Objective
Pre-viewing Activities (F2F: 10 minutes) (online: 1 day)	Introducing the video, the new linguistic content and presenting brief free commentary and narration sample	To gather background knowledge and to make learners familiar with free commentary and narration
Video viewing (F2F: 10 minutes) (online: 1 day)	The video is watched at least twice, paying attention to the	To understand the visual information

	information contained in the images	
Revoicing practice (F2F: 30 minutes) (online: 2 days)	Students create the script for the video on their own	To develop writing and speaking production skills
Post-revoicing activities (F2F: 10–15 minutes) (online: 1 day)	Watching the results of various classmates and discussing differences and possible improvements	To reflect upon one's work and peer-assessment

Table 1. Revoicing sequence
Source. Adapted from Talaván (2020)

While the guidelines outlined in Table 1 were originally intended for an audio description revoicing task, the same steps were applied for the implementation of the free commentary and narration revoicing activity in this study. However, notable differences were observed in the allocation of time for each phase within the actual task sequence used. Although face-to-face revoicing activities typically span a single one-hour session, Bolaños-García-Escribano and Navarrete (2022) showed that an ample amount of time should be incorporated into the didactic revoicing lesson plan to allow students to effectively complete the task during class time. Consequently, in this study, the total time dedicated to the revoicing activity extended to four hours over the course of one week.

The pre-viewing activity aimed to anticipate the linguistic demands of the revoicing task while introducing the techniques of free commentary and narration. The selected video for the revoicing activity depicted technicians replacing the blade of a wind turbine. Accordingly, the vocabulary and terminology covered in the pre-viewing phase encompassed both general lexicon and specialised terms related to wind energy and wind turbine components. Given the descriptive nature of the narration and the creative dimension of the free commentary, no explicit focus was placed on anticipating specific grammatical structures at this stage. In this session, learners were introduced to the characteristics of free commentary and narration, allowing them to choose their preferred approach for the revoicing activity. Additionally, the instructions and assessment rubric for the activity were presented during the initial session. The rubric, based on the guidelines provided by Talaván *et al.* (2024), served a dual purpose. First, it provided learners with a clear understanding of the expectations for the task. Second, it functioned as a tool for delivering structured feedback on their performance. These guidelines, outlined in Table 2, ensured both transparency in assessment and constructive evaluation of student output.

Dimension	Indicator
Lexical accuracy and richness	You need to be accurate in your descriptions and look for the most precise words that can reflect the corresponding images. You can omit some information that you think is not relevant for your script
Grammatical precision and reduction	You need to express actions and describe situations using the most precise structures; avoid unnecessary information, being redundant and anticipating content.
Creativity	Try to be creative with your writing. You need to understand the original text and images
Fluency and speech rate	Try to focus on using correct pronunciation and intonation. Your speech needs to be fluent and fast enough to accompany the images
Synchrony	The narration script must appear synchronised with the corresponding images

Table 2. Sample guidelines for didactic free commentary
Source. Adapted from Talaván *et al.* (2024)

Following this, the video was presented and analysed to ensure that all learners understood the visual content and the various approaches available for creating their own texts. The video viewing stage comprised several short comprehension and productive activities designed to activate prior knowledge and stimulate idea generation. Additionally, the method for integrating their own audio track with the original audio was introduced. Given that most participants reported being more used to using their mobile phones for photo and video editing than their laptops, the mobile application “InShot” was recommended and presented. All participants in this study reported using this app due to its compatibility with different mobile operating systems.

During the third session dedicated to this unit, learners engaged in writing their texts, recording their audio tracks, and integrating them into the video. They composed their texts manually on paper, without the assistance of dictionaries or online resources. However, guidance was provided by the instructor upon request, primarily addressing inquiries related to general vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation. Once they had integrated their audio tracks into the video, learners uploaded their final projects to the course’s online platform. They also handed in their written scripts, although these were not included in their formal grading.

The fourth and final session was devoted to the presentation and discussion of the completed videos. Learners who volunteered to share their work facilitated a reflective discussion in which participants provided their peers with feedback on various aspects, including their overall impressions,

approaches to the task, thematic relevance, notable elements, and potential areas for improvement. Following the viewing and discussion of all volunteer-submitted videos, participants completed the questionnaire designed for this study.

