

Article

InnoDAT—An Innovative Project Based on Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing for Learning Languages and Cultures

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Abstract: The InnoDAT project is framed within the TRADILEX Project, which is aimed at demonstrating the applicability of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) for teaching and learning languages. TRADILEX is an ongoing project presented at a state-funded competitive call and supported by the Spanish Government. This article is aimed at presenting InnoDAT, an innovative project based in the use of AVT for teaching and learning languages through: Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH). It has been designed to learn Spanish as a Second Foreign Language in an Italian Higher Education context according to a B2 CEFR level. The methodology used was developed by researchers of TRADILEX. Six tailor-made Learning Units (LU), based on the SDH mode, were designed and implemented among participants (N = 97). Authentic materials and cultural matters were also used and adapted according to the B2 level. The results show a clear improvement in the process of teaching and learning languages, knowledge of the culture and traditions of the target language, and the consciousness of accessibility among the participants. The authors compare this innovative research with former research. The InnoDAT project validates the applicability of the didactic audiovisual translation (DAT) as a means for learning languages and cultures within digital educational settings and how languages and cultures are intricately connected. Moreover, not only cultural issues but also accessibility were paramount in this research. Finally, motivation, autonomous and meaningful learning, communicative language competence, and digital competence were also nurtured by means of the InnoDAT project.

Keywords: didactic audiovisual translation (DAT); innovation; language; culture; subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH); Spanish as a foreign language; accessibility; digital and nondigital contexts



Citation: Couto-Cantero, Pilar, Noemi Fraga-Castrillón, and Giuseppe Trovato. 2023. InnoDAT—An Innovative Project Based on Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing for Learning Languages and Cultures. *Languages* 8: 235. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages8040235>

Academic Editor:

María-Elena Gómez-Parra

Received: 5 June 2023

Revised: 19 September 2023

Accepted: 20 September 2023

Published: 16 October 2023



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1. Introduction

The tradition of using Audiovisual Translation (AVT) for didactic purposes in Europe has been consolidated in recent decades. At present, there are also many researchers studying the applicability of the different AVT modalities for teaching and learning languages (Danan 2015; Fernández-Costales 2017; Frumuselu et al. 2015; Lertola 2019; Talaván 2013, 2020; Couto-Cantero et al. 2022). Similarly, other AVT combinations like Dubbing, Audiodescription, or Overlapping Voices, as well as other subtitling modalities began to be implemented for these same purposes (Danan 2010; Gómez Pérez and Roales Ruiz 2015; Navarrete 2013; Navarrete Ramírez 2021; Sánchez-Requena 2016; Talaván and Lertola 2016; Talaván et al. 2016; Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón 2014, 2019). All of them had the same common purpose in mind: to promote the potential of using AVT for learning languages and to develop communicative language competence among its users. As a natural consequence of these developments, researchers in this field, specifically those included in

the TRADILEX Project, started to use the shorter term Didactic Audiovisual Translation (DAT) instead of using the longer one: didactic AVT (Talaván and Tinedo-Rodríguez 2023). Despite these valuable contributions, there is still a research gap in terms of the lack of studies and specific research based on the use of the Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) mode to be used both for teaching and learning foreign languages and to foster accessibility among the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Consequently, the term “accessibility” is a key word, especially for this community, and this is where the importance of this innovative proposal for the field lies.

To study the applicability and use of SDH as a DAT model for learning second foreign languages is important for two main reasons. Firstly, it facilitates the design of materials and instruments for these specific purposes; and secondly, once these materials have been designed and validated for experts in the field, then it is time to perform quantitative and/or qualitative research in order to gather reliable data to be examined and to obtain conclusions from these results. Moreover, a lot of research has been gathered in the field of using AVT/DAT for learning English as a first foreign language. However, when it comes to discussing the teaching and learning of a second foreign language, there is also an interesting research gap not yet explored. Scarce research has been conducted and limited materials have been designed regarding learning Spanish as a second foreign language in general and even less if one specifies learning Spanish as a second foreign language, particularly by Italian speakers.

InnoDAT is the name agreed for this innovative project, which is explained in the following paragraphs. It is framed in the TRADILEX Project, an ongoing national project included in a Spanish state-funded competitive call aimed at demonstrating the applicability of AVT tools and techniques for teaching and learning languages. Precisely, this article constitutes a presentation of this innovative project designed ad hoc to learn Spanish as a second foreign language in an Italian higher education context by means of didactic audiovisual translation resources and techniques. The InnoDAT project consists of a set of six learning units (LU) based on one of the various AVT modalities, specifically: Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing, in which all language skills are balanced and equally considered. Cultural issues and authentic materials were also designed, used, and adapted to learning Spanish in an Italian context according to CEFR level B2 (Council of Europe 2001, 2018). This project was designed to be completed by the participants (N = 97) in both digital and nondigital contexts fostering not only autonomous and meaningful learning but also communicative language competence, intercultural communicative competence, and digital competence.

