IJ21CE

Volumen 11, Número 1 (2024)
DOI:10.21071/ij21ce.v11i1.17376

A PROPOSAL FOR VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND ENHANCEMENT OF ORAL SKILLS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH AUDIO DESCRIPTION FOR CHILDREN'S TASKS

UNA PROPUESTA PARA LA ADQUISICIÓN DE VOCABULARIO Y EL DESARROLLO DE LAS COMPETENCIAS ORALES EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS A TRAVÉS DE ACTIVIDADES BASADAS EN LA AUDIODESCRIPCIÓN INFANTIL

ELIA RAMÍREZ BARROSO*[1]

UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA (ESPAÑA)

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to elaborate a proposal based on the principles of Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT), using audio description for children-based tasks to enhance students' oral production skills, focusing on pronunciation, intonation and fluency, and enable them to acquire new vocabulary in English. The task designed for the experiment was based on the concepts of DAT and audio description (AD) for children. It was divided in two parts. The first one consisted of the analysis of one excerpt from children's programs with AD. For this task, the participants had to choose between three different clips and analyse their degree of adaptation to the target audience's specific needs. Then, for the second part of the task, they had to create their own AD for children's proposal for the clip they had chosen before. The results of the tasks show that AD for children can be employed to create tasks based on the principles of DAT. Moreover, it has proven to be beneficial in several aspects, the most important ones being the raise in awareness of the importance of accessibility and AD and the enhancement of pronunciation, intonation and fluency in English.

Keywords: accessibility, adaptation; children's audio description; didactic audiovisual translation; foreign language teaching.

RESUMEN

El objetivo principal de este estudio es elaborar una propuesta basada en los principios de la Traducción Audiovisual Didáctica (TAD) usando tareas centradas en la audiodescripción para el público infantil para mejorar la producción oral del estudiantado, especialmente la pronunciación, la entonación y la fluidez, y ayudarles a que aumenten su vocabulario en inglés. A partir de los conceptos de TAD y audiodescripción (AD) para el público infantil, se diseñó una tarea dividida en dos fases. La primera consistía en el análisis de un extracto de un programa infantil con AD. Para este ejercicio, los participantes tenían que elegir entre tres vídeos diferentes y analizar su nivel de adaptación a las necesidades específicas del público meta. Después, para el segundo ejercicio, tenían que crear su propia propuesta de AD infantil para el vídeo elegido. Los resultados obtenidos muestran que la AD infantil puede usarse para crear tareas basadas en los principios de la TAD. Además, se ha demostrado que son beneficiosas en varios aspectos, siendo el más importante la concienciación del alumnado sobre la importancia de la accesibilidad y la mejora de la pronunciación, la entonación y la fluidez en inglés.

Palabras clave: accesibilidad; adaptación, adquisición de vocabulario; audiodescripción infantil; enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras.

[1] Autor de correspondencia: Elia Ramírez Barroso. Universidad de Córdoba (España). I72rabae@uco.es
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-9688-4520

1. Introduction

Throughout history, many different methods have been developed for language teaching purposes. Among these methodologies, the use of translation task has had a relevant role. It is possible to find tasks based on translation activities for students to learn the vocabulary and syntactic structures of a language.

However, the role of translation in language teaching has been questioned and criticised in recent years, especially with the appearance of new concepts, like the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which amplifies the number of competencies that are considered important when learning a foreign language. Despite this, it is possible to find scholars who still defend the role of translation as a useful tool in the second language classroom (Pintado Gutiérrez, 2012; Lertola, 2018; Talaván, 2019). In this context, the possibility of the application of audiovisual translation (AVT) as a didactic tool has appeared and gained academic relevance (Alonso Pérez & Sánchez Requena, 2018).

The many possibilities that new technologies offer have made it possible to develop technological tools that enable teachers to design DAT-based tasks in a relatively easy manner. Another advantage of the inclusion of technological tools in second language teaching is that the existence of free software allows students from a variety of sociocultural backgrounds to participate in these activities, making foreign language teaching accessible for everyone. For all these reasons, DAT (Didactic Audiovisual Translation) has proven to be an effective and inclusive method for second language teaching and learning. One of the most significant methodological proposals in this field was created inside the TRADILEX project (Talaván & Lertola, 2022), which provides a methodology based on "complete lesson plans which make use of diverse AVT modes […]to enhance communicative competence and mediation skills in an integrated and differentiated manner" (Talaván & Lertola, 2022, p. 28).

2. The main benefits of Didactic Audiovisual Translation in second language learning

The available research on the use of DAT in second language learning has proven that it can bring a considerable number of benefits for all students (Lertola, 2019; Talaván, 2020). First, as Talaván (2019) points out, the fact that the material employed in these tasks comes from real pieces of audiovisual content makes it more engaging for students. Besides, the type of language that can be found in these materials includes natural and fairly spontaneous speech in a controlled environment. This means that, whereas the speech present in audiovisual content has been previously scripted and consciously prepared, it is natural enough to be considered a real and relevant production of language and, more importantly, lacks the usual grammatical inaccuracies present in spontaneous speech by native speakers (Talaván, 2019). In addition to that, Talaván (2020) later remarks that the selected videos should include relevant subjects that encourage students to reflect upon specific aspects of society. This way, they would improve not only their linguistic skills but also their sociocultural competencies (Talaván, 2020; Talaván & Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023; Ogea Pozo & Talaván, 2024).

Researchers have already conducted projects to implement all AVT modes (including dubbing, subtitling, voice-over, audio description and subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing) in second language learning to enhance students' linguistic skills such as oral production or written comprehension (Fernández-costales et al., 2023), but also to encourage intercultural education (Incalcaterra McLoughlin, 2009; Díaz Cintas, 2012; Talaván, 2013; Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014; Lertola, 2015; Rodríguez-Arancón, 2023; Rodríguez-Arancón & Tinedo-Rodríguez, 2023). A few of these projects and studies have even created brand-new tools to work with DAT in

a learning environment, such as LeViS (Sokoli, 2006) and PluriTAV (Marzà et al., 2018). These programs comprised in one single user-friendly interface all the necessary tools to complete a DAT task.

