

The effects of fansubs on EFL education for Translation and Interpreting students: an empirical approach¹

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ABSTRACT

This article reports on an empirical experiment conducted with Translation and Interpreting undergraduate students to gauge the effects of fansubbing on learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Experience has shown that young Spanish-speaking undergraduate students tend to watch free TV programmes online, and these programmes may be fansubbed in Spanish, which means that fansubbed videos are acting as a linguistic model to many students of English as a foreign language. This study aims to ascertain the potential benefits, as well as the main drawbacks, of using fansubbed products for foreign language learning purposes in translator training. This research targeted students in their second year of studies whose participation was twofold: firstly, they were invited to complete an online survey to collect data on their opinions about subtitling and fansubbing; secondly, the students were exposed to two short clips, one professionally subtitled and one fansubbed. This was followed by a blind experiment including a questionnaire with an assessment test and more personal questions. The survey was successfully completed by 46 students and throws light on their preferences for audiovisual consumption when learning a foreign language. The blind experiment was successfully completed by 59 students and provides evidence of the effects fansubbing may have on foreign language education.

KEYWORDS

Fansubbing, subtitling, EFL, translation, experiment, survey, translator training.

1. Introduction

Audiovisual consumption has greatly developed in recent years due to a rapid expansion of new technology (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009: 3). This has resulted in a situation where younger audiences tend to watch audiovisual content on their computers on a daily basis, and more often than through conventional broadcasting (TV, cinema and DVD). Today audiovisual programmes, such as films, TV series and cartoons are freely available on the Internet through stream mirroring and in many countries, such as in Spain, a fansubbed version is usually accessible for them (Talaván Zanón 2013: 64).

Subtitling as a learning method in Foreign Language Learning (FLL) has been a recurring topic in academia. However, amateur subtitling – or fansubbing² – has not yet been considered from an empirical point of view:

We consider a future investigation on the impact of fansubbing on the acquisition of a second language [...] on the part of the fansubbers themselves as well as users, to be of paramount importance. A study of this kind might be able to unveil whether and how a massive exposure to a cognitive learning method known as the “latent learning process” [...] represented by a subterranean, grassroots phenomenon such as fansubbing, and occurring in a semi-learning environment, has contributed to the linguistic learning process among foreign language learners and younger generations of TV show addicts in general (Massidda 2015: 117).

Literature on fansubbing has grown since the pioneering article by Díaz Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez (2006), followed by further research (Bogucki (2009), Pérez González (2012), Kreb (2011), Álvarez Raposeiras (2012), Dwyer (2012), Pérez González and Susam-Saraeva (2012), Sajna (2013), and Massidda (2015)). At the same time, there does not appear to be much research on fansubbing in connection with foreign language learning and scholars seem to have neglected the potential effects of fansubbing on EFL education in the context of translator training.

The aim of this project is to evaluate the effects of amateur subtitling on Translation and Interpreting undergraduate students using an electronic survey (see annex 1) and face-to-face blind experiments (see annex 2). The main objective of the research was to observe the potential benefits of using fansubs in EFL education as part of translator training, as well as the potential drawbacks posed by an academic environment. This paper seeks to establish whether the use of fansubs in the classroom can be advantageous for students.

The sample for this study was comprised of second year undergraduate students enrolled in Translation and Interpreting studies at the University of Malaga. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and as stated in the official curriculum the Department of Translation and Interpreting submitted to the University of Malaga in 2009 (Malaga University, Curriculum), the level of English of these students at entry point corresponded to level B2. In addition, the official syllabus for “Lengua y cultura ‘B’ aplicadas a la Traducción y la Interpretación (IV)” [Language and Culture ‘B’ (English) applied to Translation and Interpreting (IV)] –stipulates that English undergraduate students should reach level C1 by the end of the academic year, before enrolling in specialised translation courses (Malaga University, Course website).

2. Towards a definition of fansubbing

Fansubbing is a social phenomenon; however, it is primarily a form of subtitling, and thus a modality of Audiovisual Translation (AVT). Although AVT was practically untouched by scholars in the early 70s-80s³ (Pérez González 2014: 27), it is now considered a solid, relevant research field in academia (Agost Canós and Chaume Varela 2001: 15). As a sub-field of AVT, subtitling has much evolved since it was called a ‘necessary harm’ (Marleau 1982: 271, own translation) thanks to far-reaching prescriptive works, such as those by Ivarsson (1992), Karamitroglou (1998) and Díaz Cintas (2003).

Subtitling, understood here as a type of translation of the original video (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 8), has a broad typology that will not be accounted for here (see Díaz Cintas 2012: 99-101). It will instead be

regarded as a form of interlingual translation – “snippets of written text superimposed on visual footage that convey a target language version of the source speech” (Pérez González 2014: 16) – leading to audiovisual programmes made up of three different elements: spoken word, images and subtitles (Díaz Cintas, 2012: 108).

The fansubbing phenomenon originated from an amateur translation movement of people interested in Japanese anime in the United States in the 80s (Martínez García 2010: 3). As discussed by Díaz Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez (2006: 43), these amateur translations aimed to bridge the gap between official U.S. distributors and anime fans. Nonetheless, this early fansubbing phenomenon has evolved into another in which translations are made of any kind of audiovisual programme, especially of American TV series (Massidda 2015: 38). There is no terminological agreement on the difference between ‘fansubbing’ and ‘amateur subtitling’ in academia – whereas Pérez González (2007), Bogucki (2009) and Gambier (2013) restrict the former to Japanese programmes; Kayahara (2005), Díaz Cintas (2007), Martínez García (2010), Dwyer (2012), Chaume Varela (2013), Miloševski (2013) and Massidda (2015) do not make such a differentiation. In this paper, no difference will be established between the two terms.

Subtitling is a translation activity that is governed by national or commercial conventions (Mattson, 2006: 7). Nonetheless, according to Ferrer Simó (2005: 30), fansubs do not conform to the such conventions. This contrast seems to be justified by the existence of a different target audience. While TV, cinema and digital platforms are paid for, fansubs are available for free. Whereas professional subtitles need to undergo quality checks, this is not necessarily the case of fansubs. Be it as it may, some fansubbing communities do provide fansubbers with a set of guidelines, and Massidda portends “a hybridisation of approaches, merging professional and fansubbing conventions [...] to happen in the future” (2012: 17). Massidda (2015) also emphasises that the work of some fansubbers can go far beyond amateur collaborations. In fact, some fansubbers associations test newcomers before accepting them to the translation community. This may be the reason why some scholars differentiate amateurs from fansubbers.

The process of fansubbing can either be undertaken by a single fansubber or by a whole team: an online fansubbing group. In any case, whereas professional subtitlers receive a professional commission, fansubbers carry out their fansubbing projects at their will. That is, fansubbers normally select the videos they subtitle based on their personal preferences, unless they receive specific instructions from the fansubbing group to which they belong. Fansubbers often use freeware available online, such as Subtitle Workshop, VisualSubSync and Aegisub.

Spanish official amendments of the Intellectual Property Act on 4

November 2014, touching the current Civil Procedure Act too, stated that subtitle files available online are illegal (Agencia Estatal 2014). Hence, a number of Spanish fansub websites were closed down, despite their potential educational benefits:

Though a majority of fansubbing activity violates copyright law, it brings educational and global market exposure to foreign television programs and movies. The social benefits that result from fansubbing activities outweigh any of the potential damages that could emerge because of copyright infringement and should entitle the activity to some form of protection under copyright law (Rembert-Lang 2010: 32).

Fansubs, rooted in the idea of global free culture, go beyond the boundaries of the audiovisual market (Díaz Cintas 2005: 16). Ferrer Simó (2005: 28) states that there was a so-called code of ethics that fansubbers used to respect, which consisted of distributing content whose licenses had not been purchased in the country; however, this agreement has been disrespected, and has led to legal confrontation. There are two international acts about copyright infringement, which are the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works of 9 September 1886; and the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (United States Copyright Office 1996; Rembert-Lang 2010: 24-25). However, by changing their DNS, some distribution websites manage to evade national prohibitions.

3. Applying subtitling and fansubbing to EFL education in Translation and Interpreting curricula

First of all, 'learning' must be differentiated from 'acquisition.' Learning is the conscious process of gaining certain abilities in any foreign language (Krashen 1989: 8) whereas acquisition may be sub-conscious, as with children acquiring a language. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) defines learning as "the process whereby language ability is gained as the result of a planned process, especially by formal study in an institutional setting" (Council of Europe 2002: 139).

