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Spanish Translations of Literary Titles: The Importance of Text Functions

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ABSTRACT

The title of a literary work is one of the most important parts that must be translated adequately. The translation of literary titles from English into Spanish is not a topic that has been studied in depth previously although it is agreed that titles are a type of text and, as such, it should deserve more attention in the Translation Studies field. This final dissertation focuses on the analysis of the translation of literary titles from English into Spanish considering two different factors: the translation techniques used by translators and the textual functions each title has in the literature market. With this in mind, we have developed a corpus that includes 111 literary works which have been classified according to these two variables of analysis. The results of this study illustrate how the most used translation technique is the literal translation which is usually associated to the descriptive textual function.

Keywords: Literary titles, Translation techniques, Textual functions, English-Spanish, Literary works, Corpus.

RESUMEN

El título de una obra literaria es una de las partes más importantes que debe traducirse adecuadamente. La traducción de títulos literarios de inglés a español no es un tema que se haya estudiado en profundidad previamente, aunque se coincide en que los títulos son un tipo de texto y, como tal, debería merecer más atención en el campo de los Estudios de la Traducción. Este trabajo final se centra en el análisis de la traducción de títulos literarios de inglés a español considerando dos factores diferentes: las técnicas de traducción utilizadas por los traductores y las funciones textuales de cada título en el mercado literario. Teniendo esto en cuenta, hemos desarrollado un corpus que incluye 111 obras literarias que se han clasificado según estas dos variables de análisis. Los resultados de este estudio muestran como la técnica de traducción más usada es la traducción literal, a la cual se le asocia normalmente la función descriptiva.

Palabras clave: Títulos literarios, Técnicas de traducción, Funciones textuales, Inglés-español, Obras literarias, Corpus.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As we have stated throughout the study, the title of a literary work is considered to be one of the most fundamental parts of the literary work. Therefore, it is essential for us to pay attention to the way in which translators translate a literary title. It does not matter if the literary title is composed of a single word or a long sentence; essentially, the literary work begins with the title.

The essence of a literary title should be maintained in its translation to a target language as well. Translation techniques and textual functions are two key processes through which all the titles of literary works and even movie titles go through so that the translator responsible for translating a title must keep a balance between both processes. Translators have several options when translating literary titles, which depend on various factors related to textual functions that will be discussed throughout this study.

In this present final dissertation, we will be discussing and analysing which are the translation techniques mentioned by some translation scholars (Gavling (2008), Molina and Hurtado (2002)) and which will be taken into consideration to analyse the English-Spanish literary titles compiled in our own corpus. Additionally, apart from the translation techniques, textual functions given by Nord (1990) will be considered and we will apply them to the literary titles compiled in order to propose a link between the translation techniques and the textual functions attached to the titles. In fact, our main purpose is to find out which is the most used translation technique when translating literary titles from English into Spanish and if this is related somehow to the textual function expressed by these titles.

In order to carry out this study, section 2 will provide a brief overview of the titles in literary translation and its relation to Nord's (1990) textual functions. Under the same section, the description of some translation techniques will be presented with some English-Spanish examples, and the conclusions of some previous studies regarding this topic will be shown as well. The main objectives of this study will be stated in section 3 and the methodology showing how we have carried out this study will be presented in

section 4. Finally, the discussion of the results we have obtained, and the conclusions derived from them will be given in sections 5 and 6, respectively.

2. TITLES IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

The noun 'title' has its origins in the Latin 'titulus', which means 'inscription' or following a more updated definition, the "wording inscribed above the text" as stated by (Ferry, 1997: 1, q.v. Darwish & Sayaheen, 2019) and so always preceding the body text itself. More specifically, according to Jovanovic (1990, q.v. Darwish & Sayaheen, 2019), titles are created to prepare the readers for the content of the text following and thus facilitate beforehand greater comprehension of the text. For this reason, titles could be the most important part of any publication even though they are a short combination of words or even if it is a unique word (Rakusan 2016, q.v. Darwish & Sayaheen, 2019).

Despite the importance of titles and their relations to the textual content that follows them, although some research has been done related to the translation of film titles (Bobadilla-Pérez, 2007), there are very few research papers on the translation of titles of literary works. This may be due to the fact that if "translating consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (Nida & Taber, 1969:12), these conditions may not be easily accomplished in the case of (sometimes too) short and concise texts like titles.

In fact, according to Bobadilla-Pérez (2007), when the original title and the translated title differ from each other, it is very complicated to translate just one line, the title. This will lead to asking the following question: what is behind a title? It is essential to understand the relevance of titles in general as a text type to understand the relevance of its translations. This may have to do with the primary function of a title, which is to attract readers to the author's story, as proposed by Bobadilla-Pérez (2007).

Therefore, although the translation of titles in literary works may seem like a simple issue due to the shortness of the text and the concise message conveyed, it results in a translation process where other factors (e.g., the text type and its various functions) may be implied and which, in certain cases, is not achieved without difficulty. We will illustrate these factors and difficulties in the following sections.

2.1. Titles in literary works: A text type and its functions

According to Newmark (1988), the translations of titles should create a good impression on the reader; they should sound attractive and suggestive even if the title is a proper name. Additionally, the translated title should have a semantic relation with the original title, that is, it must try to convince the readers about the reading of the literary work. Furthermore, "translators should keep the characteristics of the original [titles] and consult the cultural backgrounds to keep the informative, aesthetic and commercial functions in balance" (Kelan & Xiang, 2006: 56).