Accessibility has also been present in different DAT projects, such as the SubLITE project or TRADISUB, which used subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) to work with vocabulary acquisition, or other projects in which AD has been used to raise awareness about the importance of accessibility nowadays (Ogea Pozo, 2022). Others have also combined both SDH (Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) and AD in the foreign language setting (Ibáñez Moreno & Vermulen, 2017; Navarrete, 2021; Talaván et al., 2022).

All these researchers' work has proven that DAT can be successfully applied in educational environments and that it can be highly beneficial for foreign language students. They have also shown that students enjoy this kind of activity because they find it motivating and enriching, being able to work individually or in groups to create their own audiovisual translations.

3. A review of research on didactic audio description

Despite its recent appearance in the academic field, there have already been several experiments applying DAT tasks for second language teaching. The main modes that have been employed are dubbing and subtitling, whereas accessibility modes like AD and SDH have not yet received as much academic attention as they deserve. This may well be because accessibility has gained more relevance in the academic field only in recent years thanks to the work of associations, academics and users that have demanded a more accessible society in which everyone can enjoy any audiovisual product (Ogea Pozo, 2022).

Focusing on the didactic applications of AD, it is necessary to mention Silvia Martínez Martínez's research published in 2012. The main goal of the activities she designed was to improve students' acquisition of vocabulary through passive AD. This meant that students consumed audio described content, but they did not create their own audio descriptions. However, soon the focus shifted from passive AD tasks to exercises in which students had to create their AD proposals.

Later, in 2013, Ibáñez Moreno and Vermeulen decided to employ AD to improve students' lexical and phraseological competence. After seeing the results of this experiment, they concluded that students had clearly improved their linguistic skills and that they had been able to acquire new vocabulary (Ibáñez Moreno & Vermeulen, 2013). In 2014, the two scholars continued exploring didactic AD possibilities and performed another study. In this experiment, they employed tasks based on collaborative work with two groups: one comprised of Spanish native speakers who were studying AVT and another with Dutch native speakers who were studying Spanish, with very promising results (Ibáñez Moreno & Vermeulen, 2017).

Later studies also focused on how AD-based tasks could be used to improve oral production (Ibáñez Moreno et al., 2016). That same year, Talaván and Lertola's (2016) experiment demonstrated that AD tasks could be applied in distance learning, further expanding the possibilities of DAT in general, and didactic AD in particular. Finally, Navarrete (2018) carried out a preliminary experiment with a small group of English speakers who were learning Spanish in which they used AD exercises to improve oral skills. The results of this experiment showed not only those students had indeed enhanced their oral production, particularly intonation and pronunciation, but also that this experience with AD had had a positive impact on their learning process. This was later confirmed in Navarrete (2021), with a large-scale project in which AD-based tasks were applied in the long term. The results were especially promising regarding students' perceptions and confidence in their own skills, something that is extremely important in foreign language learning (Navarrete, 2021).

Even though there is still a long way to go, these studies prove that AD can be a powerful didactic tool in the language teaching classroom (Ibáñez Moreno & Vermeulen, 2017). The promising results of this research demonstrate that didactic AD tasks can be used to develop several linguistic skills at the same time, especially written production, oral production, grammar and vocabulary acquisition, creativity and cultural mediation (Navarrete, 2018).

4. Audio description for blind and visually impaired children

Nowadays, media accessibility is achieved, mainly, through two main modes: audio description and subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing. AD consists of the introduction of additional messages in the original soundtrack which describe what appears on the screen is one of the main audiovisual accessibility services. The information contained in these messages includes all those visual elements and unclear sounds which are relevant to the plot to make them accessible to visually impaired audiences (Talaván et al., 2016). Since AD is added after the final product is presented, this information can only be included in between dialogues or during silences to prevent the overlapping of the AD with what the characters are saying or other important acoustic information. Besides, AD should describe the visual elements clearly and concisely, so the blind and visually impaired spectators can easily contextualize what is happening. It should also match the tone and rhythm of the audiovisual text and help target recipients to have an experience as similar as possible to the rest of the users (Fryer, 2016).

However, it is important to note that blind and visually impaired audiences present additional challenges to audio describers, because of their many diverse profiles with specific characteristics and needs. These characteristics may vary depending on the age, the amount of residual vision, or other factors. Moreover, not all blind and visually impaired people lose their sight at the same stage of their lives and for the same reasons. For example, some people suffer sight loss due to old age, whereas others can become blind due to an illness or an accident. Some even might be born blind. In addition, the Royal National Institute for the Blind (2009) states that a high percentage of blind children suffer from cortical blindness, a condition in which the area of the brain responsible for the processing of visual input does not work properly. Besides, there are also cases in which this brain damage affects other areas of the brain, which translates into many blind children who also present other impairments related to movement or cognitive issues. Because of these differences, the way these audiences conceptualize and interact with the outside world vary from one another, and this must be taken into consideration when creating an AD script. If the program is targeted to children, for example, audio describers must bear in mind that the lack of visual input could affect their cognitive and linguistic development and try to adapt their script to their needs (Palomo López, 2010).

Bearing the foregoing in mind, some organisations like the Independent Television Commission (ITC) or the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) have created some specific guidelines that focus on AD for children, addressing the main aspects that need to be considered when creating an AD script for children's programs. One of these aspects is the syntax and vocabulary that are employed. AD for children should include clear and concise sentences, without giving more information than is strictly necessary for the comprehension of the plot, and age-appropriate lexicon. Moreover, the tone and the rhythm of the AD must match those of the audiovisual context. This is true for all kinds of AD, but this aspect becomes even more important when talking about children's programs. This type of audiovisual content usually presents a cute and friendly tone, which should be also present in the AD. Because of this, the ITC advises to include elements that transmit this tone and help attract children's attention (ITC, 2000).