The ultimate goal of academic studies in Translation and Interpreting should be acquiring translating competence (Enríquez Aranda et al. 2010: 143), which can be defined as developing the cognitive operations required when translating (Hurtado Albir 2001: 375). One of the main sub-competences of translating competence is cultural competence (linguistic and extralinguistic), but "little attention has been given to the ways in which translators learn foreign languages" (Enríquez Aranda 2003: 127).

There are three acquisition-learning theories that would back the use of subtitling in FLL: the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, the dual-coding theory, and the information processing theory (Talaván Zanón 2011: 199). Furthermore, Krashen's (1989) Monitor Theory contemplates

the “input hypothesis” stating that students learn by being subject to constant input. Although outmoded today, this theory has recently been observed in research on AVT and foreign language learning by Zárate and Eliahoo (2014) and He (2015).

Besides, official reports of the European Commission have indicated that in countries where subtitling is predominant, the percentage of people who speak a second language is much higher than in countries where audiovisual programmes are more generally dubbed (Talaván Zanón 2013: 11), showing that:

the effect of interlingual subtitling in boosting foreign-language skills in a long-term perspective is also clear, as people in European subtitling communities tend to be more fluent in English – even without being formally taught the language – than people living in dubbing countries (Pavesi and Perego, 2008: 216).

The various benefits of subtitling in EFL courses have already been confirmed by Vanderplank (1988), Caimi (2006), Kusumarasdyati (2006) and Talaván Zanón (2011), among others. However, we must differentiate between “active subtitling” – i.e. giving videos to students that they must subtitle themselves –, as in the EU-funded project LeVis which ended in 2008, and “passive subtitling” – i.e. using already subtitled videos in class – which is the format that applies to this study. A number of scholars have already studied passive subtitling applied to FLL, such as Vanderplank (1988), Borrás and Lafayette (1994), Markham (1999) Shea (2000), Bird and Williams (2002), King (2002), Danan (2004), Bravo (2008), Zarei Mavini (2009), Ghia (2012) and He (2015) to name but a few.

DVDs, digital television, Internet channels and the recent wide spread of digital platforms (e.g. Netflix, Yomvi, Wuaki) allow for a multimodal approach to EFL in the classroom. Teachers can use a variety of audiovisual programmes, as well as exploit different types of subtitles (captions, interlingual, reversed). Nonetheless, all these educational methods must respond to previously established objectives. Besides, activities in the classroom must be carefully monitored by the EFL instructor, as well as “used with an evident aim both for students and teachers” (Talaván Zanón 2013: 73).

The undergraduate course in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Malaga, a four-year bachelor’s degree (240 ECTS⁴), provides four compulsory EFL modules for students who chose English as their first working language when enrolling at the university. Undergraduate students are supposed to reach level C1 in communication skills in English through these four EFL courses. Two courses are worth 18 ECTS in all (450 hours), and the other two are worth 12 ECTS in all (300 hours). These are taught during the first two years of studies; members of the Department of Translation and Interpreting (English section) at the University of Malaga teach these courses each academic year. Hence, the

aim of these four courses is to acquire so-called cultural competence, which would allow students to have a solid linguistic and cultural knowledge in English before facing translation projects in the future.

4. Methodology

This research can be categorised as a product-oriented empirical study (Toury 2004: 286) with two main components: an electronic survey (questionnaire), and a blind experiment (including an assessment test). This is not a study focused on translator training, but on the potential benefits of using fansubs as a didactic resource in EFL education for specific purposes. Previous publications in Translation Studies and in EFL have been taken into account when designing the methodology of this study. Specific publications about the effects of subtitles on language acquisition, such as Talaván Zanón's monograph (2013), represent the main theoretical ground for this study.

Existing publications on AVT reception and subtitling applied to FLL were used to develop the methodology of this research. Relevant research on AVT reception has included: Gottlieb (1995, 1997); Fuentes Luque (2000, 2003); Widler (2004); Neves (2005); Antonini (2005); Chiaro (2004, 2006, 2007); Bucaria and Chiaro (2007); Orero Clavero (2008); Antonini and Chiaro (2009); Fresno (2012); Schauffler (2012) and Orrego Carmona (2014). In addition, publications on the application of subtitling to FLL, either for translation or for other purposes, have also been taken into account: Vanderplank (1988); Borrás and Lafayette (1994); Caimi (2006); Bravo (2008, 2010); Santiago Araújo (2008); Zarei Mavini (2009); Talaván Zanón (2010, 2011); Sokoli, Zabalbeascoa Terrán and Fountana (2011); and López Cirugeda and Sánchez Ruiz (2012).

97 students enrolled in the final compulsory English-specific course "Lengua y Cultura 'B' (inglés) aplicadas a la Traducción y la Interpretación (IV)" [Language and Culture 'B' (English) applied to Translation and Interpreting (IV)] in the academic year 2014-15. The sample – for both the survey and the experiment – includes students younger than 30 years old, whose native language was Castilian Spanish and whose names were specified in the official enrolment list of this course at the University of Malaga.

Some personal details extracted from the surveys were highly important in terms of sample description. For instance, most students were taking this specific course for the first time, and most were younger than 22. A number of them already had English qualifications between levels B1 and B2 (except for one student holding a level C1 certificate). Furthermore, most of these students had English qualifications awarded by internationally recognised institutions from the United Kingdom, such as Cambridge ESOL and Trinity ESOL. However, a third of them did not hold any official certificate. It can thus be inferred that the overall level of

English was B2 (upper-intermediate fluency). None of these students had studied audiovisual translation at university, and hence were not assumed to have been previously informed of AVT-related and subtitling-specific constraints.

The final count of participants is reproduced in the table below:

	Sex	Age	Academic year (tuition)	English qualifications	Qualifying institution
Electronic survey	6 men 40 women	17-19: 31 20-22: 15	2 nd year: 45 3 rd year: 1	B1: 14 B2: 14 C1: 2 None: 14 Other: 2	Cambridge ESOL: 23 Trinity ESOL: 4 EOI ⁵ : 3 Other university: 1
Experiment	11 men 48 women	17-19: 38 20-22: 21	[*Not asked for this part]		

Table 1. Participants in the experiment

The survey tool LimeSurvey was used during the whole process of data collection – 29 questions were available for the students to answer between March and April 2015. The experiment was carried out in April 2015 in both groups: morning session and afternoon session. The materials used in the experiment were two fragments from two well-known American TV series, *The Big Bang Theory* (TBBT) and *House of Cards* (HOC). The six-minute fragment of TBBT was extracted from the second episode of season 5, whereas the three-minute fragment of HOC was extracted from the first episode of season 2. To obtain the clips, a screen recording was repeated on four occasions respectively – that is, a fansubbed version of each episode was recorded with screen recording software (QuickTime Player), and an official version available on Wuaki digital platform was recorded as well, so that the students could not distinguish between the two. The reason for choosing these excerpts their rich dialogue and use of specialised language.

Following Neunzig's (2011) recommendations on methodological issues in Translation Studies, this study was designed to be pedagogically sound and relevant, which means that confusing variables needed to be avoided. Hence the random selection of the actual excerpts. When being randomly selected, materials make a study ecologically valid, extrapolable and repeatable (Neunzig 2011: 19-20).

At no time were the students told which version they were watching, hence qualifying this as a blind experiment. The formatting differences were visible, such as colours and font of the subtitles, but these would by

no means have permitted to tell which was which. Regarding the quality of the fansubbed versions, there were some mistranslations and other minor accuracy-related problems. There were also signs of linguistic interference and misleading punctuation conventions that do not follow professional subtitling standards. However, they did not detract from the quality of the whole, and allowed for a good comprehension of the clip overall.

The questions in the experiment were divided into opinion questions and assessment questions. The former aimed to evaluate the students' opinion on passive subtitling as a method for EFL classes, whereas the latter aimed to evaluate the students' linguistic and cultural knowledge, as well as to observe their performance.

Finally, this study adhered to the guidelines set out by the University of Malaga's Ethics Committee on Experimentation (University of Malaga 2013) following the Spanish Organic Act 15/1999 of December 12 on the Protection of Personal Data (no. 298 of the Spanish Congressional Record) to guarantee the students' personal data privacy.