Vanderplank (1988) was one of the first researchers to demonstrate that the AVT approach could be very useful as a tool for teaching and learning languages. After these considerations, there were many other researchers who pondered the potential that the use of these strategies could have on learning languages (Araújo 2008; Bianchi 2015; Bolaños-García-Escribano 2017; Danan 2004; Gernsbacher 2015; Incalcaterra McLoughlin and Lertola 2014; Lertola 2012, 2013; Lopriore and Ceruti 2015; Neuman and Koskinen 1992; Talaván 2010, 2011, 2013 or Williams and Thorne 2000). Furthermore, in recent decades, it is common for real AVT materials to be used not only for didactic purposes but also for other purposes. According to Torralba-Miralles (2020), the delivery of these materials in foreign languages may cause problems of comprehension among receivers as they do not have enough linguistic knowledge to understand the message. This is one of the reasons why those real AVT materials are usually followed by subtitles, which facilitate understanding.

It has also been demonstrated that the use of subtitling activates the previous linguistic knowledge acquired by the users and helps them to practice, maintain, and broaden their level of communicative language competence (Díaz-Cintas 2012). On the other hand, most of the students who were able to put these AVT modalities into practice in the classroom agreed that the interest emerged and motivated them to participate (Gómez Pérez and Roales Ruiz 2011). Moreover, the potential of active subtitling has also been demonstrated through empirical studies conducted by Araújo (2008), Lertola (2012), or

Talaván (2010, 2011), who confirmed that these types of tasks were very attractive for students and were also very useful to the development of different linguistic skills. When it comes to discussing traditional basic linguistic skills, it can be ascertained that the first studies concentrated on oral comprehension (Talaván 2010, 2011; Williams and Thorne 2000), but undoubtedly, the improvement in the lexical level of learners has motivated a lot of the literature. Therefore, studies have been carried out related to the acquisition of vocabulary (Lertola 2012, 2013; Talaván 2007; Torralba 2016) and also around the acquisition of idiomatic expressions (Bravo 2008). Additionally, Incalcaterra McLoughlin (2009) investigated the retention of vocabulary and syntax, as well as the improvement in pragmatics.

Regarding Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, which is the basis of the InnoDAT proposal, it is necessary to delve deeper into intralinguistic subtitling as a tool for learning languages in different environments (Danan 1992; Vanderplank 1988; Caimi 2006; Gambier 2014). Through audiovisual materials one may access intralingual subtitles, which contain suprasegmental information and nonverbal information specifically designed for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. However, they also contain written explanations of the dialogues included, which are also very useful for the learners of a second foreign language. According to Gambier (2014), any redundant information received by the listener by means of different semiotic entries benefits students with oral comprehension difficulties and also those with concentration difficulties, as it covers the combination of three levels of information (oral, written, and visual). Additionally, if one pays attention to the VARK learning styles model: Visual, Auditory, Read-Write and Kinaesthetic (Fleming and Mills 1992), then it can be ascertained that the use of SDH activities for learning languages is also helpful for any learner with a more visual learning style, rather than an auditory one (Tarquini 2016).

However, despite finding a large amount of information on SDH and intralingual subtitling, practically all the texts refer to learning a foreign language by consuming this AVT modality. According to Talaván (2019), these types of SDH activities ensure the development of interpretative listening (listening to what is important to concentrate on the text of the subtitles), as well as writing skills (cohesion, coherence, register, etc.), and lexical creativity in those cases where sounds and other paralinguistic elements must be accurately described to serve an audience with hearing loss. Consequently, it encourages active viewing and accessibility awareness thanks to the social dimension of the task itself. It is necessary to emphasise that subtitles, especially intralingual ones, have a series of peculiarities that make them different from subtitles for those who do not have hearing loss. The most relevant aspect of SDH, concerning the didactics of foreign languages, is paralinguistic information. In addition, we also find the need to incorporate in writing all the sounds included in the video, such as noises, ambient sounds, or music (Talaván 2019).

Regarding learning about the culture of a country through learning the spoken foreign language, most international organizations, such as UNESCO's educational programmes, point out the need to promote the development of intercultural communicative competence. This not only consists of knowledge but also of skills, attitudes, values, and critical awareness (Gómez-Parra 2020). In addition, according to Portera (2010), intercultural education also offers the possibility of interacting through an exchange of ideas, principles, and behaviours, including a comparison of preconceptions, that is, of preconceived ideas.

In light of all the information gathered from the InnoDAT project, the three research questions (RQ) planned for this specific article were as follows:

RQ 1. To what extent has your participation in this project improved the development of your communicative skills in Spanish language?

RQ 2. To what extent has your participation in this project improved your knowledge about the Spanish culture?

RQ 3. To what extent did completing the SDH Learning Units make you more aware of the importance of accessibility?

To conclude, a preview of the subsequent sections of this article is provided: 1. this introduction; 2. method and materials; 3. results; 4. discussion, and 5. conclusions. Some extra information about funding, references, and the Appendix A with the questionnaire are also included at the end to complete this article.

2. Materials and Methods

The InnoDAT project was born as an innovative project to demonstrate the applicability of using SDH tools and techniques for learning languages. The method used for the InnoDAT project is based on the same method and resources developed by researchers of the TRADILEX Project (Couto-Cantero et al. 2021; Talaván and Lertola 2022). Therefore, instruments and materials were created and adapted out of the TRADILEX project for this new proposal. As digital competence is also promoted, the AegiSub programme was used to generate subtitles in some of the activities. This programme can be downloaded for free at www.aegisub.org (accessed on 12 November 2022) and is very easy to manage for practitioners. In fact, it was designed in 2005 not for professionals but for fansubbers and was aimed at explaining cultural elements to the target audience by means of explanatory notes (Torralba-Miralles 2020).