Another aspect that needs to be considered when creating audio-described content for children is the amount of information rendered in the AD. Children cannot process the same amount of

information as adults due to their short attention span (RNIB, 2009). Hence, only the essential information must be included, and too-detailed descriptions should be avoided. Additionally, the language style ought to be simple and easy to understand. However, to prevent audiences from getting bored, the RNIB advises audio describers to include more difficult words or terms with a striking pronunciation in their AD scripts to keep blind and visually impaired children's interest and to help them expand their vocabulary. This can also be emphasized with the use of rhymes or linguistic devices such as alliteration (RNIB, 2009).

Regarding the information that should be included in an AD script targeted to children, the topic of quantity is not the only important one. When looking at some standard guides for AD that have been published, such as the ITC Guidance on Standards for Audio Description (2000), the Standards for Audio Description and Code of Professional Conduct for Describers (2009) or the UNE 153020 (2005), it can be noticed that they all advise audio describers to be as objective as possible when describing the actions and events that take place on the screen. The dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity is a highly controversial one, and some researchers argue that being completely objective is impossible, since the very same process of selecting the information that will be included in the AD depends on the audio describer's point of view. This debate becomes even more relevant for children's AD since, as explained before, these scripts should include elements that can direct the public's attention to the plot, and adjectives and adverbs that express those endearing elements that children's contents portray.

These guidelines not only apply to AD scripts, but there are also some specific recommendations for the process of recording the AD. In AD, it is usual to find narrators who speak with a rather neutral tone, without letting extreme emotions show in their voice, but the guidelines offer different advice when dealing with AD for children's programs. According to UNE 153020, the narrator of the AD script in a program targeted to children can use an expressive tone and try to reflect in their voice the characters' feelings (AENOR, 2005). Thus, children can feel the characters' emotions and follow the plot more easily. To achieve this, another strategy that can be adopted is the inclusion of exclamations and even questions in the AD script to keep the target audience's attention and reproduce these elements when recording the AD. This would contrast to what is usually recommended in guidelines for AD, in which it is advised that audio descriptors avoid including their personal point of view or any subjective information.

In sum, to offer an accessible product that enables visually impaired children to enjoy and experience audiovisual content it is necessary to adapt to their specific needs. To do so, it is important to include elements, like colourful words and expressions, that keep the children's attention and narrate it with an expressiveness that matches the characters' feelings and emotions. A complex and diverse audiovisual product, with a variety of elements, meanings and emotions, must have an AD that provides the same complexity for blind and visually impaired audiences (Fryer, 2016). Unfortunately, it is still quite difficult to find audio-described children's programs, but some streaming platforms like Apple TV+ have been working to provide a wide variety of content accessible to blind and visually impaired children. One example of a children's program with a professional AD is the show Shape Island (2023), which was indeed produced by Apple.

5. Didactic children's audio description

When looking at research conducted on the use of AD for didactic purposes, a lot of interest has been placed on the analysis of the selected materials and the student's proposals, but, despite the fact that DAT tasks are designed to emulate real translation assignments, not much attention has been put into the potential target audiences. Having analysed the specific characteristic of AD for children, further research could be conducted focusing on different types of AD addressed to specific audiences, such as blind or visually impaired children, so that students would have to adapt

their proposals to those particular final recipients. This would not only pose a motivating challenge for students, but it could also help teachers design lesson plans based on children's AD focusing on specific competencies like creativity.

Because of all its specific characteristics and unique features, AD for children can be a helpful tool in the language teaching classroom. One example is narration, an element that has received a lot of attention in AD for children. Some guidelines like the one published by AENOR (2005) recommend that narrators adapt their tone to the audience's age and use a more expressive intonation. Thus, didactic AD for children can present additional benefits that could help improve student's oral production, particularly their intonation, pronunciation and fluency. Of course, they have to be mindful of their target audience, for they have to adapt their script to the specific needs of visually impaired children. Because of this, when recording the AD, they should be as expressive as possible, portraying the character's feelings and emotions through their narration. This is something that is suggested by AENOR in UNE 153020, which establishes some standards for audio description. One of the few mentions to children's programs advises to use a tone that matches the program's when recording the AD. A good script needs to be the basis of this process, but the delivery of the information also has a key role in the result. In this regard, students would have to speak as clearly as possible, making sure that the program's plot is understood, and pronounce the words clearly so blind and visually impaired children can understand them and add them to their own lexicon. Finally, an expressive AD is necessary to maintain the audience's attention, since a flat AD that does not portray any feelings at all can become monotonous and unengaging.

Another important aspect that students would have to contemplate when creating an AD for children is vocabulary. As established before, audio describers are advised to include expressive nouns, adjectives and adverbs that convey the perky and gentle tone of children's programs. Having to create an AD targeted to children would demand of students a higher level of creativity and empathy. Besides, they would have to make an extra effort to find engaging words and expressions that would help keep the audience's attention on the plot. This exercise would allow them to acquire new vocabulary, especially the one related to feelings and emotions. Besides, they would feel more self-sufficient to experiment and explore other possibilities that perhaps would not have occurred to them in standard AD. This could lead students to be more involved in the activity, increasing their motivation. All these elements would be crucial for the creation of a fruitful experience. The viability of this application of DAT has already been tested. There have been previous cases in which media accessibility has been employed to develop student's vocabulary acquisition, like the study conducted by Talaván, Águila-Cabrera and Costal in 2016, in which they focused on the use of adjectives using SDH-based tasks.

While completing children's-AD-based tasks, students would also have to pay attention to syntax. Following the published recommendations, children's AD must include clear and concise sentences that offer the essential information for the audience to understand the plot. Since children cannot process the same amount of information at the same pace as adult audiences, a higher level of condensation would be needed. This would demand students to practise their ability to summarize, a skill that can also be very important when learning a second language.

Finally, the use of didactic children's AD in the foreign language classroom can also open new possibilities in the field of DAT. Young learners belonging to lower education levels, like Primary Education, could benefit from the use of content specifically targeted to children in didactic AD tasks. Moreover, if selected properly, this content would also enable teachers to address a wide variety of topics which are relevant in today's society and try to pass on important values on the younger generations. Because of this, didactic AD for children could also be an outstanding tool for the sociocultural development of foreign language students.

