

ARTICLE



## Investigating the influence of video-dubbing tasks on EFL learning

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the effects of completing video-dubbing tasks on English speaking proficiency, English public speaking anxiety (EPSA), and group cohesion (GC). Two classes of EFL college students were assigned to either the dubbing group or the comparison group. Both groups began by responding to the EPSA scale, the GC scale, and a standardized English speaking test. Next, the dubbing group completed two video-dubbing tasks, for each of which they worked in groups to select a video clip, remove the original soundtrack, rehearse the monologues and dialogues, create a new soundtrack, combine the video clip with the new soundtrack, submit the dubbed video clip, and perform the live dubbing in class. In contrast, during the weeks when the dubbing group performed live dubbing, the comparison group watched and discussed movies in English. Finally, both groups took the post-test comprising the two scales and a second set of the standardized English speaking test. The synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that, firstly, video-dubbing tasks constituted an entertaining task that could enhance English speaking proficiency. Second, completing video-dubbing tasks reduced foreign language anxiety but not English public speaking anxiety. Third, group cohesion increased substantially as a result of accomplishing video-dubbing tasks.*

**Keywords:** *Video-dubbing, English Speaking Proficiency, English Public Speaking Anxiety, Group Cohesion*

**Language Learned in This Study:** *English*

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### Background

Video-dubbing, in its simplest form, reflects the process of substituting voices and sound effects for the existing soundtrack of a full-length video or a selected video segment (Burston, 2005). This application of video technology finds theoretical support from the technology-mediated task-based language teaching (TBLT) framework as it embraces the features characterizing the tasks employed in this teaching approach; these features include focusing on meaning, emphasizing real-world purposes, drawing upon multiple language skills, mobilizing cognitive processes, demanding a communicative outcome, fostering technology skills, and so forth (e.g., Ellis, 2003; Gonzalez-Lloret, 2016). Further, it has been claimed or demonstrated to offer listening, reading, and speaking practice that helps L2 learners advance their linguistic competence and heightens their awareness of the paralinguistic aspects of communication such as gestures and emotions (e.g., Chiu, 2012; Danan, 2010; Kumai, 1996; Wakefield, 2014). Further, video-dubbing could manifest itself as a less intimidating task that reduces language anxiety by allowing L2 learners to “take refuge behind their screen persona” (Burston, 2005, p. 81). Moreover, commonly completed in groups, it could cultivate a stronger peer bond (Danan, 2010) and, in a way similar to other media projects, develop a strengthened sense of community among L2 learners (Babaszweski, 2002). Additionally, video-dubbing revolves primarily around audio-visual materials, specifically video clips, and may, therefore, make possible more interactive and entertaining learning processes (Cakir, 2006). Equally important, in order to achieve more accurate lip synchronization in creating a soundtrack for the video clip, L2 learners need to

practice the script many times, which affords opportunities for additional language practice outside the classroom (Yachi & Karimata, 2008).

However, despite the theoretical and scholarly endorsement, empirical efforts to investigate the utility of video-dubbing tasks in the L2 classroom have been limited. Further, the extant studies adopted video-dubbing tasks that required as the end product either the creation of a dubbed video clip (e.g., Danan, 2010; He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Luo et al., 2016; Talavan & Costal, 2017) or the presentation of live dubbing in public (e.g., Chiu, 2012; Kumei, 1996). None attempted to implement projects that demanded both, even though the two requirements make available different pedagogical benefits, with the former providing additional language practice outside the classroom and the latter affording the opportunity to gain public speaking experience. This study, in response, experimented with video-dubbing tasks that required both the dubbed video clip and the live dubbing performance as end products. A mixed-method approach was utilized to examine the effects of completing video-dubbing tasks on L2 speaking proficiency, English public speaking anxiety, and group cohesion.

The results of this study could contribute to the emergent body of research on the usefulness of technological applications in L2 classrooms in general and the utility of video-dubbing tasks in specific. Further, the effects of the video-dubbing tasks, once confirmed in this study, would substantiate the scholarly claims that the incorporation of video-dubbing tasks into L2 classrooms could offer additional language practices, decrease language anxiety, and promote group cohesion. Moreover, the findings could also function to inform the design of video-dubbing tasks that maximize pedagogical benefit.

## Literature Review

### Video-dubbing as a Task in Technology-mediated Task-based Language Teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) represents a teaching approach that draws on “tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching” (Richards & Rogers, 2014, p. 174) and invites L2 learners to “focus primarily on meaning exchange and to use language for real-world, non-linguistic purposes” (Van den Branden, 2006, p. 1). Tasks, situated at the center of this approach, have been variously defined in the literature. Ellis (2003) synthesized the definitions to describe tasks as workplans that attach substantial importance to meaning, entail language use for real-world purposes, require using one or more language skills, mobilize cognitive processes, and necessitate a clear communicative outcome. In the extant literature, TBLT has been demonstrated to benefit language learning endeavors in myriad manners, such as increasing motivation, promoting learning strategy use, elevating proficiency, allowing for natural error correction, and so forth (e.g., Leaver & Kaplan, 2004).

Drawing on the benefits of TBLT and the potential of technology in facilitating language learning via offering enhanced input, supporting learner-computer and user interactions, and promoting linguistic production (e.g., Chapelle, 2003), L2 scholars have begun to integrate technology with TBLT by developing and examining the utility of tasks mediated by computer and/or Internet technology in the past two decades. Such tasks include multiplayer online games in virtual environments (e.g., Lee & Pass, 2014), collaborative writing tasks on wikis (e.g., Aydin & Yildiz, 2014), digital storytelling tasks (e.g., Castañeda, 2013), telecollaboration tasks (e.g., Ryshina-Pankova, 2018), and so forth. These technology-mediated tasks, as Gonazlez-Lloret and Ortega (2014) propounded, would (ideally) “take full advantage of a chosen technology to do what cannot be done in the classroom ...[and] ... allow students to use the language and the technology in productive and creative ways” (p. 8). Also, in addition to possessing the features characterizing classroom-based tasks, they would further address learners’ need for technological applications, their digital skills, and would help develop said skills, among other features (Gonazlez-Lloret, 2016).