Additionally, Nord, (1990) affirms that in the translation of titles, the aspect of fidelity to the original title is relegated as the translated title must be capable of fulfilling its functions in the target culture. In fact, a title is a linguistic unit, a text type (Genette 1988, q.v. Darwish & Sayaheen, 2019), whose function depends on the effect it produces on the readers. Therefore, factors affecting the communication with the reader should be taken into consideration when analysing (and therefore, translating) a title. With this aim, Nord (1990) distinguishes up to six functions related to a literary title:

i. To identify a text by giving it a name that distinguishes it from other texts (distinctive function).
ii. To inform about the existence of a text, with the aim of being text on a text (metatextual function).
iii. To describe the text: its content or its form or the factors of its communicative situation (descriptive or referential function).
iv. To express an evaluation of the text: its content, its form, the factors of its situation or its effects on the reader (expressive function).
v. To establish a first contact between sender and receiver (phatic function).
vi. To attract the attention or interest of the readers, in such a way that they feel «seduced» to accept the information offered by the co-text, with the purpose of reading the book, to see the show, etc. (operative function).

Although these functions are well described and detailed, Nord does not provide any kind of example of a literary title to illustrate each function she describes. In addition,

as Nord points out in her study, after analyzing a large number of titles of literary works, it can be verified that the distinctive, metatextual, and phatic functions are essential functions of each title, while the descriptive, expressive, and operative functions are specific functions that are only found in certain titles. To work with every single function (essential or specific) would go beyond the scope of the present dissertation, we will focus only on the specific functions of literary titles grouping them into two main types for simplicity: descriptive or referential *vs.* expressive or operative functions.

Another different approach from Nord's regarding the functions of the title is given by Sawyer (Richard Sawyer 1993, cited, by Bobadilla-Pérez, 2007) who provides a more general approach about the functions of literary titles. According to this author, titles can perform a variety of functions: they can identify the genre to which the story belongs, whether the work belongs to romance, history, autobiography, etc.; they also introduce the theme or symbol which will be the key in the story for the understanding of the work, (e.g., "Love on the Brain" (Ali Hazelwood, 2022), which let readers know they are about to read a love story); titles can also have a 'nominal' function, which serves to identify the main character or place in the story, such as "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" (Lefteri, 2019)

Therefore, both Nord (1990) and Sawyer (1993) are among the few scholars who have shown their interest in the study of literary titles as text types with specific textual functions, although the later takes into considerations more pragmatic issues that the former.

On the other hand, Nord (1990), as a translation scholar, also points out in her study that literary titles may represent translation problems which are worth to studying not only for practical (or non-linguistic) reasons, (i.e., the title of a book may lead it to become a bestseller or a commercial failure), but also for translatological reasons (i.e., the pattern followed by translators when rendering an original literary title in a target language). Due to the dual nature of a literary title, Nord (1990) concludes that the title seems to be a textual unity that can be used specifically to illustrate the possibility and the necessity of a functional translation, as will be discussed in the following section.

2.2. Translation techniques in literary titles and their functions: examples from English-Spanish titles

A translator must take several elements into account when translating literary titles. "Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (Nida & Taber, 1969: 12). The main intention should be then to reproduce the message, which can lead to many grammatical modifications as well as lexical ones. Secondly, as Nida and Taber (1969; 12) focus on the importance of using the closest equivalent, they add that the "best translation does not sound as a translation" clarifying that the style of a literary work is a significant factor, but it is secondary in relation with the content. In order to fulfill both aims, these two scholars point out that the translator must be as objective as possible and should have a wide knowledge about the literary work itself, although they should refrain from going beyond the translation limits. Applying this reasoning to the translation of literary titles, although there may be a subjective component of the entire narrative of the literary work, the translator must take into account, apart from knowing the literary work following the title, what functions are associated to literary titles in general and whether they are reflected by the techniques of translation.

There is no single pattern that is followed for the translation of literary titles from one language to another different one, but, as in the case of any other text types, various techniques could be used to do so. The selection of the type of technique that is used when translating a title may depend mainly on the functions of the title (see section 2.1.). However, the same procedure may not apply in all languages or in the same types of texts. More specifically, Gavling (2008) mentions that one of the most common translation techniques used in titles is zero translation, where the source title is usually kept in the translation[1]. When using this type of technique (very common in the case of film titles according to Negro (2010) and Rodríguez Martínez (2020)), it is assumed that the original

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[1] Gavling's (2008) study is focused on the English-Swedish translation of titles so under this section we will use English-Spanish translations to illustrate more clearly this author's approaches and proposals to Spanish target readers.

title can be understood by the target readers and that it is better to keep the source title when it is almost impossible to give a satisfactory (both linguistically and commercially) translation. The original title of the work is usually kept when it only includes a proper name (e.g., *Jane Eyre* in both the English original version and Spanish translation). In the case of children's literature, this technique is not so common since children may not have the same knowledge of the English language and/or culture as adults could have, and so a literal translation may be used instead (e.g., *Snow White* translated into Spanish as *Blancanieves*).

Therefore, not only zero translation but also other types of translations can be found when focusing on literary title translation. As Gavling puts it (2008: 8) "[literal translation] is a good choice when the words have the same meaning and value in both languages" (Anna Gavling, 2008: 8). For example, *The Book Thief* is translated into Spanish as *La ladrona de libros*. In this particular case, the translation technique works so well because there are no untranslatable words which can cause some drawbacks to the translators, and so not only linguistically but also functionally (i.e., descriptive function) the Spanish translation works. Indeed, we should mention that Gavling's study consists of the translation of titles from English to Swedish, but even if we are not talking about the same target language, we can find some relationship.

Although Gavling (2008) focuses on the translation of titles from English into Swedish, this work is especially interesting for the present dissertation because this author proposes that there are various translation techniques that could be used for translating titles: zero translations, literal translations, and quasi-literal translations, which are a sub-type of literal translation we can find quasi-literal translation, which is produced when the literal translation undergoes some modifications. These modifications could refer to the omission of some words, as in *Big Little Lies* translated into *Pequeñas mentiras*, the addition of some words, as in *If I Stay* translated into *Si decido quedarme,* or even when some words are not translated using their most common meaning (i.e., semantic modifications), as occurs with *"wrong"* in *The Wrong Side of Goodbye* translated as *El lado oscuro del adiós*.