All in all, didactic audio description for children tasks display all the advantages already associated with DAT, but, thanks to its specific characteristics that set it apart from other types of AD, it also presents additional benefits for second language learners. Among these benefits, the most important ones are the improvement of pronunciation, intonation and fluency, the acquisition of vocabulary related to feelings and emotions and the stimulation of students' creativity through the use of subjectivity in AD for children's scripts.

6. Case study

In order to put into practice, the theoretical aspects of AD for children and its didactic application, an experiment was designed and performed. In the following sections, the context and the participants of the experiment will be presented, the different parts of the task will be described, and the results will be analysed.

6.1. Context and participants

This experiment took place in September 2023, in the Audiovisual Translation EN-ES (English to Spanish) classroom. The participants were 117 students from the fourth year of the Translation and Interpreting Bachelor Degree at the University of Córdoba, their ages ranging from 18 to 26 years old. No specific level of English is required to enter the course, but, since all the students had studied English as a second language in their previous years, they already had some knowledge of the language. All the students (100 %) completed the first half of the task proposed in the experiment, whereas 95 (81 %) of them finished all the tasks. Since this experiment was done at the beginning of the school year, the participants had not had the chance to study AD in their degree, so this was their first experience with this mode of audiovisual translation.

6.2. Aims

The aims of this experiment were: (i) to raise awareness about the importance of AD for blind and visually impaired children; (ii) to determine if AD for children could be successfully applied in a DAT task focusing on oral production; (iii) to establish whether participants had in mind their target audience's specific needs when creating their own AD for children proposal; and (iv), to determine if this type of task could be used to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition and improve their oral production skills in a foreign language.

6.3. Resources

The tasks were designed using the platform *Google Forms*[12]. In this experiment, two questionnaires were provided: one for the analysis of the chosen clip, and another for the submission of the AD for children proposal, the justification of the decisions made while creating it and the reflection about the task. The main advantage of this platform is that questionnaires can be easily shared with participants through a link, and their answers were recorded anonymously as they completed them. The structure of the questionnaires was thought to allow them to have enough space to justify their answers and to upload both the documents containing their AD script and the video with their AD. The first questionnaire (Q1), which the participants had to use to analyse the chosen clip, was divided into three main parts. The first one consisted of several open questions in which participants had to identify the main elements that appeared in the scene. This part was important because, in order to properly analyse the video, they had to reflect upon the relevant elements of the scene that should be included in the AD. These questions were related to the characters that appeared on screen, the time and place of the action and the context. The second section of the questionnaire was devoted to the analysis of the AD. In this case, participants

[12] Website link: https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/

had several questions in which they had to choose in a Likert scale whether they considered the AD adapted to the target audience's needs or not, from 1 to 5 (1 being not adapted at all and 5 being completely adapted). The measured elements were, namely, vocabulary, syntax, intonation, rhythm and creativity. Finally, in the last part of the questionnaire, a section devoted to the subjectivity of the AD was included. In this part, participants had to answer whether they considered the AD to be objective or not. If the answer was negative, they had an open question to indicate which subjective elements they had identified in the audio-described clip.

The second questionnaire (Q2) was intended for participants to explain the decisions they had made when creating their AD for children proposal. In the first section, they had to explain how they had adapted the vocabulary, syntax, intonation, rhythm and creativity of their proposal to the target audience's needs. All these were open questions which participants could answer as they saw fit. In the second part of this questionnaire, specific questions about the AD recording process were asked. In this case, participants had multiple-choice questions in which they had to indicate if they had tried to be more expressive in their recording to convey the characters' feelings or not, and also indicate which skill (intonation, pronunciation or fluency) they felt to have worked the most in the process. The last section of the questionnaire consisted of several multiple-choice questions in which participants had to determine if this task had helped them develop their linguistic skills in English and their degree of satisfaction with the whole task. In the last question, they also had to choose which skill the believed to have developed the most during the task (vocabulary acquisition, grammar, intonation, pronunciation and fluency).

To record the AD, participants were instructed on the use of the software *Lightworks*[2]. Being a free resource that can be easily installed on any computer, Lightworks was the best option for this task. A brief tutorial with the basic steps to record audio in this software was provided. This software enabled them to watch the video at the same time they were recording their voices. After this step, they could export their video with the AD already added, and they could easily upload it to the questionnaire of the task. However, the main problem that appeared during this part of the task was that some participants had problems using the software. Some of them did not understand the tutorial's steps properly, and they could not add their voice to the video, and others had some technical problems during the recording process. In spite of this, the big majority of the participants who completed both tasks were able to record their AD for children proposal successfully.

6.4. Procedure

The task designed for the experiment was based on the concepts of DAT and AD for children presented before. This task was divided in two parts and participants had two hours to complete them. The first one consisted of the analysis of one of three audio-described fragments taken from children's programs. The clips were taken from the first episode of the series *Peanuts Classics* titled *Snoopy Reunion*[3], the film *Luck*[4] and the first episode of the series *Alien TV*[5]. These clips were selected because they belonged to children's programs available in the streaming platform Apple TV+ and the audio descriptions were created professionally. They were also easily accessible and, as they came from the same platform, the style employed in each one of the ADs was quite similar.

For this task, participants had to choose one of these audio-described clips and analyse their degree of adaptation to the target audience's specific needs. Then, for the second part of the task, they had to create their own AD for children's proposal for the clip they had chosen before, including

[2] Access link: https://lwks.com/
[3] Access link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sht3ymEKgC7For6pOih3fHY-nJVdomoX/view?usp=sharing
[4] Access link: (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nkqSAFwt1fIOyDPX0HTJz0qk5SDoe4d_/view?usp=sharing
[5] Access link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pJJkNQ0KXzBMQOZtK-yvkcDzSjLWTqLq/view?usp=sharing

all the modifications to the original script that they considered adequate to improve the degree of adaptation of the original AD for children. While completing this task, they also had to justify their choices. Meanwhile, the researcher, as the instructor of this particular class, helped them with any doubts they could have while completing the task.

