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TQA of *The Help*: The African American sociolect into Spanish

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to carry out a translation quality assessment (TQA) of the African American sociolect in the novel *The Help* focusing on the character of Aibileen, in order to see how it has been translated into Spanish. As far as we are aware, a TQA of this novel has not been done before, hence we consider important to analyze its adequacy. In order to do so, we have examined the different TQA approaches, which are the functionalist and the equivalence-based, of which we have chosen the functionalist one adapting Nord and Karoubi's approaches. As a result, we have analyzed the sociolect and the different solutions adopted in its translation to the Spanish language.

Keywords: TQA, *The Help,* African American sociolect, literature, functional approach.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este trabajo es desarrollar una evaluación de la calidad de la traducción del sociolecto afroamericano en el libro de *The Help* (*Criadas y señoras* en su traducción a la lengua española)*,* centrándonos en el personaje de Aibileen, para ver cómo es su traducción al español. Creemos que la evaluación de la traducción de esta novela no se ha realizado antes, por lo que consideramos que es importante analizar su adecuación. Para ello, hemos examinado las distintas corrientes para la evaluación de la calidad de la traducción, que son la funcionalista y la basada en la equivalencia, de las cuales hemos elegido la funcionalista, adaptando los enfoques de Nord y de Karoubi. Como resultado se ha analizado el sociolecto y las distintas soluciones adoptadas en su traducción a la lengua española.

Palabras clave: Evaluación de la calidad de la traducción, *Criadas y señoras*, sociolecto afroamericano, literatura, enfoque funcionalista.

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INTRODUCTION

A) PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to develop an analysis of the African American sociolect in the novel *The Help* focusing on the character of Aibileen, to see how it has been translated into Spanish. It is important to focus on the appropriateness of this translation, the non-standard uses of grammar, the compensations that are needed in order to produce a proper translation understandable for the target audience, etc.

B) DEFINITION AND INTRODUCTION TO TRANSLATION

Translation has been and still is an important discipline which is becoming more and more relevant nowadays. There are several definitions for the term 'translation', but for the present paper, we will consider it as "the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language" (House 29-30). Thus, it provides the acquisition of knowledge and the chance for communication around the world by simply reading translated texts into the native language or another different language –target texts (TTs)– from those written originally in one specific language –source texts (STs)–.

C) INTRODUCTION TO THE HELP AND THE CHARACTER OF AIBILEEN

The Help is a book about hope, bravery and change, written in 2009 by Kathryn Stockett, and it is set in Jackson, Mississippi, in the 1960s. It deals with the relationship between three totally different characters, who happen to be the three narrators of the story: Miss Skeeter, Aibileen and Minny. Miss Skeeter is a white and wealthy woman who wants to write a secret book denouncing the reality of the black maids serving in the houses of the white people – like Minny and Aibileen – and telling their stories using pseudonyms so they are not discovered.

The character of Aibileen is of particular importance as she is the one starting the book with Miss Skeeter, and hence this paper will focus on her. As she is African American, her way of speaking is different: she uses the sociolect typical of the African Americans. Even though her mother tongue is English, she does not use a grammatically correct use of this language. Therefore, this paper will focus on her and on her way of speaking and expressing herself, as her interventions are tricky in the process of translating into Spanish, because of the difficulty to express the characteristics from a specific language or sociolect into another.

D) SOCIOLECT

According to Guitart, a sociolect is a linguistic variation used by a specific socio-economic class or any group which is socially determined, not geographically. For instance, it is referred to people belonging to the same social class or people having the same educational level (3; our translation). The English spoken by Aibileen, Minny and their friends belonging to their close circle is, as stated above, different from the "standard" English, and that is why it is considered a sociolect and not a dialect.

CHAPTER 1: TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT (TQA)

1.1. INTRODUCTION

TQA has been defined in many different ways, being difficult to consider only one definition. In order to be as precise as possible, three definitions have been chosen, those by Karoubi, Williams, and Holmes. Also, taking into account the key aspects of each definition, we will define our description of TQA in the present paper.

1. Karoubi says that it is a complex process for decision making that tries to solve the problem of ambiguity and redefines key terms (253).

2. Williams defines it as a type of evaluation, which involves asking the question of something being good or not (4).

3. In the words of Holmes, it is a "part of translation criticism, a branch of applied translation studies" (78).

Taking into account these definitions, we can conclude that TQA is a process of evaluation which belongs to translation criticism and involves assessing if a specific translation is appropriate or acceptable in the target culture.

1.2. PROCESS OF TQA

In this section, the process of TQA is explained, focusing on the object, the method and the objective of assessment.

Some scholars think TQA is a subjective process that depends on the person analyzing it. The problem with this lies in the fact that subjectivity should not be present or should have a minimal presence in TQA, and that is the reason for searching a method with some objectivity, which according to Karoubi, is related to the three main components of this process: the object, the method, and the objective of assessment (253).

- Firstly, when talking about the **object** of assessment, the question which should be taken into account is: what is being assessed? The answer is the quality of a written text, which is called a translation or TT. The problem is the term *translation* is used to talk about both the product and the process of translation, but in this case, the assessment of the quality of a translation will be delivered for a translation as a product, independent of the process (256).

- Secondly, dealing with the **method** of assessment, the question proposed is: how the assessment is done; it starts with the judgement of not sounding right, but it is not clear why or how the assessor of a translation gets to that conclusion. Researchers are the ones that could provide an answer to this question, by describing the process through which the people in charge of doing the assessing of a translation have come to that judgement (261).

- Thirdly, the **objective** is: why the assessment is done? It is done to provide the reasons why some points are weak or strong, and to offer solutions to the problems that appear in the TT and improve its quality (272).

The result of this analysis is that there will not be a total objectivity in the assessment, as the process itself relies on their critical abilities to, for instance, identify and describe the problems with items and data, their analytical skills in interpreting data, etc. Thus, TQA is a complex process of decision making which very much depends on the assessor's interpretive role, and subjectivity will always be part of this process (275).