Another frequently used technique of translation is related to more communicative translation approaches, such as creation, which refers to those translated titles that are completely different from the original ones. According to Anna Gavling (2008), this technique can be used when it is believed that neither keeping the original title nor translating it literally will work for the target readers. In this way, *The Girl with The Dragon Tattoo* is translated as *Los hombres que no amaban a las mujeres*, which would be an illustration of how the creation of a new title in the target language leads to changing a functionally descriptive title into a more expressive title for Spanish readers. Another example of creation would be *A Dog's Purpose* translated as *La razón de estar contigo*, where an expressive title is turned into a more descriptive one using the creation translation technique.

As seen above, both translation techniques and the functions of the titles mentioned under section 2.1. seem to be interconnected, playing an important role in their translation into the target language. However, scarce research has focused on the study of the literary title translation, and very few studies have dealt specifically with the translation of literary titles from English into Spanish. In the following sections, the main results derived from these studies will be reviewed briefly in order to take them into consideration for the purposes of the present dissertation.

2.3. Previous studies on the translation of English-Spanish literary titles

As attested so far, very few scholars (e.g., Christiane Nord, 1990; Darwish & Sayaheen, 2019) have worked on literary title translation, and very few have worked specifically on this translation with English and Spanish as the languages under analysis (Bobadilla-Pérez, 2007). While the former authors focus on the title translation from a theoretical perspective, the latter provides an empirical analysis of the translation of a certain number of titles of literary and filmic works, concluding that there are several techniques used in this type of translation. Although Bobadilla-Pérez's (2007: 124) study is based also on cinematographic titles, the information given in relation to the titles of literary works is appropriated and useful in my study, as she concludes that "the translator does not have much freedom to change the title, being forced to let some connotations be

lost in the process". At the same time, she also alludes to the importance of textual functions such as the descriptive and the expressive ones when translating literary works as products.

Among those approaches also closer to our study, it is worth to mention Nord (1990), who focuses her study on some considerations about the translation of titles, the functionalism and loyalty. She culminates her study with an example of a title analysis in which she concludes that literal translation does not always work in every language.

A different approach is given by Ibrahim Darwish and Bilal Sayaheen (2019), who based their study on manipulating literary titles in translation, concluding that many translators manipulate title translation due to multiple reasons, such as when the grammar of the target language does not allow the structure of the original title. They conclude their study by showing how some translators may take certain ways to manipulate target titles.

Having explained some studies on the translations of literary titles prior to this current study, we can say that the present dissertation will differ from them in that a single corpus of titles of English-Spanish literary works and their translation into Spanish has been compiled in order to verify the translation techniques used and the textual functions associated to them according to Nord's (1990) specific typology. In the following section we will describe in more detail the main objectives of the present dissertation.

3. OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this present dissertation is to analyse the English-Spanish translation of titles of 111 literary works in order to show if the translation techniques used and the textual functions associated to both the original and the target titles are interconnected. Therefore, the research questions intended to be answered are the following:

- Research question 1: What are the most used specific techniques of translation when translating literary titles from English into Spanish (e.g., zero translation, literal translation, quasi-literal translation, creation (see section 2.2.))? Do literary translations predominate? And which is the least used translation technique?

- Research question 2: Is there any of Nord's (1990) functions of the title (more descriptive *vs*. expressive) that prevails in the Spanish translation of the literary titles? Are they associated to a specific translation technique (see section 2.2.)?

The answer to these questions will provide a valuable description of the translation pattern followed when translating literary titles from English into Spanish and how they relate to textual functions, a combination that, to the best of our knowledge, has not been discussed in previous literary translation literature. Once the research questions have been explained, we will be able to give an adequate response to them in the succeeding sections.

4. METHODOLOGY

This section is split into two subsections. The first one will illustrate the procedure that has been taken to carry out this study; a description of how the corpus was compiled is presented together with a reference to what type of works were selected, and where they were taken from. The second subsection shows our proposed classification of both the techniques used in the translation of the literary titles selected and which function associates to each original and translated title.

4.1. Compilation of literary titles

The first step followed in order to compile our corpus of literary titles has been to list 111 literary titles taken from the following websites: Amazon, USA Today, La Casa del Libro, Publishers Weekly, and Insider. These websites were appropriated for our purposes because they showed us a large list of literary works that were bestsellers in the last 20 years. Moreover, thanks to these websites, we have been able to find handily the translated titles.

As our interest was focused on recent literary works (i.e., published in the last 20 years), in the websites mentioned above we searched for literary works written originally in English and as best-sellers by searching different strings like "bestselling books of 2010", for example. The reason why best-sellers filter was selected was double: 1) to make sure that the fiction literary work had been or was popular enough at least among the original language readers, and 2) this popularity could guarantee the existence of the Spanish translation in the target language literary market. In fact, a useful procedure to compile as many titles as possible was to search for all the works written by popular writers like John Grisham or Nicholas Sparks. Later, we checked in the Google searcher the corresponding translation into Spanish (if there was any) and register this information (i.e., original and target title) in our Excel database.