The main stages of the experiment were carried out in the following order:

First: The participants were shown a brief presentation about AD, AD for children and DAT to get acquainted with these concepts. They also received a list of adapted guidelines which included the basic concepts of AD[6] so they could have a general view of this AVT mode. Thus, they could consider this information when analysing the audio-described videos and creating their AD for children proposal.

Second: The three clips were projected so the participants could experience what audio-described content is like.

Third: The participants had to choose one of the projected videos and analyse it individually. This consisted in a guided analysis through a questionnaire that the participants had to answer. The questions covered different aspects of the AD, such as vocabulary, syntax, intonation, rhythm and creativity. They had to determine to what extent these elements were adapted to blind and visually impaired children's needs in the chosen clip.

Fourth: After completing the analysis, they had to create their own AD for children's proposal. First, they had to adapt the script and add all the modifications they considered necessary to accommodate their AD to the target audience's specific needs. For this task, the transcription of the original AD was provided. Using it as a basis, they had complete liberty to modify the script and time codes.

Fifth: Then, they had to record their AD and add it to the clip. The original video without the AD was provided. In this phase, they had to make the necessary changes for their AD script to fit in the available space, that is to say, in the silences between dialogues or important music and sounds. They were also asked to be as expressive as possible and change their tone whenever they saw adequate to express the characters' feelings and emotions. To complete this part of the task, the participants were shown how to use the software Lightworks, which allows to record your voice over the soundtrack of a video and then edit the volumes of each audio tracks.

Sixth: Finally, they had to answer the second questionnaire in which they had to submit both their final script and the video with the AD so they could be available for the teacher to read and watch.

Seventh: In the last part of the questionnaire, all the participants had to answer some questions about their general experience with the task.

7. Analysis of the results

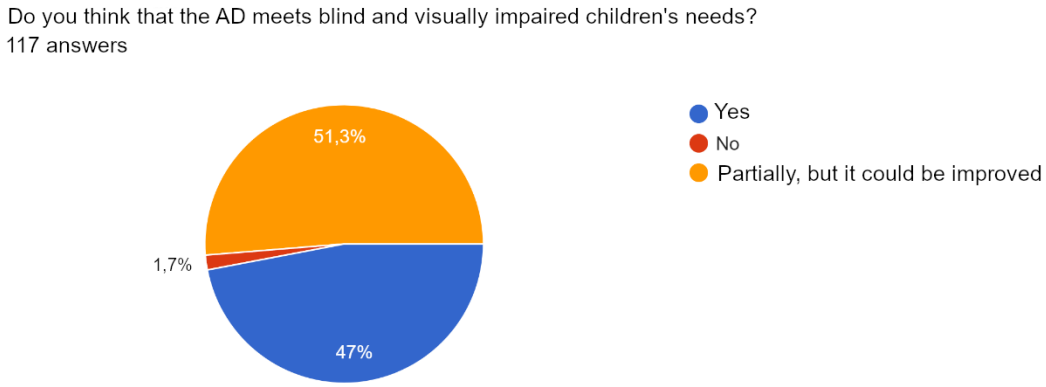
Out of the students who answered the first questionnaire (Q1), 14 % of them considered that the AD showed to them did not include all the necessary information to make the product accessible and understandable for blind and visually impaired children. Despite this, the majority of them believed that all three AD for children were adapted to the target audience's specific needs, to a certain extent. Nevertheless, 51 % of the participants (Figure 1) stated that, while these AD were adequate from their point of view, some elements could be changed to improve children's

[6] These included some explanations about AD's limit restrictions, allowing the target audience to follow the program's plot by including enough information about what is happening on screen and reproducing the program's tone and rhythm.

experience when consuming them. Out of all the different elements that were included in this analysis (vocabulary, syntax, intonation, rhythm, and creativity), the ones participants believed to show the highest degree of adaptation for blind and visually impaired children's needs were syntax and vocabulary, whereas the elements with the lowest degree of adaptation were intonation and creativity.

Figure 1

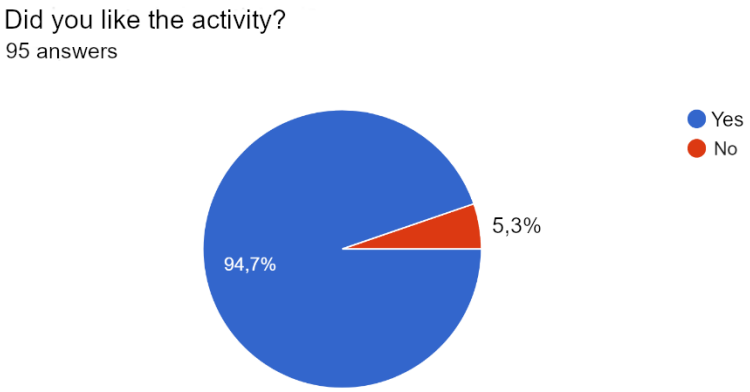
Degree of adaptation to target audience's needs.



Bearing this in mind, the participants then had to create their own AD for children's proposal for the clip they chose and complete another questionnaire (Q2). Of all the students who participated in the experiment, 95 (81 %) of them completed this step. It is important to point out that, out of the 95 participants who completed both parts of the task, 94.7 % stated that they had liked the task (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Degree of satisfaction of the participants.