5. Results and applications

5.1. Electronic survey

The survey showed subtitled audiovisual programmes are mainly used by EFL teachers for homework or self-learning tasks, and 30% of students claimed not to have been informed about them in class. Yet the clear majority of them stated that they would like to use audiovisual materials in class, especially with subtitles in English (charts 1, 2 and 3).

B6. Do you think watching audiovisual material in English is important for students to enhance their language skills in higher education?⁶

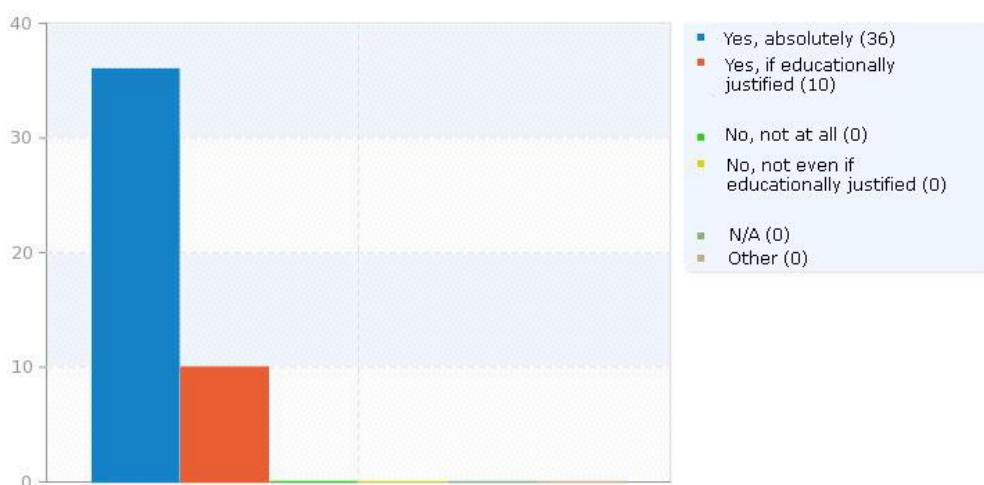


Chart 1

B7. If yes, do you think audiovisual material should be used with or without subtitles?



Chart 2

B8. If you chose 'With subtitles,' choose the type of subtitles that, in your opinion, should be used to learn in English.



Chart 3

A total of 96% of students claimed to regularly watch original videos in English, either with or without subtitles, to learn the language (chart 4) – most of them used free online streaming (60%), illegal downloads (41%), public TV (41%), cinemas (15%), DVDs (11%), private TV (7%) and digital platforms (7%) as seen in chart 5. While not all students may have admitted to downloading programmes illegally, in spite of the anonymity of the survey, therefore compromising the reliability of the data to some extent, those who did admit watching illegal audiovisual contents online claimed that streaming mirrors, downloading and streaming applications are their favourite options (chart 6). Yet when asked to give an overall

quality mark out of 5 of fansubs they use, the final average was 2.65 (0.92 standard deviation), with most marks below 3 (chart 7).

C1. Do you often watch audiovisual programmes in English, with or without subtitles?

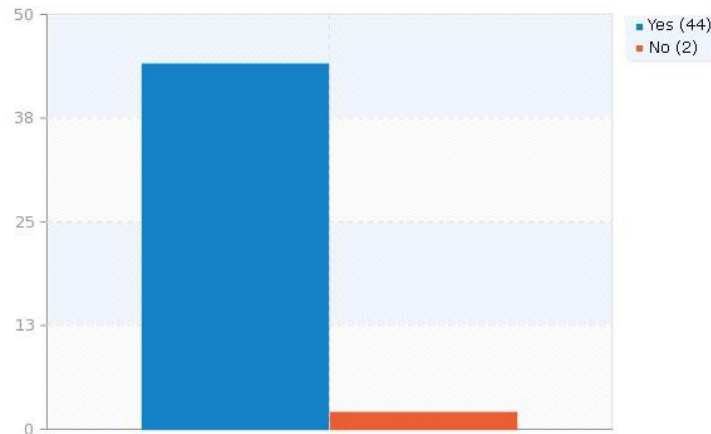


Chart 4

C2. How do you normally source audiovisual programmes?

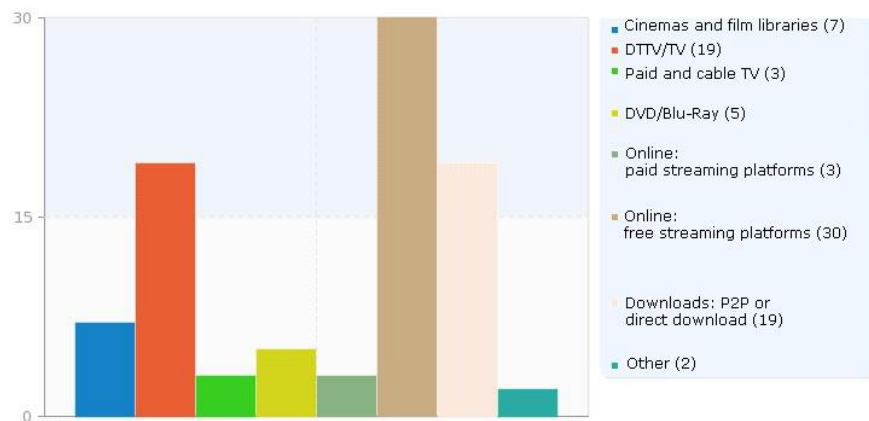


Chart 5

Do you often watch audiovisual programmes in English illegally? How?



Chart 6

C7. Please evaluate the overall quality of fansubs in Spanish (i.e. subtitles produced by amateurs) that are freely available on the Internet for audiovisual programmes in English.

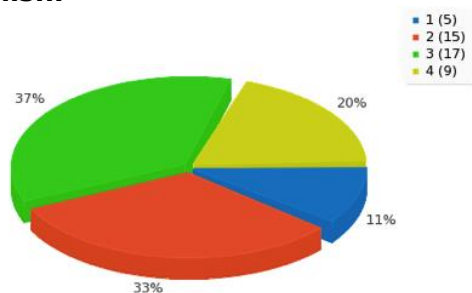


Chart 7

In fact, there is a contradiction in their viewing habits since they evaluated fansubs quite poorly. This may be explained by certain factors other than linguistic enhancement – 48% of students claimed that fansubs do not represent a good method to learn languages, as opposed to 30% who agreed they do. Students therefore, watch online fansubbed audiovisual products at home regularly to learn English, but just because they are free and easily accessible (chart 8), not because they rely on the quality of subtitles, which they actually consider their main disadvantage (chart 9). Unsurprisingly, there was no agreement on whether fansubs should be used in official courses at the university – 32% crossed yes, 30% crossed no, and 38% crossed no answer. They pointed to a variety of reasons when justifying their answers – the most repeated downfall for fansubs was that, in their opinion, they often contain translation errors. Some students argued that this could be a good enough reason to include fansubbed programmes in a Translation course at the university in terms of improving their translation and proofreading abilities (comparative analysis, error detection, alternative problem solving).

D4. Please indicate what, in your opinion, is the main advantage of using fansubs.



Chart 8

D5. Please indicate what, in your opinion, is the main disadvantage of using fansubs.



Chart 9

In the last question, which was used later to design the blind experiment, they were asked to recommend some TV programmes that may work in EFL classes at their level. The TV series listed were, in order of appearance, the following: *2 Broke Girls*, *Breaking Bad*, *Castle*, *Friends*, *Game of Thrones*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Homeland*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Modern Family*, *Peaky Blinders*, *Prison Break*, *Skins*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *The Mentalist*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Walking Dead*, *Two and a Half Men*, and *Vikings*.

5.2. Experiment

5.2.1. Pre-experiment opinion questions

As mentioned before, two American TV series, TBBT and HOC were used for the blind experiment. The exposure to the video fragments took place in the following chronological order:

- Afternoon class on 8 April 2015 (27 students, 24 final valid tests). The professional version of TBBT and the fansubbed version of HOC were used.
- Morning class on 9 April 2015 (40 students, 35 final valid tests). The fansubbed version of TBBT and the professional version of HOC were used.