The compilation process, and so the creation of the corpus of the 111 titles, has been created from scratch since there is none available on the Internet. Therefore, in order to prove that 111 titles are a representative number for a corpus, we have used *ReCor*

(2010), a program which establishes the exact point where our corpus is representative. Although this is an outdated program, it is very useful to check the representativeness of any corpus. In order to upload the different literary titles into ReCor, we have pasted the information of the excel in the Bloc de Notas, making 111 txt files in total. Finally, after having the data obtained, the program examines this data, and the results are shown in two different graphs: *Estudio gráfico A* and *Estudio gráfico B*. From these graphs, we can conclude that the representativeness of our corpus is suitable.
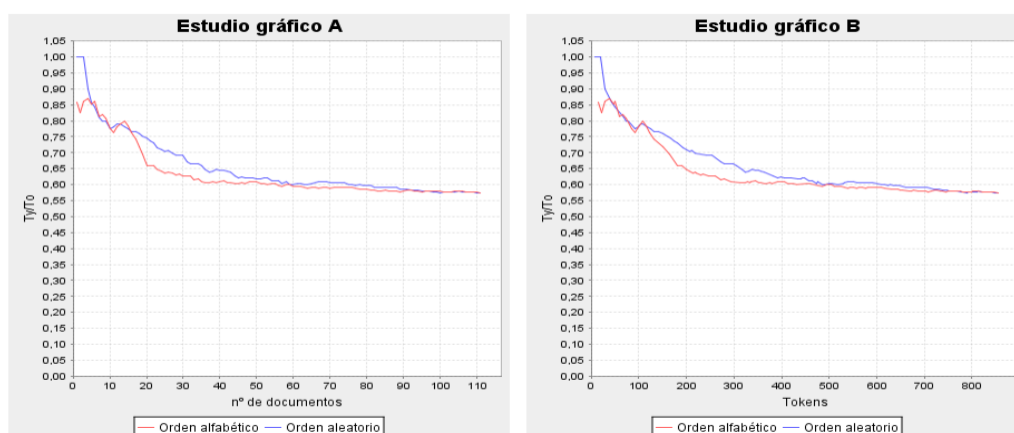
Graph 1. *Corpus representativity*

The graph on the left, *Estudio gráfico A,* allows us to know the exact number of files required for our corpus to be representative. The vertical axis represents the number of types/tokens, and the horizontal axis represents the number of files that have been selected. In this case, Graph A illustrates that the representativeness of our corpus starts approximately in file 5, so with less than 10 literary titles our corpus would be representative. Furthermore, the graph on the right, *Estudio gráfico B,* shows the minimum number of tokens that are necessary for the corpus to be representative. The vertical axis represents the type/token ratio, and the horizontal axis illustrates the number of tokens. Considering this, our corpus is representative starting at 50 words approximately. Taking these results into account, ReCor has helped us to prove that our corpus is good enough in order to carry out this study adequately.

4.2. Classification of literary titles

As we have mentioned above, we have created our own corpus since there is none that is published. More specifically, we have created and Excel document in which we have been registering several titles of works, i.e., 111 literary titles. Moreover, as table 1 shows, we have added some other information regarding each title in other columns such as the name of the author and the date of publication, the name of the original title and, consequently, the name of the title in Spanish, the translation technique that has been used when translating the original title, and finally the textual function that both English and Spanish titles have.

Table 1. *Titles classification*

Author/ Year	English title	Textual function_EN	Spanish title	Textual function_SP	Translation technique
(1) J. K. Rowlling 2013	A Slow Fire Burning	Expressive	A fuego lento	Expressive	Quasi-literal translation (Omission)
(2) Colleen Hoover 2016	It Ends with Us	Expressive	Termina con nosotros	Descriptive	Literal translation
(3) Gillian Flynn 2012	The Girl in the Spider's Web	Expressive	Lo que no te mata te hace más fuerte	Expressive	Creation
(4) William Paul Young 2007	The Shack	Descriptive	La cabaña	Descriptive	Literal translation
(5) Lauren Weisberger 2013	Revenge Wears Prada	Expressive	La venganza viste de Prada	Expressive	Literal translation

We have followed partly Nord's (1990) textual functions (see section 2.1.) and Molina and Hurtado's (2002) types of translation techniques (see section 2.2.) to classify

all the titles in our corpus. We have not excluded any type of title, but we have preferred not to register those titles which are proper names, as they are mostly left untranslated, and our interests led us to focus on other titles where not only a proper noun was used.

4.2.1. According to the translation techniques used by the translator

In our corpus, titles have been classified according to the translation technique used by the translator[2]. Below table 2 shows some examples of literary titles extracted from our corpus and with the corresponding translation technique: (1) shows a literal translation which consists of word-by-word translation; example (2) illustrates a creation which implies a completely different title from the source title at the semantic level; titles (3), (4), and (5) shows a quasi-literal translation in which the original titles undergo minor modifications in the target titles (i.e., and addition in the case of (3), an omission in the case of (4), and a semantic modification in the case of (5)).

Table 2. *Classification of literary titles according to the translation techniques*[3]

Original title	Target title	Translation technique
(1) The Girl on the Train	La chica del tren	Literal translation
(2) Turtles All the Way Down	Mil veces hasta siempre	Creation
(3) If I Stay	Si decido quedarme	Quasi-literal translation (Addition)
(4) Big Little Lies	Pequeñas mentiras	Quasi-literal translation (Omission)
(5) The Casual Vacancy	Una vacante imprevista	Quasi-literal translation (semantic modification)

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[2] We must thank each one of the translators for their work, even if they are not mentioned in this final dissertation as this information is not available in the online sources consulted.

[3] Although we have discussed the zero translation technique (see section 2.2.), we must mention that we have not found any examples of this technique in title translation; therefore, in our corpus there is no instances of zero translation.

4.2.2. According to textual functions associated to the original and the target literary titles

As table 3 shows, we have also classified each target literary title according to its textual function. Example (1) illustrates a descriptive function since according to Nord (1990) and as we have mentioned above (Section 2.1.), this function deals with the description of the text, content, and form, so both original and target title have a descriptive function; titles (2), (4), and (5) shows an expressive function in both original and target tiltle because, according to Nord (1990), the purpose of this function is to attract the attention of the readers and to seduce them to accept the co-text, and finally, example (3) implies a descriptive function in the original title, and an expressive function in the target title. Therefore, in some cases like in (3) the functions of both original and target title could not be the same.