In this questionnaire, participants explained the changes they had introduced and the elements they had taken into consideration in order to adapt their proposal to blind and visually impaired

children's specific needs. In general, the majority of the participants (94.7 %) believed that their proposal did adapt to those characteristics. Among the changes the participants stated to have applied to their AD proposals, the most important ones were, regarding vocabulary, the simplification of the words used in the original AD (in Example 1, the expression "business books" has been changed to only "books", and "bedside table" has been substituted with just "table"), the inclusion of more descriptive and subjective adjectives such as "beautiful", "little", "fat" or "fluffy" (Examples 2 to 4) and the addition of information that did not appear in the analysed version and that the participants considered important for the audience to understand the story (Examples 5 and 6). Some participants even added idiomatic expressions like the one in Example 8 to describe what was appearing on the screen. Regarding syntax, the main strategies adopted by the participants were making sentences shorter and easier to understand (Example 7), and the inclusion of exclamations (Example 9) and questions (Example 10). As for oral skills, participants adapted their intonation while recording their AD for children proposal by including changes in the tone of their voices to match the characters' feelings, pronouncing each word carefully and slowing the rhythm of the AD.

Examples of participant's proposals:

(1) Original AD: *In the morning, two business books lie on a bedside table.*

Participant's proposal: *In the morning, two business books lie on a table*.

(2) Original AD: *A dirt road leads up to the farmhouse […]*

Participant 1's proposal: *A dirt road leads up to the beautiful farmhouse […]*

Participant 2'a proposal: *A dirt road leads up to a white little farmhouse […]*

(3) Original AD: *A heavy-set puppy grabs food directly from the table and pops it into its mouth*.

Participant's proposal: *A fat puppy grabs food directly from the table and pops it into its mouth.*

(4) Original AD: *One puppy dives between the others fighting for a spot.*

Participant's proposal: *One fluffy puppy dives between the others fighting for a spot.*

(5) Original AD: NA

Participant's proposal*: A farmer stands behind the shed and talks to the mother dog.*

(6) Original AD: *A farmer in overall watches.*

Participant's proposal: *A farmer in overall watches. He calls the mother of the puppies*.

(7) Original AD: *A six o'clock alarm buzzes and the time now reads 7:13.*

Participant's proposal: *A six o'clock alarm buzzes. It is 7:13.*

(8) Original AD: *Rain pours […]*

Participant's proposal: *It's raining cats and dogs.*

(9) Original AD: *The rain clears.*

Participant's proposal: *It stopped raining!*

(10) Original AD: *Rain pours on a white farmhouse on top of a grassy hill.*

Participant's proposal: *What's on that hilltop? Rain pours on a white farmhouse on top of a grassy hill.*

In the last part of the questionnaire, specific questions about the AD recording process were asked. These questions were the following:

i. Did you try to complement your AD script with a more expressive voice in the recording?

ii. Have you included more expressive sentences to your AD?

iii. The emotions you have displayed through your AD, do they match the characters' feelings?

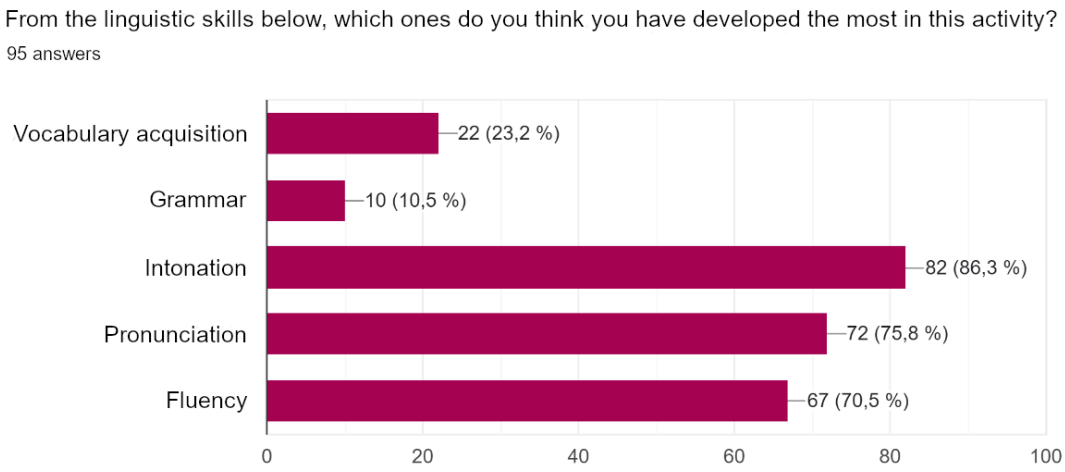
iv. Have you tried to provide a natural-sounding AD?

v. Which of these skills do you feel you have worked the most in this part of the task? Options: Intonation, pronunciation, and fluency.

In their answers, 85.3 % of the participants stated that they had tried to give more expressiveness to their AD, while 78.9 % believed that they had transmitted the same emotions as the characters in the audiovisual content. This led to 96.8 % of them to answer that their AD sounded more natural than the original version. Finally, in a question about the skills the participants believed to have developed the most in this task, the one that comes first is intonation (86.3 %), followed by pronunciation (75.8 %) and fluency (70.5 %). Vocabulary acquisition comes fourth with only 23.2 % of the votes (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Results for the linguistic skills the participants believed to have worked the most.



7.1. Discussion

The results of Q1 show that, while, in general, participants believed that the ADs shown in class where good examples of AD for children that took into consideration the audience's needs, they also considered that some elements, particularly intonation and creativity, could be improved to better address the particularities of AD for children.

Regarding the answers in Q2 about participants' satisfaction, it can be concluded that this kind of tasks are popular among students, and they enjoy the process of completing them. Moreover, the high percentage of participants who answered that their AD for children proposal adapted to the target audience's needs shows that they believed to have enough skill to put into practice what

they had learned in the task. Even though a rubric to objectively evaluate the AD's level of adequacy was not provided, these results show that participants did indeed become aware of these needs and made an effort to adapt their proposal, which was one of the goals of the task.

In the light of the analysis of the participant's AD proposals and their answers they provided in Q2, it can be said that they have tried to create an AD that includes the necessary information for the audience to follow the story, while they have also tried to keep sentences clear and simple. In addition to this, they have also tried to make their proposal entertaining by adding more descriptive adjectives and even idiomatic expressions. This has also been translated in the process of recording their AD, since the majority of them have adapted their intonation to help blind and visually impaired children to follow the story and allow them to feel the emotions the characters are portraying on the screen. Moreover, participants have also shown awareness of the target audiences specific needs by adapting their rhythm and pronunciation to make the AD easier to understand. This may also help blind and visually impaired children to expand their vocabulary and improve their language acquisition process.