Video-dubbing tasks constitute one form of such technology-mediated tasks as they possess the characteristic features of technology-mediated TBLT enumerated immediately above. To elaborate, video-dubbing tasks (a) allow learners to nominate video clips for the task and agree upon one through discussing

the potential of each clip with one another (i.e., negotiation of meaning), (b) involve learners in (rehearsed) interactions that replicate real-world scenarios, (c) entail the practice of listening, reading, and speaking skills, (d) engage learners cognitively via inviting them to decode the emotions conveyed through verbal exchanges and make plans for the creation of a dubbed clip, and (e) demand the submission of the dubbed video clip and live dubbing as the end product. Additionally, video-dubbing tasks capitalize on the video technology in ways unachievable in the classroom and enable learners to exercise creativity in the process of dubbing the clip and presenting live dubbing, which simultaneously permits them to further sharpen their video-editing skills.

### **Empirical Studies on Video-dubbing as a Technology-mediated Task**

Despite the pedagogical benefits of video-dubbing, the empirical efforts put forth to investigate the utility of video-dubbing tasks in the L2 classroom have hitherto remained largely limited. In a study by Danan (2010), American learners of Dari, Pashto, and Farsi were recruited to complete a video-dubbing project in which they translated the contents of a self-selected or teacher-chosen video clip from their respective target language to English and created a dubbed video clip based on the translated scripts. The participants confirmed the utility of this project in increasing their linguistic gains and in creating an entertaining group activity for them while learning the L2.

Chiu (2012) engaged Taiwanese EFL learners in a video-dubbing task which required them to practice the lines ahead of time and perform the live dubbing in front of the entire class rather than create a dubbed video clip. The findings indicated that the learners positively responded to the video-dubbing task as it helped reduce mispronunciation, increased speaking fluency, directed attention to intonations, and offered contexts for authentic language use.

He and Wasuntarasophit (2015) adopted a pre-post experimental design to examine the effect of a video-dubbing task for Chinese EFL learners in Thailand. Statistical analyses revealed that the video-dubbing task significantly increased their oral proficiency in terms of comprehensibility, fluency, and accentedness, while qualitative findings disclosed that the students perceived video-dubbing as an enjoyable process that could contribute to their linguistic development.

Luo et al. (2016) examined the effects of video-dubbing practices on the prosodic features of EFL learners as determined by native-speaker judgments and acoustic measures. The results showed that after engaging in a minimum of ten rounds of video-dubbing practices on the mobile application, *English Fun Dubbing*, the participating students improved the prosodic feature of timing in their dubbed version of the targeted video clip, displaying an increased degree of naturalness.

Talavan and Costal (2017) involved a small group of Spanish EFL learners in performing video-dubbing tasks over the course of two months on a custom-designed website (i.e., *ClipFlair Platform*). The tasks were recorded and evaluated. Analyses of oral test performance, video-dubbing performance, forum postings, videoconference interactions, and questionnaire responses lent support to the usefulness of video-dubbing tasks in promoting L2 pronunciation and fluency, brought to light the perceived linguistic benefits of these tasks, and positioned them as stressful but fun L2 tasks.

A closer examination of the above-reviewed studies reveals that, firstly, they only required the participants to either create a dubbed video clip (Danan, 2010; He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Luo et al., 2016; Talavan & Costal, 2017) or present the live dubbing in public (Chiu, 2012), yet both have pedagogical benefits to offer because creating a dubbed video clip provides additional language practices outside the classroom (Burston, 2005; Yachi & Karimata, 2008) and giving a public dubbing presentation might afford students the opportunity to gain (positive) public speaking experiences. Secondly, all have approached the effects of video-dubbing tasks by only exploring the linguistic gains and student attitudes, with little attention accorded to their influences on individual difference variables (e.g., public speaking anxiety) or social dimensions (e.g., group cohesion). Thirdly, for those adopting a pre-post experimental design to scrutinize the effects of video-dubbing tasks (i.e., He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Luo et al., 2016; Talavan & Costal, 2017), the absence of a control group has rendered the causes of the reported effects debatable. What follows

is a review of relevant research on the individual difference variable (i.e., public speaking anxiety) and the social dimension (i.e., group cohesion) examined in this study.

### **Public Speaking Anxiety**

Public speaking anxiety (PSA) represents “a situation-specific social anxiety that arises from the real or anticipated enactment of an oral presentation” (Bodie, 2010, p. 72) and has been demonstrated to exert a multifaceted impact on the speech giver. For instance, it could operate to incur a series of negative physiological reactions (e.g., increases in heart rate and blood pressure) and psychological responses (e.g., excessive self-focused attention and concern with evaluation) (e.g., Daly, Vangelisti, & Lawrence, 1989; Daly, Vangelisti, Neel, & Cavanaugh, 1989; McCullough et al., 2006; Paul, 2012; Witt et al., 2006). Furthermore, it could lead to a range of unfavorable behaviors (e.g., self-critical self-talk, suboptimal decisions on strategy use, communication avoidance or withdrawal, substandard preparation processes), which, together with the physiological and psychological reactivity, might give rise to performance deficits on the public speaking tasks (e.g., Beatty, 1987, 1988; Daly et al., 1995; Menzel & Carrell, 1994; Shi et al., 2015).

In light of these potentially deleterious influences, researchers have been exploring instructional procedures and technological applications that might function to ameliorate the PSA reactions confronting L2 learners in public speaking events. For example, Pribyl et al. (2001) administered a skills-based program to Japanese EFL college students and confirmed its effectiveness for reducing the level of PSA. Syafryadin et al. (2016) revealed the implementation of a speech training program not merely decreased Indonesia EFL learners' PSA but was also met with positive responses from them. Pong (2009) invited Taiwanese EFL college students to upload their English speeches to YouTube and concluded that this instructional strategy, when implemented with proper prior planning, could promote facilitative PSA for the students. Salem (2019) instructed Egyptian EFL college students to watch and summarize two TED talks in English and found this assignment to significantly enhance oral presentation performance and vocabulary retention as well as to lessen the degree of PSA. The current research, following this line of inquiry, attempted to examine the claimed capability of video-dubbing tasks to lower PSA by allowing the speakers to hide behind the characters.