As previously mentioned, the InnoDAT project was designed for a specific higher education context in which Italian speakers learned Spanish as their second foreign language. It consisted of an initial questionnaire, an Initial Test of Integrated Skills (ITIS), a set of six learning units (LU) based on the SDH mode, a Final Test of Integrated Skills (FITIS), and a final questionnaire. Owing to time and space constrictions, this article focuses on the LUs and the final questionnaire, which was the instrument designed to give answers to the three RQs. A total of (N = 97) students participated in this research, all enrolled in the Degree: “Mediazione linguistica e culturale” and the Masters in “Traduzione spagnola specialistica e per i media”. This research was conducted at Ca’ Foscari University (Treviso, Italy). Students had a B2 level of English as their first FL, and a B1 level of Spanish as their second FL, the final target being to reach a B2 level after participating in this project. Less than 10% of the sample had previously completed AVT activities for language learning purposes, and only 15% had completed AVT activities to learn Spanish outside of an academic setting. Participants were able to identify the meaning of AVT in general terms, but they were not able to explain the different accessibility AVT modes, where the SDH is included. Likewise, they were all digital users and familiar with the use of audiovisual materials for learning foreign languages. Furthermore, they were also motivated to learn Spanish and demonstrated their enthusiasm to join the InnoDAT project.

The materials designed ad hoc to create the InnoDAT project were as follows: 1. an invitation letter, in which all details of the project were explained to the participants; 2. an initial questionnaire, in which demographic details were collected to define the sample of study and to gather data; 3. an Initial Test of Integrated Skills (ITIS), which was a language test, designed according to level B2 of the CEFR, to determine the participants’ initial stage of knowledge of the target language; 4. a set of six learning units (LU) based on the SDH mode; 5. a Final Test of Integrated Skills (FITIS), which was another language test, designed according to B2 level of the CEFR, to determine the participants’ final stage of knowledge of the target language after completing the LUs; and 6. a final questionnaire to obtain feedback on the results and experiences of the implemented project. It is also worth mentioning there were some tutorials and guidelines to introduce the project and guide the participants along the process. The language of instruction for these materials was Spanish as it was the second foreign language studied by the applicants in this research.

To give answers to the final questionnaire and gather data, participants completed the six LUs described in Table 1. Each LU had an estimated time of performance of one hour and was divided into four stages: 1. warming up, 2. previewing, 3. the SDH main activity, and 4. consolidation.

Table 1. Description of the learning units.

SDH LU	Description of the LU
SDH-LU 1 La Casa de Papel	This is the initial learning unit for “active listening” (sound effects), as the trailer for the series is provided. In addition, for the warmup and consolidation activities, the story relates to a remote possibility that it was based on a real historical event that happened in Spain, so Spanish cultural–historical knowledge is introduced.
SDH-LU 2 Del revés	In this learning unit, emotions and feelings are developed. As for the main part of the subtitling, it is a bit more complicated because it increases the speed of the conversations, which makes oral comprehension difficult and, therefore, written expression too.
SDH-LU 3 Camino de Santiago	Cultural awareness is paramount in this LU. All the activities deal with the “Camino de Santiago”, including general and specific vocabulary about Galicia (Spain).
SDH-LU 4 Shot in the dark	In this LU, content related to the media is worked on since the participants deal with translation studies. Therefore, vocabulary, grammar, etc., in this area of communication is useful for their professional future. This LU also presents notorious difficulty in the speed of the audio and the noises, as it is a video clip recorded with an “amateur effect”.
SDH-LU 5 Intocable	Following the same reasoning as in SDH-LU 4, job interviews are worked on in this Learning Unit because they are useful for the participants’ professional future.
SDH-LU 6 Navidad	This is, without a doubt, the Learning Unit with the most cultural load since different traditions of Spanish culture are shown. Being the last unit, it is the most difficult, and for this reason, the subtitling activity has a large load of set phrases and a variety of interventions.

Regarding the final questionnaire, a tailor-made questionnaire was used to gather data, since it is an instrument that allows a large volume of information to be easily obtained (Canales Cerón 2006). The questionnaire was deliberately delivered online for the following reasons: (1) It is an inexpensive and accessible resource. (2) It is easy to apply, and it can be completed at participants’ convenience. (3) It facilitates data collection and statistical analysis. (4) It allows the researchers to access a specific sample easily. Likewise, following the TRADILEX methodology, the questionnaire was divided into four sections addressing the following factors: 1. results, 2. assessment and satisfaction level, 3. interculturality, motivation, and AVT, and 4. observations, comments, and suggestions made by participants. For time and space constrictions, this study only focuses on Sections 1–3, which were scrutinized to answer the RQs previously stated.

The questionnaire consisted of 14 statements, comprising 4 open-ended items and 10 closed-ended items. The 10 closed-ended items were divided into 2 multiple choice answers, another 2 in which several options must be chosen, and 6 more answers with a six-point Likert scale being: 1 “Totally disagree”; 2 “Quite disagree”; 3 “Disagree”; 4 “Agree”; 5 “Quite agree”, and 6 “Totally agree”. Needless to say, in order to achieve reliable data, the final questionnaire was previously validated by two external-international experts on DAT, who examined all the information provided and made comments and suggestions to enrich the project with their expertise. It was also piloted by a group of students who did not take part in the study. All subjects gave their informed consent for inclusion before participating in the study. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and the protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of both universities involved in this research.