Finally, the answers in Q2 regarding the AD recording process show that this task, from the participant's point of view, can be slightly beneficial for language acquisition and especially useful for the development of oral production skills such as intonation, pronunciation and fluency. Thanks to the specific characteristics of AD for children, participants put a lot of attention on the recording process of the task, helping them practice their foreign language speaking skills.

8. Discussions and conclusions

In conclusion, the experiment presented in this article has demonstrated that children's audio description can be employed to create tasks based on the principles of DAT. Moreover, it has proven to be beneficial in several aspects. First, participants have shown a high degree of awareness of blind and visually impaired children's specific characteristics and needs, taking them into consideration when analysing the projected audio-described clips and creating their own proposal for those videos. This has led them to adopt a different approach towards these tasks than to standard AD tasks, making the necessary modifications to adapt their proposals to the target audience. The strategies employed by the participants varied from one another, but there are some of them that appear in the majority of the proposals for this task, such as the simplification of sentences, the use of more descriptive vocabulary and the adaptation of the tone of the AD to the program's tone.

Looking at the results, it can also be said that, according to the participants' perceptions, this task has also helped them develop their linguistic skills in English. In particular, the ones they believe to have worked the most are intonation, pronunciation and fluency. The reason for this may be that, due to the inherent characteristics of AD for children, participants have to pay more attention to the recording process, having to adapt their AD to keep the audience's interest and to portray the same feelings and emotions that the characters show on screen, so they put more effort on this part of the task. Vocabulary acquisition did not rate very high, maybe because they already had the transcription of the AD for children projected in class as reference and they believed that the vocabulary that appeared in them was well adapted to the target audience, but further research on this topic is needed.

This experiment can set the basis for further research in the field of didactic AD for children. Thanks to its special characteristics that set it apart from other AVT modalities, AD for children presents a high potential for didactic tasks. Since the results for vocabulary acquisition for this task have been quite low, another activity could be designed in which students had to create their own AD for children from scratch. This would enable them to be even more creative, adding all the

elements that they considered necessary for the adaptation of their proposal to the target audience's needs. This, added to the already stated benefits regarding oral production, could further improve the participants' foreign language skills. Moreover, due to the fact that the audiovisual materials employed in these tasks are targeted to children, their use for foreign language acquisition in Primary Education could be explored, adapting the different activities to the participants' age so they can make the most out of the tasks.

Referencias

AENOR, (2005). Norma UNE 153020. Audiodescripción para personas con discapacidad visual. Requisitos para la audiodescripción y elaboración de audioguías [Audio description for the visually impaired. Requirements for audio description and guidelines elaboration]. AENOR.

Alonso Pérez, R. & Sánchez Requena, A. (2018). Teaching foreign languages through audiovisual translation resources: teacher's perspectives. *Applied Language Learning, 28*(2), 1-24. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/18464/

Audio Description Coalition (2009). Standards for Audio Description and Code of Professional Conduct for Describers. Audio Description Coalition.

Díaz Cintas, J. (2012). Los subtítulos y la subtitulación en la clase de lengua extranjera. [Subtitles and subtitling in the foreign language classroom]. abehache, 2(3), 95-114. https://n9.cl/q7ar7

Fernández-Costales, A., Talaván, N., & Tinedo, A.J. (2023). Didactic audiovisual translation in language teaching: Results from TRADILEX. [Traducción audiovisual didáctica en enseñanza de lenguas: Resultados del proyecto TRADILEX]. *Comunicar, 77*, 21-32. https://doi.org/10.3916/C77-2023-02

Fryer, L. (2016). An introduction to audio description. A practical guide. Routledge.

Ibáñez Moreno, A. & Vermeulen, A. (2013). Audio description as a tool to improve lexical and phraseological competence in foreign language learning. In D. Tsagari & G. Floros (Eds.), Translation in language teaching and assessment. Cambridge Scholars Press, pp. 45-61.

Ibáñez Moreno, A. & Vermeulen, A. (2014). La audiodescripción como recurso didáctico en el aula ELE para promover el desarrollo integrado de competencias [Audio description as a didactic resource in the Spanish as a second language classroom to promote the integrated development of competences]. In R. Orozco (Ed.), New directions in Hispanic Linguistics. Cambridge Scholars Press, pp. 263-292.

Ibáñez Moreno, A., Jordano de la Torre, M. & Vermeulen, A. (2016). Diseño y evaluación de VISP, una aplicación móvil para la práctica de la competencia oral [Design and evaluation of VISP, a mobile app for the practice of oral competences]. RIED: Revista Iberoamericana de Educación a Distancia (Iberoamerican Journal of Distance Learning), 19, 63-81. https://doi.org/%2010.5944/ried.19.1.14580

Ibáñez Moreno, A., & Vermeulen, A. (2017). The ARDELE Project: Controlled empirical research on audio description as a didactic tool to improve (meta)linguistic competence in foreign language teaching and learning. In J. Díaz Cintas & K. Nikolic (Eds.), Fast-forwarding with audiovisual translation. Multilingual Matters, pp. 195–211.

Incalcaterra McLoughlin, L. (2009). Inter-semiotic translation in foreign language learning. The case of subtitling. In A. Witte, T. Harden & A. Ramos de Oliveira, Translation in second language teaching and learning. Peter Lang, pp. 227-244.

Incalcaterra McLoughlin, L., & Lertola, J. (2014). Audiovisual translation in second language acquisition. Integrating subtitling in the foreign-language curriculum. The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 8(1), 70-83. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2014.908558

ITC (2000). ITC guidance on standards for audio description. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/website/regulator-archives [Last accessed 17/02/2024]

Lertola, J. (2015). Subtitling in language teaching: Suggestions for language teachers. In G. Yves, A. Caimi & C. Mariotti (Eds.), Subtitles and language learning. Peter Lang, pp. 245-267.