### **Group Cohesion**

Group cohesion (GC) constitutes one of the group characteristics commonly addressed by the study of group dynamics and represents “the strength of the bonds linking group members to the group, the unity (for we-ness) of a group, feelings of attraction for specific group members and the group itself, and the degree to which the group members coordinate their efforts to achieve goals” (Forsyth, 1999, p. 148). This group characteristic has been demonstrated to contribute favorably to group productivity because the members in a cohesive group would feel morally obligated to conform to the group-oriented norms and help achieve group success (Mullen & Copper, 1994) as well as be less likely to engage in social loafing and free-loading (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1999). As for its determinants, Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) posited that GC might vary with respect to such factors as intermember acceptance, time spent together, shared group history, group legend, public commitment, difficulty of admission, and so forth.

Drawing on the promises GC holds, L2 scholars have put forth empirical efforts to examine how this group characteristic might give rise to the changes in different aspects of language learning. For instance, Clement et al. (1994) investigated the relationship among the learner characteristics of Hungarian EFL learners and found that learners who perceived their groups to feature a greater degree of GC showed a higher level of motivation as well as a higher level of language proficiency. Dörnyei and Kormos (2000), also studying Hungarian EFL learners, examined the relationship among their affective and social variables and L2 oral argumentative task performance. They found that while GC correlated with task performance in a statistically nonsignificant manner, they were shown to bear a positive relationship with each other. In Matsubara's (2006) study exploring how L2 motivation, willingness to communicate, and classroom dynamics correlated with one another for Japanese EFL college students, GC emerged as an unimportant

predictor of willingness to communicate. Chang (2010) adopted a mixed-method approach to scrutinize the relationship between group processes and motivation for Taiwanese EFL learners and confirmed the positive correlation between GC and motivation, bolstered by both statistical findings and interview data. As one can see, the GC research conducted in the field of L2 learning has generally lent support to its positive influences on learning processes and outcomes. Drawing on this overall finding, I thus set out to examine whether the video-dubbing tasks could operate to increase the perceived GC and, in turn, promote learning performance.

## **The Current Study**

As illustrated in the foregoing review, the video-dubbing tasks draw support not merely from the technology-mediated TBLT framework but also from L2 scholars; yet, they have thus far attracted limited research attention to the examination of their utility in the L2 classroom. Further, for the relevant empirical attempts currently reported in the literature, they have included one or more design limitations: requiring either a dubbed video clip or live dubbing but not both, losing sight of individual difference variables and social dimensions, and/or failing to include a control group. Additionally, levels of PSA and GC have been shown to influence L2 learning outcomes, and the video-dubbing tasks, with their claimed benefits, might function to lead to changes in these variables. Therefore, in light of the paucity of relevant literature, the design limitations of the extant studies, as well as the potential of video-dubbing in affecting PSA and GC, I undertook this research project involving an experimental group and a control group to explore the influence of video-dubbing tasks on English speaking skills, English public speaking anxiety (EPSA), and GC. Proceeding from these purposes, this study addressed three research questions:

1. Does completing video-dubbing tasks influence English speaking proficiency?
2. Does completing video-dubbing tasks influence EPSA?
3. Does completing video-dubbing tasks influence GC?

## **Method**

### **Research Methodology**

I addressed the three research questions by employing a pre-post experimental design which assigned two intact classes of intermediate-level EFL college students from a Taiwanese university to either the experimental group (i.e., the dubbing group) or the control group (i.e., the comparison group) to be engaged in different activities according to their group membership. Their performance on the pre-test and the post-test then functioned to shed light on the influence of completing video-dubbing tasks on English speaking performance, EPSA, and GC.

To address the first research question, I operationalized English speaking proficiency for this academic project as pronunciation, intonation, and overall proficiency. The decision of specifically targeting the aspects of pronunciation and intonation arose from the nature of video-dubbing tasks that prioritizes the close reproduction of the monologues and dialogues in the video clips rather than language production on one's own (as made clear in the description of the video-dubbing tasks below). As for overall proficiency, since the video-dubbing tasks implemented in this project also propelled students to have discussions in English both in and out of class, it seems justifiable that overall proficiency might also benefit.

### **Context and Participants**

This research was situated in an undergraduate-level course aiming to develop the English skills of non-English-majored students enrolled in a Taiwanese university. The university offers this course annually to cater to the students at an English proficiency level corresponding to or lower than the B2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages<sup>1</sup>.

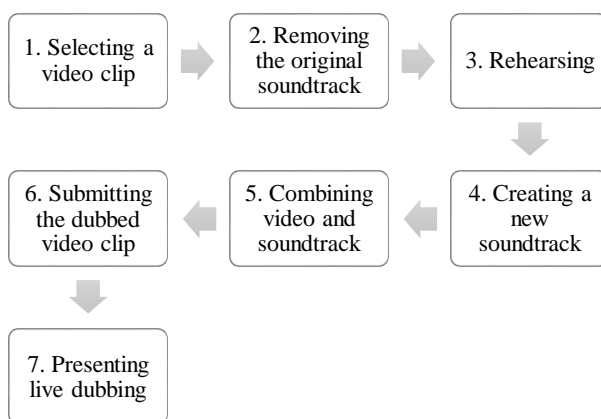
This research took place in two intact sections of this course that shared the same syllabus and instructor, and followed the same procedure. One section was assigned as the video-dubbing group (hereinafter referred to as the dubbing group) and the other as the comparison group. These two sections consisted of 57 EFL college students (32 males and 25 females) who averaged 19 years of age at the time of this study and came from a wide range of academic disciplines such as mathematics, sociology, physical therapy, political science, and so forth. Further, they had received an average of 12 years of formal education in English prior to taking these sections.