The InnoDAT project was conducted in various phases over the course of 2022–2023. The first phase of the project took place during the first semester, from September to December with participants from Degree and Master’s levels; the second phase was implemented during the second semester from February to May with new participants studying only at Master’s level. In both phases, the first LU was delivered face-to-face in the classroom with the researchers’ help during the first week, and the other LUs were completed by participants online to promote autonomous learning and digital competence. Nevertheless, participants were always guided by the researchers during the entire process by means of chats, online meetings, social media, virtual campus, etc. It is worth mentioning that the analysis and results of this research are only related to the group of participants who joined in the first phase.

Lastly, data processing was conducted in two different ways: first, by calculating the Mean (\bar{X}) and Mode (Mo) in the questions with answers in a range of values from 1 to 6 according to the six-point Likert scale, and second, through a discourse analysis, that is, analysing the content and classifying the text in essential units to codify data into categories. This form of data processing constitutes a constant comparative method inspired by grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

3. Results

To analyse data in a structured way, the RQs were divided into three. Therefore, the results of the analysis are explained according to these three RQs as follows. First, we obtained information about the improvement (or not) in the participants’ communicative skills after completing the intervention; second, we obtained information about the improvement (or not) in the participants’ cultural knowledge of the target country and language, and third, we determined whether the participants were aware of the importance of accessibility.

3.1. RQ 1. To What Extent Has Your Participation in This Project Improved the Development of Your Communicative Skills in the Spanish Language?

This section deals with the results received according to the six-point Likert scale on the importance of accessibility that students perceived after completing all the tasks. Once the students responded to what extent the project had enriched them as a person, the mean of the scores of the 97 participants was analysed, obtaining a value of $\bar{X} = 4.75$, which was barely discernible from the mode, for which $Mo = 5$. In addition, considering the Coefficient of Asymmetry of the curve and comparing it with the reference model (the Gaussian bell), we found a negative asymmetry, which indicated that most of the answers were concentrated in the higher part of the scores as seen in Figure 1.

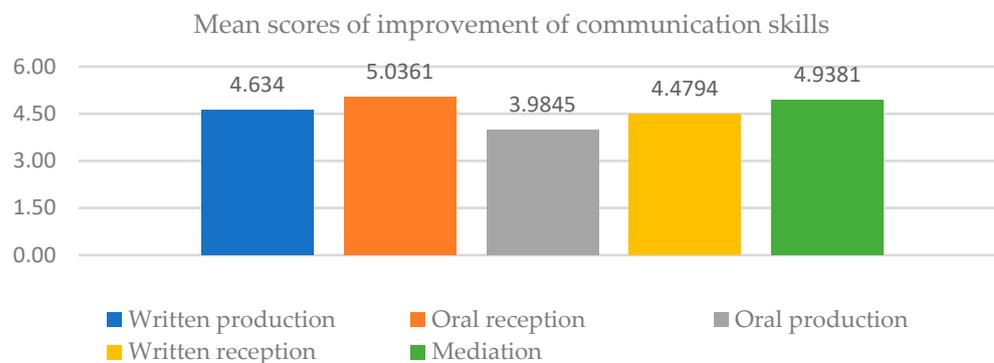


Figure 1. Mean scores of the improvement in communication skills.

To check and verify the previous information, the second question in this section was a multiple-choice option where participants had to tick the competences that they felt improved the most. In this case, the results followed the same trend as in the previous

question (see Figure 2), meaning “oral reception” (92%) and “mediation” (89%) stood out. Regarding the three remaining skills, it was observed that there were hardly any differences between “written production” (82%), “oral production” (81%), and “written reception” (81%).

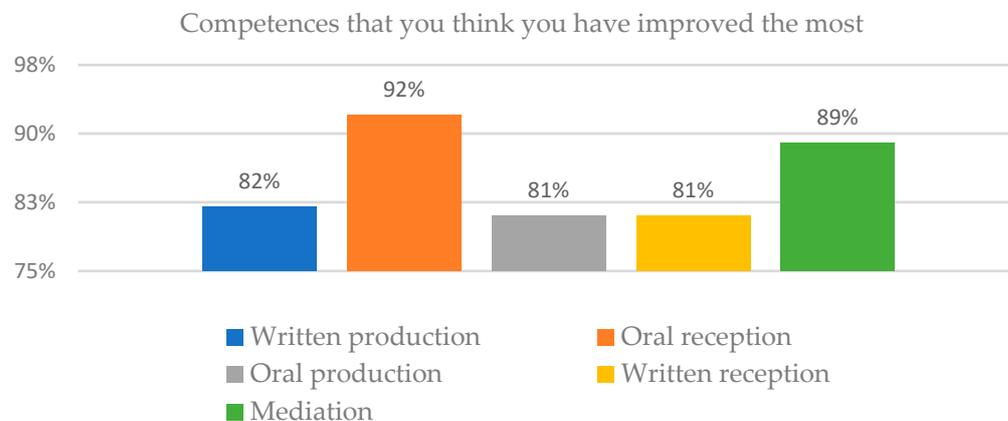


Figure 2. Communication skills that participants felt improved the most.

In summary, the findings of the improvement in communication skills section provided very positive results and high percentages of all skills, highlighting “oral reception?” and “mediation”, with minimal differences among “written production”, “oral production”, and “written reception”.