1.3. APPROACHES OF TQA

The process of translation is guided by case-specific values, and to judge the quality of a translation, the values should be accessible to the evaluator and should function as evaluation parameters, which is dependent on individual and situational factors. Hence, the reason why translation quality is a matter of consensus and agreement (Lauscher 149).

Nowadays, translations are used more than ever, which explains the growing number of initiatives relating to quality assessment. To achieve a good translation, some criteria have been established related to the use of language, that are to be applied in all

translations. Thus, assessors will be able to make prescriptive judgements on individual translations. However, these criteria are not enough for determining the TQA in professional settings, as quality also depends on many other aspects rather than those set up in them (Lauscher 149-150).

In order to make a proper TQA, two approaches have been mentioned by Lauscher: equivalence-based and functional, which are built on scientific theories (151).

1. The first one is the **equivalence-based approach**. Equivalence[1] has always been important in translation, being useful as a prescriptive and descriptive category for explaining the relationship existent between a ST and a TT. Thus, this method aims to reproduce the ST as closely to the TT as possible, as they cannot be totally equivalent. Therefore, in order to develop an equivalence-based approach, researchers have differentiated between different kinds of equivalence. For instance, Nida and de Waard distinguished between formal and functional or dynamic equivalence, and Koller talked about connotative, denotative, formal-aesthetic, textual, and pragmatic equivalence (qtd. in Lauscher 151). Van den Broeck established a model dealing with a degree of factual equivalence, which outcome claims that there is not 'one best translation' (qtd. in Lauscher 155-156). Moreover, Reiss proposed one of the pioneers' systematic approaches to TQA, focusing on the idea of translating as finding equivalents for items of the STs in the target language at the level of text and individual text units, and a translation is considered good if it can achieve the optimum equivalence. This optimum equivalence is achieved if a translator is capable of choosing an appropriate word or phrase by applying the process-governing rules, like for instance the analysis of linguistic and extra-linguistic determinants or the determination of a text type (qtd. in Lauscher 151-152). We can also find House's proposal, which is that of functional equivalence. She defines 'function' as the application of a text in a particular context. In this case, the function is what affects the equivalence, which is the basis, and that is why the functional equivalence is included within this equivalence-based approach. Thus, for establishing a functional equivalence between ST and TT, the ST should be analyzed first so the equivalence sought for ST and TT can be stated (House 37-38).

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[1] The meaning of **equivalence** considered for the present paper is "the relationship between a ST and a TT that allows the TT to be deemed as a translation of the ST in the first place." (Reza 116).

2. The **functional approach** is based on the criteria that translating is determined by factors related to the target culture, including the situation of the target readers, rather than the ST, being the function the point of reference for translation. The functions of a TT are arbitrary but confined by concepts that are socially determined (157). D'Hulst designed a functional approach in which she focuses on language for specific purposes (LSP), where the texts fulfill the same function both in source and target cultures (qtd. in Lauscher 157), and Ammann's proposal is based on the skopos theory[2], and it consists on evaluating literary translations within a specific research context. The aim of this evaluation is to consider a good translation as the one that allows the target reader to reach a coherent interpretation of the TT (qtd. in Lauscher 156).

Thus, the skopos theory and the skopos itself, which is a Greek term that means aim, purpose, goal, objective, etc. (Vermeer 4) will be the basis of many authors involved in the process of TQA.

In this regard, Nord based her text analysis as well as her TQA model on the skopos theory (8-9). In order to develop a proper TQA, she distinguished between two different factors: the extratextual and the intratextual. She states that the communicative function is the key criterion for textuality, and it has both syntactic and semantic features subordinated to it. STs, when dealing with professional translation, achieve a communicative function and have to be translated, recognizing the inaccuracies and fixing them. Therefore, the communicative function of STs, represented by these extratextual and intratextual factors, which belong to the communicative situation, is decisive for fulfilling a proper text analysis (35-36).

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[2] The **skopos theory** was first developed in Germany by Vermeer, and it will be used in this paper, according to the definition of Baker, as an approach to translation that reflects a general shift from predominantly linguistic and formal translation theories to a more socioculturally and functionally oriented concept of translation (235).

1.4. CRITERIA FOR THE SUBSEQUENT METHODOLOGY

1.4.1. INTRODUCTION

The present paper will be based on a TQA from a functional approach, which defends that the function is the reference point for the translation, always focusing on the target culture, and not on the existent equivalence between ST and TT, which is what the equivalence-based approach states. Equivalence based approach is not as specific whereas the functional approach is more accurate in order to carry out our aim, to provide a proper analysis of the translation of Aibileen's interventions in *The Help.*

Therefore, we will not consider some of the functionalist approaches mentioned before, like D'Hulst and Ammann, but instead, we will focus more specifically on Nord, completing her approach with Leech and de Beaugrande and Dressler's approaches, introduced in Karoubi's work.

1.4.2. NORD'S EXTRATEXTUAL AND INTRATEXTUAL FACTORS

As mentioned by Nord, the main aspect of this functional approach is not only the ST as such, the function that the author assigns to it, or the effect it provokes on the recipient of the ST; it is the skopos of the TT (9). As seen above (see page 8), the skopos theory opened a window for other models to be formulated, like Nord's one which is based on it. It states that the communicative function is the conclusive criterion for textuality, to which syntactic and semantic features are subordinate. Therefore, the communicative function of the ST is of crucial concern, and it is represented by the different factors belonging to the communicative situation where the ST accomplishes its function. These factors are the extratextual and the intratextual (35-36).

A) EXTRATEXTUAL FACTORS

The **extratextual factors** are defined as "metacommunicative utterances" and must be analyzed before reading the text by the process of observing the situation of use of the text (36-37). Within this group, Nord includes eight different factors: sender, sender's intention, recipient, channel, place of communication, time of communication, motive for communication, and text function.

These factors are of importance because if there is no extratextual information about the recipient's expectations, it may be difficult for the translator to reconstruct them. Thus, the greater his/her temporal, spatial and cultural distance from the original communicative situation is, the more difficult the task will be. In relation to sender and intention, they are usually explained as belonging to one unique dimension, but Nord separates them because of the different effects they have on the intratextual factors (39).