Table 3. *Classification of literary titles according to Nord's (1990) textual functions*

Original title	Textual function	Target title	Textual function
(1) The Girl on the Train	Descriptive function	La chica del tren	Descriptive function
(2) Turtles All the Way down	Expressive function	Mil veces hasta siempre	Expressive function
(3) Into the Water	Descriptive function	Escrito en el agua	Expressive function
(4) The Book of Dust	Expressive function	El libro de la oscuridad	Expressive function
(5) Before I Fall	Expressive function	Si no despierto	Expressive function

5. ANALYSIS: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we will present and discuss the results we have obtained after compiling 111 literary titles and classifying them according to the translation techniques used and the textual functions associated with both the original and the target titles. The first subsection (5.1) will present the results according to the classification regarding translation techniques, and the second subsection (5.2) will refer to the classification of titles according to the textual functions they represent. Finally, in section 5.3, we will present a discussion about the relation between these two variables under analysis to find out if there is any relation between the function of the original title and target titles and the technique used in their translation into Spanish.

5.1. Results according to the translation techniques (Research question 1)

In this section we will be illustrating the translation techniques that have been used when translating into Spanish the English literary titles of our corpus mentioned in section 2.3. (i.e., zero translation, literal translation, quasi-literal translation, and creation). The purpose of this section is to answer research question RQ 1 provided above (see section 3) and which refer to the frequency and predominance of the specific techniques of translation used in the title translation.
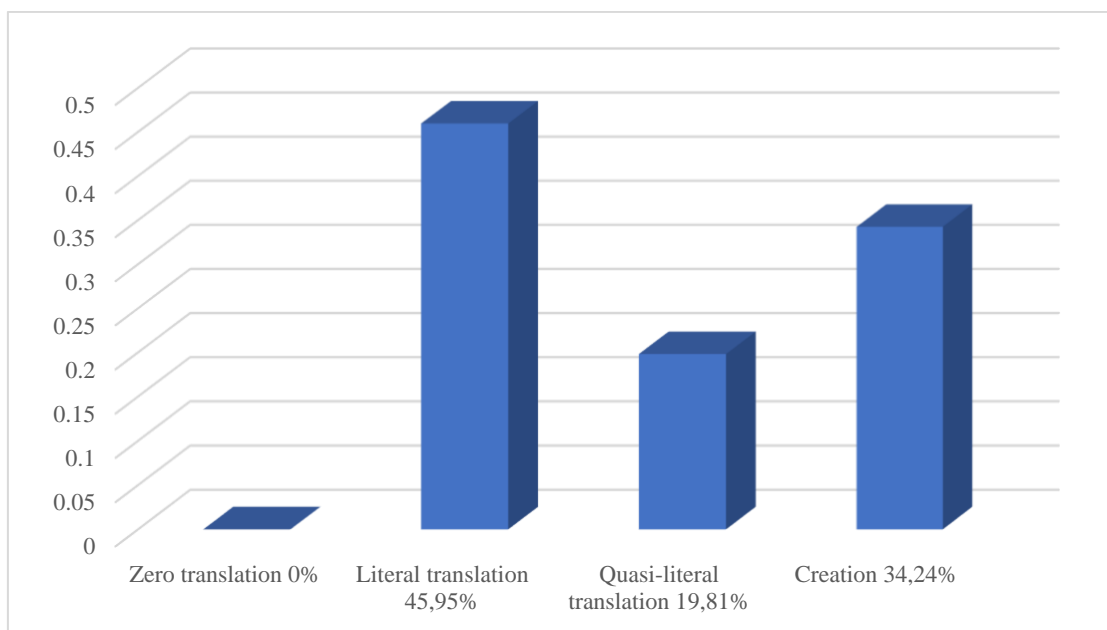

Figure 1. *Classification of literary titles according to the translation techniques*

As shown in figure 1, among the titles translated in our corpus, there is no instance of zero translation, as we have mentioned before. However, we have observed that our corpus includes 22 quasi-literal translated titles (19,81%) in which additions (9,09% of the total of quasi-literal translations), omission (31,82%) or minor modifications (59,09%) are involved. Therefore, the majority of the literary works that belong to the quasi-literal translation are composed of those that undergo minor modifications, for instance, *The Casual Vacancy* translated as *Una vacante imprevista*, *And the Mountains Echoed* as *Y las montañas hablaron*, or *Edge of Eternity* as *El umbral de la eternidad*. The second type of quasi-literal translation technique that predominates is the one that is related with the omission of some words, such as *A Slow Fire Burning* translated into *A fuego lento* or *Big Little Lies* as *Pequeñas mentiras*. The final and the least use quasi-literal translation technique is the one that has to do with the addition of some words, for example *Wolf Hall* translated as *En la corte del lobo*.

In addition, as figure 1 shows, there are 38 creation titles (34,24%), in which we can appreciate literary titles like *Luckiest Girl Alive* as *La chica que lo tenía todo*, or *The Rooster Bar* as *La gran estafa*.

Finally, regarding the literal translation technique, we can appreciate that our corpus comprises 51 of them (45,95%) with examples such as *The House of Hades* as *La casa de Hades*, *The Longest Ride* translated as *El viaje más largo*, or *A Thousand Splendid Suns* as *Mil soles espléndidos*. Therefore, according to our results, we would say that the most used translation technique in our corpus is literal translation, while the least used is the quasi-literal type (especially additions).

To sum up this section and in order to answer the RQ 1, we can state that translators prefer to be faithful to the original title providing a literal translation in Spanish, although creation also shows to be preferred by translators as a second option, which, as will be seen later, may be influenced by other functional and textual factors. Moreover, according to the previous results and in order to answer the last part of the RQ1, we can affirm that the least used translation technique is the quasi-literal one,

concretely the quasi-literal translation technique that has to do with the addition of some words.