3.2. RQ 2. To What Extent Has Your Participation in This Project Improved Your Knowledge about the Spanish Culture?

This RQ 2 dealt with cultural issues. The first question was about participants’ knowledge about Spanish culture after completing the LUs. Answers were collected by a Likert scale from 1 = “Totally disagree” to 6 = “Totally agree”, resulting in the mean result $\bar{X} = 4.95$, which coincided with the mode ($M_o = 5$) (see Figure 3).

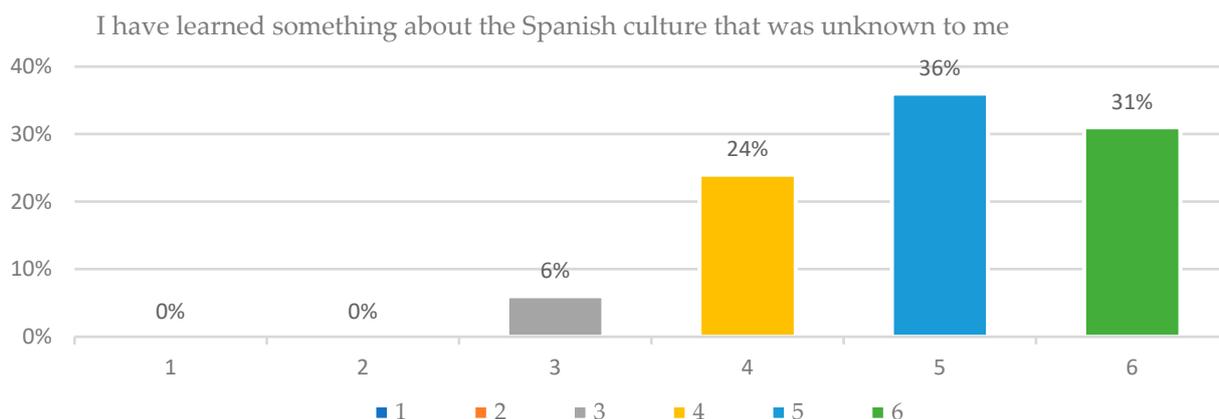


Figure 3. Number of topics learned about Spanish culture.

In addition, it is important to observe the percentage received in each score since a strong difference was perceived between the three most negative values (with the value “3” obtaining 6%), and the three most positive values (where the value “4” received 24%, the value “5” 36%, and the value “6” 31%).

On the other hand, the students were asked about the value of the cultural part; that is, they had to answer whether the cultural contents included in the learning units fostered respect for other cultures. In this case, the 6-point Likert scale was again followed, as in the

previous question, and a mean value of $\bar{X} = 5.24$ was verified, which did not coincide with the mode ($Mo = 6$) (see Figure 4).

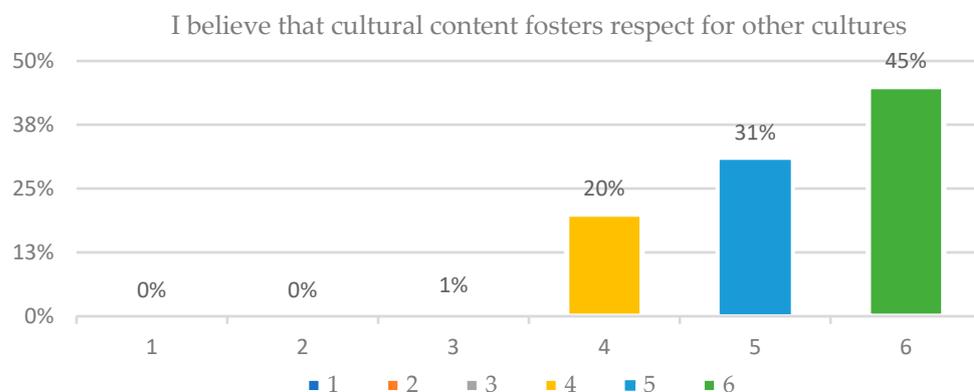


Figure 4. Degree to which cultural content fosters respect for other cultures.

By analysing these data, it can be shown that almost all (99%) of the responses fell within the three positive values, showing a clear upward curve in which the value with the highest percentage was “6” with 45%, followed by the value “5” with 31% and the value “4” with 20%.

Lastly, regarding the results of the cultural aspects section, students were asked to offer their opinion on the way in which the use of SDH influenced the improvement of their cultural knowledge. Starting from a total of 97 responses, 90 were categorized as “positively”, while 2 were negative, and 5 were other types of responses. Five subcategories were determined to deepen the category of “positively”, being that the “LUs in general” (30.92%) were what most improved the cultural knowledge of students, followed by “The effort involved in carrying out SDH” (25.77%), “Active listening” (15.46%), “The concentration required to carry out SDH” (12.37%) and, finally, “Improvement of idiomatic expressions” with 8.25%. However, in the negative influence category, only one subcategory indicated that “it did not improve” with a representation of 2.06% of the total (see Table 2).

Table 2. Influence of SDH on cultural knowledge improvements.