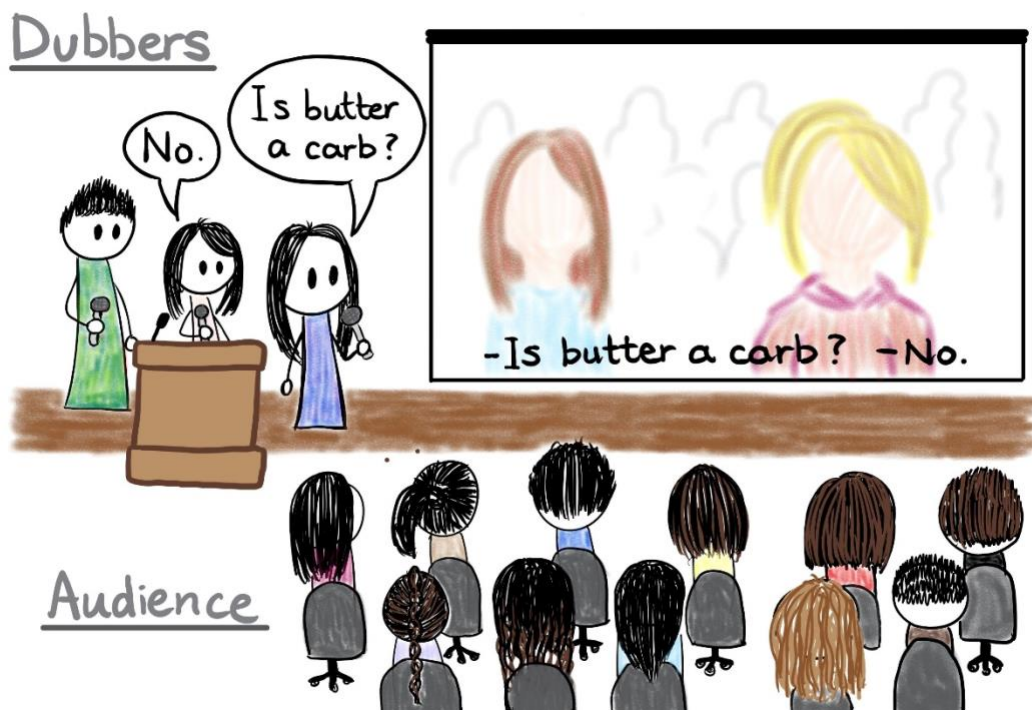
### The Video-dubbing Tasks

Drawing on the relevant tasks utilized in prior research (e.g., Chiu, 2012; Danan, 2010; He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Luo et al., 2016; Talavan & Costal, 2017) and referring to the characteristic features of the technology-mediated TBLT (e.g., Gonzalez-Lloret, 2016; Gonzalez-Lloret & Ortega, 2014), a video-dubbing task was custom-developed for this project, one that instructed the students to produce a dubbed video clip and present live dubbing as the end products. During the course of the semester, the students, working in groups of three or four members, finished two video-dubbing tasks, each of which entailed seven consecutive steps and five weeks to complete (see Figure 1). To begin, they watched as many video clips as they pleased to find one that contained sufficient verbal exchanges and appropriate content to be submitted to the instructor for approval. The chosen clip should have been three to four minutes in length. Next, upon obtaining approval, they removed the original soundtrack of the video clip and rehearsed the verbal exchanges by approximating the original ones as closely as possible. At this step, the instructor would reserve one hour of class time for the students to discuss and rehearse in groups in the target language, and encourage them to hold their group discussions in the target language outside of the classroom as well. Following that, the students constructed a new soundtrack with their voices and sound effects and generated the dubbed video clip via combining the video clip with the new soundtrack. Subsequently, they uploaded the dubbed video clip to the designated webpage for evaluation and presented live dubbing by dubbing the video clip live from behind the desktop computer with the video clip being projected onto the screen located at the center of the stage. Figure 2 shows the setup of the live dubbing presentation.

**Figure 1**

*The Flow Chart for Completing Each Video-Dubbing Task*



**Figure 2***The Setup of the Live Dubbing Presentation***Research Instruments**

I collected relevant data to address the three questions posed for this project by virtue of four sets of research instruments, each of which is described at some length below. All but the *General English Proficiency Test - Intermediate Level: Speaking* (GEPTI-S) were presented in Mandarin Chinese to the participants with the intent to obviate potential language-induced misunderstandings.

***General English Proficiency Test - Intermediate Level: Speaking (GEPTI-S)***

The GEPT represents a criterion-referenced English proficiency measure established by the Language Training and Testing Center (LTTC) in an effort to “promote the concept of lifelong learning and to encourage use of the communicative approach in English teaching and learning” in Taiwan (Wu, 2008, p. 6). Officially launched in 2000, the GEPT assesses the four language skills (i.e., reading, listening, speaking, and writing) at five different proficiency levels: Elementary, Intermediate, High-Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior level. As of July 2015, it has been administered to more than 6.5 million test-takers in Taiwan (LTTC, 2015). In this study, I chose the GEPT- Intermediate Level (GEPTI) as the targeted level because it constitutes the first level made available to the public, enjoys the most popularity among test-takers, and serves as the graduation benchmark for numerous colleges and universities in Taiwan (LTTC, 2016). More specifically, I capitalized on the speaking section of the GEPTI (GEPTI-S) to evaluate the English oral performance of the participating learners. A semi-direct test in nature, the GEPTI-S aims to assess test-takers’ English speaking ability to “make inquiries and conduct conversations on daily life topics... [and] discuss or describe personal experiences in general” (LTTC, n.d) and includes three task types (i.e., reading aloud, answering questions, and picture description) with a total of 12 tasks.

### **English Public Speaking Anxiety (EPSA) Scale ( $\alpha = 0.82$ )**

The EPSA scale, adapted from the personal report of public speaking anxiety established by McCroskey (1970) and consisting of 34 five-point Likert-scaled items, assesses the degree of fear that learners experience when delivering an English speech to an audience. Two sample items include *I get anxious when I think about an English speech coming up* and *I perspire just before starting an English speech*.