5.2. Results according to the textual functions (Research question 2)

This section will be presenting the textual functions that each translated title (i.e., original and target) renders based on Nord's (1990) reduced classification and mentioned in sections 2.1. and 4.2.2. (i.e., descriptive vs. expressive).
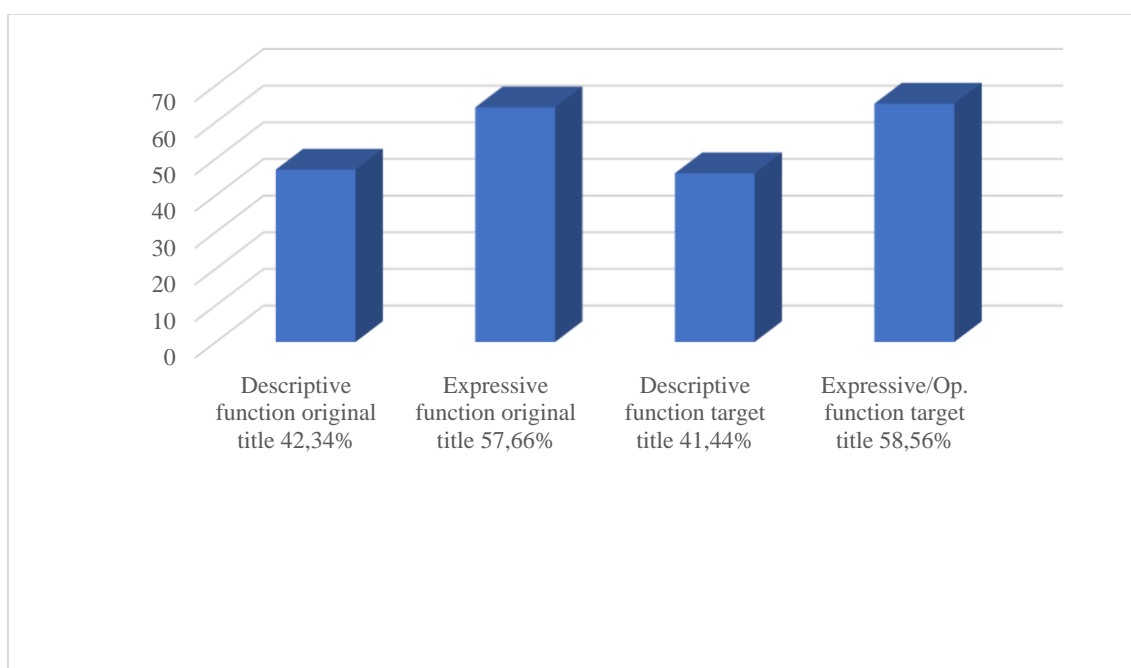

Figure 2. *Classification of literary titles according to Nord's (1990) the textual functions*

According to figure 2 and as we have mentioned above, 4 classifications are shown. Firstly, the descriptive function of the original title covers 47 titles (42,34%) with titles such as *The Girl on the Train* or *A Gentleman in Moscow*. Paralleling is the descriptive function of the target title which includes 46 titles (41,44%) in which titles as *La autopista Lincoln* or *El jilguero*. Similarly, the expressive function of the original title comprises 64 titles (57,66%) with some clear examples such as *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* or *The Husband's Secret*. The expressive function in the target title contains 65 literary titles (58,56%) with examples as *Criadas y señoras* or *El primer verano de nuestras vidas*. Therefore, it seems there is a parallelism between the number of both

descriptive and expressive titles in original and target titles which may imply that there have been no significant changes when translating them into Spanish in terms of textual function equivalence.

Taking everything into account and answering RQ 2 of the present study, we must state that both in the original and in the target title the textual function that predominates is the expressive one which seems to be related to the purpose of the tile: to attract the attention of (original or target) potential readers and so (original or target) potential buyers of the book. However, it seems that the descriptive function in both the original title and the target titles mirrors the same result, which may point out the descriptive function being also attractive to both original and target potential readers as well (i.e., the information provided in the title could also serve as an incentive to read the book).

5.3. Association of translation techniques and textual functions

As for the possibility of the relation between the results derived from the analysis of both variables (i.e., translation technique and textual function of the original and target titles) stablished in the second part of RQ2, we will show the results from this cross-section analysis in the following sections.

5.3.1. Literal translation technique

Figure 3 shows the interaction between the literal translation technique and the textual functions associated to each version of the title.
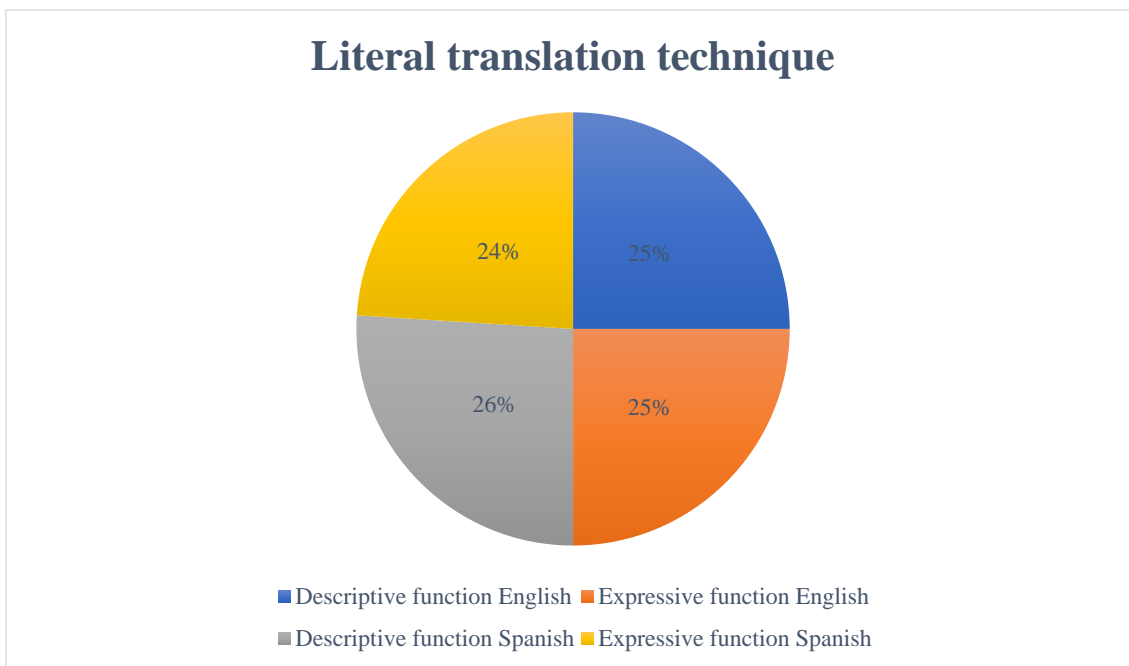
Literal translation technique