Do You Think That Completing the SDH Learning Units Improved Your Cultural Knowledge?				
Categories	N	Subcategories	N	%
Positive	90	The LUs in general	30	30.92%
		The effort involved in carrying out SDH	25	25.77%
		Active listening	15	15.46%
		The concentration required to carry out SDH	12	12.37%
		Improvement of idiomatic expressions	8	8.25%
Negative	2	It did not improve	2	2.06%
Others	5	-	-	5.15%

3.3. RQ 3. To What Extent Did Completing the SDH Learning Units Make You More Aware of the Importance of Accessibility?

This section deals with the results received according to the six-point Likert scale on the importance of accessibility that students perceived after completing all the tasks. Once the students responded to what extent the project had enriched them as a person, the mean of the scores of the 97 participants was analysed, obtaining a value of $\bar{X} = 4.75$, which was barely discernible from the mode, which was $Mo = 5$. In addition, considering the Coefficient of Asymmetry of the curve and comparing it with the reference model (the

Gaussian bell), we found a negative asymmetry, which indicated that most of the answers were concentrated in the higher part of the scores (Figure 5).

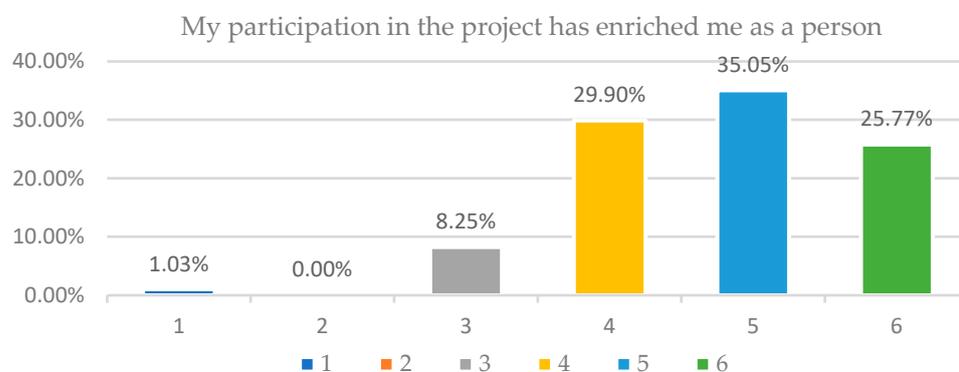


Figure 5. Degree to which the project enriched participants as people.

4. Discussion

This section compares the present research with previous research (Couto-Cantero et al. 2021; Talaván and Lertola 2022) within this new proposal. In the first place, this study confirmed once again the statement made in previous studies by researchers such as Araújo (2008), Lertola (2012), or Talaván (2010, 2011) about the usefulness of active subtitling for improving language skills, as well as for the development and expansion of the level of linguistic communication competence (Díaz-Cintas 2012). According to Williams and Thorne (2000), the improvement in oral comprehension of a foreign language that comes with this type of DAT activity is undeniable due to the number of studies that demonstrate these data, and once again, our results were in line with the previous ones. It is also worth mentioning the high scores obtained in this study about the improvement of “mediation” and “written production (oral reception)” when using SDH as the main DAT activity, also expressed by Talaván (2010) in her design of a proposal for learning English as a foreign language using the SDH mode.

Secondly, these researchers consider it paramount to promote intercultural communicative competence and demonstrate how languages and cultures are intricately connected (Gómez-Parra 2020). As verified in this study, this causes an increase in respect towards other cultures, since the introduction of cultural knowledge in the educational field implies carrying out an exchange of ideas, principles, and behaviours (Portera 2010). Likewise, it was verified that the activities carried out by our higher education participants, which had a cultural focus, resulted in the learning of a high number of idiomatic expressions, as also detailed by Williams and Thorne (2000) in their study.

Finally, it was possible to verify that the InnoDAT project, which had the particularity of carrying out SDH activities for learning a foreign language in a similar way to the proposal made by Talaván (2019), succeeded in enhancing the personal development of the participants, since they became aware of accessibility and gained consciousness of the reality experienced by the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Comparing previous research with the results achieved in this study, it can be ascertained that the InnoDAT project seems to be a solid innovative proposal. The TRADILEX project has served as a foundation to expand further research based on using DAT activities for learning languages.

5. Conclusions

According to these authors, this study advances previous research by taking a step further and incorporating target languages other than English. It also tries to focus on learning second foreign languages, which are not usually considered in these types of studies. Moreover, the DAT mode focused on SDH activities, has been deliberately selected because it gives extra value to this research by paying attention to accessibility, something that has not been studied to date.

As with any research, this study had some limitations, which are mentioned as follows. First, it is centred exclusively on one DAT modality, which is the SDH; secondly, it focuses on a specific educational context, that of higher education in Italy, and thirdly, the learning of the Spanish language is used in a B2 level according to the CEFR, with the peculiarity of being the second foreign language of the participants in this project. On the other hand, these researchers consider that all these limitations make the study more effective and reliable as the results have been scrutinised in depth. The results show a clear improvement in the process of teaching and learning languages; therefore, this study should be expanded to other levels of education, other languages, and other educational settings. It should also be considered for professional development, further research, or even for language policies.

Thanks to this innovative project, the development of communicative language competence and subsidiarily digital competence increased among participants. Likewise, motivation and autonomous and meaningful learning were nurtured in the students who joined the project. In addition, the three RQs were answered, obtaining very positive results not only about learning the target language but also in terms of learning cultural contents and traditions from Spain, since they were included in all of the LUs within the InnoDAT project in a transversal way. Thus, apart from learning cultural issues that had never been studied before, this project also managed to foster among participants respect for other cultures different from their own. Furthermore, not only were language and cultural issues key points in this research but so was accessibility. Paying attention to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community through these specifically designed learning units not only benefits this community but also serves to make participants be more aware of the problems that may exist and the need for accessibility in a diverse and global world.