As mentioned in the methodology section, a blind experiment meant that different versions needed to be used so that data could then be compared. The students were exposed to subtitled versions, but they were not aware of the authorship of the translations, that is, they did not know if they were reading professional or amateur subtitles. The aim was that, by participating anonymously, the students provided their answers as truthfully as possible. Almost every student had already watched TBBT in the past (chart 10); on the other hand, just two students claimed to have

watched HOC before the experiment (chart 11).

5. Had you watched this TV show before the experiment? (TBBT)

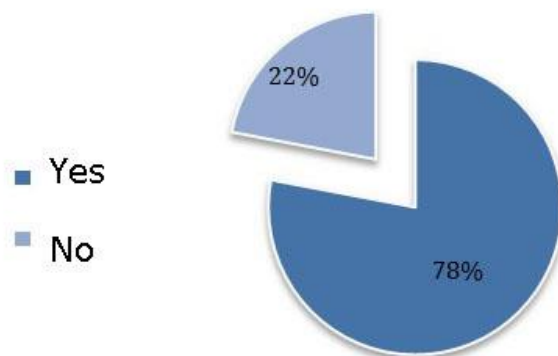


Chart 10

15. Had you watched this TV show before the experiment? (HOC)

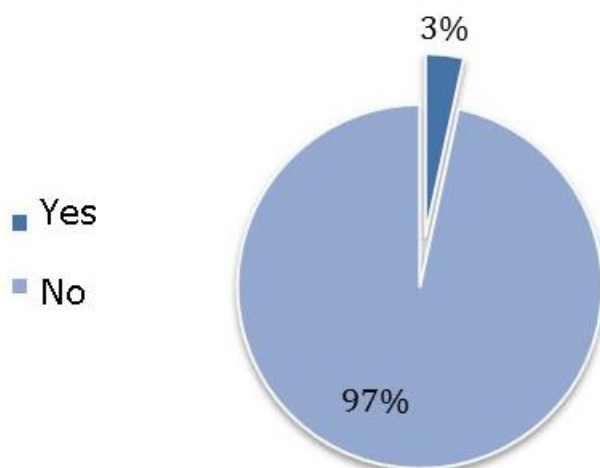


Chart 11

After being exposed to the videos, students were asked to evaluate, using a 1 to 5 ranking, how good they thought the subtitles were for the version they had watched. In the morning group, the fansubbed version of TBBT scored higher (average 3.7714) than the professional version of HOC (average 3.7647); whereas in the afternoon group, the professional version of TBBT scored higher (average 4) than the fansubbed version of HOC (3.6956). Although the general valuations for the four clips are quite high, irrespective of their authorship, both versions of TBBT (chart 12) scored slightly higher than those of HOC (chart 13).

**6. Evaluate the quality of the subtitles in the test video (TBBT)
(1 = terrible, 2 = bad, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good).**

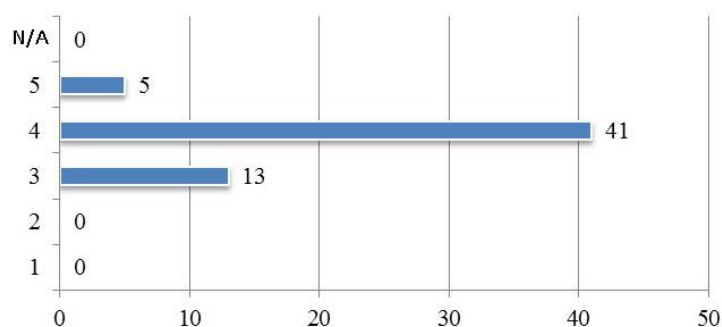


Chart 12

**16. Evaluate the quality of the subtitles in the test video
(1 = terrible, 2 = bad, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good).**

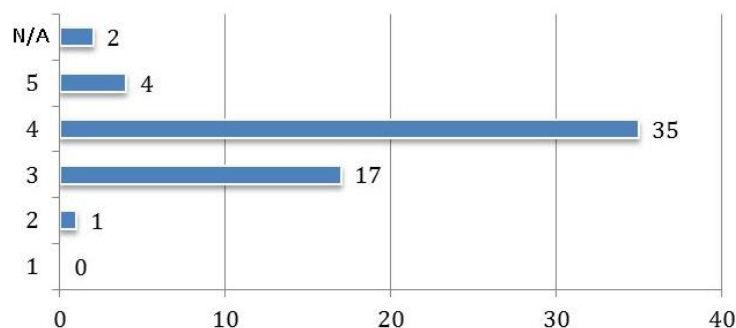


Chart 13

Questions no. 7 and 17 aimed to assess if the students could identify translation errors, and if the resulting figures changed much depending on the version they had watched. This study does not qualify as a qualitative study, which would involve a more thorough approach to errors identification. Instead, this part of the survey was included to tackle the students' perception of errors in subtitled programmes. In the morning group (chart 14), a large number of students identified translation errors in the fansubbed version of TBBT (52%) and the professional version of HOC (29%), whereas in the afternoon group (chart 15) only 25% of them claimed to have found errors in the professional version of TBBT, and 29% did so in the fansubbed version of HOC. These lower percentages could be explained by different reasons: low level of aural and written comprehension, lack of interest in the activity, lack of previous preparation, etc. Yet this can also be explained by the fact that students did not expect these questions, and did not try to carry out any preparation tasks accordingly.

7. Have you found any translation errors, grammar mistakes or typos in the subtitles? If you remember any, please write them in the box. (Morning group)



Chart 14

17. Have you found any translation errors, grammar mistakes or typos in the subtitles? If you remember any, please write them in the box. (Afternoon group)

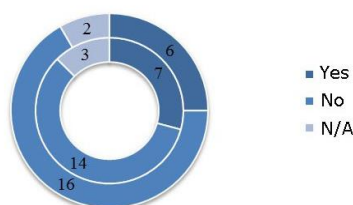


Chart 15

Among the few students who gave a verbal answer in the text box, 17 found errors, whereas three of them gave explanations that are more general. Many of them failed to give specific mistranslation examples, or even showed very poor writing skills in English. Two students seemed to have misunderstood parts of the speech and suggested their own translations, which ended up being even more inaccurate. On the contrary, and despite not having taken courses on AVT yet, one of the students rightfully pointed out that inserts and text-on-screen had not been localised. While the onscreen text messages had been translated as inserts in the professional version of HOC, the fansubbed version failed to render them in Spanish.

5.2.2. Assessment questions

5.2.2.1. Multiple-choice questions

The assessment exercises aimed to evaluate comparatively, with a numerical grade, the students' English competence. Hence, the same exercises were proposed for each TV series, irrespective of the version, to both groups. As mentioned in the methodology, the clips were in English with interlingual subtitles in Spanish, i.e. fansubs and professional subtitles in both sessions. There were thirteen questions for the two clips and they were of three different types: multiple-choice questions, open-end questions and translation tasks. The outcome of these exercises was the following:

- 63% of students in the morning group failed the questions for the

fansubbed version of TBBT (score 0-3), while the other 37% passed them (score 3.5-7);

- 47% of students in the same morning group failed the questions for the professional version of HOC (score 0-2.5), while the other 53% passed them (score 3-6);

- 50% of students in the afternoon group failed the questions for the professional version of TBBT (score 0-3), while the other 50% passed them (score 3.5-7);

- 68% of students in the same afternoon group failed the questions for the fansubbed version of HOC (score 0-2.5), while the other 32% passed them (score 3-6).