2.3. Participants

The study was conducted with a sample of 33 ESP learners enrolled at a university in Northern Spain. Participants were undertaking an English course for engineering that integrated both General English and technical English. This course, offered during the first semester of their four-year undergraduate programs, carried a total of 6 ECTS credits (150 hours), comprising 60 hours of face-to-face instruction and 90 hours of independent study. The course may be validated through an administrative process whereby learners possessing a CEFR B2 or higher certificate are awarded a fixed grade of 9, without the need to take the course. This constraint limits the sample size of this study, as the majority of potential enrollees had already obtained an English certificate to validate the course. The sample was drawn from two undergraduate degree programs: Electrical Engineering (n = 20) and Industrial Electronic Engineering and Automatic Control Systems (n = 13). While both genders were represented, the distribution was highly skewed, with 30 participants identifying as male and 3 as female. The mean age of the sample was 18.7 years.

No prior exposure to English, whether formal, non-formal, or informal, was controlled for in this study. However, at the start of the study, participants' formal exposure to English consisted of four face-to-face hours per week, structured into two two-hour sessions. Self-reported proficiency levels, as indicated in the questionnaire and based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL), were B1 (n = 27) and B2 (n = 6). Spanish was the participants' L1, while English was their L2. A summary of participant characteristics is presented in Table 3.

Total participants		33
Current formal exposure in English	6 ECTS	60 face-to-face hours
Degree	Electrical Engineering	20
	Industrial Electronic Engineering and Automatic Control	13
Gender	Male	30
	Female	3
Age	Mean (SD)	18.7 (.99)
Self-reported CEFRL level of English	B1	27
	B2	6

L1	Spanish	33
L2	English	33

Table 3. Participants' characteristics
Source. Elaborated by the author

3. INSTRUMENTS AND DATA GATHERING

As mentioned in the *Didactic implementation* section, participants were required to complete an online questionnaire comprising multiple sections during the final session, following the completion of the revoicing activity and the viewing of videos presented by learners who volunteered. The first section of the questionnaire sought participants' informed consent to take part in the study and to allow their responses to be used for research purposes. Participation was entirely voluntary, responses were anonymised, and no incentives were provided. All learners who engaged in the revoicing activity consented to participate in the research phase. Subsequently, participants were asked to provide background information, including age, gender, L1(s), undergraduate degree, and self-reported proficiency level in English according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The data collected from this section are presented in the *Participants* section and summarised in Table 3.

Following the completion of the background section, participants proceeded to the third part of the questionnaire, which required participants to evaluate statements related to the perceived development of various productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies through free commentary and narration activities. Participants rated the items of the questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The linguistic skills assessed included fluency, pronunciation, general vocabulary, overall speaking ability, terminology, general writing ability, and grammar. An example statement was: "I believe that the revoicing activity helps improve my pronunciation skills". The non-linguistic competencies assessed included self-assessment, subject knowledge, engagement, and creativity, with an example statement being: "I believe that the revoicing activity helps improve my self-assessment competence".

4. DATA ANALYSES

The data presented in this study underwent a multi-stage analytical process to ensure comprehensive examination. First, to address RQ 1 and RQ 3, which investigated the extent to which ESP learners anticipated improvements in productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies through free commentary and narration revoicing tasks, descriptive statistics

were computed. This included calculating mean scores (on a 1 to 5 scale) for each item, along with standard deviations (SD), minimum and maximum values, across the entire sample. Subsequently, Shapiro–Wilk tests were conducted to assess the normality of data distribution for each item. The results indicated that the sample did not follow a normal distribution, as determined by p-values ($p < .05$) and corroborated by histogram analyses. Given the non-normal distribution, non-parametric statistical tests were employed: Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA and Wilcoxon tests were used to compare the scores obtained across different questionnaire items.

To address RQ 2 and RQ 4, which aimed to identify the specific productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies that learners expected to improve at varying levels due to the didactic revoicing activity, two composite variables were created. One variable represented the average score of items related to productive linguistic skills, while the other represented the average score of items addressing non-linguistic competencies. To examine potential differences among individual items within these two categories, a non-parametric Friedman ANOVA test for repeated measures was conducted separately for productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies. The analysis revealed significant differences among productive linguistic skills; however, no statistically significant differences were observed for non-linguistic competencies. To further investigate these differences (or the absence of differences in the case of non-linguistic competencies), a Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired samples was conducted.