- Descriptive function English
- Expressive function English
- Descriptive function Spanish
- Expressive function Spanish

(25% Descriptive function English, 25% Expressive function English, 26% Descriptive function Spanish, 24% Expressive function Spanish)

Figure 3. *Association of textual functions to the literal translation technique*

According to the results, we can state that both descriptive and expressive functions in both versions of the title when there is a literal translation intervening are balanced (25% or close to 25% in all the cases). This balance implies that the textual function of the literal title is maintained in the target title when the literal translation technique is used. Some examples regarding the descriptive function in both languages we can show are *Panic* translated as *Pánico* or *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* as *Los siete maridos de Evelyn Hugo*. According to the expressive examples we can illustrate *The Book Thief* as *La ladrona de libros* or *Doctor Sleep* as *Doctor sueño*.
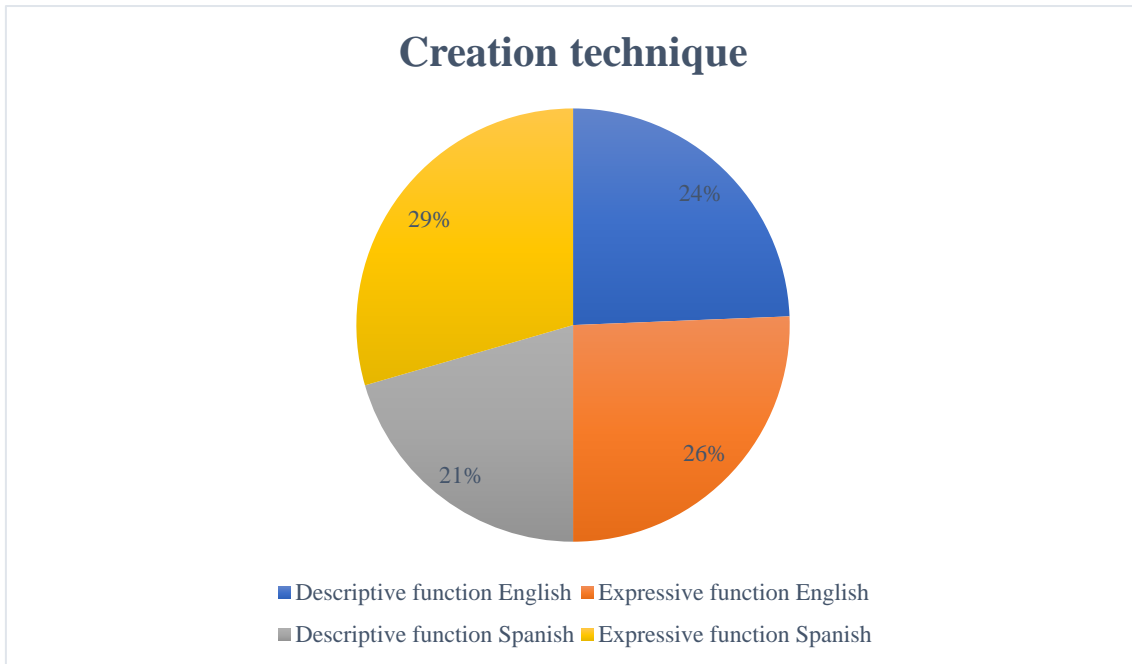
5.3.2. Creation technique

Figure 4. *Association of textual functions to the creation technique*

Concerning the creation technique results, we can state that the percentage of each textual function remains similar when creation intervenes, although, regarding the descriptive function in English, we have 19 literary titles (24%) and in Spanish there are 16 (21%). In addition, our corpus contains 20 literary titles which belong to the expressive function in English (26%) and 23 which belong to the expressive function in Spanish (29%). The difference of the results shown is due to the fact that there is a low amount of literary titles (17) which do not have the same textual function in English as in Spanish, such as *The Help*, which has a descriptive function in the orginal title while *Criadas y señoras* has an expressive function in the target title. However, in *Brig Up the Bodies* we have an expressive function in the English language meanwhile *Una reina en el estrado* has a descriptive function in the target language. Most the 17 cases where a functional mismatch appears between the original and the target title have a descriptive function in English and an expressive function in the Spanish version, a change that reveals that when creation is used, there is a slight tendency on the translators' part to make the literary work more attractive to potential target readers.