For future research, the next stage will involve analysing the collected quantitative data pertaining to the improvement observed between the initial test (ITIS) and the final test (FITIS). This analysis will be used to draw comparisons with the qualitative research presented in this article, enabling the formulation of more robust and coherent conclusions. In addition, we believe that this study is a step forward in research on the teaching–learning of the second foreign language and in the SDH mode of accessibility, as they are both two very important features in developing decent communication in a globalized, diverse, and inclusive society and have not been studied in depth until now.

Finally, the hypothesis of these authors established that the use of SDH learning units for teaching and learning second foreign languages could facilitate the process and help not only to improve communicative language competence, intercultural communicative competence, and digital competence but also to promote accessibility among the community. All in all, the hypothesis is confirmed as the findings show that the SDH-LUs designed within the InnoDAT project seem to be appropriate for a B2 level of Spanish, and they can be considered an interesting innovative option to improve second foreign language learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that the InnoDAT project demonstrates the applicability of didactic audiovisual translation (DAT) as a means for learning languages and cultures within digital educational settings.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, P.C.-C., G.T. and N.F.-C.; methodology, P.C.-C. and N.F.-C.; formal analysis, P.C.-C. and N.F.-C.; investigation, P.C.-C. and N.F.-C.; data curation, N.F.-C.; writing—original draft preparation, P.C.-C.; writing—review and editing, P.C.-C., G.T. and N.F.-C. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by PID2019-107362GA-I00 AEI/10.13039/501100011033. Spanish Government, Science, and Innovation Ministry/Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación. Noemi Fraga-Castrillón is funded with an INDITEX-UDC 2023 predoctoral.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Ethics Committee of UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA (date of approval 5 July 2021).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: For further information about the data, please contact the authors.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Link to the Online Final Questionnaire (accessed 10 October 2023)

<https://forms.gle/U4YbdrstehL7Pact7>

Final questionnaire (cuestionario final)

(As the target language was Spanish, the questionnaire was designed and completed in this language).

Este es el cuestionario final para estudiantes del curso de “Lingua e traduzione spagnola 2” y “Traduzione spagnola specialistica e per i media” a través del subtitulado para sordos organizado la doctoranda Noemi Fraga Castrillón y sus directores (la Dra. Pilar Couto Cantero y el Dr. Giuseppe Trovato).

Este curso de español a través de la traducción audiovisual didáctica (TAD) tiene como objetivos evaluar el potencial didáctico de la modalidad del subtitulado para sordos (SPS) para mejorar el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras y evaluar la mejora de las competencias comunicativas en español del alumnado.

Te informamos de que todos los datos recogidos durante el proyecto, así como los incluidos en el presente cuestionario serán tratados de manera anónima EN LO QUE RESPECTA A LA INVESTIGACIÓN y cumplen con el código ético de la UDC y la Unive. Para cualquier duda o comentario al respecto, puedes ponerte en contacto por email con la responsable del proyecto, Noemi Fraga Castrillón (noemi.fraga.castrillon@udc.es).

Sección 1: resultados.

1. Indica el grado de claridad de cada uno de los siguientes elementos del proyecto (1—Totalmente confuso; 2—Bastante confuso; 3—Aceptable; 4—Claro; 5—Bastante claro; 6—Totalmente claro)
 - a. La organización del proyecto en Moodle
 - b. Las instrucciones generales del proyecto
 - c. Las instrucciones de las unidades de aprendizaje
 - d. Las instrucciones sobre cómo utilizar el software recomendado
2. ¿Cuál ha sido el tiempo medio que has dedicado a cada unidad de aprendizaje?
 - Menos de 60 minutos
 - 60 minutos
 - 90 minutos
 - 120 minutos
 - Más de 2 horas
3. La duración del proyecto (6 unidades de aprendizaje, más las pruebas y los cuestionarios) me ha resultado:
 - Muy corta
 - Me gustaría tener más unidades de aprendizaje
 - Me gustaría tener menos unidades de aprendizaje
 - Muy larga
4. Valora los siguientes ítems de 1 a 6 (1—Totalmente en desacuerdo; 2—Bastante en desacuerdo; 3—En desacuerdo; 4—De acuerdo; 5—Bastante de acuerdo; 6—Totalmente de acuerdo)
 - a. En general estoy satisfecho/a con el trabajo que he realizado en las tareas de TAV
 - b. El resultado de mi trabajo en las tareas de subtitulado ha progresado según ha ido avanzando el proyecto
 - c. Las pruebas (previas y posteriores) de nivel me han servido para conocer mi evolución en el aprendizaje del español a lo largo del proyecto