Lertola, J. (2018, July 19 & 20). From translation to audiovisual translation in foreign language learning. *Trans. Revista de Traductología* [Trans. Translatology Journal], 22, 185-202. http://dx.doi.org/10.24310/TRANS.2018.v0i22.3217

Lertola, J. (2019). Audiovisual translation in the foreign language classroom: Applications in the teaching of English and other foreign languages. Research-publishing.net. https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2019.27.9782490057252

Martínez Martínez, S. (2012). La audiodescripción (AD) como herramienta didáctica: Adquisición de la competencia léxica [Audio description (AD) as a didactic tool: Lexical competence acquisition]. In S. Cruces, M. Del Pozo, A. Luna & A. Álvarez (Eds.), Traducir en la Frontera [Translating in the border]. Atrio, pp. 87-102

Marzà, A., Torralba Miralles, G., Cerezo Merchán, B. & Martínez Sierra, J.J. (2018). PluriTAV: desarrollo de las competencias plurilingües mediante el uso de la traducción audiovisual [PluriTAV: development of multilingual competences through the use of audiovisual translation] [Conference session]. Congreso Nacional de Innovación Educativa y de Docencia en Red [National Congress of Educational Innovation and Network Teaching] in Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, Spain. http://dx.doi.org/10.4995/INRED2018.2018.8617

Navarrete, M. (2018). The use of audio description in foreign language education. A preliminary approach. Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts, 4 (1), 129-150. https://doi.org/10.1075/ttmc.00007.nav

Navarrete, M. (2021). Active audio description as a didactic resource to improve oral skills in foreign language teaching [Doctoral dissertation, National University of Remote Education]. Teseo.

Ogea Pozo, M. del M. (2022). Concienciar y enseñar sobre accesibilidad: un experimento didáctico en el aula de traducción audiovisual basado en la audiodescripción [Raising awareness and teaching about accessibility: a didactic experiment in the audiovisual translation classroom based on audio description]. *Avanca Cinema Journal*, 20-30. http://dx.doi.org/10.37390/avancacinema.2022.a457

Ogea Pozo, M. del M., & Talaván, N. (2024). Teaching Languages for Social and Cooperation Purposes: Using Didactic 565 Media Accessibility in Foreign Language Education. In A. Bolaños García-Escribano & M. Oakín (Eds.), Inclusion, 566 Diversity and Innovation in Translation Education. UCL Press.

Palomo López, A. (2010). The benefits of audio description for blind children. In J. Díaz Cintas, A. Matamala and J. Neves (Eds.), New Insights into Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility: Media for All 2. Rodopi, pp. 213-225.

Pintado Gutiérrez, L. (2012). Fundamentos de la traducción pedagógica: Traducción, pedagogía y comunicación. *Sendebar: Revista de la Facultad de Traducción e Interpretación*, 23, 321-353. https://doi.org/10.30827/sendebar.v23i0.41

RNIB (2009). Audio description for children. https://www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/assistive-aids-and-technology/tv-audio-and-gaming/audio-description-ad/ [Last accessed 17/02/2024]

Rodríguez-Arancón, P. (2023) Developing L2 Intercultural Competence in an Online Context through Didactic Audiovisual Translation. Languages, 8, 160. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages8030160

Rodríguez-Arancón, P., & Tinedo-Rodríguez, A. J. (2023) La integración de la traducción audiovisual didáctica y la interculturalidad en el diseó de propuestas pedagógicas. Un análisis mixto sobre la formación del profesorado. In M. Osuna Rodríguez, M. I. Amor Almedina, I. Dios and F. Santiago Morales (Coords.), XI Premio "Luis Rodríguez" de Investigación en Interculturalidad, pp. 36-61

Sokoli, S. (2006). Learning via Subtitling (LvS). A tool for the creation of foreign language learning activities based on film subtitling [Conference session]. EU-High-Level Scientific Conference Series. Multidimensional translation: Audiovisual translation scenarios, Copenhagen. https://www.euroconferences.info/proceedings/2006_Proceedings/2006_Sokoli_Stravoula.pdf

Talaván, N. (2013). La subtitulación en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras. [Subtitling in foreign language learning]. Octaedro.

Talaván, N, Ávila-Cabrera, J.J. and Costal, T. (Eds.) (2016). Traducción y accesibilidad audiovisual [Audiovisual translation and accessibility]. UOC.

Talaván, N. (2019). Using subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing as an innovative pedagogical tool in the language class. International Journal of English Studies, 19 (1), 21-40. https://doi.org/10.6018/ijes.338671

Talaván, N. & Lertola, J. (2016). Active audiodescription to promote speaking skills in online environments. Sintagma, Revista de Lingüística [Sintagma, Journal of Linguistics], 27, 59-74. http://dx.doi.org/10.21001/sintagma.2016.28.04

Talaván, N. (2020). The didactic value of AVT in foreign language education. In L. Bogucki & M. Deckert (Eds.), The Palgrave handbook of audiovisual translation and media accessibility (pp. 567-592). Palgrave Macmillan.

Talaván, N., & Lertola, J. (2022). Audiovisual translation as a didactic resource in foreign language education. A methodological proposal. Encuentro, 23-39. https://doi.org/10.37536/ej.2022.30.1931

Talaván, N. Lertola, J. & Ibáñez, A. (2022). Audio description and subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing. Media accessibility in foreign language learning. Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts, 8(1), 1-29. https://doi.org/10.1075/ttmc.00082.tal

Talaván, N., & Tinedo-Rodríguez, A. J. (2023). Una mirada transdisciplinar a la Traducción Audiovisual Didáctica: Un recurso para formar a la ciudadanía del Siglo XXI. *Hikma*, *22*(1), 143–166. https://doi.org/10.21071/hikma.v22i1.14593

Filmography

Barnett, M., et al. (Executive Producers) (2023). Shape Island [TV series]. Bix Pix Entertainment; Apple Studios.

Fecha de recepción: 11/06/2024
Fecha de aceptación: 26/11/2024