5.3.3. Quasi-literal translation technique

Quasi-literal translation technique

- 7% Descriptive function English
- 43% Expressive function English
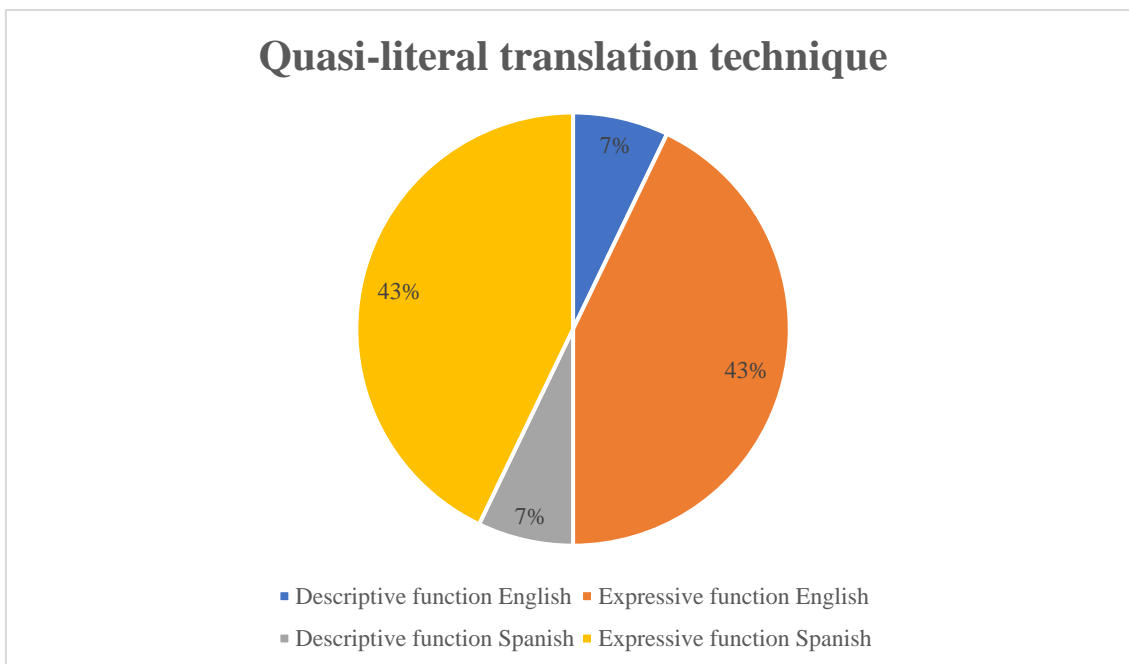- 7% Descriptive function Spanish
- 43% Expressive function Spanish

Figure 5. *Association of textual functions to the quasi-literal translation technique*

As for the results of the quasi-literal translation, we can see in figure 5 that both textual functions are very steady, since we count on with the same percentage of descriptive (7%) and expressive functions (43%) in both languages, representing 7% and 43%, respectively, in each language. This result, compared with that of the descriptive function intervening literal translations, seems to point to the fact that when an original title in English has an expressive function, it is also kept in the target text but especially through the use of quasi-literal translations, which are found not so often in the case of titles with descriptive functions. This could be due to the fact that in the Spanish translation the expressive function is emphasized either omitting/adding more material, or more especially specifying the meaning of one of the original words (see section 2.1) to keep the attention of the target readers.

Taking everything into consideration, we can state that in most of the cases, in all of the translation techniques each title maintains the same textual function in both English and Spanish literary title, while in very few cases (21 in total) the textual functions do not match. Considering these last cases, they are predominant in the case of creation and very scarce in the case of literal or quasi-literal translations. This leads to conclude that certain

translation techniques seem to be more closely related to textual functions than other when translating literary titles.

6. CONCLUSION

After discussing the results of the translation techniques used to translate English literary titles to the Spanish ones, and the textual functions of both the English original literary title and the Spanish version, we can provide an elaborated answer to our previous research questions (see Section 3). As seen in Section 5, the literal translation is the translation one that has been used most often for the literary titles in our corpus (RQ1). This means that translators may prefer mainly to translate each literary title word by word, keeping the "exact structural, lexical, even morphological equivalence between two languages" (Molina & Hurtado, 2002). Nonetheless, according to the previous results (see Section 5), the quasi-literal translation technique, particularly the one involving the addition of some words, is the one that is least used. This may be due to the fact that this translation technique is the last option for some translators when translating a literary title, as they may prefer to use the literal translation technique instead.

Regarding the textual functions, the expressive function seems to be maintained by some translators in the original and target titles. This might be because this function works better than the rest, as its purpose is to catch the attention and interest of the readers more than simply trying to describe the text, content, and form, as the descriptive function does. However, the descriptive function is also maintained in a high percentage, which may be interpreted as an incentive for selling the literary work as well: the descriptive information contained in the titles (both the original and the target one) could attract both the original and target readers and, so, this function would respond to same aim, i.e., to sell the book. Furthermore, according to the previous results (see section 5), we can state that, to a greater or lesser extent, both textual functions (i.e., descriptive and expressive) coincide in both titles (i.e., English and Spanish). This means that most of the literary titles our corpus includes have the same textual function in both languages.

In addition, the results of this study can state that zero translation is the last option translators carry out when translating literary titles from English to Spanish, a tendency which has been attested in film title translation (Negro, 2010; Rodríguez Martínez, 2020). A reason for this may be that translators prefer to be more faithful to the original text, as happens with many literary works.

Taking everything into account, this study has been of assistance in order to know which is the most common used translation technique and textual function (and their interaction) when translators work with the literary title translation. Moreover, according to the discussion of the results (see section 5), we can affirm that there is a clear link or influence between the translation techniques and the textual functions (RQ2) since certain translations techniques respond to certain textual functions.

As further research, a study like this would be more accurate if the corpus included more literary titles to analyze and if different types of literary genres (i.e., drama, comedy, etc.) were taken into account, as this may result in different findings.

7. APPENDIX

The appendix used to carry out this final dissertation can be found in this link.

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