1. The first factor is the **sender**, who is the person using the text to communicate a message or to produce an effect. There may be more than one sender, in which case the data need to be analyzed for all of them. It is important to figure out the data which may clarify or explain the cultural background, the sender's intention, the time, place and motive for the production of the text, the social and regional dialect, temporal features, idiosyncrasies, knowledge presuppositions, etc. (42-45).

2. The second factor is the **sender's intention**. In order to verify this intention, it is important to know what function the sender wants the text to carry out, and what effect the sender wants to achieve on the recipient by transmitting the text (47).

In order to measure this, some objective facts are needed, which have to be carried out through a series of questions that are used indistinctively of the criterion used. The questions used for this evaluation are taken from Srisongkram's study, in order to reinforce Nord's ideas, and they are divided in four different types:

- The first type is the closed question, which requires 'yes', 'no', or a simple piece of information as an answer, and they are useful to narrow the circle of options rapidly (78-79; our translation).

- The second type is the filter question, which is used to determine if the respondent is the type of interlocutor needed. It can be a dichotomic question or one of multiple response (82; our translation).

- The third type is the weighting question, in which the interviewee makes a value judgment in order to determine tendencies, as for instance: how would you evaluate the quality of the product? 1) Excellent, 2) Good, 3) Bad (82, our translation).

- The last type is the reflexive question, which gives the opportunity to reconsider those ideas and thoughts that have led the respondent to give the previous answer. These questions help to clarify and define the areas of concern that the potential interlocutor may not be aware of or not able to express (83; our translation).

3. The third factor is the **recipient**, which is a very important, if not the most, as s/he is the one who completes the process of communication (51). The recipient of the TT will always be different to the recipient of the ST at least in the aspect of s/he belonging to another linguistic and cultural community; thus, a translation cannot be addressed to the same recipient as the original (52). It is important to take into account the recipient's communicative background, so the translator can make the translated text not requiring an excessive or a non-existent effort (53).

4. The forth factor is the **channel**, which is the vehicle or the means that conveys the text to the reader. It is important to notice if the text will be transmitted in oral or in written form, because the means of transmission affects the conditions for the reception and production of the message (56). In written communication, the channel is referred as the means of publication, that is for instance books, newspapers, magazines, etc. (57).

5. The fifth factor is the **place of communication**, which deals with the dimension of space, referring not only to the place of the production of the text, but also to the place of the reception (60). This dimension of space is important, for instance, in the cases where one language exists in different geographical varieties, as what happens with the English that is spoken in Australia, Great Britain, United States, etc. Considering one of these as the source language, the place of the production of the text can provide a pre-signal for the variety of the language that is used in the ST, and if we

consider another of these languages as the target one, the place of the reception will determine the variety that the translator has to use in the production of his/her translation (61). Considering the difference of social classes present in *The Help,* this factor may be of great interest for the analysis completed in this paper.

6. The sixth factor is the **time of communication,** which is the time the text belongs to, as language is subject to a continuous change in terms of use and form. Therefore, the time of the production of a text is important. The age of a text can affect the expectations of both the recipient and the translator with regard to the typical characteristics of a specific type of text (63).

7. The seventh factor is the **motive for communication,** which is the reason for a text being written. Sometimes it does not only refer to the reason but to the occasion for which it was written (67). It can also be a pre-signal for some features of the text, which guide the expectations of the recipient (68).

8. The last factor is the **text function,** which is the communicative function a text fulfils in the situation of production and reception, and it is related to the situational aspect of communication. It is important to notice that the text function is a crucial factor, as it derives from the other extratextual factors mentioned before (70). Nord mentions four different functions of communication:

- First of all, the referential function, focusing on the referent or on the context to which the text is referred to.
- Secondly, the expressive function, which focusses on the sender, his/her emotions and the attitude towards the referent.
- Thirdly, the operative function, which deals with the orientation of a text towards the recipient.
- Finally, the phatic function, which not only establishes the communication between the sender and the recipient, but also extends it or even finishes it in order to call the interlocutor's attention, to check the functioning of the channel, etc. (42).

The pragmatic relation existing between recipient, sender, motive and medium gives some pre-signals to the translator about the possible presence of a specific function, which will be confirmed or denied by the intratextual analysis that will be done afterwards (74).

B) INTRATEXTUAL FACTORS

The **intratextual factors** are defined as the internal factors relating to the text itself (36), and eight factors can be differentiated within this group: subject matter, content, presuppositions, text composition, non-verbal elements, lexicon, sentence structure and suprasegmental features. It is to be noticed that they refer to the sender's text and how s/he expresses it. Taking into account the point of view of the sender, it is seen that s/he produces a text for a communicative purpose (79), to verify which intratextual factors are needed to be taken into account in the production of the text.

1. The first intratextual factor mentioned by Nord is the **subject matter,** which refers to the sender's discussion (84), and it is important for some reasons:

- If one subject dominates the text, that means that the text is coherent. More than one subject can create problems to translators depending on the target situation.
- If the subject is embedded in a specific cultural context, the translator has to consider the possible presuppositions and implications in the translation (85).

2. The second factor is the **content**, which makes reference to objects and phenomena in an extralinguistic reality that can be real or fictitious. Thus, the analysis of the content starts with the information that is carried by the elements of the text that are linked on the surface of the text (90).

3. The third factor is the **presupposition**, which is a piece of not verbalized information that cannot be "spotted" in the text (97). The information that is presupposed by the author needs to be presupposed by the reader as well. These presuppositions establish the whole information expected by the sender to be part of the knowledge of the readers (96).

4. The forth factor is the **text composition**, which considers that the text has an informational macrostructure consisting on different microstructures, being both important for the translation-oriented text analysis (100-101). Nord distinguishes three levels of composition, being the highest the meta-communication, which happens when the text is included as a unit of a broader rank; and within the text itself she distinguishes the macrostructure and microstructure (101-102).

5. The fifth factor deals with the **non-verbal elements**, which are the paralinguistic elements used to illustrate, supplement, intensify and eliminate the ambiguity of the message. In written texts, examples of these non-verbal elements would be pictures or emblems, and in spoken communication there would be for instance gestures or facial expressions (108).