### **Group Cohesion (GC) Scale ( $\alpha = 0.84$ )**

The GC scale, adapted from the group cohesion questionnaire by Rosenfeld and Gilbert (1989) and the group cohesiveness scale by Chang (2010) by taking into account the context targeted by this research, explores GC in the L2 classroom with 10 five-point Likert-scaled items which combine to tap into learners' feelings toward the group and group members and their perceived positivity of the interactions with one another. Two sample items on this scale are *I want to remain a member of this group* and *I felt very comfortable working with this group*.

### **List of Interview Questions**

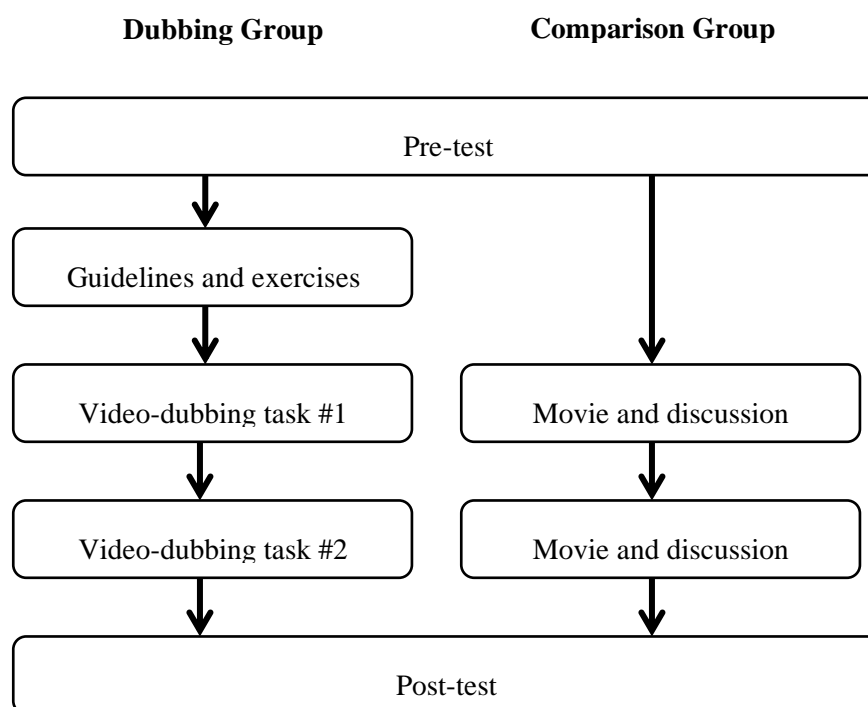
To explore the participants' experience of finishing the video-dubbing tasks as a tool to augment their English learning outcomes, I performed individual, semi-structured interviews with 15 students from the dubbing group who volunteered participation. The pre-established questions were:

1. Please briefly describe your process of completing each video-dubbing task.
2. What strategies did you use to complete each video-dubbing task?
3. In what ways do you think the video-dubbing task can benefit English learning?
4. What difficulties did you encounter in completing the video-dubbing tasks?
5. Please share any other thoughts you have about video-dubbing tasks.

### **Implementation**

Figure 3 presents the implementation procedure for the two groups: the dubbing group and the comparison group. Firstly, having obtained an informed understanding of this project and offered their consent of participation, both the dubbing group and the comparison group took the pre-test by responding to the two self-report scales (i.e., the EPSA scale and the GC scale) and sat for the first set of GEPTI-S. Secondly, for the students in the dubbing group, I, doubling as the instructor, detailed the guidelines of the video-dubbing task and engaged them in a hands-on video-dubbing exercise. Thirdly, the dubbing group completed two video-dubbing tasks (i.e., video-dubbing task #1 and video-dubbing task #2); during the weeks when the dubbing group presented live dubbing, the students in the comparison group watched movies in the target language and participated in post-viewing discussions where they first formed small groups to discuss the provided questions and then each group elected a representative to report their collective ideas to the whole class. Fourthly, at the conclusion of the semester, both groups took the post-test which similarly consisted of the two self-report scales and the second set of GEPTI-S. Further, 15 volunteers from the dubbing group attended individual semi-structured interviews with me to vocalize their experience of completing video-dubbing tasks. Each interview lasted for approximately 15 minutes and took place in Mandarin Chinese, (i.e., the shared native language between me and the participants).



**Figure 3***The Implementation Procedure***Data Analysis**

This study adopted a mixed-methods research approach that entails the collection, analysis, and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative evidence, placing emphasis on the “data linkage, or integration at an appropriate stage in the research process” (Shorten & Smith, 2017, p. 74). More specifically, it followed the convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014). With reference to this design, the data analysis thus began with the examination of the data amassed from the scales and GEPTI-S and those from the interviews concurrently and separately, and ended with the comparison and integration of the analysis results to identify the convergent and/or divergent aspects. What follows details the quantitative and qualitative analysis procedures.

**Quantitative Analysis**

I analyzed the numerical data gleaned from the scales and the GEPTI-S by performing multiple analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) to compare the dubbing group and the comparison group in terms of their English speaking proficiency, EPSA, and GC at the two time points (pre-test and post-test). The ANCOVA procedure represents the combination of analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis, and compares one variable in two or more groups while taking account of the variability of other variables, namely, the covariates (MedCalc, 2022). In other words, it can function to “control for covariates that are confounding intervention effects, thereby helping to isolate the effects of a [treatment]” (Brown & Coombe, 2015, p. 259). This statistical procedure makes for an efficient tool for pre-post experimental designs because it can adjust the post-treatment estimates by controlling for the pre-treatment variability between groups and as such offers more accurate group comparisons (Oaks, 2001). In the context of this study, the operation of ANCOVAs allowed me to compare the dubbing group and the comparison group in terms of their post-treatment levels on the five constructs (i.e., pronunciation, intonation, overall proficiency, EPSA, and GC) by controlling for their initial, pre-treatment levels.

In order to permit the subsequent ANCOVA operations, I first coded the answers to the two self-report scales and rated the oral responses to the GEPTI-S. To begin, I coded the answers to the EPSA scale and the GC scale by replacing the response points with ascending numerical values. For example, for the EPSA scale that contains five points of agreement, I substituted one for “strongly disagree,” two for “disagree,” three for “neutral,” four for “agree,” and five for “strongly agree.” Next, I summed the numbers into composite scores to represent the students’ levels of EPSA and GC, respectively.