Morning group

TBBT (Questions 8-14)		HOC (Questions 18-23)	
Mark out of 7	Number of surveys	Mark out of 6	Number of surveys
0.00	0	0.00	3
0.50	2	1.00	8
1.00	2	2.00	6
1.50	0	3.00	15
2.00	7	4.00	3
2.50	2	5.00	1
3.00	9	6.00	0
3.50	5		
4.00	1		
4.50	2		
5.00	2		
5.50	3		
6.00	0		
6.50	0		
7.00	0		

Afternoon group

Mark out of 7	Number of surveys	Mark out of 6	Number of surveys
0.00	0	0.00	1
0.50	0	1.00	5
1.00	1	2.00	11
1.50	0	3.00	7
2.00	4	4.00	1
2.50	3	5.00	0
3.00	4	6.00	0
3.50	4		
4.00	3		
4.50	3		
5.00	2		
5.50	0		
6.00	0		
6.50	0		
7.00	0		

Table 2. Valuations in the assessment exercises

As seen in the table above, although numerous students had already watched TBBT in the past, they did not score higher in their comprehension of this series than for the series that was new to them. Actually, what can be noticed here is that professional versions get the highest scores, both for TBBT and HOC. At this point, it could be interesting to discuss the differences that exist between professional and amateur translation since these affect the quality of the target clips. For instance, company-specific subtitling standards normally require subtitlers to perform revisions and quality checks on subtitled products. In this last step, prior to the encoding, burning and distributing of the programme, expert subtitlers evaluate parameters like reading speed, line breaks, syntax, style, and the like, which does not necessarily occur for fansubbed products. This may result in better output quality of the professional subtitles, although it is also true that some vendors tend to assign episodes on a first-come, first-served basis, which means that the same TV show may be translated by many different subtitlers for the same distributor. Having said that, the students watched the clips on a screen in the classroom, whereas fansubs are primarily meant for individual use on a personal device. These findings show that professional versions helped students get better results, and this is something that should be further investigated.

5.2.2.2. Translation tasks

In the translation tasks the students were asked to provide their own translations of selected pieces of text extracted from the scenes. This aimed to assess if the students would use terms from the subtitles. As the dialogue did not contain a sufficiently large number of terminologically challenging terms, it was necessary to shift the focus from specialised terms to other complex structures, such as idioms, set phrases and slang words. In the two programmes, there were very few nouns, adjectives, verbs or collocations that would have proved difficult to the students, as seen in table 3. The aim of these exercises was to see how permeable students' translations were to previous audiovisual input.

Once the terminology extraction was completed, the following terminological and phraseological units were selected:

	TV SERIES		VERSION
	TBBT	Fansubbed	Professional
Nouns	bachelor	soltero	Soltero
	Ocean	Mar	Mar
	Aqua Socks	"Aqua-calcetines"	zapatillas para el agua

Adjectives	crazy	locura	Locura
Verbs and collocations	to make out	hacerlo	enrollarse
	to wrap something up	terminar	Resumir
	to have sex	hacerlo	echar un polvo
	HOC	Fansubbed	Professional
Verbs and collocations	to happen	pasar	Pasar
	to kill oneself	quitarse la vida	quitarse la vida
	to slow down	ir más despacio	ir más despacio
	to need	necesitar	Deber
	to take a step back	bajar una marcha	-
	to keep someone guessing	mantener (a alguien) suponiendo	quedarse pensando
	to exhaust	Agotar	agotar

Table 3. Lexicon and structures extracted from the episodes

Translations that coincided in both the fansubbed and the professional versions were not included in the sample texts. The final elements to be analysed were therefore: 'Aqua Socks,' 'to make out,' 'to wrap something up,' 'to have sex,' 'to need,' 'to take a step back' and 'to keep someone guessing.'

To obtain a final numerical grade, we multiplied the number of exercises by the number of elements in the translation. Thus, the number of coincidences allows us to obtain a percentage showing how the different versions could have influenced the students. The coincidences, as shown below, demonstrated that this 'permeability' had occurred in a higher percentage in both versions of TBBT, while numbers were still quite small:

	Fansubbed TBBT	Professional TBBT	Fansubbed HOC	Professional HOC
No. of surveys	35	24	24	35
No. of possible coincidences	140	96	72	105
No. of coincidences achieved	28	37	13	12
Percentage	20%	39%	18%	11%

Table 4. Term coincidences in the translation after exposure to the video

The translation tasks did not have either any specific commission or any context, but for the sentences themselves. However, the students understood that the sentences had been extracted from the video clips in the experiment. It has also been noticed that, even though the students were exposed to subtitles in Spanish, there have been a number of errors, flaws, literal shifts, free translations, calques, wrong use of register, etc. in their answers. Surprisingly, some students used exactly the same terms, which had been indeed mistranslated in the subtitles, just because they read them on the screen. This exercise thus aims to open up new

ways of assessing how this sort of audiovisual interference may affect translations of translators-to-be who are still being trained in undergraduate courses. Here are some examples, randomly selected from the questionnaires. Bold letters mean the student's term choice corresponds directly to the units found in the subtitles, while terms in red are negative points (negatives, from now on) and terms in green are positive points (positives, from now on) considering the input from the version they watched, as explained in the right column:

TBBT

14. Translate the following sentences into Spanish. "I was a bachelor back then. I was making out with this girl at the beach. I know, it's crazy, and I wasn't even wearing my aqua socks. Anyway, I'll wrap it up – I totally had sex in the ocean."

Professional subtitles: "Me acuerdo de una vez, estaba yo con una chica en la playa. / Estábamos en el mar y empezamos a enrollarnos. / Lo sé, es una locura. / No llevaba ni mis zapatillas para el agua... / - ...así que... - Nos da igual, Hofstadter. Resume. / [...] / Pero eché un polvo en el mar."

Fansubs: "Recuerdo una vez, / yo estaba con una chica en la playa. / Estábamos en el mar y empezamos a hacerlo. / Lo sé, fue una locura. / Ni siquiera llevaba mis "Aqua- calcetines". / Entonces... / A nadie le importa, Hofstadter. / Termina. / [...] / Lo hice en el mar."

STUDENT	ANSWER	COMMENTS
Student #1 (Afternoon class – Professional version)	Yo también fui soltero y me enrollé con una chica en la playa. Sí, lo sé, es una locura , ni siquiera llevaba mis zapatillas de agua . Total , que nos liamos... tuve sexo en el mar. [I also was a bachelor, and I made out with a girl at the beach. Yes, I know, it is something crazy, I was not even wearing my water sneakers. In short, we made out... I had sex in the sea.]	Negative: unnatural use of past tenses, unnecessary omission ('back then') and calque of 'to have sex'. Positive: 'to make out' and 'anyway' have been naturally rendered, and has avoided the calque of 'Aqua Socks'.
Student #2 (Afternoon class – Professional version)	Era estudiante por aquel entonces . Me estaba enrollando con esta chica en la playa. Lo sé, es una locura , y ni siquiera llevaba mis zapatillas para el agua. De todas formas, eché un buen polvo en el agua . [I was a student back then. I was making out with a girl at the sea. I know, it is something crazy, and I was not even wearing my sneakers for the water. In any case, I had a good shag in the water.]	Negative: 'bachelor' has been misinterpreted as 'student' (bachelor also refers to a person holding a bachelor's degree); there is an unnatural calque of the demonstrative 'this'; a mistranslation of 'to wrap it up'; and an unnecessary addition of 'buen'. Positive: natural syntax and use of idiomatic expressions such as 'back then', 'to have sex' and 'in the ocean'.
Student #3 (Morning class –	Yo también era soltero por esa época . Estaba haciéndolo con	Negative: 'Aqua Socks' was not understood, and neither was the

Fansubbed version)	una chica en la playa. Lo sé, es una locura, y no llevaba mis calcetines de agua . No importa, lo dejo . Me la tiré en el agua . [I also was a bachelor by that time. I was doing it with a girl at the beach. I know, it is something crazy, and I was not even wearing my water socks. It does not matter, I stop. I got laid with her in the water.]	phrasal verb 'to wrap something up'. Positive: natural syntax and the use of expressions such as 'back then' and 'in the ocean'.
Student #4 (Morning class – Fansubbed version)	Estaba soltero en esa época . Me estaba enrollando con una chica en la playa. Lo sé, fue una locura , y ni siquiera llevaba puestos mis zapatos de agua . De todas formas, lo resumiré – tuve sexo en el océano . [I was a bachelor by that time. I was making out with a girl at the beach. I know, it was something crazy, and I was not even wearing my water shoes. In any case, I will wrap it up – I had sex in the ocean.]	Negative: 'zapato' [shoe] does not seem appropriate for 'Aqua Socks' in this context; several semantic calques have made it to the target text ('to have sex', 'in the ocean'); as well as a punctuation calque (the use of a hyphen instead of a semi colon or a comma). Positive: natural syntax and expressions (natural past tense, 'back then').

HOC

23. Translate the following sentences into Spanish: "Ok, we don't know what happened that night, other than three days later he killed himself. We need to slow down, take a step back. We should keep him guessing. We should exhaust all options."