6. The sixth factor is the **lexicon** (111). For its analysis, it is important to know how the extratextual factors are reflected on the chosen lexicon, which lexical fields are used in the text, the register and unusual use of morphology and syntax.

7. The seventh factor is the **sentence structure.** Its functional, formal and stylistic aspects are important for the text analysis. It is also important to consider the type and the length of the sentences, their complexity, if they are coordinated or subordinated, if the order of the formal components matches the thematic structure, the order of the words, the use of rhetoric techniques and the function they carry out, etc. (118).

8. The last intratextual factor is the **suprasegmental features,** which is the features dealing with the organization of the text that overlap the limits of any syntactical and lexical segment, sentence or paragraph. These features are indicated in written texts by resources like bold, italics, inverted commas, dashes, brackets, specific punctuation, etc.

The analysis of these features conveys information about the subject matter, the content, and the presumptions, and some of the extratextual factors mentioned before like the sender and the intention, the motive, the place and the text function are characterized by these suprasegmental features. To analyze these resources, it is important to consider if they are specific of the chosen type of text, if they give hints dealing with specific characteristics or emotions, and also if the "skopos" requires adaptations of these suprasegmental aspects to the target language conventions (120-126).

1.4.3. KAROUBI'S MODEL FOR TQA

According to Karoubi, the assessment process begins with a critical reading of the TT in order to determine those features that are considered problematic, as they challenge the understanding of the assessment skopos. Then, those problematic features will comprise the data for the assessment process and they will be analyzed to see if they coincide with the skopos of assessment. The nature of these problems is related to the structural and lexical properties (262).

The **structural properties** include: structural rules for the combination of linguistic units to create larger ones, sentence patterns, grammatical functions of syntactic categories, rules for the use of cohesive and typographical devices, punctuation marks, etc. (Karoubi 262).

The **lexical properties**, are divided taking into account Leech and de Beaugrande and Dressler, into a micro and a macro-textual level:

- Within the **micro-textual level**, Karoubi includes meaning and statistical collocation. He identifies three types of meaning: conceptual, associative and thematic, making a further distinction within the associative meaning, including affective, collocative, connotative, social and reflective meaning. Moreover, Karoubi refers to statistical collocation as a linguistic phenomenon where an item prefers the company of another item rather than its synonym (Leech 1-23).

- The **macro-textual level** includes seven different factors of textuality which are at or above the level of the sentence and according to de Beaugrande and Dressler are: acceptability, intentionality, coherence, cohesion, informativity, intertextuality and situationality.

   1 & 2. <u>Acceptability and intentionality</u> are those standards of textuality concerning the intention of the text producer for producing the text and the relevance it has for the receiver (7).

   3. <u>Coherence </u>refers to the way in which the components of a text are relevant and accessible (4).

4. <u>Cohesion</u> refers to the grammatical dependencies existing between the components of a text (4).

5. <u>Informativity</u> refers to the extent to which the occurrences of a text are seen as expected or unexpected, or as known or unknown. Texts with low informativity could bore the readers, and those with too much informativity could exceed the capacity of understanding of the readers (9).

6. <u>Intertextuality</u> concerns the style of writing and it refers to the factors which make the use of a text dependent upon the knowledge of one or more texts (10).

7. <u>Situationality</u> concerns the factors which make a text more relevant to the situation as it is happening (163).

Therefore, these factors are suitable as a scheme for the categorization of problematic features, which is relevant for this paper because of its communicative approach (Karoubi 266).

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY OF TQA

The TQA in this paper will be carried out on the basis of extratextual and intratextual factors as previously mentioned (pages 8-14). From the extratextual factors we will use those of Nord and for the intratextual factors we will use a combination of Nord and de Beaugrande and Dressler, based on the structure provided by Karoubi, which he calls macro-textual level (263-264). We will do so because these intratextual factors correspond in terms of Karoubi to the macro-textual level. So from now on, either if we use one or another, we are referring to the same aspect.

We will leave apart Leech distinction at a micro-textual level due to this analysis being of macro-textual level, as previously mentioned in the above paragraph.

The factors used in this paper to analyze Aibileen's interventions through *The Help* are:

- Every extratextual factor mentioned by Nord:

    - Sender

    - Sender's intention

    - Recipient

    - Channel

    - Place of communication

    - Time of communication

    - Motive of communication

    - Text function

- Some intratextual factors mentioned by Nord and de Beaugrande and Dressler according to Karoubi's structure:

1	**Logical/Pragmatic coherence and consistency**	Continuity of sense	Interaction with the prior knowledge of the world (Presuppositions)
2	**Informativity**	Information quantity	
3	**Situationality**	Subject matter	
4	**Intertextuality**	Style of writing	Generic / literary / novel
			Text composition
			Suprasegmental features
5	**Order of textual material**	Syntactic structure	Sentence structure (simple, compound, subordinate, etc.).
6	**Grammatical function of the textual material**	Syntactic categories	Nouns, pronouns, prepositions, interjections, verbs, etc. / Within verbs: Person and number, inflected and non-inflected, auxiliary verbs.

Table 1. Intratextual factors according to Karoubi's structure

From Nord's factors we will not include the content as it is not relevant for this analysis because we will not focus on Aibileen comments but on how she speaks and how that information is translated. We will not include either the non-verbal elements, as they do not even appear in the translation, so there is no need to consider them.

From de Beaugrande and Dressler's factors we will leave apart the acceptability, intentionality and cohesion, as they do not contribute with relevant information for the analysis of the translation of Aibileen's interventions because they are more related to the content, and we are focusing on the form.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

As we have based this paper on a TQA from a functional approach, the results according to our criteria will be based on the first place on the extratextual factors by Nord and on the second place on Karoubi's macro-textual level, which, as seen in pages 15-16, corresponds to the intratextual factors by Nord and de Beaugrande and Dressler. All of this will be done focusing specifically on the character of Aibileen. In addition, we will make a comparative analysis with specific examples of *The Help* at a macro-textual level in order to illustrate all of this, not focusing on the inadequacy of the translation, but on seeing if the translation is functionally equivalent; that is, if it produces the same effect in the TT readers. Sometimes, a specific characteristic from the ST that does not appear in a language level of the TT is not considered as not appropriate if it is compensated in another one.