For productive linguistic skills, three distinct groups were established based on learners' perceptions: 1) skills that improved the most due to didactic revoicing, 2) skills that improved to an average degree, and 3) skills that improved significantly less than others. These classifications are visually represented in Table 5 using colour coding for clarity. Skills shaded in grey indicate a statistically significant difference when compared to the overall productive linguistic competence variable, while those without a shaded background (white) do not show significant differences. The statistical significance of these differences is further indicated by p-values: skills with $p \leq .05$ exhibit significant differences from the overall mean, while those with $p > .05$ fall within the average group. This classification applies exclusively to the analysis of productive linguistic skills. In contrast, the analysis of non- linguistic competencies did not yield significant differences among items; therefore, no items in Table 7 are highlighted with a grey background.

5. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the data analyses, aiming to provide answers to the established RQs. To ensure clarity, the findings are structured in accordance with the specific research questions they address.

RQ1 investigates the extent to which ESP learners perceive didactic revoicing activities–such as the one they participated in–as beneficial for enhancing various productive linguistic skills. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 4. For each linguistic skill, the table reports the number of valid responses, mean, median, SD, minimum and maximum values, as well as the Shapiro–Wilk W statistic and its corresponding p-value. The linguistic skills are ranked in descending order based on their mean scores, with fluency receiving the highest average rating and grammar the lowest.

	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	SD	MIN	MAX	SHAPIRO–WILK W	SHAPIRO–WILK P
FLUENCY	33	4.58	5	0.56	3	5	0.68	< .001
PRONUNCIATION	33	4.55	5	0.56	3	5	0.69	< .001
VOCABULARY	33	4.45	4	0.56	3	5	0.71	< .001
SPEAKING	33	4.38	4	0.65	3	5	0.75	< .001
TERMINOLOGY	33	4.16	4	0.78	3	5	0.79	< .001
WRITING	33	3.97	4	0.93	1	5	0.83	< .001
GRAMMAR	33	3.88	4	0.89	2	5	0.79	< .001

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of productive linguistic skills
Source. Elaborated by the author

The findings indicate that nearly all linguistic skills received high ratings ($\bar{x} > 4$), with the exception of writing and grammar, which obtained mean scores slightly below 4. This suggests that participants generally anticipate improvements in all assessed linguistic skills following engagement with the didactic revoicing activity, albeit with slightly lower expectations for writing and grammar. Furthermore, the SDs for the three highest-rated skills–fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary–are relatively low (SD = 0.56), suggesting greater consensus among participants in their evaluations of these skills. In contrast, skills that were perceived as less likely to improve exhibited higher SDs, indicating greater variability in responses. Regarding the range of scores, the minimum values indicate that, apart from writing (which received a minimum score of 1), all linguistic skills were rated at least 3 by all participants. Conversely, the maximum values show that all skills received at least one rating of 5. The Shapiro–Wilk test was employed to assess the normality of the data distribution. W values are not close enough to 1 and the significance levels indicate that the data are not normally distributed for any of the assessed linguistic skills ($p < .001$). This observation was further

corroborated through distribution histograms. Consequently, non-parametric tests were employed in subsequent statistical analyses to compare these linguistic skills.

RQ2 investigates which productive linguistic skills ESP learners perceive to be significantly more, averagely or less likely to improve when they engage in didactic revoicing tasks such as free commentary and narration. To assess potential differences in these perceptions, a preliminary non-parametric Friedman test for repeated measures was conducted to compare the scores obtained for each linguistic skill. This test revealed a chi-square (χ^2) value of 47.6, which was statistically significant ($p < .001$) with 7 degrees of freedom (df). This indicates significant differences between the assessed skills, suggesting that ESP learners perceive some productive linguistic skills as more likely to improve than others. Consequently, additional statistical tests were performed to further explore these differences.

Table 5 presents the results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired samples. Linguistic skills are arranged in descending order, from the highest to the lowest mean scores. Three distinct groups emerge from the analysis based on the mean scores and the significance level of comparisons between individual skill scores and the overall mean score (representing linguistic competence). These groups are: 1) skills expected to improve the most (fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary), 2) skills expected to improve moderately (speaking and terminology), and 3) skills expected to improve the least (writing and grammar). The significance levels (p-values) are indicated by asterisks (*), where the absence of an asterisk indicates $p > .05$, "*" denotes $p < .05$, "**" denotes $p < .010$, and "***" denotes $p < .001$.