Professional subtitles: "No sabemos lo que pasó esa noche, / solo que tres días después se quitó la vida. / [...] / Debemos ir más despacio y reevaluar... / [...] / - Que se quede pensando, sin... - ¿Tener más de qué? / [...] / Deberíamos agotar todas las opciones."

Fansubs: "- El tío era un alcohólico. - No sabemos lo que pasó esa noche, / solo que tres días después se quitó la vida. / [...] / Necesitamos ir más despacio, bajar una marcha y reevaluar... / [...] / - Debemos mantenerlo suponiendo, no... - ¿Tener más de dónde? ¿De quién? / [...] / No lo sé. Deberíamos agotar todas las opciones."

STUDENT	ANSWER	COMMENTS
Student #5 (Afternoon class – Fansubbed version)	Vale, no sabemos que ocurrió esa noche, 3 días después de que se suicidara . Necesitamos ir más lento, dar un paso atrás. Debemos seguirle preguntando . Debemos agotar todas las opciones. [All right, we do not know that happened that night, 3 days after he committed suicide. We have to slow down, take a step back. We need to keep posing him questions. We need to exhaust all options.]	Negative: an accent is missing in 'que', which should be 'qué'; wrong use of the digit '3', that should be 'three' as numbers are most commonly used only from ten onwards; 'other than' has been mistranslated for other shift meaning 'after'; and the nuance of 'to keep someone guessing' has not been understood. Positive: natural verbs have been used, instead of literal translations.

Student #6 (Afternoon class – Fansubbed version)	Vale, no sabemos qué pasó esa noche, otros tres días después se suicidó . Tenemos que calmarnos , retroceder. Debemos mantenerlo suponiendo . Tenemos que desgastar todas las opciones. [All right, we do not know what happened that night, another three days later he committed suicide. We need to keep him guessing. We have to wear all options down.]	Negative: the nuance of ‘other than’ has not been understood; different nuance for ‘to slow down’; and wrong nuance of ‘desgastar’ [back translation], which does not collocate with ‘options’ in this context.
Student #7 (Morning group – Professional version)	Vale, no sabemos que pasó esa noche , tres días antes se mató . Necesitamos ir despacio, volver a mirar con calma . Seguir dejándole adivinar . Debemos mirar todas las opiniones . [All right, we do not know that happened that night, three days before he got killed. We need to go slowly, look back calmly. To keep him guessing. We need to observe all the opinions.]	Negative: accent missing in ‘que’, which should be ‘qué’; ‘later’ has been replaced with ‘before’; nuance of ‘to kill oneself’ has not been understood and leads to misunderstanding in Spanish (using the reflexive pronoun with ‘matar’ indicates unintentionality; unnecessary omission of ‘other than’; nuance of ‘to keep someone guessing’ has not been fully rendered; and ‘options’ seems to have been misread and rendered as ‘opinions’.
Student #8 (Morning group – Professional version)	Vale, no sabemos lo que ocurrió esa noche a parte de que, tres días después, se suicidó . Tenemos que dar un paso atrás y tomarlo con calma. Deberíamos de complicarle las cosas y agotar todas nuestras opciones. [All right, we do not know what happened that night, other than, three days later, he committed suicide. We have to take a step back, and take it calmly. We need to complicate things for him, and exhaust all our options.]	Negative: misspelling of ‘a parte de’, which should be ‘aparte de’; wrong use of the preposition ‘de’, which is unnecessary; wrong syntax because of arguable position of complement ‘lo’ which is direct complement masculine pronoun (there is no previous subject); nuance of ‘to keep someone guessing’ has not been fully rendered and there is a calque of the possessive ‘ours’, which has been rendered as ‘nuestras’ [ours] instead of a more idiomatic ‘las’ [the]. Positive: the use of literal translations has been avoided by using verbs that collocate naturally in this context.

Table 5. Examples extracted from students’ answers to tasks no. 14 and 23

The selected examples above aim to demonstrate that, although the students were already pursuing a course on general translation by the time they participated in the experiment, they had by no means acquired a solid cultural subcompetence by means of the EFL courses at the university. Many lexical, syntactical and phrasal units were misunderstood, and hence mistranslated in these tasks. Examples extracted from the answer sheet submitted by students #1 to #8 are, in fact, very similar to the answers of their classmates. This exercise aims to confirm that developing cultural subcompetence represents a basic requisite for students willing to undergo further specialised courses in Translation and Interpreting curricula.

5.2.3. Self-evaluation questions

In the end, the students were asked to complete some diagnostic questions to self-evaluate their performance. In a ranking from one to five (chart 16), most students claimed the audiovisual material helped them to do the exercises (35% crossed 4, and 34% crossed 3 respectively); conversely, 24% did not feel the video was helpful enough, whereas a very low percentage chose either the lowest (1) or the highest marks (2). The overall attitude to using audiovisual material to enhance aural and written comprehension skills in English hence remains positive.

In the following questions, students were asked to signal, in their opinion, how many questions they would have answered correctly without the audiovisual support (chart 17). Practically no one claimed that they would have answered more than seven questions (out of thirteen) correctly, although the majority of them would have felt sure enough to get some answers right.

24. How much do you think watching the original excerpts in English with Spanish subtitles has helped you complete the tests?
(1 = not at all, 2 = not much, 3 = enough, 4 = quite a lot, 5 = a great deal)

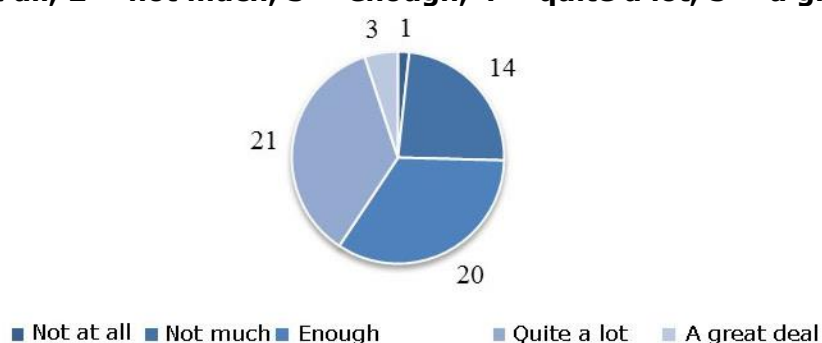


Chart 16

25. How many test questions would you have been able to answer correctly if you had not previously watched the clips?

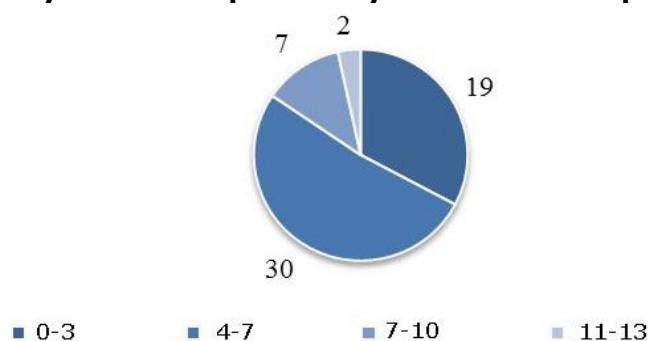


Chart 17

More than 90% of students claimed, after the experiment, that audiovisual materials subtitled in their native language help to enhance certain skills in EFL learning – this confirms what had been proved in the electronic survey before (chart 1). Those who were against subtitled audiovisual programmes in EFL pointed to the distraction subtitles impose when hearing the original dialogue, whereas those who were in favour of subtitles pointed to the following elements: acquiring new vocabulary, enhancing aural comprehension skills, improving pronunciation, learning translational equivalences, solving translation errors, relating dialogues with their writing form, understanding grammar and acknowledging structures that sound natural in English. Beyond all these particular benefits, there is a very positive inclination towards using videos in class.

5.2.4. Post-experiment questions

In the final question (chart 19), we aimed to discover what the perception of the students in regard to fansubs applied to EFL was. The outcome was quite balanced between those in favour of the application of them in class (42%) and those against it (50%). Most of them claimed that there is no pedagogical reason to use them, since they are not subject to a professional quality control check – this would have a negative impact when learning English to be professional translators in the future. The main points against the use of fansubs for official EFL courses were: recurring translation errors, lack of professionalism, literal translations, synchronisation errors, lack of linguistic competence by fansubbers, etc. However, some students stated that fansubs represent a valid way to complete exercises on comparative translation analysis, error solving, proofreading, etc. Most students questioned fansubbers' linguistic competence, arguing that fansubs do not display enough quality to be used outside of an amateur context – and yet, as we have seen before, half of them still claimed they could be potentially beneficial.