3.1. EXTRATEXTUAL FACTORS

1. **Sender**: the sender would be the author of the book, Kathryn Stockett, which is materialized through the character of Aibileen, so she will be considered the sender of the message, which is delivered to the readers through her narrations and interventions.

2. **Sender's intention**: what Aibileen wants to show to the readers is the African American maids experience, denouncing their conditions and the racial discrimination that they suffer.

3. **Recipient**: as the translation has been made in Madrid, Spain, the recipient will be the Spanish community.

4. **Channel**: the channel is a book, as it is transmitted in written form.

5. **Place of communication**: the place of production of the text is Mississippi, as it is the place where the action happens, and the place of reception would be Spain, as it is the specific edition of the translation that we are considering.

6. **Time of communication**: the action of the book takes place in the 1960s, which is the time of communication, even though the book has been written in 2009 and the first translation published in Spain dates the very same year.

7. **Motive for communication**: the motive includes the intention of the sender, but also the occasion for what the text was written, which is a period of racism, discrimination and inequality. Even though the story is set in the United States and we are analyzing a Spanish translation, the motive would be the same: making people be conscious of the problems described above.

8. **Text function**: it is to raise awareness within the Spanish society of the situation that African Americans were suffering.

3.2. INTRATEXTUAL FACTORS

We are going to compare the intratextual factors and whether the translation has been done appropriately and if it provokes the same effect in the TT as intended for the ST, and if something that could not be translated in a specific linguistic level has been compensated in another different one in the TT.

As Aibileen appears as both narrator and character, there are narrations and dialogues from which we will take different examples in order to illustrate the intratextual factors as mentioned (page 18) and make a comparative analysis between the ST and the TT in order to do assess the translation.

According to Karoubi's approach, the analysis will be done following these different intratextual factors:

1. **Logical/Pragmatic coherence and consistency**: which, according to Karoubi, is related to the continuity of sense. Next to the coherence and consistency, we include the **presuppositions**, as they constitute all the information that belongs to what the reader already knows, so there is an interaction with that prior knowledge. As the book is written in 2009 and set in the 1960s, the reader may be aware of the situation during that timeframe. Therefore, our presuppositions on what happened in that time period bring consistency and coherence to the actual reading of the text.

2. **Informativity:** related to the quantity of information, which is not low neither exceeded, as facts that occur throughout the novel are relevant and accurate for the storytelling. It has some unexpected incidents that make the story interesting and unpredictable, catching the attention of the readers. Sometimes, there are extracts from the ST which are not translated into the TT, so we can consider the informativity of the TT is lower, although in a minimum degree, than that of the ST. We can see this in the following fragment:

ST	TT
"I go on and get the silver service out the dining room. Law, I'm already tired and I got to be ready to work the Benefit next Saturday night. Minny ain't coming. She too scared she gone run into Miss Hilly. Miss Skeeter still waiting on me in the kitchen when I come back in" (98).	"Me dirijo al comedor y saco la cubertería de plata. Cuando regreso a la cocina, Miss Skeeter está todavía esperándome" (130).

Table 2. Informativity

In the above example, ST readers are told that Aibileen is tired, how she feels about the Benefit whilst Minny is not going to this gala, and there is no reference to it in the TT, which keeps the readers uninformed about it.

3. **Situationality and subject matter:** the subject matter is the African American maids' situation, whom were suffering racism and discrimination, and it is related to the situationality which, as said before, concerns to those factors making the text relevant to the situation whilst it occurs. In this case, it is related to the dialect, what we defined as a sociolect; the time of the events, which are quite contemporary as they are set in the 1960s; the register used, which is informal, not using any kind of technical words; and the social status is, in relation to Aibileen and the African Americans, the lower class.

4. **Intertextuality** that is the style of writing, which in this case is generic and literary, as we are dealing with a novel. In the ST we can find different styles as there are different narrators. Aibileen's sociolect is different to Miss Skeeter's way of speaking and writing, who uses a more appropriate style because she does not use any sociolect and she belongs to the high class. But in the TT, narrations are not written respecting those specific cultural elements of the African American sociolect, so there is no difference between the narrators in the TT. We will first illustrate this with an example, to show the differences between both characters in the ST and how similar they write in the TT:

	ST	TT
Aibileen	"Ever once in a while, that air-condition motor go *phheeewww*. Like it just giving up" (388).	"De vez en cuando, el motor del aire acondicionado suelta un chirrido quejumbroso, como si estuviera a punto de rendirse y pararse para siempre" (492).
Miss Skeeter	"I get out of bed and listen. I didn't sound like Mother. It was too high-pitched. It was a scream, like material ripping into two shredded pieces" (414).	"Me levanto de la cama y escucho. No puede ser una llamada de Madre, era un sonido demasiado agudo. Ha sido un chillido, como si estuvieran partiendo a alguien por la mitad" (523).

Table 3. Differences in the style of writing

The different use of the verbs like missing -s, missing auxiliary verbs, etc., or even the sound that she represents, are not translated in the TT, making the reader loose that sense of being written by an African American.

Within intertextuality we can include two more factors: text composition and suprasegmental features, as they are also related to the style of writing.

- **Text composition**: the text is only one book that does not belong to a broader rank (as what happens with tales within anthologies). It is divided in 33 chapters, being Aibileen the narrator of 11 of them, and the rest are narrated by Minny and Miss Skeeter.

- **Suprasegmental features**: these are seen in the text in the form of italics when Aibileen uses specific cultural elements, but only in the version in Spanish. In the English version, it appears with the same letter format as the rest of the text. An example of this is seen in the following extract:

ST	TT
"How you doing? You have to iron pleats this morning?" (13).	"¿Qué tal *to*? ¿Te tocó *planchá* pliegues esta mañana?" (23).

Table 4. Use of italics

The use of italics in the TT indicates the use of specific characteristics of the African American sociolect, but in the ST, these characteristics are not marked in any way.