- d. Habría preferido realizar el curso sin las pruebas (previas y posteriores) de nivel
5. Valora los siguientes ítems de 1 a 6 (1—Totalmente en desacuerdo; 2—Bastante en desacuerdo; 3—En desacuerdo; 4—De acuerdo; 5—Bastante de acuerdo; 6—Totalmente de acuerdo)
- a. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi capacidad de escritura en español
 - b. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi habilidad para entender lo que escucho en español
 - c. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi habilidad para hablar en español
 - d. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi capacidad para comprender textos escritos en español.
 - e. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi habilidad para transmitir con fidelidad lo que escucho, leo u observo de una lengua a otra
 - f. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi gramática en español
 - g. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi vocabulario en español
 - h. Las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi comprensión de la cultura hispánica
 - i. Gracias a las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mis habilidades tecnológicas
 - j. Me resulta interesante realizar tareas de subtítulo para sordos
 - k. Cuando realizo tareas de subtítulo para sordos me siento motivado/a por ver el resultado final de mi trabajo
 - l. Las tareas de subtítulo para sordos requieren demasiado esfuerzo por mi parte
 - m. Las tareas de subtítulo para sordos son beneficiosas para mejorar mi nivel general de habilidades comunicativas en español
6. Marca qué habilidades comunicativas mejoran con el uso del subtítulo para sordos: (1—Totalmente en desacuerdo; 2—Bastante en desacuerdo; 3—En desacuerdo; 4—De acuerdo; 5—Bastante de acuerdo; 6—Totalmente de acuerdo)
- Expresión oral (hablar)
 - Expresión escrita (escribir)
 - Comprensión oral (escuchar)
 - Comprensión escrita (leer)
 - Mediación/capacidad de transmitir lo escuchado/leído/observado con fidelidad
 - Competencia léxica
 - Competencia gramatical
 - Competencia intercultural
 - Competencia tecnológica
 - Capacidad creativa

Sección 2: valoración y satisfacción

7. Valora los siguientes ítems de 1 a 6 (1—Totalmente en desacuerdo; 2—Bastante en desacuerdo; 3—En desacuerdo; 4—De acuerdo; 5—Bastante de acuerdo; 6—Totalmente de acuerdo)
- a. Me gustaría seguir aprendiendo lenguas mediante tareas/ejercicios de subtítulo para sordos
 - b. Me gustaría seguir aprendiendo lenguas mediante tareas/ejercicios de otras modalidades de traducción audiovisual
 - c. Las tareas de subtítulo para sordos han cubierto mis expectativas de aprendizaje
 - d. Mi participación en el proyecto se ha ajustado a mis intereses
 - e. Me gustaría repetir la experiencia el próximo curso
 - f. Mi participación en el proyecto me ha enriquecido como persona
 - g. Durante la realización de las tareas me he sentido motivado/a
 - h. El subtítulo para sordos contribuye a un aprendizaje más autónomo de la lengua extranjera

- i. El subtulado para sordos ofrece un contexto auténtico para aprender español
- j. El subtulado para sordos es un recurso útil para aprender español
- k. Preferiría aprender español mediante tareas de traducción audiovisual que a través de otras metodologías
- l. Convendría incluir este tipo de tareas de traducción audiovisual como recurso didáctico en las clases de idiomas (academias de idiomas, centros universitarios de idiomas, etc.)
- m. Convendría incluir este tipo de tareas de traducción audiovisual como recurso didáctico en el currículum de educación primaria
- n. Convendría incluir este tipo de tareas de traducción audiovisual como recurso didáctico en el currículum de educación secundaria

Sección 3: interculturalidad, motivación y TAV

8. Valora los siguientes ítems de 1 a 6 (1—Totalmente en desacuerdo; 2—Bastante en desacuerdo; 3—En desacuerdo; 4—De acuerdo; 5—Bastante de acuerdo; 6—Totalmente de acuerdo)
 - a. Creo que tras la realización de esta secuencia didáctica puedo desenvolverme mejor en contextos interculturales
 - b. He aprendido algún aspecto sobre la cultura hispánica que era desconocido para mí
 - c. He mejorado mi repertorio de expresiones idiomáticas
 - d. La inclusión de contenidos culturales de forma transversal me ha resultado motivadora
 - e. He sentido emociones positivas durante la realización de ejercicios de las unidades de aprendizaje relacionados con la cultura
 - f. Creo que los contenidos culturales de las unidades de aprendizaje han mejorado mi entendimiento de otras culturas
 - g. Opino que los contenidos culturales fomentan el respeto hacia otras culturas
9. ¿Cuáles de los contenidos culturales ofrecidos en las Unidades de Aprendizaje te ha resultado más enriquecedor? ¿Por qué?
10. ¿Cómo crees que ha influido el uso del subtulado para sordos en la mejora de tus conocimientos culturales?
11. ¿Crees que la combinación del subtulado para sordos junto con los contenidos culturales supone un aumento de la motivación hacia el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera? Explica tu opinión al respecto.
12. Selecciona la(s) competencia(s) que crees que has mejorado más gracias a la combinación de contenidos culturales y TAV. Puedes elegir varias opciones.
 - Producción oral
 - Producción escrita
 - Recepción oral
 - Recepción escrita
 - Mediación
 - Ninguna
13. Selecciona el/los componentes que crees que has mejorado más gracias a la combinación de contenidos culturales y TAV. Puedes elegir varias opciones.
 - Gramática
 - Vocabulario
 - Ninguno

Sección 4: observaciones

14. Utiliza este apartado (solo si te parece oportuno) para incluir cualquier observación, comentario o valoración que te parezca relevante hacernos llegar.

Indica tu código de alumno: TriennaleMagistrale_corso_

CognomeNome Ej.: Triennale_2_FragaNoemi

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