	MEAN	SD	W	P
FLUENCY	4.58	0.56	57.5	0.003**
PRONUNCIATION	4.55	0.56	70	0.004**
VOCABULARY	4.45	0.56	62	0.007**
SPEAKING	4.38	0.65	146.5	0.312
PRODUCTIVE LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE	4.30	0.52	–	–
TERMINOLOGY	4.16	0.78	233.5	0.144
WRITING	3.97	0.93	253.5	0.015*
GRAMMAR	3.88	0.89	297	< .001***

Table 5. Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired samples of productive linguistic skills

Source. Elaborated by the author

The results section now shifts focus to non-linguistic competencies. RQ3 examined the extent to which ESP learners expected their non-linguistic

competencies to improve through engagement in free commentary and narration revoicing activities. Table 6 displays the descriptive statistics for the scores related to learners' expectations of improvement in non-linguistic competencies following participation in the didactic revoicing activity within an ESP context.

	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	SD	MIN	MAX	SHAPIRO–WILK W	SHAPIRO–WILK P
SELF-ASSESSMENT	33	4.41	5	0.70	3	5	0.74	< .001
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	33	4.29	4	0.62	3	5	0.77	< .001
ENGAGEMENT	33	4.27	4	0.62	3	5	0.77	< .001
CREATIVITY	33	4.18	4	0.72	3	5	0.80	< .001

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of non-linguistic competencies
Source. Elaborated by the author

Similar to the descriptive statistics for linguistic skills, the non-linguistic skills are arranged in descending order of mean scores, from the highest (self-assessment) to the lowest (creativity). The results indicate that all non-linguistic competencies received high mean scores ($\bar{x} > 4$), suggesting that students perceive didactic revoicing activities as highly effective in enhancing their non-linguistic competencies, such as self-assessment, content knowledge, engagement, and creativity. Among these, content knowledge and engagement exhibited the lowest SD (0.62), indicating relatively less variability in participants' responses. In contrast, creativity (SD = 0.72) and self-assessment (SD = 0.70) demonstrated higher SDs, reflecting slightly greater variability in the participants' expectations. However, it is important to note that the SDs across all four non-linguistic competencies should not be interpreted as particularly high. All these values fall between the highest (0.93) and lowest (0.56) SDs observed for the linguistic skills. This suggests that while responses were more consistent for certain productive linguistic skills (such as fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary), the variability in non-linguistic competencies was not as pronounced as it was for others, such as writing skills.

The range of scores indicates variability, with responses spanning from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 5 across all four non-linguistic competencies. This range of variability is consistent with the values observed for linguistic skills, with the exception of writing and grammar, where the minimum scores fell below 3. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the data for all non-linguistic competencies were not normally distributed ($p < .001$), with W values not sufficiently close to 1 to suggest normality. This finding was further supported

by histograms, which also demonstrated the non-normal distribution of the data.

RQ4 sought to examine whether ESP learners perceive certain non-linguistic competencies as significantly more, moderately, or less likely to improve after engaging in free commentary and narration revoicing activities. To explore this, a preliminary non-parametric Friedman test for repeated measures was conducted to compare the scores obtained for each non-linguistic skill and assess the presence of significant differences. The test yielded a χ^2 value of 5.14 ($df = 4$), which was not statistically significant ($p = 0.27$). These results suggest that ESP learners perceived all analysed non-linguistic competencies as comparable in terms of improvement following didactic revoicing tasks. This absence of significant differences was further confirmed by a Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired samples, the results of which are presented in Table 7.

	MEAN	SD	W	P
SELF-ASSESSMENT	4.41	0.70	109	0.14
NON-LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE	4.29	0.50	–	–
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	4.29	0.62	134	0.91
ENGAGEMENT	4.27	0.62	123	0.81
CREATIVITY	4.18	0.72	200	0.15

Table 7. Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired samples of non-linguistic competencies
Source. Elaborated by the author

As anticipated by the ANOVA test, no significant differences emerged when comparing individual non-linguistic competencies to the aggregate variable representing the mean scores of all competencies (non-linguistic competence). This suggests that, although participants assigned different values to each non-linguistic competency, they generally perceive them as improving in a similar manner after engaging in free commentary and narration revoicing activities.

6. DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to examine ESP learners' perceptions of free commentary and narration as revoicing tasks to foster productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies. To achieve this, the research was structured around four RQs: two addressing linguistic skills and two addressing non-linguistic competencies. This section addresses these RQs

by analysing the results obtained and situating them within the existing literature on AVT practices in language learning.

RQ1 and RQ2 explored the potential improvement in linguistic skills. The participants of this study perceived fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, and terminology as the most likely to improve, with mean scores exceeding 4. In particular, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary were expected to improve significantly more than the other skills. These findings align with previous research on didactic revoicing practices such as dubbing and voice-over. Studies on dubbing have reported positive effects on fluency and pronunciation (Chiu, 2012; He and Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Sánchez-Requena, 2016, 2020), while research on voice-over has highlighted improvements in pronunciation (Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón, 2018), and audio description has been linked to enhanced lexical accuracy (Talaván and Lertola, 2016). These findings suggest that free commentary and narration activities align with other revoicing techniques in achieving positive linguistic outcomes.