26. Do you think watching original clips in English with Spanish subtitles, either in the classroom or as self-learning practice, helps you to improve your English skills?

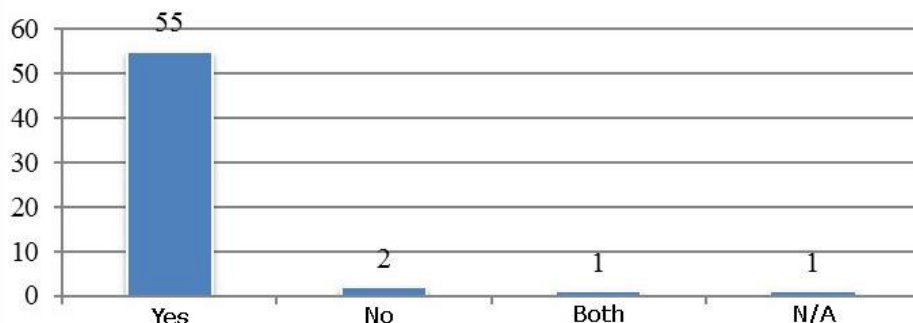


Chart 18

27. Do you think fansubbed clips (i.e. clips subtitled by amateurs) are a good resource for learning English?

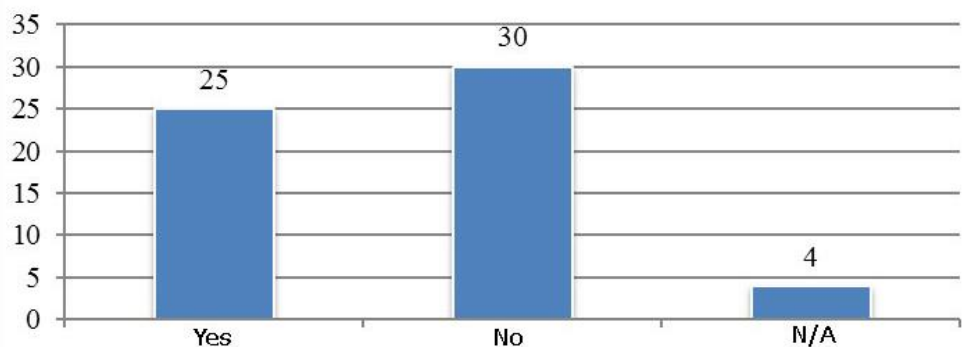


Chart 19

6. Conclusions

A high percentage of translators-to-be at the University of Malaga admit to consuming fansubs online on a regular basis. Although fansubs do not necessarily follow national subtitling conventions or commercial ones, their ultimate function is to be freely distributed over the Internet, which improves their reach among younger audiences. What is more, it seems that over the last decade, and particularly in certain genres, some fansubbing groups have a better organised system for quality control (Lepre 2015: 78).

Although this study cannot provide definite proof of the existence of negative or positive effects of fansubs in EFL education at this stage, it does contribute to enhancing empirical research in Translation Studies, shedding some light on how fansubs affect the learning process of English by translators-to-be.

It is advisable that activities that involve the use of audiovisual programmes in the classroom be monitored in EFL education for translator

training. In addition, and despite the fact that respondents' preferences, background knowledge and personal level in EFL education are key factors when testing the level of aural comprehension in English, the concept of 'permeability' could be exploited for further research on the potential influence of audiovisual input in students' translations.

Regarding qualitative data, these are the main findings of the experiment:

- most students have no experience or background knowledge of audiovisual translation at this stage, and this may affect their attitude towards the use fansubs for educational reasons;
- students have different views of the advantages and drawbacks of using fansubs in the classroom;
- students show a low degree of permeability in their translations when they have been previously exposed to translated audiovisual input that contains the fragments they have to translate; the answers provided by students with an upper-intermediate level of English present serious mistranslations, misspellings, punctuation errors and other flaws; and
- a number of students expected higher marks, and even stated that they would have successfully answered many questions without watching the clips, although the poor results indicate the opposite.

Regarding quantitative data, the main results are the following:

- most students watch subtitled audiovisual products on a regular basis, with intralingual and interlingual subtitles, for both educational and entertaining reasons;
- most students watch audiovisual products which are freely available online (fansubbed versions), but acknowledge the fact that they may contain mistranslations and are of poor quality, which may represent a drawback when learning English;
- most students point out that the main advantage of fansubs is that they are free of charge, while the main drawback is their poor quality;
- their views are mixed on whether fansubs should be used in academic environments for EFL education or not;
- the results of the assessment tests were higher for TBBT which, interestingly, was the TV series that most students had previously watched in their free time;
- the grades that students allocated for the quality of the subtitles were, in average, very positive and with very little variation between fansubbed and professional versions; and
- most students pointed out that watching the subtitled clips helped them to answer the questionnaire and the assessment tests, and they highly recommended using subtitled products for English learning purposes.

The continuous development of new digital modes of consumption,

especially the Internet, has led to a greater distribution of free audiovisual programmes online, of which many are fansubbed. On the one hand, and following Massidda (2015), it would be highly interesting to apply a sociological perspective to Translation Studies to map out the profiles of the fansubbers as well as the fansubs users. On the other hand, eye-tracking studies focused on ascertaining potential differences between the reception of professional subtitles and fansubs could be a fruitful field of research to further investigate subtitling quality and revision.

As discussed, most of the trainee translators at the University of Malaga who were surveyed in this study do not contemplate an official application of fansubs in their EFL education and yet they acknowledge using them regularly, both for entertainment and self-learning purposes. In the light of this, more research is needed to assess the potential impact of fansubs and professional subtitles on foreign language learning and teaching.

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Biography

Alejandro Bolaños is a PhD candidate, postgraduate teaching assistant and teaching fellow at University College London's Centre for Translation Studies thanks to a La Caixa Social Foundation scholarship. He holds a Master's degree on Translation Studies from the University of Malaga, as well as a Master of Science in Audiovisual Translation from University College London's Centre for Translation Studies. He is currently carrying out research on the pedagogical potential of subtitling and cloud-based systems in collaboration with subtitling software developers. He also works as a freelance translator and foreign language teacher in London.



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Annex 1. Electronic survey

Electronic survey

Pilot study: questionnaire on viewing habits and foreign language learning

A. Personal details

*** A1. Please indicate your sex.**

- Male
- Female
- Other

*** A2. Please indicate your age range.**

- 17-19
- 20-22
- 23-26
- 27-30
- +30
- Other

*** A3. Is Castilian Spanish your native language variety?**

- Yes
- No

B. Education

*** B1. Please indicate your current year of study.**

- 1st year
- 2nd year
- 3rd year
- 4th year
- Other

*** B2. Do you hold an official certificate of English, other than those awarded by the University of Malaga? Please choose the level of your certificate according to the CEFR scheme.**

- Beginner/Elementary (A1/A2)
- Intermediate (B1)
- Upper-intermediate (B2)
- Advanced (C1)
- Expert (C2)
- No, I do not currently hold a certificate
- Other

*** B3. If yes, please indicate the institution that awarded your certificate.**

- Cambridge ESOL
- TOEFL

- IELTS
- Trinity
- EOI (Escuela Oficial de Idiomas)
- Other university
- Other:

? *You may tick more than one option if needed.*

*** B4. Did your “Lengua y cultura B (inglés) aplicadas a la Traducción y la Interpretación” courses include watching videoclips in English, either in the classroom or as part of self-learning practice?**

- Yes, in the classroom
- Yes, as monitored self-learning practice
- Yes, both in the classroom and as monitored self-learning practice
- No, but we have been recommended to do so
- No, not at all
- N/A
- Other

? *This question relates to all four 1st and 2nd year modules. You may tick more than one option if needed.*

*** B5. If yes, which version did you watch?**

- Original version in English, no subtitles
- Original version in English, captions in English
- Original version in English, subtitles in Spanish
- Original version in English, subtitles for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing in English
- Dubbed version in Spanish, captions in English
- Other

? *You may tick more than one option if needed.*

*** B6. Do you think watching audiovisual material in English is important for students to enhance their language skills in higher education?**

- Yes, absolutely
- Yes, if educationally justified
- No, not at all
- No, not even if educationally justified
- N/A
- Other

*** B7. If yes, do you think audiovisual material should be used with or without subtitles?**

- With subtitles
- Without subtitles

*** B8. If you chose "With subtitles", choose the type of subtitles that, in your opinion, should be used to learn in English.**

- Subtitles in English
- Subtitles in Spanish
- Reversed subtitles (dubbed dialogues in Spanish, subtitles in English)
- Other

? The minimum level of English for the course on Translation and Interpreting at the University of Malaga is upper-intermediate (B2).