Next, a colleague and I, both of whom have received extensive rater training administered by the LTTC, assessed all of the GEPTI-S performances with reference to the scoring rubrics that I developed by drawing on the level descriptors for the GEPTI-S established by the LTTC (n.d). These scoring rubrics comprise six criteria: (a) pronunciation (i.e., the intelligibility and correctness of produced utterances), (b) intonation (i.e., the correctness and naturalness of emphasis and pitch), (c) fluency (i.e., flow and pace), (d) vocabulary (i.e., range and choice of vocabulary), (e) grammar (i.e., range and accuracy of grammar), and (f) relevance (i.e., connection to the prompts). Based on these scoring rubrics, each GEPTI-S performance received a rating that ranged from zero to five for each criterion and an overall rating that summed up the ratings for the six criteria.

In order to achieve a stronger level of rating consistency, a rater training session was held before each round of GEPTI-S rating. First, the colleague and I performed the GEPTI-S to familiarize ourselves with the prompts and review the benchmark performance for each level. Second, we jointly rated ten GEPTI-S performances, described to each other the primary aspects of each performance, and reached an agreed-upon rating for each. Third, we independently rated another ten GEPTI-S performances and, when completed, discussed how and why we awarded the particular rating for each performance. Then, we began rating the remaining GEPTI-S performances with reference to the scoring rubrics and the discussions at the rater training sessions. When a GEPTI-S performance received two ratings that differed by more than two levels (e.g., a two and a five), a third rater would resolve the discrepancy by generating another rating to be averaged with the closest one. The inter-rater reliability estimates calculated by means of Spearman’s rho ( $\rho$ ) ranged from .85 to .93, as such demonstrating an adequate level of rating consistency.

Before performing the ANCOVAs, I tested the assumptions underlying this statistical technique, namely, the assumptions about normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of the covariate and treatment effect, and homogeneity of regression slopes (Field, 2009). Specifically, I assessed the skewness and kurtosis values of all variables (i.e., normality), evaluated their pairwise scatterplots (i.e., linearity), performed Levene’s tests of equality of error variances (i.e., homoscedasticity), conducted ANOVAs (i.e., independence of the covariate and treatment effect), and examined the interaction term in each ANCOVA (i.e., homogeneity of regression slopes). After testing and satisfying these underlying assumptions, I computed a total of five ANCOVAs to compare the pre-test performance and post-test performance in terms of students’ responses to the GEPTI-S, the EPSA scale, and the GC scale in order to examine the presence and the extent of the effects of video-dubbing tasks. The first three ANCOVAs were computed to address the first research question and the other two performed for the second and third research questions, respectively.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

I analyzed the verbal data arising from the semi-structured interviews via a series of qualitative procedures to bring to light the participating students’ experience of completing video-dubbing tasks. Specifically, I (a) carefully perused the interview transcripts to produce codes, (b) labeled all interview transcripts with the generated codes, (c) reviewed and combined the relevant codes into several emerging themes, (d) re-read the transcripts and conducted re-labeling if needed, and (e) interpreted the themes. [Table 1](#) shows the themes along with sample codes and representative examples. Throughout the analysis process, I constantly sought out disconfirming evidence and, when it was found, made revisions to the interpretations accordingly in an attempt to enhance their trustworthiness. When reporting the results, I used pseudonyms to maintain the anonymity of the participating students.

**Table 1***Themes with Sample Codes and Representative Examples*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Code</b>	<b>Representative Example</b>
Video-dubbing tasks influence English speaking proficiency	Intonation awareness	“I am more aware that changing my intonations can change the meaning of what I want to say.”
Video-dubbing tasks influence EPSA	Difference between dubbing and public speeches	“During live dubbing, we got to hide behind the screen. However, for a public speech, I need to come up with the content on my own and face the audience directly, so I will still feel anxious.”
Video-dubbing tasks influence GC	Friendship building	“The video-dubbing tasks gave us time to interact with each other outside of the classroom; we got to practice together, play together, eat together, and, most importantly, gossip together. We actually became friends because of this.”

## Results and Discussion

### Assumption Testing

Having ensured the absence of out-of-range values and missing values, I further verified that the dataset was normally distributed, the bivariate relationships were approximately linear, the variance of error terms was homoscedastic, and the effect of treatment (i.e., video-dubbing) and covariate (i.e., pre-treatment levels of targeted variables) was independent. Moreover, for each ANCOVA, the relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable did not differ significantly as a function of the independent variable and as such confirmed the homogeneity of regression slopes; pronunciation [ $F(1,53) = 0.26, p = .62$ ], intonation [ $F(1,53) = 0.89, p = .35$ ], overall proficiency [ $F(1,53) = 0.01, p = .94$ ], EPSA [ $F(1,53) = 2.48, p = .12$ ], and GC [ $F(1,53) = 0.32, p = .58$ ].

### Does Completing Video-dubbing Tasks Influence English Speaking Proficiency?

As noted earlier, to address the first research question, I operationalized English speaking proficiency for this academic project as pronunciation, intonation, and overall proficiency. With this operationalization scheme, I thus conducted three one-way ANCOVAs to evaluate the impact of video-dubbing on (a) pronunciation, (b) intonation, and (c) overall proficiency. As evinced by [Table 2](#), [Table 3](#), and [Table 4](#), respectively, undertaking video-dubbing tasks produced a statistically significant impact on pronunciation [ $F(1, 54) = 6.57, p = .01$ ], intonation [ $F(1, 54) = 14.26, p < .01$ ], and overall proficiency [ $F(1, 54) = 10.06, p < .01$ ]. Put differently, the video-dubbing experience functioned to enable the dubbing group to achieve substantial gains in English speaking proficiency.