Conversely, the linguistic skills that received the lowest scores were writing and grammar, with mean scores slightly below 4. Statistical analyses indicated that ESP learners perceived these skills as significantly less likely to improve through free commentary and narration activities. The finding regarding grammar knowledge is consistent with the study on free commentary by Lertola (2021), in which learners anticipated improvement but to a lesser extent. However, the author also found that writing skills were expected to improve significantly more than speaking skills, which contrasts with the present study. This discrepancy could be attributed to differences in task sequencing or the value learners place on different DAT stages. Prior research suggests that learners favour AVT activities emphasizing oral rather than written skills (Talaván and Ávila-Cabrera, 2015).

These results indicate that free commentary and narration are effective activities for developing productive linguistic skills. Therefore, more educators and researchers should consider integrating these AVT modalities into language teaching and research. However, additional focus on writing and grammar should be incorporated to further support their development. Furthermore, a broader selection of didactic materials related to free commentary and narration should be made available for educators, learners, and researchers.

RQ3 and RQ4 examined the potential enhancement of non-linguistic competencies. Learners reported strong expectations for improvements in self-assessment, content knowledge, engagement, and creativity, with mean scores exceeding 4. No significant differences emerged in the statistical

analyses, indicating that these competencies were similarly expected to improve. These findings support prior research suggesting that DAT fosters engagement (Talaván, 2013; Talaván and Ávila-Cabrera, 2015) and creativity (Ogea-Pozo and Ruiz-Espejel, 2024). Additional studies focusing on content-related aspects, such as intercultural awareness (Rodríguez-Arancón, 2023) and gender awareness (Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2024; Zaragoza-Ninet and Ricart-Vayá, 2020), further suggest that DAT can enhance learners' content knowledge and awareness. The present study corroborates these findings, as participants perceived free commentary and narration as beneficial for deepening their understanding of audiovisual texts–a particularly advantageous outcome for ESP learners. The high scores for self-assessment indicate that these tasks may promote autonomous learning, allowing students to develop independent learning strategies.

These findings suggest that free commentary and narration contribute to the development of non-linguistic competencies, making them highly valuable for language teaching and learning in ESP contexts. Nevertheless, further implementation and exploration of these DAT modalities are necessary across various domains, including General English, translation training, teacher training, and English for Social and Cooperation Purposes.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated Engineering ESP learners' perceptions of the potential impact of didactic revoicing activities, such as free commentary and narration, on productive linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies. The findings reveal that ESP learners perceive skills such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, and terminology as highly likely to improve, with mean scores exceeding 4 on a 1-5 scale. Notably, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary are expected to improve significantly more due to free commentary and narration activities. In contrast, writing and grammar are rated as significantly less likely to improve, yet their scores remain relatively high, still approaching a score of 4 out of 5. Therefore, free commentary and narration appear to be appropriate tasks for enhancing learners' productive linguistic skills. However, a greater emphasis on writing and grammar is needed to create more comprehensive tasks that can enhance a broader range of linguistic areas.

The outcomes of this study also indicate that non-linguistic competencies are highly expected to improve among ESP learners, with all competencies obtaining mean scores above 4. In this case, no single competency is statistically expected to improve either more or less than the others. This suggests that self-assessment, which obtained the highest score, and creativity, which obtained the lowest, are similarly expected to improve

through free commentary and narration revoicing activities. This implies that free commentary and narration are suitable for developing additional competencies in the ESP classroom.

However, these results should be interpreted with caution. Firstly, the context of this study is an ESP learning environment, meaning that the outcomes might differ in other instructional approaches or samples with different characteristics. Therefore, the suitability of different DAT modalities should be investigated in various teaching and learning contexts. This also opens the possibility of analysing outcomes in larger sample sizes. In this study, the number of participants was limited because the course could be validated by those with a B2 or higher certificate.

Future studies have the potential to qualitatively explore learners' perceptions of different DAT modalities to further understand how various linguistic skills and non-linguistic competencies are developed or can be enhanced through different types of tasks. This research approach could also incorporate more objective measures of learners' outcomes to align their perceptions with more realistic assessments. This requires the creation of didactic proposals for different DAT modalities in various learning contexts, such as different ESP disciplines or General English, which could be available for language practitioners and researchers.

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