5. **Order of textual material**: in this section, we will deal with the syntactic structure, focusing on the sentence structure. In the ST Aibileen normally uses short sentences, and rarely uses subordinated or coordinated clauses, but this does not happen as often in the TT. Sometimes the translation of the short sentences is kept in the TT as it appears in the ST, but in most of the cases some of those short sentences become subordinated clauses by adding a comma or coordinated clauses by adding the conjunction "y". For instance, we can see this in the following fragments:

ST	TT
"Mae Mobley two years old now. She got big brown eyes and honey-color curls" (2).	"Mae Mobley tiene ahora dos años, unos ojazos marrones y tirabuzones de color miel" (8).
"Miss Leefolt, she like it fancy when she do a luncheon. Maybe she trying to make up for her house being small. They ain't rich folk, that I know. Rich folk don't try so hard" (3).	"A Miss Leefolt le gusta quedar bien cuando tiene invitadas. Puede que lo haga para compensar que su casa es pequeña. No son gente rica, no señor. Los ricos no se toman tan en serio estas cosas" (10).
"About a year after Treelore died, I started going to the Community Concerns Meeting at my church. I reckon I started doing it to fill time. Keep the evenings from getting so lonely" (207).	"Más o menos un año después de la muerte de Treelore comencé a acudir a las reuniones que organizan en la parroquia para tratar problemas de la comunidad. Supongo que empecé a ir por pasar el rato y para que mis tardes no fueran tan solitarias" (267).
"This morning, I can't even get my stockings on. My legs is too swollen" (388).	"Esta mañana no puedo ponerme las medias, de lo hinchadas que tengo las piernas" (491).

Table 5. Short sentences into coordinated and subordinated clauses

Short sentences are not always coordinated or subordinated in the TT, but they usually appear as such in order to make the text sound more natural while reading it.

6. **Grammatical function of the textual material:** which deals with the syntactic categories, like nouns, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, verbs, etc.

a. **Nouns**

Regarding the use of nouns, there is not a rule followed by Aibileen in their use that marks a specific usage. There is only one particular noun repeated throughout the book which needs to be discussed in relation to its translation. The noun we are talking about is 'Law'. This word appears many times, referring to "the system of rules which a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and which it may enforce by the imposition of penalties" (Oxford Dictionary), but also as an expression meaning 'Lord', which is the one that we are going to assess as it is of particular relevance in the translation. The reason for discussing this is that the same word has been translated into four different forms (see table 3):

	ST	TT
Narration	"But, **Law**, if she ain't running my full legs off" (92).	"Pero, ¡ay, Señor!, me va a machacar las piernas de tanto andar detrás de ella" (122).
Dialogue	"**Law** have mercy" (121).	"¡Que el *Señó* se apiade de mí!" (160).
Narration	"Before I know it, Miss Skeeter out the door. **Law**." (189).	"Antes de que me dé cuenta, Miss Skeeter se ha marchada y no he tenido oportunidad de hablar con ella. ¡Demonios!" (246).
Dialogue	"Oh *Law*" (443).	"¡Ay, Dios!" (558).

Table 6. Use and translation of "Law"

'Law' has been translated as 'Señor', '*Señó*', 'Demonios' and 'Dios'. These words pretend to express the same meaning: exclamation or sigh, but the first time it appears and once the translator decides to translate it in one specific way, it should have been faithful to that first translation through the rest of the book, which does not happen. Anyway, we can justify the different use of '*Señó'* as being a compensation for the use of 'have' instead of 'has' which should have been the correct word used in this case and will be discussed within the verbs section.

b. Pronouns

Dealing with possessive pronouns, Aibileen sometimes uses the personal instead of the possessive pronoun, which is a distinctive feature of this sociolect, as it happens a lot through the story with the use of 'you' instead of 'your', and sometimes with the use of 'they' instead of 'their'. Examples of this are:

	ST	**TT**
Narration	"I reckon that's the risk you run, letting somebody else raise **you** chilluns" (2).	"Supongo que es el riesgo que corres cuando dejas que otra persona críe a tus retoños" (8).
Dialogue	"How nobody gets paid **they** Social Security" (128).	"Que ninguna temenos *seguridá social*" (168).
Narration	"Folks is putting ice cubes in **they** coffee" (207).	"Los hay que se ponen cubitos de hielo en el café" (268).

Table 7. Use and translation of possessive pronouns

This does not happen with the rest of possessive pronouns, as she uses them correctly, and she even uses 'your' and 'their' properly in other cases as well, they are not always used in a wrong way. Anyway, the use of personal pronouns instead of possessive pronouns is not translated in the TT when they appear in the narration, but they are usually compensated when they appear in the dialogues, as we can see in the second example of table 7. In the TT the pronoun itself does not appear but there is a compensation in '*seguridá sosial*' to keep that sense of being using the sociolect.

Moreover, Aibileen sometimes uses reflexive pronouns like 'themselves' in a wrong way, saying 'theyselves', or instead of 'himself' she says 'hisself' as seen in the following examples:

	ST	**TT**
Narration	"They can't get the hang of it and get to thinking low a **theyselves**" (92).	"Igual todavía no tiene edad para saber aguantarse las ganas y termina pasando que es un negado" (122).
Dialogue	"I'm nothing short a the devil **hisself**" (27).	"Soy el mísmisimo demonio" (40).

Table 8. Use and translation of reflexive pronouns

This peculiar use of 'theyselves' and 'hisself' is not seen in other reflexive pronouns, as she uses 'myself', 'yourself', 'herself', 'itself', 'ourselves', and 'yourselves' correctly. Moreover, there are other instances where she uses 'himself' and 'themselves' properly as well.

There is no particular use of relative and reciprocal pronouns that needs to be highlighted.

c. Prepositions

Within this group, there is one recurrent distinction to be maid according to the use of the preposition 'of'. She usually uses 'a' instead of 'of' as seen for instance in:

	ST	TT
Narration	"Miss Leefolt, she look terrified **a** her own child" (1).	"Miss Leefolt contemplaba aterrorizada a su propia hija" (7).
Dialogue	"You drunk up two glasses **a** grape juice" (93).	"*T'has tomao* dos vasos de zumo de uva" (122).