C. Viewing habits

*** C1. Do you often watch audiovisual programmes in English, with or without subtitles?**

- Yes
- No

*** C2. How do you normally source audiovisual programmes?**

- Cinemas and film libraries
- DTTV/TV
- Paid and cable TV
- DVD/Blu-Ray
- Online: paid streaming platforms
- Online: free streaming platforms
- Downloads: P2P or direct download
- Other

? Please remember this is an anonymous survey. You may tick more than one option if needed.

*** C3. Do you often watch audiovisual programmes in English illegally? How?**

- Yes, mainly on free websites
- Yes, mainly on free apps or software
- Yes, mainly through peer-to-peer file sharing or direct downloads
- No
- Other

? Please remember this is an anonymous survey. Free streaming platforms, such as Youtube or Vimeo, are not considered illegal. You may tick more than one option if needed.

[Questions C4-C6 were deleted]

*** C7. Please evaluate the overall quality of fansubs in Spanish (i.e. subtitles produced by amateurs) that are freely available on the Internet for audiovisual programmes in English.**

- 1

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

? '1' being the lowest mark and '5' being the highest.

*** C8. Please add any relevant information on your viewing habits below.**

? For instance, if you did not find a suitable answer in the previous questions, or if you have chosen more than one answer and you want to explain why.

D. Fansubs and foreign language learning

*** D1. Do you watch fansubbed programmes in English?**

- Yes
- No
- Other

*** D2. If yes, why?**

- Entertainment
- Learning English
- Both
- Other

*** D3. Do you think watching audiovisual programmes that have been translated by amateurs and freely distributed on the Internet is a good way to learn English?**

- Yes
- No
- N/A
- Other

*** D4. Please indicate what, in your opinion, is the main advantage of using fansubs.**

- Free to use
- High quality
- Usability and distribution
- Other

? You may tick more than one option if needed.

*** D5. Please indicate what, in your opinion, is the main disadvantage of using fansubs.**

- Low quality
- Formatting issues

- Usability and distribution
- Other

? You may tick more than one option if needed.

*** D6. Do you think fansubs might be included in “Lengua y cultura B (inglés) aplicadas a la Traducción y la Interpretación” modules?**

- Yes
- No
- N/A
- Other

*** D7. If yes, why?**

*** D8. If not, why?**

*** D9. Please indicate which TV series, originally in English with subtitles in Spanish, you would choose for a classroom exercise.**

Annex 2. Blind experiment questionnaire

Experiment questionnaire

1. Pre-experiment questions

1. Please indicate your class group.

Morning group

Afternoon group

2. Have you completed the 'Electronic Survey' on LimeSurvey as requested by your teachers?

Yes

No

3. Please indicate your sex and age range.

Male

Female

17-19

20-22

23-26

27-30

+30

4. Is Castilian Spanish your native language variety? If not, please indicate which.

Yes

No

TEST #1 (*The Big Bang Theory – 5x22 – The Stag Convergence*)

1.1. Subtitle quality

5. Had you watched this TV show before the experiment?

Yes

No

If yes, what version?

Spanish dubbed version

Original subtitled version

- in Spanish

- in English

6. Evaluate the quality of the subtitles in the test video (1 = terrible, 2 = bad, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good).

1

2

3

4

5

7. Have you found any translation errors, grammar mistakes or typos in the

subtitles? If you remember any, please write them in the box.

Yes

No

1.2. Language Enhancement

8. Write at least one synonym for the following terms (try to use the vocabulary in the videos):

'Wedding' (noun)

'Prostitute' (noun)

9. Have you noticed any references to other well-known TV series or films? If yes, which?

Yes

No

10. What does 'to tickle one's ribs' mean?

To have stomach-ache

To throw up

To laugh

To be hungry

11. Choose an idiom that means 'to get married'.

To have a finger in the pie

To play to the whistle

To get laid

To tie the knot

12. Explain what 'kosher' stands for.

13. What is the human weight measure unit you would use in the US?

Kilograms

Pounds

Ounces

Tons

14. Translate the following sentences into Spanish. "I was a bachelor back then. I was making out with this girl at the beach. I know, it's crazy, and I wasn't even wearing my aqua socks. Anyway, I'll wrap it up – I totally had sex in the ocean."

END OF TEST #1

TEST #2 (House of Cards – 2x01 – Chapter 14)

2.1. Subtitle quality

15. Had you watched this TV show before the experiment?

Yes

No

If yes, what version?

Spanish dubbed version

Original subtitled version

- in Spanish

- in English

16. Evaluate the quality of the subtitles in the test video (1 = terrible, 2 = bad, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good).

1

2

3

4

5

17. Have you found any translation errors, grammar mistakes or typos in the subtitles? If you remember any, please write them in the box.

Yes

No

2.2. Language Enhancement

18. Write at least one synonym for the following terms (try to use the vocabulary in the videos):

'To support' (verb)

'Lie'/'Nonsense' (noun)

19. What does 'to be up against a brick wall' mean?

To feel
confused

To have an
anxiety
attack

Not to be able
to breath
correctly

Not to be able to
continue something

20. Choose an idiom that means 'to observe rather than taking part of something'.

To watch out

To be on the sidelines

To be in two minds

To start the ball rolling

21. Explain what 'VP' stands for in an American political context.

22. The US Capitol houses the bicameral legislature of the American federal government. What is its name?

The Congress

The House of Lords

The Cabinet

The Parliament

The Presidency

23. Translate the following sentences into Spanish: "Ok, we don't know what happened that night, other than three days later he killed himself. We need to slow down, take a step back. We should keep him guessing. We should exhaust all options."

END OF TEST #2

II. Post-experiment questions

24. How much do you think watching the original excerpts in English with Spanish subtitles has helped you complete the tests? (1 = not at all, 2 = not much, 3 = enough, 4 = quite a lot, 5 = a great deal.)

1

2

3

4

5

25. How many test questions would you have been able to answer correctly if you had not previously watched the clips?

0-3

4-7

7-10

11-13

26. Do you think watching original clips in English with Spanish subtitles, either in the classroom or as self-learning practice, helps you to improve your English skills? Justify your answer.

Yes

No

27. Do you think fansubbed clips (i.e. clips subtitled by amateurs) are a good resource for learning English? Justify your answer.

Yes

No

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

¹ Thanks to Dr Mercedes Enríquez Aranda (University of Malaga) for help at the developmental stage of this research, and to Prof. Jorge Díaz Cintas (University College London) for help with result findings.

² Disclaimer: this scholarly study intends in no way to encourage copyright infringement or illegal retrieval of audiovisual material.

³ Excluding the pioneering articles by Caillé (1960) and Cary (1960), the studies on restricted translation first appeared with Fodor (1976) and Titford (1982).

⁴ ECTS, acronym for "European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System," is an academic standard applied in European countries. These credits follow the educational amendments established by the international agreements of Bologna Process (1999-2015), but were already in use before the process began. Most recent Translation and Interpreting undergraduate and postgraduate curricula in Spain respond to the European educational reform that followed the Bologna declaration (1999). In Spain, these reforms were implemented in the Spanish Organic Act 4/2007, which was officially legalised by Royal Decree 1393/2007. Nevertheless, the ultimate application of this homogenising process was held on 4 July 2010 (Royal Decree 861/2010), as announced in the Spanish Congressional Record, no. 161, sec. I. For more information on European higher education area and credits, see the European Commission's official website (Europa, Education Policies and Training).

⁵ Escuela Oficial de Idiomas is a Spanish publicly funded foreign language education institution.

⁶ The survey and the experiment questionnaire have been translated from Spanish into English to facilitate reading comprehension.