**Table 2**

*ANCOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Post-study Pronunciation with Pre-study Pronunciation as Covariate*

<b>Group</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>		
Comparison group	27	3.89	0.34		
Dubbing group	30	4.07	0.18		
<b>Source of Variation</b>	<b><i>SS</i></b>	<b><i>Df</i></b>	<b><i>MS</i></b>	<b><i>F</i></b>	<b><i>Sig.</i></b>
Pre-study pronunciation	0.75	1	0.75	12.30	.00**
Grouping	0.40	1	0.40	6.57	.01*
Error	3.29	54	0.06		
Total	908.50	57			

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 3**

*ANCOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Post-study Intonation with Pre-study Intonation as Covariate*

<b>Group</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>		
Comparison group	27	3.46	0.34		
Dubbing group	30	3.70	0.39		
<b>Source of Variation</b>	<b><i>SS</i></b>	<b><i>df</i></b>	<b><i>MS</i></b>	<b><i>F</i></b>	<b><i>Sig.</i></b>
Pre-study intonation	2.62	1	2.62	30.52	.00**
Grouping	1.23	1	1.23	14.26	.00**
Error	4.64	54	0.09		
Total	741.75	57			

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 4**

*ANCOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Post-study Overall Oral Proficiency with Pre-study Overall Oral Proficiency as Covariate*

<b>Group</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>		
Comparison group	27	18.37	1.76		
Dubbing group	30	18.92	1.56		
<b>Source of Variation</b>	<b><i>SS</i></b>	<b><i>df</i></b>	<b><i>MS</i></b>	<b><i>F</i></b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Pre-study proficiency	85.55	1	85.55	70.75	.00**
Grouping	12.16	1	12.16	10.06	.00**
Error	65.29	54	1.21		
Total	19998	57			

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The interview data present parallels with the ANCOVA results as the vast majority of interviewed students ( $n = 14$ ) explicitly stated that the video-dubbing tasks helped move them toward a higher level of English proficiency by affording them additional chances to improve their listening skills, vocabulary size, pronunciation, intonation awareness and intonation, and overall oral proficiency. As repeatedly asserted in the interviews, this endorsement seems to arise from the processes necessitated by the completion of the video-dubbing tasks: watching numerous movies to select an appropriate clip for the tasks (listening and vocabulary), attempting to sound similar to the characters (pronunciation and intonation), and discussing and rehearsing the lines in the selected clip as many times as necessary to achieve the desired effect (overall oral proficiency). For example, Stella asserted that, through this process, her listening and speaking skills had really improved, and she had become more aware of how intonation could change the meaning of a message and the emotions being conveyed.

Further, most students ( $n = 12$ ) indicated that the video-dubbing tasks constituted an interesting assignment that improved their overall English proficiency and should continue being given as a class assignment. As disclosed by the interviews, the students concurred that the video-dubbing tasks indeed imposed a demand on them, yet the process did not merely create fun experiences but allowed them to make demonstrable improvement in their overall proficiency. According to Allen,

The video-dubbing task was a super interesting assignment. Creating our dubbed video clip was a lot of fun and watching the live performance of other groups was equally entertaining. Most important of all, I have learned a great deal about English during the process, for example, how to use my intonation to express emotions in English. I'd rather spend more time on this assignment than take tests or analyze texts.

These convergent findings substantiated the scholarly claims (e.g., Burston, 2005; Wakefield, 2014) and empirical findings (e.g., Cakir, 2006; Chiu, 2012; Danan, 2010; He & Wasuntarasophit, 2015; Talavan & Costal, 2017) suggesting that the video-dubbing tasks (a) support the favorable development of L2 proficiency in the aspects of pronunciation, intonation, fluency, comprehensibility, emotion production, and so forth, and (b) emerge as a challenging yet engaging and fun L2 learning activity. These findings might have stemmed from the additional language practice afforded by the video-dubbing tasks and the inherently appealing nature of video use in language classes. Namely, each step entailed by the completion

of video-dubbing tasks invited the learners to communicate in the L2 (Yachi & Karimata, 2008), which might have changed the different aspects of their oral proficiency for the better. Also, learners may have come to perceive the video-dubbing task as an interesting activity because videos constitute an authentic medium that showcases how native speakers behave in a wide array of communicative situations (Cakir, 2006).

### Does Completing Video-dubbing Tasks Influence English Public Speaking Anxiety?

To respond to the second research question set to explore the influence of completing video-dubbing tasks on EPSA, I computed another one-way ANCOVA to quantitatively compare the post-study EPSA between the comparison group ( $M = 115.81$ ,  $SD = 24.49$ ) and the dubbing group ( $M = 117.93$ ,  $SD = 14.92$ ). As evinced in Table 5, the groups' post-study EPSA did not differ in a statistically significant manner [ $F(1, 54) = 0.20$ ,  $p = .66$ ]. Stated alternatively, the video-dubbing tasks exerted no observable effects on EPSA.

The examination of the interview transcripts produced findings that echoed the ANCOVA results; namely, most students ( $n = 13$ ) expressed reservation about the impact of video-dubbing on ameliorating the anxiety of speaking in English publicly. To elaborate, the students indicated that the setup of the live dubbing transforms it into a public speaking experience immensely different from conventional ones where the speaker commonly stands at the center of attention. Acutely aware of this difference, the students remained skeptical about how their reduced anxiety in live dubbing could transfer to other public speaking events. Johnny's comment represents a case in point: "During live dubbing, we got to hide behind the screen. However, for a public speech, I need to come up with the content on my own and face the audience directly, so I will still feel anxious."

**Table 5**

*ANCOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Post-study EPSA with Pre-study EPSA as Covariate*

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Comparison group	27	115.81	24.49		
Dubbing group	30	117.93	14.92		
Source of Variation	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<b>Sig.</b>
Pre-study EPSA	12311.90	1	12311.90	74.67	.00**
Grouping	32.16	1	32.16	0.20	.66
Error	8904.05	54	164.89		
Total	800617	57			

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

On a more positive note, most students ( $n = 12$ ) also believed that the video-dubbing tasks could operate to reduce foreign language anxiety through decreasing their anxiety to communicate in English. According to the interviewed students, the presence of the video somehow put them more at ease about learning English as it served as a model for them to follow both for this assignment and for real-life communication. Further, the setup of the live dubbing shone the spotlight on the video rather than the dubbers and thus allowed the students to harbor an increased sense of security and perform with less anxiety, which in turn elevated their confidence in speaking in English. As James put it,

The video provided a model for me to follow and made me feel that learning English is not that hard. Also, during the live dubbing, I felt less anxious because it was the characters on the screen that received attention, not me. This gave me the courage to speak up in my not-so-perfect English in class or to talk to foreigners outside of class.