Table 9. Use and translation of the preposition 'of'

The rest of the prepositions are properly used, but when it comes to 'of', she uses 'a' and it is not usually translated into the TT. In table 9, the last example shows that it has been compensated in the use of the verb, translating 'You drunk up' for '*T'has tomao*', which, taking into account that the rest of the sentence is grammatically correct except for the preposition, we assume that it has been translated in that way in order to compensate the use of 'a', which seems difficult to translate whilst maintaining specific cultural elements in this situation, but looks quite effective.

d. Interjections

The use of interjection is very recurrent, and within this group, we will highlight the most common ones which are: 'hey', 'aw' and 'oh'. They are repeated several times and considered of importance because of their translation into the target language.

- 'Hey': when used by Aibileen is translated as: '*Güenos* días' or '*Güenas*' as we can see in the following examples:

ST	TT
"**Hey**, Miss Skeeter" (4).	"*Güenos* días, Miss Skeeter" (11).
"**Hey**, Miss Clark" (96).	"*Güenas,* señora Clark" (127).

Table 10. Use and translation of the interjection 'Hey'

By contrast, when it is used by Miss Skeeter for instance, it is simply translated as: 'Hola', even though it is the very same word. Thus, we can see the translator has chosen to add a cultural element which was not present in the ST but works in the TT in order to reinforce the use of the African American sociolect.

- "Aw": it is used in order to express surprise or sigh, and it is always translated as 'Ay', as we can see in the following examples:

ST	TT
"**Aw**… *Law*" (190).	"Ay… ¡Dios!" (247).
"Minny Jackson. **Aw**! Shoot" (299).	"Minny Jackson. ¡Ay! ¡Carajo!" (383).

Table 11. Use and translation of the interjection 'Aw'

- "Oh": it is also used to express sigh or surprise, and it is translated as 'ay' or also by using the exact same word both in the ST and in the TT: 'Oh', which is the most recurrent use given to the word, even though sometimes, the translator has decided not to translate it, as seen in:

ST	TT
"**Oh** I knew Constantine" (10).	"¡Oh! Yo conocía muy bien a Constantine" (18).
"**Oh** no, ma'am, everything's fine" (10).	"No, señorita, las cosas están bien como están" (19).
"**Oh** *no,* Minny" (17).	"¡Oh, no, Minny!" (27).
"**Oh** Miss *Skeeter*" (190).	"¡Ay, Miss Skeeter!" (247).

Table 12. Use and translation of the interjection 'Oh'

e. Verbs

In relation to verbs, main features of Aibileen's use of language are the following, even though these do not appear every time Aibileen speaks:

a) **Person and number:** There is no particular problem with the use of person and number, except with the missing '-s' on the third person singular, as Aibileen barely uses it. There are several examples of this through both the narration and the dialogues, and this specific characteristic does not usually appear in the TT, as we can see for instance in:

	ST	**TT**
Narration	"Baby Girl stopped her crying, got to smiling up at me like she do" (1).	"La pequeña dejó de llorar y me miró sonriente" (7).
Narration	"The way she say it, like it's a fact, make my insides hurt" (92).	"Me duele escuchar la forma en que lo dice, como si se tratara de algo evidente" (121).
Dialogue	"Miss Leefolt, she don't know what she do–" (95).	"Miss Leefolt, ella no se da cuenta de lo que hace…" (125).
Dialogue	"It's true, she do not like Minny Jackson" (191).	"Es *verdá*, Minny Jackson no le cae *na* bien" (248).

Table 13. Use and translation of the missing '-s'

We can see that "like she do", "the way she say it", "she don't know what she do" and "she do not like" have a missing '-s' in the verb, which is not reflected in any of the verbs of the TT. It is only in the last case where this cultural reference is compensated using '*verdá'* and '*na*', which are non-standard forms of expressing 'verdad' and 'nada', more typically used in oral form. It has been difficult to find the missing '-s' compensated, and impossible to find it in the narration, as there is no compensation at all through the novel.

b) **Inflected and non-inflected forms:** Aibileen generally uses inflected forms, but also non-inflected verbs are present through the ST. These are not present in the TT in any way, neither when they appear in the narration nor when they appear in the dialogues, so once again we do not get that sense that is given by the African American sociolect in the ST. We can see this through the following examples:

	ST	TT
Narration	"First day I walk in the door, there she be, red-hot and hollering with the colic" (1).	"El primer día que entré en casa allí estaba, colorada como un tomate y aullando debido a un cólico" (7).
Narration	"Her face be the same shape as that red devil on the redhot candy box" (2).	"Su rostro se parece a ese diablillo rojo que sale en las cajas de caramelitos de canela" (8).
Narration	"Her whole body be so full a sharp knobs and corners" (2).	"Todo su cuerpo está lleno de ángulos afilados y esquinas" (8).
Narration	"She doing her figuring, like she be trying to count it all up" (284).	"Se pone a pensar, como si estuviera echando cuentas" (364).
Dialogue	"She say she call you if she be needing help with the Benefit" (26).	"La telefoneará si necesita ayuda con la campaña benéfica" (38).

Table 14. Use and translation of non-inflected forms

c) **Auxiliary verbs**: including 'be', 'do' and 'have' are usually missing. Because there are no auxiliary verbs in Spanish, this has to be compensated in order to maintain that sense of being using a sociolect. Sometimes these characteristics cannot be translated so the sociolect is lost, but there are other cases where they can be compensated. We will see both cases through these examples, consisting on extracts from the dialogues, as the narration does not have characteristics of the African American sociolect, as we have seen before:

	ST	TT
BE	"Say maybe she getting mal-nutritious" (14).	"Ha dicho que la ve *desnutría*" (23).
	"Mae Mobley, where your tail?" (91).	"Mae Mobley, ¿y si *t'agarro* yo de tu cola?" (120).
DO	"What Miss Hilly smell like?" (94).	"¿A qué huele Miss Hilly?" (124).
	"What you mean?" (409).	"¿Qué quieres *decí*?" (516).
HAVE	"Guess what Mae Mobley done today?" (94).	"¿Sabe qué ha hecho hoy Mae Mobley?" (125).
	"You been out a town awhile, Miss Skeeter." (292).	"Han *pasao* muchas cosas mientras estaba fuera, Miss Skeeter" (375).