The synthesis of these derived findings only partially bolster the hypothesized effect of video-dubbing tasks on alleviating the anxiety confronting learners by removing them from the center of attention as they present live dubbing (Burston, 2005; Wakefield, 2014); namely, they reduced foreign language anxiety but not EPSA. To interpret, students' language anxiety might have decreased as a result of the video-dubbing tasks reducing their fear for negative evaluation, a major aspect of foreign language anxiety that represents the apprehension, avoidance, and expectation of others evaluating oneself negatively (Horwitz et al., 1986). That is, presenting live dubbing while hiding behind the characters might have allowed the students to speak up without the feeling of being constantly evaluated. Thus, they became more comfortable with communicating in the target language, eventually easing their language anxiety. On the other hand, the students perceived the video-dubbing tasks as causing little change in their EPSA, probably because these tasks sidestep two of its major components: content preparation and speaker role (Bippus & Daly, 1999). The former relates to the research and organization of speech content whereas the latter deals with concerns over the expectations associated with speech givers. As the video-dubbing tasks necessitate little effort on content writing and demand no face-to-face communication with the audience, students might believe that they incur a level of EPSA lower than, and not replicable in, other public speaking events.

### Does Completing Video-dubbing Tasks Influence Group Cohesion?

The third research question aimed to unveil the influence of completing video-dubbing tasks on the levels of GC. In answer to this question, I similarly computed a one-way ANCOVA, which revealed that the comparison of the comparison group ( $M = 35.56, SD = 3.21$ ) and the dubbing group ( $M = 37.43, SD = 2.87$ ) significantly favored the latter in terms of GC [ $F(1, 54) = 6.23, p = .02$ ], as shown in Table 6. Stated alternatively, video-dubbing could give rise to substantial increases in the level of GC.

**Table 6**

*ANCOVA Results and Descriptive Statistics for Post-study GC with Pre-study GC as Covariate*

Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Comparison group	27	35.56	3.21		
Dubbing group	30	37.43	2.87		
Source of Variation	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<b>Sig.</b>
Pre-study GC	28.28	1	28.28	3.18	.08
Grouping	55.36	1	55.36	6.23	.02*
Error	479.75	54	8.88		
Total	76679	57			

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

In concert with the ANCOVA results, the interviews brought to the fore the belief shared by most students ( $n = 12$ ) that the video-dubbing tasks could enhance the level of GC by increasing peer interactions, forming a favorable peer relationship, and promoting team spirit. They attributed the increased sense of GC to the

presence of additional opportunities to interact with their group members outside of class, which helped them form both a stronger friendship and a spirit of camaraderie with one another. As Annie put it,

The video-dubbing tasks gave us time to interact with each other outside of the classroom; we got to practice together, play together, eat together, and, most importantly, gossip together. We actually became friends because of this. Also, when recording the soundtrack or during the live performance, we reminded each other and covered each other's backs. We felt very much like a team.

These quantitative and qualitative findings combined to corroborate the theorized benefit of video-dubbing tasks in fostering an enhanced sense of GC through creating out-of-class opportunities for completing the entailed steps as a group (Burston, 2005) such as gathering around the computer for the dubbing rehearsals, causing positive changes to the peer bond among group members (Danan, 2010). By confirming this benefit, these findings serve to position the video-dubbing tasks as a communicative milieu favorable for the development and refinement of social strategies commonly claimed and/or shown to facilitate L2 attainment (e.g., Park, 1997). Moreover, they highlight the promising features of video-dubbing as a collaborative L2 learning task that embodies the principles of technology-mediated TBLT (e.g., Gonzalez-Lloret, 2016). For instance, they permit and stimulate negotiation of meaning via prompting group members to discuss video selection and dubbing strategies and involve them in (rehearsed) interactions that simulate real-world scenarios.

## Summary and Implications

This research project employed a mixed-method approach to examining the impact of finishing video-dubbing tasks on English speaking proficiency, English public speaking anxiety (EPSA), and group cohesion (GC). Following the synthesizing of the results from the ANCOVAs performed on oral test performance and scale responses and those from qualitative analysis conducted on interview transcripts, three major findings came to light. First, video-dubbing tasks emerged as an entertaining technology-mediated TBLT task that could enhance English speaking proficiency, operationalized as pronunciation, intonation, and overall proficiency. Second, completing video-dubbing tasks led to the reduction of foreign language anxiety but induced little change in the level of EPSA. Third, GC increased in no small measure as a result of accomplishing video-dubbing tasks.

These results hold useful implications for L2 instruction in general and technology-enhanced L2 instruction in specific. Namely, they bring to light the potential utility of the video-dubbing tasks in bettering L2 proficiency and thus endorse their incorporation into L2 curricula that attempt to harness the affordances of technology applications to expand L2 skills. Further, the findings foreground the importance of giving additional public speaking assignments that require script writing and audience interactions to offer hands-on experience and reduce EPSA.

This empirical study is limited in two major aspects that might have affected the derived findings. First, it recruited only participants with a homogeneous first language background (i.e., Taiwanese EFL learners). Second, it only lasted for one semester and called upon the participants to complete merely two video-dubbing tasks. Therefore, I suggest that future relevant endeavors recruit participants from diverse L1 backgrounds and invite them to complete four or more video-dubbing tasks in the duration of an entire academic year.

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## Note

1. The CEFR, developed by the Council of Europe, constitutes an international standard established for describing language ability and comprises six levels: A1, A2 (basic users), B1, B2 (independent users), C1, and C2 (proficient users). The CEFR makes it possible for individuals involved in language teaching and assessment to recognize and evaluate language qualifications and to compare different language exams (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 2022).

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