Table 15. Use and translation of auxiliary verbs

There are some cases in which the cultural characteristics do not appear in the TT in any way, but many others in which they are compensated. The use of '*desnutría*', '*t'agarro*', '*decí*' and '*pasao*' reinforces the use of the sociolect in the TT.

Regarding other syntactic categories like adjectives, conjunctions, etc., they have not been analyzed as their use is not of special importance for the assessment of their translation, as they are neither used with specific cultural elements nor translated to reinforce that use of the sociolect.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the results, this paper concludes by arguing the appropriateness of the translation by looking into both the extratextual and the intratextual factors which have been discussed.

First of all, dealing with the extratextual factors, we have seen sender, sender's intention, recipient, channel, place of communication, time of communication, motive for communication and text function as being maintained in the TT, so they are as effective as they appeared in the ST.

Next, dealing with the intratextual factors, there are more differences between ST and TT, even though in both cultures there is that awareness of the African American maids' situation. Focusing more specifically on the translation of the text itself, we have seen for instance the use of italics in the TT in order to highlight the use of the sociolect in Spanish, whereas in the ST it is not highlighted in any way. We have also seen lower level of informativity in the TT, as some fragments of the ST are omitted in the TT. Moreover, we have also seen that the sentence structure is more complex in the TT because of the use of coordinated and subordinated clauses when in the ST there is usually just short sentences. Regarding the use of syntactic categories, we have seen no pattern or general rules followed by Aibileen in her way of speaking. She mostly uses elements specific of the African American sociolect, but sometimes she also uses the 'standard' English.

Thus, we have seen no particular use in the nouns but the repetition of 'Law', which is an African American expression which means 'Lord'. Nevertheless, it has been translated into four different ways in Spanish like 'Señor', '*Señó*', 'Demonios' and 'Dios'. This calls our attention as it is supposed to mean the same thing every time it appears in the ST, but it is translated in different ways in the TT, so it gives the readers a different sense.

She also uses specific interjections for expressing surprise like 'aw' and 'oh', which are repeated several times through the novel and translated as 'ay' which sounds more natural in Spanish, and 'oh', equally used in both languages. Aibileen also uses 'hey' to greet people, which is translated into Spanish as '*güenas*' or '*güenos* días' to reinforce her African Americanness, differentiating it from the use of Miss Skeeter for instance, who also uses 'hey' but it is simply translated as 'hola'.

Regarding the pronouns she uses the personal pronouns 'you' and 'they' instead of the possessive pronouns 'your' and 'their', and the reflexive pronouns 'theyselves' and 'hisself' instead of 'themselves' and 'himself'. As seen before, there is not a general use of these pronouns, as she sometimes uses the correct form and sometimes she does not, but this specific cultural element is not translated in the TT. It is sometimes compensated in another linguistic level, but this does not usually happen. An instance of this would be: "How nobody gets paid they Social Security" (128), translated as: "Que ninguna temenos *seguridá social*" (168).

There is no particular use of prepositions neither, except for the use of 'a' instead of 'of' while speaking, but as seen with the pronouns, it is not a general rule, and it is not translated in the TT except for its compensation sometimes as seen in "You drunk up two glasses a grape juice" (93) translated as "*T'has tomao* dos vasos de zumo de uva" (122).

Therefore, as we have said before, there is not a general rule followed by Aibileen when she expresses herself, as she mostly uses elements specific of the African American sociolect, but she also uses the 'standard' English. Anyway, the translator has tried to represent the sociolect in Spanish in an appropriate way dealing with the dialogues.

In addition to all of this, one of the most important aspects regarding this translation is the different styles in writing used by Aibileen in the TT. After the assessment, first thing we notice is the narration in the TT does not have any cultural elements specific of the African American sociolect, whilst the ST does, both in the narration and in the dialogues. The TT only presents those features in the dialogues, so the narration does not seem like written by an African American.

By contrast, the dialogues do have those cultural elements in the TT. Even though sometimes they do not appear in the specific linguistic level from the ST, they have been compensated in a different one in the TT, as we have seen through the examples from the tables. Creating this compensation presents a lot of problems while translating because it is difficult to represent the characteristics from one dialect or language into another. In this case, what the translator has done is translating the African American sociolect by using the non-standard Spanish.

For instance, the use of the non-standard level has been used for the ending of the participles, changing the ending '-ado' for '-*ao*' like in *tomao* or *pasao*.

Also, it has been used in the omission of the last consonant accenting the vowel preceding it like in *cociná, verdá*, *decí, seguridá, Señó,* etc. Moreover, the sound 'güe' at the beginning of a word is normally associated to the non-standard Spanish, which is seen in '*Güenos'* or '*Güenas*'. These are some of the most repeated examples of the non-standard level used in the TT in order to compensate the use of the sociolect in the ST.

It is preferable to look for a way of translating these specific cultural elements rather than ignoring their existence, as done so with the narration, because they belong to the book and the message that the writer wants to send, and if we ignore them the purpose is not fulfilled in the TT. What matters is the creation of a functionally equivalent translation, and it is achieved with the dialogues as they provoke in the TT the effect which was expected for the ST.

Therefore, in its overall, we consider this translation as being functionally equivalent, as it is an accepted translation which has been published because it fulfills the communicative function both in the source and the target culture. The use of extratextual factors is effective, but the point of discussion comes then with the intratextual factors and the appropriateness. The translation effectively works for the dialogues, but for the narration it is not completely appropriate, as we have seen through the examples used to illustrate the intratextual factors. In the narration of the TT we get the message, but they way of delivering it in the ST is lost, because the specific cultural elements of the African American sociolect are not translated into Spanish. Therefore, it is a functionally equivalent translation as it provokes the same effect in the target readers, but with some inappropriateness in the narration that should have been taking into account.

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